

The
Advocate
of
Truth



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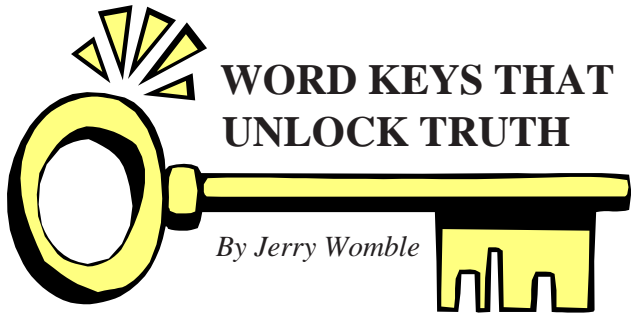
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WORD KEYS THAT UNLOCK TRUTH

By Jerry Womble

LEBANON

There are 70 texts in the Bible that mention Lebanon; but the ones that caught my attention are Isaiah 2:13, Song of Solomon 4:11 and Hosea 14:6. They speak of the cedars being "high and lifted up" and of the "smell of Leba-

non". We are to be like the trees of Lebanon, that is, we are to be above the world in our way of life. Our ethics and character are to be straight and upright, we are to display a way of life better than what is expected of the rest of the world. The "smell of Lebanon" means that a person would know where he was by the aroma in the air. The sweet smell of cedar would be everywhere, showing that one was in the area of Lebanon. The smell is the evidence of your location. The evidence that a person is a child of God is seen by other men just as sure as the smell of cedar identifies Lebanon. One evidence is found in Mark 16:20. It tells us that after the ascension of Jesus the disciples spread the word "...with signs following." All who saw them and their words knew that they were men of God, straight as a cedar of Lebanon and with the same sweet smell. A sign that we can all have is found in John 13:35 "...ye are my disciples if ye have love one for another." If you claim to be a Christian, act like one.

DISCERNING FALSE DOCTRINE

BY DINAH LANGAT
KENYA EAST AFRICA

We are living in the last days. I Timothy 4:1 says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." This is a warning to believers. We are warned not to believe every spirit. Instead, try the spirits whether they are in agreement with God's word or not. A spirit that isn't God's will always evoke fear and intimidation in the hearts of people.

We can discern false prophets and overcome them, because greater and wiser is the indwelling Holy Spirit than the spirit of the anti-Christ that is in the world. This spirit (anti-Christ) denies Jesus.



There is a sound doctrine and there are false doctrines. So, departing from the faith means departing from the sound doctrine. A false doctrine will always try to defile the believers heart and conscience. It will always try to make us believe wrong things. Believing false doctrine is believing in wrong things. The Bible warns us against having an evil heart of unbelief. False doctrines try to draw the believer away from fellowship with God and other believers. False doctrines will try to get us out of the faith, but we don't have to entertain those thoughts! We should boldly denounce them.

Jesus told His disciples, "Beware ye of the leaven, of

the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." Luke 12:1. The leaven of the Pharisees was their teachings. "Evil communications corrupt good manners" (I Corinthians 15:33). The false prophets will not come to somebody and introduce themselves as being false prophets. No, they come disguised as a minister or an angel of light. The power of God will help us discern false doctrine, but we must prove all things through the word of God.. The Bible tells us, "But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (I John 2:20).

The anointing that we have received abides in us. We can know if teachings come from the spirit of God, the spirit of man, or that of the Antichrist. We abide in Christ as the anointing of the Holy Spirit teaches us. Abiding in Christ is drawing strength and nourishment from Him. It is abiding in the even. In Matthew 24:24 we are reminded, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." There

is none like Jesus Christ. Many will imitate him, trying to be like Him, but His power came from above and shall never be compromised.

There are several kinds of friends. There are those who are your friends only when it suits them, but will not stand by you in the day of trouble. Others will expose you to the public when you decide not to agree with them. There are others who are very close to you when things are good, but once you fall into trouble they will disown you! A true friend is the one who is faithful all the time. A person who is kind in words and actions makes many friends. A friend will help you avoid evil so that you may grow closer to God. Just as a good friend shares moments of joy, they will share difficult times with you. Jesus is the best of all friends. Jesus is a true and sincere friend. Though his nature was divine, He took our human nature and lived among us. Through His example of doing God's will, and dying on the cross for our sins, we are saved.

Vital Religion

A Lesson Study



"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, THIS PEOPLE HONOURETH ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR FROM ME. HOWBEIT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING FOR DOCTRINES THE COMMANDMENTS OF MEN" (Mark 7:6-7).

There has always been a conflict between the true teachings of the Bible and the teachings of fallible men. The teachings of men when adhered to from generation to generation become traditions, and in the minds of many these traditions become of equal value, or greater importance, than the inspired teachings of the Word of God. This was true in Jesus's day, and it is true today.

This lesson has to do primarily with the traditions of ancient Jewish elders who developed teachings pertaining to the washing of hands, cups, pots, brasen vessels, and of tables. To the scribes and pharisees of Jesus's day, the washing of these was fundamentally important in

keeping the body from becoming defiled by the food which they ate.

Jesus's answer to all this was, "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man" (verse 15). Jesus is speaking here of the defilement of the mind and of the heart. That which comes out of a man are his words. Words give expression to the thoughts. If one's mind and heart are defiled with his evil thoughts and motives, his words not only will increase his own defilement (since expression deepens impression), but his evil words may well defile those to whom they are spoken.

James wrote, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of

nature; and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:5-6). James also wrote, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:8-10).

James is correct. No one can fully tame or control the tongue. He is correct also in saying that out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. However, it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaketh, and our responsibility as children of God is to keep our hearts cleansed as fully as possible from evil things—from the spirit of envy, hatred, jealousy, and the like; and to fill our hearts and minds continually with the good thoughts of God, from His Word, so that as much as possible our words reflecting the fullness of our hearts, will be wholesome and blessed to all who hear.

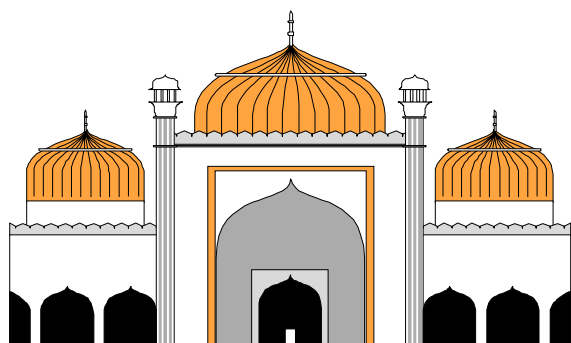
In our opening verse, Jesus quotes from Isaiah 29:13. Let us quote the whole verse, "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth,

and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept (tradition) of men." The expression "this people" refers to those mentioned in verses 9-12 of the chapter. The spiritual vision of these had become as a book that is sealed.

