

# The Rich Family In Our Church

by Edie Ogan

I'll never forget Easter 1946. I was 14, my littler sister Ocy, 12 and my older sister Darlene, 16. We lived at home with our Mother, and the four of us knew what it was to do without many things. My Dad had died five years before, leaving Mom with seven school kids to raise and no money.

By 1946, my older sisters were married and my brothers had left home. A month before Easter the Pastor of our church announced that a special Easter offering would be taken to help a poor family. He asked everyone to save and give sacrificially.

When we got home, we talked about what we could do. We decided to buy 50 pounds of potatoes and live on them for a month. This would allow us to save \$20 of our grocery money for the offering. We thought that if we kept our electric lights turned out as much as possible and didn't listen to the radio, we'd save money on that months electric bill.

Darlene got as many house and yard cleaning jobs as possible. Both of us baby sat for everyone we could. For 15 cents, we could buy enough cotton loops to make three pot holders to sell for \$1. We made \$20 on pot holders.

That month was one of the best of our lives. Every day we counted the money to see how much we had saved. At night we'd sit in the dark and talk about how the poor family was going to enjoy having the money the church would give them.

We had about 80 people in church. We figured that whatever amount of money we had to give, the offering would surely be 20 times that much. After all, every Sunday the Pastor had reminded everyone to save for the sacrificial offering.

The day before Easter, Ocy and I walked to the grocery store and got the manager to give us three crisp \$20 bills and one \$10 bill for all our change. We ran all the way home to show Mom and Darlene. We had never had so much money before.

That night, we were so excited that we could hardly sleep. We didn't care

that we wouldn't have new clothes for Easter; we had \$70 for the sacrificial offering. We could hardly wait to get to church!

On Sunday morning, rain was pouring. We didn't own an umbrella. And the church was over a mile from our home. But it didn't seem to matter how wet we got. Darlene had cardboard in her shoes to fill the holes. The cardboard came apart, and her feet got wet. But we sat in church proudly.

I heard some teenagers talking about the Smith girls having on their old dresses. I looked at them in their new clothes, and I felt rich.

When the sacrificial offering was taken, we were sitting on the second row from the front. Mom put in the \$10 bill and each of us girls put in a 20.

As we walked home after church, we sang all the way. At lunch Mom had a surprise for us. She had bought a dozen eggs and we had boiled Easter eggs with our fried potatoes!

Late that afternoon the Minister drove up in his car. Mom went to the door, talked with him for a moment and then came back with an envelope in her hand. We asked what it was, but she didn't say a word. She opened the envelope and out fell a bunch of money. There were three crisp \$20 bills, one \$10 and seventeen \$1 bills. Mom put the money back in the envelope.

We didn't talk, just sat and stared at the floor. We had gone from feeling like millionaires to feeling like poor white trash. We kids had such a happy life that we felt sorry for anyone who didn't have our Mom and Dad for parents and a house full of brothers and sisters and other kids visiting constantly.

We thought it was fun to share silverware and see whether we got the spoon or the fork that night. We had two knives that we passed around to whoever needed them. I knew we didn't have a lot of things that other people had, but I'd never thought we were poor. That Easter Day I found out we were.

The Minister had brought us the money for the poor family, so we must be poor. I didn't like being poor. I

looked at my dress and worn-out shoes and felt so ashamed that I didn't want to go back to church.

Everyone there probably already knew we were poor! I thought about school. I was in the ninth grade and at the top of my class of over 100 students. I wondered if the kids at school knew that we were poor. I decided that I could quit school since I had finished the eighth grade. That was all the law required at that time. We sat in silence for a long time. Then it got dark, and we went to bed.

All that week, we girls went to school and came home. No one talked much. Finally on Saturday, Mom asked us what we wanted to do with the money. What did poor people do with money? We didn't know. We'd never know we were poor.

We didn't want to go to church on Sunday, but Mom said we had to. Although it was a sunny day, we didn't talk on the way. Mom started to sing, but no one joined in and she only sang one verse.

At church we had a missionary speaker. He talked about how churches in Africa made buildings out of sun dried bricks, but they needed money to buy roofs. He said \$100 would put a roof on a church.

The Minister said, "Can't we all sacrifice to help these poor people?" We looked at each other and smiled for the first time in a week. Mom reached into her purse and pulled out the envelope. She passed it to Darlene. Darlene gave it to me and I handed it to Ocy. Ocy put it in the offering. When the offering was counted, the Minister announced that it was a little over \$100.

The Missionary was excited. He hadn't expected such a large offering from our small church. He said, "You must have some rich people in this Church."

Suddenly it struck us! We had given \$87 of that offering.

We were the rich family in the church!

Hadn't the Missionary said so?.....

# Stewardship

by Elder W. H. Durrence  
Brooklet, Georgia

The word **stewardship** is found only three times in the Bible. All three references are recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Luke. It will be helpful if you read the passage about the unjust steward as recorded in Luke 16:1,13. The passage deals with a steward who was called into question about his stewardship. It is intended to cause us to question our own stewardship and see whether or not we please God.

In addition to the three verses which use the word stewardship, there are fifteen additional Scriptures which use the word **steward**. A diligent study of them clearly establishes the Christian's duty with regard to stewardship.

Let us begin our study by endeavoring to understand the meaning of stewardship. In biblical times, a steward was an officer or employee whose job was to manage the domestic concerns of a family or estate. Sometimes his duties included supervising servants, or caring for the children of the family by whom he was employed. At other times, his duties included collecting monies and keeping accounts, as described in the passage from Luke 16. Even though he was entrusted with a variety of duties, it is obvious that whether his responsibilities included the care of people or possessions, he always took care of something that belonged to others. It is important to keep in mind that his responsibilities involved properties not owned by the steward, but entrusted to his care.

It should also be realized that stewardship was a common occupation during many of the periods which are covered by Bible history. Stewards were mentioned as early as Abraham's time. Elizer of Damascus is said to have been Abraham's steward (Gen. 15:2). Later Jacob acted in this capacity in the household of Laban. While

he is not actually called a steward, the responsibilities seem to indicate that he held that position (Gen. 29:15-30). When Joseph was second in command to the Pharaoh in Egypt, he had a steward who served him (Gen. 43:19, Gen. 44:4). During the years that David was King of Israel he had many stewards who were responsible for all his possessions (I Chron. 28:1). Even in the New Testament the position of steward continued to exist, as amply evident from the various Scripture references which include the passage from Luke. While these passages remind us that it was an ancient position, they should also serve to help us recognize that the responsibilities of stewardship continue and are binding upon all saved people. Our duties may differ from those of the biblical stewards, but the fact remains that we are stewards. God has entrusted to us a variety of gifts; therefore, whether good or bad, just or unjust, we must all give an account of our stewardship.

When we recognize the fact that we are stewards and must account for our stewardship to God, we should then endeavor to discover our duties and discharge them in a manner that will please Him. One of the parables of our Lord, the parable of the vineyard, deals with the stewardship of ministers. A man hired laborers to work in the vineyard, hiring them at various hours during the day. "So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first" (Mt. 20:8). I see Jesus as the householder, the church as His vineyard, and the minister as the steward, with the members laboring in the vineyard. If this analogy is true, then ministers do have a duty and responsibility to the Lord as stewards over His

house and Word.

