

# THE LIVING CHURCH NEWS

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## Stir Up Your Philadelphian Faith!

Dear Brethren and Friends,

Greetings, again, from Charlotte! Thank you *so much* for the outpouring of love and concern that you have shown regarding the death of Morgan Montgomery and the deep hurt that this has brought—not only to her family, but to so many campers at our summer camp in Ohio. We do appreciate this and hope that this will “stir” *all of us* to draw closer to God than ever before. As most of you know we had the sad duty of releasing the following post on our LYC Web site and on Facebook right after the accident:

“There was a tragic water skiing accident this afternoon at the Ohio LYC Camp. Morgan Montgomery from Australia was down in the water and was run over by another boat that was traveling at a high rate of speed. The boat and driver were not connected with the LYC camp.

Morgan was a much loved counsellor and an inspiration to be around, and this has been a very difficult experience for the campers and staff. Mr. Monson and Dr. Winnail spoke with the campers and staff this evening at a general camp meeting, and the ministers counselled with all of the campers in their dorms. Please join us in heartfelt and fervent prayer for everyone who has been impacted by this tragedy. We have been able to speak with Morgan’s parents in Australia. They will certainly appreciate everyone’s prayers, and they have asked for prayers on behalf of the driver of the boat involved in the accident.



Many of you may have met Morgan, as she has visited Charlotte several times over the past few years. Please remember the Montgomeries, the campers and staff in your prayers in this very difficult time.”

Brethren, right after the accident, our entire team at the camp went into action. It certainly seemed that God guided things for good, and the campers and staff shared many helpful talks with Camp Director Mr. Sheldon Monson, visiting evangelist Dr. Douglas Winnail and many other ministers and visitors. From every report I have heard, they all did an *excellent job* in handling the entire situation. I especially appreciate Mr. Sheldon Monson’s constant effort over many days in facing a multitude of challenges, inquiries and situations which must have caused him a great deal of concern even while coping with his recent cancer diagnosis. So, I ask all of you—in addition to your prayers for Morgan Montgomery’s family—**not** to forget Mr. Monson, who continues to need our *fervent prayers* as he recovers!

During my visit over the last three and a half days at the camp, I was able to have four or five personal talks with Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery—especially Mr. Montgomery. I was able to give talks at three different meetings—the Evening Reflections when I first arrived, the Christian Living class the next morning and then the final sermon on the Sabbath at the end of the camp. In addition, I tried to talk to *dozens* of students all over the camp as I went to the various activities. As each day progressed, I could see—as could we all—that the mood

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of the camp had improved wonderfully. Christ showed the young people that He *allowed* this for some good purpose and that, indeed, “we know that all things work together for good to those who *love God*, to those who are the *called* according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28).

Brethren, it may not *seem* to be “good” at the time we experience life’s many tragedies. But *in the end*, I have found over my 65-plus years in Christ’s Church that it *does indeed* work for good in the lessons that thousands of people learn and in the overall effect on those involved. *For God is good*. He has **never** promised us eternal life in this flesh. He does want each of us to be sure that we have “run our course” and that we are, in fact, *ready* for eternal life once He has called us and begun to work with us. So we must truly believe that He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).

Back in 1958, *many* of us had to learn the above lesson. For that was the year in which Mr. Armstrong’s elder son, Richard David Armstrong, was *crushed to death* in a horrible automobile accident in central California. I was sitting directly across from Mr. Armstrong in his little office at the time the call came in from the other minister involved. I will always remember him saying, “Did this really happen, is Dick in danger of dying? What can we do?” He immediately began to move into action—trying to find a way to lease a plane and *fly* to San Luis Obispo immediately. But he was unable to do this quickly so he decided to go up there himself—taking Norman Smith, his technician in the radio studio, along with him, as he was an excellent driver. He asked me to “take over,” temporarily, while he was gone—as Garner Ted Armstrong was back in Springfield on an Evangelistic Campaign at the time. So I had to take over for a week or two during this crisis and, later, Mr. Armstrong named me Second Vice President after Dick died. He was afraid that he and Ted might be in the same car and that *both* of them could perish at the same time.

Brethren, Mr. Armstrong *trusted God*. But he had to realize that God *allows* a number of things to happen to test us in this life. After Dick’s body was brought back down to the UCLA Medical Center from Central California, he *died* as they were transferring him from the ambulance to the hospital. Soon,

Mr. Armstrong asked me to *join him* in going to the funeral home in Pasadena to see about necessary arrangements. Even there, I talked Mr. Armstrong into *anointing Dick’s dead body* in hopes that God would **resurrect** him then! We did pray fervently, together. But it was not God’s will at that time. God

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does *not always* take care of everything in this life. Again, we are promised a *magnificent reward* in the resurrection.

In the years immediately following Dick’s death, however, the Work grew more than ever, having ever greater impact on the nation and gradually on the world as a whole. The college at Bricket Wood was established in 1960. Then the college in Big Sandy was established in 1964. The number of television stations, the **power** of the programs, the increasing *millions* of people on the mailing list of *The Plain Truth* magazine—all these began to increase. For God had **shaken us** at Dick’s death. Many of us, as a result, drew even closer to God and *cried out* for His intervention and His help. So, things will work “for good” over the long run. We must *understand that* and grasp the **reality** of the soon-coming resurrection from the dead. I tried to explain this to our young people at camp, and I fervently hope many of them are focusing on those types of lessons.

This was my third year visiting our camp in Ohio. It is truly a wonderful camp and adds a great deal of spiritual zest and growth and broadening opportunities to many of our young people, who often come from very small congregations or even live in an area where there is *no local church* and no genuine opportunity for fellowship with young people their own age. So I hope all of us will *pray fervently* for this camp and for all the other Living Youth Camps. As I attended the various activities of the camp—the Christian Living classes, softball, volleyball, flag football, swimming, archery, etc.—I

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## EDITORIAL By Roderick C. Meredith

### POWER IN PRAYER

When you are sick or in trouble, you probably pray about it. But do you have the faith and the understanding to leave a matter *completely* in God's hands—to absolutely *know* that He will deliver His children from sickness and trials of every kind? Very few people do.

When we seem to lack the wisdom or the power to solve our problems, we often become frustrated and unhappy. We may completely *forget* and *ignore* the fact that we have the *right* to call on the Supreme Creator of Heaven and Earth for help with all our problems. The greatest *wisdom* and *power* in all the universe will be with every one of us—if we will only do our part.

Jesus Christ set a *perfect example* that we “should follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21). He lived a full and abundant life—a life that, though cut short, was filled with *love* and *power* from God. He knew how to keep in contact with, and draw upon, the *Supreme Power of the Universe*.

#### CHRIST THE EXAMPLE

Can you imagine Christ acting as if God had “gone way off somewhere”?

Yet that is the *exact attitude* displayed by most who call themselves “Christians” today. Do they completely rely on God to *heal* them when they are sick, to *rescue* them from disaster, or to *bless* them in material as well as spiritual matters? Of course not! They do not have the same faith shown by Christ's apostles, who saw firsthand that Christ, unlike most people, actually *expected* God to intervene and heal the sick, cast out demons, and even to quiet a storm on the sea. Christ's own apostles wanted that kind of intimate contact with God, just as we do. They knew, by His fruits, that Christ understood *the correct way* to draw close to the Eternal God, and to call upon His power to help in every pressing situation.

That *key*, the *correct way* to call upon God's power, is something you and I should be utilizing *every day of our lives*! Its use can put new *meaning* and *power* into our lives!

But that “key” has been *incorrectly* employed by many people of many different religions—even many who call themselves “Christian.” Remember that Christ is *our*

*example*. He knew how to use this “key” perfectly. His way *brings results*!

#### CHRIST TEACHES US HOW TO PRAY

In Luke 11:1–4, we read that the disciples came and asked Jesus *the way* to establish right contact with God. “Lord, *teach us to pray*,” they asked. People do not know *how* to pray until they are properly taught. So Christ gave them a “type”—or pattern—of a prayer that will *get results*.

Let us analyze this *perfect example*. The prayer is addressed to “Our Father in heaven.” When you pray, think of God as your Father. Not *your* Father only, but “Our Father.” Remember that there are others who are trying to serve their Creator and Spiritual Father, and that God loves us all *far more* than a human father would be capable of doing.

Moreover, He has power to help you in ways that would be *impossible* for a human father. Would your earthly father let you rot away and die of disease if he could possibly help it? But God

*can* help it, and He has *promised to heal* (Psalm 103:3; James 5:14–15).

Claim God's *promises* when you pray, and always think of Him as *your Father*.

“In heaven” reminds us that God is not an ordinary father, but One who has all power and should be worshiped. We must be humble and reverent when we pray to the true God.

“Hallowed be Your name,” shows us that God's name—and all that it stands for—is to be held in reverence. God's name will someday be *our name*, if we overcome and are *born of God*. That name carries authority to rule. It must always be respected.

#### WHAT TO ASK

“Your kingdom come,” is the first *request* of this perfect prayer. *First of all*, we should learn to pray for God's





kingdom—His government, His rule—to come on this earth. *How many* so-called “Christians” really want God to *rule* their lives? Most carnal-minded people use every imaginable device to avoid the truth that God is *Supreme Ruler*. Christians should pray that God will *rule this earth*. Only His rule will bring about the peace and happiness that this world is striving in *vain* to achieve (Isaiah 11).

“Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” teaches us to *surrender our wills* to God as we pray—to acknowledge His rule—*His authority*. Remember that *God knows what is best*. You need to *study* God’s word, in order to learn the principles of God’s will, so you can pray accordingly. Paul wrote, “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what *the will of the Lord* is” (Ephesians 5:17).

Drink in of God’s word, so that you may begin to think as God thinks, and have His will made a part of your very character. “Let this *mind* be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:5). Then you will automatically pray according to God’s will, as revealed in the Bible—and your *prayers will be answered*.

“Give us day by day our daily bread” certainly shows that God wants us to ask for our material needs. But notice that we are not to ask for great wealth, but rather for our *daily bread*. God has *promised* to supply every *need* (Philippians 4:19). It is God’s will that we prosper and be in health (3 John 2), but great wealth might become a stumbling block to our faith. So, remember Christ’s example of asking only for our *daily bread*—not necessarily for several years of sustenance in advance.

### **FORGIVE OTHERS, RESIST THE DEVIL!**

“And forgive us our debts, for we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us.” You may ask God’s forgiveness *only if you first forgive others*. When you kneel before God in prayer, never come before Him with feelings of bitterness, resentfulness or hate. If you cannot first rid yourself of those feelings, ask God to *clean you up* and replace the spirit of *hate* with His Spirit of *love*. That love is charitable and patient with others.

It is a wonderful feeling to know that you hate no one, and that in your way, however clumsily, you are trying to show love to everyone. God *hears* and *answers* the prayers of those who are of this Spirit.

