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August 2010



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# The DAWN

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### HIGHLIGHTS OF DAWN

Adolescent Violence 2

### INTERNATIONAL BIBLE STUDIES

Sharing God's Grace 16

Giving of Oneself 18

Living in the Future 20

Growing in Joy and Peace 22

Upheld by God 24

### CHRISTIAN LIFE AND DOCTRINE

Searching the Scriptures—Part 8

Gold Tried in the Fire 26

Determining the Lord's Will 39

Weekly Prayer Meeting Texts 15

### VINEYARD ECHOES

Blessings in India 51

**OBITUARIES** 61

**SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS** 62

**CONVENTIONS** 63

# Adolescent Violence

*“This know also,  
that in the last  
days perilous  
times shall come.”*

—II Timothy 3:1

**IN THE APOSTLE PAUL’S** second letter to his beloved Timothy, he was looking down the long stream of time to a day filled with violence.

He told him that it would be ‘the last days,’ and that it would mark the closing features of this present Gospel Age. Paul then explained that there would be a general disrespect for law and order, and that it would be seen in every element of society, including the youth. He further said, “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.”—vss. 2-5

## **PERILOUS TIMES**

Paul also referred to our day in prophecy as “perilous times.” We are now witnesses of the violent

changes that are taking place in our world, and tragically also among this generation's adolescent population. The problem is worldwide. The apostle indicated that one of the main distinctions would be a decline and challenge to the standards of family life, and to parental discipline and authority. The word 'perilous' as used by Paul, has been translated from the New Testament Greek word which means 'grievous' or 'dangerous.'

The word perilous is thus an apt description of the rising tide of lawlessness that has gripped our society, including the younger generation. Our prophetic day is indeed grievous and is becoming increasingly dangerous. The problem covers a wide range of behavioral issues, such as anger and physical fighting to more severe forms of assault that can result in serious injury or death. Bullying, gang violence, school shootings, and other violent conflicts are a concern for families, school personnel, and communities alike who are seeking ways to control this growing trend.

## **A TIME OF TROUBLE**

In symbolic language, the Prophet Daniel also wrote concerning this end of the age. He prophesied that it would be marked by a great time of trouble over all the earth. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." (Dan. 12:1) At the close of Jesus' earthly ministry, he recalled this prophecy

and gave it even further dimension. He said, “Then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” (Matt. 24:21) Jesus also stated that this great trouble coming over the human family would never be repeated.

God then gave the prophet further instructions, and said, “But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.” (Dan. 12:4) In his translation of this scripture, Joseph Rotherham renders this verse, “But thou Daniel close up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end, many will run to and fro, and knowledge [calamities or wickedness—*Marginal Translation*] shall abound.” (vs. 4) This increase of knowledge may be used either for good or for evil. The tendency toward evil doing was shown in the early history of the human creation. “GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”—Gen. 6:5

## **FRUSTRATION AND AGGRESSION**

We are now living during the closing years of this present Gospel Age, and the Scriptures substantiate the fact that it will be associated with a great time of trouble. Today’s youth have been brought up with new technology that has created a generational shift in the ethics of its many various activities. They may realize that a certain action is wrong but are able to justify their actions as being within the new norm.

Today's teenagers are also under more social and parental pressure to excel, that may not have been true even a few decades ago. Therefore, it is not unusual to find our present-day youth unable to cope with the added stress of everyday living. The teenage years are a time of great change and transition in a young person's life. Young adults seek to define who they are and how they will choose to make their mark upon the world, and their young bodies are producing hormones that are often linked to frustration and aggression.

There are positive influences that will help reduce the chances of an adolescent turning to bad behavior. These may include personal intolerance toward violent action and a more positive commitment to the doing of what is right. Other factors may include a supportive relationship with parents or other adults and having friends who disapprove of violence. Analysts point out that family influences are most important before the age of twelve, whereas peer influences become more important during later adolescence.

However, it is suggested that problems may arise when a frustrated, or bored, teen begins to experiment with pushing their boundaries too far, or venting their emotions in unruly ways. Although there is no single reason why a young person may turn to violent behavior, there are certain indications that are believed to be contributing factors. Some of these influences may include a history of early aggression in childhood, being exposed to family or neighborhood violence, drug and alcohol use, gang membership, or residing in a poor neighborhood with few economic opportunities.

## **STRESS FACTORS**

When stress is allowed to pile up and not dealt with in a productive manner, it may cause a young person to experience a physical state of distress. Stress depletes the brain of important chemicals that are needed to regulate emotion, and physical and mental symptoms may begin to disrupt the pattern of a normal life.

Becoming overly stressed can lead to a variety of adverse side effects among teenagers, including being more susceptible to illness. If excessive tiredness is experienced it may lead one to being ill equipped to deal with life's problems. If not dealt with satisfactorily, stress can cause depression, a sense of boredom, emotional upset, and other factors. Learning proper coping techniques early in life is important in our stressful day.

## **ALCOHOL ABUSE**

Those who study alcohol related problems point out that there is a steady increase in alcohol abuse among teenagers in the 11 to 15-year-old group. They also say that there is an increase in the amount of alcohol that is consumed, and that they are concerned about possible negative health effects on our nation's youth.

Adolescence is a transition time when the body is undergoing many significant changes, such as hormonal alterations and brain development. It is also a time when young people start to associate more with friends and others beyond their childhood peers. They thus feel an increased pressure to 'fit in' or to go along with the crowd in order for them to be accepted socially. These new circumstances may be

confusing and difficult for the youth to understand and deal with. Often their ability to make correct, or safe, decisions is also at a stage of immaturity. Exposing the brain to alcohol during this period may interrupt key processes of brain development, possibly leading to mild cognitive impairment as well as to a further escalation of drinking.

Alcohol is absorbed very rapidly into the blood stream from the stomach lining in as short a time as 5 to 10 minutes, but its effects can last for several hours depending on the amount ingested and how quickly it is consumed. Females absorb alcohol faster than males because their bodies contain less water. The water dilutes the alcohol and so the same amount of alcohol will produce a higher concentration in the blood. After consuming only 2 to 3 normal strength beers or 4 to 5 standard glasses of wine, most people will feel less inhibited and more relaxed. Anything that is consumed after this may cause a person to become less coordinated and clumsy, and in some cases there may be emotional reactions.

Motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death among youth ages 15 to 20. The rate of fatal crashes among alcohol-involved drivers in this age group is more than twice the rate for alcohol-involved drivers 21 years and older. Alcohol use also interacts with conditions such as depression and stress that may contribute to suicide, which is the third leading cause of death among people between the ages of 14 and 25.

## **DRUG ABUSE**

A drug is a substance that modifies one or more of the human body's functions when it is consumed.

Various medicines and other substances are produced under patent by pharmaceutical companies and are made available for the general public. Within a controlled environment these medicinal drugs are used by doctors to treat various illnesses and disease. The dispensing of these products is regulated by the government, and may be purchased over the counter from licensed pharmacies without restrictions.

The use of illegal drugs, on the other hand, has widespread serious implications for violence and evil. It is one of the profound evils that mark the closing features of this present Gospel Age. It is becoming an increasingly dangerous threat to the well-being of mankind. Unfortunately, it is often aimed at our nation's youth, and has caused untold distress among those who have been affected by it. Many have become addicted to the use of these illegal drugs. Surveys show that cocaine, marijuana, heroin, and inhalants are the most commonly used drugs among teenagers age 13 through 18. Juveniles take drugs for many different reasons including peer pressure and family problems, such as a broken home. Others may perceive taking drugs as a new, interesting, or exciting experience.

Adolescents may abuse substances such as drugs, alcohol, and tobacco for a variety of reasons, but it is clear that our society pays a significant cost to deal with this problem. The toll for this may be seen in our hospitals and emergency facilities in every part of this nation through direct damage to the health of the individuals concerned. It is also noted that there is a direct and serious connection between substance abuse and crime of all sorts.

Although the use of some drugs, such as cocaine, has declined, use of other drugs, such as heroin and others, has increased.

Therefore, it is essential that there be an increased awareness and knowledge among families with teenage children concerning the terrible risks of substance abuse, its causes and manifestation. It is absolutely essential to reach our young people during the crucial years when drug use may become an unfortunate and serious issue.

