

# Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the Whole counsel of God

## Definite SIGN POSTS Of The End

Paul N. Smith

**“The earth also was corrupt before God; and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.” -  
- Genesis 6:11-13**

God's words spoken to Noah over 4000 years ago, could very well describe conditions today. God said back then that He was sorry that He had made man. His heart was grieved with their evil imaginations and actions. How must He feel today? It has been almost 2000 years since Jesus Christ died on the cross of Calvary, and God has been offering free salvation to mankind for all this period of time. The Gospel has been preached worldwide since the Day of Pentecost. Today, every method of communication is being used to spread the Gospel, with many accepting Christ as Savior, and yet, the same conditions exist now, that existed in Noah's day. Surely, with the lessons of past generations, mankind should have evolved into better specimens. But, the root of the trouble lies in the fact that sin is still in the hearts of men, and will remain there until they have a born-again experience. If men reject the Gospel of Christ, the Light of the world, they fall into greater darkness.

Mankind is more responsible today to accept God's way of salvation than they were in Noah's time. The Message of Christ and the Cross, so freely given, will give eternal life to those who believe, but also judges the thoughts and actions of those who reject the Gospel. They will have no reason to expect mercy in the day of judgment. Their wicked hearts have already condemned them. Great judgment will come upon this world as in the days of Noah. All flesh perished in the flood waters then; now in the end time, the catastrophes will be varied. Revelation describes the different types of punishment and their effects on humanity. Chapter 16 relates it: “And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven messengers, Go your ways, and pour out the bowls of the wrath of God upon the earth.” The first bowl was poured out upon the earth and grievous sores broke out on those who accepted the anti-Christ. The second one resulted in the sea becoming blood in which all living things died. The third fell upon all the fountains of water and they become as blood. The fourth bowl was emptied on the sun, and it became so hot that men were scorched with great heat. The fifth one resulted in extreme darkness upon the kingdom of the beast, so great that they “gnawed their tongues for pain.” What this darkness will bring

is mysterious, but is probably a foretaste of the bottomless pit. The Euphrates river will dry up, enabling armies from the East to reach the land of Israel easily. "And the seventh messenger poured out his bowl into the air, and there came a great voice from the throne, saying, It is done (or, finished)!" This will be the signal for the final battle, called "Armageddon."

It seems that the flood waters of Genesis 6 were more merciful than what these judgments will be. If those chaotic events described above are not enough, read this: "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings, and there was a great earthquake such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great." Religious Rome will be divided into three parts; cities of the nations will fall ... "Every island fled away, and the mountain were not found." And then comes the climax of God's display of wrath: "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent (100 lbs.); and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." It is no wonder that Jesus said, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the Elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:22).

NATIONS ARE STRIVING TO BRING STABILITY AND PEACEFUL ORDER TO THE WORLD. There is much to be done to establish an atmosphere that is free from fear of the threats of war. The United States has been trying to establish an end to civil war in Iraq, with little help from other countries, except Great Britain. Now, there are many demonstrations, calling for the removal of British troops from Iraq. The unrest in the Middle East is of vital concern to the world. The Soviet Union has been quiet for some time, but there has been contact between this country and the European Union. All nations will be brought into a conflict of great proportions, as the Scriptures tell us. They realize the devastation which would result from the use of today's weaponry.

The United States is trying to achieve peace with its enemies through diplomacy. Does the U. S. have the kind of diplomacy necessary to win Iran, Syria and Korea as friends and allies? We know by God's Word, that a global peace will be achieved by the influence of two men, who are known as the anti-Christ and the false prophet. One will be a political figure and the other, a religious leader, who will convince the ungodly world to cease all hostilities. They will then announce that peace and safety has been achieved. This team will deceive ungodly Israel in accepting them as their Messiah and Prophet.

We also learn from Biblical Prophecy that the Roman Catholic Church will be a great influence over both the religious as well as the political world. This church has always attempted to take control wherever possible. She has used her great influence with rulers and kings for centuries. Her power has waned in the past couple of decades, but now She is stepping up efforts to regain her lofty position. Revelation 17 and 18 describes her great downfall by the hands of the antiChrist and false prophet. They will use her until they have accomplished what they want, and then destroy her when she seeks to control them.

King Henry VIII broke away from the Roman Catholic Church in the 1500's, and established the Anglican Church. This has been England's church since then. This was done through much effort and bloodshed to gain freedom

from the oppression of Catholicism. The Times of London reported recently: "Radical proposals to reunite Anglicans with the Roman Catholic Church under the leadership of the pope are to be published this year, the Times has learned. The proposals have been agreed by senior bishops of both churches. In a 42page statement prepared by an international commission of both churches, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are urged to explore how they might reunite under the pope." The archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Anglicans, met with Pope Benedict XVI in Vatican City.

VATICAN GLOBAL TV NETWORK? There is a report that Pope Benedict is going to use a television network in fighting the secular materialistic liberalism destroying the moral fiber of Anglo-American society, especially among the youth, and stop its growth on the continent of Europe. He claims that Islamic Religious fervor dominates the mass media in the West. However, figures tell a different story. The Vatican is winning the religious media war hands down! Remember the record-breaking audiences that tuned in to see Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger conduct Pope John Paul's funeral, to the massive media coverage of the installing of Pope Benedict XVI. The slight figure of this Bavarian pope has become the most recognizable of personalities around the globe. He enjoyed total audiences in 2006 greater than the annual audiences of any single previous pope, and far greater than any other single religious leader in history!

THERE IS NO NEED TO TELL YOU THAT WE ARE LIVING IN THE END OF THIS AGE. There are many disturbing elements in the world. We are told daily of the crimes of hatred and violence, conspiracies, lies, frauds, all the weakness and frailty of mankind. What we need is Good News. We cannot expect any good news to come from a source that is rotten to the core. Men without Christ are hopeless, helpless and doomed. Read Psalm 14:1-3 for a perfect picture of present-day society.