Such has been the case with a great many of those who have professed to serve the Lord in every age! These have not been able to understand the "Book," the Word of God, because they have rendered only lip service to Him, while their hearts have been removed far from the Lord. Today, there is a whole new group of traditions, important among them being eternal torture and purgatory precepts; the trinity doctrine; the Virgin Mary traditions, etc.

Those who do not hold to and teach these traditions today are looked upon as Jesus and the apostles were in their day because they did not teach the traditions of the elders, but insisted instead on teaching the truth of God's Word.

Contributed



GOD SHOWS HIS GLORY IN BABYLON

Because His chosen people were not faithful to Him, God allowed them to be taken captive to Babylon. However, a few faithful were among them whom He used as witnesses during the period of their captivity. Among these were Daniel and his three young friends, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. The "prince of the eunuchs" under whom they first served changed their names to Belteschazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 1:6-7).

Daniel first came into prominence before the king when by the Lord's help he was able to recall Nebuchadnezzar's dream for him and interpret its meaning, after the "magicians, and the astrologers, and the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans" had failed in their attempt to do so. This was a most effective witness for the true God,

causing the king to acknowledge to Daniel" ..., Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldst reveal this secret" (Daniel 2:47).

Daniel then was made ruler over the entire province of Babylon, "and chief of the governors over all the wise men of Babylon." Daniel, in turn, remembered his three young friends, and requested that they be appointed his assistants. This request was granted.

But Nebuchadnezzar soon forgot what he had confessed concerning the true God being the "God of gods and a Lord of kings." He wanted to be recognized as supreme ruler, and his gods worshipped in the realm, so he had a great image erected symbolizing his authority as civil ruler, and his right to demand that the people worship

his gods. He commanded that all officials of the realm, at a given signal, bow down and worship this image. Those who refused to obey were to be cast into a fiery furnace, Apparently Daniel, because he "sat at the gate of the king," was exempt from this command.

But his three friends were not! Enemies, jealous of the position to which these Hebrews had been appointed, reported that they had not obeyed the king's command to fall prone before his golden image. In a rage, Nebuchadnezzar summoned the three Hebrews before him, demanding to know if the report was true. They assured him that it was. Then he indicated his willingness to give them another chance, but made it plain that if they still defiled his edict they would surely be cast into the fiery furnace. "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:16-18).

We all remember the outcome. The three Hebrews were cast in the fiery furnace-a furnace in which the fire was burning so furiously the the king's servants who hurled them into it inhaled the flames and died. But the three Hebrews were protected by divine power.

Then the king, probably a little uncertain as to whether or not he had acted wisely, after the flames subsided somewhat, peered into the fiery furnace, and discovered not only were the three Hebrews alive, but there was a fourth person with them, "like the Son of God" (Daniel 3:25). Only the cords which bound them had been burned. As a result of this, the king saw them walking about in the fire. Then he called them forth from the flames, and said: "..., Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath seen this angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him, and have changed the king's word, and yielded their bodies, that they might not serve nor worship any God, except their own God. Therefore I make a decree, That every people, nation and language, which speak any thing amiss against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, shall be cut in pieces, and their houses shall be made as a dunghill: because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort" (Daniel 3:28-29).

I WISH YOU ENOUGH

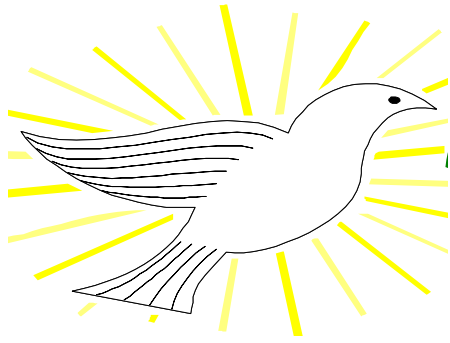
At an airport I overheard a father and daughter in their last moments together. They had announced her plane's departure and standing near the door she said, "Daddy, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Daddy." They kissed good-bye and she left. He walked over toward the window where I was seated. Standing there I could see he wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but he welcomed me in by asking, "Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?" "Yes, I have," I replied. Saying that brought back memories I had of expressing my love and appreciation for all my Dad had done for me. Recognizing that his days were limited, I took the time to tell him face to face how much he meant to me. So I knew what this man was experiencing.

"Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever good-bye?" I asked. "I am ill, and she lives much too far away. I have challenges ahead and the reality is, her next trip back will be for my funeral," he said. "When you were saying good-bye I heard you say, 'I wish you enough'. May I ask what that means?"

He began to smile. "That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone. He paused a moment and looking up as if trying to remember it in detail, he smiled even more. When we said 'I wish you enough', we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with enough good things to sustain them. He continued and then, turning toward me, he shared the following as if he were reciting it from memory:

"I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright. I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun more. I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive. I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in life appear much bigger. I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting. I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess. I wish you enough 'Hellos' to get you through the final 'Good-bye'. He then began to sob and walked away.

My friends and loved ones, I wish you ENOUGH!!! They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but then an entire lifetime to forget them.



THE DYNAMICS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit, which is the power of God and His Son, convicts of sin and wrong doing. "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgement" (John 16:8). Many fail to respond to His reproof but continue to practice their sinful ways. Unless they repent, they are doomed to eternal death. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Ephesians 1:7). When the God's power reproves us for wrong words, thoughts, deeds, and actions, we must ask for His forgiveness and cleansing.

Repentance and faith bring forgiveness of sins. "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 they shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). The Holy Spirit bears witness through one who has become a member of the family of God. "But I have greater witness than that of John; for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of men, that the Father hath sent me" (John 5:36). Conversion brings new life in Christ. It gives a new faith, new hope and new love. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).

Some Christians fail to make a total commitment to Christ. "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith" (Acts 15:9). They are unwilling to give up certain things for Christ, i.e., habits, affections, or possessions. We must surrender everything unreservedly to Christ. When we are willing to yield all to Him, the Holy Spirit is ready to cleanse and fill us with His love. "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 1:7).

There is little comfort in today's world. "And I will

pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever" (John 14:16). War threats, separations, divorces, shortages, and inflation bring frustration and disappointment. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Ephesians 2:14). Christians are confronted with difficulties also, but lately can possess the peace and comfort that only the presence of the Holy Spirit can bring.

Many try to live their lives depending on their own strength. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come" (John 16:13). We need the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. God is omniscient and omnipotent. "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Philippians 3:10). They fail because finite power is not sufficient for successful living. We need the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. "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). God gives those who are totally committed the power needed for service. He assures them of eternal life hereafter if they remain faithful and true to Him.

The believer exhibits the fruits of the Holy Spirit when that power abides within that believer. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). That indwelling is necessary, so that when Jesus returns, the believer will be a part of the first resurrection

Contributed

LIVING...

There are moments in life when you miss someone so much that you just want to pick them from your dreams and hug them for real!