“And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.” God himself tempts no man (James 1:13). However, He does permit us to be tempted by Satan and our own lusts. We should constantly pray that He would not permit us to be *brought into*, or *partake of*, any temptation—that He would give us the spiritual *power* to master any wrong desires. Ask God

each day to give you the strength to “resist the devil and he [the devil] will flee from you” (James 4:7).

“Be *sober*, be *vigilant*; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Satan the devil will try his best to upset you day and night! Ask God for strength and faith.

### **ASK FOR WHAT YOU NEED**

Jesus continued teaching His disciples about prayer by giving them a parable (Luke 11:5–13). He showed that if we are in truly dire *need*, as was the man who had an unexpected guest, we can be sure that God will answer our prayer if we throw ourselves completely on His mercy.

The disciples were still unconverted, because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. So Jesus told them, “If you then, *being evil*, know how to give good gifts to your children, *how much more* will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (v. 13). God is *totally willing* to give of His Spirit to those who respond to His calling.

Do you need wisdom, knowledge, faith and love? These are all *gifts* of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12; 13). *Ask* God for these gifts. He is more willing to give you these things than you are to feed *your own hungry child*.

*This is His will, so ask in faith!*

### **TWO MISTAKES TO AVOID**

During His “Sermon on the Mount,” Christ showed that He *expects* His true followers to pray (Matthew 6:6–8). He did not say, “*If* you pray,” but rather “*when* you pray.” He *knew* that anyone who was truly serving God would be *praying often*.

*Are you?*

He cautioned the disciples never to pray “to be seen of men,” but instead to enter into a closet or “secret place,” and there commune with their Heavenly Father. Christ taught that it is *wrong* to make long prayers in front of others to “show off” (Matthew 23:14). Those who delight in this sort of showmanship are *disobeying God*.

Also, you have probably heard members of some religions, and even some “Christian” denominations, repeating the same prayers over and over again. Christ said, “And when you pray, *do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words” (Matthew 6:7).

Memorized prayers—including the “Lord’s Prayer”—soon lose their meaning and sincerity.

Nowhere in the entire New Testament is the “Lord’s Prayer” repeated. The Apostles did not repeat it over and over again.

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# TRUSTING GOD

By Rod McNair

There is a slogan on American currency: “In God We Trust.” People pass it from hand to hand millions of times a day. This is truly ironic considering the spiritual state of our nation, and of the world, today. There is just not a lot of real trust in God.

The question for us is: “*How much do we trust God?*” That might sound like an easy question to answer, at first. When all is going well—when the weather is pleasant and warm, there is sunshine on our face and a gentle breeze at our back—we can feel pretty good about our relationship with God.

But, when the sky grows dark, the wind blows, and the rain falls, things look bleak. When the car breaks down, debts pile up and money is tight, we can get discouraged. We cry out to God and ask for help. We examine ourselves to see if we need to change. But maybe God does not answer right away. Or, maybe the answer is “no” or “not right now.” Maybe God lets someone die. Maybe He allows a trial to go on and on and on. We can get disoriented, confused and worried. We still believe in God, but we feel hurt—why is this happening? Why does it keep on going? Where is His deliverance, especially when we read the many scriptural promises of it?

Trusting God takes more than simply believing He exists. The Bible says that the demons believe—and tremble (James 2:19)! Real trust is believing that *God always has our best interest at heart*, and is dedicated to guiding us.

It is human nature to trust those things we have seen with our own eyes. We trust people with whom we have spent personal time, and whom we have come to know as trustworthy. Trust takes contact, and it develops as we see firsthand how the people we trust respond to us.

But God is *invisible*—so, how do we grow in trust toward Him? We must spend time with Him. We must walk with Him and experience Him in an ongoing relationship. And we must come to *spiritually see Him*. Ecclesiastes 2:14 says, “The wise man’s eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness.” Paul reminds us that “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). The true realities of life are not the things we can touch, taste and see. They are the unseen things of God.

Do we come to see and trust God more through our own human faith? Of course not. As Dr. Meredith often explains, we must have *Christ’s* faith in us, not our own faith (Galatians 2:20). Christ is the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). His Spirit shows us things we did not previously see. “But the natural man does not

receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For ‘who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?’ But we have the mind of Christ” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

When we are filled with God’s Spirit—and therefore the mind of Christ—we see things that we previously could not. We are able to do things we normally could not. At this year’s Teen Camp, Mr. Martin Montgomery gave a heartfelt address to the campers just a few days after his daughter Morgan was tragically killed in a boating accident. Yet Mr. Montgomery not only encouraged the campers to seek comfort from God; he also encouraged them to

*pray and have compassion for the man driving the boat that killed his daughter.* Mr. Montgomery could see a higher perspective than what is normally seen—he had *spiritual sight*.

We all need more spiritual perspective, to face our trials, to understand why they happen, and to grow in trusting God. Because “without faith [or trust] it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must

believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

So, what are some things we must do in order to grow in trusting God?

## SEEK TO SEE GOD MORE CLEARLY

How acquainted with God are we? How much do we really know Him? How much do we really *see* Him as a reality in our life? That should be a huge priority in our spiritual life—to grow to understand Him in every way.

The carnal mind does not understand God or His character. God explains this in saying to the wicked in Psalm 50:21, “You thought that I was altogether like you!” In Isaiah 55:9 God further explains, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.” God is not like us! He does not react carnally, like humans do—but because we *assume* He is like us, we can misjudge His motives and intentions.

Have you recently read the book of Job? Who could guess how the story would unfold from the opening verses? From the start, Job is described as a man who was “blameless and upright, and one who feared God and shunned evil” (Job 1:1). Later we





see that description coming from God Himself (v. 8), with the addition, “there is none like him on the earth.” Wow! From that description you would expect that Job’s life, in the story, would be blessed and wonderful, with never a sour note!

God was pleased with Job—he was doing a lot of things right! Did he have some things to learn? *Of course.* However, God was not punishing Job or playing a cruel joke on him. Neither was He neglectful of Job. God did not “fall asleep at the wheel.” When you are in a trial, how do you think God feels about you? What do you think God says about you? Could it be possible that He is saying some of these same things?

We normally do not assume positive things when we are in trials. We assume God is disappointed or ashamed of us, and we are sometimes ashamed, ourselves. We should always examine ourselves! *But could God be happy with our progress—and He just wants to take us to the next level?* Brethren, can we see that? Do we see the kind of God we serve? Do we see His care and concern for us? He says, “Trust me! I will take care of you!”

There is a proverbial story of a father who was teaching his son or daughter to swim. He waited in the water while they were on the side of the pool. He said, “Jump in, I will catch you. I promise! Don’t be afraid!” So the frightened child jumps—and at the last second the father pulls his arms away and lets the child fall, helpless, to flail in the water. The child sputters and struggles to come to the surface. Eventually the father pulls the child out of the water to safety. Once the child is safely in the arms of his father, his father says, “You’ve learned your first lesson—don’t trust anybody!”

Is that how God treats us? Absolutely not! He does not “drop” us unexpectedly, or “teach” us not to trust anyone. No! He is actually in the business of *teaching us how to trust Him more deeply.* He says “I will never leave you nor forsake you” (Hebrews 13:5)—and Titus 1:2 says that God never lies!

We need to understand our Father more completely, and understand that He is “merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy” (Psalm 103:8). We need to remember that “as a father pities [or should pity] his children, so the LORD pities those who fear him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust” (vv. 13–14). We need to focus on these character traits, especially when we are in grievous trials.

### SEEK TO RECOGNIZE THE TACTICS OF SATAN THE DEVIL

To grow in trust and belief that God has our best interests at heart, we also have to see and recognize the work of our Adversary. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 2:11 that “we are not ignorant of his devices.” We *must not* be ignorant of the fact that Satan the Devil is a spirit who is always on the attack. What is he trying to destroy? *Our faith and trust in God and Christ.*

From the very beginning of mankind’s history, Satan has been at his devious and destructive plan. In the Garden of Eden, what was Satan’s message to Eve? *You cannot trust God* (Genesis 3:1–4). *God lied to you—He is holding something back—He cannot be depended on.* Humanity ever since has been hearing—and heeding—this message from Satan.

The book of Job gives an unusual—and enlightening—look at the spirit world, because it contains a conversation between God and Satan. As you read Job 1:6–12, you find that God *supports His righteous servant Job and defends him*, whereas Satan accuses and judges him.

We need to remember **who** is the “accuser of the brethren.” Not God! Who questions our motives and doubts our intentions? *Not God!* This is extremely important to think about. Yes, we need

to examine ourselves to see if we are doing something wrong. We need to ask God to show us what we need to learn. Sadly, some allow themselves to sink into depression, under the weight of guilt, unnecessarily. They may feel they do not measure up. *Truly, none of us do!* However, that does not mean God is busy *accusing* us. He is not the accuser of the brethren—Satan is (Revelation 12:10)! Satan is busy day and night, *accusing God*, trying to put doubts in our mind about God’s motives.

When we face trials, we must not succumb to Satan’s negativity. He constantly throws doubts at us, like spiritual fiery darts. Our personal trust and faith in God helps us to extinguish those flaming arrows, with the “shield of faith” (Ephesians 6:16).

Not being negative does not mean it is wrong to grieve or mourn—and we even need to vent sometimes. We should not judge those who are grieving or struggling in a trial. We need to comfort them and encourage them, even if it is hard to find the right words. Never let that hold you back from offering condolences! Sit with them. Cry with them, if need be. If you do not know what to say, just say, “I’m sorry—I’ll pray for you.” Pray for God’s help working through the trial, so they can once again see blue sky beyond the grey. Pray that they will clearly see the hand of God, *and also recognize the fingerprint of Satan.*

### SEEK TO UNDERSTAND WHAT GOD IS DOING

In the dialogue between the Lord and Satan, the Devil made an interesting observation. He said, “Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has... You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land” (Job 1:10). Think about it. Even Satan acknowledged that God put a “hedge” or ring of protection and blessing around this righteous man!

God **did** give Job special protection—and He gives it to us as well. Think about all of the things the world has to deal with. This is Satan’s world (John 16:11), and he is a cruel master. Dozens of wars are raging around the world right now. Thousands of people are



killed every year, with many more separated from their families or driven out of their homes. Millions have fled the fighting in Syria. Hundreds and thousands are killed in natural disasters.

Brethren, billions of people on this planet do not have the tremendous benefit of having a hedge! We in God's Church know that the ultimate hedge will be put around God's most faithful, zealous people, who will be taken to a Place of Safety during the Tribulation (Revelation 12:14). We pray for protection. We pray for guidance. We pray for help. We pray for the food on our table. We thank God that He has called us out of this world, and that we know the Truth. We thank God that we can share the Truth. We have a hedge.

