

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul...

THE TESTIMONY

...of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." Psalm 19:7

— VERSE OF THE MONTH —

"LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." Psalm 15:1-2

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KEEP ME CLOSE TO THEE

Lord, help me walk so close to thee
That those who know me best can see,
I live as godly as I pray,
And Christ is real from day to day.

I see some once a day, a year,
To those I blameless may appear.
'Tis easy to be kind and sweet
To people whom we seldom meet.

But, in my home are those who see
Too many times the worst of me.
My hymns of praise were best unsung,
If He does not control my tongue.

When I am vexed and sorely tried
And my impatience cannot hide,
May no one stumble over me
Because Thy love they fail to see.

But, give me, Lord, thru calm and strife
A gracious and unselfish life;
And help me with those who know me best
For Jesus' sake to stand the test.

— Anonymous

Selected from "A Woman for God's Glory"
by Jessica Bayer

THE TESTIMONY

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“Continue in prayer,
and watch in the same
with thanksgiving...”

Col. 4:2



EDITORIAL

**SPENDING TIME WITH
GOD IN PRAYER**

Everyone has his or her own particular exercise in prayer, often very characteristic of that individual. I believe it is never wise to fault a person in his or her prayer. After all, that person is talking to God, not to me.

We were once in worship in a small country church on the back side of a mountain in West Virginia. It came the time of prayer and almost everyone present knelt or lay face-down, for nearly thirty minutes, upon the floor at the altar. All prayed aloud, all at one time, swelling up in crescendo, then falling to a murmur. Then someone said "Amen" and everyone arose and returned to the pews. I could not distinguish one prayer from another. I could understand hardly a word that was said. But they weren't praying to me. They were praying to God. And God understood.

In Luke 6:12 Jesus spent all night in prayer. In John 6:15 Jesus prayed entirely alone. In Luke 9:29–31 Jesus prayed so intensely that He became infused with Shekinah. His visage was changed, "And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening." The patriarchs Moses and Elijah appeared and comforted Him speaking "of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." In the Garden before His crucifixion Jesus "...fell on his face and prayed..." so intensely that the His sweat became as

blood running down upon the ground. Finally, hanging on the cross He prayed aloud, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

Some of Jesus' prayers were long—all night. Some were very short—a few words. Some were prayed all alone. One while hanging on a cross between heaven and earth, for every passerby to see and hear. We cannot comprehend the tremendous intensity, the passion, the depth of the prayers of our Lord.

So, what should it look like to spend a life with God in prayer?

Too often we spend our time telling God what we need, what we want, what we want Him to do for us. "Spending time with God in prayer" doesn't mean we have to do all the talking. Maybe God has something to say. If we talk all the time, maybe we won't be able to hear what God has to tell us. Good listeners encourage others to speak. Perhaps we should "encourage" God to speak to us. Try asking Him questions. "Lord, what would You have me to do?" And then, in silence, listen to what He has to say.

Prayers should not be "a pretense," "for show," "to be heard of men." But God will accept the prayer of every humble, sincere person—even if simply expressed as a groan. Prayer should be our way of life. And all-night prayer doesn't mean we need to talk all night.

Marcus Miller

GENERAL

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Whether we realize it or not we are all engaged in a battle. Paul sums up this battle in which we find ourselves in Galatians 5:17: “For the flesh lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other...” Paul tells us in Galatians 5:16, that we should “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

So, we see very plainly that the battle we are in is a spiritual warfare.

II Corinthians 10:3–5 says “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ...”

Ephesians 6:12 says, “For we wrestle [war], not against flesh and blood [one another], but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” We need to realize that our enemy is not one another, Our real enemy is Satan who is behind all the confusion we see around us today. Satan’s goal has always been, and still is, to disrupt and destroy people’s lives. This is certainly happening all over the world in our

day. Paul warns in II Timothy chapter 3 that in the last days perilous times shall come. All the signs point to the fact that we are now living in those times.

We do not need to be fearful.

Satan is powerful, but his power in the world is limited. The Word tells us that “...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” Praise the Lord for this promise.

In Ephesians 6:10–11, Paul encourages the Ephesian believers, and us also, to “...be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” That is the only way in which we can be victorious in this warfare we find ourselves in.

We must put on the whole armor of God and stand firm, having our loins girt about with Truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness.

Our feet shod with the Gospel of Peace, and above all taking the Shield of Faith with which we will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked (Satan).

And take the helmet of salvation, which protects and guards our minds and thoughts.

Take up the Sword of the SPIRIT, which is the WORD of GOD.

This is the only offensive weapon in our armor, all the others are for our defense.

Hebrews 4:12; says “For the word of God is quick, and power-

ful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

All of the various parts of the armor are bound together and supported by prayer. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Eph. 6:18).

Romans 13:11–12; tells us; "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light,"

Paul explains in verse 14, that by putting on the armor of Light we are putting on the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

We can be victorious in our spiritual battle.

Along with Paul, we can say, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Therefore, my beloved brethren [all believers], be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Humbly submitted with the help of the Lord,

Ronald and Caroline Holsinger

STEPS FOR PASSING ON THE FAITH

(Editor's note: This article is a small portion of a larger article entitled "A Legacy of Victory" by Luther Patches, in the Bible Helps booklet No. 454.)

There is an important difference between the way God dealt with Israel in the Old Testament and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The followers of Jesus today cannot justify taking up the sword and occupying a physical territory like those who were living under the Old Covenant given to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. When Jesus ministered here on earth, He announced a New Covenant. Jesus revealed a higher level of living, showed His redeeming love, and identified Himself as the Messiah. Jesus introduced a heavenly kingdom.

