

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

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*"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.*

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*"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18)*

## SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

### SELF-MINISTRIES

By Richard Ebler

There is a very popular view abroad in the religious world which says, in effect, "Only God can get things done. We, of ourselves, can do nothing. Therefore, we should say a little prayer, then sit back and wait for God to work. No need for personal effort, because that would be trying to serve God in the flesh. God does it all. Praise the Lord!"

Although there are times that the Lord does indeed say to us, "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord" (Ex. 14:13), yet this is not to be made into a general rule to cover every situation. It usually applies to our circumstances over which we have no control, as when our enemy comes in like a flood and the Lord lifts up a standard against him (Isa. 59:19). However, when it comes to the matter of our personal sanctification and the perfecting of holiness in the fear of God, here is an area where strenuous exertion is demanded by scripture and by experience. We are to run the race of faith as though there could be only one winner and we were determined to be that one; therefore, we are to *strive* for the mastery (I Cor. 9:24-27).

While it is true that "our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:5), and without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5), for it is God "that worketh in us both to will and to do of His own good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13), yet it is also true that we are to "labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (Col. 1:29). We are "workers together with him" (II Cor. 6:1).

With this in mind, there are many ministries that we can have to ourselves, i.e., where we can minister to our own needs. The following is a partial list of verses of this nature:

1. "As obedient children, *not fashioning yourselves* according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" (I Pet. 1:14, 15).

First let us note that this responsibility is laid squarely on our own shoulders. It is true that there is "grace to help" offered us (Heb. 4:16), but the fact of the matter is that it won't get done until we *ourselves* begin to apply ourselves with earnest effort.

This verse tells us the amazing and profound truth that we ourselves do actually mold or fashion *ourselves* to a great degree. In our former ignorance and lust we did this fashioning in the easy and unconscious manner. We followed the lusts of our flesh, not realizing that we were molding ourselves into bad habits of thought and life which would be hard to break later. Now we must consciously strive to cultivate holiness of heart and life, because God is holy.

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## The Word of Truth

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### THE TIME OF THE DEAD

"And the nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that Thou shouldest give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth" — Revelation 11:18.

There is a "time of the dead" — a time when all men shall be called to account for the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). This is a set time — "the" time. It is a specific period set aside — the "time". There is a precise designation as to what shall be unveiled at that time — the time "of the dead". The term "the dead" is used because all earthly life has passed. It is not meant to be a review of a period of time, of a segment of men, of a portion of man's accomplishments/failures. **It is a time when all men, all life, all time will be spangled upon the canvas of God's judgement** — "the time of the dead." No amount of earthly manipulations can hasten or delay this "time". There are no schemes or plans that can be conceived which will alter the outcome of this "time." The works of all men will have been recorded in "the books", and the immutable and just judgement of the "God of all flesh" (Jer. 32:27) has come this "time of the dead" will come in spite of the anger of the nations — though they rage, resist, plot, and scheme — the day shall come! It will be a time of fearful "wrath" — "**Thy Wrath is come**"! Wrath that has been stored up for centuries; heaped up until this time when it will be "poured out without mixture" (Rev. 14:10). All mercy shall have been exhausted for the wicked; no compassion, no forbearance, no patience will be exerted by the Lord towards them! O, what a day that shall be — "the time of the dead"! The satire of the spiritually ignorant shall suddenly dissipate; the anger of the wicked shall be turned into fear; the prattling of the skeptic shall turn to dumbness and silence! **What we actually have portrayed in this text is the consequences of earth's rebellion against the Lord of lords and King of kings — particularly rebellion as actuated by the governments of this world; earth's system at its acme and peak.**