So, *why do bad things sometimes happen?*

The story of Job shows that though we have a hedge, sometimes God lifts the hedge, just as with Job. All his oxen were stolen (Job 1:14). All his sheep were destroyed (Job 1:16). His camels were captured (Job 1:17). Most of his servants were killed in these catastrophes. And, tragically, his seven sons and three daughters were killed by a sudden windstorm (Job 1:18–19). Later on, he came down with a debilitating and painful illness (Job 2:7).

Had God lost control? Had His promises suddenly become void? Was He unfaithful? No! God briefly lifted the hedge to allow Satan to strike at Job. God was in complete control—including the exact, limited parameters under which Satan could strike Job (Job 1:12; 2:6). God dictated exactly what the terms were, down to the details—Satan could go not one inch further.

When we think about the trials in our life, could it be that a similar conversation might be going on between our Lord and the Adversary? Jesus Christ might be allowing Satan to send you a trial, but He is telling Satan, "You can go this far, and no further!" Jesus Christ explained the proper fear we should have for God, because He has ultimate power of life and death over us, for all eternity (Luke 12:4–5). But then, in the same context, He also explained the care and concern that the Father and the Son have for us, if they even are aware of the tiny sparrows (v. 6) and the number of hairs on our head (v. 7).

God's capacity for keeping the whole universe running is astounding and awesome! But, so is His sensitive loving-kindness, gentleness and capacity for encouragement. God is neither cruel nor cavalier about our lives. He does not just throw us "in the deep end" and see if we can survive. He does push us out of our comfort zone, but only as far as He knows we can handle it. That is a promise! Paul said, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make a way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:12–13).

The lesson is that God is with us, and He is in complete control. However, God is *pushing* our comfort zone. He allows us to be tested. He wants us to develop greater capacity to serve Him. So, He has to let us face trials.

Jeremiah 17:5–6 outlines the curses for trusting in our own strength instead of trusting in God. Verses 7–8 explain that it

is much better to trust in God instead of ourselves. However, that is not the entire context; read verses 9–10: "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked [or incurably sick]; who can know it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind." The word for mind here is, as explained in the margin, literally "the kidneys," or the most secret parts.

God wants to really know what we think and feel deep inside! He tests our motives, our intentions. He wants to know what we really want. Moses told the Israelites after wandering for forty years, "The LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not" (Deuteronomy 8:2). He wants to know how well we see—and to help us develop our spiritual understanding! Ultimately, He wants us to learn, to ask Him to show Himself more clearly, and to cry out for Him to do so!

In his address to the campers after his daughter's tragic death, Mr. Martin Montgomery quoted Psalm 116:15; "Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints." The *Living Bible* says it this way: "His loved ones are very precious to him and he does not lightly let them die."

Be grateful that God has a hedge about us, and that He only opens the hedge to teach us, train us, try us and test us—to make us more fitting servants. He does not test us in order for us to trust Him *less*—but rather to trust Him *more*!

### SEEK TO UNDERSTAND THE ANSWERS GOD GIVES

When we face trials, we have many questions, often similar to the ones with which Job wrestled: "Why?" "Why did you do this, God?" "If You didn't do it, and I know you are all powerful, why did You *allow* it?" Those are many of the questions we ask as well.

God answered Job, eventually—but in a way that took Job completely by surprise. Notice in Job chapter 38: "Then the LORD answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said... 'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy'" (vv. 1, 4–7)? The answer, of course, was that God did all those things—and so much more (Job 38:8–36)!

When small children ask parents, "Why?" sometimes the answer is simply, "Because I told you so." This was essentially what God was telling Job. "There is a reason. I have a reason. You cannot see it right now. But just because you cannot see it does not mean there is no reason. You are in the palm of My hand. I am faithful. I am here. I love you. Sometime, you will see. But you will have to take My word for it right now."

Sometimes that is all the answer we will get right now. We may not know the reason for every tragedy or trial, and it is hard not knowing! But God does give us an answer. God always

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# A Vital Way to Support God

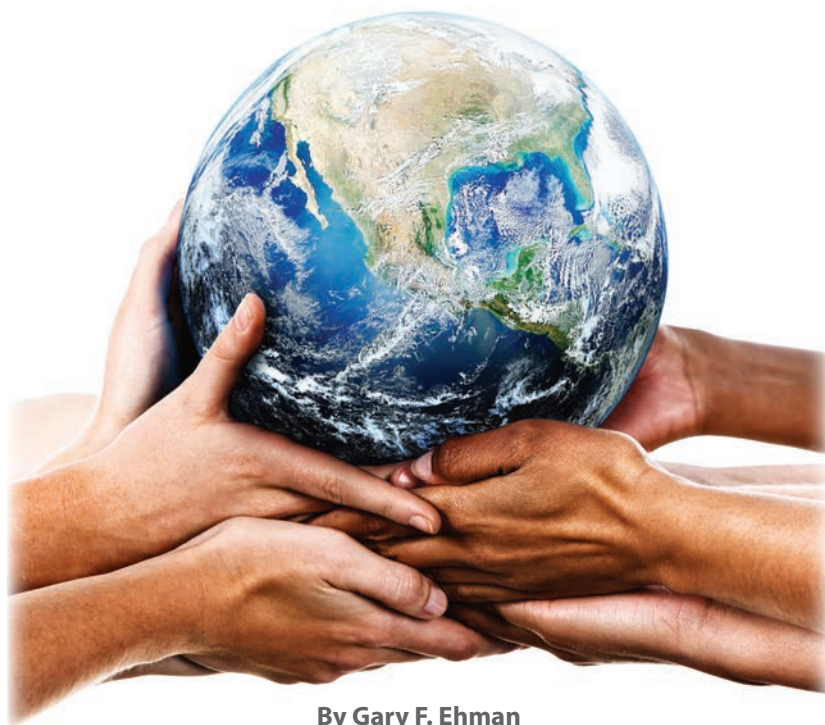
We have recently returned from the Feast of Tabernacles and Last Great Day of the Feast, and now have begun the long pull through the fall and winter months, aiming our spiritual sights at the Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread just a few months from now in 2016. We, as a Church and individually, have faced much over the past year, not all of it easy and some of it just plain overwhelming. Nevertheless, we go on because we are Christians, and Christians always go on. Discouragement is not an option.

By this time, thinking back over the past year and sifting through the dimming memories of the Feast, something should be evident to all of us. Truly, we are unique people! Unique? Why would that be true? We *are* unique, because our worship of God is so far out of the mainstream, it brands us in the eyes of the mainstream as outcasts.

You may have never thought of yourself as being unique, but you are. God says you are—Jesus living His life in us makes it so. Scripture tells us this is true: “...looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works” (Titus 2:13–14). God says true Christians are “special people.” The Greek for “special” people, “peculiar” in the *KJV*, is: *periousios* [per-ee-oo’-see-os], being beyond usual. This uniqueness is important to God. And God *wants* it to be so.

The questions we need to ask ourselves are: How supportive are we of God’s wishes in this regard? Or, how supportive are we as Christians, being aware that we are unique? The logical concluding question then is: How does one *support God*? This is something we need to explore in depth so as to come to an understanding of this concept of “supporting God.”

There is a vitally important principle God wants us to use—a yardstick that Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith, said would set the Christian apart from the rest of humanity: “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the



By Gary F. Ehman

foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you

did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me” (Matthew 25:34–40).

The Apostle Paul reveals a surprisingly intimate relationship between God and His Church, one of cooperation and companionship: “For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, you are God’s building” (1 Corinthians 3:9). Can you, personally, think of yourself as a fellow worker with God or, as the *KJV* puts it: “a laborer together”? The Greek word used here is *sunergos* [soon-er-gos’] meaning a companion in work.

We in God’s Church support God’s Work as His team, as we reach out to the world through the proclamation of His coming Kingdom. Yet the word “support,” as we commonly use it, is found only twice in the Bible, where both instances illustrate our cooperative effort with God.

We read: “I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts 20:35).

Also, we find: “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold [support], the weak, be patient with all” (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

The Greek word for “support” is *antilambanomai* [an-tee-lam-ban’-om-ahee] “to take hold of in turn, that is, succor; also to participate: help, partaker, support” (*SEC*). The context of Acts 20:35 shows that we labor with God to support others. God has other words He uses in this regard: help, labor, give, and strive together, forbear, bear, comfort, and—the really big one—love.



The most vital aspect of our cooperative relationship is that God supports us. This was a recurring theme of Jesus as He instructed His disciples: “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it” (John 14:13–14).

God not only supports us, He gives us the means to be supportive in concert with Him—His Holy Spirit: “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that... may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, [which] the world cannot receive, because it neither sees [it] nor knows [it]; but you know [it], for [it] dwells with you and will be in you” (vv. 16–17).



### CHRIST GAVE HIS ALL

Jesus Christ made the ultimate sacrifice for the sake of His creation: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16–17).

With this striking example of God’s dedication to His creation and willingness to serve to the extent of even sacrificing His own son for it, how can we, His begotten children, be more supportive of His desires? How can we apply Matthew 25:31–46: “when I was hungry”? We could explore this in a number of areas, including the ministry, husbands and wives, children, parents, neighbors, the world around us and the Church. These would be far too broad a study for the scope of this article, so here we will focus simply on the Church, which in a sense encompasses all the other areas.

This should not be dismissed as a vague and general topic. The Apostle Paul gives an example of the personal commitment he expects of Church brethren: “Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis” (Colossians 4:12–13). Now, that is involvement! The word “zeal” is *zēlos* [dzay’-los], meaning excitement of mind, ardor, fervor of spirit.

As members of God’s Church, we must become people-oriented—being not just fellow church members, but truly brothers and sisters to each other. That is why we call each other brethren. Paul taught this throughout his epistles: “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love” (Ephesians 4:1–2). The word “bearing” or “forbearing” in the *King James Version* is *anechomai* [an-ekh’-om-ahēe],

generally meaning putting up with one another, regardless. *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance* introduces it as “to hold oneself up against”—which is a much more meaningful description of true Christian fellowship.

This certainly gives much more meaning to the next five verses, “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all” (vv. 3–6).

God, Jesus, you, we—we are all one. Or, as Crocodile Dundee of movie fame stated: “Yep, me and God, we’d be mates.” If this is true with us, we had better not be caught playing favorites.

We are made *one* to support *one another*: “Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection” (Colossians 3:12–14).

### DO NOT NEGLECT GOD’S PEOPLE!

In Sabbath services, sitting next to you are flesh and blood, sentient human beings of incredible worth to God—precious and unique, just like you. If you hurt them, they will cry out. If you neglect them, they will cry out. And, you had better believe—neglect is far worse in God’s eyes than we may think. In fact, God calls our concern for others who are alone and hurting, the purest form of worship we can address towards Him: “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27). If we neglect the widow and orphan, then we neglect God.

As stated earlier, Paul makes this very clear to us in his epistles: “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:1–2). The Christian is to be “spiritual,” displaying the attributes of God and Christ. We are to “bear” *bastazō* [bas-tad’-zo], meaning to bear what is burdensome with the idea of carrying it away. God allows us the opportunity to help one another, but He does *not* give us the right to dictate. Reproving is especially for the ministry—they bear that responsibility. But that does not exclude us from the process of *carefully* supporting one another in times of trial.

