

The Advocate of Truth

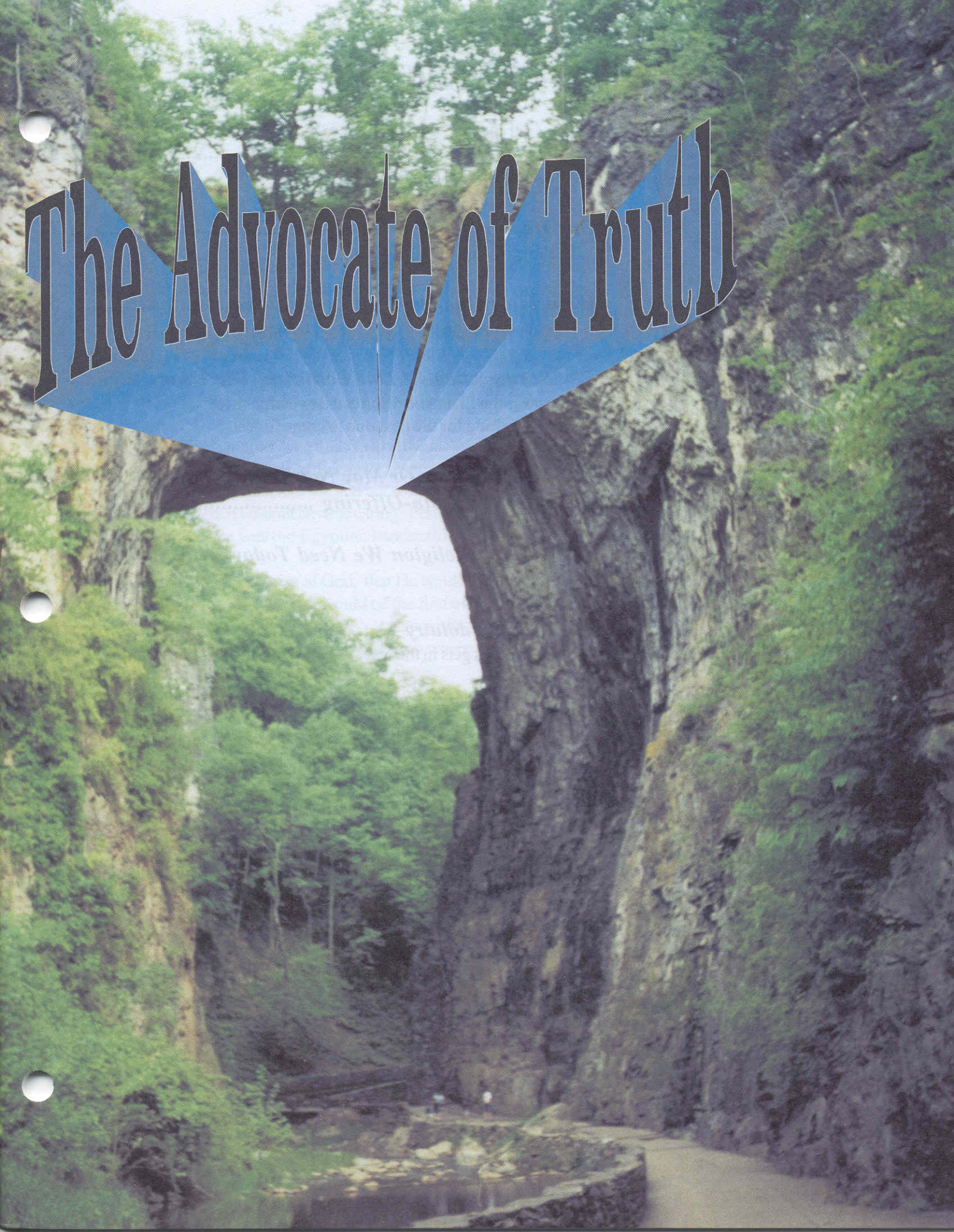




TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

The Advocate of Truth is the official organ of The Church of God (7th Day) with headquarters at Salem, West Virginia.

It is published once a month on the fourth Monday of each month by The Advocate of Truth Press, Inc. PO Box 328, Salem, West Virginia 26426. Entered as Second Class Matter on January 22, 1990 (now periodicals) at the Post Office in Salem, West Virginia under the Postal Act of March 3, 1879. The magazine is mailed under the periodicals rate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Your subscription is free. It is paid for by people who are concerned about the truth.

Your contributions are sincerely appreciated. You may request this periodical by sending your mailing address to this address.

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to:

**THE CHURCH OF GOD
PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. Box 328
Salem, WV 26426-0328**

**Telephone: 304-782-1411
Fax: 304-782-2248
E-Mail: cogsevdav@aol.com**

Del DeLong

Bond Tennant.....Editorial Staff
Gary Mills Managing Editor
Ludina Mills.....Children's Page Editor
Fred Hardman Printer

Volume LII

Number 1

July 22, 2002
The Advocate of Truth
USPS 542-940

<i>An Angel Talks In The Desert</i>	3
An angel talks to Hagar.	
<i>Our Heavenly Father Loves Us</i>	3
The key to being faithful is love.	
<i>What Must One Do To Become Saved</i>	5
This question is on the mind of every believer.	
<i>The Resurrection Of Our Lord And The Dead</i>	7
Jesus was the first to be resurrected to eternal life. We are waiting for the next one to come for us.	
<i>7 Things You May Or May Not Know About Sin And Sin-Offering</i>	8
<i>The Kind Of Religion We Need Today</i>	9
Has it changed?	
<i>The "I" In Idolatry</i>	10
"I" often times gets in the way.	
<i>The Signs Of The Times</i>	14
Arab ire against Israel mounts.	
<i>Questions And Answers</i>	16
Please summarize repentance and baptism.	
<i>The Church Around The World</i>	18
This month we look at The Philippines and India.	
<i>The Children's Pages</i>	20-23
<i>Sabbath School Lessons</i>	
<i>A Story - "The Twins Peace Pact"</i>	
<i>Games and Puzzles</i>	



AN ANGEL TALKS IN THE DESERT

By Paul Herrera

"And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is. Arise lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand for I will make him a great nation. And God opened her eyes and she saw a well of water, and she went and filled the bottle with water and gave the lad drink (Geneses 21:17-19).

Hagar was a single mother who found herself without a home, work, or money. All of her food, water and hope had vanished. It seemed like she and her son would die all alone in the desert without anyone caring. Perhaps you remember that she was the Egyptian handmaid of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

Sarah had heard the promise of God, that He would bless them with a son, and that son would be the first of an innumerable number of descendents. Yet, that promise only made her laugh. How could she bear a son when her time of being able to conceive was over.

We know that Abraham was eighty six years old when Hagar bore Ishmael, his son. Read Genesis 16:16. So, Ishmael was about fourteen years old when Sara had Isaac, who was her miracle son, even though she had doubted that this miracle would occur.

After a period of time, Sarah told Abraham to get rid

of this bondwoman and her son. Isaac probably was between two to five years old when he was weaned. Ishmael could have been between fifteen or seventeen years old at that time. The reason Sarah told Abraham to get rid of Ishmael was that Sarah saw Ishmael mocking Isaac at the weaning party. See Genesis 21:7-10.

Perhaps you're a father or mother that struggles with your children in the desert of this modern world. It's possible that you can feed and clothe your children, but you still worry about their safety. You worry about drugs and violence. If you are single, maybe you are all alone thinking that you need a companion to help you in this cruel world. If this is the case, ask God to open your eyes to the help that He has for you and your family like the way He helped Hagar. If God hadn't talked to her through the angel, Hagar and her son would have died of thirst.