"The nations were angry". It does not say

that they are angry, but that they "were angry". This is the raging of which the Psalmist spoke in Psalms 2:1-9. "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. . . . Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." The nations and the kings of the earth rebelled against the authority of the Lord. They considered His presence, His laws, His will, as constrictive rather than liberative. Whereas the Lord Jesus declared; "And if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). The world considered His proclamations a threat to their position — thus did they set themselves against God, and against His Christ. They sought to liberate themselves from His dominion, His power, His will, and His Law. The kings of the earth have always opposed the Lord God. They fought against the Israelites when they entered into Canaan. They opposed the servants of God, the prophets — even slaying them often. They crucified the Lord of glory (Acts 4:25-26). They slew the apostles of the Lord, and martyred early proclaimers of the faith beginning at Stephen the faithful. They have sought to remove the scriptures, forbid the worship of the Lord God through Christ Jesus, remove the influence of the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and make it as uncomfortable for His disciples as it was possible for them to do. But now the end has come! The "kings of the earth" (Psa. 76:12; 110:5) are called to account. "The time of the dead" has arrived, and in spite of their bitter opposition, the Lord has brought a people out of every "kindred and nation, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 5:9; Acts 10:35). Once they were angry because their ways were condemned by the Lord, condemned by his prophets, his apostles, and his people — their teaching and their lives did this unquestionably! The nations were restrained as by cords and bands by the presence of the saints of the Most High God! They were angry because they were faced with the fact that they were inferior to the Kingdom of Heaven, and because they could not make the people of God bow to their system: they could not make them conform to the world order. But their anger has turned to fear, because, "**Thy wrath is come**"! This day of wrath is often referred to in scripture, it is no strange concept (Job 21:30; Rom. 2:5; Rev. 6:17; Rom. 2:8). This is actually "the day of Christ" from the world's perspective (Phil. 1:6) — a day of wrath. This is a day when wrath shall no longer be mingled with mercy, but will be poured out "without mixture" (Eph. 5:6; Rev. 14:10; 19:15; 16:19; II Thess. 1:7-8; Heb. 10:27). This is "the wrath to come" of which the spirit witnesses (I Thess. 1:10). This is when God's fierce anger shall be fully revealed, and the wicked shall be consumed in all of its awfulness. It is when God's longsuffering shall terminate abruptly, which longsuffering we now "account" as salvation (II Pet. 3:15). This awful day is here associated particularly with the fall and demise of earthly kingdoms because: 1.

Their's was an organized conspiracy against the Lord of lords and King of kings. 2. Their's was a deliberate and planned rebellion. 3. Their's was an intelligently pursued conspiracy, not being a mere spontaneous response to the Lord's dominion. 4. Their's was an influential conspiracy — one that was not private or isolated, but which was zealously propagated by its constituents. But the "day of wrath" shall find them out, their conspiracy shall be ended, and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ shall be manifested, vindicated, and praised among men and angels.

**"The time of the dead"**. While the dead, at the present time, have been apparently laid to rest, and have not been openly active — their time now comes. They are summoned to give account for the deeds that were done while yet they were "in the body". It is written that "the dead shall hear His voice" — yea, "all that are in the graves" shall hear His voice (Jno. 5:28-29). They shall all come forth to face Him that is set forth as the "Judge of the quick (living) and the dead" (II Tim. 4:1). It is true — the dead shall all stand before the Lord of glory, both "small and great" (Rev. 20:12-13).

In particular, the wicked dead had, in the form of earthly government, judged the prophets, accounting them unworthy to live: unworthy to be at peace. They had judged and condemned the Lord Jesus Himself, the Lord of glory, together with His apostles and his Post-Pentecostal saints: "Unworthy to live" — "unworthy to exert influence in the world" — that was the edict of earth's governments: and there was hardly a single one, if indeed there was any one, that did not come out against the Lord and His Christ! They, with one consent, had judged the Gospel as unfit to pervade the world influentially, and so had fought against it with all of their power. But now — now — it is the "time of the dead", a time when they must stand before the very One they judged unworthy of life, unworthy of influence: the One that they considered "beside himself", and a perverter of the right way. Further, it is written that the saints shall "judge the world" (I Cor. 6:2), thereby declaring that those of earth that judged the saints shall themselves be judged by the saints. In this way God has wondrously designed for vindication to come through the instrumentality of the very ones that were wronged. It is well to keep this in memory if any are tempted to do wrong to the children of the Lord. At this "time" — "the time of the dead" everything will be straightened out; the crooked made straight, the valleys raised, confusing things made plain. All false analyses will here be exposed and brought to light — at "the time of the dead".

