



THE GOOD NEWS MESSENGER

Volume 6, Issue 1

A publication of the Church of God in Moore, Oklahoma

January / February 2005

Hope for the Hopeless

By: Misti Chancellor

Have you ever had a time when you were in trouble — cut off from those that would help you — ashamed of your condition, but too proud to admit how bad it was? Have you looked around at the things you are bound by, and wondered, HOW you could ever get free? Do you wonder if anyone notices; if anyone cares that you're hurting, afraid, and sick of things as they are?

“Oft my heart has bled with sorrow, not a friend my grief to share;
But I yielded Christ to follow, and he took my load of care”

“Once I sighed for peace and pleasure, Felt a painful void within;
Life was gloomy, death a terror, till my soul was saved from sin.”

“All this world is dark and dreary, And the soul designed for light,
Must be sad and lost forever, While it gropes in sinful night.”

“Sin made all my life so bitter, Jesus makes it sweet and pure;
Now I'm free from every fetter, Blest with peace forevermore.”

It's a familiar story. Countless others have been in your shoes... hurting, afraid, ashamed, and oh, so alone. It seems that there is no one they can turn to. So, instead, some turn to drugs or alcohol, trying futilely to drown out the pain, as life just gets darker. Some try to ignore it all, hoping that somehow, eventually, things will fix themselves and life will be good again. This, they discover, doesn't work.

So, what's the answer? Is there hope? The poem quoted above seems to say so. Where does this hope lie?

“Have you ever heard of Jesus, How he came from heav'n to earth
With a name of mighty virtue, Tho' by very humble birth?
When the world was held in bondage Under Satan's dismal sway,
Jesus healed their dread diseases—He is just the same today!”

Jesus came and lived here. Jesus said “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised...” He came to heal the hurting—not just in body, but in mind and soul. He came to set the captive free.

You wonder if anyone notices your troubles? Jesus knows how many hairs you have on your head. He told us that he sees the sparrow fall, and that we are more valuable to him than the sparrows.

Jesus sees, he sympathizes, and he has the answer for your every need. He wants to lift you out of the miry pit, to loose the chains that bind you, and to set you in the way that you should go. He calls to you, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Can you refuse his call? He loves you so much.

“Is there here a soul in trouble—
Whosoever needs a friend?
Jesus' love your heart will gladden,
Bless and keep you to the end.”

I Met With God

By: A. K. Chancellor

I met with God, in prayer in early morning,
I met with him along the path of life,
I've seen the Lord in trials and temptations,
I've felt him near to calm the sea of strife;
I've seen his grace when troubles would o'erwhelm me,
I've felt his pow'r my burdens to remove,
I met the Lord and glory fell so freely,
I met with God who filled me with his love.

I met with God, and oh the wondrous meeting,
I met the Lord and gladness filled my soul,
I felt his blood of cleansing come upon me,
I knew by faith that God had made me whole;
I met the Lord when sickness racked my body,
I've seen his touch afflictions take away,
I met him when my heart was full of sadness,
And meeting God has turned my night to day.

I met with God, and saw his face of beauty,
To see his smile bro't comfort to my heart,
I've seen the Lord in many things around me,
I've seen his voice cause sorrow to depart;
I met with God, I cannot help but praise him,
I've seen his hand lift' up against the wrong,
I felt a strength that only he could give me,
And meeting God has filled my heart with song.

And so I ask, my friend do you know Jesus?
He'll be to you whatever you may need,
And when you meet him joy will fill your being,
To be in Christ is all in all indeed.

Inside this issue:

Hope for the Hopeless	1
I Met With God	1
Just for Today	2
A Pharisee, A Sinful Woman, and the Savior	3
His Hand Reached Further Down	3
Opening the Windows of Heaven	4

Just for Today

Excerpt from "The Secret of a Singing Heart—By: C. W. Naylor

There are three days—yesterday, today, and tomorrow. The population of the world is divided between these three days. Some are living in the present, some in the past, and some in the future. Where we are living with respect to time has a great influence upon our lives. Perhaps we do not know just where we are living. It might pay us to make a careful examination of our lives and see whether the past, the present, or the future is bulking most largely in our life.