Perhaps God will send you an angel to show you the fulfillment of your need. After all, our comfort comes from God's promises to us. God can help us with all our needs if we will have faith and ask. Maybe you think that all you need is a good relationship, a good job, and plenty of money. These are only temporary provisions. We all need to come to the water of life, that fountain which is Christ, where we can obtain eternal life.

OUR HEAVENLY FATHER LOVES US



By Pastor Henry Miroro



God is our shelter. We must fear none but Him. "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the

Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" (Psalm 27:1) Our living Father is ever ready to help us to

solve the problems which we face in this world. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1). In order to realize this, we must pray to our God without ceasing, and Satan will flee from us through the power of God. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 4:7-8). Therefore, brethren, we have to serve one another. We, as brethren, all have one Master who is our Heavenly Father. We have to practice a higher standard of love toward our brothers and sisters. If we have no love, then our faith is dead. Our faith demands works of love. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone" (James 2:17).

The key of being faithful to God is love. If we have love, it is very simple to keep God's Ten Commandments. Love plays a great role in the lives of the brethren. "Though I speak with the tongues of angels, and have not charity (love), I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (love), I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity (love), it profiteth me nothing. Charity (love) suffereth long, and is kind; Charity (love) envieth not; charity (love) vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things" (I Corinthians 13:1-7).

Satan will tempt the brethren, but I urge all the brethren to be joyful when tempted. "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (James 1:2-3). Children of God will be troubled and tempted just as Jesus was!

The Apostle Paul describes the last days in II Timothy 3:1-5. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady,

highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." We know that these are the last days because there are beautiful and interesting things which may hinder one's faith, but God can save us from such things and make us clean. "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: through your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isaiah 1:18).

In our daily lives, God can direct us about what to eat, what we should wear and how to act toward others. Therefore, we must thank Him always. "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower" (Psalm 18:1-2).

These are dangerous days for the brethren because Satan is searching for all that he can take to final destruction with him. Satan is working on God's children day and night. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them. And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it" (Job 1:6-7). We have to know how to live in this corrupt world. We cannot live foolishly, but we must live wisely. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:15-17).

We are not to know the day and hour of our Lord's return, but we must not be unaware of His return! "But of the times and seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thessalonians 5:1-2). We must make our calling and election sure by repenting, being baptized and receiving the Holy Spirit. Job 7:7 tells us that each of our lives are as the wind. "O remember that my life is wind: mine eye shall no more see good." We have to be sure that our faith is always strong and firm.

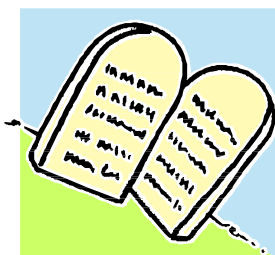
Children of God are blessed in many ways, and they shall be saved by going through the strait (narrow) gate. "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many

there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:13-14). God does not want any of His human creation to be lost. That is why He sent His only begotten Son into the world, not to condemn the world; "but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

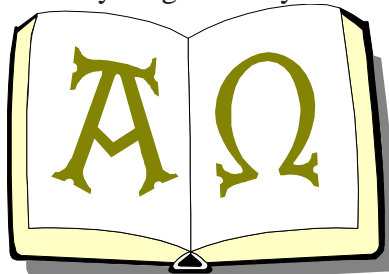
And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:16-20).

We must all believe on His Son and have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in order to be caught up to meet Him in the resurrection at that last day.

WHAT MUST ONE DO TO BECOME SAVED



By Siegfried Maywald



First of all we have to understand that a person who expresses interest to become saved must already know something about God or at least heard about the saving power of our Lord Jesus Christ. The person that wants to be saved does already recognize in part that there is some higher authority, someone who created the earth and maintains life as we see it in perfect balance. In other words, God, by the Holy Spirit, has already planted a seed in the heart of this individual person and caused his mind to be open to the message of God. Even the scriptures tell us that: "No man can come to me (Jesus), except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, comes unto me" (John 6:44-45). Therefore to become saved necessitates four requisites:

1) Knowledge and understanding.

Through knowledge and understanding, people are lead to trust, believe and have faith in God and His word as the absolute truthfulness. The scriptures tell us to go "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Timothy 2:25). One has to

have heard and learned of God's word and will. A person has to believe and trust that His word is truth. A complete trust in God's word is necessary to be able "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me" (Acts 26:18). "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Hebrews 11:3). "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Roman 10:17). We stand by faith and are warned not to become high minded (Romans 11:20). Therefore, people have to hear God's message first to become pricked in their heart and then, when they ask as were read in Acts 2:37-38:

"What shall we do?"

God's word instructs them to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:37-38). Only "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. But without faith it is impossible to please

him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:3,6). For we all become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:26). Once we learn and understand God's word and have the desire to abide by His will, it is His goodness which leads a person to repentance (Romans 2:4). To become saved.

2) We need to repent.

True repentance in action is the result of strong faith, the unrelenting belief in God's plan and purpose for our life as well as Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross and his grace to forgive our sins. "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). And the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23).

The commission of Jesus Christ is found in Luke 24:47. "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." But we have to remember that repentance can only happen when a person has full understanding of God's will, and believed in faith first before repentance can and will create a complete change in a person's life. Repentance can be explained in a fourfold change in a person's life:

a) We recognize our mistakes, feel ashamed and become truly sorry for our past sins. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (II Corinthians 7:10). We turn aside from our former sinful way of understanding and create in us a new heart and spirit, not of the world, but of God.

b) We have to confess and acknowledge our sins and equities before God. We accept responsibility for Jesus Christ's death on the cross who thereby forgave the iniquity of our sins (Psalm 32:5). "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

c) We are changed in our mind in regard to thinking and our outlook on life and begin through the teaching and hearing of God's word to learn and understand His will. We thereby become not conformed to this world, but we become transformed by the renewing of our mind, that we may prove what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God (Romans 12:2).

d) We demonstrate a changed life style. We begin to live in harmony with God's word and present our bodies

as a living sacrifice, which is holy and acceptable before God and expected of us (Romans 12:1). For one can not ask for forgiveness and then continue to sin. This is against God's will. We read in Romans 6:1-2: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

3) We have to be baptized.

After we found trust and believe in God, have repented, changed our life style and thinking in our minds, we are told to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. The word baptism indicated a ceremony of washing with water as an outward sign of religious purification or consecration. The word baptize is taken from the Hebrew word "baptizo" which means to plunge, to immerse, to bury or dip. Water baptism therefore is a sign of an already inwardly changed person who found trust in God. This ceremony symbolically shows the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

In Romans 6:3-7 we read, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin." A person must be completely buried into the water and raised out of the water during baptism. The body of sin is thereby washed from him and is then raised out of the water free of sin. A person that is turning away from sin is explained as dying to sin. For it typifies the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Colossians 2:12). It also is the commission given by Jesus Christ to His disciples as seen in Matthew 28:19. Infant baptism is not found in the scriptures. A person has to be old enough before baptism to be able to think, reason, and understand what the will of God is.

In John 3:3-4 Jesus tells Nicodemus and us: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" "Jesus answered: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can-

not enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again" (John 3:5-7). "For God so loved the world, that he gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:16-17). "For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ" (Galatians 3:27). There is only one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-7). People who seek God with all their heart and soul shall find Him,. "even in the latter days: (Deuteronomy 4:29-30). God specializes in finding and changing people's lives that we sometimes may consider out of reach. It took time for Nicodemus to understand, but God was patient with him. It took time for Paul, who persecuted the church, to fully understand and realize his sins by the power of God (Acts 22:12-15). Ananias, an elder of the Damascus church, had to ask him, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16).