Stewardship, however, is not limited to the ministry, but actually includes everyone who is saved by God's Son, Jesus Christ. All of us who are saved and hold the hope of heaven in our hearts are recipients of God's grace. Peter said, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (I Peter 4:10). Paul wrote, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit" (I Cor. 12:4). Blending these two Scriptures together we must recognize that God's Holy Spirit has given us gifts, and as objects of God's grace we are stewards of those spiritual gifts. Perhaps you remember the parable of the talents as recorded in Mt. 25:14-30. It tells of one who was given five talents, another who was given two talents, and a third individual who was given only one talent. Those talents were actually monetary gifts, but the nature of the gifts makes no difference. Whether entrusted with monies or abilities, the steward is to use the trust wisely. If someone can sing, play an instrument, teach, pray in public, preach, or use anyone of a great diversity of other gifts, he is to use his talent in the church and thereby share with the whole body so that all may benefit and be blessed. God did not give us talents for our benefit only; we are stewards of them, and are therefore to minister to each other as Peter admonished, that we may be good stewards of God's grace. If an one of us fails to use our abilities for the good of others and to the glory of God, he is not a good steward. No one but you and God can know what is in your heart and whether or not you have been a good steward of the gifts He entrusted to your care.

Having mentioned spiritual gifts,

we must recognize that there are also temporal gifts of which God has made us stewards. All temporal possessions are on loan from God. Paul quoted Psalm 24:1 and said, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof" (1 Cor. 10:26,28). Everything we possess belongs to God; it is not really ours. The evidence of this truth lies in the fact that when we die we can take none of it with us. All things which bless our lives God has given for our use. Every good and perfect gift is from God (James 1:17), and we are to be good stewards of our children, homes, salaries, cars, and other material possessions. Good stewards of such blessings should endeavor to use them in such a manner that the Master, not the steward, receives the ultimate benefit from them.

In addition to the spiritual and temporal blessings mentioned, we should recognize that the greatest gift God has entrusted to us is life itself. Our natural life belongs to God and will one day return to Him at our death (Ecc. 12:7). God created life and He also preserves our lives from day to day. Paul said, "...

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring" (Acts 17:28). Because we live, move, and have our being from God, we are to live for Him and move in His service. Only then are we good stewards of the life which God has imparted to us. Some of God's children not only use the Lord's day for themselves, but they also use the life and strength which God gives and exhaust their energies only on personal pursuits. This is sin, "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20). How can we doubt that we belong to God and how can we fail to take seriously the stewardship of our lives? A good steward will use his life to bring glory to God.

As we conclude this study, I want to reemphasize that stewards are entrusted with properties which belong to another. I have endeavored to help you realize that all we are and have belongs to God, and we are stewards of it. Regardless of whether God entrusts

much or little to our care, He requires faithfulness of us all. Paul wrote "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). How would you feel if you found that a steward managing your home affairs was using your possessions for his own gain and benefit? You would probably do as did the man in the parable which began our study; you would likely require that steward to account for his actions. Do you realize that God is doing the same? All you possess belongs to Him. Grace, blessings, and life itself all came from God that you may be a steward of these and all else you possess. Are you using these possessions only for your good, glory, and gain, or do you use them in such a way that they bring glory to God also? If you do the latter, then you are a good steward. Let us reexamine ourselves in the light of the Scriptures which we have studied. May we renew our commitment to the goal of being a good steward who pleases our Master in heaven, and let us serve Him with all that He has lovingly entrusted to our care.

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## *"Who Am I?"*

(answers on page 11)

1. I claved to a woman who wasn't my mother. And I wouldn't leave her to go to another. One field to glean and not from any other, For the one I looked for, I need not go any further. I married a man that wasn't my (late) husband's brother. Had a child that I gave to my (first) husband's mother. Who Am I?

2. Early in the morning we did rise. With two servants, went my master and I. One's anger was kindled, because we went. But one for an adversary was surely sent. Smote was I because obey I did not do. Another voice I spoke, yet my master knew not who. Who Am I?

3. Very big was I, but very small was he, Courage had he, but the rest were scared of me. An army I did withstand, but God sent his own man. Weapons had I, but only a sling had he in his hand. The man is not still, for a pain in my head I do feel. He is alone, the pain is all gone. How can this be real? Who Am I?

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*Wisdom is the ability to use knowledge so as to meet successfully the emergencies of life. Men may acquire knowledge, but wisdom is a gift direct from God.*

*Bob Jones, Sr.*

# Evangelism

by Elder Greg Phillips  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

*And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. (Revelation 3:7-8)*

*Our Lord Jesus Christ requires that His church be evangelistic—joyfully proclaiming the good news of our Redeemer. The risen Saviour's last instructions to the eleven Apostles before His ascension concerned the preaching of the Gospel. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20). At the moment of His ascension Jesus said, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).*

To the church at Philadelphia, the Lord used the metaphor of an open door to assure the church of success and progress of the Gospel, in the preaching and dispensation of it.

It is interesting that the open door is set before the church of Philadelphia, which means city of brotherly love. John's Gospel tells us that Andrew was among those who heard John the Baptist say, "Behold the Lamb of God!" An-

drew's first action was to tell his brother and to bring him to Jesus. "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone" (John 1:40-42). Similarly, after Jesus found Philip and called him to follow, Philip sought out Nathaniel. "Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see" (John 1:45-46). Andrew brought his brother to Jesus. Philip urged his friend Nathaniel to "Come and see."

It is in our nature to want to share good news with others. When something good has come into our lives, we can hardly wait to tell others. Andrew and Philip heard good news that they had long awaited, the greatest news of their lives. It is not surprising that they would hurry to tell their loved ones the news and to make them a part of the joyful announcement. It is possible, however, to lose the desire to share good news.

We often see "new converts," eager at first to talk of the Lord and their experience of grace, gradually cool to the point of exhibiting little love for sharing the gospel. We sing, "I Love to Tell the Story" that is "pleasant to repeat," without actually telling the story. We sing, "There is a story ever new, I'll tell it o'er and o'er" when in fact the story has grown old to us and is sel-

dom repeated.

We preachers and theologians have argued over who is to evangelize and how and to whom to the point that often we have failed to preach to any outside our established borders. As well, we have seen the efforts of some with more zeal than knowledge actually turn people from Christ and make it difficult for any to share the truth.

There are many today who have a genuine desire to share the good news of Jesus Christ but seemingly lack opportunity. We live in a time in which the Gospel is not very popular. It is often difficult to find people willing to listen.

We can find all manner of challenges as well as mistakes and failures in the area of evangelism, but none of the difficulties remove the responsibility of believers to be witnesses of Jesus Christ. Every believer has this responsibility—not just preachers. Without question the Lord has called certain men to formally preach the Gospel at every opportunity. As well, He calls every believer to be a witness.

In his first epistle, Peter urged believers who suffered for righteousness' sake to "...sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15). To "sanctify the Lord God in your hearts" is to esteem God as a holy being, and in all our behavior to act towards Him as such. The charge to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you," implies that there will be some who see in your manner of living that there is hope in you and will ask the reason. We are commanded to be prepared to answer such inquiries.