When the door of happiness closes, another opens; but often times we look so long at the closed door, that we don't see the one which has been opened for us.

Don't go for looks; they can deceive. Don't go for wealth; even that fades away. Go for someone who makes you smile, because it takes only a smile to make a dark day seem bright. Find the one that makes your heart smile.

Dream what you want to dream; go where you want to go; be what you want to be, because you have only one life and one chance to do all the things you want to do.

May you have enough happiness to make you sweet, enough trials to make you strong, enough sorrow to keep you human, enough hope to make you happy.

The happiest of people don't necessarily have the best of everything; they just make the most of everything that comes along their way.

The brightest future will always be based on a forgotten past; you can't go forward in life until you let go of your past failures and heartaches.

When you were born, you were crying and everyone around you was smiling. Live your life so at the end, you're the one who is smiling and everyone around you is crying. Please send this message to those people who mean something to you (I JUST DID); to those who have touched your life in one way or another; to those who make you smile when you really need it; to those who make you see the brighter side of things when you are really down; to those whose friendship you appreciate; to those who are so meaningful in your life.

And if you don't, don't worry, nothing bad will happen to you; you will just miss out on the opportunity to brighten someone's day with this message!!!

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away!

KEEP ON LIVING LIFE TO THE FULLEST

-From the Internet

HOW TO WIN OVER SELF

In order to win over self, you must make a definite decision. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Many try to hold on to God with one hand and Satan with the other. We follow the Lord through choice, "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). We must be firm in our decision for Christ, leaving no bridge unburned which would facilitate turning back.

Many people are self-indulgent. They fail to practice self-denial and restraint. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). We must set rules and limits for ourselves. "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (James 1:12).

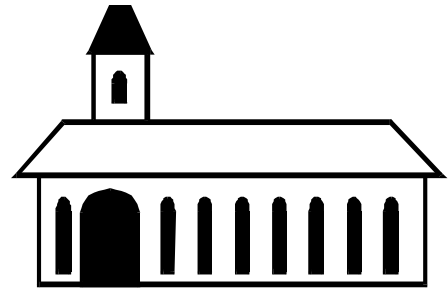
Many people are devoted to selfish interest. "He that loveth not knoweth not God: for God is love" (I John 4:8). They fail to win over self because they neglect God and others. We need to be diligent in our devotion to God. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). Faithful church attendance, daily prayer and Bible reading, plus sharing Christ with others-these bring victory over self.

Many fail in their quest for victory over self. They lack courage to reflect the wrong and take their stand for the right. "Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord" (Psalm 27:14). We must develop a bulldog tenacity, a never-give-up, do-or-die attitude. Determination, with God's help, brings victory in the greatest battle of all-the battle against self. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13).

In conclusion, many things are necessary to win over self. You must make a definite decision, show daring discipline, daily devotion and dauntless determination. Self-interest is strong, but God is stronger!

CHURCH

By Carol Buechner



Just say the word, “Church.” It is most likely that when you say the word, a picture flashes in your mind. It may be a picture of the church you attend or it may be several pictures of different church buildings that come into your mind. Maybe there is a special church building that you think of. Yes, a church is a building that is used for the public to gather for the purpose of worship. Inside, will be benches or chairs or some other type of seating for those attending. There will probably be a pulpit from which a sermon can be delivered and there may be a variety of musical instruments. The decorative nature of the church will vary according to the size and the style of those in charge.

The church building is an important place for you to go for your worship of God. But, it is necessary to delve into a deeper meaning for the word church. The most important thing to do would be to consider what the scriptures tell you about the church. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ” (1 Corinthians 12:12). “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23). “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body’s sake, which is the church” (Colossians 1:18, 24). Now consider some human quotations that enhance what the Bible has said about a church.

“A Christian church is a body or collection of persons, voluntarily associated together, professing to believe what Christ teaches, to do what Christ enjoins, to imitate His

example, cherish His spirit and make known His gospel to others.”

“A church is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by a covenant in faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws.” - R. F. Sample

“A church is an organization which should fight not for itself but for that salvation of the world.” - E. T. Hiscox

“A church is God between four walls.” - Dietrich Bonhaeffer

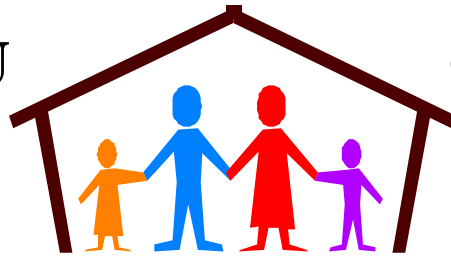
“A church is a center of light and leading of inspiration and guidance, for its specific community.” - Victor Hugo

“It takes men, not a creed, to make a church.” - Rufus M. Jones

“A church is people on the move.” - Cleland B. McAfee

The church is the body of Christ. It is made up of all the members that believe in Christ, let their life reflect His life, keep His teachings, work together to bring salvation to others and use their abilities in unity for the perfecting of the work. It is you, me and everyone else that are working together. The building is secondary to what the people are doing as members of the body of Christ! It is a special relationship with Christ and that is so very important and must be maintained according to His word.
- John O’Conner

WHY DO YOU



GO TO CHURCH?

By Carol Buechner

How would you answer the above question? Please take a few minutes right now to carefully and honestly consider your reasons for going to church. Maybe you do not go to church, so you should consider what prevents you from going. It might be helpful if you wrote your reasons down and examined them before you read any further. Now that you have some ideas, study the following reasons to see how they match up with yours. "I go to church because: I enjoy going. I want to be closer to God. I want to be energized, grow and be renewed spiritually. I have a desire to learn more about God and His ways. I want to hear and read God's word. I want to sing and praise God. I want to fellowship with other Christians. I want to pray and hear others pray. I want to glorify God. I want to hear a good sermon. I want to receive or give encouragement. I have a problem to bring before God. I want to worship God. I am seeking inspiration. I need guidance. I want to be in unity with other believers. I need my faith strengthened. I feel it is an obligation to go to church. I feel God commanded me to go to church. I have always gone to church, so I guess it is a habit. I think it is good entertainment. I want to see friends. I must admit it is a place to show off my new clothes, new car, etc. I want to "show off my talents." Hopefully, this sampling of reasons has given you inspiration to think more about why you really go to church. Have you identified legitimate reasons for going?

Perhaps the best thing to do is to let the Bible speak concerning going to church. "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122:1). "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with

thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations" (Psalm 100). "I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and will call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all his people. In the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise ye the Lord" (Psalm 116:17-19). These scriptures tell you to be glad you are going to church. You are to be joyful and singing praises to God. You are to express thankfulness to Him for what He has done for you. You are blessing Him and glorifying Him with your words and actions. It would definitely be an atmosphere that was peaceful and conducive to spending time with God and learning more about His ways.