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS, AND THAT HE IS COMING SOON TO JUDGE UNGODLINESS. And it is good news to know that we need not be a part of this world's system. Jesus said of His followers, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil" (John 17:14-15). God counts His people as citizens of Heaven. We cannot change world conditions, but we are concerned for the souls that are spiritually blind and dead. God changes individuals when they accept His Son as their Savior, and then their lives affect others who need this born-again experience.

NOAH WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE OF HIS TIME WHO FOUND GRACE IN THE EYES OF THE LORD. There was another man who lived during this same evil time. His name was Enoch, and he walked and talked with God 300 years. During that time, the Lord told him many things. He knew that judgment was coming on the world at that time, and then of the future judgment that awaits the world now. See Jude 14-15. He warned people of his time that God knew what they were doing and that punishment was about to happen. Even though Noah and Enoch were faithful to preach God's Word, it did not change people's attitudes. It is the same today. The Gospel Message has lost its power, as far as

men's hearts are concerned. To many it is just an idle tale. To others, they have heard the Gospel so often, rejected it, and now it means nothing to them. Let us not feel discouraged when someone rejects the Gospel; it has been the same since God began dealing with mankind.

**ENOCH WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD CAME.** What made Enoch different from other people of his time? It was not that he was more educated, more wealthy, more influential. He was different because he “believed God!” He was different because he walked with God, and talked with Him. He was different because he accepted the grace of God for himself. “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him; for, before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God” (Hebrews 11:5).

“By faith Enoch was translated.” This means that God had told him about translation, and that He would take him to heaven before the Flood, or before he died. Did Enoch laugh at such an impossible promise? Did he scoff in his heart that such a thing was not possible, because he had never witnessed it? Not finding such a precedent, did he discard these words as imagination? No, no, no! He believed God! This kind of faith makes the impossible, possible. Another fact we note is that “he was not found.” So, they did look for him! Where could this strange man be? Where is this babbler who talked about wickedness and coming judgment? Where is this man who talked so much about his experiences with God? Search, they did, but they could not find him, because he had been taken out of this world.

**WE HAVE THE SAME PROMISE TODAY THAT ENOCH HAD.** It is found in Revelation 3:10: “Because thou hast kept the Word of My Patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” Jesus was not speaking of everyday temptation of sin. He was talking about the 7-year Hour of Tribulation, that is fast approaching the world. He was speaking of that time when mankind will be tormented by fear, by the elements, by violence and by the forces of evil.

The promise is for those who keep the Word of His patience; that is, those who continually look for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. By faith, we will be translated, even as Enoch. There are some Christians today who are foolish enough to believe the Scriptures about Christ's return. Some of us don't want to be on earth when the Tribulation comes, any more than Enoch wanted to experience the universal flood. This hope enables us to endure the reproach that comes with being different from the world and the worldly church. Wonderful hope! Let us lay hold of it as we have never done before. Jesus could come any time. Let's get ready if we aren't; He will not wait for us to apply extra “make-up” or change our clothes. If the proclamation that Jesus is coming anytime, brings joy to your heart, you are in that “Enoch Company.” Praise the Lord!

**FORTY YEARS AGO, ON JUNE 5, ISRAEL LAUNCHED A PREEMPTIVE STRIKE AGAINST EGYPT, SYRIA AND JORDAN FORCES AS A DEFENSIVE MOVE.** These three nations were confident they could destroy Israel, and they prepared their forces to strike. They formed a mutual defense treaty and ordered the UN contingent out of the Sinai Peninsula, and the peacekeepers ran like

scared rabbits. The Israelis made a fateful decision: they would not wait and become victims, so the IDF went after their enemies. Israel's victory mirrored Joshua's march around Jericho, when the walls fell flat. In six days, little Israel turned back its enemies and, in the process, also captured the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza Strip, Judea, the West Bank, the Jordan River, the Old City of Jerusalem, and the Golan Heights. What mighty things God will do for that nation, when the people turn to Him! This is an exciting time to live! Let's keep believing God!

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Labor Day Fellowship Meeting  
Saturday, Sunday and Monday until noon  
September 1 - 3, 2007

GOSPEL FELLOWSHIP  
13001 Grandview Road  
Grandview, Missouri

Pastor Gene Hawkins-announces that he and his assembly will host a Fellowship Meeting, all day Saturday and Sunday, and Monday until noon. For more information or reservations, you may contact Brother Hawkins at:

21801 Ray Lynn Road  
Belton MO 64012-9550  
(816) 618-3306 -- (816-582-9873 - cell)

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## **BUILD BRIDGES, NOT FENCES**

There were two brothers who lived on adjoining farms, who were having a conflict. It was the first serious rift in almost 20 years of farming side by side. They had shared machinery, traded labor and goods as needed without a hitch.

Then the long collaboration fell apart, beginning with a small misunderstanding that grew into a major difference. Finally, it exploded into an exchange of bitter words, followed by weeks of silence.

One morning a knock came on John's door. He opened it to find a man with a carpenter's toolbox standing on the threshold. "I'm looking for a few days work," he said. "Perhaps you have a few small jobs I could help with?"

"Yes," said the older brother. "I do have a job for you. Look across the creek at that farm. That's my neighbor; in fact, it's my younger brother. I ast week, he took his bulldozer over to the levee, and now there is a creek between us. Well, he may have done this to spite me, but I'll do him one better. See that pile of lumber by the barn? I want you to build me an 8-foot fence, so I won't be able to see his place, or his face, any more."

The carpenter said, "I think I understand the situation. Show me where the post-hole digger and nails are, and I'll do a job that pleases you." The older brother helped the carpenter with the materials needed, and then was off for the day.

About sunset when the brother returned, the carpenter had just finished the job. The farmer's eyes opened wide and his jaw dropped. There was no fence there at all! It was a bridge spanning the creek. It was a great job with handrails and all. As he looked, he saw his younger brother coming across the bridge with his hand outstretched.