We have available to us today many means of mass communication through broadcast, print, and internet. Some

means have been abused and some have been neglected. Some of this mass communication seems to have had some success in proclaiming the Gospel. The most effective means of evangelism, however, remains the tried and true method established by Jesus Christ and His Apostles—personal, face-to-face, one on one evangelism.

After Jesus had cast out a devil from a man, he desired to follow Jesus. Jesus did not permit him to follow. "Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark 5:19). Jesus departed, but left behind him a witness whose very body was a living monument bearing testimony to Christ's compassion and power. "Go home to thy friends." His presence there would be a constant sermon. In the truest sense he was "a living epistle." Sane instead of mad, holy instead of unclean, gentle instead of raving, he was "a new creation." All who had known this man before would have seen a profound difference in him and would have been compelled to ask how the change had come about. He had "an open door" of opportunity to tell others of this One with life changing power.

A certain man who had been born blind was miraculously given sight by Jesus Christ (John 9) and was questioned by the Pharisees about what had taken place. At this point in his life, this man knew very little about Jesus, but he had a very powerful testimony. "He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). This man could make no great theological arguments, but he knew that his life had been changed, and he testified of that fact even though it resulted in his being excommunicated (John 9:34). Later, Jesus revealed Himself more fully to the man.

This man who had been born blind came to see far more clearly than those hard-hearted Pharisees who

considered themselves "a guide of the blind" (Romans 2:19). A door was opened to the formerly blind man, while it remained closed to the proud Pharisees.

Our Lord identified Himself to the church of Philadelphia as "he that hath the key of David" (Revelation 3:7). Key is used here as the emblem of authority and knowledge. The key of David is the regal right or authority of David. David could shut or open the kingdom of Israel to whom he pleased. He was not bound to leave the kingdom even to his eldest son. He could choose whom he pleased to succeed him. The kingdom of heaven is at the disposal of Christ. He can shut it against whom He will; He can open to whom He pleases. If He shuts, no man can open; if He opens, no man can shut. His determinations all stand fast, and none can reverse them.

To the church at Philadelphia, Christ said, "thou hast a little strength." (Revelation 3:8). This church was evidently under persecution, and we might assume that her strength was almost spent from the battle. Christ did not say, however, that there was little strength remaining, but simply "thou hast a little strength." This church may have never had great strength.

There are several possible meanings of strength in this passage. The Lord may have had reference to miraculous powers given to the early church. The church at Corinth boasted of the gifts of tongues, of prophecy, of healing, and other gifts. Philadelphia may have had few such gifts. The church of Philadelphia may have been few in number and thus of little strength. They may have been poor in material goods. They may have had little political power or social influence.

"Little strength" was evidently a discouragement in that day as it is in ours. It is not uncommon to find a defeated attitude in the church today. We can't compete with all the attractions of the world. We are too small; we are too poor. We have only "little strength." It was because the church of Philadel-

phia had little strength that Christ set before them an open door. The church was not dead but had some strength. The Lord is able to take little strength and do great things. The words of the hymnist are very true, "Little is much when God is in it."

The Apostle Paul remembered the Lord's words, "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). Paul came to understand that it is when we are conscious of our weakness, and when we feel our need, that the Redeemer manifests His power to uphold and imparts His great strength. It has been rightly said that "our strength is often His rival; our weakness, His servant, drawing on His resources, and showing forth His glory. Man's extremity is God's opportunity; man's security is Satan's opportunity."

When the Lord sets before His people an open door, he gives ample power to use the opportunity to the best advantage. Paul said that at Ephesus, "...a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Corinthians 6:9). The door of opportunity was accompanied by power—it was effectual. There were many adversaries. Paul spoke of having fought "...with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Corinthians 15:32), but he fought with the strength of the Lord and prevailed.

The Lord said, "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee" (Revelation 3:9).

"The synagogue of Satan" was evidently the source of the church's persecution. They were of Jewish extraction and boasted much of being Jews, yet they were really under the influence

of Satan, and their assemblages deserved to be called his "synagogue." Jesus promised to "... make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

Some take this to mean that the Jews would show a civil respect and honor to the church and recognize that they were God's children. Others take these words to mean that many of the Jews would be converted to Christianity and would come and worship with the church. Christ has the power to accomplish either of these things and promised the church that He would be victorious.

Jesus said, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temp-

tation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:10). The church at Philadelphia had patiently endured and remained faithful to the Lord even in times of persecution. To keep this word of Christ's patience, implies not only keeping his doctrine pure and uncorrupted from error, but also the observing and practicing all the duties our Lord commands.

A season of fiery trial, apparently in the form of severe persecution was to come.

It would not be localized, but involve the whole Roman empire. Such persecution did go over the Christians, and over the Jews and heathens, though in a very different manner. The church at

Philadelphia had the Saviour's promise, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation."

The coming persecution was to "to try them that dwell upon the earth." Persecution would test those Christians that lived within that empire, and show how well they would adhere to Christ, and the profession of the gospel. It would show who were sound and devoted Christians and who were not. The church at Philadelphia had already been tested and proven true, and would face no further trial.

Such persecution might well come to us. If it does, we must patiently endure, living and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ.

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## Grow in Knowledge

1. "And this shall be a \_\_\_\_\_ unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

2. "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a \_\_\_\_\_ shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

3. "And this shall be a sign unto you, saith the Lord, that I will punish you in this place, that ye may know that my words shall surely stand against you for \_\_\_\_\_."

4. "Thus Ezekiel is unto you a sign: according to all that he hath done shall ye do: and \_\_\_\_\_ this cometh, ye shall know that I am the Lord God."

5. "And as he sat upon the mount of olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy \_\_\_\_\_, and of the end of the a world?"

6, "And he gave a sign the same \_\_\_\_\_ saying, This is the sign

which the Lord hath spoke; Behold, the altar shall be rent and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out."

7. "That this may be a sign among you, that when your children ask their fathers in time to come, saying, what mean ye by these stones? Then ye shall \_\_\_\_\_ them, That the Waters of Jordan were cut off before the ark of the covenant of the Lord; when it passed over Jordan, the waters of Jordan were cut off: and these stones shall be for a memorial unto the children of Israel for ever."

8. "And this shall be a sign unto \_\_\_\_\_, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them."

9. "But if they say thus, come up unto us; then we will go up: for the \_\_\_\_\_ hath delivered them into our hand: and this shall be a sign unto us."

10. "And they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a \_\_\_\_\_, and upon thy seed for ever."

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One hundred religious persons knit into a unity  
by careful organizations do not constitute a church  
any more than eleven dead men make a football team.  
The first requisite is life, always.

A.W. Tozer

# Calvary

by Elder McKinley Wright  
Jacksonville, Florida

## For The Young People

Just outside the city of Jerusalem there is a small mountain which was once known as Mount Calvary. Mount Calvary means "the place of the skull". It might have been called this because it was shaped like a skull. Or, it might have been called this because of the skulls on the ground which were left over from the executions which had taken place there.