WHAT DID JESUS DO WHEN ENTERING CHURCH?

The Bible instructs us that Jesus spent much time in the temple (church). As a child, He was there studying, listening to the adults and learning all that He could. As an adult, Jesus was there every day teaching in the temple. However, Jesus had to make some changes in what was going on in the temple in order for the services to be conducted in a manner that was right and beneficial for those attending. "And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but YE HAVE MADE IT A DEN OF THIEVES" (Matthew 21:12-13). Jesus was not pleased with the activity that was going on in the temple, so He promptly removed those that were corrupting the services. He called

them a gathering of thieves.

WHAT WOULD BE JESUS' REACTION TODAY?

If Jesus were to enter your church this Sabbath, what reaction might He have to what was happening? Do you think He would be pleased? Would there be a possibility that He would ask some to leave because of their words and actions? Perhaps Jesus would say to them as they departed, "You have made this a den of gossip. You have made this a den of anger. You have made this a den of jealousy. You have made this a den of hatred. You have made this a den of unforgiveness. You have made this a den of resentment." Hopefully, Jesus would not have this kind of reaction and would say, "Well done. I am very pleased with your attitude, conduct and Christian love."

HOW IMPORTANT IS CHURCH ATTENDANCE?

A direct commandment to attend church is not given in the Bible. However, there is important advice given in 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." This informs you to NOT stop meeting together and it is especially important now as you see the coming of Christ drawing nearer and nearer. It tells you that assembling with others is a time of encouragement to continue the work for the Lord in a spirit of love.

A BIBLICAL LOOK AT CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND CONDUCT

Church attendance is important but the reasons why you attend, your actions and the actions of others there and the overall atmosphere are extremely important to carefully contemplate. Set your mind on being in church and read the following series of scriptures carefully. Apply the scriptures to what should be going on and what the atmosphere should be. First, consider what James has to say: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay

clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all" (2: 1-4, 8-10). "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (3:13-18). "Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law. ..." (4:11). A brief summary of these verses would be that you must treat everyone equal in church. What a person wears or how they look is not important. Everyone is the same in God's eyes and you are to treat others in the same manner. Your conversation is to be Godly without any evil connotations. There is not to be envy and strife or any such evil work (anger, resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, gossip). This involves walking in the fruit of the spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance).

James has given you some important instructions on church atmosphere and conduct. Next, the Apostle Paul has sound words that can be applied to church attendance. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. That there should be no schism in the body; but the members should have the same

care one for another. And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues” (1 Corinthians 12,12-14, 18-20, 25-28). To summarize Paul’s words, it could be stated that the members of the church are all one in Christ. God has determined the organization of the body according to His will and He assigns jobs according to abilities. The body should be concerned equally about all those involved and there is to be no divisions among the members. Unity is the key.

Paul has more admonition in Ephesians for the church body to follow. “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the body of peace. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. 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. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (4:1 1-16,31-32,5:21). Again, you can see that God has chosen the ones to be in charge and they are to walk in the fruit of the spirit and not the flesh. The reason is of enormous importance - FOR THE PERFECTING AND EDIFYING OF THE SAINTS. The whole congregation

can be united by the effective work of the leaders and those attending church. Love, humility and forgiveness are vital for all involved.

Finally, absorb into your mind and heart instruction from John. “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. 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. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (1 John 4:7-8, 11-12, 5:2-3). John’s words certainly seem to have one prominent theme-LOVE. If you do not love the brothers and sisters with whom you are attending church, you DO NOT LOVE GOD. You are considered a liar which would make you a hypocrite. Therefore, love must be the prevailing theme in church. This passage also says that you must keep God’s commandments. Keeping His day holy by going to church in the right frame of mind is keeping His commandments. This also includes not using vain language, stealing (this includes not stealing someone else’s enjoyment of church by your words and actions), coveting, gossiping and so much more.

A SHORT BIBLICAL SUMMARY

There are so many scriptures that could be applied to attending church, but consider just a few more that are an excellent summary for what you are studying. “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND PEACE, AND JOY IN THE HOLY SPIRIT. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. LET US THEREFORE FOLLOW AFTER THE THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE, AND THINGS WHEREWITH ONE MAY EDIFY ANOTHER. That ye may with ONE MIND AND ONE MOUTH GLORIFY GOD, EVEN THE FATHER OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST” (Romans 14:17-19, 15:6). “And

let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, **LET US DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN, ESPECIALLY UNTO THEM WHO ARE OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH'** (Galatians 6:9-10). You should remember that you are going to church to serve Christ with righteousness, peace and joy. When you do this you are able to edify others which helps to create a unity that glorifies God. Always remember that you are to do **GOOD NOT EVIL** at all times, especially to brothers and sisters in the church.

QUESTIONS TO STIMULATE YOUR THOUGHTS

Perhaps the easiest way to examine and stimulate your thoughts on going to church and what the atmosphere should be like and how to act and speak there, is to pose questions to answer on your own. Do not just quickly pass over them but spend some quality time seriously thinking about the whole matter of church and the purpose and even what you could do to improve your attitude toward church and get even more from attending. Here are the questions:

What is the real reason I go to church?

Do I have a positive attitude or is it negative?

Am I an asset to the church gathering or am I a disruption?

Do I do anything that would edify other brothers and sisters or do I discourage them? What was my mind on during church? (What I'll do after church, the dress someone has on, the song I do not like, the remark that hurt my feelings, what I plan to say back when given an opportunity, what I am going to *fix* for lunch, who is not in church, the sermon is too long....)

Was God the focus of my thoughts?

Was I kind and caring in any way or was I rude?

What was really accomplished or what did I learn?

Am I being too critical and negative about the services?

Is there something I should be doing to help with services?

What if Jesus were sitting beside me in church?

Would my behavior or thoughts change? Was I really open to learning and growing stronger in the faith?

Was my motive in going to church the right one or did I go to cause a problem or to gossip?

Did I spend my time looking at my watch and wishing it were time to go?

Do you think, "I fulfilled my obligation for this week by going to church?"

FROM THE PULPIT

If you are directly involved in conducting the church service (minister, teacher, elder, musician, deacon), you will probably have a much different point of view to consider. In previous scriptures in James, Corinthians and Ephesians, you read that God determines the jobs of those in the church. Therefore, if you are involved in conducting the service, you have a responsibility and the responsibility is to do your very best. It is helpful to perform an examination of some scriptures that describe the duties and qualifications of those involved. Paul states the qualifications and duties of elders in Titus 1:5-9: "Ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." The qualifications are certainly stated in understandable words. Actually, these qualifications should apply to anyone involved in managing the affairs of the church.