Evaluation studies show that schools which have implemented some form of awareness programs have had fewer children partaking of drugs than those schools that did not have these types of programs. The findings also indicate that the target population needs to have more schools to implement educational programs such as Planned Parenthood and the Drug Abuse Resistance Education programs. Making known the risks of drug use and abuse among juveniles thus makes them more aware of the consequences they are facing in the future. Children who are made aware of the risks of drug use tend to draw away from these substances, as opposed to those who have not been informed about the risks involved in taking drugs.

## **TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES**

Statistics show that in 1998, homicides in the United States claimed the lives of 2,573 children between the ages of 11 and 19. It was the second leading cause of death for adolescents that year. When compared to other industrialized nations, adolescent violence in the United States is greater, more likely to involve firearms, and has more lethal

consequences. From 1990 to 1995, the rate of fire-arm-related homicide in this country for youth under the age of fifteen years was substantially higher than that of several other countries combined.

### **INTOLERABLE BEHAVIOR**

An incident occurred recently that reveals a serious behavioral problem that is taking place on America's school grounds. Police were called to the scene in which a 14 year-old school boy had been severely attacked and beaten by more than a dozen of his classmates. The police reported that the boy had red hair, and they believed the attack originated with a Face-book group who carried out the attack in observance of "Kick a Ginger Day." They further explained that 'Ginger' is an old-fashioned term for a person who has red hair, and was the reason why the boy was targeted. They also noted that other redhead students had been attacked as well.

This level of intolerance is a serious symptom of a growing trend in our ever-increasing violent society. It is a seed that generates hatred and makes it grow, and it was manufactured as a new and different reason for victimizing fellow students.

### **A MORAL VOID**

A very timely article appeared in the *Los Angeles Daily News* recently that emphasizes the increasing lack of respect for the common standards of law and order in our modern world. It was submitted by Paul D. White, and reports a vicious attack that took place against a young girl on a school campus, from which we quote in part. "The refusal by dozens of students and adults to intervene in a horrible scene involving a young school girl being

molested by several boys should not surprise anyone. Every recent White House, including the present one, has said our schools' sole goal is to raise academic achievement. The mantra of every President and Secretary of Education in recent memory has been 'higher scores.' And ever so slightly, our children's ability to memorize and recite relatively meaningless academic factoids has increased.

"But this proclaimed improvement in our education system has come at a price. It was accomplished by gutting school curricula of time spent teaching children about character, integrity, compassion, unselfishness, and moral courage. Also marginalized or eliminated from the school day has been the inspiration to care about fellow humans that comes from studying music and art.

"We've taught our children that school is not about 'us,' or the good of the group, but about 'you' and making sure your test scores go up. By extension of this reasoning, who should care about someone being molested? We've taught students that the most important thing is keeping 'your' future safe by securing your test scores. With no moral exceptions to this directive being taught, of course no student risked personal damage to rescue the victim.

"The damage of this no-values approach to education has spread further than the children. School employees, too, allegedly observed and ignored the young girl's urgent need for help. Why? Because the same amoral approach to learning that staff promote with their students has poisoned their souls as well. Fearful, apathetic responses like this one occur because schools do not educate children's

hearts as well as their minds. This has resulted in a moral illiteracy that could annihilate our civilization.”

## **BRUTAL BEHAVIOR**

Another article concerning the same incident, and from which we quote in part, was published at about the same time by the *Los Angeles Times* (October 31, 2009) under the title “Brutality Hard to Fathom” and was submitted by Sandy Banks. She wrote, “School officials wished to emphasize the fact that the homecoming dance that was taking place that evening where party-goers danced in the gym, was indeed a success in terms of safety because nothing happened at the event. Banks pointed out that the police report stated that while the 10 participants and 20 onlookers stood by, they were jeering, taking photos, and messaging friends to join them.”

Banks was unable to explain the level of brutality that took place that evening on the school campus. She said, “They blamed music and video games that glamorize violence; desensitized men who treat women like pieces of meat, the disengagement of young people in a world ruled by technology, where real life is what’s on You Tube. Or, the powerlessness these disenfranchised kids feel in their violent neighborhood and fractured families.”

## **WHOLESALE MASSACRE**

Although school shootings are not an entirely new event in the United States, a new level of violent behavior among teenagers was achieved and brought suddenly to America’s attention on April 20, 1999. It happened at Columbine High School in

Littleton, Colorado. On that day, two high school seniors, 18 year-old Eric Harris and 17 year-old Dylan Klebold, carried out a vicious attack inside the school building during the middle of the day. When the massacre ended 12 students and 1 teacher had been killed, more than 20 others were injured and the two youths had both taken their own lives.

The two murderers were both intelligent, came from solid homes with two parents, and had older brothers who were three years their senior. In elementary school, Klebold and Harris had both played in sports such as baseball and soccer. Both enjoyed working with their computers. However, when the two boys entered the school they were carrying guns, knives, and a multitude of explosive devices. Apparently they had been planning to kill hundreds of their fellow students.

The incident has sparked a lively debate that is centered on the increasing availability of firearms, and the need for more gun control in the United States. Discussion related to gun violence involving youths was focused on the nature of high school clique, subcultures, and bullying. In addition, the role of violent movies and video games in American society was considered. The shooting also resulted in an increased emphasis on school security.

## **COUNSEL AND UNDERSTANDING**

The Scriptures present standard laws of righteousness and common respect for our fellow man. However, as one of the signs of our times, these laws are being set aside in favor of a new found sense of liberty that suggests that we have the right to do whatever feels good at the time. Solomon was

a very wise man and is the author of valuable counsel. His writings are based on the principles from above, and his supernatural wisdom prefigures our Lord Jesus—the greater Solomon. (Matt. 12:42) Thus we read, “The Proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel; To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion. A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels.” (Prov. 1:1-5) We must have love and reverence for God. “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”—vs. 7

## **DISCIPLINE AND CORRECTION**

Discipline and correction are a means to teach our youth what is acceptable behavior and that which is not. In this connection, Solomon wrote, “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.” (Prov. 13:24) He further emphasized, “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.” (Prov. 22:15) Correction given in the proper spirit of love is beneficial to a child. To profit from discipline is evidence of wisdom. “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. When the wicked are multiplied, transgression increaseth: but the righteous shall see their fall. Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul.”—Prov. 29:15-17

## THE DAYS OF YOUTH

Thus is the wonderful counsel of a loving Heavenly Father toward his human creation, and especially for the perilous times in which we now live. “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain.”—Eccles. 12:1,2 ■

## WEEKLY PRAYER MEETING TEXTS

**AUGUST 5**—“We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”—Romans 8:28 (Z. ’00-22 Hymn 12)

**AUGUST 12**—“Cleanse thou me from secret faults. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. . . . Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my Redeemer.”—Psalm 19:12-14 (Z. ’98-22 Hymn 256)

**AUGUST 19**—“Abstain from every form of evil.”—I Thessalonians 5:22 (*Revised Standard Version*) (Z. ’03-26 Hymn 130)

**AUGUST 26**—“Love . . . is kind.”—I Corinthians 13:4 (Z ’03-153 Hymn 267)

# Sharing God's Grace

**Key Verse:** *“Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”*  
—*Philippians 1:27*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Philippians 1*

in knowledge and in all judgment; That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel; So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places.” vss. 9-13

Another favorable outcome of Paul's imprisonment

**THE APOSTLE PAUL COM-**menced this epistle by identifying himself as well as his companion, Timothy, and proceeded to express gratitude to God for his brethren in Philippi. Paul was always joyful as he prayed for the Philippian brethren and, because of their zeal in proclaiming the gospel, the memory of their faithful service made him long to be with them again despite his being kept as a prisoner in Rome. “God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.”—Phil. 1:1-8

“This I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more

was the fact that his example of fearless witnessing inspired many in Rome to manifest greater courage in speaking boldly as they testified about Christ. “Many of the brethren in the Lord, . . . are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” (vs. 14) Evidently, there were two types of Christians who were engaged in this preaching. Some may have had a desire for greater personal prominence or even to add affliction to Paul out of envy, whereas others with sincere desires wished to further the work which the apostle had begun.—vss. 15,16

Those who preached with loving motives recognized Paul’s determination to defend the gospel, realizing that he had been imprisoned because of his bold stand. Thus, the apostle was able to rejoice because even though his activities caused his loss of freedom, he derived pleasure from seeing the Heavenly Father’s name glorified—“I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.”—vss. 17,18

Paul’s life was totally consumed in serving Christ; but if he were to die, it would have been a personal gain for him to have rested from all the rigors associated with being spent while carrying out his sacrificial course. “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (vs. 21) Having yielded himself to God’s will, he had no personal preference as to whether that should be his portion, or instead, to be relieved from toil by the sleep of death. Nevertheless, the apostle continues by expressing a desire for a third option—the return of Christ—because he knew that he then would be resurrected and rewarded for his faithfulness.—vss. 22,23

In the Key Verse of our lesson, Paul expressed a desire that the brethren should speak truth with sobriety, and honor God by a walk of consistency based upon divine principles.