Calvary was the regular place used for executions in those days. Today we have gas chambers, electric chairs, or places for hanging. Then, they executed people by leaving them upon a cross until they died. The Romans executed many people. They had a place set aside for that purpose. To make executions easier to do, they placed poles in the ground. Then, when someone was to be executed they would cut out a beam of wood strong enough to hold his weight, and long enough for his arms to be stretched out and have spikes or large nails driven through his hands into the wood. When these nails had been driven, this cross bar would be lifted up by two Roman soldiers, and would be placed into a notch cut into the upright pole. The person would then be hanging by the two nails in his hands. He would hang there until he

was dead. Sometimes, nails would be driven through the feet, but this was not usually done. When the person was dead, his body would usually be left on the cross until it had completely decayed. It was always done that way unless a friend or relative was allowed to have the body.

When Jesus died, a secret disciple named Nicodemus and another man named Joseph asked for His body and it was given to them. They took it down and placed it in a grave.

The grave was near Mount Calvary, but we don't know exactly where it was. In those days, people buried the dead much differently from the way in which we bury the dead today. Then, they had family graves. A man who was the head of a family would dig a hole into the side of a hill made of rock. He would provide a way to close the entrance so that coyotes or other small animals could not get into it. This was usually done by rolling a rock up to the door of the tomb and closing all of the holes with sticks and stones. Not long before Jesus died, a man whose name was Joseph began to dig a tomb for his family. He had just finished it when Jesus was crucified. God caused him to want to use his own tomb to bury Jesus. He went and asked for the body of

Jesus, and when it was given to him he placed it in his new tomb. Three days later, Jesus was raised from the dead and the tomb was left empty. Joseph might have used the tomb for his family, but we like to think that it was never used again. We know that Jesus was the first one who was buried there.

On the third day after Joseph and Nicodemus buried Jesus, there was an earthquake early in the morning. An angel came and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb. Jesus came out of the tomb. He was alive! He changed though, so that even the disciples did not know Him until He caused them to be able to recognize Him. All of this happened a long time ago, but when we have Easter Sunday we are remembering the Resurrection of Jesus.

Jesus died on Mount Calvary for the sins of His people. Because He died and gave Himself for them, they will all be in heaven. Because He was raised from the dead, His children will also be raised from the dead. It makes us sad to know that because of our sin He had to die. But it also make us happy to know that He loved us enough to die for us. Knowing these things make us want to obey Him.

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## Answers to Grow In Knowledge

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|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Sign - Luke 2:12      | 5. Coming - Matthew 24:3 | 8. Thee - I Samuel 2:34        |
| 2. Virgin - Isaiah 7:14  | 6. Day - I Kings 13:3    | 9. Lord - I Samuel 14:10       |
| 3. Evil - Jeremiah 44:29 | 7. Answer: Joshua 4:6,7  | 10. Wonder - Deuteronomy 28:46 |
| 4. When - Ezekiel 24:24  |                          |                                |

**A man's strength is shown by what he stands for. A man's weakness is shown by what he falls for.**

# Walk While Ye Have The Light!

by Elder William M. Mullis  
Waycross, Georgia

*Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." (John 12:35)*

The above text contains both a command and a warning. The command is **“WALK!”** The **implied** warning is: “If you do not walk while you have the light, **then darkness will come upon you.**”

In studying the Scriptures, we find that **“walking”** usually has reference to “going forward in service to God; bringing forth fruit to His honor and glory; and living in accordance with godly principles.” The word **“light”** often has reference to “God, Jesus Christ, the Church, the kingdom of God, the word of God, the people of God, knowledge, or truth.” And the word **“darkness”** is often a symbol signifying “ignorance, unrighteousness, sin, torment, or being without God.”

In other words, Jesus is telling us to be actively involved in service to God while we know what to do and can feel His presence, or else we may stop feeling His guidance and support in our lives. Though God is long suffering, merciful, and gracious, we need to understand that if we refuse to obey Him, there are serious consequences. Please prayerfully consider and study the following Scriptures:

“The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, **he will forsake you.**” (II Chronicles 15:2).

“And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imagination of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever.” (I Chronicles 28:9).

...“This people will rise up, and go a “Whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be

among them, and will forsake me, and brake my covenant which I have made with them. Then my anger shall be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us, because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought, in that they are turned unto other gods.” (Deuteronomy 31:16-18)

“They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the Lord; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them.” (Hosea 5:6).

“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.” (II Timothy 2:12).

“But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 10:33).

(Please also read and prayerfully study Proverbs 1:24-33 and Isaiah 1:1-15.)

The above Scriptures should help us all realize there is a great danger in failing to follow the Lord each day of our lives. While it is true that nothing can separate us from the love of God (Romans 8.38,39), yet we also need to know that **we can lose fellowship with God** if we fail to walk in the light as He is in the light. “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” (I John 1:5-7).

Concerning any doctrine of truth, there is a ditch on either side. Satan is always trying to pull God’s people into the ditch on either side. That is the primary reason there are so many different denominations today. One group of people begins to dwell on the truth of eternal security, while another group dwells on the truth that there is great danger in failing to walk God’s paths of righteousness. Before long, the first group is only preaching Amazing Grace and rejoicing in the truth that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and the second group is only preaching the importance of working, serving, and living right so we can have fellowship with God. The first group often ends up in the ditch of “do nothing” and the second group often ends up in the ditch of “work hard so you can go to heaven when you die!” Both groups started out with doctrines of truth, but failed to teach, preach, and consider a counter-truth of “the other side of the coin.” May God help us all to preach, teach, and listen to the whole truth on every subject.

Going back to the text under consideration, “Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you,” there is an important admonition and warning to each of us today! We need to all be walking, going forward, serving God diligently every day. We need to be zealous; busy about our Father’s business! In so many ways, God has given us light in which to walk. There is so much we all need to be doing! We need to walk in the glorious light of the gospel, follow God’s word which is a lamp unto our feet and light unto our path, follow Jesus! We need to “walk as children of light.” (Ephesians 5:8-15). We need to listen, obey, and repent while God is still speaking to us,



lest He cut us off as He did the Jews who rebelled against the light of truth!

We need to understand and believe that any local church can have the can-

dlestick removed when she fails to walk in the light. (See Revelation 2:1-5).

God is not limited to being glorified by us! He can raise up another people

who are willing to walk in the light if we do not.

“Walk while ye have the light Lest darkness come upon you!”

\* \* \* \* \*

# The Love of God

by Elder Don McWilliams  
Brownsburg, Indiana

In Paul's letter to the saints which were at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, in the third chapter, he writes a prayer: "That he would grant you according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.. (Ephesians 3:16-19).

There seems to be a great lacking today of man's comprehension, or, rather, realization of God's love for and toward His people. John writes in his epistle that, "God is love." This statement carries with it an unfathomable breadth, length, depth and height that is too vast for mortal man to grasp with his finite mind. God's love goes beyond any emotion we are blessed to possess in this life. How then are we to understand or enjoy a love so great as God's love? Jesus says in John 14:23, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode

with him." So we can conclude by this and other statements made by Jesus that we need to keep His sayings and commandments to feel His nearness. Thus, being blessed to comprehend the vastness of His love, to the limits of our humanity as He blesses.