A. Nonconformity to the world is taught consistently in both the Old Testament and in the New Testament. However, in the New Testament retribution is not given to believers to carry out (see Matthew 5:38–42; Romans 12:17–19). Christ taught love and nonresistance, and told us not to judge the world. "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (I Thess. 5:15). Christian believers are asked to make judgments within the church body to preserve a consistent scriptural witness, but this discipline is not intended for general society.

Jesus has been given power over Satan. Through the resurrection we are living in a position of victory that has already been won for us by Jesus! We are to resist Satan with the spiritual weapons through the Holy Spirit. Satan may cause our enemies to use physical harm against us, and even try to defeat the divine nature working within us, but we should not surrender that ground. We are to resist the principles of force, greed and sinful pleasures that are not of the Father. These are of the world, the sphere that Satan has organized.

The rising prevalence of nationalism, with its quest for political power, is an idol that is causing some to turn away from the power of the Gospel. In some areas where people are living in peace and prosperity, they may be either tempted to apathy (inaction) or, when insecure, become lured by promises of men. In other places where believers have few rights and little power, rebellion and bitterness may stir in their souls. The Gospel of Jesus Christ requires those in both situations to hold the faith securely, and in all cases, to be good citizens and godly neighbors to all people.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ transcends all cultures and all governments of the world. A life with possessions should certainly not be a life of ease. In affluent cultures, believers can be tempted to forget Jesus' words that we "are not of this world" and strive with political efforts, in hope of chang-

ing men and protecting their way of life. This is unscriptural. Only changed hearts can produce lasting changes of behavior. We must remember that it is God who controls all the kings of the earth, setting up and tearing down whomever He will (see Daniel 4:17).

Believers in every nation are to live in such a way that we show the existence of another world. The Anabaptist believers knew there would always be conflict between the church and the world. They did not attempt to reconstruct society, but they did believe the principles given in the *Sermon on the Mount* were not given as a heavenly vision, but were meant to be kept and practiced. And they resolved to do that wherever they were, as a light upon a hill.

Will we show our families and neighbors (as our forefathers did) that we hold physical things loosely enough to have them uprooted, as many believers even today are having to do in some parts of the world?

Or are we showing we have more faith in (or fear of) national leaders than toward God? Jesus said of His followers, "the world hath hated them [believers], because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:14).

B. A life of holiness is another important evidence of the legacy we possess. Joshua continued his parting instructions by a call to a life of holiness, so that the Israelites would be successful in passing on their inheritance.

A strong devotional life is needed to grow in holiness. It is essential to grow in our understanding and love for God. As we see His character we will understand what pleases Him most, as well as what grieves our Savior. "...For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (II Cor. 6:16). The pleasures and pursuits of sin defile His temple within us.

Joshua told the people to turn away from all heathen practices and false gods. Giants and walled cities needed to be conquered, but the heathen remaining had the potential of becoming snares to the Israelites. The same is true for believers today. We face secular giants that lift themselves up against the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but we also face lesser choices that can hinder the passing of our faith. *Every generation needs to identify and withdraw from practices that will lead us away from the truths of the Bible.* If this is not done, step by step these practices will draw us away from God. Let us be continually attentive to leaving a heritage of faithfulness for those who are coming after us.

What does this holiness include? It is a great privilege to be called God's people, but it places great responsibility on us to show what this means! For the Jews, the consequence was that they needed to be different from all other nations. The Sabbath was holy, and it was

different from other days. The Bible is holy, and it is different from all other books. The temple was holy, and it was different from other buildings. God is holy, supremely holy, and He is supremely different.

The followers of Jesus comprise a spiritual "holy nation." We who are Christian believers are called to be holy! (See I John 2:15–17.)

Holiness will include every area of the believer's life: speech, thought life, leisure time activities, choice of occupation, worship practices, recreation, and music. Do we avail ourselves of the ability to sing hymns on Sundays as a way to pass on our legacy? A good hymn will lead our minds to God if it teaches scriptural principles.

We need to be aware of spiritual issues in any given area. Most of us wouldn't consider moving into "Canaanite territory." But are we bringing Canaan right into our homes through the fashion, music, use of media, clothing, or other choices we make? Do we have the courage to ask ourselves whether we can truthfully say, "*Hallowed be thy name,*" in all of our decisions?

C. Avoiding the danger of an unequal yoke with unbelievers was another warning Joshua gave (see Joshua 23:12–13). It would be a cause of spiritual defeat: "*they will turn away your heart after their gods*" (I Kings 11:2). The context for this passage was when King Solomon loved many strange women. The Lord had warned the Children of Israel centuries earlier that they

should not intermarry with the people of the land. As we work with or become acquainted with our neighbors, we must be aware that we may absorb their beliefs. Too much interaction with unbelievers may lead us to question, “Did God say?” We cannot flirt with the world and the values it holds. If we find ourselves attracted to their ways of slander, disrespect for authority, social drinking, or types of recreation that are unprofitable, we need to pray for the renewing of our mind and guidance in that relationship. James asks, *“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world [unscriptural values and practices] is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”* (Jas. 4:4).

This was the case with Samson, as he was deceived by Delilah and came to a sad demise. Likewise, Solomon followed the flesh rather than the Spirit of God, and was judged by God. His sin contributed to his son, Rehoboam, losing the kingdom (see I Kings 11:1–12). What a legacy lost!

God has instituted several ways of passing on our spiritual legacy. Among them are the Christian home, a church that is in spiritual unity, and ministering to the spiritual and physical needs of people. The beliefs of one who is in communion with God cannot be hidden from others who are seeking salvation. If you have not already done so, seek forgiveness, and

pray to receive the divine nature of Jesus in exchange for your ruined soul. Hold it securely in your heart. Seek to worship, and learn from those committed to God’s Word. Pass it on! May the assertion of Joshua be ours: ***“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD!”***

Selected by,

The Editor

TO CARE FOR THE SPIRITUAL BEING IS TO CARE FOR THE HUMAN BEING

Ken Nair

“I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

These words should cause our eyes to widen with anticipation. Jesus is offering us a lifestyle and source of power that is beyond the normal human mind’s ability to even comprehend. And, it can only be obtained as we recognize that we are totally inadequate and undeserving of it. This lifestyle and power cannot be obtained with human cleverness nor might.