"You're quite a fellow to build this bridge instead of the fence I asked you for!" The brothers met in the middle of the bridge, taking each other's hand. When they turned, the carpenter was hoisting his toolbox on his shoulder. "No, wait! Stay a few days. I've got a lot of other projects for you," the older brother said.

"I'd like to stay on," the carpenter said, "but I have many more bridges to build."

## **JESUS, THE JUDGE**

**A. S. Copley**

**"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write, These things saith He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks."  
-- Revelation 2:1.**

The nine-fold description of Jesus in the first chapter of this book, is that of a Judge. To this church at Ephesus, He is seen walking in the midst of the churches; meanwhile holding the stars (the ministers) in His right hand of authority. The word "holdeth" is a very strong word in the original Greek. It means not only to hold fast, but to hold with mighty power, to control. There came to my mind five basic reasons for Christ's right to judge the Church.

(1) The Father gave Him authority to judge all men. "For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son. I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear I judge, and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:22, 27, 30). This is why we view Him in Revelation 1 with His breasts girt about, His eyes as a flame of fire, His feet like fine brass as if they were burning in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.

(2) Calvary is the next basis for His judgeship. Jesus purchased us by His death on the cross. We belong to God by right of creation, and especially so by the right of redemption. Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all mankind; hence, we are not our own. We have been bought with a dear price, even by the precious blood of the immaculate Lamb of God. We have been purchased by that meritorious death, by which we have been delivered from the power of the enemy, and placed into the Father's care as a new creation. We are the rightful property of the Father and the Son; therefore, Jesus has authority to judge us.

(3) Pentecost is the next basis for Christ's judgeship. He went to Heaven after His death and resurrection, and sent "this

which ye now see and hear," as Peter declared. He sent the Holy Spirit, the Other Comforter. He had made this promise before His crucifixion: "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever ... He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:16, 26). The Holy Spirit is the chief Executive of the Godhead, performing the will of the Father and of the Son, on earth. He convicts sinners, leading penitents to the Savior; teaching, guiding, guarding, and correcting believers, so that they may walk worthy of the high calling in Christ. Therefore, Jesus has a perfect right to examine our walk and work, and pronounce sentence upon us.

(4) Jesus' Priesthood gives Him the right to judge. "He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him, seeing that He ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). He is our Daysman right now in the Presence of God. His mediatorship is effective continually. His priesthood is untiring, unceasing, and absolutely perfect and sufficient; and while He is pleading for us on high, the Holy Spirit is pleading within us down here. The Father hears this double plea and keeps back nothing that is needed to give us victory and make us overcomers. Hence, Jesus has full right to judge us and report to the Father.

(5) Jesus Promised to Come Again, and take us out of this scene. He said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, ye may be also" (John 14:2-3). It is always a great comfort to me, that Jesus Himself is coming after us. He is taking care of us now through the power and comfort of the Holy Spirit; and He will not entrust our transit to Glory into the hands of Gabriel, the angel of information and mercy, nor to Michael, the angel of mighty power. He made two trips back to Heaven, and He knows how to grant us a safe journey up - past the principalities and powers, the organized forces of wickedness. Satan and his fiendish hosts would prevent our landing at the throne if they could. Thank God! They cannot. Therefore, our faithful Lord has a right to examine our walk and work and pronounce the verdict accordingly.

## **JUDGMENT IN PROCESS NOW**

The time and place of Jesus' judgment demands our attention. Therefore, I barely touched the five bases thereof. The question arises, When and where does our Lord judge the Church? The Holy Spirit gives us the answer. He is judging the Church here and now. It is generally thought that the judgment seat of Christ will come after death. Two Scriptures are usually quoted to teach it - Romans 14:10; II Corinthians 5:10-11. "But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at naught thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For we must all appear (be made manifest) before the

judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences.”

The judgment of the saints in heaven may also have come by the fact that the nations will be judged from Christ's throne before the millennium, and the wicked dead will appear before the “great white throne” after the millennium. “When the Son of man shall come in His glory and all the holy angels (the saints) with Him; then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats” (Matthew 25:31-32). “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works” (Revelation 21:12). But, remember, that no throne is mentioned with reference to the judgment of the saints

## THE JUDGMENT SEAT

What and where is the judgment seat of Christ? Let us read John 19:13: “When Pilate, therefore, heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth and sat down in the judgment seat in a place, called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.” The Greek word, translated judgment seat, is “bemos,” from “bema.” This word simply means a place, a step, a footstep, a raised step, a tribunal to speak from. Young says that it means a “footprint.” Note carefully what John wrote about Pilate. He “sat down upon the bema in a place called Pavement.” The Pavement was a mosaic of stones near Pilate's palace. Faucet informs us that Pilate's judgment seat was usually in his palace, but this particular time it was on the pavement. How simple was that judgment seat. Pilate sat down upon a step, a footstep, a raised step; that is, a place higher than the pavement, and Jesus stood before him on the pavement.

If Pilate's judgment seat, where Jesus was unjustly judged, was movable, why may not the just judgment seat of Christ also be movable? If criminals, supposed, or real, were brought before some step on which the governor sat for a short time, a place of his own choosing, may not our Lord arraign His own people any time and anywhere? The time and place of Pilate's tribunal was determined by circumstances. He was the man in authority and had the right to sit in judgment when and where he would. The conditions in Christendom make similar demands on the Head of the Church; and is He not the “Man in authority, having the right to judge when and where He will? Furthermore, our Lord's footprint is the standard, or rule of conduct. He says, “Come and follow me.” The judgment seat either accuses, or exonerates us, according to our rule of action.