THE RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD AND THE DEAD

By Bond Tennant

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is one of the fundamental doctrines found in the Word of God! In I Corinthians 15:3-19, The Apostle Paul presents the evidence that Christ has been raised from the dead. This evidence is based upon the testimony of those who had seen Him. He was seen of Cephas (the Aramaic for Peter), then of the Twelve. After that, He was seen of about five hundred brethren at the same time! Perhaps these

4) The indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

We become endued with the power from on high, with the attribute of God the Father by request of Jesus Christ, His Son. This attribute, this power from on high, is the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which will guide us and lead us in the understanding of God's word. Only the Comforter, or Holy Spirit, will give us the power to overcome all the temptations we are prone to be confronted with in the world. The Holy Spirit will lead, guide and direct our path according to God's will. Even the Apostles were admonished by Jesus to tarry in the city of Jerusalem until they were endued with the power from on high (Luke 24:49). Only then are Disciples of Christ able to fulfill what Jesus has commissioned them to do. But when the Comforter is come, who I will send unto you from the father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of Me" (John 15:26). "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John 17:8,19,21).



were the majority of those who became Jesus's followers during the course of His earthly ministry. He was also seen of James and of all the apostles.

Paul indicates that many of the brethren who saw Jesus after his resurrection from the dead were still living at the time of his writing, but some had "fallen asleep." It is interesting to note that Paul does not speak of these deceased brethren as having gone to heaven, but as having "fallen asleep." Paul knew and clearly taught that the faithful followers of Jesus would not receive their heavenly

reward until He returned, and they were brought forth in the "first resurrection."

The Bible teaches that those who accept Jesus's call and follow in His footsteps are given a heavenly hope. The receiving of this hope of a new life is spoken of as a begetting of the Spirit through the Word of God. This new life then is nourished by the Word of God, and in the resurrection is "born". The individual then becomes like the glorified Jesus. Those who attain to this resurrection birth, being like Jesus, will behold his glory as well as the glory of the Father.

Paul continued, "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (vs. 12) This reveals a strange situation within the church at Corinth. Evidently some of the professed believers did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, and they could not accept the fact that Jesus had been raised from the dead.

At that time, the Jewish sect of the Saducees did not believe in the resurrection, and it is a possibility that some of these, being appealed to be the moral and ethical teaching of Jesus, associated themselves with the brethren, but they did not believe in the vital doctrines found in the Word of God!

The doctrines of Jesus' resurrection and the resurrection of the dead set the Christian religion apart from all others in the world. The fact is that, even today, the teachings of the Bible are the only ones in the world which hold out hope of a resurrection of the dead. The reason for this is that other religions insist that "there is no death," so if no one is really dead, how could there be a resurrection of the dead?

Paul presents the positive side of the matter. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (I Corinthians 15:20-22).

Jesus himself is the firstfruits of the resurrection, but in verse 23, where the firstfruits of the resurrection are again mentioned, His faithful followers are included. "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures" (James 1:18). These are the first to be raised from the dead, and they will be "kings and priests" with Jesus during His thousand year reign.

7

THINGS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT - SIN AND SIN-OFFERING

By Warren H. Randall Jr.

1. Sin is mentioned several times in scripture before Exodus 20, where we are given formally the 10 Commandments.

"And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him" (Genesis 4:6-7).

"And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgement; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. And the Lord said, Because they cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous" (Genesis 18:17-20). See also Genesis 20:9; 31:36; 39:9.

2. A bullock was used for a Sin-offering.

"But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: it is a sin offering" (Exodus 29:14).

3. This was done daily.

"And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to

sanctify it" (Exodus 29:36).

4. A blood sacrifice was necessary for the remission of sins.

"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22).

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath PURCHASED WITH HIS OWN BLOOD" (Acts 20:28).

5. One can be angry but not sin.

"BE YE ANGRY, AND SIN NOT: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:26-27).

6. Who is blessed?

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose SIN is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; an thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah" (Psalm 32:5).

7. When we commit sin, we become law breakers.

"Whosoever committeth SIN transgresseth also the law: for SIN is the transgression of the law" which is the Ten Commandments (I John 3:4).

"He that committeth SIN is of the devil; for the devil SINNETH from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil" (I John 3:8).

THE KIND OF RELIGION WE NEED TODAY

Many people in the world today call themselves Christians. They go to church weekly, attend Bible studies and prayer groups, and have "Meet me in Church" bumper stickers on their cars. However, many of these so-called Christians have never had a personal, spiritual encounter with Jesus Christ. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:3,5).

To truly be a Christian, we must be born again. We must repent of our sins and have faith that Jesus is the Son of God, who died on the cross so that our sins might be forgiven. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). When we truly repent and believe, God forgives us our sins and

receives us into the family of God. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3-5).

Many Christians have never totally committed their lives to Jesus Christ. They stumble and fail in their spiritual lives because they insist on doing things their own way. "But if we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (I John 1:7). We must surrender our will unquestioningly to God's will. In so doing, we will be cleansed, and the presence of the Holy Spirit will fill our lives and help us along the narrow way of Christian life. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus

Christ" (I Thessalonians 5:23).

There is a lack of sureness that some Christians feel today. Many are uncertain about their personal walk with Christ. When asked about their salvation, their replies begin with "I guess so," or "I hope so". "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). True Christians can answer questions about their salvation positively. They "know (in whom they) have believed". "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (II Timothy 1:12).

Most modern religions have no power to save, sanctify or sustain. They are false and powerless religions. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (I Peter 1:3,5). There is a definite need for a religion with

real power-God's power. Only God is able to forgive sins, cleanse hearts, heal the sick, and "keep that which (we) have committed unto him". "Hold fast the form of sound works, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 1:13).

Many Christians also fail to work diligently for God. Some are unconcerned. Some are neglectful. Others are simply spiritually lazy. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you" (John 15:16). We must be vigilant. Jesus is coming soon, and at an hour unknown to men. "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only" (Matthew 24:36).

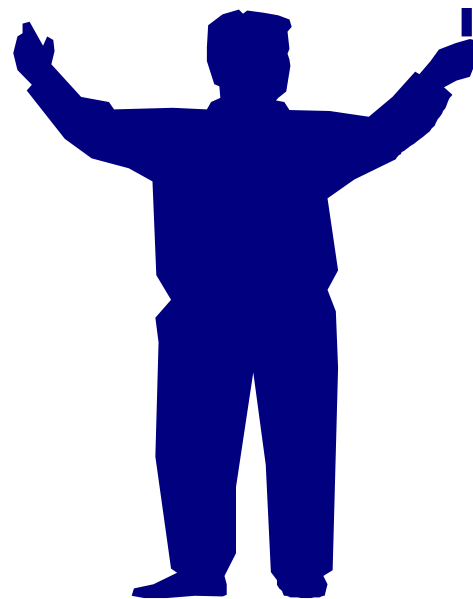
We should pray for the needs of others, assist the less fortunate, and share Christ with the unrepentant. "But ye shall receive power, after the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). We must be sure to share with the world the only kind of religion we need today!