This sage counsel is applicable to all who would serve as divine mouthpieces. “Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.”—Ps. 19:14 ■

# Giving of Oneself

**Key Verse:** “*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.*”  
—*Philippians 2:5*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Philippians 2:2-3:1*

**THIS LESSON STARTS WITH** Paul’s exhortation towards brotherly love and affection for one another. Such a condition prevailing in the brethren’s hearts and minds would promote unity of the spirit and prove to be a source of great joy for the apostle.—Phil. 2:1,2

“Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”—vss. 3,4, *New King James Version*

Our Key Verse sets forth the Master whose qualities of obedience, devotion, and sacrifice in the doing of God’s will during his earthly sojourn should be the standard for emulation by believers.

“Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.”—vss. 6,7, *New American Standard Bible*

The mind of Christ is also characterized by our Lord’s great humility. Not only was he willing to leave the glory of heaven to take on the form of a ‘bond-servant,’ but he humbled himself further by rendering perfect obedience to God and enduring the death of the cross so that mankind would have an opportunity for salvation, as he

provided the ransom price for Adam's sin back in Eden.—Heb. 2:9; Phil. 2:8

The foregoing verses affirm that our Lord Jesus was a spirit being before he came to earth and took on human nature to bear the penalty for man's sin. Being in the 'form of God' refers to his glorious spiritual condition before he came to the earth. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."—John 3:17

In view of his faithful submission to the Heavenly Father's will, the Lord Christ Jesus has been raised from the dead and highly exalted to the divine nature. He has become the head of the 'Seed of Abraham' that will bless all the families of the earth during the future Millennial kingdom. "God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."—Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 1:20-22

Paul then urges the church at Philippi to continue through obedience and humility to emulate the disposition of Christ by heeding the instructions of the Lord, realizing that the Heavenly Father will strengthen their minds as they seek to lead sanctified lives. The end result of such a regimen and devotion to the Master would lead to the brethren's becoming partakers of the divine nature at the end of their Christian walk.—Phil. 2:12-16

The admonitions by the apostles are equally relevant to believers today who are seeking to do God's will. Similar encouragement as to the rewards of faithfulness is also provided by the Apostle Peter. "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."—II Pet. 1:10,11 ■

# Living in the Future

**Key Verse:**  
***“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: 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.”***  
**—Philippians 3:13,14**

**Selected Scripture:**  
***Philippians 3:1-4:1***

worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”—Phil. 3:1-4

The apostle then lists some of his former credentials that would be of little worth in comparison to his new life as a Christian following his conversion on the road to Damascus. “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which

**PAUL’S CONTINUED EX-**hortation to the church at Philippi is for the brethren to rejoice in the Lord because of the special standing they have of discipleship. Nevertheless, he also warns them against false teachers. He describes as “dogs” a class of self-seeking individuals who would spread false doctrine among believers. He contrasts this group with the “circumcision,” not necessarily those who have been literally circumcised, but rather those whose hearts glory in their relationship to Christ as opposed to trusting in their own fleshly accomplishments. “We are the circumcision, which

is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.”—vss. 5-11

Our Key Verses demonstrate the single-mindedness of purpose that Paul manifested and, using the figure of a runner in a race, he expresses the conviction that he needed to press down upon the mark for the prize of the High Calling in Christ Jesus to attain glory, honor, and immortality. He realized this mark of character development included perfect love for God, our brethren, all men, and a sympathetic love for even our enemies which would result in doing good to them wherever possible.

The joys of the Christian walk and the ultimate exaltation for those who are faithful are chronicled in this chapter. Nevertheless, these are also warnings for any of the consecrated who might abandon their righteous course along the narrow way. “Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.”—Heb. 10:38,39

“Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.” (Phil. 3:15) May this lesson provide us with a sense of focus as to the means by which we may attain the desire of our hearts! ■

# Growing in Joy and Peace

**Key Verse:** *“Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”*  
—*Philippians 4:9*

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Philippians 4:2-14*

Several sisters appeared to be prominent helpers in the ecclesia, among whom Euodias and Syntyche are especially mentioned. Apparently, these two believers were having some difficulties in getting along with each other, and they were implored by the apostle to be of the same mind in the Lord in order to preserve a unity of the heart and mind in matters relating to a furtherance of the cause of Christ. Additionally, Paul mentions the role of a “true yokefellow”—probably a brother in that congregation—exhorting him to assist the two sisters by providing counsel towards finding a scriptural solution to help resolve their differences.

Turning next to the entire church, Paul exhorts to “Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.” Those who could do this would need to have faith and

**UNLIKE SOME OTHER** churches, Paul did not rebuke the brethren at Philippi. His epistle to them was full of warmth and loving expressions. Nevertheless, he urged them to stand fast and not retreat from the advanced stages of love and obedience they had already taken.—Phil. 4:1

trust in the Lord. Persecutions, trials, and suffering are part of the Christian's experience, and inability to rejoice even in the midst of difficult situations would be evidence of a need for drawing more closely to the Heavenly Father through prayer, study, and meditation upon his precious promises.—vss. 2-7

The apostle then gives some advice concerning the cultivation of proper habits of thought. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”—vs.8

In our Key Verse, the apostle again sets forth his life as a pattern worthy of emulation. His proper living was an outgrowth of the thoughts he entertained in his mind as described in verse eight. The Heavenly Father will be very near to us if our lives are governed by his instructions as outlined in his Word.

The apostle also declared his gratitude for the close relationship that existed between himself and the church at Philippi. He had received some financial assistance from the brethren again after some interval of time had passed and acknowledged they had a desire to render it earlier but lacked the opportunity. He also expressed the fact that he was not in want regardless of his circumstances because the Heavenly Father provided for all his needs.

One lesson believers can take from this account is the fact that we need never have anxious care concerning temporal matters if we are children of God. The Master's counsel is very much to this point. “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.”—Matt. 6:33,34 ■

# Upheld by God

**Key Verse:** *“Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him.”*  
—Acts 28:30,31

**Selected Scripture:**  
*Acts 28*  
*Philippians 4:15-23*

they had not received any letters from Judea concerning him, nor had any of their fellow Jews brought any reports against him. Nevertheless, they desired to learn more because they knew the Christian faith with which he was associated was spoken against everywhere.—vss. 17-22

“When they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded

**PAUL’S ACTIVE LIFE OF** witnessing concerning the Lord Jesus Christ eventually resulted in his arrival at Rome where he was permitted to dwell as a prisoner under house arrest in a private home with a soldier who guarded him.—Acts 28:16

After three days, Paul invited the chief Jews to meet with him and he explained his desire to appeal to Caesar because there was no just cause for him to be put to death in Jerusalem. In view of Paul’s innocence of any crimes against the Jewish people, he shared the hope of Israel regarding its promised Messiah with the Jewish leaders. However, they professed to know nothing about Paul because

and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not.”—vss. 23,24

When Paul realized that once again the Jews as a whole rejected the gospel concerning Jesus Christ, he quoted from Isaiah 6:9,10 indicating the majority of the Jews would be blinded to the good news of the coming kingdom. It was for this reason that the apostle announced he was sharing the gospel among the Gentiles, assured that they would receive it. (Acts 28:25-28) During his ministry, Jesus also issued the same rebuke to the people of Israel. “This people’s heart is waxed gross and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed.”—Matt. 13:15

Our Key Verses assert that Paul continued in Rome for two years and ministered to a large number of visitors who desired to hear what he taught. It is believed that during this period he also wrote the epistles to Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Paul also wrote his second epistle to Timothy from Rome shortly before he was beheaded.