Those who are living in yesterday are living on memories. Yesterday is gone forever. We can never recall it. I once knew a home where the wife had died. I visited it a year or so after her death. It was a gloomy place. The husband was a gloomy man. He had tried to leave everything in the home as nearly as possible as his wife had left it. The musical instrument had been untouched. This man was living in the past. All the brightness, joy, love, and happiness came from the past. The present meant nothing to him. The future held no hope. On the journey of life he was walking backward. His gaze was ever behind him.

There are many like this man. Their circumstances may be different, but they are facing the past. Their joys are the memory of past joys. The sorrow of past troubles, mistreatments, losses, failures, and sins, shroud their lives in gloom. Why should we keep these things ever present with us? Bring not the cares of the past, its regrets, sorrow, or anything from it that can cast a gloom upon our today, into the lives we are now living. Yesterday is only a memory. Let us carefully cover its scars. Let us not exhibit them to the world. Let us not be ever looking upon them and thinking over them. Paul's example is a good one to follow. "Forgetting that which is behind I press forward." We should let yesterday be yesterday. Someone has said, "The tears of yesterday are like passing showers." After the shower should come sunshine. After yesterday's troubles should come forgetting. Yesterday's joys should be succeeded by the joys of today. Let us not live in yesterday. Today is too full of opportunity. It is heavily laden with good things. Let us dry the tears of yesterday. Let us turn to today.

There are other people who live in tomorrow. Their joys are the joys of anticipation, not of realization. True, anticipation has its real joys, but we should not picture a tomorrow so bright that it obscures today. We should not exalt tomorrow so much that today loses its meaning. The hopes of tomorrow, the bright pictures we paint, are not reality. We know not whether they ever shall be. Sometimes people cannot enjoy the things of today because of their forebodings for tomorrow. Instead of filling the future with bright anticipations, they fill it with a thousand ghostly fears. They cross their bridges before they get to them and because they are ever looking at the bridges their imagination pictures before them, they cannot see the beauties beside the roadway they are traveling.

For them the flowers beside them bloom in vain. The songs of the birds are not heard. The beautiful prospects on each side of their way are lost. The bridge ahead is what they see. Their attention is so focused on it that they have no eyes or ears for today. A writer said, "I am the champion bridge crosser. I not only cross them but I help build them." He has many relatives today scattered all over the world. They are in the same business. The fears of tomorrow are a blight on many lives.

Jesus, who understood life better than anyone else, said, "Take therefore no thought for tomorrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." His meaning is—do not live in tomorrow, do not borrow trouble. Live tomorrow when you get to it. Live in today. We know not what tomorrow shall bring forth. When it comes it will take thought for itself. There will be time enough to meet its problems, to overcome its difficulties, to fight its battles, and to rejoice in its victories, when we have reached it. Let us not neglect today for tomorrow.

Whittier says,

"No longer forward or behind I look in hope or fear,

But grateful take the good I find—The best of now and here."

Our lives are wholly made of todays. Let us live in the time that is ours; make the best of it while we may. Let us enjoy its joys and do its work. Let us live to the full today, giving to the past and to the future only what is justly theirs and only what will profit us in the giving.

It is important that we properly meet the things that come. Someone has said, "Tomorrow we shall smile over today's worries; so why not begin today?" This is an excellent philosophy and well worth consideration. If adopted it will be a profitable rule of life for us.

If we were given now the strength and grace we shall need tomorrow we could not use it. It would profit us nothing. If we are strong enough for today tomorrow need give us no concern. We shall be strong enough for it when it comes. Sufficient for today is God's way of giving. Suppose you try using today the strength and grace you had yesterday. Does it avail you anything? Then do not look for tomorrow's grace today, for if you had it today you could not use it either tomorrow or today.