**"That thou shouldest give reward . . ."** What a day that will be! Those that have lived in obscurity and rejection for the Name of Jesus — some having left houses, lands, wives, children, brothers, sisters; and others even having made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of God's sake (Matt. 19:29, 30; Matt. 19:12, 13). — That have "counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ" (Phil. 3:8) and, in exchange, have received the insults of persecution of the world . . . **their time comes!** They shall be rewarded, doubtless. Though they have sown in tears, they shall truly reap in joy (Psa. 126:5). Now their joy comes, though their "weeping en-

ured for the night" (Psa. 30:5).

Do not remove the idea of rewards from my heart — it is a blessed balm when the believer is confronted with the mean and ferocious looks of evil men, the rejection of the thoughtless, and the persecution and abuse of the ungodly! When all else fails from vision, the believer looks for the morning, when the joy shall come, and he will bring home his sheaves — fruit of the precious seed which he has sown in faithfulness (Psa. 126:6). How much the scriptures speak about rewards to encourage our hearts (Rom. 2:10; Heb. 10:34; 11:36; Col. 3:24; Rev. 2:10; 22:12).

This touches, of course, upon that wonderful and immutable spiritual law of reaping: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-9). **Were the faithful to engage their lives for the glory of the Lord and not be rewarded, God would be mocked just as surely as if the wicked were to go unpunished.** God's glory is effected by the distribution of rewards — make no mistake about that. Further, "he that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly, and he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully" (II Cor. 9:6). **The rewards of the Lord will be based upon the quality and quantity of the sowing.** There shall not be given large rewards for small work, nor small rewards for large work. The reward shall be precisely in proportion to the sowing; to the effort that was expended: to the faithfulness manifested in the sower's continuance, even through faced by obstacles and hindrances. "The time of the dead" is when these rewards shall be handed out to the glory of God and the thorough satisfaction of the saints. Incidentally, it ought to be noted that "small work" and "large work" are not be defined by appearance, nor by the approbation of men, but by the entrance of the heart into the matter. **There are many seemingly large works that have little heart in them — God shall regard them as small works. On the other hand, there are many apparently small works that have a lot of heart in them — God shall regard them as large works. "And shouldest destroy them that destroy the earth."** It is a fact that the earth shall be destroyed: "heaven and earth shall pass away" (Matt. 5:18; II Pet. 3:10). It is further stated: "of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth: and the heavens are the work of Thy hands. They shall all perish . . ." (Psa. 102:25, 26); and again, "the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage . . ." (Isa. 24:20): and again, "lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away, and the earth shall wax old as doth a garment . . ." (Isa. 51:6); and again, "and I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the heavens and the earth fled away" (Rev. 20:11); and again, "and I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea" (Rev. 21:1).

Why should the earth be assigned such a fate by the almighty? **It is because of the wicked.** Certainly the earth has not violated the will of the

HEAVEN

I can't wait till I'm in heaven, yes heaven afar;  
There'll be no more sin, not anything beyond the stars;

It will be so glorious when we will be there;  
Nothing-oh-Nothing like anything down here;  
It'll all look so precious and beautiful in our eyes;  
No crying, no weeping, no groaning, no sighs;  
We'll clasp hands together and sing praise to our LORD;

Oh no one will be standing as stiff as a board;  
Rejoicing and singing and shouting with praise;  
We'll greet one another and be glad always.

by Rochelle Faith Blakely  
16 yr. old daughter  
of the Editor.

Lord: it has not transgressed. Even "the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope" (Rom. 8:21). It is the wicked that have "polluted" the earth (Micah. 2:10). They have corrupted it with their sinful, selfish, and rebellious ways — and we have all had a part in that! **It is they that have "destroyed the earth".** God is not here speaking of environmental pollution, nor of an O-zone factor, or other such things. Earth may speak of such things, but not the scriptures! God speaks of moral, spiritual — real — pollution! Now, it is not that the wicked have, with their own hands, destroyed the earth. **Man cannot destroy what the Lord has made.** It is ever true that the Lord giveth, and (only) the Lord taketh away (Job 1:21). **But when the Lord destroys the earth with that fire for which it is presently reserved; He shall give all of the credit to the wicked.** They have sown the earth with iniquity, and at "the time of the dead they shall reap the bitter harvest along with the earth they have polluted with their ways! They themselves shall be "destroyed from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power" (II Thess. 1:9).