As believers today, a change in circumstances does not necessarily mean we should become inactive in serving the Lord’s cause. For those who are physically able but isolated, personal study, listening to convention recordings, corresponding with other brethren, and various witness activities are all profitable forms of service. For those who are aged or physically unable to do much of anything, in addition to the foregoing suggested activities, they may receive visitors and be an example of cheerfully enduring under adversity. Above all, we are responsible for doing what we can, and if there is nothing else we can do but pray for others who are actively laboring in the Lord’s vineyard, the Father will reward us for our faithfulness in doing that. ■

# Gold Tried in the Fire

*“I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.”*

—*Revelation 3:18*

**THROUGHOUT THE PRESENT** Gospel Age our Heavenly Father has extended an invitation to a special class of Christians who would share in blessing the sin-sick and dying human family under the future administration of Christ’s glorious kingdom. In this lesson’s scripture, our Lord speaks of this distinct class of his faithful followers in a very special way, even as ‘gold tried in the fire.’

Through the writings of the revelator, our Lord makes clear the fact that after these faithful followers of our Lord Jesus have been called from the world, they must also be cleansed, purified, and conformed to his own image. To assist them in this endeavor, he will provide them with some very important spiritual gifts they will need to be faithful. He promises that they will be given “white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.”—Rev. 3:18

## HIGHLY VALUED

Gold is the most valuable of all metals and is usually found in small quantities, thus making it very rare. It is the first metal that is mentioned in the Bible, and is associated with the name Pison, one of the four divisions of the river which went out from the garden of Eden. The river symbolizes the human family, out of which a special class would be selected. From the scriptural record, we read, "A river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone."—Gen. 2:10-12

Gold is highly valued not only for its rarity, but also because it has long lasting durability and beauty. It was recognized as a measure of wealth and prominence in ancient times, even before Abraham's name had been changed. "Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold." (Gen. 13:2) Throughout the ages it has been highly sought after. "The rich man's wealth is his strong city, and as a high wall in his own conceit." (Prov. 18:11) The Scriptures foretell a time when this hoarded wealth will become useless, and the present world and its evil institutions will fall away. James wrote, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."—James 5:1-3

Because of its color and luster, and resistance to oxidation and tarnishing, gold is especially useful for making jewelry and ornamentation of many kinds. “Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.” (Song of Sol. 1:10) Another property of gold is that it is more stable and unchanging than other metals, and this has made it useful as a standard medium of exchange and commerce among nations and people.

### **THE DIVINE NATURE**

Because of its scarcity and great value, gold is used in the Scriptures to illustrate the spiritual inheritance of the bride of Christ on the highest of all planes of life—the divine nature. Our featured scripture is taken from the Lord’s message to the last of the seven churches of Revelation. The inspiring promise was, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Rev. 3:21) The faithful bride class, also known as the New Creation will share the divine nature as members of ‘the Christ’ and is shown seated on the messianic throne in the future heavenly kingdom. Jesus promised, “I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.”—Luke 22:29

### **THE BRIDE OF CHRIST**

In the Hebrew Old Testament types and shadows, Rebekah symbolizes the Lord’s bride. To illustrate this, she was given gifts of gold that pictured the wonderful promises of the Heavenly Father who was seeking a bride for his beloved Son, our Lord Jesus. She willingly left her father’s

house to set out on an arduous journey that marked her commitment to meet her future husband, Isaac, who in turn represented our Lord Jesus. “It came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands [Rebekah’s] of ten shekels weight of gold.”—Gen. 24:22

In the Book of Psalms, there is an illustration of the future marriage ceremony where the bride of Christ is dressed in gold. Gold serves to enhance her spiritual reward to the divine plane of life. Concerning this most wonderful inheritance, the psalmist wrote, “Kings’ daughters were among thy honourable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir.” (Ps. 45:9) The queen stood distinct from her companions, the other honorable women, because of her loyalty to the Lord who she was about to marry, and because her character had been endowed with the principles of truth and righteousness. From the scriptural record, we read, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.”—vss. 6,7

The reference to Ophir identifies a place renowned as a source of much gold of the very highest quality. Thus, “The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee.”—vss. 13,14

## THE HEAVENLY CITY

When speaking of the future bride of Christ, our Lord Jesus proclaimed, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid." (Matt. 5:14) In his last message to the faithful members of the Christ we are given a glimpse of the heavenly city. The revelator recorded, "I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. 21:2) In symbolic language, Jesus described the adorned Christ in glory. "He carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."—vss. 10,11

Even as gold was associated with the heavenly bride of Christ, so also was the heavenly city seen as a divine institution. "The building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass." (vs. 18) Each one of the city's twelve foundations were garnished with beautiful stones (vs. 19,20), and the twelve gates with twelve pearls. "The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." (vs. 21) Thus does the city of God represent the glorified Christ that has been in preparation to share in the rule over the nations. The heavenly city will be the center of blessing for all the families of the earth under the administration of Christ's glorious future kingdom.

## **GOSPEL AGE CALLING**

We are now living during the closing years of this present Gospel Age, and the appointed time of our Lord's promised return. It was to be a special time of trial and testing for those who responded to the heavenly calling in Christ Jesus. From the prophetic words of Malachi, we read, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the LORD an offering in righteousness."—Mal. 3:2,3

We see that the world's old social order which has been established on selfishness and pride is passing away in preparation for Christ's future kingdom. "These be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." (Luke 21:22) As evidence for this upheaval among the nations, Luke recorded Jesus' words, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."—vss. 25-27

All around us today we see the prophesied 'distress of nations, with perplexity,' and with no apparent solution or way of escape. Selfishness, hatred, pride, and the spirit of aggression have led to the creation of cruel and powerful tyrannies. Sin, corruption,

and injustice have surely brought their awful consequences. Man now has the weapons to even destroy himself. However, we are assured by the wonderful promises of God that the human family will not be permitted to do so. The Scriptures teach that human selfishness would ultimately lead to self destruction if not restrained by divine power and intervention. Jesus spoke of this awful time and the great distress toward which the world is now moving. He said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for elect's sake those days shall be shortened."—Matt. 24:22

### **THE GROANING CREATION**

The poor groaning human creation will be rescued from its own selfish and proud madness. All national and international problems will be solved under the administration of Christ's future kingdom. We are promised that all unrighteousness will then be removed from the earth, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."—Rev. 21:4,5

The closing years of this present Gospel Age is the culmination of two thousand years during which time the faithful followers of our Lord have accepted the invitation of the heavenly calling. "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted

that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”—Rev. 19:7-9

## **A TEST OF FAITH**

The ending of this age is a time of special testing for the Lord’s people, and the faith of each member of the Christ is being refined, purified, and proven. John recorded our Lord’s words, when he proclaimed, “The great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (chap. 6:17) We are now witnesses of the rapidly approaching collapse of all present social institutions in the earth.

Jesus said, “So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”—Luke 21:31-36

## **FAITH AND WORKS**

It has always been true that those who have accepted the heavenly calling to joint heirship with Christ will be thoroughly tested. Each must stand

fast in the faith of God's Holy Word. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." (I Cor. 16:13) If the proper degree of faith is developed in us, it will surely manifest itself by bearing fruit. Those who may have only a measure of faith have not progressed in the Truth by making it a living faith. Thus does the Apostle James ask, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14) "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."—vss. 17,18

Our faith, and our whole being as individuals, is especially on trial now, and we are thus exhorted by our Lord, "Be thou faithful unto death." (Rev. 2:10) Faithfulness of each member of the Christ unto death means an inheritance with him in glory, and the wonderful promise to share with him in blessing all families of the earth. This is the grandest gift we could ever expect to receive and is worth striving to attain and to prepare ourselves for. Our Lord asks for our faithfulness. He desires to purge out of us everything in the nature of dross, including self-will and all the works of the flesh.