Contributed

The "I" In Idolatry

By Carol Buechner

The root word for idolatry is idol. An idol is an object, symbol, representation or likeness of something that draws admiration or extreme devotion. An idolater is a person that worships excessively or intensely devotes himself to an idol. Idolatry is living in a state of excess in which a person centers his life on certain things. His life is



concentrated on obtaining those things that have become most important to them. The thought may be in your mind that you do not have idols, therefore you do not need to be concerned about living in idolatry. As you concentrate on the subject of idolatry, keep in mind that it is easy to slip into idolatry. Let your mind be receptive to a variety

of ideas concerning idolatry.

During ancient times of the Bible, physical idols were a very real concern. These idols were actual objects that were worshipped. There were many statues representing many things. The ancient world of the Bible had many deities represented in human and animal forms. For example, the Canaanites worshipped Baal and Asherah, gods of fertility. You may recall the rebellion of the Israelites in the wilderness when they melted down all the gold and made a golden calf to worship. Moses was up on the mountain at the time receiving instruction from God and the tables of stone with the ten commandments written on them. The people became restless and impatient and asked Aaron to make the image for them. He did as they requested. As Moses and Joshua descended the mountain, they heard the noise being made by the people as they sang and danced about the golden calf. Moses boiled with anger when he witnessed what was being done, and he threw the tables of stones to the ground breaking them. Then Moses took the golden calf, burned *it* and ground *it* into powder. He poured the powder over the water and made the Israelites drink it. As a result of this terrible sin, three thousand men were killed that day. The concluding statement of Exodus chapter thirty-two states how the Lord felt about the incident. "And the Lord plagued the people, because they made the calf, which Aaron made."

Fast forward your thoughts into the present. It is not likely that you have a golden calf to worship or some other such statue. However, there are religions today that do have such objects and even human beings as idols. Perhaps it is too easy to overlook the most obvious form of idolatry. It is the "I" in idolatry. I is a personal pronoun meaning the one speaking or writing. It is you. Other forms of I are me, my, myself, mine. How can you be worshipping or serving yourself? When you are centered on yourself, seeking with all your heart those things that you want to do and obtain in life, and not putting God at the center of everything, this is idolatry. Your efforts are to obtain material goods which then become your idols. Your efforts are to please yourself and not be concerned about others, and this is idolatry.

Does the Bible substantiate this idea? Colossians 3:5-6 states: "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and **COVETOUSNESS**, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh

on the children of disobedience." Galatians 5:19-21 states: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in times past that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The key word here is **COVETOUSNESS**. It is included with the works of the flesh which is disobedience. To COVET is to enviously want wealth and other possessions and to have a strong desire to have what belongs to other people. It involves greediness and envy and results in anger, strife and hatred. The Ten Commandments clearly state that covetousness is a sin. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

Another aspect of coveting may never have occurred to you. It involves being self-centered and coveting attention, pity and special treatment because you feel sorry for yourself. You might think of it as a "poor me" attitude. You do not want others pointing out your faults even though you are actively involved in seeing their faults. You play the "blame game" where you blame your problems on how you grew up, the people you work with, your lack of money, your family situation. You convince yourself that you just could not be the problem. It is because other people are mistreating you and not giving you what you need. Maybe it is time to stop idolizing yourself and consider how you are involved with other people and how you are really treating them. Maybe it is time to give up the past, forgive and forget and move on to more godly forms of behavior.

The Bible has another interesting statement about idolatry in 1 Samuel 15:23: "**STUBBORNNESS** is as iniquity and idolatry." This plainly states that stubbornness is sin and idolatry. To be stubborn is to be self-willed and unreasonably unyielding in what you are doing and believing. Another word for stubborn is obstinate which means that a person adheres to their own opinions, purpose of actions regardless of the outcome. It includes being unreasonable and unwilling to change in actions and words. The stubborn person feels that they are right and that others are wrong. They do not want to listen to others. They do not want to even consider their part in what is

occurring. It goes back to the ideas mentioned in the previous paragraph concerning covetousness. Covetousness and stubbornness can be a lethal combination for a Christian. It leads to disobedience and the development of a rebellious spirit.

This can be seen in the life of King Saul. Carefully examine this passage from I Samuel 15:16-23,28: "Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the Lord hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on. And Samuel said, WHEN THOU WAST LITTLE IN THINE OWN SIGHT, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel? And the Lord sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. Wherefore then didst thou NOT OBEY the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord? And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal. And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king. And Samuel said unto him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou."

The key to what happened to Saul comes from this passage: "WHEN THOU WAST LITTLE IN THINE OWN SIGHT. . . THE LORD ANNOINTED THEE KING OVER ISRAEL." When Saul was humble and obedient, he succeeded. When he became stubborn, covetous, arrogant and self-willed, his downfall came.

When covetousness, stubbornness and self-centeredness or self-idolatry continue, another problem develops. The '1' develops into PRIDE. Pride means to be haughty and arrogant. When people are full of pride, they have a feeling of contempt or scorn for others and they are exalting themselves. They do not want to listen to

the advice of others. What does the Bible say about pride? Obadiah announces, "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee,. . . that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord" (Verses 3-4). Several statements about pride are provided in Proverbs: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate" (8:13). "When pride cometh, then cometh shame..." (11:2). "Only by pride cometh contention..." (13:10). "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall" (16:18). "A man's pride shall bring him low..." (29:23). Isaiah states something that needs to be remembered: "For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon everyone that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low" (2:12).

As you can see from these verses, pride is hated by God, and it causes deceit, shame, contention and destruction. Do not let pride be a part of your life. There are a few warning signals that you need to be aware of to alert you that you are operating in self-idolatry and pride. First, are you spending a great deal of your time thinking about the words and actions of others instead of your own words and actions. Second, are you considering the actions of others in order to find ways to criticize or accuse them? Third, are you planning things to do and say to others that will give you satisfaction because you feel revengeful toward them? Fourth, are you dwelling more on the negative and not the positive in life? Are your words and actions most often negative? Fifth, are your relationships with others good ones or poor ones? If you are having difficulty getting along with almost everyone you have contact with, you have a definite "I" problem. Sixth, do you feel that everyone picks on you? Does it seem that no one has good words to say about you. Seventh, do you feel that you are purposely being left out of activities in which you want to participate? Did you ever stop to think that you are not so pleasant to be with? It could be that you definitely have an attitude problem that needs to be changed. If these warning signals stir something in you, then it is time to consider your ways and be open to making changes in yourself NOT in others.

The evidence is conclusive. The "1" in idolatry brings destruction if left to grow and take over your life. The

question now is how should you be treating yourself. The Bible instructs you to love yourself. “Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:18). Jesus gave the same instructions in Matthew 19:19: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” You love yourself by taking care of your body physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. This is absolutely necessary because of who you are. “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). The Spirit of God lives in your body, therefore your body is holy. Therefore, you are to glorify God in everything you think, feel, say, and in all your actions. You can not glorify God if you are idolizing yourself. Romans 13:13-14 tells you how you should be acting and should not be acting. “Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness (unruly, undisciplined), not in strife (conflict, contention), and envying (jealousy). But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof” Idolatry is fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. You must be walking in the fruit of the spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance) wherever you are. Realize also that you cannot become spiritually mature as long as you are walking in your own self-centered ways.