Paul continues to lay out the responsibility of being proactive, dedicated Christians: “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not

lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (vv. 9–10). This clearly describes the feeding, giving drink, caring for, clothing, tending and visiting Jesus said we should be doing.

We should not let down in extending the helping hand for those in or out of the Church. Paul states it in an even more emphatic way, deepening the responsibility: “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves” (Romans 15:1). The warning is not to just please yourself, which means taking advantage of others in these situations: “Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God” (vv. 5–7).

There is much more to what Paul was driving at and the Greek reveals his mindset and how it affects us as Christians today. Notice the word “strong” in verse 1; it is *dunatos* [doo-nat-os’], meaning not only strong, but capable and able to use the strength. In today’s world, we share in everything the world offers: death, taxes, disease, war, pollution, economic woes, etc. Some of those unique, precious individuals who sit next to you in Sabbath services may be sharing more of these woes than you know. If we continue in ignorance, we may be missing the point of being Christian.

Paul’s message was clear—if they need it *and we are capable* of providing it, then we need to provide it to them. There are any number of lists of things to provide, outlined in the Bible.

True brothers and sisters in Christ are supposed to know, *should know* and should understand one another—that is why we are called Christian. “If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also” (1 John 4:20–21).

On a personal responsibility note, if you do not *know* who needs your love, your capability and your support, taking part in Church activities, such as Sabbath services and Bible studies, attending the Feast, and generally being an *active member* of the Church helps. The optimal word is “fellowship.” God does not say for you to judge your brother—He says for you to help your brother.

### CONCERN FOR ONE ANOTHER

Jesus says Christians, indeed, are to be unique, not only to God and Him, but unique to one another: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends. You are My friends if you do whatever I command you” (John 15:12–14). Jesus demonstrated this to us by laying down His life for us, His friends. It must be pointed out that

Jesus was describing much more than the death He would endure a few hours later.

It is important to notice a proper translation treatment in verse 13: “Greater love has *no one* than this....” Jesus did not use the word “man” *anēr* [an’-ayr] as in the *KJV*; He used the term *oudeis* [oo-dice’] meaning “no one,” as it is properly translated in the *NKJV*. He was not just speaking of Himself, and what He was going to do. He had done it and now we must reciprocate that friendship, showing our support by laying down our lives for Him. We can only do that by obeying Him and our Father, and serving our brothers and sisters as well as—on into the future—all of mankind.

Is it really important to emphasize this concern for one another? “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard *them*; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name” (Malachi 3:16). So often we just look at this Scripture from the simple point of view that it is only referring to fellowship. However, the truth goes much deeper than that. The Hebrew word for “spoke” is *dābar* [daw-bar’] and while it means literally speaking words, the voice is more pointed in what words we are to speak to one another. The context is set in verses 14–15 of people speaking against God. **The godly speak for God.** The prophet says when we do this we serve. *We support* God, thereby fulfilling what Jesus commanded in Matthew 25:34–40.

### CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER

Throughout the Apostle Paul’s epistles, this theme of mutual support, representative of Jesus’ sacrifice, abounds: “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching” (Hebrews 10:24–25). The Greek word for “exhorting” is *parakaleō* [par-ak-al-eh’-o] and means to call to one’s side, to comfort and instruct—an act of invoking support. This means having very deeply involved concern for each other, as this sinful world attempts to distract and Satan seeks whomever he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

What better way, then, than for us to support the least—those who are the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the sick and those in prison. For, indeed, we then support our great God.

Jesus clearly states that God will give special reward to those who labor together with Him and Jesus. The Apostle John describes the ultimate result for the Philadelphian Christian who keeps the word of God’s truth, does not deny His name and perseveres to the end in that support: “I will make him a pillar in the temple of my God” (Revelation 3:12). We will become the pillars, *stulos* [stoo’-los], those who will uphold, support—throughout eternity—the very basis of God’s house at the Headquarters of the universe. ■

# Meekness: An Attribute that Will Inherit the Earth!

By Peter Nathan



In His “Sermon on the Mount,” the third beatitude Jesus taught was: “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Matthew 5:5). Earlier He had inspired David to declare that, along with that same inheritance, the meek “shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (Psalm 37:11).

These promises portray a wonderful, peaceable, eternal existence—but *why is it that only the meek inherit it?* What does meekness have to do with inheriting this earth with an abundance of peace and other blessings?

## MEEKNESS: OFTEN MISUNDERSTOOD

When we hear the term “meekness,” we may tend to think in terms of personality: someone who is somewhat compliant; who is not going to cause a fuss; who will do what is wanted. In lexicons and various language tools, the concept of meekness is so often expressed in that way: as gentleness, humility, and compliance. In reality, meekness is associated with—but *not defined by*—those qualities. The translation of the New Testament Scriptures readily shows that linkage. Take a concordance and a Bible, and look at the use of the term “meek” or “meekness.” You will find many of the newer translations do not use those terms. They tend to use “humility” or “gentleness.” So the concept of meekness is lost, because scholars have difficulty understanding it. Do we? That is important because without meekness we will not be inheriting the earth.

Meekness has a very distinct meaning. Many, in groping to find an appropriate definition for “meekness,” have mostly defined it by the negative—that it is not “weakness.” But that simple negation does not convey the full picture that Jesus Christ desired us to comprehend when He established that beatitude.

## TWO EXAMPLES OF MEEKNESS

We can better understand meekness when we examine it from a scriptural perspective, rather than from lexicons or dictionaries. The quality of meekness, and how it relates to our future of ruling with Jesus Christ in His Kingdom, can be illustrated well by considering the examples of two individuals who exemplified meekness. One example is found in the Old Testament; the other in the New. The terms used in the respective Hebrew and Greek languages are equivalent, so we can be confident we are considering the same quality.

Moses was the first individual described as “meek” in Scripture: “Now the man Moses was very **humble** [“meek” here is a correct, appropriate translation as rendered in the KJV], more than all men who were on the face of the earth” (Numbers 12:3, NKJV).

Moses was anything but a weak person! He was skilled in the art of war so that he could lead the armies of Egypt (as Josephus records), and learned in Egyptian statecraft so that he was seen as a potential



threat to the Pharaoh—both of which indicate a man of power and resolve. To be placed in charge of the children of Israel required a personality of some forcefulness and confidence. That role involved going before yet another Pharaoh to plead Israel's cause and then to lead that multitude out of Egypt into the Wilderness of Sinai en route to the Promised Land. He certainly could not be characterized as weak! The Eternal's summation of him was a "very meek" person. How could such an accomplished person be meek?

What was it about Moses that led to this assessment of him? For a major clue, we may take note of his attitude in a request He made of the Eternal: "Now therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You and that I may find grace in Your sight. And consider that this nation is Your people" (Exodus 33:13).

Moses clearly recognized that the Israelites were God's possession, not his. He led them in the way revealed to him by the Eternal and not his own way. His life was deeply and totally committed to that mindset. That defined the kind of relationship he had with his Creator—and the kind *we* must have.

Moses was very capable, but he also was teachable regarding His Creator's ways, and that is a key component of meekness and godly relationships.

Of course, the ultimate example of meekness is Jesus Christ. As a man, He never shrank from declaring the Way of His Father, even to the most unreceptive and inhospitable audiences. He faced the prospect of death on several occasions and eventually did not flinch from giving Himself as a sacrifice for humanity. He said of Himself: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:28–29, KJV; see also Matthew 21:5 in the KJV).

### GETTING TO THE HEART OF MEEKNESS

We see here that meekness has much to do with an outgoing attitude toward another—giving to another. Jesus was offering rest as a result of His meekness—an interesting parallel to the peace offered to the meek by the Psalmist. Meekness has to do with a relationship. What was at the center of Christ's meekness?

"For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day" (John 6:38–39).

Jesus Christ dedicated His entire life on earth to carrying out His Father's role for Him. That included every last detail

in His plan of salvation for all mankind, even to the point of being willing to suffer a horrific death on the cross. At the last Passover, prior to being arrested, scourged and crucified, Jesus Christ prayed to His Father and declared that He had finished that work (John 17:1–19).

The Hebrew term translated as "meek" describes a person who is a servant—in total subjection—in this case to the God of Israel. Meekness therefore describes the situation of one who subjects himself to God without reservation.

The examples of both Moses and Jesus provide this ultimate definition of meekness. They are examples of individuals who were prepared to put themselves totally, completely and unreservedly under the will of God. These men were exemplars of servant leadership.

Meekness is not then a matter of personality. It rather speaks of conversion and commitment to another way of life. As Jesus taught: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

Paul understood this idea very well. He instructed the Church in Corinth—and us today—that we are to seek the will of God the Father and Jesus Christ, "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2

Corinthians 10:5).

Moses followed this principle as he placed the learning he had received from the Egyptians—his military training, his government instruction—under the will of the Eternal. To measure up to that standard is a very tall order, and takes a lot of effort over a long period for us to achieve. God worked with Moses for 40 years in the wilderness in preparation for that role. James explains how this standard can be achieved: "So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God. Therefore, lay aside all filthiness and overflow [margin: abundance] of wickedness, and receive with **meekness** the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:19–21).

Repentance from sin must be followed by the meek attitude—that is, to be totally submissive and teachable—imbibing of God's word. That means firmly connecting ourselves to the vine that is Jesus Christ, submitting our will to His (and His Father's) so that we increasingly take on His character—the living Word of God. Meekness—to be meek—is a fruit of living a Way of life. Being connected to that vine indicates that



we are receiving the nourishment necessary for godly growth through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit given as a gift by God. So meekness is a spiritual quality (Galatians 5:23).

### THE WORLD'S WRONG APPROACH

In the world around us, we witness a pronounced absence of meekness—even at a physical level. People seek their own wills rather than the will of the Father. Everyone feels entitled to his or her own opinions. Even among those who claim to have a relationship with God, some may feel tempted to express opinions, even in a combative or hostile way, that result in strife and division rather than righteousness and peace. Some such people believe that God is working with them and revealing things to them, but the fruits of their lives belie this. Such people have inflated opinions of their own ideas. Often they have a problem with Church government and create their own “living room Church of God.” Godly meekness does not blossom in this kind of confusion.

James describes both the cause and cure of the above malady: “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (James 3:13–18).

For James, as well as the rest of the Bible, the litmus test of “the meekness of wisdom” is the polar opposite of “bitter envy and self-seeking.” That “meekness of wisdom” is described by the eight spiritual qualities listed in verses 17 and 18 (see also Paul’s instructions on this subject in Galatians 6:1, Ephesians 4:2, Colossians 3:12 and 2 Timothy 2:25).