We should not attempt to solve all the future's problems now nor to see our way entirely clear before us. Face the things that are right at hand. Sometimes the difficulties of today have a way of projecting themselves into the future so that when we look forward to it we feel we never can bear it.

Perhaps a little more of my own experience may be helpful to others. When I was forced to take my bed my sufferings were very great. These continued month after month. After several months I was one day lying thinking. The future began to loom up before me so dark, so discouraging, so hopeless, that I felt I never could face it. I asked myself, "How can I endure it?" I was appalled by the prospect. While I was in this melancholy state it seemed the Spirit of God drew near and whispered to me, "You do not have to live tomorrow now. You do not need to bear tomorrow's pain or suffering now. God knows what you can bear. He will not let more come upon you than you can bear. But live today, not the days that are before you."

I said within myself, "Yes, God knows what I can bear. He will not let that come which is too great for me. I will live today. I can bear this today. I will not think of tomorrow." And so again and again I said to myself, "I can bear it today." This attitude was a great help to me, and the sense of God watching over my life became much more real.

Yes, dear soul, you can bear it today. Whatever your trouble, whatever your sorrow, whatever your perplexity, you will find a way of getting through today. When tomorrow comes there will

(Continued on page 3)

A Pharisee, A Sinful Woman, and the Savior

Taken from Egermeier's Bible Story Book—Story 24—Luke 7:36-50

In one of the cities of Galilee where Jesus was teaching the people a Pharisee named Simon came to hear him. Like many of the other Pharisees, Simon tried to find fault with Jesus. Because he could neither see nor hear anything to criticize in Jesus, he decided to ask this teacher to take dinner at his house. There he would watch him closely, and possibly find something that would be wrong.

So Simon the Pharisee asked Jesus to come to his house one day, and Jesus went with him. Other people went, too, some who were invited and some who were not. And they all came into the dining-hall, where the food was placed on the table. Around this table the guests were given room, while the uninvited persons stood back, looking on.

Jesus and the other guests did not sit on chairs about the table, but they lay on couches with their heads near the table and their feet away from it. While they were eating, another uninvited person came into the dining-hall. This person was a woman. Looking about, she espied Jesus, and at once she hurried to kneel at his feet. Then she wept tears of sorrow for her many sins, and the tears fell upon Jesus' feet. She dried his feet with her hair, and kissed them. Afterwards she broke a beautiful box of costly perfume and anointed his feet by pouring the perfume upon them.

Simon, the Pharisee, knew this woman; for she was a great sinner. He had heard many things about her that were not good. He was surprised when he saw that Jesus allowed her to weep at his feet and to anoint them with sweet perfume. He said in his heart, "If Jesus were a prophet he would not allow this woman to come near him. He would know that she is a wretched sinner, unfit to be in his presence."

Jesus knew all about this sinful woman, and he also knew about Simon's thoughts. He looked at the proud Pharisee and said, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

Simon answered very politely, "Master, what is it?" Then Jesus told him this story:

"There was a certain rich man who had loaned money to two poor men. The first man he loaned a great sum of money, and the second man he loaned only a small amount. When the time came to repay the loan, neither of the two men could pay back the money they had borrowed. In their distress they came to the rich man, and he freely forgave them both. Which of these two men loved the rich man the more?"

"I suppose," answered Simon, "that the man whom he forgave the bigger debt loved him the more."

"You have answered rightly," said Jesus. Then he turned to the sinful woman still weeping at his feet, and said, "Simon, when I came into your home, you did not treat me like an honored guest. You did not give me water to wash the dust from my feet; but this woman has washed my feet with her tears and has dried them with the hair of her head. You did not give me a kiss of welcome; but this woman has kissed my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, as you anoint the heads of your friends who come as guests into your home; but this woman has poured costly ointment upon my feet. Wherefore I tell you that her sins, which were many, are forgiven; for she has loved much. But those love little who have little forgiven them."