Peter leaves no doubt about what a leader is to do: "The elders which are among you I exhort... **FEED THE FLOCK** of God which is among you, **TAKING THE OVERSIGHT THEREOF, NOT BY CONSTRAINT, BUT WILLINGLY**; not for filthy lucre, **BUT OF A READY MIND**; Neither being lords over God's heritage, but **BEING ENSAMPLES (EXAMPLES) TO THE FLOCK**. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, **ALL OF YOU BE SUBJECT ONE TO ANOTHER. AND BE CLOTHED WITH HUMILITY**: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Peter 5:1-3, 5). When Peter says to, "**FEED THE FLOCK**," he means to teach the members of the church and to provide their spiritual needs, not because you feel it is your job but because you know it is God's will. Do not do it for personal gain, profit, recognition or attention but as an example to be followed. Everyone

involved must be humble and open to suggestions, rebuke, correction, etc., when needed.

Those in charge of the church service will want to create the best environment possible for glorifying, exalting, magnifying, praising and thanking God. One of the most important things that can be considered here is have you done your job in preparing for teaching or preaching or whatever it is that you do? Have you spent adequate time and really studied to bring the very best instruction or have you done just enough to get by? Have you given the flock milk when they need meat? Are you feeding them spiritually as well as with knowledge? Are you edifying those in attendance to work hard for God and to put God first in their lives? As a teacher or minister, do you deliver a message quickly to satisfy those in a hurry or do you take the time needed to thoroughly convey the message? Are you aware of how people are reacting? Are you concerned about everyone that is in attendance? Does there seem to be someone that is really struggling spiritually? Have you noticed any contentions or situations that are not conducive to the atmosphere needed? Are you willing to step in and take care of difficulties that arise? Are you open to advice and suggestions from others? Do you feel your job is not important so it does not really matter how it is done? For example, if you are taking up the offering and must say the prayer for it, do you seriously consider what you should pray or just mumble a few words? Is there someone that is participating in the service that is not qualified while there is someone much more qualified that is not involved? Take a serious look at your role. It is extremely important. There are souls to be won or lost!

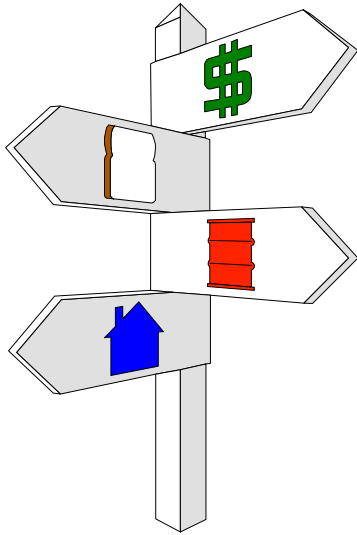
Church attendance is not something to be taken lightly. Neither is the conduct of the service to be considered unimportant. Both need serious attention because time spent in church is special time spent with God. You should be there to glorify, magnify and praise God. You should be there to offer prayers of thanksgiving. You could be there with prayer requests, seeking healing or asking for help for others in need. You should be there to be encouraged. You should be there to be instructed in the word of God, gain knowledge, wisdom and spiritual understanding. You should be there to grow spiritually so you can help others. There are many, many more reasons why you should be in church. You should NOT be in church as an obligation or for any negative reason (anger,

resentment, bitterness, unforgiveness, jealousy, gossip, to retaliate), it is not a place to promote selfish desires or be self-centered.

WHEN GOING TO CHURCH THE FOCUS MUST BE ON GOD AND THE LORD JESUS AT ALL TIMES. It is a special time of fellowship, joy, contentment and peace. Love should be the central theme for everything done and said in church. Before you enter church the next time, say a prayer for the service asking God for His guidance and for His blessings on all that attend. Above all, be thankful that you live in the United States, a country where you have the freedom to worship God as you please. Many people in the world are not able to worship God without being taunted, intimidated and put in fear for their lives.

WHAT IS A SERMON?

The highlight of attending church may be hearing a good sermon. A sermon is a speech, teaching, talk, or discourse given by a minister that is intended to give instruction in religious subjects which are based on Biblical scriptures. The manner in which this instruction is given is important. If it is presented in a routine, mechanical, unexpressive, dull, lethargic, indifferent, reluctant, uninteresting manner, lacking an enthusiastic approach, it is likely to be of little effect. The presenter needs to have adequate knowledge of the subject being presented. A sermon needs to be organized and prepared carefully before presentation. It should have a specific theme with appropriate scriptural references. It should be sequentially organized so that the listener can easily take notes. It should be inspirational enough to stir the listeners to grow spiritually and study the Bible more. It should be something that the listener can remember and put into action in their lives. It should bring salvation to those in need. The actual presentation should be understandable to all levels of abilities of those in attendance. It should not be too difficult to comprehend yet it should not be too mundane that it is boring. Scriptural references should fully support the material presented. The following words may help to stimulate the giver of the message: inspired, vivacious, earnest, passionate, fervent, zealous, diligent, satisfying, stirring, informative, motivating, refreshing, arousing curiosity. A good sermon will, "FEED THE FLOCK."



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 excerpt is from the Houston Chronicle.

Most Americans believe they are headed to heaven

**By K. Connie Kang
Los Angeles Times**

An overwhelming majority of Americans continue to believe there is life after death and that heaven and hell exist, according to a new study. What's more, most think they are heaven bound.

Nearly two-thirds of Americans in the survey said that they believe they will go to heaven. Only one half of 1 percent said they were hell-bound, according to the poll by the Oxnard, Calif.-based Barna Research Group, which has tracked trends related to beliefs, values and behaviors since 1984.

"We're optimists at heart," theologian Robert Johnston, professor of theology and culture at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, said, commenting on the survey's result. "If you really believe in hell, you wouldn't want to be there. By definition, hell is the denial of goodness." The survey, released last week, found that 76 percent of Americans believe in heaven and 71 percent in hell - same as a decade ago.

The poll interviewed 1,000 adults throughout September in all the states except Hawaii and Alaska. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Millions of Americans mix secular and various religious views to create their personal belief systems, said David Kinnaman, vice President of Barna Research Group.

"Americans don't mind embracing contradictions" he said. "It's hyper-individualism. They're cutting and pasting religious views from a variety of different sources - television movies, conversation with their friends."

Pollster George Barna, a former Protestant minister who found the research group noted that one out of 10 people who describe themselves as born-again Christians also believe that people are reincarnated in another form after death, which violates Christian tenets.

A national survey found these beliefs about an after-life:

FROM THE HIGH...

*Among those who believe in heaven, nearly half described it as a "state of eternal existence in God's presence." *Almost a third said heaven is "an actual place of rest and reward where souls go after death." *One in eight said heaven is just "symbolic," 5 percent said there is no after life and 5 percent said they weren't sure.