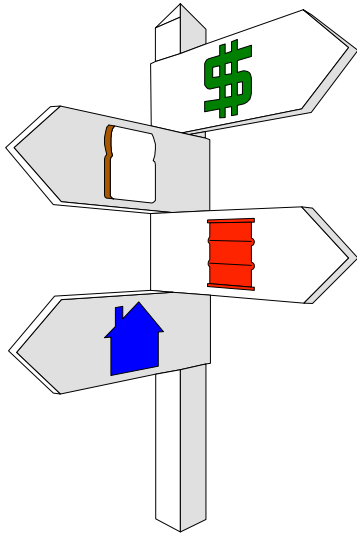
There is one “I” that must be foremost in your life. The following scriptures will give you a clear picture of whom this “I” is. “And God said unto him, I AM GOD ALMIGHTY...” (Genesis 35:11). “And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM” (Exodus 3:14). “. . . I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God” (Isaiah 44:6). “Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will rid you out of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments: And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, which bringeth you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it

you for an heritage: I AM THE LORD” (Exodus 6:6-8).

The very same God that promised to remove burdens, bring redemption and take care of the Israelites will do the same for you. You can be His child, and He will be your God. But, He must be the center of your life in every way. You must be looking to Him and not at yourself.

If you have been convicted by this discussion on idolatry, there are a few things you will need to do to bring change into your life.

1. Make up your mind that you must honestly face the truth about yourself. Be adamant that this is the time for change.
2. Spend much time in prayer asking God to reveal to you all that you need to know and do to overcome your habits. Turn to Him with these words from Psalm 51:10: **“Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”**
3. Be determined that you will not feel sorry for yourself. You may need to stop playing the “blame game” and take responsibility for yourself Consider others and how you have been affecting their feelings and lives. Realize that you will need to listen to others.
4. Forgive and forget the past. It is over, and the only thing you can do about it is to get it out of your heart, mind, soul and spirit. Philippians 3:13-14 provides excellent instructions to follow. “. . . But this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”
5. Center your life on the great “I AM.” Read His word, and look for His advice on how to live a Godly life free of idolatry.
6. Do not forget what will happen to an idolater. **“FOR THIS YE KNOW, THAT NO WHOREMONGER, NOR UNCLEAN PERSON, NOR COVETOUS MAN, WHO IS AN IDOLATER, HATH ANY INHERITANCE IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST AND OF GOD”** (Ephesians 5:5).



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

The following article appeared in the Houston Chronicle.

**Arab ire against Israel mounts
Demonstrators, police clash in capitals of Jordan,
Egypt
by Nadia About El_Magd
Associated Press**

CAIRO, Egypt - Arab protests against Israel escalated Monday, with demonstrators clashing with police in the Jordanian and Egyptian capitals as their leaders sought ways to defuse the crisis.

The Egyptian demonstration was the most violent protest here since Israel seized control of Yasser Arafat's compound Friday. Arabs also took to the streets in Lebanon, Libya, Sudan and Yemen.

After a group of artists, intellectuals and opposition politicians called for a march from Cairo University to the nearby Israeli Embassy, hundreds of marchers ran toward the embassy and broke through a line of riot police.

The officers responded with tear gas and water cannons and whipped demonstrators with their batons, pushing them back to an area near the campus. The protest lasted for seven hours.

Thirty protesters were arrested and nine police officers were struck by stones. Sixteen protesters - most recovering from the effects of tear gas - were hospitalized after the clashes.

The Egyptian protesters called on their government to close the Israeli Embassy, accused the United States of giving Israel the green light for its offensive and called for a boycott of U.S. goods.

Calls to boycott U.S. products have been heard be-

fore in Egypt and gone largely unheeded. Egyptian officials say their ties with Israel give them an opportunity to influence Israeli policy.

Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi led a march in the capital of Tripoli and called on Arab nations to open borders to let Arab fighters in to help the Palestinians.

Officials said 20,000 Sudanese marched through the capital of Khartoum. They carried banners declaring: "No peace with the Zionist" and "No bargaining when it comes to Jerusalem."

In Yemen, more than 200 journalists carried pictures of Arafat and gathered in front of the U.S. Embassy in San'a.

They handed an embassy official a letter accusing the United States of siding with Israel.

In Zarza, about 17 miles northeaster of Amman, about 3,000 people chanted "Death to Israel" and called for a holy war against the Jewish state.

Later, about 300 mostly women protesters held a candlelight march at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, where they called on Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to intervene.

"Beloved Saddam, strike at Tel Aviv," the protesters chanted in front of a line of police at the embassy.

More than 500 Lebanese and Palestinian demonstrators, demanding that Egypt sever relations with Israel, tried to storm the Egyptian Embassy in Beirut, but were dispersed by dozens of police officers.

In Syria, more than 1,000 Syrians and Palestinian refugees chanted: "Terrorism is Zionist and the weapons are American!"

In Saudi Arabia, whose Crown Prince Abdullah was

reportedly working with the United States to get Israeli troops out of Arafat's compound, Saudis criticized President Bush.

"The American administration has been covering up for (Israel's) terrorism for fifty years," said businessman Soliman al-Obedallah, 50.

The official Saudi Press Agency reported that King Fahd, during a Cabinet meeting Monday, condemned Israel.

He urged the United States, Russia, the European Union and the Security Council to support the Arab peace initiative and pressure Israel into withdrawing from Arab land.

Comment

The Arabs are not completely honest about certain terms they use. Let us consider the following advertisement placed in the WORLD magazine. The publishers of this advertisement are listed at the end.

Arabian Fables (II)

More fanciful Arab myths to sway world opinion. Earlier this year, we published our message "Arabian Fables (I)," in which we made clear how the Arab propaganda machine creates myths and lies with which to misinform the world. We discussed the myths of the "Palestinians" and of the "West Bank": and the mythical concept of "occupied territories." In today's message, we shall address three more of these myths.

What are some of these myths? Jerusalem ("Arab East Jerusalem"). The Arabs have assiduously propagated the myths that Jerusalem is an Arab capital, that (after Mecca and Medina) Jerusalem is their third holy city, and that it is intolerable to them that infidels (Jews) are in possession of it.

The reality, of course, is that Jerusalem was never an Arab capital and that it was, until the Jews revitalized it, a dusty provincial city that hardly played any economic, social, or political role. Jerusalem is mentioned hundreds of times in the Jewish Bible and has been the center of the Jewish faith and the focus of Jewish longing ever since the Romans destroyed the Temple in the early years of the first millennium. Not once is Jerusalem mentioned in the Koran.

As to "East Jerusalem". There is East Saint Louis, there is East Hampton, and there used to be East Berlin, but, until the Arab propaganda machine created the concept, there was never in history an "East Jerusalem," let alone an "Arab East Jerusalem."

The eastern part of Jerusalem is now predominantly inhabited by Arabs, though their proportion is decreasing. But what is the reason for this? It is because the Jordanians destroyed all traces of Jewish presence from the eastern part of the city and drove all the Jews out during the 19 years (between 1948 and 1967) in which they were in occupation of the eastern part of the city. The world, informed by Arab propaganda, considers those Jews who wish to return to the eastern part of the city to be troublemaker or worse. The concept of Jerusalem being a holy Arab city and the capital of whatever political entity the "Palestinians" may eventually form is a myth and so, of course, is the concept of "Arab East Jerusalem"

"Settlements." When Jordan came into possession of Judea/Samaria and the eastern part of Jerusalem following the invasion of the newly formed Jewish state, and stayed in occupation for 19 years, it systematically obliterated all Jewish villages in the area under their occupation, drove out the Jewish inhabitants, and left the area judenrein ("free of Jews") - the first time that concept had been applied since the Nazis created it during their short and bloody reign in Germany. When the Israelis recovered these territories, they rebuilt these villages, created new ones, and built new towns and suburbs to existing cities, especially Jerusalem.