It follows, then, that judgment is taking place today. The Judge is walking in the midst of His people continually, with His flaming feet as the standard and His searching eyes as just examiners. Although the Lord is not walking in our

midst in His physical body, yet by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and by means of the Word of God, He examines, corrects, instructs and encourages; and sentence is pronounced day by day. The Spirit also uses the saints in this ministry, as they give out the Word faithfully. "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself" (I John 5:9). Likewise, he that obeys the voice of the Lord has the witness in himself. The Lord pronounces a verdict upon our conduct and work as we walk in the Light.

## **PAUL'S PRACTICAL TEACHING**

"Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment; yea, I judge not mine own self; for I know nothing by myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but He that judges me is the Lord" (I Corinthians 4:1-4). The Lord searches for a faithful man, and then makes him a steward. He could not be a steward unless he was faithful and was judged and pronounced true in his former office; hence, worthy of a promotion. Some of the apostle's converts sat in judgment over his teaching and work. He gave them to understand that they were out of order in doing so. He did not even judge himself, but left that serious task to His Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was being judged continually, which the end of his career proves.

If the Apostle Paul, our pattern and teacher, was being judged continually, why not also his followers? And did not his very words judge them? Likewise, the judgment of our Lord has been in progress throughout this entire Church Age. John's vision of Him walking in the midst of the candlesticks includes this whole period. Therefore, He is judging you and me now. "Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (I Peter 4:17). And that judgment is in this life, even "at us." He examines us by the Word: "For the Word of God is quick (living) and powerful (energetic) and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). We learn by the Word whether we are carnal, soulish, or spiritual. We learn all about ourselves. Our actions, and even our thoughts are weighed by the Word. We discover what pleases, or displeases the Lord. We can know whether we are walking worthy of our high calling in Christ, and in the good works ordained for us.

Because the judgment of the Church by the Lord is in progress, the apostle said, "Therefore, judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and will make manifest the counsels of the heart; and then shall every man have praise of God." Paul had said before, "If I come short, He keeps me right. He found me faithful in witnessing for Jesus before He appointed me to be steward over His spiritual house. Five years or more rolled by from the time of my conversion until the Holy

Spirit separated me and Barnabas to the Gospel work (Acts 13). Therefore, you have no right to sit in judgment over my teaching and toil. I get my instructions from the skies. The Lord is over me and keeps me from error." That is Paul's meaning. And, every God-sent and faithful minister, or steward of Christ, holds the same attitude to Christ. He makes them competent and faithful ministers of the Gospel of Grace.

-- To Be Continued.

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## **READY FOR THE RAPTURE**

Ready for the rapture, Ready for the crown!  
Ready we must fully be.  
Body, soul and spirit, when the Lord comes down,  
Shall be happy, well and free.  
Changed in just a moment, spite of Satan's frown,  
Then to Glory we will flee.

And He wholly sanctifies, whom He seals and trains and tries,  
That translation glory they may see;  
Brother Paul has prayed for this - purest, highest bridal bliss  
Spirit, soul and body blameless be.

Do you wonder at the fight, as we walk in all the light?  
Satan seeks to make us fear and fail;  
He would dim our dove-lit eyes, rob us of our place and Prize,  
But through blood we surely shall prevail.       - A.S.C.

## **ONE GLASS OF MILK**

A poor boy who was selling goods from door to door to pay his way through school, discovered that he had only a dime left, and he was very hungry. He decided that he would ask for a meal at the next house. However, he lost his nerve when a lovely young woman opened the door.

Instead of a meal, he asked for a drink of water. The young lady thought he looked hungry, so she brought him a large glass of milk. He drank it slowly and then asked, "How much do I owe you?" She replied: "You don't owe me anything. Mother taught us never to accept pay for a kindness."

He thanked her again, and as Howard Kelly left that house he not only felt stronger physically, but his faith in God and man was stronger also. He had been ready to give up and quit.

Years later, that young woman became critically ill. The local doctors were baffled. They decided to send her to a larger city, where specialists could study her rare disease. Dr. Howard Kelly was called in for the consultation. When he

heard the name of the town she came from, he went to her room to see her. He recognized her at once. He determined to do his best to save her life. He gave special attention to her case, and after a long struggle, the battle was won.

Dr. Kelly requested the business office to give him the final bill for approval. He looked at it, then wrote something on the edge, and the bill was sent to her room. She feared to open it, for she was sure that it would take the rest of her life to pay all of it. Finally, she looked and saw some words written along the edge of the bill. It read: "Paid in full with one glass of milk." Signed, Dr. Howard Kelly.

Tears of joy ran down her cheeks, as she gave praise to the Lord: "Thank you, God, that your love is shed abroad through human hearts and hands!"

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It's the "nobodies" SOMEBODY chooses so carefully. (Charles Swindoll)

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## Editor's Reflections:

**"From that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?" -- John 6:66-67**

We are saddened to witness the decline in church attendance, and this seems to be more pronounced within the "Grace" Churches. I have agonized, prayed earnestly for new people, blamed myself when people leave for various reasons, but none of this seems to help.

These verses are not new; we are all aware of them. Jesus did not have a church building in which to preach, but He did have a following. At times, the crowds grew exceedingly, as witness the feeding of the 5,000. This was one of the miracles Jesus performed which drew a crowd. When He began to preach the Word in depth, the crowds dwindled. If He didn't perform a miracle daily, the people lost interest in listening to His messages.

This particular occasion was after He had fed the 5000 people with the young boy's lunch of five loaves of bread and two fish. Instead of extolling the benefits of this particular bread and promising more miracles, Jesus began to explain the typical value of bread. He said, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst ... The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the Bread which came down from heaven." This is when reason displaced faith, and this little bit of truth offended them. Jesus continued with the same Message; He didn't soft-pedal any of the Truth just to appease them.