The bottom line on meekness, then, is that it defines how we seek to do the will of our Father in heaven in our own lives. It is a simple step from that understanding to see why it is the meek who will inherit the earth. The Father once gave control of the earth to a being (Satan) who eventually refused to do his Creator’s will. The Father never again is going to entrust the rule of this earth, or His creation, to any being other than one who is unequivocally committed to seeking and doing His will in all things.

Furthermore, the meek will not only rule the earth with Jesus Christ under the Father, but they are offered protection

from the troubles humanity faces. Zephaniah was inspired to record for us: “Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden in the day of the LORD’s anger” (Zephaniah 2:3).

Once again, note that meekness is coupled with qualities of God’s own character—justice, righteousness and humility—picturing an active commitment to the ways of God.

**Repentance from sin must be followed by the meek attitude—that is, to be totally submissive and teachable—imbibing of God’s word. That means firmly connecting ourselves to the vine that is Jesus Christ, submitting our will to His (and His Father’s) so that we increasingly take on His character—the living Word of God.**

In summary, we have established these points about meekness:

- Meekness defines a relationship with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ, in which we seek and obey the divine will. In such a relationship, we rely upon God, rather than upon our own instincts and thoughts. It is evidence of our New Covenant relationship with God.
- In such a meek relationship, God has defined the parameters, qualities and fruits. He does not leave those for us to determine. I had an acquaintance who said, “It’s just God and me.” Every time I heard that, I know who *really* defined the relationship; it was the self, not God.
- The meekness praised in Scripture is not a mere personality trait; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and can only be manifest through that Spirit dwelling in us (Galatians 5:22–26).
- While humility is very much a part of meekness, meekness is more than just being humble. People can maintain a false humility.
- Our meekness results in a relationship of trust and confidence in which, ultimately, God the Father is willing to entrust to us rulership over all things for all eternity (Hebrews 2:8), knowing that His children will do what He desires. There will be no repeating Satan’s rebellion against the Father.
- Above all else, meekness in our relationship with God ends up being reflected in our relationships with our fellow human beings, so that peace and righteousness prevail. Meekness produces those fruits, to the honor and glory of the Father’s name.

The result of having the quality of meekness, of having those types of relationships, is that you and I can inherit all things—eventually being born into that peaceable Kingdom for all eternity! ■



# Living Youth Camps:

## A Summer of Sadness and Joy

The Living Youth Program has completed another challenging season of summer camps in the United States. This year camps were held in six states with a record number of campers and staff in attendance—North Carolina (86), West Virginia (78), Missouri (147), Texas (156), Wyoming (41) and Ohio (320).

Both the Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming “Adventure Camp” and the Ohio camp conducted at Camp Lazarus Boy Scout Camp in Delaware, Ohio were designed for “teens” while the other camps focused on the youth ages 8–12. Family members of the campers largely comprised the staff, although anyone who wished to serve could apply. Background checks and pastoral evaluations were required for all staff.

### FOUNDATION FOR A LIFETIME!

All of our summer camps are designed to provide young people in God’s Church the opportunity to meet others of like mind and to build friendships that will last a lifetime! The positive effects these relationships have rendered are inestimable. Making and nurturing Christian friendships remains a major reason why young people apply to attend the various Living Youth Program activities. The need to *love our neighbor as ourselves* is a prevalent and underlying theme at all of our summer camps, and certainly helps to strengthen the strong bonds that are built among those who attend.

In addition, Christian Living classes were held daily at all of our camps, focusing on topics particularly relevant to young people. These classes, in addition to the Bible Studies and sermons presented, emphasized the need to put God first in our lives, and to love Him with all of our strength, mind and heart. It was refreshing to

see so many young people at these camps striving to put these values into practice. We are blessed to have such a fine group of young people in God’s Church today! God is preparing them for the tough times to come at the end of an age.

Each camp offered a wide variety of activities appropriate to the campers and their locations. Many young people found themselves participating for the first time in an unfamiliar activity, while others developed and honed their skills in familiar areas. Activity directors and their respective staffs spent considerable time and effort in preparation well in advance of the camp session to ensure a well-structured and dynamic camp activity program. The commitment to excellence in their

respective areas of expertise demonstrated their care and concern for every counselor, assistant counselor and camper who participated.

Many volunteers were necessary to fill other important roles. Dozens of people were needed to serve as members of the kitchen, laundry, custodial, nursing, media and office staff. Without these people our camps would have come to a grinding halt. Though many of these key people worked long hours, without pay, their service-minded approach and positive attitudes were a light and inspiration to all. Their service did not go unnoticed and was greatly appreciated. May God richly bless all who served!

### MORGAN MONTGOMERY: A TRAGIC LOSS

This year was especially challenging for those who attended the Teen Camp at Camp Lazarus in Delaware, Ohio. On Sunday, August 2, approximately halfway through the camp session, Morgan Montgomery was killed in a tragic boating accident on Alum Creek Lake just four miles from camp. When the family was notified





and the announcement was made at camp that Morgan had been struck and killed by a boat (driven by a boater who is not a member of the Church), they were devastated. Many tears were shed, and everybody was in a state of mourning. Our hearts went out to the family as we shared their pain and loss. Ministers were sent to comfort and console the campers, and to pray with them. Dozens of the adult staff also stepped in to help deal with this incredibly difficult situation. Although the pain was almost unbearable, most people retained their composure and remained calm and levelheaded. In spite of this tragedy, the decision was made to move forward with camp. No one quit. No one went home. Everyone pulled together and worked through this trial together and we were strengthened in the process.

A few days later, Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery arrived. Once again many tears were shed. The line of people who assembled to hug and console them seemed endless. The strength of character and the attitude and approach of the Montgomerys gave us hope. They *inspired us* with their words and by their actions! Mr. Montgomery spoke to the camp following Dr. Meredith's moving address. He impressed upon us the need to have hope and to move forward; that someday soon we would again see Morgan; that Morgan loved camp, she loved children, and she had died doing what she loved—serving young people, as an assistant counselor. We all cried. His words echoed the words of Job when he had suffered great loss: “The LORD [Eternal] gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (Job 1:21).

We realized that God could have prevented this from happening, but He chose not to. We thought of Isaiah 59:1, which reminds us that “His hand is not shortened that it cannot save.” Our faith in God was not rocked, it was not diminished. It was tested and perfected.

### SHINING OUR LIGHT

It was late Sunday afternoon, August 2, when Headquarters staff heard the news of Miss Montgomery's death. The immediate task at Headquarters was to assist with posts on the LYC Web site to inform the membership and to help see to the needs of the campers and staff.

Director of Business Operations Dexter Wakefield, who also serves the Church as Director of Public Relations, was responsible for handling the many media inquiries. Calls came in day after day from print and TV reporters, including

the local NBC and CBS affiliates. The story produced a great deal of local interest, and it was important to let both Church members and the people in the Ohio area know that every effort was being made to take the best possible care of the campers and staff.



**“I can do all things  
through Christ who  
strengthens me”**

**(Philippians 4:13).**

The local TV and print media were professional and respectful, and tried to report events accurately as they unfolded. Mr. Wakefield and others kept them informed on matters at the Living Youth Camp, and we were grateful that the media agreed that it was inappropriate for them to barge onto the camp facility to interview the campers. It is also worth noting that the camp staff commented that local emergency responders were very professional, courteous and helpful.

After the camp ended, the local community assembled a flotilla of 18 boats, which came slowly down the lake to the area of the accident, viewed by more than 50 people on land—most of whom were LCG members. Music was played and flowers were laid on the water, followed by five minutes of silence. It was a very moving moment for all who were there, and the kind gesture by the community was much appreciated by the campers and staff who had stayed after camp for the ceremony.

Church offices in Charlotte, NC and Adelaide, SA, Australia made arrangements for the Montgomery family to travel to and from the United States. Church staff at the camp coordinated arrangements with the local funeral home staff, communicated with local police authorities and also coordinated transportation arrangements to Australia, with technical assistance from the Australian Consulate in New York City. The Montgomerys returned safely to their home in Australia after a long and difficult week.

Many people have asked how they can contribute to help the family of Morgan Montgomery in this difficult time, and we are happy to report that transportation and related costs were fully covered upfront by the Church, to be reimbursed by insurance and private donations.

Others are continuing to express a desire to help. So, in Morgan's memory and with the family's approval, the Church has set up a special fund, the **Morgan Montgomery Memorial Youth Fund** to provide scholarships and transportation to help Church youth around the world participate in the Church's youth camps, in addition to providing other important services to Church youth.

Donations should be made payable to Living Church of God, designated for the “Morgan Montgomery Memorial Youth Fund” and sent to: Living Church of God, P.O. Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227. Or donations can be made online at



the *LCG.org* Web site. Simply click on the link for “Donations,” and **be sure to designate** that the donation is for the “Morgan Montgomery Memorial Youth Fund.”

### ONWARD WITH GOD’S HELP!

The tragic loss of Miss Montgomery helped us appreciate, all the more, the theme previously selected for this year’s camp: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13). That theme was selected back in January or February, and it certainly seemed fitting this summer. It is also important to note that the scripture Morgan chose to put up on the wall of her dorm, among the other Scriptures posted by her dorm-mates, was Romans 8:28: “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” The events that occurred reinforce the fact that God knows what He is doing, that He sees things from a godly perspective and not a human one.

Now that camp is over, and we look back and reflect on what happened, we have been motivated even more to pray fervently for Christ to return and the Kingdom to come. Morgan was

baptized just 19 days before the accident that killed her. We are looking forward to the time when she is resurrected and we will be able to see her and hug her again! With God’s help, we too can move forward and press on into the Kingdom.

### CAMPS IN 2016

Although we have not yet finalized the dates and locations for all of our Living Youth Programs camps in 2016, we can let you know the dates of the Adventure and Teen Camps, and the location of the Teen Camp, to help you plan ahead by reserving that time in your family’s schedule.

—**Adventure Trip 2016**—*Location to be determined*—Arrival: Tuesday, July 5 (not later than 5:00 p.m.)—Departure: Thursday, July 14 (not later than noon)

—**Ohio Teen Camp 2016**—Arrival: Sunday, July 24 (not later than noon)—Departure: Sunday, August 7.

Other dates and locations will be announced as they become available. Whether you come as a camper or as a volunteer, we hope to see you at camp next year. You will not want to miss out on this amazing opportunity for growth.

—Sheldon Monson and Dexter Wakefield

ADVENTURE CAMP



ADVENTURE CAMP





OHIO TEEN CAMP



OHIO TEEN CAMP



OHIO TEEN CAMP





EUROPE



EUROPE



NORTH CAROLINA



NORTH CAROLINA





MISSOURI



MISSOURI



WEST VIRGINIA



WEST VIRGINIA





# Woman to Woman

By Linda Ehman

## PEPPERS OF DISOBEDIENCE

My husband and I were both in God's Church when we first met and then married. Being single in the Church was one thing, but marriage added a new dimension—a change from “me” to “us” and living now as a married woman, wanting to typify a Proverbs 31 wife.