In his writings, the disciple John verifies the above message. The most powerful and clever religious leaders just witnessed something that illustrated the incredible power of Jesus. He had just restored the eyesight of a man blind from birth. You would think

that astounding miracle in itself would speak volumes to them, but that was not the case. Instead, they confronted Him.

You see, they were familiar with only one form of power, theirs. They were not familiar with another greater form of power, a mature, spiritual capacity that even allowed for comprehending and curing physical situations.

John's writings validate for us that no one automatically receives the spiritual capacity to comprehend things of a spiritual or physical nature. Jesus' miracle could not register in the minds of those religious leaders because, although it was a physical situation, it was under His spiritual power. They encountered a spiritual power that was foreign to them.

It's easier for people to relinquish their need to be responsible than to diligently, consistently search for godliness and find the spiritual power offered. Even today, too many religious leaders are such only because men confer that title upon them. Too many people, not experiencing the power that Jesus is offering here, allow others instead of Christ to have spiritual reign over them. Let's examine the text in John 10:10 to see if we can uncover this great power Jesus is making available to us.

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

COME—(Greek: *erchomai*, *er'*-

khom-ahēe) to come or go, a decision must be made before action takes place.

MIGHT—(Greek: *dunamai*, *doo'-nam-ghee*) to be able or possible, can do, have power to accomplish.

LIFE—(Greek: *zoe*, *dzo-qy'*) to live, life (the time involved) alive, lively, quick, (psuche) breath (that is in) your heart/spirit (the spiritual being).

MORE—(Greek: *epischuo*, *ep-iskhoo'-o*) from, *epi*: to superimpose, and *ischuo*, (*is-khoo'-o*): to have, through the exercise of force.

So, as a paraphrase, John 10:10 could read this way: Jesus said, "I have made a decision to come to you because I want you to be able to have power in your life, but here's what I want you to understand. This is a power to accomplish much more within your spiritual being. It will be superimposed through the exercise of force against your flesh/sin nature. I intend to introduce your human spirit to a life in the spiritual realm (where God dwells), and as a result you will experience a superabundance (in quantity) and a superiority (in quality) as you live life."

This superabundant and superior spiritual lifestyle and source of power is only possible, though, when we let Him become our spirit's Shepherd! Our spirit's Keeper! Our spirit's Master!

This kind of spiritual power comes only after we receive Christ as our Savior. When we accept

Christ as Savior, God's Holy Spirit indwells our human spirits. The Holy Spirit is where we get the power and motivation to work at letting Christ become the Lord of our lives.

To have Christ reign as Savior and Lord means that we must work at discovering our flesh/sin nature and daily "put it to death."

A good place to discover our flesh/sin nature is in God's Word, the Bible. Reading it cover to cover helps us see the contrasts between ourselves and Christ. We must become conscious of how much our flesh/sin natures control our words, actions and thoughts, and then stop our flesh/sin natures from making decisions that are contrary to Christlikeness.

Instead, when we let the Spirit of God prompt our human spirits with godly, biblically validated decisions, then we can illustrate Christ in our everyday lives. Now we're talking SPIRITUAL POWER!

God bless us as we yield more and more of our "power" for His power.

A prayer: "Dear Father, help me discover when I am relying on my own power and strength. Help me challenge myself to turn loose and surrender to You and Your strength and power, I am asking this in the name of Jesus. Amen."

Selected from

"Discovering Concepts That Build Christ-Likeness" by

Lane and Lucy Deaton

TWO VERY DIFFERENT CHRISTIANS

Yesterday I was sent a link to the same video from two very different Christians. One was trying to convince me of an elaborate conspiracy. The other person was sincerely asking for my opinion and candidly confessed that they were just "an uneducated observer to all this." One is a leader of many, one a leader of a few. One was older, the other was younger than I. One humbly confessed that as they look back in life they are not sure that when they have given advice it was actually wisdom. The other zealously encourages me to not just listen to others more educated than I, but to "do my own research."

Ironically, the one who was too humble to give his opinion is one whose opinions I have always esteemed very highly.

Which makes me wonder, is it just coincidental timing, or is the force driving the polarization of political America the same spirit motivating the ubiquity of church splits? Is the root cause of all this actually a lack of humility? Who do we really resemble more, the repentant publican or the confident pharisee? Are we a people who are slow to speak and quick to listen? Are we genuinely willing to place ourselves under an imperfect authority? Do we honestly esteem others better than ourselves? Would we actually sacrifice a liberty so as not to offend a brother?

How much good am I sacrificing

to keep my pride and opinions intact? Let us remember that one of the thieves died on the cross with his pride intact, but one gained all of eternity.

What will be the price to not repent?

Caleb Wagoner

TEN SIGNS OF A HEALTHY CHURCH

To the believer in Christ, the church experience is a vital part of the Christian life. A life hid in Christ will be inspired by the Word of God in the Holy Spirit and motivated to fellowship in a healthy church setting. What is a healthy church setting?

The word healthy means having good health which means “wellbeing.” How then do we examine whether a church is healthy? What do we use to measure the health of a church? Is it the size of the church? Is it a busy church with lots of activities? Is it a fresh new church with vibrant zeal? Can long established churches still be healthy and vibrant? How important is the idea of a healthy church? Is it even necessary to think about if my church setting is healthy? What would I do if I was to determine by some genuine authentic standard (biblical study and application) that perhaps my church setting

isn’t as healthy I as I assumed it was? One thing is for certain, there are no perfect churches. Churches are made up of people under construction and we are not perfect yet.