**What shall we say to these things?** We ought to prepare ourselves zealously for "the time of the dead" by "studying to show ourselves approved unto God — workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing (handling aright) the Word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). Let each believer "cleanse himself of all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord" (II Cor. 7:1). Remember, follower of the Lord, and those that are sinners too, that we shall all face the Lord, as well as the deeds that we have done! If we have sown to the wind, we shall surely reap the whirlwind (Hosea 8:7). If we have sown to the flesh, we shall surely reap corruption. "The time of the dead" is **scheduled**, and it shall surely come at the appointed time. For the wicked, it shall be a time judgement and punishment — for banishment from the presence of the Lord. But for the righteous, it shall be a time of reward, of blessedness, of reaping everlasting life, of full and complete vindication. Well, dear reader, where shall you stand in that day — the day that is called "the time of the dead"?

From time to time men become so apparently zealous to bring glory to the Lord that they indulge in the exaggeration of normal experiences of life. For example, a very common infirmity of the body occurs; one that is neither medically serious, nor cause for alarm. The individual possessing the infirmity seeks public prayer and supplication in his behalf, grossly overstating the seriousness of the affliction. When finally recovery is experienced, great praise is said to be due the Lord for a miraculous intervention. How often does this sort of thing occur in the household of faith. Now with great caution I approach this matter, lest any suppose that we are discouraging prayer for the sick, or a lifting up to the Lord of all matters that concern us. But they must be related in **truth**, in **proper perspective**, and not in any attempt to bring glory to the Lord through unscrupulous means. God does not need our exaggerations or lies for the furtherance of His glory. Sometimes it is best to leave private providences and mercies of the Lord unsaid among the congregation of the Lord, lest our Lord become associated with murmuring trivia rather than the essentials of life. Pleasure is good, and pain is bad, but pleasure is not the best thing, and pain is not the worst thing — this is good to remember in the assessment of our afflictions. **Believers should not only be characterized by a right dividing of the Word of truth (II Tim. 2:15), but by a proper evaluation of the circumstances of life.** If Aunt Suzy has a cold in the nose or an ingrown toenail, it is well that the saints remember and be careful not to present this as a critical matter for prayer in hopes that the Lord will receive glory. Let us not reduce our God to the level of an aspirin tablet or an antibiotic capsule. God is not glorified particularly by being able to do what an Anacin tablet can do, but in doing what no man nor any god of this world can do. When Hezekiah was delivered from the malicious hand of Sennacarib, the Lord did what otherwise could not have been done. When the woman with an issue of blood was healed of the Lord, her issue being stanchd when she touched the hem of His garment, a wonder was wrought which could not possibly have been wrought otherwise. When the woman with the spirit of infirmity, which was bowed over for eighteen years, was healed of the Lord, glory was rendered to the Lord for working the unworkable among men! Withered hands, blinded eyes, deaf ears, speechless tongues, leprous skin and flesh, crippled legs — none of these things could possibly have been healed without the hand of the Lord — not possibly! That is why He was glorified in those matters.

Now, let none suppose for one minute that I am saying that other lesser things should not be presented to the Lord. God forbid! I am speaking of the relating of these matters publicly; of rehearsing the righteous acts of the Lord; of making known His wonderful works; of bringing **public** praise and glory to the Lord. It is not that each one of us do not have a thousand smaller incidents that we could relate — matters that, quite frankly, are very precious and dear to our