TO THE LOW

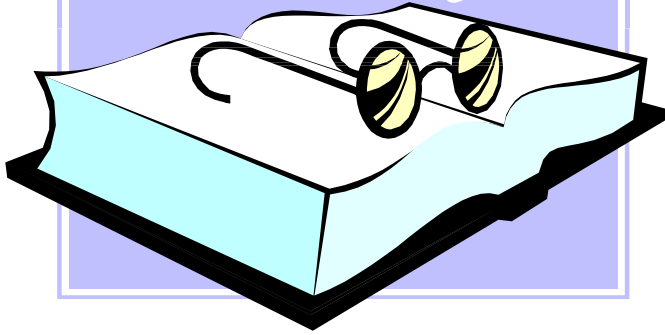
*Four out of 10 believe that hell is 'a state of eternal separation from God's presence.' *One-third believe it is "an actual place of torment and suffering where people's souls go after death." *One in 8 believe that hell is just a symbol of an "unknown bad outcome after death."

Comment

Heaven is the dwelling place of God and His Son, Jesus. Jesus told us that no man has entered heaven. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13). His saints will be caught up to the New Jerusalem as he brings this city down with Him when He returns and resurrects His own. Until then, they rest in death in their graves.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Should we use sacred names for God or Jesus?

Answer: This question is asked frequently because there are those that teach we should only address or talk about God and Jesus with a sacred name and the true believer would know them and use them accordingly. This belief is based on the supposed fact that Hebrew is a pure language, and that it was used before Babel, but scripture does not support this thinking. Let us turn to the book of Genesis.

"Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech." (Genesis 11:7).

No one language survived as perfect or pure, otherwise believers would have been told to use this language or that language. Instead, the Apostle Paul tells us the following in Romans.

"Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Romans 8:26).

What are we to conclude? At this time, there is no pure language and our prayers are being translated, as it were, by the Holy Spirit back to God in a pure language which we do not know and cannot utter or speak.

Another area of discussion is where Moses is told to tell the children of Israel the following:

"And Moses said unto God, Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? What shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations." (Exodus 3:13-15).

Here we learn of the I AM THAT I AM or JHWH the tetragrammaton for I AM THAT I AM. JHWH is an unpronounceable group of letters, without vowel points, that represent I (Y) AM (H) That (W) AM (H). What man has tried to do is make the unpronounceable, pronounceable, by adding what they believe to be acceptable vowels, so we (man) can say this name. YHWH is not as much a name but letter representing an existing being that causes things to be or to exit. Remember when Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees in John, He spoke these words:

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. (John 8:58).

Further study reveals that the patriarchs did not know something that people today claim to know - the sacred name. If anyone would have known a sacred name, it would have been Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Please read

the following verse.

"And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty, but by name JEHOVAH was I now known to them." (Exodus 6:3).

Jehovah is another use of YHWH. There was no J in the Hebrew alphabet. Here we have YHWH become JHVH and then adding vowel points to make JHVH pronounceable - thus Jehovah.

Lastly we are told the following in Zephania.

"For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent." (Zephania 3:9).

A "pure language" will be returned, meaning we do not have one now, and in Revelation, we read: "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself." (Revelation 19:12).

This verse tells us that when Jesus returns he had a name written, THAT NO MAN KNEW, but He Himself. If we believe these verses, how could we possibly know His name now?

Question: What does the Bible say about Satan and what affect does he have on the world today?

Answer: Satan began his existance as an anointed Angel named Lucifer. Satan made war with God and attempted to take over heaven, convincing a third part of the Angels to follow him. Ultimately Satan, who is also referred to as the Devil and the dragon, was unsuccessful and was cast down to the Earth. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:7-9). "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit" (Isaiah 14:12-15). "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." (Luke 10:18)

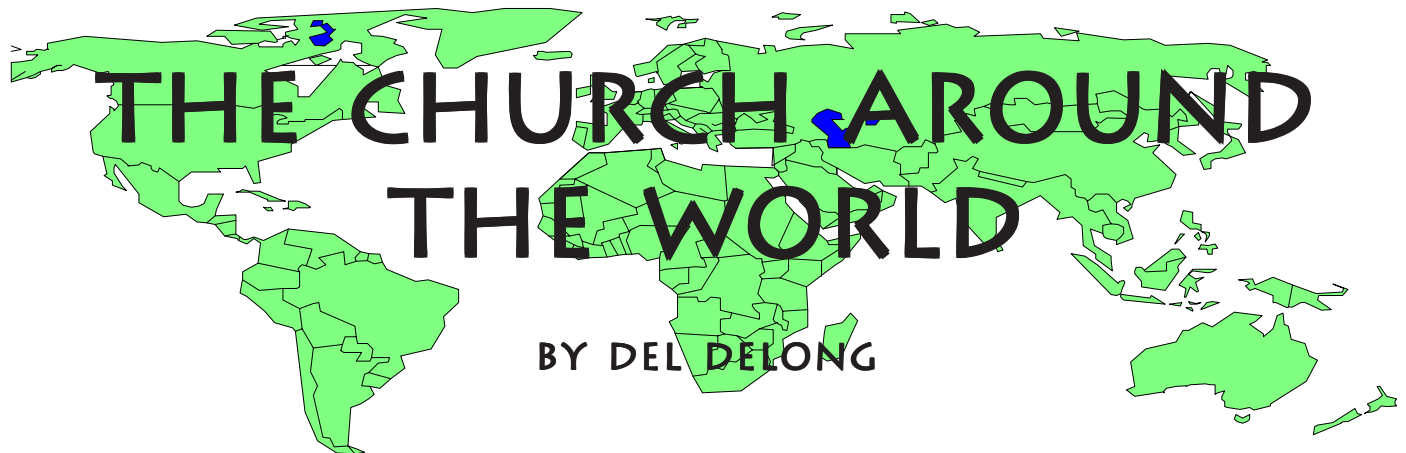
Satan, through a serpent, tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden with a lie and Eve, followed by Adam, committed sin for the first time because of this temptation. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (Genesis 3:1-6).

Satan is the great deceiver and the adversary of God and of all of the Children of God. He is the father of lies and the author of deception. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). In olden times, Satan was able to accuse the Children of God before God. However, through the power of Christ he has been cast down and much of his power is curbed. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. (Job 1:6) "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:10)

Satan still has a great affect on the World today. He goes forth to spread lies and falsehoods. Only through the truth and power of Christ are we able to overcome him. "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 words of the devil" (I John 3:8).

"To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also: for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ; Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices"(II Corinthians 2:10-11).

Satan was created as an Angel of light but through his own pride he rose up against God and was cast down to Earth. Satan remains on Earth today, seeking to deceive and corrupt mankind. Only through the power of Christ are we able to resist this temptation and refrain from sin.



This is the front page of our new web site. The address is:
www.churchofgod-7thday.org

Church of God (7th Day)

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Contact us:
Phone: (304) 782-1411
cogsevday@aol.com

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (Matthew 7:14)

As we strive to understand God's word, we proceed up the narrow path of righteousness. Click on the waypoints along this path to learn more about the teachings of the Church of God (7th Day).