Jesus then told the woman that her sins were forgiven; that her faith had brought forgiveness, and she should go home in peace.

This woman was sorry because she had done wrong, and Jesus forgave the wrong which she had done. But Simon, the proud Pharisee, believed that he was too good to need forgiveness for sin and Jesus did not forgive him. Only those who are sorry for their sins can know the forgiveness of Jesus, the Savior.

His Hand Reached Further Down

Selected

When I think of where I came from, And how Jesus bro't me out
From a life of shame and sorrow Lost in sin, without a doubt,
With all my heart I want to praise him For the love he gave to me
When the precious hand of Jesus Reached way down and lifted me.

Like a man locked up in prison, With no one to go my bail
Every time I sought for freedom, All endeavors only failed
There I was in sin's dark dungeon, Bound in chains of misery,
Until the Lord paid me a visit, Unlocked my cell and set me free.

I had nothing to live for, I was lost, so all alone.
All my friends had long forsaken,
It seemed my heart in trouble roamed
There I was, a poor lost sinner, wretched, blind, I could not see,
Then, from the pit of sin and anguish,
He broke my bonds and set me free.

From the depth of the pit, I tried so hard, but I couldn't touch him.
There, in my despair, I cried so loud,
And yet it seemed he couldn't hear me.
Lost, and undone, full of sin and so corrupt
His hand reached further down than I could reach up.

Just for Today

(continued from pg 2)

be a way for tomorrow. Not long ago I was reading a hymn, "Lead Kindly Light." I was very deeply impressed by some things contained in it. The author says, "I do not ask to see the distant scenes: One step enough for me." He had come to live in today. But was this a natural characteristic? By no means. He continues,

"I was not ever thus—I loved to choose and see my path."

How human he was. How like the rest of us! But he learned sufficiently the wisdom of living in today, until he could say, "One step enough for me." In confidence he closes:

*"So long thy power hath blessed me, Sure it will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent till The night is gone."*

Today has enough for us to bear, enough for us to conquer, enough work for us to do. But we shall be sufficient for it. Many of our troubles of today will pass with today. We need not carry them into the future. We can meet our troubles of today as Abraham Lincoln met his, "Lincoln even when assailed by such anxieties and griefs as you never will know used to say, 'And this too will pass.'"

Yes, today will pass and tomorrow will come and when tomorrow comes we shall have tomorrow's strengths for its needs. Let us live in today, in the strength that God gives, and not permit the shadows of yesterday nor forebodings for tomorrow to hide the sunshine and beauty and gladness that come from trust and obedience in today.

Opening the Windows of Heaven

Excerpt from "The Secret of Prayer"—By: E. E. Byrum

When the Jews had wandered away from the Lord and failed to do that which was required of them, in bringing their tithes and offerings for the service of the Lord, they were admonished through the prophet Malachi, who said to them, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Malachi 3:10.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Malachi 4:2.

When Jesus Christ came preaching the gospel, those who believed were made free from the bondage of sin and were delivered from the power of the devil. The promise was given of the Holy Spirit, the abiding comforter; and upon the day of Pentecost, as the disciples were earnestly praying and waiting and believing, "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. . . . And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:2-4. Surely the windows of heaven were open to them, and the blessings of God showered down upon their souls, and it is said of them that "they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, praising God, and having favor with all the people."

Thousands of people believed, and became followers of Jesus, and consecrated their worldly possessions to the service of the Lord. A mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit continued to rest upon these liberal hearted people, nor did the blessings of salvation and the manifestation of his joy and power stop with the believers at Pentecost. Throughout the New Testament, are many promises of joy and happiness to those who obey the Word of the Lord. The apostle, in writing to the Roman brethren, said, "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Romans 15:13.