hearts. Every day in the smallest and most minute matters of life, the saints of the Most High God make their requests known unto the Lord, and seek His guidance, intervention, and care. Were most of us to publicly relate before men the ways in which the Lord has answered our prayers, the carnal mind would laugh and hold the Lord in derision. Does that lessen the preciousness of these things to us? In no wise! But neither will we make them out to be exceeding large matters that could not have been aided if the Lord did not intervene. We ought to modestly and discreetly report many things that happen to and for us, for the glory of God, zealously avoiding exaggerations that are not thoroughly honest, to say the least. An example of this point is to be seen in the twenty-eighth chapter of the book of Acts. Here some very remarkable things happened — things which the family of God clearly see as being wrought by God. But a modest relation of them by the writer Luke serves to illustrate the principle which we are here seeking to establish. "When they were escaped . . ." (verse 1) — referring to the complete safety of all occupants of that ship that was broken to pieces in a raging sea. ". . . the barbarous people showed us no little kindness . . ." (verse 2) — a very remarkable thing considering the circumstances. "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand . . . and he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm" (verses 3-5) — a phenomenon of no small proportions. ". . . the father of Publius lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him" (verse 8) — the very evident hand of God! "So when this was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed: who also honoured us with many honours; and when we departed, they laded us with such things as were necessary" (verses 9-10) — the providence of God here manifestly wrought in the interest of His children. Now, in all of these things, the hand of the Lord is plainly to be seen. That is not the point in question — it is the presentation of these things that we seek to lay before you. Behold how modestly Luke presents it; how careful he is to relate precisely what **appeared** to take place, even though his faith, no doubt beheld infinitely more than he inscribed with the pen! Why this sort of presentation? It was to put things in proper perspective — **not to paint the canvas of life with gaudy colors so as to obscure the real nature of God's work.** God does work in the ordinary, as well as in the extraordinary. There are the ordinary ministrations to men, and the extraordinary happenings, such as the shaking off of a poisonous viper. If, however, we become guilty of making the ordinary extraordinary and the extraordinary ordinary, we have wrought a great disservice to the sons of men!

I cannot help but observe that there are religious camps that make a great deal out of physical healings, financial prosperity, etc., while speaking lightly of such great matters as justification, the cleansing of the heart, the transfor-

mation of a character, etc. I do not question for one moment that these things are done out of a zeal to bring glory to God — but we are set to declare that this is not the outcome of such exaggerations and false emphases! It rather presents a false and warped concept of the Kingdom of God. I call upon you, dear reader, to become a student of presentation; one that in the rehearsal of God's works so guards the glory of God so that His Holy and precious Name is not blasphemed by the doubters. Let us not forget that when our Lord Jesus wrought wonders through His Apostles His enemies were sometimes heard to say; ". . . for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and **we cannot deny it**" (Acts 4:16). To my knowledge, we never have a skeptic doubting the working of the Lord in the Gospels. The man with the withered hand, the blind man that came seeing, the man that laid lame by the ancient pool, the lepers that were cleansed — no one ever doubted that a notable work had been done. They might not have agreed with the Worker, or been a worshipper of Him; but they could not deny what He had done. What I am saying is this: that we ought to be careful that what we say the Lord has done is equally undeniable! If it is not, you may glory in the Lord privately, or speak of the matter to some of the household of faith — but do not make out as though a great thing has been done when it is only a common mercy: the Lord does not need your exaggerations!

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## MODERN FADS A SOURCE OF IRRITATION

While the matter of which I here speak is not an exceeding large matter, it is something that is a source of irritation to many of the faithful. Currently women's dress has been socially changed so that pants are the acceptable wear. While there is something in the Scripture concerning women wearing the attire of men, it is not that particular point which we here desire to make (Duet. 22:5). Rather, as a man, I seek to register an objection to this trend on another basis. Recently I sought to procure a new dress for my Beloved wife. After having visited several rather fashionable shops, I was appalled to find that hardly any of them even carried a supply of dresses. Their shops were filled with pant-suits. Many of them were considered formal wear. The blouses and upper outer wear were only of a casual nature, very few of them being becoming to a lady. It does appear to me that here is a very definite ministry that women of the church may have — an insistence that the shops of the day carry attire that is proper for ladies to wear among the faithful; clothing that compliments those who seek to emulate the Lord Jesus in their dress as well as in their profession. It is highly objectionable that the world should set the trend for dress codes for our sisters in Christ; particularly when that trend is questionable, to say the least. Modest and becoming apparel may or may not be fashionable.

## THE SECURITY OF SERVING THE LORD

"Ye have said, It is vain to serve God . . ."