On one occasion, Jesus was asked by a lawyer which was the great commandment in the law. In Matthew 22:37-39, " Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

I believe God's people have little difficulty knowing that they should love our Heavenly Father with all of our strength, mind, soul, and body. The difficult duty seems to come in the second commandment of loving our neighbor as ourself. We are often unfortunate to have a neighbor who is either loud, obnoxious, rude, temperamental, or with other disagreeable traits which we deem unsatisfactory according to our standards or even God's standards. We can handle the situation in one of two ways. We can act just like

him, or we can show a Godly spirit and try to be a right example before him. I have found through associating with all types of people, if I live and act as I should, the great majority of time the offenders mellow and begin to act in a much nicer way.

Godly love can be projected in many different ways. A kind word, a charitable act, a happy demeanor, kindness to young and old, tolerant with others. Can you name other ways? Others see what we do concerning love, rather than what we say.

May our lives display the same message that was seen in Peter and John who boldly proclaimed the message of Jesus Christ in the face of great persecution. It was said about them by the Sanhedrin, "they took knowledge of them, (Peter and John), that they had been with Jesus."

".....think on these things."  
(Philippians 4:8).

**Editors Note:**

**Elder Don McWilliams had bypass surgery this week and is making good progress, but faces colon cancer surgery as soon as possible. Please pray for Bro. Don and Sister Darlene.**

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## JUST A PILGRIM PASSING THROUGH

Recently while visiting in a home,  
I saw this framed stitching of the person's great-grandmother:

Ann Bell is my name. Ireland is my nation.  
New York is my dwelling place, and Heaven is my expectation.  
(Written in 1831)

# Lukewarm!

by Elder Phillip Nichols  
Blackshear, Georgia

*“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” {Revelation 3:14-16}.*

I would like to think about being lukewarm. You might feel that you are hot for the Lord, and this subject wouldn't apply to you. Yet, if we judge ourselves, we might be surprised. If we find that we're not lukewarm today, we can rest assured that we will be tempted to become lukewarm sometime soon. I really believe that all of us at times become lukewarm. Those who judge themselves continually can correct themselves before they develop a life-style of lukewarmness toward God.

First, let's look at what lukewarm means. It is a state of no enthusiasm; barely warm; not cold, not hot. The hotter a liquid gets, the more the molecules move around, bumping into one another. When the liquid reaches 212 degrees, it begins to boil because the activity of the molecules have increased. Likewise, we need to be active in our service to God, I must add here that not just any activity will do. Only true faith in God and love for Him and His word is acceptable. We can be very active, yet very far from God. The Lord told the church at Sardis in Revelation 3:1 that they have a name that they lived, yet they were dead! We can be very active in our lives yet not in a right way. The Lord tells us, “I would thou wert cold or hot.” Being cold is not trying to serve God, never going to church or professing to be His disciple. Yes, it is better never to attend church or join than to be a member of the church

saying, “I'm a follower of Christ” but not showing it in our lives. Now I am not telling you (nor is Jesus) not to follow Christ, but I'm only reminding you it's all or nothing! In other words you are following Christ or you're not following Christ. You see, someone that doesn't profess Christ doesn't hurt the cause of Christ so much as the ones who say they believe but don't live like they believe. It is God's will for us as His children to serve Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. When we lay our hands on the plow and look back, we are not fit for His kingdom.

The Lord made it plain to the church at Laodicea that they couldn't hide their slackness toward Him because He could see right through them. They thought that they were something, having great wealth. They probably had big, beautiful buildings with all the comforts of that day. The Laodiceans had a great show of religion outwardly, yet not with the works that God would have them to do, such as loving and serving one another. Neither were their works motivated by faith in God nor by love for God. We as churches and individuals are so often the same way. Do we sometimes play Christianity? We say all the right words, wear the right clothes; and we even go to church, sing, pray, read the Bible; yet sometimes we don't do what God tells us to do.

I heard an illustration recently that shows how lukewarmness harms those around us. A man was taking a trip on a train, and the train was taking a long time in leaving the depot. He asked the conductor what the problem was. The conductor told him that up the rail apiece there was a car off the track. The man decided he would take a look for himself, so he walked up the railroad to the derailed car. When he came back to the conductor to report,

he said, “Well you're partly right and partly wrong. The car isn't completely off the track, but is half on and half off.” You see, if the car was completely off the track, the trains could move along the track without trouble. Yet the car was half off and half on; so it had to be put back on track, or removed completely so the other trains could move. The big problem today isn't those who don't profess Christ or go to church. It is those who confess and attend church, yet are not committed wholeheartedly to Christ. Not only do these not enjoy the blessings of God, but they also keep or hinder others from enjoying the blessings of Jesus and His kingdom (Matthew 23:13). People who are around us are watching us, and they see how we live. If what we say or profess doesn't add up to what we do, it will certainly hinder others in their service to God.

It seems that sometimes as God's people, we turn to God only when it appears there is no other place to go. When all else fails, we then turn to God. Sometimes God, in His love, chastens us and brings us down in order that we might look unto Him. Yet some shut their eyes and refuse to look to God except to complain about their circumstances. Those that are corrected and look to God and obey His words, He will surely bless. The danger here is this: will we continue to follow God, or will we forget and turn our backs on the promises we made to God when things start to improve? There was a particular scene in a movie shown a few years ago, starring Burt Reynolds called “The End” that is an example of this. Now I am in no way endorsing the movie, nor do I remember the scene completely right, yet I feel it illustrates my point. The character which Burt played was considering suicide. He decided he would swim out in the ocean as far as

he could and would drown after he became too exhausted in swimming. After he swam a long way out, he suddenly decided that life wasn't so bad after all, and that he wanted to live. He was so tired and worn out that he was afraid that he would really drown. He began to pray, "God if you help me make it, I'll go to church every time the doors are opened and I'll give you fifty percent of what make." He kept swimming and got closer to the shore, and he prayed, "Lord, just help me make it and I'll go to church when I can, and I'll give you twenty five percent of what I make." He swam even closer, and he was almost to land when he prayed, "Lord, please help me make it. I'll go to church some and give you ten percent of what I make." Finally, he made it to land and

he said, "Lord thank you. I'll go to church maybe once in a while and if I have a dollar or two, it's yours." It was an amusing ending to the movie, but it is so much like people of God to feel the same way. When things are bad, we cling to God and make all kinds of promises. But as things get better, we forget our promises and our flame dwindles to only a small flicker, or an occasional spark. God is not pleased with promises made in haste, only to be broken when He blesses our problems to improve. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 states, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldst not vow, than that thou shouldst vow and not pay."

So many times God's people want to serve God on their own terms. Isaiah 4:1 states, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, we will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Do we as God's people sometimes want to do and act how we want to, and then say "We love the Lord," or "We're Christians"? My brethren, if we don't do what Jesus says, we're not Christians but are only false disciples, saying Lord, Lord. (Matthew 7:21). That is, we're confessing Christ with our mouths, yet our heart is far from Him. (Matthew 15:8-9). God help us to hear God and His words. Then, as James said, to be doers and not hearers only! For in doing so we will be hot, not lukewarm in God's service.

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## *Love for the Unborn*

I am a woman of an early age that desperately wants a child. I have strong faith in God, I think. I will not take fertility drugs and will not see a doctor to try to find a problem. I don't believe it would help. You see, I believe a child is a most precious gift of God that no doctor could give me. I do believe one day, at God's time, I will have a child. I believe God blessed me to write a letter to my unborn baby. I don't know the purpose, maybe it's to give someone else comfort. This letter is very precious to me. I truly hope that it does help anyone with the pain and grief of not being able to conceive. I hope it gives them the hope and comfort I've found in God.