When I feel healthy, going to the doctor for just an examination isn’t something I get excited about. What if I find out something is amiss? What would I do then? Would it change my preferred lifestyle? Would I be willing to make the adjustments needed? Sometimes, ignorance does seem blissful. If I feel okay, then I must be fine? There is a possibility that I can feel fine, but not be in the best of health.

When we read about the seven churches in the forepart of the book of Revelation, we find out Jesus knows our church’s health regardless of whether we are interested in the reality of our church’s health or not! Peter, John, and Paul and other apostles, when they wrote to the early churches, seemed to know the health of those churches. Paul made it a point to revisit the churches to “see how they do.” In all cases, the churches were examined to some extent and lovingly admonished to sincerity and faithfulness.

So, what would we use as a basis of for the consideration of church health? There are several places in Scripture where we could consider our church health. The passage I’m thinking of is found in Acts chapter 2.

The Fellowship of the Believers

Acts 2:42 says, “And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”

Acts 2:43—And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.

Acts 2:44—And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Acts 2:45—“And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.

Acts 2:46—“And 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,

Acts 2:47—Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

This passage is the earliest description of the New Testament church after the coming of the Holy Spirit. Now, for the sake of clarity, the church is the body of Christ, the “called out ones” (from the world and the looming judgment of God) who have believed on Jesus, and in the Gospel message, and have moved in faith and obedience to accept Him as Lord. The “operation of God” places us as believers into the Body of Christ as His children. “To them [as many as believed] gave he [God] power to become the sons of

God” (John 1:12). “Beloved, now are we [who have believed] the sons of God” (I John 3:2). As redeemed and reconciled children, we are the family of God. We are restored to fellowship with God. And we are in this fellowship with God with each other (those of us who have believed).

Let’s identify at least ten signs of this authentic church—and they” (the Christian believers)

1. Continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching
2. Fellowship
3. Communion
4. Prayers
5. Godly fear
6. Common care
7. One accord
8. Hospitality
9. Praising God
10. People being saved

Continuing steadfastly in the apostles’ teaching

The teaching and preaching in the church is very important. What we believe is vital. Speaking must be solid truth and grounded in Scripture. Much care should be taken in the study of the Word and the application of its resulting message. Whether it is the public preaching/teaching in the church, or the teaching of the church as in how we profess the Truth in our daily lives, all must be carefully studied and lived. The Holy Spirit is an essential and vital part of this, as well as our sub-

mission to choosing to yield to the Holy Spirit's influence.

"Continuing steadfastly" takes watchfulness and care, "renewing the battle every day."

A healthy church will faithfully and carefully teach and live out The Word of God.

Fellowship

The word for this in the original text is "*koinonia*," taken from "*koinos*" meaning "common." Deriving concepts then are communion, communication, community, sharing in common, etc. Further, "*koinonos*" means "a partaker" or "partner" of the common, or in fellowship with what is common.

We are to "*koinoneo*" (have fellowship) with God and His people, the church, and not with the world and its ungodly influence. We who are of God's kingdom and not of this world, are to be good neighbors, ambassadors for Christ, and active in compassion to others, but always in the context of faithfulness and obedience to God. We are to be ready to share the Hope we believe in with others.

A healthy church (individually and collectively) will fellowship and walk with God.

Communion

The "in breaking of bread" in verse forty-two means to me a deeper fellowship, or communion, with Jesus The Christ in His suffering and death for me, His giv-

ing of His life so I could have life—life eternal both now and beyond. It is remembering "what our redemption has cost," and that was costly to God, and it is costly to us in the fact we lay down our old life for the new one, daily. Jesus' body and blood give us life. It gives us so many things. This can only be partaken of by believers in spirit and in truth. A believer will put a priority on being "in communion" with Jesus and His believers.

A healthy church will lovingly and with much care strive together to partake often in communion and remembrance of Jesus, the Christ, together.

Prayers

Steadfastly continuing in prayers denotes the active engaging in prayer to God. This communion, and communication, and connection with God is so important. "Seek His face continually," "continuing instant in prayer," "pray without ceasing." The list of encouragement is long in Scripture and is a definitive sign of the believer. So much in the fellowship of believers can be accomplished by taking things to God in prayer. There is much a believer can do and be active in. It isn't self-promoting, and it doesn't take away God's glory to be active in prayers (plural—many). There is so much to pray about, isn't there?

A healthy church in all endeavors will be in prayer.

Godly fear

I don't think it's realistic today that we see one of us raise someone from the dead, or heal a sick person, or multiply bread, or change water to wine. But I do think it is very realistic that a praying church sees God restore health of some among us, work out for good the circumstances in the lives of the believers. I believe, in the church, there should be powerful testimonies of changed lives. A church that never grows in grace, and people never change, should be alarming! If personal behavior doesn't become more godly and fruitful in the Spirit; if relationships never improve for the better; if the church is always on edge and lacking peace and harmony in the Spirit, then what is the sign of our health?

A healthy church will be manifesting the power of God at work in our midst.

Common care

Verses 44 and 45 are interesting verses. There are several phrases in these two verses that attract attention and thought to just exactly what did it all mean in practical terms? As we study Scripture in the broader context, we do find often that God intends us to care for others and not be selfish or uncaring, but compassionate. One of the "two great commandments" is to love our neighbor as our self. In

our culture, we don't all live together, share all things together as in communal living where there's one pot of food, one pot of money and everything is done all together. But surely we recognize our responsibility to look out for each other, and where we see needs, we simply and quietly help out.

A healthy church will have a genuine care for each other.