It is evident that many Christians are not enjoying their full privileges in the gospel. One of the principal hindrances is not only a lack of energy and enthusiasm, but a lack of belief for the needed help and manifestation of the power of God. It was when the apostles were commanded not to speak any more in the name of Jesus that they were made to flee to the Lord in prayer, and there, in great earnestness, the petitions ascended to the throne as the petition of one man. They could have quietly complied with the request of their enemies, and have placed their light under a bushel, as it were, in order to avoid further opposition and persecutions, but on the other hand, they prayed for boldness, that they might speak the Word of the Lord, and that the Lord might enable them to work signs and wonders. This was the very thing that caused them to

get into trouble—the manifestation of the power of God in and through them. When they had thus prayed, it is said that the place was shaken where they were assembled together, and they spake the Word of God with boldness. It was then that the mighty manifestation of the power of God followed.

Their prayer was a prayer of faith: much was at stake. They were determined to be obedient unto the Lord regardless of opposition; regardless of persecutions, and when they prayed for boldness, they expected to act accordingly. They did not mean to wait until some wonderful thing should take place, in order that they might have some occasion to go forward and do their duty. Considering matters from a reasonable standpoint, and realizing that God now is as he was in those days, as we read in Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever," and also realizing that men are of like passions now as they were in those days, it is only reasonable to believe that the same earnestness, the same consecration and exercising of faith will now bring about similar results. It may not be exactly the same manifestation, but the power of God will be manifest in a way that is satisfactory to those who meet the full conditions of the Word of God and press the battle on to victory.

Paul was not among the number that prayed for boldness, but instead soon after that time we read that he was very bold in persecuting the children of God, even casting them in prison and consenting to their death; but when he turned from his sins and wickedness, God manifested his power with him in various ways, and not only with him but with those under his teaching, and under the preaching of the gospel by other ministers at that time.

It is when the whole word of God is preached, or believed and practiced, that the windows of heaven are opened unto the people of God. There are many who occasionally receive blessings, and whose faith is honored by God, but they are living so far below the standard of truth that their showers of blessings are not very frequent.

Would you have the windows of heaven opened to your soul, where the blessings can be showered down upon you? Then let the consecration not only be complete, but see to it that you are energetic and active in doing what God has for you to do in his service. The man or woman who has nothing to give for the furtherance of the gospel, in accordance with the means that God has placed in their hands, or enabled them to possess, has failed to realize the riches of the blessings that come from that source of consecration. Ofttimes people plead poverty, forgetting the widow's mite, and the commendations of Jesus for her liberality. There are times when people are really unable to give of their temporal means, because they have nothing to give, but there are deeds of charity that can be performed, there are words of kindness that can be spoken, there are burdened hearts that need to be cheered, the sorrowful to be consoled, and words of comfort and consolation to those who are tried and discouraged. There are times, when even a smile from one who is filled with the grace of God, will be a source of encouragement to those in need of help. There are many ways by which a person may be useful, even though penniless, yet abounding in the grace of God.

James says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." There should be a determination to do the will of God at the cost of all things. Such a fixed decision will enable one to go through the thickest of the fight and surmount the greatest difficulties in life.

The glory of the Lord will rest upon those who are faithful and push the battle through to victory. They may oftentimes pass through deep waters of trial, have very heavy burdens of life to bear, and at times it may seem that the Lord has hidden his face from them, but their trueness in such times will enable them to realize the truthfulness of the promises of the Lord, and will open the windows of heaven to shower blessings upon their souls.

The Church of God Pastor: David Chancellor
701 S. Eastern Ave. Email: dchancellor@juno.com
PO Box 6187 Website: <http://www.moorecog.org>
Moore, OK 73153 Phone: (405) 794-2765

Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

Service Times:

Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Young People's Service (Sunday)	4:45 p.m.
Children's Service (Sunday)	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Evening Service	6:00 p.m.

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.