The Arabs decided to call these towns and villages "settlements," with their connotation of illegitimacy and impermanence. The world, including the United States, is much agitated over these population centers and, goal by the Arabs, declares them to be impediments to peace. What nonsense! Nobody concludes the tens of thousands of Arabs who continue to stream to these territories as impediments to peace. The term "settlements," too, is a propaganda myth created by the Arabs.

The Arab propaganda machine, aided by the most high-powered public relations firms in the United States and all over, has created myths that, by hint of constant repetition, have been accepted as truth by much of the world. No sensible discussion, no peace in the Middle East, is possible until those Arab myths have been exposed for what they are.

This ad has been published and paid for by FLME.
Facts and Logic about the Middle East.
P.O. Box 590359 San Francisco, CA 94159
Gerardo Joffe, President



Questions and Answers

Question: Will you please summarize repentance and baptism?

Answer: First let us summarize repentance. Repentance is a requirement for salvation due to sin which entered the world by transgression of God's commandments. "Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). This law is spoken of in James 1:25 and 2:8 as the "perfect law of liberty" and the "royal law according to the scripture."

Repentance is required by all! "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). How many have sinned? The scripture says that ALL have sinned. ALL need to repent, or have a change of service in their lives to obtain salvation.

What is the will of God concerning his promises toward the multitude of unrepentant people? We find the answer to this question in II Peter 3:9. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness: but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." If it is the will of God that all should come to repentance, surely there is something to lead people to that condition in life. Therefore, we ask a question. What is repentance? First, read Romans 2:4. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Let us also read II Corinthians 7:10. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." True

repentance is manifesting godly sorrow for sins sufficient to be sorry enough to quit them and not commit them any more insofar as is possible while living in this body of sinful flesh.

What will show that anyone has repented? In Luke, we read about John the Baptist who was the forerunner of Jesus. "...The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Luke 3:4). John was preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sin, and saying that all flesh shall see the salvation of God. "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Luke 3:7) In the first part of verse eight is the answer to the question asked in the beginning of this paragraph. "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance..." The last part of verse nine records, "...every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thrones, or figs of thistles?" (Matthew 7:16).

Paul, in explaining his heavenly visit to King Agrippa, said he was not disobedient unto it: "But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that thy should repent and turn to God, and DO works meet worthy for repentance."

Mark 1:1 calls the doctrine of repentance and baptism, "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the

Son of God." "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2). After His baptism by John and temptation by Satan in the wilderness, Jesus began "...to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). This message will continue as long as probation lasts, or until Jesus comes. The result of John's preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins is found in Mark 1:5. "And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."

Why was Jesus, the Son of God, sent into the world? It was God's great plan of salvation. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him shouldn't perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). When Jesus had come into the world, he made known his mission in Mark 2:17. "...They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." ALL had sinned, and all needed to repent. If all need to repent, then all needed to be baptized.

Baptism Now let us summarize baptism. Ephesians 4:5 records, "One Lord, one faith, one baptism." The world practices many so-called modes of baptism, but the scriptures teach only one, and that is a burial in the water (immersion) to come forth a new creature. Why be baptized? The answer is found in the following scripture. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized in his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Romans 6:3-6). "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:12).

These scriptures teach that baptism is a burial so that the old man or body of sin might be destroyed, and a coming forth or resurrection from the watery grave to become anew creature in Jesus Christ.

The words of Ananias to Paul in Damascus are very

significant of the reason to be baptized. "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). The Apostle Paul was destined to do a great work for the Lord, but here needed to be a great change in his life wrought by repentance (godly sorrow), followed by baptism to wash away his sins.

What is the importance of baptism relative to salvation? Let us read Mark 16:16. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Our greatest example for being baptized was Jesus. We find this in Matthew 3:13-15. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him." Jesus gave the example, and we are to follow him in all things. Therefore, how are we to be baptized and in what name? Jesus gave the commission to His disciples in Matthew 28:19. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Father, Son and Holy Ghost (Spirit) are only titles, but the name is **Lord Jesus Christ**. The apostles understood this and baptized in His name, not just titles. Turn to Acts 2:38 and read, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Spirit)." To prove that Jesus, who was crucified for the sins of the world, is also Lord and Christ, read verse 36. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Rightly dividing the word of truth, we have the name as a whole in which to be baptized. **It is Lord Jesus Christ.**

As a result of Peter's preaching, great things were accomplished. "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:41).

The name "Lord Jesus Christ" is salvation. Let us close by reading Acts 4:12. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."



THE PHILIPPINES

Brother Salvador Oliverio Jr., our assistant overseer in the Philippines, writes the following report:

We had a good Lord's Supper on March 28, 2002 (Bible time). The brethren in the Islands had prepared themselves for the Lord's Supper. After the Lord's Supper, I visited the local congregation in Buenasuerte, Pio V. Corpus, on the Island of Masbate. Brother Obnimaga, his wife Virgie, Dolores Abayon with their mother, and my wife Phebe Sausal Oliverio accompanied me to attend the wedding ceremony of Brother Isabelo Aplacador and Sister Anelie Salubre. I performed the wedding service on April 8, 2002.

Field Ministers and other workers in the vineyard of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao districts are performing the work of the Lord efficiently. Beginning from the month of November up to the present, a number of souls were baptized, and a number of infants were dedicated

On April 24-27, 2002, two members of the Evangelistic Ministry Team were assigned to Caracol, Salug, Zamboanga del Norte, to attend the Provincial Youth Convention. Brothers Beethoven Sausal and Orlando Ohnimaga were the ministers in charge. The Convention was very successful.

I was not able to attend because, I went to Lucena City in Quezon Province and from there to Manila to assist nineteen of our brethren who had been on board a sailing vessel, the Maria Carmela, from Masbate to Lucena City which unexpectedly caught on fire one hour before they were to dock at the port of Lucena City. Out of the

nineteen of our brethren on board the vessel, two died, four are missing, two landed in the hospital, and the rest were rescued with injuries. The nineteen brethren were all from the Salubre family. The Salubres were on their vacation, and they attended the wedding of their relative. The dead are Sister Babalyn Salubre Odad, who was seven months pregnant, and her daughter Jaybelle Salubre Odad. Brother Julierto Odad, the husband of Babalyn, landed in the hospital along with his son, Jayverson Salubre Odad. His other child, Odessa Vera Salubre Odad is still missing. The Odad family had three children with them, and they had just come from California, U.S.A. for a vacation here in the Philippines. Brother Inocencio Salubre's wife, Ruth, and his daughter Aileen are also missing. Brother Catalino Salubre Jr.'s son, Catalino Salubre Jr. II, is also missing. There are four missing altogether. I stayed there with our brethren for twenty days to give them moral support and comfort.

I have to close this report for now with a view of the blessings ahead from our heavenly Father to be poured on us, His sons and daughters, so that we may have sound and healthy bodies to serve Him. We pray for you and all the saints of the whole world, and hope you will pray for us, too.

We are all deeply saddened by this great loss. If you wish to help the families, you can send donations to the Publishing House, and we will see that they receive them.

INDIA



Above we have pictured two views of the new church in Brahmanapally. The brethren expended a great deal of effort to complete this beautiful church in time for the Lord's Supper.



Above, the congregation inside the new church in Brahmanapally is pictured during one of the services. Not everyone could fit inside. As you can see, there is standing room only at this gathering.

LESSON I

OUR MONEY

Scripture Reading: Luke 18:18-30.

Golden Text: I Timothy 6:10 (first part).

"For the love of money is the root of all evil."