Although works are essential, works without faith will not enable us to stand fast in the Truth. "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (James 2: 20) He whose life is not in harmony with his faith dishonors that faith, and that kind of faith is dead. James then wrote, "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when

he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”—vss. 21-26

If Abraham and other faith heroes had merely discussed their faith with one another they would never have been faith heroes, or have obtained a good report through faith. The Scriptures reveal that they walked in faith, and their works were in harmony with their faith. Thus was their faith made complete by their works. Our faith must also be alive, active, and working in us by love.

## **THE MARK OF LOVE**

Development of the attribute of love must also be stressed, although it does not take the place of other important factors in the life of those who have accepted the Heavenly Calling. For example, love cannot take the place of doctrine, but it does guide us in the proper use of doctrine. Love cannot take the place of faith or activity in the Lord’s name, but it is the only motive for faith and for service that is acceptable to God.

While we stand fast in one spirit, with one mind and cooperate with others of like precious faith, we are to love each other from the heart. We are to

encourage one another to love and to good works, and to avoid every word and every act that might incite to misunderstanding or strife. These traits are of the flesh and of the Devil. Faith and love must go hand in hand. If we stand fast in the faith and are made alive by love, we are kept by the power of God.

The love of many may wax cold, but our love toward others, as we stand fast in the faith, must remain fervent even though it may be spurned by others. If we are abused or reviled we must see that we revile not in return. When we are persecuted let us never join the ranks of the persecutors. We need a strong faith, and an increasing measure of the loving spirit of holiness. This should be our sincere desire and earnest prayer. God's precious Word is the firm foundation for our faith, and ours must be a faith which works by love.

## **ENDURING FAITH**

We must bear up under the trials and stand fast while our beloved Lord continues to refine, purify, and cleanse us, that we may offer unto him our acceptable sacrifice. It will mean taking up our cross daily and following him. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus 2:13,14) The beloved refiner is graciously working upon us, and we are to submit willingly to his refining. We all need refining and cleansing because of the dross that is inherent in our earthen, fleshly vessel in which our spiritual treasure resides, even as gold tried in the fire.

The psalmist has expressed, "Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."—Ps. 130:2-5

Throughout our pilgrim journey, we could not possibly have any standing before our Heavenly Father without the covering robe of Christ's righteousness. "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."—Isa. 61:10

In his letter to the brethren at Rome, the Apostle Paul wrote, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." (Rom. 2:7) To the church at Galatia, he said, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." (Gal. 6:9) Our Lord will never leave us nor forsake us, and he lovingly desires that we be conformed to his likeness and that we reflect his image. It is for us to bear up courageously under his refining and cleansing.

We must not become 'weary in well doing,' and we must remember that our test is not one simply of well doing, but 'patient continuance in well doing.' Then keeping on the "whole armour of God" that we may be able to stand in this "evil day."—Eph. 6:13

## **MORE PRECIOUS THAN GOLD**

The Apostle Peter wrote, “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.” (I Pet. 4:12) The apostle also draws our attention to the elect class, symbolized by gold, that is being especially tried at the end of this present Gospel Age. Concerning the Christ, he further explained their special calling, “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”—I Pet. 1:2

The apostle continues, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.”—vss. 3-6

Peter speaks of the Christ as gold tried in the fire, “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”—vs. 7

We are to remember, “He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.”—Job 23:10

# Determining the Lord's Will

*"I delight to do thy will, O my God."*

—*Psalms 40:8*

## **THE ESSENCE OF CONSE-**

cration is contained in the words of our theme text and, although these words of the psalmist prophetically spoke of Jesus, they also speak of the attitude that Jesus' body members—the church—must have developed fully in them. The 'will' may be expressed as one's desire, delight, what one takes pleasure in, what one wants, approves of, and deems acceptable. When we speak of God's will, as does this verse, we speak of God's desire, delight, what God takes pleasure in, what God wants, what God approves of and deems acceptable.

The Scriptures point out various important features about God's will. Jesus said that it would not be enough just to believe or to even know God's will, but that doing it was necessary also. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. 7:21) Apostle Paul tells us that God's will must be done from the heart—it must be rooted in a heart's desire

to please God. “Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.” (Eph. 6:6) In order to do God’s will, we must know what that will is. Hence these words, “For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.” (Col. 1:9) Summing up the eternal importance of doing God’s will, Apostle John says, “He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”—I John 2:17

## **LEARNING HIS WILL**

Those who have taken the step of full consecration to God, whether recently or many years ago, have likewise dedicated their lives to the doing of the Lord’s will. Yet, actually doing and performing in full accord with the Lord’s will is a struggle. The influences of the world, the adversary, and our own weak flesh hinder us at times from doing the Lord’s will to the extent we would like. Like many endeavors in the Christian walk, the matter of doing the Lord’s will is something we learn over time, through experience. Our sentiment in all this is that expressed by the psalmist, “Teach me to do thy will.” (Ps. 143:10) Before we can do the Lord’s will, however, we must first know what that will is. This is the primary focus of our lesson—determining the Lord’s will.

Fortunate it is that in many of the day-to-day experiences of life it is quite easy to determine the Lord’s will, both in temporal and spiritual ways. If we are employed, we believe the Lord would be pleased that we go to our job each day and carry it out to the best of our ability. If we have a home, he

would expect us, as part of his will, to take care of it and not let it fall into disrepair. The Lord, we believe, is also pleased that we take reasonable care of our physical bodies and our health. These, and many others, are temporal things, yet they are part of our stewardship, and it is the Lord's will that we take care of these responsibilities as part of our consecration vows. Likewise, concerning the all important spiritual responsibilities of our life, we can easily understand that it is the Lord's will that we come to meetings regularly, attend conventions when possible, spend time in study, prayer, and meditation, speak the gospel message to others, and develop a character in the likeness of our head, Jesus. These are all part of God's will.

### **GOD'S WILL NOT ALWAYS OBVIOUS**

The focus of our lesson, however, is not so much the clear-cut matters described above, important though they are, but on the experiences of life in which the Lord's will is not so obvious. Suffice it to say that in some experiences it is difficult to determine God's will and, in those cases, we need assistance and help to make such a determination. The Scriptures set some 'ground rules' for helping us determine God's will. The first rule is that we cannot determine God's will in an experience by using worldly, or fleshly, thinking. "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Rom. 12:2) Notice that the will of God is proven by having our mind transformed from 'this world' and renewed by the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit. To

put it another way, we must use godlike, or Christ-like, thinking—spiritual thinking—to determine the Lord’s will. The second ground rule for determining the Lord’s will is that, in order to do so, our walk must be circumspect. The Apostle Paul makes this connection between walking circumspectly and understanding the will of the Lord using these words, “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.”—Eph. 5:15-17

### **A SCRIPTURAL TOUCHSTONE**

Even with these ground rules, though, we sometimes struggle in our determining of the Lord’s will. God, in his great love, has provided tools to help us in this endeavor. One such tool is found in this touchstone scripture, “Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.” (Isa. 30:21) We note in this scripture the fact that God knows we will face experiences in life which present us with a choice to go either in one direction or another. When we come upon such experiences we should realize that we have not sinned because we face a fork in the road, but we have come to a point at which we need to be especially guided by God in our decision making. The ‘word behind thee’ is not to be considered literal, but figurative, referring to the tools we have to help us. These tools or methods that say symbolically, ‘this is the way, walk ye in it’ are suggested as follows: 1) Prayer; 2) The Word of God; 3) The brethren; 4) Family; and 5) Experiences/God’s providence.

Having begun by following the ground rules of spiritual thinking and walking circumspectly, prayer becomes an important ‘word’ behind us to assist in determining the Lord’s will. Prayer, in fact, should be used in conjunction with all the other tools we will discuss. Indeed, Jesus in his model prayer asked, “Thy will be done.” (Matt. 6:10) The Apostle Paul describes prayer as the final piece of the Christian armor, saying, “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.” (Eph. 6:18) Notice that this verse states not only to pray, but also to watch. As we utilize prayer to seek the Lord’s will, let us remember to then watch—watch for God’s leadings, watch for experiences in which his will might be revealed, and watch through the other tools mentioned earlier. In one or more of these ‘watchings’ the Lord’s will may become evident to us.