Early in our marriage I decided I wanted to plant pepper plants just outside our kitchen window, but my husband told me not to do it, because the soil was poor there. But I *so* wanted to plant some—right there—so when he was away covering a meeting one evening (he was a news reporter for our daily paper at the time), I went out and bought six pepper plants and planted them in that very spot. He never said a word about them. They were about eight inches high when I planted them, and at the end of the growing season they were still eight inches high, with not a pepper on them.

This was the first of several such lessons in yielding my will to his, but none quite so dramatic. We would talk of these situations over the years, and this one came to be known as “peppers of disobedience.” It wasn't really a dire lesson, thankfully, but I was beginning to get a glimmer of the meaning of Proverbs 14:1: “The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish pulls it down with her hands.” Looking at it in hindsight, I could see that: 1) I disobeyed my husband, wanting *my* will to be done, 2) The soil really was poor there and my actions produced *no fruit* and 3) He was actually right and I was in the wrong.

And so began our growing together in learning the way of Christian marriage. We realized the need to communicate and we wanted our marriage to be based on the relationship of our heavenly Father with Christ. They **never** argue—they are always in complete agreement, with absolute harmony and love.

The concept of being married to Christ in the first resurrection is not exactly easy to grasp, but God has given us marriage as a **type** of the *real* marriage to His Son; “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” (Revelation 19:7-8).

There is very much in the way of preparation for the wife to make herself ready. First of all, she must truly love her husband-to-be and want the very best for him in every way—and it needs to be mutual, of course. She now needs to focus on learning what

is important to her husband, respecting him, walking in this new path. This concept applies to single women as well, and even more in a way, as the Apostle Paul shows in 1 Corinthians 7:34: “The unmarried woman cares about the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit.”

## THE EASE OF DISOBEDIENCE

It is not easy for women to submit to their husbands. Our very society teaches us that women are *free* to do what they want—even to the point of killing an unwanted child in the womb—and, when you really get right down to it, are more intelligent than men. There's a little-known conspiracy in the nation(s) that pictures the man as the bumbling oaf, always stumbling about, never doing what is right, while the woman is the intelligent one—extremely capable in every way and in command of every situation. Just notice it: on television programs, in ads and virtually all the media. It is everywhere! And it is even being extended to little boys and girls. It is called “The Jackass Formula.”

Do not fall for it. Scripture tells us to “Let the wife see that she respects her husband” (Ephesians 5:33). God intended the man to have authority over the woman (v. 23) so there would be order and peace, and He instructed the man to “love his own wife as himself” (v. 33).

Additionally, as Satan's society spirals downward, confusion is even being thrust upon our children regarding their gender. This appears to be a recent phenomenon, but it is moving at an extremely fast pace. If a little boy strongly feels he should have been born a girl, apparently, under certain circumstances, he could dress and act as a girl. The schools in this country are faced with increasingly difficult problems of this nature, including which bathroom should be used. Much publicity has been given of late to the sex change of former Olympic champion Bruce Jenner, now known as Caitlyn, which undoubtedly influences children who may be thinking along these lines.

Truly, Satan is attacking the family and we must be aware of the danger and stay close to God as a family.

As the years have gone by, my husband and I have moved to other homes, I have planted peppers numerous times and they have been very fruitful plants, blessed by God, I know. Now I am an “aged” woman and I ponder how possibly to teach “the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands,” as we are advised in Titus 2:4. It is not





an easy thing for any of us, knowing the enemy is constantly seeking to undermine our families and our lives in any way he can; tearing us apart and leaving us bleeding and dying, while he claps his hands in delight, so to speak. The main key to success is to put God first in everything (Matthew 6:33), then, in secondary order, the family follows, with the husband as the head. King Solomon put it so well in Proverbs 3:5–6: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.”

## WE HAVE BEEN PLANTED

One of my favorite scriptures, found in Ecclesiastes 3, is a marvelous example of the wisdom of Solomon and how the analogy of planting is relevant in our lives. “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted” (Ecclesiastes 3:1–2).

It is exciting to realize that we have been “planted” here on the earth, called by God and given His Holy Spirit (upon repentance, belief in Christ and baptism, of course), to be the

basis—the “soil,” if you will—upon which He will “plant” a future garden of immense proportions, in the coming Kingdom and even more in the Great White Throne Judgment period. It is crucial to get this vision and keep it alive and nourished and not think that we are “just dirt.” In Psalm 128, God tells us what the results are of keeping His ways: “Blessed is every one who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways... your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table... thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD” (vv. 1–4).

As wives and mothers, then, we need to support our men, encourage them, cheer them, help them in every way and thereby enable our children to greatly love and respect them. This is the normal mindset of children anyway, as their parents seem like God to them early on in their lives.

It is important not to let the world intrude into a peaceful family structure, where both husband and wife are working together to raise godly children, looking to the ultimate reality, when we will have the Great Marriage to our Savior, the wife having made herself ready, prepared to help her Husband in tomorrow’s world. Then there will be no more “peppers of disobedience” for us. ■

## Trusting God

Continued from page 7

gives us an answer when we ask Him questions—even hard questions. We just need to be aware that the answer might be to a different question than we asked!

God did answer Job, clearly—but He did not directly answer Job’s question. Job had asked “Why?” God’s answer was, “I know what I’m doing. I’m the Creator. *Trust Me.*” And, as it turned out, *that was exactly the answer Job really needed.*

Notice how Job responded to God’s answer: “Then Job answered the LORD and said: I know that You can do everything. And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You. You asked, ‘Who is this who hides counsel without knowledge?’ Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me, which I did not know. Listen, please, and let me speak; You said, ‘I will question you, and you shall answer Me.’ **I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees You,** Therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes” (Job 42:1–6).

None of his circumstances had yet changed, but he had a totally different attitude, because his “sight” had changed. His outlook had changed. His perspective was different. *He saw God better.*

How can we know that “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Romans 8:28)? Only through having *spiritual vision*. God says that for those He is calling now, He works all things out toward one unified purpose. That is, to prepare us to be with Him in His Family for all eternity—and to help others attain that goal as well.

God is working out a plan here below. We sometimes struggle to understand the good in every circumstance, but

God helps us through His Spirit (Romans 8:26). We know that the whole world is struggling under the burden of pain and suffering, and “groans and labors with birth pangs,” but we have hope—because God has allowed us to see the unseeable (Romans 8:22–25). We cannot see the whole picture yet, and that is why we have to hope and wait for it. And we ask for God’s vision, to help us trust Him.

What is spiritual vision? Paul clearly exhibited it when he said, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18). Paul suffered greatly in his life, and yet had solid faith and trust in God, because he had come to really see God and God’s priorities in his life. That is our goal!

Psalm 62:8 exhorts us: “Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us.” A key to trusting God is seeing Him and His care and concern for us more clearly (which also involves recognizing the snares and traps of the devil—including the doubts he tries to plant in our mind to undermine our trust in God). We also must appreciate the hedges God does place around us, and understand that He—in a limited way—allows them to be lifted, from time to time, for a purpose. There *always* is an answer when we ask God, “Why?” It is just that God’s answer may be to a different question than the one we are asking.

All of this requires spiritual sight. Spiritual sight is vital to growing in trust in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and our Heavenly Father as well. As Paul said, “Therefore we do not lose heart... For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen” (2 Corinthians 4:16–18). ■

## Power in Prayer

### Continued from page 4

Jesus gave it as a pattern or example after which we could fashion *our own* prayers.

The world's churches are in *error* when they practice repeating *any* prayer over and over again each week. Avoid this error. *Also, try not to offer thanks in the same way at the table every meal.*

When you pray, do not just “rattle off” so many words. Think about your blessings and your needs, and pray from the heart.

## NEVER BE ASHAMED

We should be careful not to pray “to be seen of men.” *But* does this mean that we should be overly secretive—as if we were ashamed—when we pray?

*Absolutely not!*

Many “babes in Christ” are faced with this problem. Some are afraid to pray as often as they should *because they are afraid other people will know about it!* Have no such fear! Should the nearness of your wife, husband or children prevent you from maintaining an intimate contact with your Creator and God? Of course not!

In Luke's gospel, we find two examples where Christ—our *perfect example*—prayed a short distance from His disciples and they knew *where* He was and *what* He was doing (Luke 9:18, 28).

So *do not* be ashamed if anyone knows you are praying! Just be careful not to pray “to be seen of men,” and try hard to find a closet or “private place” where you will not be disturbed.

When Jesus was staying at Peter's home with His disciples, “having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed” (Mark 1:35).

You *can* be alone with God if you will follow Christ's example and *make a way!*

## POSITION FOR PRAYER

The Bible records many different positions for prayer. But it *always* shows that in private, personal prayer, you should *kneel on both knees*. It has always been a custom to kneel on *one* knee to a king or other ruler as a sign of *respect and esteem*. Yet the Bible always records that we should bow *both* knees to God in *reverence and worship*.

1 Kings 8:54 and Ezra 9:5 show an example of a very suitable position in prayer. Notice that Solomon and Ezra kneeled upon *both* knees and spread out their hands—upward—toward God. This is a position of humility and supplication. You will come more nearly praying *fervently* if you are in such a position.

God may not answer “sleepytime prayers” that you mumble to yourself in bed just before dropping off to sleep. If you truly

want an answer, you should be willing to get out of that bed and kneel to pray fervently before your Creator.

In private, Jesus “knelt down and prayed” (Luke 22:41). In your personal prayers, you should often kneel before God and pray *fervently* (James 5:16).

## HOW OFTEN TO PRAY?

In Acts 13:22, we read that David was a *man after God's own heart*. Many of the Psalms are simply David's prayers. He prayed to God in time of trouble, for guidance and in thanksgiving. In *every circumstance*, David went to God in prayer.

Never think you are “bothering” God by sharing your joys and your problems with Him. *Talk to God often—in every circumstance.* That is undoubtedly one of the main reasons why David was a man after God's own heart.

If you want to be a child of God, then “become acquainted” with your Heavenly Father. Talk to Him *often*. *Share your life* with God. David wrote, “*Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall hear my voice*” (Psalm 55:17). David went to God in prayer *three times a day*.

We read that God's prophet Daniel “knelt down on his knees *three times that day*, and *prayed* and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days” (Daniel 6:10). These examples are not commands, but they certainly show that to kneel in prayer *three times a day* is a good way to bring God into our lives.

“He that hath an ear, *let him hear.*”

The Apostle Paul was inspired to teach the Thessalonians to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). This means we are never to *discontinue* our prayer life. It also—along with many other scriptures—shows that we should be *constantly* in an attitude or spirit of prayer. Talk to God as you go about your work or play. Ask Him to direct your *every thought and action*.

When you seem to be losing your temper—or when you are in doubt about a certain course of action—*stop and think*, “Would Jesus do that?” Ask God to show you the answer, and *study* your Bible so you will *know* what God would have you do. Then ask God for the *wisdom*, the *faith* and the *power* to carry out what is right.