1. Is money the first thing we should seek for? Matthew 6:33.
2. If we would seek to be rich, into what do we fall? I Timothy 6:9.
3. With what should we be content or satisfied? I Timothy 6:8.
4. What part of our money belongs to God? Genesis 28:22; Malachi 3:10.
5. Does God love people more if they are able to give more than others? Mark 12:41-44.
6. Did Judas's love of money cause him to betray Christ? Matthew 26:15.
7. Instead of wanting or coveting money, what should be our desire to follow? I Timothy 6:11.
8. What did Jesus tell his disciples about a rich man? Matthew 19:23-24.

NOTE: The eye of a sewing needle is very small and would be impossible to go through, however, Jesus is referring to the opening of a gate. It was difficult for a camel to enter this but not impossible.

9. What did Jesus tell the rich young man that wanted eternal life? Matthew 19:21-22.



LESSON II

IDLENESS

Scripture Reading: Matthew 20:1-8.

Golden Text: Matthew 12:36.

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgement."

1. Should we speak idle words or should they be words of blessing to others? Matthew 12:36.
2. What insect is given as an example to us? Proverbs 6:6-8.
3. Does an idle person learn to be a tattler or busy body? I Timothy 5:13.
4. Does the Lord hate the ways of an idle person who speaks lies and makes trouble between brethren? Proverbs 6:16,19.
5. What are some things we should do and not do? Proverbs 31:26-27.
6. From what should we ask the Lord to cleanse us? Psalms 19:12,14.



LESSON III

LOVE

Scripture Reading: Luke 10:25-37.

Golden Text: Mark 12:30 (first part).

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."

LESSON IV

MUSIC

1. What is the greatest commandment? Mark 12:30-31.

NOTE: All Ten Commandments are part of these two commandments.

2. Who else are we commanded to Love? Leviticus 19:18.

3. How do we know we are a child of God? I John 4:7-8.

4. Who was the one who loved us so much that He gave His life for us? Galatians 2:20.

5. Could we have a greater love than to lay down our life for our friends? John 15:13.

6. How can we show God we love him? I John 5:3.

7. Love covers all our sins. What does hatred do? Proverbs 10:12.

8. If anyone says "I love God" and he hates his brother, what is he? I John 4:20.

9. If we love God, do all things work together for our good? Romans 8:28.

Scripture Reading: I Chronicles 25:5-7, Psalms 98:4-6.

Golden Text: Psalms 100:1.

"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands."

1. How many people praised the Lord with musical instruments in the house of the Lord when David made Solomon king? I Chronicles 23:5.

2. What were some of the instruments used to praise the Lord during this time? II Chronicles 25:6.

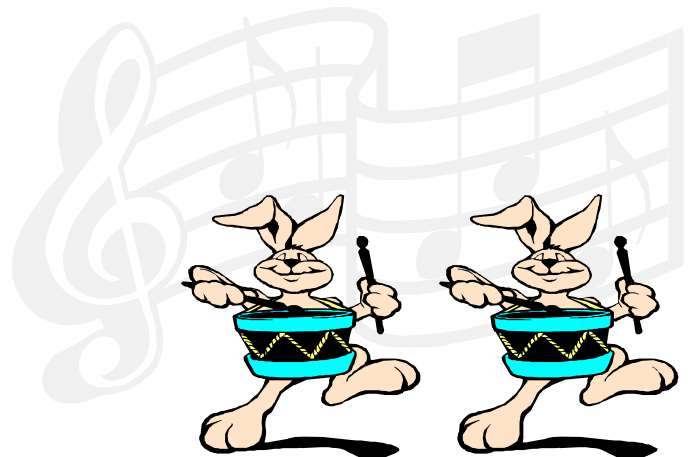
3. Have people always praised the Lord with musical instruments? Genesis 4:21.

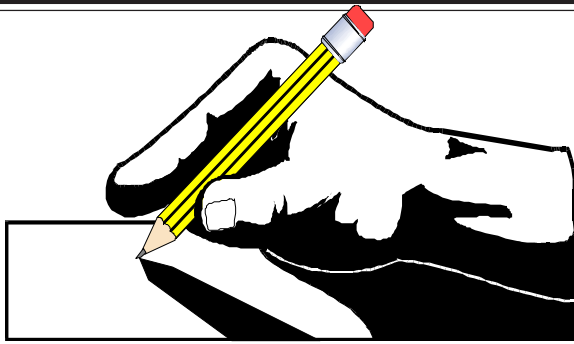
4. Should we make a joyful noise unto the Lord and sing praise to him? Psalm 98:4.

5. If we have musical talent, should we not use it to glorify God? I Chronicles 6:20 (last part).

6. Who sang "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"? Luke 2:13-14.

7. The Heavenly Choir will again sing when Jesus is to be made King of the earth. What kind of musical instrument will they use? Revelation 5:8-9.





THE TWIN'S PEACE PACT

Ken and Ben Miller were so worked up that night that they could not go to sleep right away. All day, off and on, they had quarreled over the chemistry outfit that Aunt Betty had given them "to have between them", as if things "between" people were any fun at all!

Because they were still awake, they overheard what mother said to father in the next room. "I always supposed that twins - twin brothers especially - would be particularly loving, but our boys certainly are not. My nerves are on edge because of their continual squabbling. I wish we had a big boy and a little boy instead of twin girls. I'd prefer girls."

"Well, they must stop their fighting. We should discover something to do about it," said father.

After that the twins lay very still. What made them feel bad, so bad they couldn't sleep for so very long, was that mother didn't like twin boys. Mother would rather have girls!

The next morning Jim Dale came across the street to play with the twins. His sister Lily came, too. She always tagged after Jim, but the twins didn't mind. She was a nice girl. But this morning no one was having much fun. At last Jim asked, "What's the matter with you fellows? Have you lost your best friend?"

"Well, yes." Ken tried to grin.

"Mother doesn't like us!" said Ben, coming to the point at once.

There was a shocked silence.

Then Lily asked, "Is it you she does not like, or some of your ways?"

"Why-" Ken thought a minute. "It's our ways, I guess."

"We quarrel quite a bit," put in Ben.

"Mother thinks we don't love each other," went on

Ken. "But we do, really. It's just that Ben won't share what's given to both of us."

"Neither will Ken!" broke in Ben. "Not only that, but Ken shirks all the chores and errands off onto me."

"I don't either! You're always slipping away when there are dishes to do."

"Smarty! You-"

"If you're going to quarrel now, I'm going home," threatened Lily.

"We're not exactly quarreling," said Ken. "But we'll stop. Don't go, Lily!"

"But you see how exasperating Ken can be," Ben told her.

Ken opened his mouth and shut it again. He saw that Lily was going to say something.

"It seems to me," as Lily put on her grown-up air, "that what you boys need is a peace pact."

"Like the United Nations!" her brother chimed in.

"But how can we have one?" asked Ben.

"Let's work it out together," proposed Lily. "You twins get us a pencil and some paper."

For the next half hour, the four were busy with their tablets and pencils. Then they all compared notes. Ken and Ben almost came to blows over some of the "peace provisions," but they quieted down when Lily threatened to "walk out."

When everyone's suggestions had been discussed and written down, Lily took all the papers home for big brother Ned to copy on his computer.

Ned made two copies. "One is for you to post in your own room," Lily told the twins, "and one is for your parents. As Ned says, your Father and your Mother will help you keep your pact."

"As if we couldn't keep it without any help!" sniffed Ken.

"Thinks he knows it all, Ned does," grumbled Ben.

"Still, there is that way of looking at it," conceded Ken. "We have not done very well by ourselves."

"That's so. We haven't." Ben was unexpectedly meek.