Events

The Church of God (7th Day) 2004 Summer Retreat will be in San Antonio, TX from June 27th, 2004 through July 1st, 2004. [Details](#)

The Salem Church of God (7th Day) will be hosting a Vacation Bible School for children from June 21st, 2004 through June 25th, 2004. [Details](#)

The semi-annual Apostolic Council meeting will be held in Salem, WV on June 4th, 2004 through June 6th, 2004.

The date for the next Lord's Supper has been set to be Saturday evening, April 3, 2004 (after sunset). This is the beginning of April 4th (Bible time).

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The new web site has many links. Under doctrine, you will find three areas. The first is called "Base Camp". When you click on that link either from the place on the mountain or on the words, you will see the page below "pop up". Each of these topics may be clicked on for a new page. The other links will do the same thing. There are back issues of the Advocate as well as the current issue, back issues of the Quarterlies as well as current and future quarters, tracts, a French section, and a Spanish section.

You can print out the Advocates, Quarterlies or tracts, but first you must download Acrobat Reader (free) by clicking on a link at the bottom of those pages. This sometimes will take some time depending on how fast an internet connection you have.

There is a complete concordance which is very useful, frequently asked questions (FAQ), addresses of local churches, pictures, and a minister's page (password protected). On the opposite side of the picture you will find upcoming events.

The site is updated once a month on the fourth Monday of the month. Several sites are still under construction, but we are making good progress. Your comments and suggestions are welcome. We are always striving to improve on the web site.

As you proceed up the mountain, the next link is called "Ascent". Here you will find twelve links covering topics such as the priesthoods, commandments of God, testimony of Jesus, and Church beliefs.

The next stop on the road up the mountain is called "Summit". Here you find fifteen topics which include Church organization, prophecies concerning Jesus's return, and various other topics. Each topic can be clicked on and the related page will "pop up".

As time goes on, you will see more links and more information appear on the site. We are very excited about this new tool to help spread the good news of salvation, and the truth of God's Word. Please let us know what you think.

Ben DeLong is our technician, and he has done an excellent job with the design and content of the site. We wish to thank the many ministers who have contributed to the content of our web pages.

Base Camp

Welcome to the Base Camp. Here you will learn the basic beliefs of the Church of God (7th Day) on salvation, Jesus, the Bible, and living a christian life. Base Camp contains what Peter refers to as "the sincere milk of the word" [1 Peter 2:2].

Click on the links below to learn more about each of these subjects.

Bible and Religion

[What is the Bible and what does it contain?](#)

[Who is God?](#)

[Who is Jesus and what does His life mean for me today?](#)

[Who or what is the Holy Spirit?](#)

[What does the Bible say about Satan and what affect does he have on the world today?](#)

[Who or what are Angels?](#)

Christian Life

[What are the keys to receiving salvation?](#)

[How does one lead a Christian life?](#)

[What is prayer, and why should we pray?](#)

Church of God

[What is the Church of God \(7th Day\)?](#)

[How do I become a member of the Church of God \(7th Day\)?](#)

LESSON I

SPIES SENT INTO THE PROMISED LAND

Scripture Reading: Numbers 13:17-33.

Golden Text: Numbers 13:17 (first part).

"And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan,..."

NOTE: The Lord has led the children of Israel in their long journey to Canaan and now they were at the very border of the land.

1. At this time what did God tell Moses to do? Numbers 13:1-2.
2. What did Moses ask these spies to do? Numbers 13:17-18.
3. Besides finding out about the strength of the people, what else were they to look for? Numbers 13:19-20.
4. How long were the spies gone? Numbers 13:25.
5. When the spies returned, what did they bring with them? Numbers 13:26-27.
6. What report did they give of the people there? Numbers 13:28.
7. Caleb was one of the spies, and what did he say? Did the other spies agree with him? Numbers 13:30-32.

NOTE: Joshua and Caleb were the only two spies who brought back a good report.

8. What did the spies who brought evil reports call the people who were in Canaan? Numbers 13:33.

NOTE: Out of the 12 spies who went into Canaan, 10 returned with an evil report. Two believed God and wanted to cross over into the land. They knew He had been with them all the way and would still protect them.

LESSON II

MURMURINGS OF THE PEOPLE

Scripture Reading: Numbers 14:1-9.

Golden Text: Numbers 14:2 (first part).

"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron..."

NOTE: In our last lesson we found that 12 spies were sent out into the land of Canaan. When they returned, only 2 gave a good report and wanted to go over and take the land.

1. What effect did the evil report of the 10 spies have on the people? Numbers 14:1.
2. Were they sorry they had left Egypt and what did they decide to do? Numbers 14:2-4.
3. What did Moses and Aaron do? Numbers 14:5.
4. Joshua and Caleb were the two spies who brought a good report. What did they say to the people? Numbers 14:7-8.
5. Why did they tell the people not to be afraid? Numbers 14:9.
6. What did the congregation want to do with their leaders? Numbers 14:10.

NOTE: The people rebelled and refused to go forward. They would have stoned their leaders except for the appearance of the Lord.

7. The Lord was very angry. What did He say He would do? Numbers 14:11-12.
8. Moses answered the Lord and what did he say? Numbers 14:13,16,19.

LESSON III

TURNING BACK INTO THE WILDERNESS

Scripture Reading: Numbers 14:20-45.

Golden Text: Numbers 14:25 (last part).

"..Tomorrow turn you, and get you into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea."

NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that the Lord was very angry with the Children of Israel and Moses pleads for them.

1. What does God promise and what will He bring on the people? Numbers 14:20-23.
2. Caleb was one of the good spies. Was he to see the promised land? Numbers 14:24.
3. Where did the Lord tell the people to go? Numbers 14:25.

NOTE: For their disobedience they were sent back into the wilderness.

4. What did the Lord say would happen to all over 20 years old? Numbers 14:29-30.
5. What would happen to the children under 20?: Numbers 14:31.
6. How long were they to wander in the wilderness? Numbers 14:34.
7. What did the people want to do when they saw they had sinned? Numbers 14:39-40.
8. What did Moses tell them about leaving? Numbers 14:41-43.
9. Did they go anyway? What was the result? Numbers 14:44-45

LESSON IV

THE REBELLION OF KORAH

Scripture Reading: Numbers 16:1-22.

Golden Text: Numbers 16:19 (first part).

"And Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation:..."

NOTE: In the last lesson, God turned the children of Israel back into the wilderness because of their sinfulness, lack of faith, and murmurings. Now Moses has a new trouble to arise.

1. Who rose up against Moses and how many men were with him? Numbers 16:1-2.
2. What was the complaint of Korah and others against Moses? Numbers 16:12-14.
3. Moses was angry and what did he do? Numbers 16:15.
4. Moses then spoke to Korah and what did he ask him to do? Numbers 16:16, 18-19.
5. What did the Lord tell Moses and Aaron to do? Numbers 16:20-21.
6. What did they ask of God? Numbers 6:22.