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” (Matt. 26:41) In contrast with the previous scripture, Jesus here says to watch first, and then pray. This means to show our desire, interest, and attentiveness before we pray to God about a matter by displaying a watchful attitude, even before going to the throne of heavenly grace. Thus, we are to watch, pray, and then continue to watch for his will to be revealed to us. The importance of prayer cannot be stressed enough. We must talk to the Heavenly Father—after all, it is his will that we want to know, and have covenanted to do. We should be prompt to talk to the very one whose will we are trying to do and to whom we are striving to please.

## **GOD'S WORD AN IMPORTANT TOOL**

Another important tool which speaks as a 'word behind' us is the Scriptures themselves—the Word of God. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3:16,17) Paul here says that scripture—the Word of God—is used for 'instruction,' so that we might be prepared for 'good works.' These good works, and our doing of them, are part of his will for us, and so, to determine what works he would be pleased to have us engage in, we go to the Scriptures and find the 'instruction in righteousness' which they provide.

The primary work which the Scriptures teach us to be engaged in, as part of God's will for us, is the work of sanctification. Note these words from Jesus and the Apostle Paul, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (John 17:17; I Thess. 4:3) As these verses indicate, it is God's Word which sanctifies, and it is God's will that this work of sanctification take place. This thought presents a constant truth concerning the Lord's will—that which does not sanctify, or set us apart for the Lord, cannot be his will for us.

Another constant truth about the Lord's will, which we find in the Word of God, is this, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess. 5:18) In other words, that which does not inculcate a feeling of thanks to God also cannot have any part in being his will for us. The Bible, God's Word, is the

ultimate and infallible word behind us in decision making. However, we must use it, study it, and make it our own, for it to truly help us in determining the Lord's will. If we do not utilize its help, we place ourselves at a great disadvantage. Rather, as we seek to know more fully God's will, let us go to the Scriptures, continuing also to watch and pray.

### **BRETHREN AND FAMILY AS ADDITIONAL HELPS**

A third tool God has graciously given as a word behind us is our brethren, fellow members of the body of Christ. Many times it is these who assist us in determining the Lord's will when it otherwise seems unclear. Paul on numerous occasions spoke of the fact that brethren in one place were instrumental in helping those somewhere else, most often by way of example. One such comment was directed to the brethren of Thessalonica, "Ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." (I Thess. 1:7) We too, have the privilege of looking to the ecclesia, either collectively or individually, as a source of example and help as we seek to determine the Lord's will. Addressing the elders of the ecclesia, the Apostle Peter said, "Being ensamples to the flock." (I Pet. 5:3) At times, it may be helpful to look to the elders of the ecclesia, either by personal contact with them, or by their example, to gain insight into the Lord's will. However, this is not just the responsibility of elders, nor should we only look to them for guidance. We all should be examples, and willing to help each other in times when ascertaining the will of God is difficult. We all have the privilege to do as Paul admonished Timothy, "Be thou an example of the believers, in

word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”—I Tim. 4:12

It is important to remind ourselves that this important tool of the brethren cannot be of use to us unless we have regular contact with them. This can be through regular meetings together, other opportunities for fellowship, cards, letters, phone calls, and e-mail. All of these are means by which we can utilize this tool to assist us in determining God’s will. We must remember these words from Paul, “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.”—Heb. 10:25

Our natural families can also be a useful tool of assistance to us as we seek to determine the Lord’s will, especially if they are also brethren, members of the household of faith. The Apostle Paul recounted the great and positive impact that Timothy’s natural family had in his development as a young man, stating, “I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day; When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.” (II Tim. 1:3,5) It is obvious from Paul’s words that the faith possessed first by his grandmother and then his mother had been of much influence in the life of young Timothy, and had most likely helped him on many occasions find needed answers as to what the will of the Lord was.

We should ask ourselves, ‘Am I giving heed to those words and examples I see around me in

decision making?’ Conversely, ‘Am I showing forth the proper words and examples to others who may need assistance in decision making?’ This is a two-way proposition—we can benefit from others in seeking the Lord’s will, and we can also help others in doing the same thing, all by seeing, and being, examples one to another.

### **GOD’S PROVIDENCE IN EXPERIENCES**

The fifth, and last, tool we want to discuss as an aid in determining the Lord’s will is certainly not least in importance or value. Our experiences, and God’s providence in them, are a most valuable and indispensable tool in ascertaining the Lord’s will. Experience, it is said, is the best teacher. We can know much in the way of God’s will for us by rightly learning from our experiences. Paul expresses our progression through experience this way, “We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us.” (Rom. 5:3-5) True maturity, both naturally and spiritually, comes best through experience. Paul spoke of his own spiritual maturity by using the example of the natural man, “When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”—I Cor. 13:11

We are to claim God’s promises in our experiences, remembering that his providence is always there to guide, if we are submissive to him. “My God shall supply all your need according to his

riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19) Seeing the Lord’s will through our experiences is part of being properly exercised by them, as Paul says, “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Heb. 12:11) If we truly believe that our experiences are ‘tailor-made’ then we should be alert because the Lord’s will just might be indicated in them. As the words of the hymn say, “Looking back, I’ll praise the way, thou hast led me, day by day.”

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT NECESSARY**

One very important element which allows all of the aforementioned tools to work together in harmony is the Holy Spirit—God’s power and influence directed in our lives. Note that the previously mentioned scripture which spoke of walking circumspectly (Eph. 5:15,17) is immediately followed by these words, “Be filled with the Spirit.” (Eph. 5:18) It is this Holy Spirit which works with our New Creature mind to help us use all these tools to their best possible benefit in assisting us to determine the Lord’s will. Therefore, as we utilize the first tool of prayer and watching, we should include in our prayers the request for more of the Holy Spirit’s guidance in seeking God’s will.

Summarizing these tools as they relate to the touchstone scripture of Isaiah 30:21, we see that we are to use prayer, the Bible, the brethren, our family, and the experiences of life as words behind us, saying figuratively, ‘Here is the way, here is the Lord’s will.’ The word ‘behind’ also implies that

although we have these tools, we must still proceed with the eye of faith. We are not looking for, nor will God give us, a miraculous vision of what his will is, but by faith we should see his direction as we use the tools he has given us. “We walk by faith, not by sight.”—II Cor. 5:7

## **MAKING NEEDED DECISIONS**

Let us suppose, however, that an experience comes upon us, and in spite of our best efforts to use all the tools provided to assist us in determining God’s will, the path to choose remains unclear. Additionally, let us suppose we are faced with a decision which must be made. What should we do? First, we should continue to pray and watch, and not stop using all of the other tools given to us. Second, we must claim the precious promises, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” (Rom. 8:28; Heb. 13:5) Third, we should then make the very best decision we can in the matter, being firm in it, not wavering, and carrying it through. We should be full of faith that God, who knows our very hearts, will guide our decision in some way. In such cases, we should pray again, after making a decision, asking God to overrule according to his will that our decision will be made to work to our best spiritual welfare, and watching for his further providence in the matter.

We must always remember that God’s hand is not short—he can and will overrule. “Is my hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem? or have I

no power to deliver? behold, at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness.” “Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.” (Isa. 50:2; 59:1) These promises are all by faith, and such experiences in which the Lord’s will is not made clear to us may actually be permitted as a test of our faith.

### **DOING GOD’S WILL THE ULTIMATE GOAL**

The key to success in the narrow way is not only determining the Lord’s will, but actually doing it, to the best of our imperfect ability. This requires action on our part. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” (John 13:17) The Apostle James states the matter with these words, “Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”—James 1:22,25

If we follow the ground rules of spiritual thinking and a circumspect walk; if we use the tools of prayer, the Word of God, the assistance of our brethren and families, our past experiences and providences; if we make the best decisions we can; if we use the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit; if we are watchful, claim the precious promises, and have an unwavering faith, we cannot fail. In so doing, let us echo the words of Jesus, “I can of mine own self do nothing . . . I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me. My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”—John 5:30; 4:34 ■

# Blessings in India

January 29-February 23, 2010

O. B. Elbert, Ernie & Janice Kuenzli

**EARLIER THIS YEAR**, the three of us had the wonderful privilege and opportunity to visit some of our brethren in India. We visited brethren in three Indian states located in the southern and central part of the country: Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh.