One accord

Does this mean we always agree? Does this mean we have nothing to work out? No. It means we strive together and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Faithfulness to God, love for each other, and conclusions that bring peace, are our key things. A quality garment will be made of woven individual threads going in intersecting directions for a greater purpose. We realize our greater value is submitting one to the other in the fear of God. A definition I have always appreciated for the word "unanimity" goes like this: "The point where two factions agree to be agreeable because they love and value each other's fellowship and love." I heard this statement made once, "One thing is definitely worldly, and that is 'I want my way!'" Anything that has value will take working at constantly, and our churches are no different.

A healthy church will be in one accord.

Hospitality

Verse 46 speaks to me at least of hospitality and enjoying fellowship with fellow-believers. God loves people and so should we. Some folks like a lot going on and lots of company and activities together. Some folks certainly love people, but they may be more reserved or enjoy quiet time more than others. There are four basic personality traits and combinations of those four types that are realistic, and we should respect them. Understanding those four types of personalities helps us cope one with another. We all have different gifts that God uses as He sees fit, and we yield to Him. I can't be you, and you can't be me. But I can value you and respect you and bless you. And people like this can enjoy one another's companionship and presence in the consciousness of the fact that we are all different, but we really do compliment each other.

One of the best ways to overcome doubts of each other, is simply to sit down together at the same table "so to speak," and genuinely listen to each other. Eating food together, gladness of heart and singleness or simplicity of heart will work wonders. A warm, welcome invite, a meal, and time shared together on occasion will do much to cheer the believers. It is a requirement of leadership in Scripture to "be given to hospitality."

A healthy church will be hospitable.

Praising God

This is thought provoking: in my daily experience who is getting the glory? Why do we do what we do? What are my habits? Is God getting the praise? When we go to church services, when we associate ourselves together in any capacity, what is the focus and who gets the praise?

Does our personal devotion time matter? When the group assembles, what is the singing like? Does working with ourselves in the Spirit, to be positive and fruitful, make any difference? Does recognizing our identity in Christ and being humbly confident in that reality make any difference? Praise is in direct relation to the condition of our heart. Is my focus on God or others? It all matters. A healthy church will bring praise, and honor, and glory to God.

People being saved

That's what the verse says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." That means people were being saved. What do we say about this? The idea "of being saved" (from God's wrath to come) should really affect us. There has been caution about saying "I'm saved." Is this because I doubt it? Certainly, we should recognize we are in the battle of all battles, "the flesh against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh." Certainly, we deny ourselves daily and take up our cross. But remem-

ber, the resurrection follows the cross. There is power unfathomable in yielding to God and walking in and with Him. God works with us as sons (children). How do we work with our children? If they perfectly listen, then they are our children? And if they don't then they are not our children? God works with us to change us and mold us into His image—a mature measure and stature of a son of God. We who have believed, and have obeyed, and have confessed Him, and have been baptized, and have received the gift of the Holy Spirit are saved. We have been saved, we are being saved, and will be saved to another experience in His presence beyond our ability to fathom! If this isn't our hope, if this isn't our theology, then what do we really believe? If we aren't experiencing people from time to time “being added by the Lord to the church such as should be saved,” who then are we? What do we really believe and teach as a focus? There is certainly more to it than “just being baptized.” But conviction starts somewhere, salvation does start somewhere. And if we can't say with humble, worshipful confidence that we are born again and saved, then what is there to say?

A healthy church will experience “the Lord adding to the church, from time to time in His time, such as should be saved.”

Well, what is your church like?

Do you see evidence of each of these ten signs of an authentic New Testament church in your church? I didn't ask you if your church was perfect. If you find one, I'm going to be skeptical you're telling me the truth. And I'll not join it because then it wouldn't be perfect as you say it is. But realistically, I think we should be able to say, “Our church is a real blessing, and I'm so glad to be saved in Jesus, the Christ, and I love the people in my church.” The size of it doesn't matter, and it doesn't have to be a new church, and it being established for many years shouldn't matter. But it should match the description of Acts 2:42–47. Our church should be faithful and obedient to the Word of God, and it can be if we walk in the Holy Spirit. If in fact we find, after careful and thorough study of Scripture, with proper attitude and humility and much sincerity, that our church isn't faithfully continuing in the Word of God's teaching and practice, then perhaps we should seek godly counsel and direction.

I've heard it stated like this, “What kind of a church would my church be if every member was just like me?” You see, it matters most, who each of us are in the church. Am I walking with God?

Aaron Garber

John Wesley's Twenty-One Questions of Accountability

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass onto another what was told me in confidence?
4. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
5. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
6. Did the Bible live in me today?
7. Do I give it (the Bible) time to speak to me every day?
8. Am I enjoying prayer?
9. When did I last speak to someone about my faith?
10. Do I pray about the money I spend?
11. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
12. Do I disobey God in anything?
13. Do I insist on doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
14. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
15. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful?
16. How do I spend my spare time?
17. Am I proud?
18. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisee who despised the Publican?
19. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward, or disregard? If so, what am I going to do about it?
20. Do I grumble and complain constantly?
21. Is Christ real to me?

Selected by,
David Miller

IDLE WORDS

Somehow my mind has focused on the idle words we speak. What are idle words? One form can be venting over a situation. Another way could be empty, insincere, or exaggerated talk, or foolish, careless, or thoughtless talk.

Also, could putting a careless word before what we have to say, be another way?

How often do I use them? And can they become a habit? The Bible tells me God is keeping a record of all my words. Let's just see what the Bible says about this. "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Jesus warns us. God keeps a record of our words. What we say with our mouth matters to Him. Venting does not give us the right to disobey with our words. Ephesians 4:29 says, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." Words are not simply sounds caused by air passing through our larynx. Words have real power. Words do more than convey information. The power of our words can actually destroy one's spirit, and even stir up anger and bitterness. Of all the creatures on earth, only man has the ability to communicate through the spoken word. The power to use words is a unique and powerful gift from God.

What about when we abuse words? Our words have the power to destroy or build up. Proverbs 18:21 says, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."