This simple process will *change your life!* Your life will then have more *meaning*, and more *real happiness*, than you have ever before experienced.

## HOW LONG TO PRAY?

Prayer should be one of the most important and *most enjoyable* activities of your life.

If you really love God as your Father, you will *want* to spend a great deal of time talking to Him.

Your spiritual food is obtained by contact with God through Bible study and prayer. Preparing and eating your material food takes most people at least two hours each day. Is your “spiritual food” *any less* important? Spend *more time* acquiring it!

Time is precious. Use your time where it *counts*. It is better to miss a few *physical* meals—to *fast* once in a while—than to grow “too busy” to drink in the spiritual things of God.

That is the very *purpose* of your life!

Sometimes you will need to spend a *long session* with God. Christ prayed *all night* before choosing His twelve apostles. When you have a tremendous decision to make, or when facing serious trouble, remember that example. In such a crisis, spend a *long time* in God’s presence. Pray with all your might. God *will hear*, and it will be an experience that you will never forget.

### WHAT TO PRAY?

Do you have trouble knowing what to pray about? First of all, “count your blessings” and thank God for “every good and perfect gift.” How little most appreciate God’s boundless love!

Then *study* your Bible and find what God’s true servants prayed about. Fix your mind *away from self* once in a while. Paul

asked the Ephesians to pray for the saints and for him, God’s servant (Ephesians 6:18–20). He wrote that he remembered the Philippian church in every prayer (Philippians 1:4). Apply these principles to God’s true ministers, His Work and His true Church.

*Each of us has a part* in God’s great Work by contributing what we should in tithes and offerings, but also in *crying out* to God day and night to guide and protect His servants. God’s ministers are only human, but we have a job beyond our human power to perform. *We need your prayers!*

### POWER IN PRAYER

When a crisis comes, when you are sick or afflicted, *know* that God is a God of *power*! You can tap that supreme source of all *power* just by kneeling down in a private place and fervently beseeching God to intervene and help you.

Learn to expect an answer. God reveals Himself as *real*—a *living, acting* God. *Take Him at His word!* ■

### Stir Up Your Philadelphian Faith! Continued from page 2

noticed how enthusiastic the young people were in learning to work together as a **team**, in **bonding** with one another and truly feeling part of the Church of God and the *Work of God* in a way they probably never would otherwise. So we are very grateful for the thousands of hours of work done by Mr. Monson, Mr. Jason Fritts and all the others who have contributed *so much* to this important function of the Living Church of God.

Also, I want to publically thank the *dozens* of Church members who help out in so many ways. I had better not mention names, since I would certainly forget someone out of the many who so generously gave of their time and their effort. But I will mention that we have had some really **big** donations of money and property to help support the camp. We have also had *hundreds of hours* of time **volunteered** by wonderful people from our local churches all over—helping out in the kitchen, in the activities at camp and in so many other ways. These people often have to use their vacation time from work in order to **serve** the camp and serve these young people. *They added so much!* So, I want to **thank you**—all of you—in the name of Jesus Christ!

Also, since *so many* brethren began to phone us or e-mail us about helping the Montgomery family and the Living Youth Camp because of the tragedy, we have established the **Morgan Montgomery Memorial Fund** to provide scholarships and transportation for Church youth around the world

to participate in the Church’s youth camps, in addition to providing other important services to Church youth. As I mentioned in my special member letter, which most of you received a few weeks ago, Miss Montgomery stated herself that Living Youth Camp was indeed a “turning point” in her entire life. She *deeply appreciated* the camp and the help it was to her and so many others. So we are grateful for the opportunity God gave her to be baptized a few weeks *before* her death, and to have the opportunity of being there with loving young people even though this tragedy was allowed to occur. As I told the

campers, all of this should make us realize our need to “redeem the time” as we are told in the book of Ephesians: “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, **redeeming the time**, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:15–16).

As God’s Word tells us: “The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. Who knows

the power of Your anger? For as the fear of You, so is Your wrath. *So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom*” (Psalm 90:10–12).

Brethren, as you know, in the last (September–October 2015) issue of the *Living Church News* I wrote an article titled, “The Danger of Laodiceanism.” *Many* of our ministers have noticed, as I have, that although most of our brethren **are** involved in the Work and the Church in many ways, there is often a general sense of “relaxation” and a “take it easy” spirit among the brethren unlike what should be. Yet, if you watch the





world news at all, you can see that end-time events are **crashing down** upon us with increasing rapidity! We do truly need to be “on fire” to proclaim Christ’s message to this world with more power than we have **ever** done before. So I hope, as we realize the **fragility** of our human lives and how short our lives really are, we all will devote even more time and energy to **seeking God** in profound study, deep meditation and *fervent prayer*—with occasional **fasting**—than ever before! I hope all of you can begin to understand that this is not just a “nicey-nice” saying. Rather, it truly is becoming **imperative**, as we can definitely see before our eyes the beginnings of those events God Almighty said would occur.

What will we do when uncontrollable *disease epidemics* begin to ravage *our own neighborhoods*, and when increasing drought and famine begin to stalk our lands—along with **raging fires** as are *right now* occurring across much of the western United States? What will we do when massive **earthquakes** begin to strike, here and there, even in unexpected places? How will we react when race riots, class riots and anti-government riots begin to pop up all over the U.S. and the British-descended nations? Will we do as God commands? Will we **cry out** to Him as never before? Brethren, we are **God’s people!** If our *whole being* is involved, and we are “walking with God”—and actually **doing His Work** of proclaiming the *full Truth* of the Kingdom of God and the true *name* of Jesus Christ—then we will be *rewarded forever*.

Let us understand the *reality* of Almighty God, the **power** of His increasing intervention in human affairs and the *wonderful outcome* that will be ours **if** we *walk by faith*—even through the valley of the shadow of death—and persevere through all these

terrible tragedies that have occurred and the many more that **will occur** before Christ returns!

As Mr. Herbert Armstrong said so many times, “True faith is learning to absolutely **believe** that God will do the things which He has *promised* to do!” We **must** have that kind

of **faith** to make it through the years ahead. While each of us still has life and breath, each of us should try with all our hearts to truly make our lives **count** for something! We must show God that we **seek first** His Kingdom and His righteousness above all else (Matthew 6:33). Near the end of the book of Daniel, God’s inspired Word describes both the *opportunity* and *challenge* for those of us who live at the very **end** of this present age: “And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of

the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever” (Daniel 12:2–3).

May God **stir all of us** as never before to prepare ourselves fully to be on **His team** and truly be part of *His* ruling Kingdom in tomorrow’s world. That is *why* we were born! That is why we are called *right now* instead of later on! May God *move you* to go all out—**not** with Laodicean laziness, but with Philadelphian **zeal** to fulfill this challenge.

With Christian love,

*Roderic Meredith*



## Upcoming **TOMORROW'S** **WORLD** Telecasts

<b>NOVEMBER 5–11</b>	<b>WHY WILL CHRIST RETURN?</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 12–18</b>	<b>THE NEW JERUSALEM</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 19–25</b>	<b>WHO IS THE PROPHESED “MAN OF SIN”?</b>
<b>NOVEMBER 26–DECEMBER 2</b>	<b>SEVEN KEYS FOR PEACE OF MIND</b>
<b>DECEMBER 3–9</b>	<b>WHAT HAPPENED TO GOD?</b>
<b>DECEMBER 10–16</b>	<b>EBOLA CAN BE PREVENTED</b>
<b>DECEMBER 17–23</b>	<b>OUR DESTINY IN SPACE</b>
<b>DECEMBER 24–30</b>	<b>IS CHRISTMAS CHRISTIAN?</b>

SCHEDULE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

For stations and times, check the Television Log on page 34 of your *Tomorrow's World* magazine.

## Ordinations

**Mr. and Mrs. Mike (Marilyn) Green** were ordained as deacon and deaconess on Pentecost by Pastor Glen Harrison. Mr. and Mrs. Green serve in the Lafayette, Louisiana congregation.

**Mr. Tim Jablonski** and **Mr. Mike Loper** were ordained as deacons on Pentecost by Pastor Gene Hilgenberg as well as Wyatt Ciesielka, Karl Beyersdorfer, Shannon Christal and

Mark Sandor. Mr. Jablonski and Mr. Loper serve in the Tulsa, Oklahoma congregation.

**Mrs. Joanne Myers** was ordained a deaconess on Pentecost by Pastor Rick Stafford and elders Ron McGowan and Dan Dever. Mrs. Myers serves in the Houston, Texas congregation.

## Births

Mr. and Mrs. Valentin (Debra) Celan, of the Dallas, Texas, congregation, are joyful to announce the birth of their first child, **Savannah Joy Celan** on May 8. She weighed 5 pounds, 6 ounces and was 18.5 inches long. They are grateful both grandfathers are alive to enjoy her and they look forward to the resurrection so both grandmothers can see her also.

Chad and Sarah Brinkman of the Washington, DC, congregation are excited to announce the birth of their first son, **Elias Sean Brinkman**, born May 26. Elias weighed 6 pounds, 8.4

ounces and was 19.75 inches long. He joins two sisters, Ella (age 8) and Arlee (age 4). This is the first grandson for happy grandparents Eugene and Teresa Brinkman, also of the Washington, DC congregation. Elias is truly a miracle and a blessing from God.

**Amanda Anastasia Ambrose** was born on June 24, weighing in at 6 pounds, 13 ounces. She is the first child for happy parents Marlon and Anastasia Ambrose, who attend the Chaguanas, Trinidad congregation.

Mr. and Mrs. Derek (Holly) McQuattie of the Mississauga, Ontario, Canada congregation are delighted to announce the birth of their first child, a son, **Brayton David James**, born July 10. The baby weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces and is the first grandchild of Mr. and Mrs. Shane Kruse of Mississauga, Ontario.

Mr. and Mrs. Damian (Yonette) Weekes of the Chaguanas, Trinidad congregation, welcomed **Elizabeth Angelina Weekes** into the world on July 24. She weighed just over 7 pounds and was 18 inches in length.

## Jury Service Exemption Forms Available

Living Church of God adherents who are summoned for jury service may wish to make use of the Jury Service Exemption Request form and documentation provided by the Office of Legal Affairs and Risk Management.

Your local minister should be able to give you copies of the form, which includes legal precedents as well as a ministerial affirmation that you adhere to the doctrines of the Living Church of God, and have a sincerely held religious objection to jury service.

If your request for excusal is denied, please send a copy of your original jury summons, the signed first page of the executed "Jury Service Exemption Request" form, and the denial, to the Office of Legal Affairs & Risk Management by fax at (704) 844-1976, or by email at [legal@lcg.org](mailto:legal@lcg.org).

For more information, please see our document, *Steps in Seeking Jury Service Exemption*, available through your local minister.