"Now you've got to sign it," Lily prompted, "but read it first. Always read a document before putting your signature to it."

The twins bent over and read:

"We, the Miller twins, Kenneth and Benjamin, do sol-

emly agree to the following peace provisions:

"I. Neither of us shall lay claim to any possession that we own in common. If said possession is nothing we cannot use together, we shall take turns.

"II. Each of us shall remember to take his turn washing and wiping the dishes.

"III. Each shall do his area of the chores and errands and not try to shirk them onto the other.

"IV. Each shall respond immediately to a parent request, even if it is his brother's turn to do what is asked. (Such matters shall be settled between us, without annoyance to parents.)

"V. Each shall try to respect the other's rights and possessions and bear with the other's faults, always remembering that one's twin is one's twin, no matter how he acts up."

"Pretty good," commented the twins in chorus. Feeling quite grown up, they signed both copies of the agreement. Then Jim and Lily signed their names under "Witnessed by."

That night, before they went to sleep, the twins heard Mother read the "peace pact" aloud to father. They hoped father wouldn't laugh at it.

Father didn't laugh. He just said, "That is fine. We must help them keep it."

Mother agreed, and replied, "Aren't twin boys the dearest things in the world?"

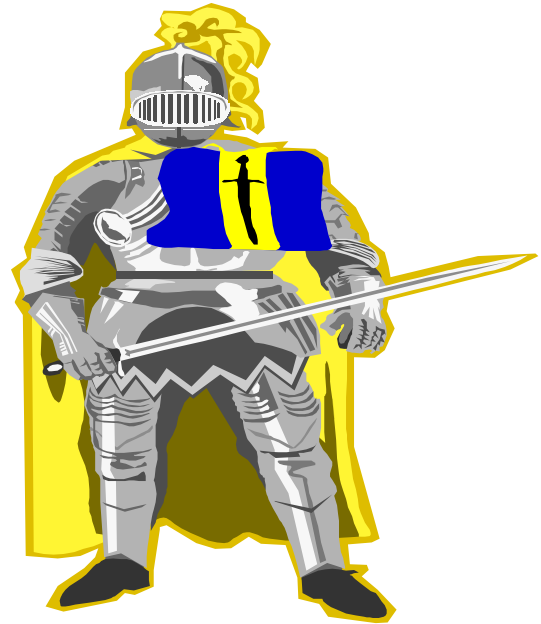
Winta M. Armstrong

THANK YOU'S

Thank you, Jesus, for the sunshine
 Flooding all the world with joys,
 Making grassy, flowery meadows
 For us happy girls and boys.

Thank you most of all, dear Jesus,
 For the love you give to me.
 Help a little child to always
 Be just what you'd have him be.

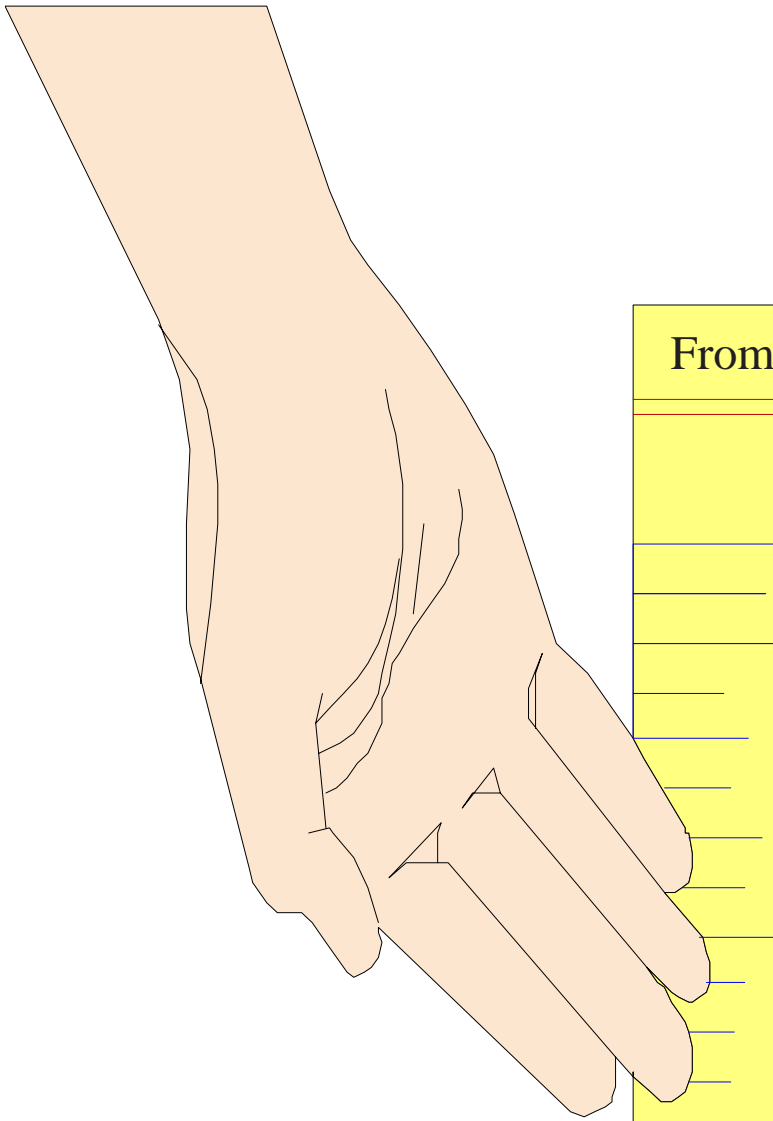
Jean Leathers Phillips



Make Your Own Suit Of Armor

In the days of old when knights were bold and went off to try to rescue the Holy Land from the infidels who then held it, they took a coat of armor along to protect them when fighting their battles. You would find one of their suits of armor awkward and rather heavy. However, you can make yourself a most useful and effective suit of armor, exactly your own size and weight to wear as you fight your battles to keep your land a holy land. Paul calls it the "armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day." Fill the blanks in the following texts, and you will have a suit of armor that will last a lifetime if you keep it bright an shiny by constant use.

1. "An helmet of _____ upon his head." Isaiah 59:17.
2. "He put on _____ as a breastplate." Isaiah 59:17.
3. "Having your loins girt about with _____." Ephesians 6:14.
4. "And your feet shod with the preparation of the _____ of peace." Ephesians 6:15.
5. Your shield may be either (a) "The shield of _____, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6:16), or (b) "His _____ shall be thy shield and buckler" (Psalm 91:4).
6. "And the sword of the _____, which is the _____ of God." Ephesians 6:17.



From The Internet

Now I sit me down in school
Where praying is against the rule
For this great nation under God
Finds mention of Him very odd.

If Scripture now the class recites,
It violates the Bill of Rights.
And anytime my head I bow
Becomes a Federal matter now.

Our hair can be purple, orange or green,
That's no offense; it's a freedom scene.
The law is specific, the law is precise.
Prayers spoken aloud are a serious vice.

For praying in a public hall
Might offend someone with no faith at all.
In silence alone we must meditate,
God's name is prohibited by the state.

We're allowed to cuss and dress like freaks,
And pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks.
They've outlawed guns, but FIRST the Bible.
To quote the Good Book makes me liable.

We can elect a pregnant Senior Queen,
And the 'unwed daddy, 'our Senior King.
It's "inappropriate" to teach right from wrong,
We're taught that such "judgments" do not belong.

The Ten Commandments are not allowed,
No word of God must reach this crowd.
It's scary here I must confess,
When chaos reigns, the school's a mess.