Having the opportunity to meet with the India brethren was a great joy and blessing. They are enthusiastic for the Truth and always welcome us with so much love. Their warm smiles and happiness to see us are spiritually encouraging, and we feel quite at home as members together in the body of Christ. When traveling delays occur, which happen quite often due to traffic or other conditions, and we arrive late for a meeting, there are never any complaints. The children, with their



Girls in Mettapalayam

bright and shining faces, are always especially happy to see and fellowship with visitors.

Most of our travels were by car—either by taxi, or, in several instances, brethren using their own cars for our service. We traveled on a number of new, divided highways, some still in the process of being built. We also took several flights within India when it was expedient to move quickly from one city to another, giving us time to meet with an ecclesia the same day. The three airports which we used had just been rebuilt, and were clean and modern.

### **MEETING WITH THE ECCLESIAS**

During the trip, we met with over 32 ecclesias and hundreds of brethren. In many towns, there are multiple ecclesias due to distance and the difficulty in traveling.

On January 31st, we attended a convention of over 200 brethren in Bangalore. That convention was served by brothers from both India and the United States. Since the brethren in each state speak a different local language, on all but three occasions, the discourses were translated sentence-



Sisters singing group, Bangalore

by-sentence into the local language—Kannada for Karnataka, Tamil for Tamil Nadu and Telegu for Andhra Pradesh. When we visited the town of Chittoor, because it is located near the

border of two states, parts of the meeting there were conducted in 3 different languages.

In the course of our trip, we met with some newer ecclesias, whose existence is the result of the recent witnessing efforts of the India brethren, as well as with long-established ecclesias. One of the newer ecclesias, in the village of Nagenahalli north of Bangalore, meets in an abandoned Korean Presbyterian church.



Nagenahalli Ecclesia

Other ecclesias share meeting halls, one of them meeting on Sunday morning and the other meeting on Sunday evening. Many ecclesias meet in prayer halls that an ecclesia member has built on top of their home. We attended several meetings in thatched-roof prayer halls as well as participating in one meeting on the roof under a tent.

A lack of electrical power in the state of Tamil Nadu causes the brethren there to endure daily black-outs, or 'power cuts.' These can sometimes cause challenges during the meetings. During a loss of power one evening, a brother lent us his cell phone to provide enough light to read our notes. Also with the loss of power, the PA system becomes inoperative and both the speaker and the translator have to raise their voices to be heard above the competing noise of the city. One evening, we

plugged our computer into an outlet and the entire prayer hall went dark. We waited for 15 minutes while a local man climbed the roof of a building across the street to restore power to the prayer hall.

After the meetings, there were usually continuing discussions on Truth matters, or question meetings. Both brothers and sisters would ask questions freely. In several ecclesias, there were formal question meetings. Some of the questions included: (1) What is the body referred to in Isa. 26:19, (2) With what body will the dead be raised in Christ's kingdom, (3) What is pictured by the 3 woes of Revelation and (4) What is meant by the statement in Mark 12:25-27 that God is the god of the living and not the dead. In one ecclesia, there was a spirited discussion in Tamil about the Scriptural proof of why we believe our Lord returned in 1874.

## FELLOWSHIP

One joy we always have in returning to India, is to renew the friendships begun in 1997, during our first visit. The young people we met back in 1997 have grown up, and many of them are married and



Bro. Alex Barnabas, Sr. Deepa, and  
Benny - Coimbatore

raising families of their own in the Truth. This brings us much joy! It was wonderful to see their continuing faith in the Lord and reliance upon Him, and their service now with the next generation of young people, through youth seminars, etc.

During our stay in Coimbatore, we visited Bro. D. Daniel, a long-time faithful Bible Student who is now in his 80s and is suffering from the paralytic effects of diabetes. Bro. Daniel's witnessing efforts were responsible for the formation of a number of ecclesias in the Nilgiri Hills (Blue Mountain) region of Tamil Nadu. As an engineer, he would drive the steam cog-railway train between Mettupalayam and Coonoor. Typically, he would drive the train up the mountain one day, spend the evening witnessing in the Nilgiris and then drive the train back down the mountain the next day. Now bedridden, Bro. Daniel is accepting his physical illness with quiet acquiescence, and focusing his thoughts on the challenges facing his India brethren.

While in the Trichy area, we visited the farm of Bro. Jeyaraj's family. Some years, on December 25, they hold a one-day convention outside there, in the grove under the beautiful, tall coconut palms. It was a very peaceful place, and we could imagine how refreshing it would be to hold a gathering there.



Bro. Newlin at the coconut grove on Bro. Jeyaraj's farm

In the Tambaram ecclesia, near Chennai, we heard the amazing story of how one young brother received the Truth. Raised as a Hindu and growing up next to a Hindu temple, over a number of years

he came to first accept the Bible as the Word of God, and then came to the Truth. His mother once threw hot coffee at him when he told her he would never again worship Hindu gods or their idols; but



Tambaram Ecclesia

through his continued witnessing efforts, his mother, brother and sister have now come to an understanding of God's plan and are now also part of the Tambaram ecclesia.

Almost always after the meetings, the brethren would show us their warm hospitality by serving us fruits, snacks, or a meal. We enjoyed spicy rice, chicken briyani, local fish, wonderful fresh fruits, the milk and meat of the 'tender ( young) coconut' and much more. After every evening meeting, we would be invited to join the brethren for dinner and additional fellowship. Once, after a Sunday meeting, we enjoyed



Bro. Jeyaraj, Bro. Suresh, Sr. Nirmala

lunch at the meeting hall, and then were taken to a nearby ecclesia where we were served a second lunch!

### **TRANSLATION WORK GROWING**

During our time in Trichy, we had

four lovely days of discussions with local brethren. We learned that these brethren translate two monthly magazines, including *The Dawn*, into Tamil and print and distribute 700 copies every 1-2 months. They have also translated and printed 1,000 copies of two different children's books—*Adam to Zion* and *12 Apostles of the Lamb*—in Tamil. The costs of these projects they are bearing themselves.

With Volume 6, *The New Creation*, and Volume 5, *The Atonement Between God and Man*, of the *Studies in the Scriptures* now translated and printed in Tamil, many classes in Tamil Nadu are now implementing volume studies of these two books. Sometimes the study is actually a series of discourses by ecclesia elders and teachers on the various sections of the books, or discussed in smaller groups. However the study is conducted, having this Truth material in their local language has been a blessing to the India brethren.

Bro. Selvaraj, of the Chennai Tiruvottiyur ecclesia, is currently correct-



Sr. Esther, daughter & son-in-law,  
Bro. Selvaraj

ing the translation of Volume 3, *Thy Kingdom Come*, and Volume 4, *The Battle of Armageddon*, of the *Studies in the Scriptures*. These books were translated by other brethren, or ecclesias. This cooperation illustrates



Visiting Sr. Ruth Kottalingam at her home

both the grassroots activity, and how the India brethren are working together to translate Truth literature into their local languages. The current plan is to have Volume 4 printed by the end of 2010 and Volume 3 printed after that.

In Rajahmundry, we met with Sr. Ruth Kottalingam, who has translated the *Daily Heavenly Manna* and *Songs in the Night* into Telegu. She has also translated part of Volume 1, *The Divine Plan of the Ages* into Telegu. There are a number of other translating projects going on, as there seems to be a great desire to have the Harvest Truths in their local languages.

## **WITNESSING TO GOD'S PLAN**

India is made up of two main religions—Hindu (83%) and Muslim (13%). Those of the Christian faith make up less than 3% of the population. Despite the fact that the Christian population is very small, the Harvest work has been, and continues to be, going ‘grandly on.’

Virtually every ecclesia in India is involved in public witnessing. Most will hold periodic public meetings in their area, or nearby towns, and then conduct a series of 53 weekly follow-up lessons that present the basics of the Truth. At the end of the 53 lessons, those who are interested are invited to be immersed, and then the new brethren are

organized into a new ecclesia or encouraged to join a nearby ecclesia.