Are we using words to destroy or build up? Matthew 12:37 says, "For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." As followers of Christ, we should follow the example of Jesus that are so filled with grace. In Matthew 12:34–35, Jesus reminds us that the words we speak are actually the overflow of our hearts. When we become Christians, there is an expectancy that a change of speech will follow, because living for Christ makes (or should make) a difference in our choice of words. Our words should demonstrate the power of God's grace and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Can we challenge ourselves to look at the unnecessary words we use? Maybe we use slang words. I do believe they can become a habit, and habits can be broken. As I am writing this, I am thinking of how I have abused words, and how serious this is. Let us challenge ourselves to eliminate them from our lives.

Love and blessings to all,

Donna Davison

WHAT IS IN THE NEWS?

As the days unfold, there are many concerns in our nation and around the world and we feel the need to know what is in the news from day to day. Let us purpose in our hearts that we read the Good News first. It may not seem like it would matter, but it does. God's Word to us is full of the truths that provide us courage and wise perspective to face the challenges of the day and to make a difference in the lives of others. It gifts us with the attitude of kindness and respect toward our spouse and our children as well as each person we meet in town or at the workplace. These are the important interactions that spread the Gospel as we manifest Christ's way. Bible reading gives us purpose for each task when we remember, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Col. 3:17). "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12).

The news of what is happening in the world is important for us to know but the impact of it comes into perspective when we have read passages like Isaiah 59:1, "Behold the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; nei-

ther his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." Also Isaiah 59:19, "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." We see prophecy for the future in these verses but we draw comfort for today also.

We are reminded of our responsibility to reach out to the needs of others in Isaiah 58:10, "And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday," and Psalm 41:1, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor: the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble." Acts 4:32 reminds of the unity believers feel and how we want to hold our possessions with an open hand for the Lord's distribution. "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own..."

Mothers and Dads who are so busy each day providing for your families, God can speak to you through His Word from a verse or two or maybe six or seven verses. The Bible can lay open on the truck seat or on the kitchen counter.

Young people, once you are twelve or thirteen, take the time

to read the four Gospels completely through. Read, knowing this is exactly what our Lord Jesus wants you to know. This makes it interesting and if it is interesting you will retain an immense portion of it for the rest of your life.

God has provided and preserved the Gospel, the Good News, for us and whatever comes in these last days, He will be right with us, giving us His wisdom and strength for each challenge.

*Fear not, I am with thee,
O, be not dismay'd,
For I am thy God,
And will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee
And cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous,
Omnipotent hand.*

This hymn (#526 in our book) was composed from Isaiah 41:10.

*"Fear thou not; for I am with thee:
be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I
will strengthen thee; yea, I will help
thee; yea, I will uphold thee with
the right hand of my righteousness."*

Myrna Nachatelo

PRIDE IN GENERAL

Someone has given us a rooster they no longer wanted. He's a colorful little banty and perfect company for four hens. He fits in well and

things go smoothly until one morning I think I see him fluff out his neck feathers and make a move toward me as I fill the feeder and water. Surely not, I think, and watch several mornings. Yes, this is what is happening. Another morning after I mention his behavior to his owner I follow instructions and walk him back into a corner with a scold about how I provide his daily food and water and that I'm not a threat. He doesn't like it and I'm scared but he doesn't do it for a few mornings. Soon, however, he's at it again and I grow weary of watching for him to peck or spur. On one particular morning he puts on a good show and it just strikes me funny. Hardly ten inches tall, I'm thinking, and I could probably stomp him and that would be the end. Then the Lord says, "I wouldn't do that and this is how mankind acts sometimes." So true and convicting. Do I act like that and when was the last time I was sincerely thankful beyond table grace for all God provides and blesses me with?

We've just spent two weeks trying to find housing for people flooded out of homes in Kentucky, and we've seen the thankful and unthankful, (the humble and the proud) and have been very frustrated with the latter. Indeed, when one person gets demanding enough to threaten, a decision is made above

me to release reasonable funds and cut ties. The person is now on their own. Generally, if they have that much fight in them they can figure it out and find a place to live.

Another day, after I'm home a couple of weeks, I get a call from a church about helping a mother (who is keeping foster children) to rebuild a house. They would like help to insulate the floor of the house. She has only told us the work she's done on her own. Without laying eyes on it, we ask if she is doing what she tells us. "Oh, yes," is the answer, "Above and beyond," which is what we sensed when she wearily told us what needed to be finished yet. We tell this plain brother, "That's what we like to hear," and, yes, likely with a phone call the request can be met. We further lament that we don't have more able-bodied men to help in these situations. This mother is raising other children to help with raising her own and we know nothing of a father. Yes, the plain brother agrees it is a blessing to be able to help and it would be good if more of us lived to do it. We ring off, make a second call, and funds are released for insulation. Our donors will never hear her "thank you" and she will never know what happened behind the scene or how we came to hear about her rebuild group through a Resurrection Sunday service. It's a good reminder of how God works, in fact we marvel.

An humble attitude made a real difference. We think back to the first case and wonder, if when a local church delivers their house trailer, will they be thankful enough to begin attending church, and will God eventually be glorified there, too? We hope there is that conviction because we seldom see such a gift given.

By and by, two more roosters arrive on the farm. Now the owner is going to have to make a choice, because occasionally when he's away the neighbors feed the chickens. One of the roosters crows and struts, the other nary a cluck is heard. Intimidated, he keeps to himself and doesn't even dare to join the hens and the other rooster in the run. The owner separates the crowing rooster from the flock. One day we hear a new voice and see the other rooster in the run with hens. After a few weeks the owner decides the first rooster will join the other banty in the freezer and he keeps the more mild tempered rooster in the barn. Again, we see lessons on how we ought to conduct ourselves. The owner made a wise choice. Indeed, when a neighbor does the chores for four days there are no complaints, nor has this rooster bothered us except for a peck on the shoe when we thoughtlessly stepped between him and the hens one morning.