The more He taught about eating the True Bread from heaven, the less they wanted to hear. Their spiritual understanding did not go very deep. They were thinking only on a natural plane, and never did get the spiritual meaning of "eating Christ, and feeding on Him." He put on more pressure, as He said, "Your

fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am that living Bread ... and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." The reasoning human mind immediately rejected such a thought, and said, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

Jesus poured it on even more, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, ye have no life in you." Many of the followers said, "This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" The same is true today. Many people are saved by hearing about salvation from one of the Gospel Records; perhaps John 3:16. As babes in Christ, they are content therein and cannot digest anything of a deeper nature. As these same believers are taken over into the Apostle Paul's writings, they hear truth that is difficult to understand; and, if they have not received the infilling with the Holy Spirit, they do not have the Revealer of Scriptures to help them. The Word they hear takes more and more chewing and meditation. Often, they have become so occupied with serving within the church, or with witnessing, etc., that they don't have time to study the Word. Finally, they make the decision to 1 look elsewhere for satisfaction in their spiritual life.

Jesus asked the twelve: "Will ye also go away?" Impetuous Peter spoke out and replied, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Peter wavered for one brief period when Jesus was arrested, but he was restored and became a mighty preacher of the Word.

I know it is discouraging to study for a message, or Bible Study, and then see the church building almost empty. To witness this time after time, with the devil whispering negative thoughts in your mind, it takes a real effort to keep on. But, we must. Jesus also said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them. The Apostle Paul witnessed the same treatment in his day. Let us not dwell on the negative side, the empty seats, but rather on the faithful ones who still attend. In Heaven, we see a vast difference in number of the full overcomers typified by the four living ones and the 24 elders (Chapter 4-5), and the innumerable multitude of Chapter 7. Which number would you rather be a part of?

## God's Symbols

Gene Hawkins

**"Is there no balm in Gilead; is there no physician there? Why then is not the health of the daughter of My people recovered?" -- Jeremiah 8:22**

The balm of Gilead evidently had a reputation for healing, but there seems to be no record that God ever used it as such. In our text, and also in chapter 48:11, it is apparent that God declares its inefficiency to produce the healing desired for this nation. God has used many symbols concerning healing as well

as for other purposes. Symbols in themselves have absolutely no healing virtue; they are just that, symbols, and only God has the power to heal.

The bread and juice used in the communion service are but symbols, and like so many others which we shall see, have no power in themselves to make one pure and righteous, or to be accepted with God. It is necessary that we understand these God-given symbols, for if we do not, we will be robbed of spiritual blessing and wealth. The ones who do not understand the symbolic language of Revelation will indeed have to look on it as a "closed" book.

Jesus used symbols both in His teaching and in miracles. John 9 has the story of the healing of a man who was blind from birth. Jesus "spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle" with which He anointed the eyes of the blind man. He then told that man to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. Valuable and spiritual truth is seen in this act. The spittle, which was out of His mouth, speaks of the Word of God, Jesus Himself. By spitting on the ground, Jesus, who was the Word from eternity, shows that He became flesh and dwelt among us. It was Jesus who came down into the very dust of the earth, to be identified with sinful humanity, and thus is the Word of God made effective for us. It is this Message that still anoints our eyes today. Was there anything magical about the pool of Siloam? Certainly not. The word means "sent," and speaks of Christ who was sent into the world that we might experience the washing of water by the Word.

King Hezekiah was one of only seven good kings in Judah, but he was sick unto death, and God said that he was going to die. He turned his face to the wall and wept much before the Lord, and because of that, Isaiah was sent with the message to put a lump of figs upon the boil, and in three days he would recover, and go up once again to the sanctuary. Did the figs have any healing virtue? If that were the case, men would have gone to their olive yards and harvested them immediately for their own ills, and to sell. The word "lump" means "that which is pressed," and tells us of Christ who was pressed beyond measure by the judgment of God. Three days later, we see the effect of that pressure, as Hezekiah was raised up -- (II Kings 20).

The nation of Israel also experienced God's lessons taught by symbol. They had murmured incessantly from the time they left Egypt, and there came a day when God said, "It is enough!" He sent fiery (poisonous) serpents among them and many people died -- (Numbers 21). Moses was instructed to make a serpent of brass, like the fiery serpents and hang it on a pole. When anyone would look upon this serpent, he would live. This is the message of redemption today, in symbol. "Look and Live!" There was no power in that hunk of brass. Later, in their history, Israel evidently thought there was, for they burned incense to it and called it "Nehustan" - (2 Kings 18:4). Through this brazen serpent on a pole, God was preaching a message of Redemption. Christ was the fulfillment of that serpent of brass, as He was hanged on the cross. He was suspended between heaven and earth, accursed of God, having been made sin for us. It was He who endured the judgment hand of God. The result was, and is, life for us, but there was no healing power in that inanimate brass serpent made by Moses.

The Ark, though ordained by God, was only a symbol. It was made of shittim wood, symbolic of Jesus' humanity. It was overlaid with gold, telling us of His Deity, but there was no power in, or of itself. Israel, once again, fell woefully short in recognizing its true meaning, for they began to treat it as nothing more than any other common idol. They had been severely smitten by the Philistines, and were persuaded that if they would take the ark to the battle with them, it would surely deliver them - (1 Samuel 4:3). That proved not to be so, for not only was Israel once again smitten, the Philistines also stole the ark of God. The ark still meant something to Him, for He made the Philistines extremely uncomfortable while it was in their custody. He determined that Israel learn that it was the God of the ark that had the power. It is also so with all the symbols of redemption.

II Kings 5 records the glorious story of redemption using symbols to manifest this Truth. "Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master, and honorable, because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria; he was also a mighty man of valor, **but he was a leper**" (5:1). This is the story of humanity in general. Regardless of how great one may be, or what pedigree he may have, notable with the elite of the world, all men are "lepers" in that they have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Leprosy, in Scripture, is symbolic of sin, and it is incurable, but for God. Naaman learned that lesson. His journey is typical of every sinner today. Ultimately, he came to the house of Elisha, the man of God, even as God "will see to it that someone will convey His Message to the needy. Naaman, like so many of us today, had his own idea of how things should be done. Elisha had sent a messenger to him, saying, "Go, and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (5:10).