—Malachi 3:14

The world has ever heard this ancient cry of the backslidden Israelites: "It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts"? It was arisen from the sons of men in divers languages and expressions, in attitudes and responses, in precise statements and in ambiguous actions — but it is ever the same: "It is vain to serve God"! O, we that have "tasted of the Lord, that He is gracious" have not found this to be so. We consider this to be an abortion of the truth; a perversion of reality; a false presentation of the case. This statement is based upon present observation; upon immediate analysis; upon temporal settlements of life. **But it is not vain to serve the Lord; our Lord did not say in vain "Seek ye my face" (Isa. 45:19).** It is true that appearance often dictates false conclusions. The saved of the Lord may presently appear to be "the offscouring of all things" (I Cor. 4:13). It may seem that it truly is vain to serve the Lord. Their lives may be characterized by persecution, heartache, outward sorrow and apparent disadvantages. But that is not the whole of the story. **The immeasurable benefits of reconciliation with God, peace within that holds during the most fierce storms of life, and a joy unspeakable and full of glory, cannot always be assessed by outward appearance.** The sense of sins forgiven, of a home in heaven, and of full and free access to the Monarch of creation, are by no means small benefits! But this is still not the end of the matter! The whole story has not been told, and all of the workings have not yet been manifested. There shall come an "end" in which the real benefits of serving the Lord will be openly declared and proclaimed to an assembled universe. The people of God hold to this hope, knowing that it shall surely come to pass. They, by faith, "know Whom they believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which they have committed unto Him against that day" (II Tim. 1:12). Such wonderful promises of reality bear them up as follows:

"They that sow in tears SHALL reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, SHALL DOUBTLESS come rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psa. 126:5-6); "Weeping may endure for the night, but joy cometh in the morning" (Psa. 30:5); "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His Name. And they SHALL be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him" (Mal. 3:16-17); "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor, and immortality, eternal life. . . ." (Rom. 2:7); "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world . . . know ye not that we shall judge angels . . ." (I Cor. 6:2-3); "For now we see through a glass darkly, but then, face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known" (I Cor. 13:12); "And let us

not be weary in well doing, for in DUE season we SHALL REAP, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9); "When Christ Who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory" (Col. 3:4); "Knowing that of the Lord shall ye receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ" (Col. 3:24); "If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him . . ." (II Tim. 2:12); "There remaineth therefore, a rest to the people of God" (Heb. 4:9).

O, dear reader, the Scriptures are filled with promises such as this. The future is bright for the believer. His body shall be changed, his understanding enlarged, his labors rewarded. God has said that He "is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward His Name . . ." (Heb. 6:10). He has retained even your "tears" in His bottle (Psa. 56:), and your ministrations to His people shall be meticulously remembered and rewarded (Matt. 25:31ff). Let that light shine for Him; continue to fight the good fight of faith, stand in the gap! Do not think or act, or permit the delusion to once cross your mind that it is vain to serve the Lord. His reward will be as minute and particular as your service. Not even a cup of cold water offered in the name of a disciple will go without a reward (Mt. 10:42; Mk. 9:41). If you seem to think that you are not appreciated, think of the Apostles — they were cast in question often by the very church to which they ministered! Think, above all, of the Lord Jesus, and of His lonely suffering for you. His disciples fled. One of His own followers betrayed Him, another thrice denied Him, another sat with the High Priest while His very death was being deliberated and decided. His own people dictated His crucifixion, and of all the multitudes that He healed, taught, and fed, not a single one stepped forward to defend His Name. He truly tread the winepress of God's wrath "alone" (Isa. 63:3). No mercy, no sympathy of even the lowest sort, no fellowship — not even with His heavenly Father. And what did He get for all of that? Where was the vindication of His great Name? He was exalted and given a name that is above every name that is named, not only in earth, but also in heaven! All authority in heaven and earth was given unto Him! Angels and authorities and powers were made subject to Him! The heathen were given to Him for an inheritance! He was ushered into the portals of

### THE ANVIL OF GOD'S WORD

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.  
Then looking in, I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

'How many anvils have you had, said I,  
To wear and batter all those hammers so?'"  
"Just one," said he, and then, with twinkling eye,  
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's word  
For ages skeptic blows have bent upon;  
Yet, through the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone.