These 53 lessons trace their roots back to hundreds of lessons taught by Bro. Jayappa, an Indian pilgrim who traveled tens of thousands of kilometers on his bicycle witnessing to the Truth. The lessons were distilled down to 52 and more recently 53 lessons. Many ecclesias take the 53 lessons, modify them as appropriate to suit their local needs



Sign outside Erode Ecclesia

and then use them in a systematic way to teach the Truth to those who respond to their public meetings. One ecclesia in Erode has a large sign outside their meeting hall advertising these

free Bible study meetings. Another ecclesia in Erode is conducting four different follow-up meetings each week. An ecclesia in Trichy currently has one follow-up meeting numbering 60 individuals.

The India brethren are very adept at using the newest technology in their witnessing efforts. While in Ooty, Bro. O.B. Elbert dedicated a small recording studio



Bro. Prem in recording studio - Ooty

in the home of brethren, which will be used to create CDs and DVDs for witnessing purposes.

## **THEIR SACRIFICE**

The brethren there sacrificed much for us during our visit. In Mysore and Rajahmundry, we were privileged to stay with brethren, which was a joy for us. Several brothers used their own vehicles to take



Bro. Pushparaj ( on left)  
Bro. Roman - one of our faithful drivers

us from city to city and to ecclesia meetings, taking time off from their normal work schedules for this service. Brethren in Trichy spent their own funds to fix a car's air-conditioning system just so our

journey would be more pleasant. All along the way, various brothers and sisters would travel with us, knowing just where to go and how to get there. They watched over our every need, and did everything within their power to make our visit both possible and productive. We are very thankful to our Heavenly Father for their sacrifice and service of love, and for the added fellowship that traveling together provided.

## **CONCLUSION**

All of the brethren that we met with as we traveled, asked us to take their warm Christian love

back to the brethren in the United States. It has been our great privilege and blessing to come to know these brethren and convey their Christian example and love to those of you who may never have the opportunity to travel to India and meet them face-to-face. “Blest be the tie that binds our heart in Christian love.” ■

*“Quench not the Spirit.”—I Thessalonians 5:19*

*The Spirit of the Lord amongst his people is compared to “a flame of sacred love” for the Lord and all connected with his cause: this flame is enkindled through the divine message in each one individually, when begotten of the Holy Spirit, and appertains, therefore, to the church collectively, under the guidance of that Spirit. In proportion as the church grows in knowledge and in love and in fellowship with the Lord this “flame of sacred love” will make it a light in the world, a city set on a hill, which cannot be hid.*

*—August 17, Daily Heavenly Manna*

## **OBITUARIES**

*The following brethren have recently finished their Christian course. We wish to express our sincere sympathy to their family and friends in the loss of these dear ones.*

Renee Jean Nalivka, Havre, MT—May 31. Age, 60  
Sister Barbara Fleming, Vancouver, BC—June 21.  
Age, 83

# SPEAKERS' APPOINTMENTS

*The speakers listed below are routed through the Pilgrim Department of The Dawn. Their visits are furnished free upon request. Write to: The Dawn Pilgrim Department, East Rutherford, NJ 07073. A visit will be arranged whenever possible.*

## **M. Balko**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **K. Fernets**

Milwaukee, WI August 21,22

## **C. Chandler**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

*The speakers listed below are invited by individual classes, or their services have been arranged by their home classes:*

## **D. Christiansen**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **H. Montague**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **J. Freer**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **A. Oystryk**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **R. Gorecki**

Milwaukee, WI August 21,22

## **J. Parkinson**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **B. Jakubowski**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **B. Sweeney**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **T. Krupa**

Red Deer, AB August 13-15

## **J. Trzeciak**

Milwaukee, WI August 21,22

*“By love serve one another.”*

*—Galatians 5:13*

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# CONVENTIONS

*These conventions are listed by request of classes who sponsor them. So your convention can be placed in these columns in time, make your request in writing three months before the date of the convention to Dawn Magazine, 199 Railroad Avenue, East Rutherford, NJ 07073.*

**INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION, August 8-13**—Baia Mare, Romania. Contact Tom Machacek. Phone: (219) 662-8107 (International Youth Seminar follows, August 16-20.)

**ALBERTA CONVENTION, August 13-15**—Pioneer Lodge, 4324 47th Avenue, Red Deer, AB, Canada. For hotel reservations, call Stanford Inn, (403) 347-5551. Contact A. Baumgarten. Phone: (403) 356-0004

**MILWAUKEE CONVENTION, August 21,22**—Lake Lodge, 1235 East Howard Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53207. Contact L. Boyd. Phone: (414) 736-1106

**JACKSON LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4,5**—Fa-Ho-Lo Camp and Conference Center, 3000 Mt. Hope Road, Unit 1, Grass Lake, MI 49240. Contact R. Lumley. Phone: (517) 782-7252

**NEW YORK LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4,5**—Doubletree Hotel, 180 Route 17 South, Mahwah, NY 07430. Phone: (201) 529-5880. Contact G. Pasios. Phone: (201) 939-3196

**SEATTLE LABOR DAY CONVENTION, September 4-6**—Seabeck Christian Conference Center, 15395 Seabeck Hwy NW, Seabeck, WA 98380-9583. Contact L. Flinn. Phone: (253) 838-3822

**HUNTSVILLE CONVENTION, September 10-12**—Radisson Inn Huntsville Airport, 8721 Madison Blvd., Madison, AL 35758. Reservations: (800) 395-7046 or (256) 772-8855. Mention Huntsville Bible Students. Deadline for rooms: August 31. Contact J. Cothren, 1300

Huntsville Hills Drive, Huntsville, AL 35802. Phone: (256) 852-8505

**CLAY CITY CONVENTION, September 24-26**—Canyon Inn, McCormick's Creek State Park, 451 McCormick Creek Park Road, Spencer, IN 47460. Cut-off date for reservations is August 27. Contact S. Clark, 7861 Clearwater Parkway, Indianapolis, IN 46240. Phone: (317) 578-2634

**LOS ANGELES CONVENTION, September 26**—Auditorium, 406 Irving Drive, Burbank, CA 91504. Contact R. Wojcik, 12807 Elkwood Street, N. Hollywood, CA 91605. Phone: (818) 982-7253

**PITTSBURGH AREA CONVENTION, October 2,3**—Sewickley Grange Hall, Route 136, West Newton, PA 15012. Contact J. Krasonic, Sr., 1106 State Route 136, Belle Vernon, PA 15012. Phone: (724) 872-6215

**GRAND RAPIDS CONVENTION, October 9,10**—Kenowa Hills Middle School, 3950 Hendershot Avenue NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49544. Contact T. Malinowski, 5609 Buttrick Avenue SE, Alto, MI 49302. Phone: (616) 868-0313

**ORLANDO CONVENTION, October 30,31**—Garden Club of Sanford, 200 Fairmont Drive (Corner of Hwy. 17-92), Sanford, FL. Contact J. Kuenzli, 330 Jasmine Road, Casselberry, FL 32707. Phone: (407) 831-2098

*"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us,  
and his love is perfected in us."*

*—I John 4:12*

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*To us the Scriptures clearly teach:*

**THAT THE CHURCH IS “THE TEMPLE” OF THE LIVING GOD** —peculiarly “his workmanship;” that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel Age—ever since Christ became the world’s Redeemer and the chief “corner stone” of this temple, through which, when finished, God’s blessings shall come “to all people,” and they find access to him.—I Cor. 3:16,17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29

**THAT MEANTIME THE CHISELING, SHAPING, AND POLISHING** of the consecrated believers in Christ’s atonement for sin progresses, and when the last of these “living stones,” “elect and precious,” shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the first resurrection; and the temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8

**THAT THE BASIS OF HOPE FOR THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD** lies in the fact that Jesus Christ, by the grace of God “tasted death for every man,” “a ransom for all,” and will be “the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” “in due time.”—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; I Tim. 2:5,6

**THAT THE HOPE OF THE CHURCH** is that she may be like her Lord, “see him as he is,” be a “partaker of the divine nature,” and share his glory as his joint-heir.—I John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; II Pet. 1:4

**THAT THE PRESENT MISSION OF THE CHURCH** is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God’s witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests in the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6, 20:6

**THAT THE HOPE FOR THE WORLD** lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to all by Christ’s millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church—when all the willfully wicked will be destroyed.—Acts 3:19-23; Isa. 35