We are living in an age when we see ever more obviously what the Bible calls *pride*. We heard a

brother say recently that he used to hear pretty regularly admonition against “*pride in general*.” He said he always wondered what exactly that was and how it ought to be admonished against.

Pride, by definition today, seems to be pretty watered down to a feeling of satisfaction derived from one’s achievements. The Bible, on the other hand, would define pride as an undesirable trait right up to the point of stealing God’s glory. The Bible would make us to understand that God would not want men to be proud. But men are arrogant and presumptuous, not at all as the dictionary would lead one to believe, having dignity and honor. Pride doesn’t bring joy and delight but dishonor and shame. We all know “pride goeth before destruction and an haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). In these latter days pride has become a real obvious problem.

Boasting has become *de rigueur* (required or necessary). In fact, if you can’t speak well of yourself, something is wrong with you. It’s such a fashion that when we tried to convince someone we can’t introduce ourselves by the things we accomplish, why, that was just odd. Everyone does! As we listened to others proceed, each adding more, we wondered just how all this feeling of accomplishment would play out. It didn’t. “Let another man praise thee, and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips” (Prov. 27:2).

As you might imagine, there was some disappointment and resulting grumbling. Well, all things considered, no wonder. Pride always has to best the next person, and if it turns out to be untrue we know who the father of that is. Rather makes one want to say no more than our children were taught in school, “Hello, my name is...” “What is yours?” How long is it until were saying, “Oh, yes, you’re so and so’s son or daughter,” or “So and so was my grandfather.” And we’re getting pretty close to the Scribes and Pharisees, with Abraham as our father.

Man’s pride and presumption is leading him far afield, affecting the working man, and the poor.

A brother spoke recently about digital currency which seems to us to be coming from thin air, using much electricity and a computer, and the only obvious sweat is some poor miner in a coal mine. This just defies the curse. Sounds like a rooster crowing that he can make breakfast, but has never laid an egg, and wasn’t created to by God. If that’s not enough, mankind is beginning to think he can do greater and ever more grand things. A politician recently put pressure on the executive branch to outlaw gas cars and replace them by some very near date with electric cars. We thought about a friend’s son who drove an hour to charge his car. Sounds unreasonably demanding, since one in seven Americans is living below the poverty level.

This month, an entire month is dedicated to celebrating pride in a lifestyle that most certainly God does not like. Speak against it, and feathers will fluff up. As you can see, the pride of man is far beyond boasting and bragging. It's become outright defiant against God. They say the world is going to come to an end if we don't do something! And we've got just the thing. We're going to cool the earth, quit eating meat, vaccinate the world, bring peace by agreements with countries armed to run another one into the sea. And on it goes, until we wonder if anyone really believes it. What is happening is that it's becoming a bigger mess and a far cry from what the King has planned.

How can a minister admonish against pride to this degree? Really, we know how it's all going to end. Oh, we might slip every once in a while and boast or brag. We're human, but on the whole, we consider it to be unmannerly and uncouth because none want to hear it. We're enough separated from the world that we are often aghast at the arrogance, and marvel that there aren't some bolts of lightning on perfectly fine days. How did it progress so far?

There is yet a generation living that remembers when one attended Sunday worship regularly, but there are three or four that have never done so and society at large has left off doing this. Additionally, they are rapidly losing any

fear; actual mortal fear, as well as respect for God and His power. Thankfulness and humility are missing. There is no acknowledging that without God we would not eat. There is no reckoning of where all these good things that don't just happen come from. People say, "If you don't mind, I'll go first in line, except if it makes me feel guilty, because I'm in a bigger hurry than you are." When this happened the other day I let the woman push ahead, and imagine my surprise when her small son looked up and said, "Thank you." I stammered, "You're welcome," and wondered where he learned it as his mother stared straight ahead. People shake their fists and shout stout words at each other, at their leaders, and at God.

It won't get better. In fact, the Bible says it's going to get worse.

When the Lord comes, is it any wonder He will meet the humble in the air? Would you want to spend eternity with a proud, arrogant person constantly defying you? It's not hard to discern such an attitude in man or beast and it is repulsive to all those around. Sadly it often seems there is not much hope of admonition.

But it is a struggle for all, and come to think of it, frequent counsel on pride in general might be a good idea.

Rachel Brubaker

MEDITATIONS

Waiting on God isn't waiting for Him to show up. It is serving Him now.

Questions of Truth always take priority over questions of unity.

When your ship is sinking, pray while you bail out water.

It is difficult to restrain a living sacrifice on the altar!

Always try to speak to those less lovable.

Read or study God's Word every day.

If you're breathing, you're blessed.

QUESTIONS TO PONDER

This section offers some questions to think about, or for Sunday afternoon discussions, or to prompt future articles from our readers, etc. Readers are encouraged to offer questions.

As one pandemic has receded, and a variant seems to threaten the world again, it may be prudent to give some thought to preparing our minds and hearts for the impact this may have on Christian life and worship in the last days.

We are certain that our adversary, the devil, who is going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, is pleased when tribulation comes to the saints to disturb their peace, and their love for one another.

Perhaps we should ask ourselves some questions.

1. How strong is my resolve to stand strong against every device Satan may use, as he wars against the Church?
2. As I converse about the issues of the day, at home or abroad, will those who are listening feel peace and rest in the Lord? Or will they be stirred to have feelings against men?
3. If my brother or sister has a different view than I, am I able to overcome critical thoughts, and keep the love-bond strong between us?
4. If my church chooses not to take a strong position, am I at peace?
5. Am I equipped to foil all of the adversary's efforts to divide us?