## *To my unborn child*

Dear sweet little baby. I can't tell you how precious you are to me. I don't know when I'll have you, but I know someday I'll have you, when God decides to give you to me. I want you to know I've done so much for you already. I've made you things, bought you things, and watched shows that teach me more about you. I hope I can raise you to know right from wrong and to know that the Lord is your Savior and everything is in Him. When you finally are conceived, there will be so many people that think the world of you. But your mommy will love you most. (I already do) I thank God above that I have hope of someday having you. Mommy loves you with all her heart.

Love and Prayers,  
Mommy

*My mother was not a stern woman, but she was wise in many ways. Some things we children learned at her knee and some we learned over it!... A pat on the back is a great character-building gesture, if delivered young enough and low enough down!*

*Harry Rimmer*

# "Let Brotherly Love Continue"

(Hebrews 13:1)

As we begin to think about love, we could concentrate on loving God, loving our natural **family members**, loving our **neighbors**, or even loving our **enemies**. But the main thought for this study is "brotherly love."

I am going to define "brotherly love" as love between brothers and sisters in Christ, especially members of the same household of faith. It is a special group of people identified in the Scriptures in this way: "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). For example, the Waycross Primitive Baptist Church is a household of faith. We are to do good unto all men, but especially unto those who come and worship God with us in the local Church body.

Brotherly love is of more value than gold or silver. Feeling the love of the brethren is a blessing beyond description. John explains we are to love the brethren. He also says if we say we love God and hate our brother we are a liar. "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:20, 21). Loving the brethren is an unmistakable evidence we have been born again, quickened, passed from death unto life. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death" (I John 3:14).

Paul loved the brethren. He loved

his brethren among the Jewish nation so much he said he could wish himself accursed if that would bring them into fellowship with Jesus Christ. He was willing to lay down all the joys of this world because of his love for his Jewish brethren. But in addition to those kinsmen in the flesh he loved, he had a special love for the brethren who already loved Jesus and were faithful in their service to the Lord. Brotherly love: Paul, Silas, Barnabus, Timothy; David and Jonathon; Peter, James and John.

"Let brotherly love continue!" We have the capacity to love the brethren because God implanted love as a part of the fruit of the Spirit in our hearts. (See Galatians 5:22, 23). Consider brotherly love "continuing" in three ways. First, let it be maintained; do not let it stop or end; let brotherly love continue! Second, let brotherly love continue to grow, continue to increase, continue to expand to those brethren you already love. Love them more! And third, let brotherly love continue to more brethren! Increase your borders!

I. **Let brotherly love continue! Do not stop loving the brethren!** Do not get angry with them and leave them. Let brotherly love continue toward those you love right now.

"And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:30-32).

**Remember I Corinthians 13:1-3,13; Philippians 1:27; Acts 2:42-47; I John 2:10; 4:7-21; John 13:34,35; 15:12; Romans 12:9; II Corinthians 12:15.**

II. **Let brotherly love continue to grow toward those you presently love.** Do not stop at the level of love you have right now. Love them MORE!

And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints" (I Thessalonians 3:12).

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently" (I Peter 1:22)

III. **Let brotherly love continue to more brethren! Expand your borders!**

"But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another. And indeed ye do it toward all the brethren which are in all Macedonia: but we beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more" (I Thessalonians 4:9,10).

**LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE:**

- 1. Toward everyone you love now!**
- 2. To increase rather than staying at the same level!**
- 3. To grow toward more brethren than you presently love!!!**

W.M.M

## "Who Am I" Answers

1. Ruth - Ruth ch. 1-4

2. Balaam's donkey - Numbers 22:21-30

3. Goliath - I Samuel 17

# Eerie Tranquility

by Bro. Brooks Strickland  
Waycross, Georgia

Our nation reminds me of a situation that occurs just before a tsunami (a tidal wave in the Pacific). Waves are constantly crashing in and out on the shoreline. But then there is that rare occasion when an extremely large wave crashes into the shore called a tsunami. A tsunami is a situation that many people are not familiar with. When a tsunami is in the making and about to strike, the ocean recedes back several hundred feet to where the line of waves are out of touch and are not easily seen. When this occurs, it may seem very unusual to some, but unusual in a way that is pleasant. It seems quite amusing to see something so unnatural.

If you've ever wanted to walk on part of the ocean floor, you might think now would be your opportunity! With the crashing of the waves way out of earshot, there is a certain tranquility about the area. For those who do not know that these are signs of a tsunami, this is a very exciting time. For those who acknowledge these signs and recognize the situation, this is in no way pleasant. This is a time to gather your loved ones, friends, and even strangers and get them to high ground. For

those who know the signs, it is up to them to alert those who frolic about having no idea of the severity of the situation. Some will hear, take heed to the warnings, and follow to higher ground. Others will not hear, or will not respond, and will remain only to perish moments later.

America is in a similar situation. The normal day-to-day crashing of the waves as we know it has ceased. The waters have receded, and God has given us our signs. "To him that hath an ear let him hear". He has allowed some of us to know what these signs mean so we can prepare ourselves and take cover on higher ground. But a knowledge of these signs is not only for ourselves. But He has commanded us to tell others because many have no idea what is only moments away. For those of us that know what is happening, this is that "eerie tranquility" that lets us know something is not right.

At the same time, here in America, many around us think this is the greatest thing they have ever seen. They look forward to living it up here on this big, new "beach." However, their ignorance of the signs will result in their own demise. "My people are destroyed for

lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). Many of these Americans who are children of God are enjoying things that we know to be changes for the worst. We cannot partake in the things that are going on around us. We have to gather our families and as many others as the Lord will allow, and "head for the higher ground," not looking back. Though it is true that when that tsunami comes it will shake everything around the higher ground, the promise from God is that we will not see and experience the worst of it. He will be with us to give peace in the midst of the "tidal wave."

Here in America, we are experiencing that typical calm before the storm. Just when times seem the least dangerous, the darkest hours are just ahead. "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 24:44). I would like to charge Christians to first recognize and acknowledge the signs (i.e. II Timothy 3:1-7) and not ignore them. Don't act like what's about to happen isn't going to. And second, prepare yourselves and others to work, for the night is coming. Depart from the world, and head for high ground.

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Anger is not always or necessarily sinful, but has such a tendency to run wild that whenever it displays itself, we should be quick to question its character with this inquiry: "Doest thou well to be angry?" It may be that we can answer, "YES." Very frequently anger is the madman's firebrand, but sometimes it is Elijah's fire from Heaven. We do well when we are angry with sin because of the wrong which it commits against our good and gracious God, or with ourselves because we remain so foolish after so much divine instruction. He who is not angry at transgression becomes a partaker in it.

Charles Spurgeon

# A Good Start with Good Works

(Part One)

by Sis. Christy Bond  
Patterson, Georgia

Let me begin by saying that I am not where I need to be with good works. This is written to me as well as others. This article was put on my heart after God spoke to me through a sermon recently. I hope this gets us all motivated to have a good start with good works. Matthew 5:16 says, "Let your light so shine before men, **that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**" In order for others to see the Father in us, our lives must be full of good works. Many people know about God's grace saving us to eternal heaven, and use that as an excuse to do NOTHING for the Father while they live here on earth. To have fellowship with God while we live here, we MUST be busy about our Father's business. There are many examples that God's Word gives us about how to serve the Lord in good works. I will attempt to share some of these scriptures with you. Think about these scriptures as a checklist to look at daily.