Author Unknown

glory amidst the angelic shouts of; "Open ye the doors, and the King of glory shall come in"! He was set down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting until His enemies be made His footstool! And He shall yet come in the glory of His Holy Father, and of the angels, as well as the unimaginable glory which is properly termed "His glory"! (Phil. 2:9; Matt. 28:18; I Pet. 3:22; Psa. 2:8; Psa. 24:7ff). **If it was not vain for the Lord Jesus — our Master — to obey and serve the Father in heaven, then it is certain that it is not vain for His "brethren" to serve the Lord, for they are being "conformed to the image" of God's Son" (Rom. 8:29ff). which image could not properly be reflected if one of the least of them served the Lord for vain or for naught!**

Is it any wonder that the Lord challenges His people by saying; "Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Word, forasmuch as ye know that **your labor is not in vain in the Lord**" (I Cor. 15:58). Even though we may be in "perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils" of our own countrymen, in perils of the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren": although we may experience in extreme measures "weariness, and painfulness, and watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings oft, in cold and nakedness" (II Cor. 12:26-27): although you may be "troubled on every side . . . perplexed . . . persecuted . . . and cast down", remember that in God's faithfulness you are (even in this life) "**not distressed . . . not in despair . . . not forsaken . . . not destroyed**" (II Cor. 4:8-9). The great principle of the Kingdom for laborers is this: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, **worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory**; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things are seen are temporal, but **the things which are not seen are eternal**" (II Cor. 4:17-18). Dear reader, those "things" which are "not seen" are real; they are truth. They are **not** a figment of the imagination. Jesus Christ our Lord will bring the fulness of those things with Him when He comes to take us unto Himself; to gather us as grain into His garner. We shall reap everlasting joy, everlasting life, an everlasting reign. No! **It is not vain to serve the Lord!** It is the most profitable, the most secure, the most blessed occupation into which mortals may thrust themselves. In fact, all other occupations are fleeting, vain, pointless, and destined to meet with corruption (Gal. 6:7-8). Teacher, preacher, servant, elder, deacon: stay in the fight! Remove not from the front lines! Your labor is not in vain in the Lord. Common but precious disciple that occupies no glowing position in the kingdom — **you too are precious!** You are more vital to the Kingdom than you would dare to suppose. Your hospitality, cordial attendance at the services, gifts of love, attentive ears, and kindly appearance and demeanor is precious in the sight of God. It is you that have buoyed up many a servant of God whose hands grew weary, whose feet became faint, and whose countenance was fallen because of false feelings of utility. Remain faithful; be not weary in well doing; forsake not the assembling of yourselves together! Our Lord will come soon; yea, it is written; "Soon He that shall come **will come, and will not tarry**"

(Heb. 10:37). If He asks you to remain obscure and apparently unappreciated by the masses — do so, and do it faithfully! In the final and great day of the Lord, you shall be summoned before the Divine tribunal and before an assembled universe you shall "have praise of God"; you shall be lauded before angels; and you shall "shine as the stars" of heaven!

### — 0 — THE DETERIORATION OF THE FAITH

There is a phenomenon in this world of which many professed believers are apparently not aware; that convictions, zeal, and profession all tend to deteriorate with time. Admittedly, we would not have it to be so, and there is, in Christ Jesus, a means of halting this sinful decline. "They that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength" — but they are the **only** ones that will (Isa. 40:31). **A great deal of very practical effort must be expended among the faithful to maintain uprightness.** I am thinking particularly of the matter of parents and children, or of teacher and students. We are living in a time that has a marked tendency toward leniency and looseness. Matters of religious order, perseverance, and faithful meticulousness that characterized the lives of parents are often not insisted upon in the lives of their children. They are permitted to be less zealous, less attentive, less ordered in their manner of life. Admittedly, this may all seem quite harmless — and it may be from the immediate standpoint. There has been, however, a trend in this loose sort of living — and it is a trend of downwardness — a trend of compromise and deterioration. What parents and teachers that permit such compromise do not fully realize is that the generation following will also permit a kindred looseness, and the generation after that, until finally the faith has been overthrown. It is the settled conviction of this writer that more consideration needs to be given to **future** generations. We cannot properly pray "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven" if we are willing to let a general deterioration and erosion of the faith take place not only under our noses, but with our very approval and sanction. Arise, saints of God, let us return to the "old paths", abandoning this sort of neo-religion that has invaded the camp of the saints. Disobedient children, noisy women, slothful elders, mealy-mouthed preachers, untaught students, ill-clad "worshippers" — these trends alarm us very much, because they are downward TRENDS which **will be passed on!**