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL NOTICE

We are making our call for subscriptions for the year 2022 at this time. The rate continues at \$20 per year. The subscription price for each subscriber should be received by December 1, 2021, from the District Agents. Each District Agent should include an updated list of subscribers, with their current addresses. Individual subscribers' subscription payments should be received by December 1, 2021, as well, if possible, for the 2022 subscription year.

GENERAL ITEMS

BAPTISMS

Aug. 22, 2021; Dallas, OR
Mary Morrison, Anne Morrison,
and Kiara Root

COMMUNION NOTICES

Oct. 2, 2021 Providence, IN
Oct. 2, 2021 Caldwell, ID
Oct. 9, 2021 ... Cascade Valley and Zillah
Brethren, together at Cascade Valley, WA
Oct. 16, 2021 Maple Grove, OH
Oct. 23, 2021 Stillwater, OH
Oct. 30, 2021 Kidron Valley, KS
Nov. 6, 2021 Columbia River, WA
Nov. 6, 2021 Bethel, OH
Nov. 13, 2021 Covington, OH

Nov. 13, 2021 Shenandoah, VA
Feb. 5, 2022..... Pine Grove, FL
Feb. 26, 2022..... West Manchester, IN
Feb. 26, 2022..... West Modesto, CA
Mar. 26, 2022..... Dallas, OR
Mar. 26, 2022..... Fair Haven, KS

HARVEST MEETINGS

Nov. 25, 2021 Pleasant View, OH

THE TESTIMONY FINANCIAL REPORT

Ending Balance 6/30/20	\$ 14,156.64
Income.....	\$ 27,427.54
Expenses.....	<u>\$ 28,937.63</u>
Ending Balance 6/30/21	\$ 12,646.55

POEMS

WHEN I CAN READ MY TITLE CLEAR

When I can read my title clear to mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear, and wipe my weeping eyes.

Should earth against my soul engage, and fiery darts be hurled,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage, and face a frowning world.

Let cares like a wild deluge come, and storms of sorrow fall,
May I but safely reach my home, my God, my heaven, my all.

Then I shall bathe my weary soul, in seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll across my peaceful breast.

Isaac Watts (1707)

LOOKING UNTO JESUS

I have looked at myself, and my sins too long;
I will look to the Savior now,
Not inward, but upward I turn my eyes,
As before His throne I bow;
There is not a sorrow within my heart,
But He can the sickness heal,
So I will not harbor my griefs again,
But will tell Him all I feel.

Shrouded in mist is the way I go,
And the clouds are dark and deep,
The valleys are rugged with rock and thorn,
And the mountains are long and steep.
But whenever I falter, or weary grow,
I will turn my eyes away,
And fix them steadfastly on the Lord,
For He is alone the Way.

Little I know of the future years,
Whether shall come to me
Grief or happiness, weal or woe,
Sickness or liberty;
Little it matters indeed to me,
If I lean on the Savior's breast
Only anxious to do His will,
For He will arrange the rest.

Though I may falter or miss my way,
Almost losing my hold,
Though my prayers may be faint and few,
And the love in my heart grow cold,
Though the journey of life may be long to take,
And my steps are very slow,
I will look to Jesus with kindling love,
Till His guiding voice I know.

Whenever the summons comes to me,
And I stand on the river's brink,
Hearing the rush of the waters deep,
Until heart and flesh shall shrink,
I will lift my eyes from the restless surge
To the still calm above,
For Jesus is never out of sight,
And I know I may trust His love.

—M. F.

Selected by Maribeth Filbrun

THIS DO IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME

According to thy gracious word, in meek humility,
This will I do, my dying Lord, I will remember thee.
Thy body, broken for my sake, my bread from heaven shall be;
Thy testamental cup I take, and thus remember thee.

Gethsemane can I forget? Or there thy conflict see,
Thine agony and bloody sweat, and not remember thee?
When to the cross I turn mine eyes, and rest on Calvary,
O Lamb of God, my sacrifice! I must remember thee.

Remember thee, and all thy pains, and all thy love to me;
Yea, while a breath, a pulse remains, will I remember thee.
And when these failing lips grow dumb, and mind and memory flee,
When thou shalt in thy kingdom come, Jesus, remember me!

James Montgomery

Terms

Subscriptions should be made through the congregational contact or through *The Testimony* office. Subscription price is \$20.00 per year. New subscriptions should be paid (prorated) through the remainder of the current year. All renewals begin at the first of the calendar year. Newly married and those unable to pay for a subscription may receive a free subscription through the agent of their local congregation.

Contributors

Authors of essays, devotionals, poems, etc. are asked to review the Statement of Purpose on the back page of this periodical. Articles should

be based on Scripture. References are appreciated. Shorter focused articles are more desirable than articles that move from one topic to another. Selected material will be considered. Original writings are preferred. It is recommended that writers submit themselves to the Spirit, which reveals the will of God to the Church in every age, according to the varied needs and circumstances.

Written articles should be legible. Typed material is preferred and should be double-spaced. Electronic transmission or CD will be accepted. The author's name and address must be included on all material. An attempt will be made to contact the author of articles that are not accepted.

Old German Baptist Brethren
Church—New Conference

THE TESTIMONY

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The Testimony is a Christian publication intended for those who desire nourishment in their spiritual walk, and for writers who wish to express witness to the Truth of the Gospel as experienced in their own lives. It holds the Holy Scriptures to be its only Creed. Its purpose is to bear witness to the Truth of God's Word as it is applied in the daily life of committed Christians. It supports the anabaptist and pietist foundations of the Brethren of Schwarzenau, Germany (1708) including the biblical principle of the community of believers bound by a confession of faith in the Lord Jesus confirmed by adult immersion baptism (Mark 16:16). It strives to promote a life of true living piety among all who confess Jesus as their Lord. It seeks to restore and

maintain a fellowship of true primitive Christianity through the communication of all good things.

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