How well are YOU glorifying your Father? If you aren't daily feeling the Father with you, then you probably aren't daily serving him in good works. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

James 1:27 says, "**Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this. To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.**" One of the most important works we should be doing is visiting. Do you know any widows or where to find them? We have it easy these days to find widows in their affliction! The nursing homes are FULL of them! Pick one or two nursing homes and visit them regularly. You'll be amazed at how quickly you get to know people just by stopping in weekly to visit! It will mean as much to you as it will the residents in the nursing home! You

can also send them cards on their birthdays, when they're sick, etc. Go "adopt" an extra granny or grandpa for your children. You, your Father, and your "new" grandparent will be glad you did!

Psalm 95:2a, "**Let us come into His presence with thanksgiving...**" Psalm 100:4, "**Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his court with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.**" How many times do we go before the Father with prayers focused on our wants? Our prayers should be first focused on thanking God for the many blessings he DAILY loads us with! We should be telling others about our many blessings. The song, Count Your Many Blessings, says to name them one by one. Make a list each week listing the blessings of that week. How can we be depressed or sad when we're constantly reminding ourselves of our blessings? We must learn to be a more thankful people and to be content with what we have!

Ephesians 5:19, "**Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;**" Psalm 100:1-2, "**Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.**" Both of these passages emphasize the importance of singing before the Lord and making yourself joyful before the Lord. If writing a list of your blessings doesn't lift your spirits, then try singing hymns and spiritual songs. We should be glad that God didn't say it had to sound beautiful to man's ears! He just said to make a joyful noise! Even if you don't feel you've been blessed with a great singing voice, God made your mouth so use it to glorify Him! Your spirit will be lifted and your soul will rejoice. Others will be joyful to be around such a happy spirit! Be sure you're singing songs that glorify God. Don't let the world's music be ringing in your ears.

Psalm 98:1 says, "**sing unto the Lord a new song.**" If you have been listening to ungodly music with bad words and/or bad lyrics, put it behind you and live as a new man. Ephesians chapter four teaches us to put off the old man and put on the new man. We should do this with our music also.

Nehemiah 10:39b, "**We will not forsake the house of our God.**" Exodus 20:8, "**Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**" Hebrews 10:24-25, "**And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**" There are so many reasons why we should be in the house of God! We should be in church to receive God's message to us. God ordains and calls ministers to deliver messages to His children. Of course we can hear the Lord from home when we read our Bible, but it's so powerful to get it from His messenger too. Many times I get weary in my service to the Lord, and then when I'm in church I get provoked or motivated unto love and good works! I leave the House of God with a new spark to go and serve Him. It also helps to develop friendships with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. Having godly friends is one of the greatest blessings on this earth. I thank God for the many godly friends He has put in my life! I grew up going to a church camp called Camp Hillview and we had a group of friends called the "Misfits." Those Christian friends helped me through many hard times in my life! We all need to have Christian friends that we can depend on, but the greatest friend we need is Christ. Christ is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Be in God's house each week and receive that extra provoking to go out and do good works.

\* To be continued...\*

# Prosperity Can Lead to Destruction Quicker Than Poverty

We often think being poor is terrible, and being rich is wonderful. Certainly, there are many advantages to having material blessings. But there is always a major temptation to forget God, become carnally minded, trust in uncertain riches, and follow after the things of the world when we are prospering. Look at a few Scriptures which caution us about the danger of riches and prosperity.

1. **Matthew 19:23, 24** "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

2. **Deuteronomy 6:1-15** "And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not, And houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name. Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; (For the LORD thy God is a jealous God among you) lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and destroy thee from off the face of the earth."

3. **Ezekiel 16:49, 50** "Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And

they were haughty, and committed abomination before me: therefore I took them away as I saw good."

4. **Revelation 3:17** "Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:"

5. **I Timothy 6:6-11** "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

6. **Psalms 62:10(b)** "...if riches increase, set not your heart upon them."

7. **Mark 4:18, 19** "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

8. **Matthew 6:19-21** "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

9. **Luke 12:15-21** "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which

he possesseth. And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

10. **Philippians 4:11-13** "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

11. **Proverbs 30:8, 9** "...give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain."

The Lord has blessed us all to have lived in prosperous times! We have had more material blessings than any other people who have ever lived upon the earth. As we see a decline in what we have, may God help us to say as Job: "**Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away: blessed be the name of the LORD**" (Job 1:21).

WMM

# Bible Reading Calendar for April

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Judg. 3,4,5	Luke 7:31-50
2	Judg. 6,7	Luke 8:1-21
3	Judg. 8,9	Luke 8:22-56
4	Judg. 10,11	Luke 9:1-36
5	Judg. 12,13,14	Luke 9:37-62
6	Judg. 15,16,17	Luke 10:1-24
7	Judg. 18,19	Luke 10:25-42
8	Judg. 20,21	Luke 11:1-28
9	Ruth 1,2,3,4	Luke 11:29-54
10	I Sam. 1,2,3	Luke 12:1-34
11	I Sam. 4,5,6	Luke 12:35-59
12	I Sam. 7,8,9	Luke 13:1-21
13	I Sam. 10,11,12	Luke 13:22-35
14	I Sam. 13,14	Luke 14:1-24
15	I Sam. 15,16	Luke 14:25-35

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	I Sam. 17,18	Luke 15:1-10
17	I Sam. 19,20,21	Luke 15:11-32
18	I Sam. 22,23,24	Luke 16:1-18
19	I Sam. 25,26	Luke 16:19-31
20	I Sam. 27,28,29	Luke 17:1-19
21	I Sam. 30,31	Luke 17:20-37
22	II Sam. 1,2,3	Luke 18:1-17
23	II Sam. 4,5,6	Luke 18:18-43
24	II Sam. 7,8,9	Luke 19:1-28
25	II Sam. 10,11,12	Luke 19:29-48
26	II Sam. 13,14	Luke 20:1-26
27	II Sam. 15,16	Luke 20:27-47
28	II Sam. 17,18	Luke 21:1-19
29	II Sam. 19,20	Luke 21:20-38
30	II Sam. 21,22	Luke 22:1-30