### — 0 — PUNGENT POINTS

"Large and small" in their normal earthly sense, are not generally found in the Scriptures. The concept, for instance, of a "large church", or a "small church", is not a spiritual concept. The word "large" is employed by the Holy Spirit to describe land (Gen. 34:21), a place where we have been brought into fellowship with the Lord in heart (Psa. 18:19), a work to be accomplished (Neh. 4:19), a city (Neh. 7:14), etc., but **never** of an assembly of the righteous — **never!** The same is true of the word "small", or the word "little". Why is this so? Simply because the Lord's evaluation of an assembly is not upon the basis of their numerical size, or their prominence in the com-

munity, or the measurement of any physical aspect of their existence. Their faith, their works, their love, their perfection of heart, their participation in the ministration to the saints, their faithfulness in the face of stress—these are things that mark the fellowship of the righteous before the Father which is in heaven. These are matters that cannot be exploited, that cannot be utilized to make an earthly name, that cannot become the basis for the exaltation of mortal personages. These are things to think about in our day.

### Self-Ministries

(From page 1)

2. "But ye, beloved, **building up yourselves** on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, **keep yourselves in the love of God**, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" (Jude 20, 21).

Here are some helpful thoughts in the form of an urgent command from God. We build up ourselves and keep ourselves largely by praying in the Holy Ghost and looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. "Little children, **keep yourselves from idols**" (I John 5:21).

This is no small task when we realize that there can be idols of the mind, i.e., wrong concepts of God. Also we read that covetousness is idolatry (Col. 3:5), and who has not felt the tug of this upon his spirit? It takes energy and determination to **keep** God first in our lives.

4. "**Save yourselves** from this untoward generation" (Acts 2:40).

This language is startling only when it is compared with a background in modern perversions of the doctrine of grace. Otherwise it makes very good sense to the honest heart that has been taught of God to keep himself pure.

The ungodly who surround us are continually exerting a pressure for us to conform to their unholy thoughts and actions. If we yield to this, then we shall be damned along with them. It is **our** responsibility to **save ourselves** by refusing to conform to sin.

5. "**Lay up for yourselves** treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6:20).

This might seem selfish (in a bad sense), but actually it is selfish in a **good** sense. God made us in such a way that we are interested in our own welfare. He also put promises in the scriptures which state that He will reward us for our faithfulness. We know that it is His will for us to believe these promises and comfort ourselves

and exhort ourselves with them. This is lawful, holy, necessary, spiritual selfishness.

6. "Meditate upon these things; **give thyself wholly to them**; that thy profiting may appear to all. **Take heed unto thyself**, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both **save thyself and them that hear thee**" (I Tim 4:15, 16).

I will leave it to the reader to peruse the first four chapters of this epistle in order to find out what great doctrines are referred to when the apostle says "Meditate on these things," and, "give thyself wholly to them." They certainly must be important because they are said to have power to save.

My purpose here is to point out a single vital truth; namely, that **until we first** have taken care of **ourselves** spiritually, we are in no position to save others.

7. "Make to **yourselves** friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations" (Luke 16:9).

The basic thought of this verse is that we ought to make our earthly goods work to our spiritual and eternal advantage.

8. "Come ye **yourselves** apart into a desert place, and rest awhile: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat" (Mark 6:31).

Proper rest is needful for health and productivity.

9. "Exercise **thyself** rather unto godliness" (I Tim. 4:7).

Godliness calls for spiritual exercise and exertion also.

10. "Have salt **in yourselves**, and have peace one with another" (Mark 9:50).

Paul says that we should let our speech be "always with grace, seasoned with salt . . ." (Col. 4:6).

11. "Keep **thyself** pure" (I Tim. 5:22).

If we don't do this, it will not get done.

### HIS LAMP AM I . . .

Matthew 5:14-16

His lamp am I —  
And lamps are not for sunny rooms,  
Nor for the light of day;  
But for the dark places of the earth,  
Where shame and wrong and crime  
    have birth,  
Or for the murky twilight gray  
Where wandering sheep have gone astray,  
Or where the lamp of faith grows dim  
And souls are groping after Him.  
And as sometimes a flame we find,  
Clear-shining, through the night  
So dark we cannot see the lamp —  
But only see the light —  
So may I shine, His love the flame,  
That men may glorify his name.

—Annie Johnson Flint

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