Naaman was offended that someone of his rank would not merit a personal audience with the man of God in this matter, and he also took exception to a bath in the river Jordan. "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage." He clearly depicts the very nature of man. His reaction is typical of one under the conviction of the Holy Ghost. He, like most people, put forth his own "sensible" ideas. But, herein is the problem. God's Ways are not our ways. Jordan is symbolic, which name means "Descender" or "Their Descent." It empties into the Dead Sea, and speaks of our going down into death with Christ. This river was used as a border between the wilderness and Jordan, and that border still exists today in our own spiritual experience; for we will never be able to take our place in Canaan - the heavenlies - unless we find experimental resurrection in Christ. When Israel crossed this river, as they came out of the wilderness, 12 representatives took a stone out of the riverbed after the waters had been cut off. Joshua was then instructed to put 12 other stones back in their place. It was Joshua, symbolic of Christ, who did all the work. As with us today, the 12 had nothing to do with placing those stones back in Jordan, the river of death. Christ, alone, took our old man down into death with Himself.

Although Naaman had gone away in a rage, he finally relented. “Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean” (5:14). This is a clear picture of the new birth. Every sinner must “go down” in obedience to the saying of the man of God. This was God's way for Naaman, but let us remember that there was no healing power in those muddy waters of the river Jordan. Had that been the case, every leper colony for miles around would have clamored to come to the river. Today, some enterprising entrepreneur would have cordoned off the place and charged an exorbitant price to spend a few minutes in the “miracle-working water.”

Naaman's lessons are not over, however. He tried to pay the man of God for his services, but Elisha would have none of it. His action exemplifies Divine Grace, which tells us that God gives without measure, but without money and without price. Naaman desperately tried to persuade him, but Elisha said, “As the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused” (5:16).

Elisha's servant did not have the same spirit. He ran after Naaman, telling a false story about two young sons of the prophets had just arrived, and needed a talent of silver and two changes of garments. Naaman gladly gave Gehazi what he asked for, but Gehazi paid a tremendous price. Elisha asked his servant where he had gone, and again, Gehazi lied. Elisha replied: “The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow” (5:27). Men who preach and practice such a message of profiteering today, either in word or deed, are also in danger of severe consequences. They imply that the hearer will receive the desire of his heart, only if his request is accompanied by a “love-gift.”

Naaman continued to be a receiver. “Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? For thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD” (5:17). Change had not only taken place in Naaman's body, but also in his heart. He had determined to worship only the God of Israel and took back this soil that he might sacrifice, as it were, from the land of Israel. The word “earth” carries the same meaning as the word “Adam,” both meaning “red.” It is symbolic of the blood of Christ, and Naaman, in spirit, recognizes that atoning blood. It is interesting that he sees the fallacy of his master's idolatry, and in effect asks God's pardon before he is required by his master to go to the temple of idols and bow before them. Elisha approved this request and replied, “Go in peace. So he departed from him a little way.”

The communion service is also a lesson taught by symbol. The Apostle Paul instructs us: “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come” (I Corinthians 11:26). Jesus did not initiate this memorial feast until the last Passover, but He had introduced the truth of it in John 6, when He celebrated the second Passover of His public ministry, with the feeding of the five thousand. Through His discourse, He announced Himself as the “Bread”: “For the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world ... I am the bread of life ... I am the bread which came

down from heaven ... This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die ... I am the living bread which came down from heaven ... This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever” (6:33-58).

We are instructed to eat of this bread, but just what does that term mean? Some teach, just as the incensed Jews wrongfully perceived, that Jesus' words were to be taken literally. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you” (6:53). However in Verses 47-48, we read: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life.” Thus, believing and eating are the same thing, for they produce the same result. Jesus is telling us that His language is only symbolic, even as we have seen with all the other symbols of redemption. Faith in what they represent is the key to their effectiveness in our lives.

Some people teach that by taking the communion, one is proven to be “worthy,” while another is found “unworthy.” This teaching is absolutely contradictory to the words of Jesus. Eating this bread is the path to worthiness, not vice versa. Verses 56-57 indicate that the path to fullness of life is a continual process. Our eternal destiny is settled the moment we believe, for we have eternal life, but if we want to have the relationship with Jesus that He has with His Father, we must adhere to these verses. “He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in Him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” This was a way of life for Jesus, and so it must become for us if we are to attain to the intimate growth and fellowship that these verses promises. It is a daily experience of continually believing His Word and interacting with Him, and this is not limited only to the communion feast!

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### **The Holy Spirit's Voice**

The voice of the Holy Spirit falls softly on my ear:

“look up, my love, be ready; Christ's coming draweth near.”

I do not know the day or hour, but signs are all around,

Proclaiming that the time is near ... The evidence abounds.

-- Beula Clark

## **KEEP PRAYING - UNTIL GOD ANSWERS**

**When He seems not to hear, trust Him still.**

There are two passages in the Gospel of Luke which throw a flood of light upon the question, "What sort of praying prevails with God and obtains what it seeks from Him?" This also leads to the question, "why is it that many prayers of God's own children come short of obtaining that which we seek of God?"

The first of these two passages is found in Luke 11:5-10. Our Lord Jesus Himself is the Speaker: "And He said unto them, which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is a friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

**KEEP ON PRAYING UNTIL YOU GET IT!** The central lesson in this parable is that when we pray, if we do not obtain the thing the first time, pray again. And if we do not obtain it the second time, pray a third time, and if we do not obtain it the hundredth time, go on praying until we do receive it.

We should do much thinking before we ask anything of God and be clear that we ask according to His will. We should not rush heedlessly into God's presence and ask for the first thing that comes to mind without giving proper thought to it. But when we have decided that we should pray for something, we should keep on praying until we get it.