**ANSWERS TO  
CROSSWORD  
PUZZLE  
MARCH 09**

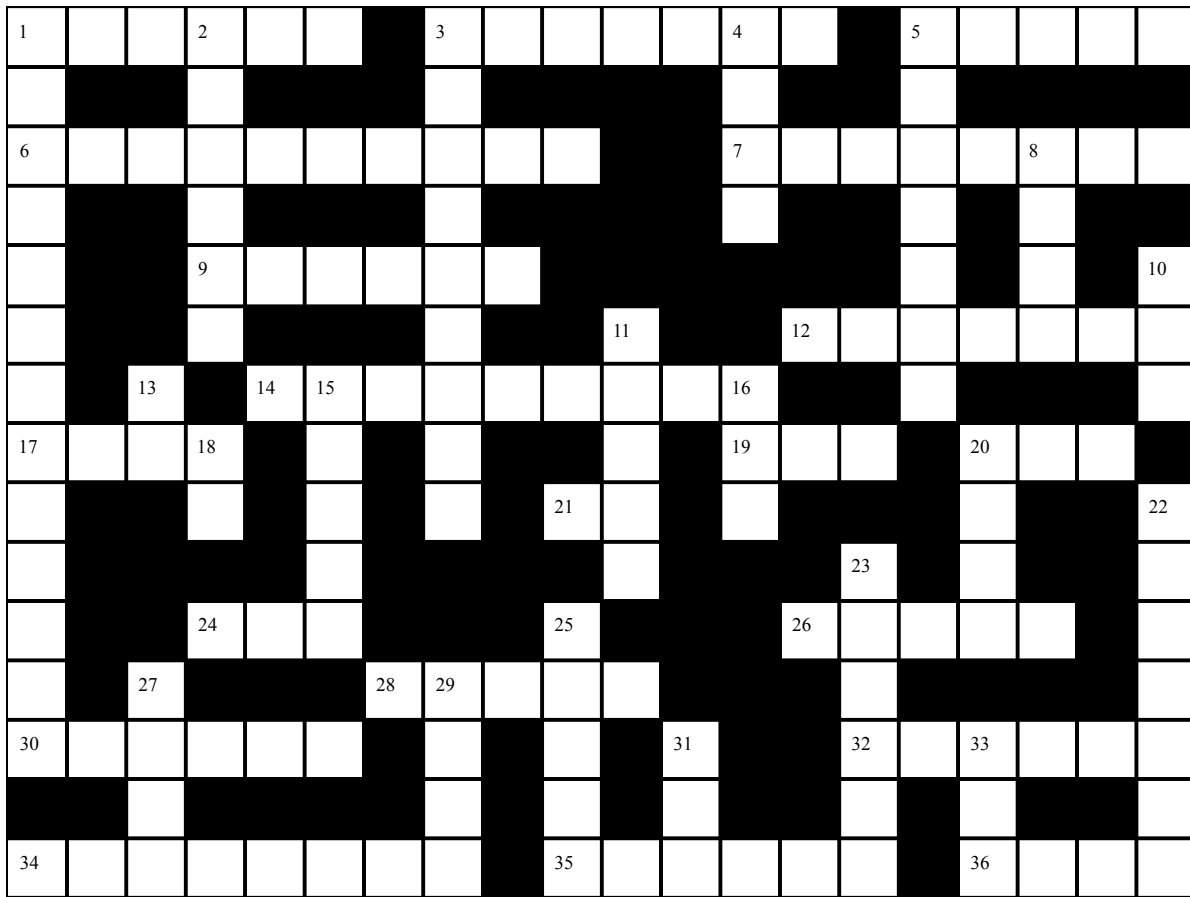
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# Crossword Puzzle

## ACROSS

1. "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy \_\_\_\_." 3. "For unto you is born this day in thy city of David a \_\_\_\_, which is Christ the Lord." 5. "\_\_\_\_ be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." 6. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the \_\_\_\_ of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:..." 7. "But the transgressors shall be destroyed \_\_\_\_: the end of the wicked shall be cut off." 9. "According as he hath \_\_\_\_ us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:" 12. "\_\_\_\_ is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." 14. "I am alpha and omega, the \_\_\_\_ and the end, the first and the last." 17. "When Jesus came \_\_\_\_ the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" 19. "Blessed be the God and Father of \_\_\_\_ Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." 20. "and he that is righteous, \_\_\_\_ him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." 21. "He that is unjust, let him \_\_\_\_ unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still:..." 24. "\_\_\_\_ that which thou hast vowed." 26. "When thou vowest a vow unto God, \_\_\_\_ not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools:..." 28. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall \_\_\_\_ into the kingdom of heaven, " 30. "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant \_\_\_\_ in peace, according to thy word." 32. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will \_\_\_\_ men." 34. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good \_\_\_\_." 35. "But go \_\_\_\_ to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." 36. "And they \_\_\_\_, some say that thou art John the Baptist:..."



## DOWN

1. "Having \_\_\_\_ us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." 2. "And as ye go, \_\_\_\_, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 3. "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in \_\_\_\_\_. Amen." 4. "He saith \_\_\_\_ them, But whom say ye that I am?" 5. "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not \_\_\_\_ against it." 8. "I press toward the mark for the prize of the \_\_\_\_ calling of God in Christ Jesus." 10. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou \_\_\_\_ the Christ, the Son of the living God." 11. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is \_\_\_\_: and the government shall be upon his shoulder:..." 13. "And Joseph and his mother marvelled \_\_\_\_ those things which were spoken of him." 15. "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give \_\_\_\_ man according as his work shall be." 16. "For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy \_\_\_\_:..." 18. "But the salvation \_\_\_\_ the righteous is of the Lord: he is their strength in the time of trouble." 20. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of \_\_\_\_, and may enter in through the gates into the city." 22. "But I am the Lord thy God, that \_\_\_\_ the sea, whose waves roared: The Lord of hosts is his name." 23. "\_\_\_\_ is it that thou shouldest not vow, then that thou shouldest vow and not pay." 25. "And then will I profess unto them, I \_\_\_\_ knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." 27. "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will \_\_\_\_ thee out of my mouth." 29. "...and his \_\_\_\_ shall be called wonderful, counselor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." 31. "And he saith unto me, Seal \_\_\_\_ the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand." 33. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which \_\_\_\_ lost."

# Overcome Evil With Good

by Bro. Robert Varn  
Jacksonville, Florida

God's word says in Romans 12:21, **"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."** This verse and subject has been on my heart a lot lately about combatting evil with good. In the verses before verse 21, it tells us how to overcome evil with good; it tells us not to seek vengeance but leave vengeance to God, **"Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord."** Verse 20 says, **"Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head."**

So as the Bible tells us to give food and drink to our enemy if they need it, we can show Christ's love by doing this. I have found that giving a letter to someone in a time of loss is a good way to show Christ's love to our enemy.

Verse 18 says, **"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."** This means try to live in peace with everyone if at all possible, but don't give up your beliefs. Always stand for what is right. If you give up standing for what is right then the devil wins.

Try to find times when you can show Christ's love to our enemies. By doing this we are overcoming evil with good. We live in a culture of death. Try to overcome that by presenting a culture of life. Visit the elderly and pray for an end to abortion. By doing this you are overcoming evil with good. God will present a time in all of our lives where we can show Christ's love to our enemies. Therefore don't be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

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## If You Can

submitted by  
Alvin Maynard

*If you can start the day without  
caffeine or pep pills  
If you can be cheerful,  
ignoring aches and pains  
If you can resist complaining and  
boring people with your troubles  
If you can eat the same food everyday  
and be grateful for it*

*If you can understand when loved  
ones are too busy to give you time  
If you can face the world  
without lies and deceit  
If you can conquer tension  
without medical help  
If you can relax without liquor  
If you can sleep  
without the aid of drugs*

*If you can take criticism and blame  
without resentment  
If you can overlook when people take  
things out on you,  
when through no fault of yours,  
something goes wrong  
...Then you are becoming  
Christlike*