**United States:** P.O. Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227-8010, Phone: (704) 844-1970 • **Australasia:** PO Box 300, Clarendon, SA 5157, Australia, Phone: (61) 8-8383-6288 • **Canada:** P.O. Box 409, Mississauga, ON L5M 0P6, Phone: (905) 814-1094 • **New Zealand:** P.O. Box 2767 Shortland Street, Auckland 1140, New Zealand, Phone/Fax: (09) 268 8985 • **Philippines:** PO Box 492, Araneta Center Post Office, 1135 Quezon City, Metro Manila, Philippines, Phone: (632) 455-3699 • **South Africa:** Private Bag X3016, Harrismith FS, 9880, Phone: (27) 58-622-1424 • **United Kingdom:** Box 111, 88-90 Hatton Garden, London, EC1N 8PG, Phone/Fax: 44 (0) 844-800-9322.

## Weddings

On May 17, **Christopher George Hine** and **Leah Michelle Bussey** were united in marriage by Regional Pastor Stuart Wachowicz, as witnessed by family and friends from all across Canada. The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Lenard (Esabelle) Hine of Edmonton, Alberta, and the bride is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold (Melvina) Bussey of the Springdale, Newfoundland, congregation. A reception with toasts and speeches and followed by a dance was held in a beautifully decorated hall. The happy couple resides in Edmonton.

**Philip Kovanis** of the Long Island, New York, congregation and **Kristin Vorel** of the Washington, DC congregation were married on June 14. The groom is the son of Kurt and Monica Hartman of the Concord, California congregation. The bride is the daughter of John and Linda Rutland. The outdoor ceremony was conducted by Mr. Larry Alverio in Bluemont Vineyard in northern Virginia. Mrs. Cathy Alverio wrote of the event: “It was such a miracle! Clouds and perhaps rain all around us, but blue sky and fluffy clouds covering over us. Then, when the ceremony was over, God’s rainbow appeared in the sky as if He were saying, “I heard your prayers.”

**Don E. Davis** and **Karen J. Lehne**, long-time Church of God members, were married on June 14 in Millsite Park of Myrtle Creek, Oregon. Mr. Michael Norris officiated at the outdoor ceremony.

**Ryan William Patterson** and **Lisa Nicole Oberlander** were united in marriage on July 12 in Omaha, Nebraska. After the outdoor ceremony, guests were treated to an indoor reception complete with memorable toasts, delicious food, and a song sung by the bride to the groom. Ryan is the son of Franz and Christina Boehm of the Traverse City, Michigan congregation, and Lisa is the daughter of Alan and Patricia Oberlander of the Omaha, Nebraska congregation. The couple resides in Dallas, Texas.

**Brian Ruane** and **Sandra Post** were united in marriage on August 9 in Kannapolis, North Carolina. Brethren and friends from several states joyfully celebrated with the happy couple at the ceremony conducted by Mr. James Sweat. After the nuptials, everyone enjoyed a fine reception with good food, fellowship and dancing. The bride and groom will reside in Hillsborough, North Carolina.

## Anniversaries

On June 11, **Mr. and Mrs. Richard (Helen) Thomas** celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. The Fort Lauderdale congregation honored Mr. and Mrs. Thomas with a cake on the previous Sabbath. Baptized in 1971, they have been in God’s Church for 44 years. Mr. Thomas serves as an elder and Mrs. Thomas serves as a deaconess in the Fort Lauderdale congregation.

**Mr. and Mrs. Ron Peterson** of the Tampa, Florida congregation celebrated their 64th wedding anniversary on June 18. The congregation expressed their deepest love and affection for them and honored them with a beautiful cake. The Petersons have been devoted and faithful members of God’s Church for 51 years and their service and commitment to God’s truth is an inspiration to us all. Mr. Peterson has served as an elder since 1996.

**Mr. and Mrs. Stephen (Barbie) Woolley** of the Cincinnati, Ohio congregation, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary on July 2.

**Mr. and Mrs. Gerald (Vilma) Shoquist** celebrated 60 years of marriage this year. They were married on July 2, 1955 and have two children and four grandchildren. Mr. and Mrs. Shoquist were baptized in December 1971. Mr. Shoquist is an elder and Mrs. Shoquist is a deaconess, serving in the Phoenix, Arizona congregation.

We want to hear more about the happy milestones in the lives of our brethren. If your family has had a birth, marriage or major anniversary, please ask your local pastor to send word to the *Living Church News*, PO Box 3810, Charlotte, NC 28227-8010 (or to send e-mail to [lcnc@lcn.org](mailto:lcnc@lcn.org)).



# In Loving Memory

**Mr. Pierre Homer Trahan**, 91, of Alexandria, Louisiana, died on February 11. He is survived by his wife, Yolande Cormier Trahan; one son, Randall Trahan of Keithville; two daughters, Vernola Stephen of Lafayette, and Elaine Coleman of Pineville; five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Mr. Trahan had been a member of God's Church since 1969. He lived a long and interesting life and was well known for growing Louisiana hot peppers. His funeral service was conducted by Mr. Daniel Friz and Mr. Curtis Lambright.

**Mr. Glendon Chandler**, 85, of Ferriday, Louisiana, died on February 20. He was baptized into God's Church in 1970. He was an excellent carpenter and he enjoyed entertaining others by singing and playing his guitar. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 43 years, Margie Lee Chandler, his parents, three sisters and four brothers. Survivors include three daughters, Rita Hall, Janice Chandler, and Joyce Cupit and their families. Mr. Curtis Lambright conducted the funeral service.

**Mr. Pieter van der Byl** died suddenly of a stroke on April 22, after faithfully serving God's people in Southern Africa for nearly 50 years. He was 78 years old and is survived by his wife Pat, daughter Jennie, and son David. Mr. van der Byl was born and lived his whole life in Cape Town. He was a professional nurseryman and was famous in the Western Cape for his seedlings. His other passion was fly-fishing, which he enjoyed at every opportunity. He was baptized in July 1968, ordained as an elder in 1977, and became the Regional Pastor for Southern Africa in 2007. Mr. van der Byl did not seek to become the Regional Pastor of nine congregations, but he was willing to step into the gap when the need arose. His steadiness and faithfulness, his care and genuine outgoing concern for all, and his dedication to God's Truth and Work were important aspects of his leadership. Mr. van der Byl had a great interest in the Church youth and for 19 years he took a leading role in working with the youth in the area, including running summer camps. Many of those whom he worked with through those years made a point of either coming to his memorial service or contacting the family to say how much he meant to them and what a great effect he had had on their lives. Mr. van der Byl's balance, wisdom, discernment and patience were related to his age, his experience and his willingness to be led by God's Spirit. He was a father figure to many, and his example of humility and unselfish servant leadership are certainly worthy of remembering and following. He will be very much missed, but remembered and appreciated by all who had the privilege of knowing and working with him.

**Mr. Adam Lutton**, 65, of the Birmingham, UK congregation, died May 21. He is survived by his wife Donna, daughter

Alison, stepson Craig, four grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and siblings Bill, Paul and Connie. Originally from Northern Ireland, Mr. Lutton was renowned in the congregation for his serving attitude, sense of humor and positive outlook. He set a fine example of courage and faith, displaying great peace of mind during his battle with cancer. His funeral, conducted by Mr. John Meakin on June 9, was attended by a large number of his former work and union colleagues from the Goodyear Tyre Factory where he worked until his retirement, gaining the respect of all. Many employees came out to line the road to say good-bye, bowing and saluting as the funeral hearse passed by the factory on the way to the cemetery. Mr. Lutton is sadly missed by all who knew him, but he died confident in faith of the resurrection and God's promises.

**Mrs. Beulah Callbeck**, of the Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada congregation, died on May 3, and her husband, Wallace Callbeck, 86, died two and a half months later, on July 18. They had celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary in November 2014 with a small family gathering. Mr. and Mrs. Callbeck are survived by two sons and one grandson.

**Mrs. Geneva Perry**, 74, of Alton, Illinois died on June 17. Mrs. Perry was loved by all who knew her because she had a very pleasant attitude and infectious smile. She attended the St. Louis congregation until two years ago, when she moved to her daughter's at Olathe, Kansas, and attended the Kansas City congregation. She loved the brethren very much. Mrs. Perry was an excellent cook and had a beautiful singing voice. She was predeceased by one son, and is survived by her daughter. Mr. William Oswald gave her eulogy at the funeral.

**Mrs. Socorro Medina**, 85, died on June 30. She was baptized in 1965 and was a founding member of the Kansas City, Missouri, congregation before moving to Tucson, Arizona. She was loyal to the Truth for 50 years of her life and died in the faith.

**Mr. Billy Trest**, 69, of the Laurel, Mississippi congregation died on August 12. He was preceded in death by most of his immediate family. Mr. Trest and his mother were both called into God's Church and baptized in the mid-1970s. Mr. Trest was a retired schoolteacher who loved people, knowledge and travel. Before his health failed, he was an avid gardener and also collected old coins, autographs, books and more. He loved his Church family far and wide, who will miss this dedicated brother in Christ, with his gentle, quiet and loving character and his example will be remembered by all those who knew him.

# COMMENTARY

## Something To Count On

Long ago, the God of the Bible revealed to Moses that there is something worthy of respect and reverence. In Exodus 20:7, God demanded that His name be honored when He said, "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."

So we see that we are to honor and respect the name of God, our heavenly Father. In a beautiful acrostic poem in the Psalms, we find the words, "Holy and awesome is His name" (Psalm 111:9). The original Hebrew word for "awesome" means "to fear" (as in respect), or "to revere or be in reverence toward." Jesus said the same as He instructed His disciples on how to address God, "In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name" (Matthew 6:9). He meant that we should be very careful how we use God's name. We should not cheapen it. We should not assign God's name to things that do not pertain to Him or to things of which He would not approve.

Imagine what a positive impact it would have on society if these principles were applied to entertainment, literature and our daily conversations. It would eliminate profanity in speech and prevent euphemisms which creep into our vocabulary. How much more positive our daily walk would be if we kept our Creator and His desires in our mind.

God further states, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you" (Exodus 20:12). This kind of respect for parents is decidedly old-fashioned, but think of the wonderful lessons that could be learned and the happiness it would bring if families were built on this solid foundation. If young people would reflect upon how their actions affect their parents, and carefully protected their family's name, many foolish and sinful acts would be avoided, preventing much pain, suffering and strife within families.



Are there absolutes? Is there something you can count on? Yes! The prophet Malachi was inspired when he wrote, "For I am the LORD, I do not change" (Malachi 3:6).

While much of the present world is adrift without a spiritual anchor or foundation, there is coming a time in which there will be a way of life based on having respect and reverence for the God of the Bible and His ways. Those living at that time will have teachers who will show them how to live. Isaiah wrote about this in his prophecy about the Kingdom of God on the earth: "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left" (Isaiah 30:21). God speed that day!

—J. Davy Crockett, III