The word translated "importunity" in Verse 8 is a deeply significant word. Its primary meaning is "shamelessness"-that is, it sets forth the persistent determination in prayer to God that will not be put to shame by any apparent refusal on God's part to grant the request that we ask. This is a very startling way that our Lord employs to explain the necessity of importunity and persistence in prayer.

### **The Syrophencian Woman**

Our Heavenly Father delights in the holy boldness that will not take no for an answer. The reason why He delights in it is that it is an expression of faith, and nothing pleases God more than faith. We have an illustration of this holy boldness in the woman of Syrophencia, as recorded in Matthew 15:21-28, concerning the healing of her daughter. She cried, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a demon."

The Lord seemed to pay no attention to her. He answered her not a word. His disciples besought Him, saying, "Send her away; for she cried after us." In spite of His apparent deafness to her appeal, she kept on crying. Then He turned to her with an apparently more positive rebuff: "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," for she was not of Israel. Then she worshipped Him and kept on calling to Him, "Lord, help me!"

Then came what almost appears to be a very cruel rebuff: "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." The word He used for dogs was

a peculiar word that meant a little pet dog, and was not all as harsh as it seems, although it was an apparent refusal to hear her request. But, as we shall see, our Lord was simply putting her faith to the test that she might receive an even larger blessing.

Then she said, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from the Masters' table." She refused to take no for an answer. Then came one of the most wonderful words of commendation that ever fell from the lips of our Lord: "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour."

That sort of thing pleases God. He would have us exercise that kind of faith in His loving kindness, and in Himself, that even when He seems not to hear, we will trust Him anyway. God does not always give us the things we want the first time we ask, but let's not give up; keep on praying until we receive an answer. We should not only pray, but we should **pray through**.

Why is it that God does not always give us the things that we ask for, the first time we pray? The answer is plain: He wants us to have the far greater good of training us in persistent faith. For our own good, God compels us to be persistent in our effort. Just as men and women exercise their bodies to become strong and do extra-ordinary feats, He trains us to be made into strong men and women of prayer. He compels us to pray through.

There are many who pray for a thing once or twice, and when they don't receive an answer, stop praying. They call it "submission to the will of God." But as a rule, this is not submission to His will, but spiritual laziness and lack of determination in that most all-important of all human lines of effort - prayer. We should be very careful what we ask from God; but when we begin to pray, we must never give up until we receive what we request, or until God definitely makes it, very clear that it is not His will to grant our petition. But let us always remember, God really is and He really does answer prayer!

I prayed 15 long years for the conversion of my oldest brother. When he seemed to be getting father and farther away from any hope of conversion, I prayed on. My first winter in Chicago, after 15 years of praying, never missing a single day; one morning God said to me as I knelt, "I have heard your prayer; you need not pray anymore; your brother is going to be converted." Within two weeks he was in my home, shut in from sickness which made it impossible to leave. Then, the day he left he accepted Christ over in the Bible Institute in Mr. Moody's office, where he and I went to talk and pray together.

I told this incident when holding meetings in a certain city. An elderly woman came at the close of the meeting and said, "I have been praying for the conversion of my brother, who is 63 years old, for many years, but a short time ago I gave up and stopped praying." She added, "I am going to begin my prayers again." Within two weeks she came and said, "I heard from my brother, and he has accepted Christ."

Oh, men and women, pray through, pray through, pray through! Do not just begin to pray for a little while and then throw up your hands and quit! Pray and pray until God bends the heavens and comes down!

-- R. A. Torrey (1856-1928)

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## GOD HAS A POSITIVE ANSWER

You say: "It's impossible." God says, "All things are possible" (Luke 18:27).  
You say: "I'm too tired." God says: "I will give you rest (Matthew 11:28-30).  
You say: "Nobody really loves me." God says: "I love you." (John 3:16; 13:1).  
You say: "I can't go on." God says: "My grace is sufficient." II Corinthians. 12:9; Psalms 91:15).  
You say: "I can't figure things out." God says: "I will direct your steps." (Proverbs 3:5-6).  
You say: "I can't do it." God says: "You can do all things through Christ" (Philippines 4:13; II Corinthians 9:8)  
You say: "I'm not worth it." God says: "It will be worth it all." (Romans 8:28)  
You say: "I can't forgive myself." God says: "I forgive you" (I John 1:9; Rom. 8:1).  
You say: "I can't manage." God says: "I will supply all your needs." (Phil. 4:19)  
You say: "I'm afraid." God says: "I have not given you a spirit of fear." (II Tim. 1:7)  
You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated." God says: "Cast all your cares on ME." (I Peter 5:7)  
You say: "I'm not smart enough." God says: "I will give you wisdom." (I Cor. 1:30)

## **THINGS OF... OTHERS**

Jack W. Bannister

**"Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." -- Philippians 2:3-4**

These weighty words were written by the great Apostle Paul, who through many years of suffering and deep experiences with the Lord learned this lesson. The last word of Verse 4 is "others." This was the overpowering, dominating note in the life of Jesus, who lived for others and died for others. Selfishness He knew not. "The Son of man came not to be ministered (waited upon) unto, but to minister (wait upon, or serve), and to give His life a ransom for many (for others)" -- Mark 10:45. Unselfish devotion for the good of others, summed up His whole life. He said, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matthew 11:22). The mind of Christ is the lowly mind. This attitude of heart, Paul possessed. He drank deeply of the Spirit of Christ, thereby exemplifying the meekness of the lowly Jesus:

In Acts 21:18-26, Paul puts this spirit of "others" on exhibition. "Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them" (Vs. 26). Why did Paul permit this? We must first consider his motive. These men at Jerusalem had not been liberated completely from the shadows of the law, because their leaders, such as

James and the elders, although saved men, did not teach the full results of Calvary. Why did not Paul say, "You know better than that, James! You know I don't attempt to keep the law!" Why didn't Paul correct James as he did Peter, as recorded in Galatians 2:12-18? Peter was trying to bring Gentiles under the law by his actions. These men in Jerusalem did not understand the message of Grace, a Paul preached it. Paul was not compromising the Truth He was using this opportunity to tell those men the truth concerning the offering made for them. This was chance to tell those men what other teachers failed to do that all the Jewish offerings were representative of the sacrifice of Christ for them. Paul, using Holy Spirit wisdom, seized this opportunity to glorify Jesus.