DO YOU REALLY LOVE MOTHER?

by Mary Railton

School was over and Martha and Mark were in the living room at home. The weather outside made them very happy to have a home where they could play inside and have fun.

Suddenly, from another room they heard a familiar voice calling. "It is supper time," said Mother. "Time to pick up your toys and get cleaned up for supper."

After exchanging glances, Martha and Mark went right on playing. Father came up from the basement workshop and he and Mother talked for a little while. Then Mother called again. "Martha and Mark, get out here and get cleaned up. Supper is on the table."

They dropped everything on the floor and ran to the kitchen to make ready for supper. As they sat down to the table, Mark turned to Mother, and said, "Oh, I love you, Mother. You fixed 'skettie' and meatballs, my favorite supper."

Mother stole a glance in to the living room and, turning to Mark, said, "Do you really love me, Mark?"

"I love you, too, Mother," spoke up Martha. "I would do anything for you."

Turning to Martha, Mother repeated her question. "Do you really love, me, Martha, enough to do anything I ask?"

Martha and Mark exchanged puzzled glances, wondering what Mother meant by her odd questions.

After supper, the twins scampered back to the living room to play while Mother put away the food and did the dishes. Soon it was time for a bedtime story. It was Mother's turn tonight to tell the story and she had thought, while doing the dishes, of an appropriate story.

Gathered all on the couch, the children climbed up on Mother and Dad, and Mother began her story.

"A long time ago there was a wealthy man named Abram. He had all the comforts of life and he and his wife, Sarah, were very happy together."

"One day God spoke to Abraham. 'I want you to pack up your goods and take your family to a far away country that you have never seen. I will protect you all the way and show you how to reach that country. I want to begin a new nation, and I want you and your wife, Sarah, to be the founders of that nation.'

"Well, Abraham knew that when God asked him to do something he should obey God, And so he said, 'All right, I will be ready to travel as soon as I can gather everything together.'

"They traveled for many, many days; and always God protected them for harm. When they reached their new country, Abraham looked in all directions. To himself Abraham said, 'My, how happy I am that I obeyed God. For this country has wonderful grass for all my cattle and sheep and there is plenty of room for them to graze. My, think what I would have missed if I had not done what God asked me to do!'

"Soon they had a little baby boy in their happy home. Abraham became more wealthy than he had been in his homeland. Yes, Abraham was certainly glad that he had obeyed God although at the time he could not understand why God would want him to leave his country. Why, he was much happier here than ever before. Yes, he would always do as God asked, for he knew that it was much better to obey."

Martha and Mark listened quietly, often looking at each other. Mark stole a glance at his father who was watching all those toys still on the floor. And Martha noticed Mother looking sadly at the toys while she was telling about Abraham.

Again they exchanged glances and quickly slid off the couch to the floor. Mother and Dad said nothing while the toys quickly disappeared into their box. But when Mother tucked them tenderly into bed she whispered in each of their ears, "Thank you for doing as I asked." And kissed them good night. They had learned a lesson in obedience.

-The Restitution Herald.



A LOVE CAKE FOR MOTHER

RECIPE

- 1 can of "obedience"
- Several pounds of "Affection"
- 1 pint of "Neatness"
- Some holiday, birthday, and everyday "Surprises"
- 1 can of "Running Errands" (Willing Brand)
- 1 box of powdered "Get up when I should"
- 1 bottle of "Keep sunny all day long"
- 1 can of pure "Thoughtfulness"

DIRECTIONS

Mix well, bake in a hearty, warm oven, and serve to "mother" every day. She ought to have it in "Big Slices."

-Jean Beadle

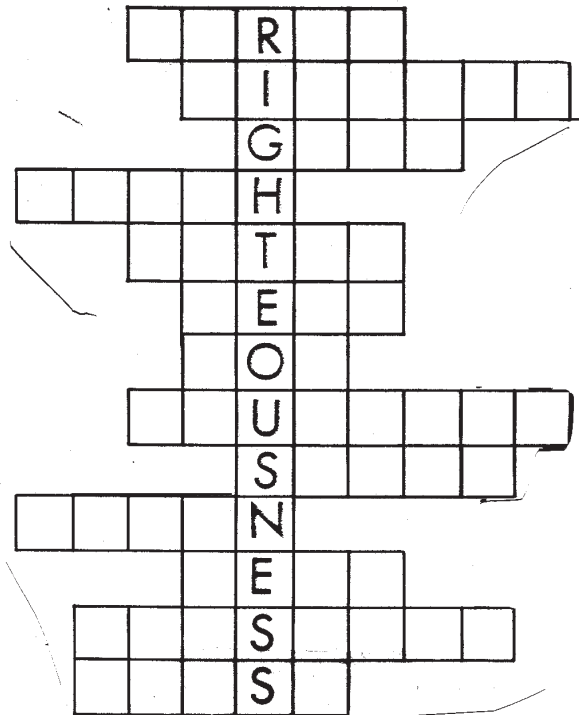
Find these foods you might like to eat that are found in the Bible. Look up the verses.

- Judges 6:19
- Luke 4:4
- Numbers 11:5
- Luke 15:23
- Luke 24:42
- & ----- Numbers 11:5
- Ezekiel 4:9
- Isaiah 28:4
- I Kings 17:13
- Isaiah 7:15
- OR ----- Isaiah 55:1

BIBLE STORY ACROSTIC

GENESIS 12:1-9

- R. God asked ___ to move to a new land (v. 1).
- I. Another name for relatives (v. 1).
- G. Opposite of receive (v. 7).
- H. Direction opposite of north (v. 9).
- T. Place where sacrifices are offered in worship (v. 8).
- E. "Unto thy ___ will give this land" (V. 7).
- O. Abraham's brother's son (v. 5).
- U. Higher than a hill (v. 8).
- S. Wife of Abram (v. 5).
- N. Abraham was 75 years old when he left this place (v. 4).
- E. Abraham lived in a ___ (v. 8).
- S. "Thou shalt be a ___" (v. 2).
- S. Opposite of bless (v. 3).



I GO TO CHURCH

By Carol Buechner

*I go to church to meet with the God that I love,
Where He embraces me in His special love from above.*

*I sing praises to His glorious name,
And bow in His Holy presence as thanks I proclaim.*

*I go to church to learn more about Jesus,
With my mind focused on all He means to each of us.*

*I enter with an attitude of great joy and peace,
Knowing that God has provided for my sins to be released.*

I go to church where everything I do and speak.

Will be done humbly and in a spirit so meek.

*I spend my time in God's marvelous house of instruction,
Having put all my selfish wants and desires out of function.*

I go to church because I love going there

For it is where I can put away my worldly cares.

I don't look for things to complain about or criticize.

For I go to church for my spiritual exercise.