And so it is today. There are some, who knowing, the Word and ways of the Lord, make everything bend to the furtherance of the cause of Christ. A knowledge of the Word, though absolutely necessary, is not enough. We must also remember in ministering the Word of God that we are dealing with human beings, not computer: People are largely influenced by habits, environment education, and by measure of intellectual and spiritual comprehension. Maybe, some have not been exposed to the Truth as long as we have, therefore are not as quick to absorb it as we think they should. We must make allowances in such cases. Some people with limited experience make the statement, "I don't care what people think." We should care. If we don't, a day may come when no one will listen to us. We are to minister to the saints and care for their needs. As ministers, we may be called upon to say, or to do certain things which we would not ordinarily do; but if we are real minister (servants), we will lay aside our feelings and desires, for the sake of others. This is not compromising any more than the things that Jesus and Paul did.

One day the Lord's disciples were eating corn of the Sabbath and they were taken to task for it. Jesus related the incident in which David went into the holy place and ate the bread meant only for the priests (1 Samuel 21). And, Jesus defended him for it. David was getting the food for his followers who were hungry. Others is what motivated him to do that. There is more to the Scriptures than just quoting them. There is no cut and dried method to being a blessing to others. We must meet them on their own ground and work from there. They are individuals with different characteristics and tastes, and we must act accordingly.

There is a vast difference in the approach of Jesus when He witnessed to Nicodemus in John 3, and the way He talked with the woman of Samaria in John 4. To Nicodemus, He was firm, because this man was a teacher of the Law, and should have known the truth. To the woman at the well, He was tender, because she was weak, and longed for something or someone to help her. Jesus was successful in dealing with both of them, because He approached them as individuals on their own ground. These two instances are certainly a lesson in witnessing if we want to learn how to do it.

Back to the Apostle Paul. He reprimanded the Galatian Church for going back to the shadows of the law, because they should have known better. He had taught them the Truth of Grace. Read his epistle to them. Yet, at this time, he went along with James' request. There are those who obtain a knowledge of the Word, but lacking a well-rounded experience, become a little uppity. This is more

manifest in younger saints. In their zealotry to be true to the written Word, they neglect the Spirit of the Word. They seek to instruct others who are older and wiser than they. Preaching, or teaching the Word of God, places a great responsibility on the messenger. We are not playing church; we are dealing with the souls of people and their eternal future.

Returning to the Scripture Verse at the beginning of this article - "look on the things of others," - this is how we do it. By menial service we render, doing the little undesirable things, the things from which others shrink, forgetting ourselves, we are able to be a blessing to others. We must always consider others instead of ourselves.

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God pours His love into our hearts to flow out to others.

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## **Stop Worrying About Money**

Never waste another day feeling down about money or the weather. If you can clear the clouds in these two common areas of aggravation, you will be well on your way to faith filled living.

Rise each morning thanking God for clouds or sunshine, heat or cold, and you're sure to have a better day. Lift your heart in praise to God for His provision so far in life and your financial fears will fly away.

Money concerns are common to all. And the love of money can be a danger to those of all financial position: producing greed, bitterness, irritability and poor health.

John D. Rockefeller, the wealthiest man of his time pursued money with a passion. By the time he was 33, he had made his first million. At 43, he controlled the largest business on earth. At 53, he was the only known billionaire in the world. In spite of having all of this money, however, he was unhappy because his money had him.

Once Rockefeller shipped \$40,000 worth of grain across Lake Erie without insurance because he thought the \$150 premium was too high. That night a vicious storm raged over the lake, endangering his investment and making him so concerned about the load of grain that when his partner, George Gardener, arrived at their office, he found John D. pacing the floor anxiously.

Gardner immediately went out to buy insurance on the jeopardized cargo, if possible, while Rockefeller kept pacing and fretting. Upon arriving back at the office, however, he found his partner in an even worse state of mind. A telegram had come saying the ship had arrived safely at its destination. Rockefeller was now so upset over having wasted the money on insurance that he had to go home and spend the day in bed.

At the age of 53, Rockefeller's health was so bad that he wasn't expected to live another year. Worrying about money had nearly destroyed him. Then this unhappy man recognized the destructive power money was exercising over him

and began taking steps to break free from its bondage. Instead of grasping for more dollars, he started giving them away: millions of them.

This change from getting to giving worked a miracle in Rockefeller's life. In trading his self-seeking attitude for one of service for others, he became healthy and happy. By losing his life, he found it; and lived to the ripe old age of 98.

Worrying does nothing to solve money problems. Fretting over funds won't place one slice of bread on the table nor delay the call of one bill collector. Arguing over bills at mealtime won't prevent foreclosure on your home but it may ruin your marriage.

Can anything good come out of your present difficulty? Will this be the time you learn to care about the needs of others who are hurting financially? Do you have untapped resources and abilities that might never have been discovered without the arrival of this money crunch?

Have you considered giving instead of continually reaching out for more? Our Lord said, "Give and it shall be 34given unto you" (Luke 6:38). God may want to prove His power to meet your needs, improve your health, and extend your life by returning more than you give.

-- Roger Campbell

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## HOW TO GIVE

Give as you would if an angel  
Awaited your gift at the door.  
Give as you would if tomorrow  
Found you where giving is o'er.

Give as you would to the Master  
If you met His loving look.  
Give as you would of your substance  
If His hand the offering took.

--Anonymous