

Read Contenders

GOD TRIES US ALL

JANUARY 1989

THIS HAS BEEN A WEEK THAT HAS BROUGHT SOME TELEPHONE CALLS TO ME, FROM PEOPLE IN DISTRESS. YOUNG PEOPLE, YOU YOUNG GIRLS AND YOUNG BOYS, I HOPE I CAN SAY A FEW THINGS THAT WILL REALLY GET YOU TO LOOK AT YOURSELVES, AND YOUR LIVES, AND BEGIN TO REALIZE THAT WE ARE LIVING IN AN HOUR OF TIME WHEN THE WORLD ABOUT US IS FALLING APART. THERE IS NOTHING REALLY CONSISTENT, YOU CAN PUT CONFIDENCE IN, WITH ANY ASSURANCE THAT ANYTHING IS GOING TO TURN OUT ALL RIGHT, OTHER THAN JESUS CHRIST. I RECEIVED A TELEPHONE CALL FROM A YOUNG MAN, THAT ANOTHER BROTHER HAD ALREADY CALLED AND RELATED A FEW THINGS TO ME ABOUT HIS SITUATION. A YOUNG GIRL HAD MET THIS YOUNG BOY, AND ALL THE PEOPLE THAT KNEW THIS BOY, KNEW HE HAD SOME KIND OF PROBLEM. THEY ADVISED THE YOUNG GIRL NOT TO MARRY HIM, BUT NOTHING WOULD DO HER, EVEN THOUGH IT WAS CHRISTIAN PEOPLE THAT ADVISED HER NOT TO MARRY HIM, LEST SHE HAVE PROBLEMS; SHE WENT AHEAD AND MARRIED HIM ANYWAY. NOW SHE HAS HAD A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN. SOME OF IT IS DUE TO HER OWN HOME BACKGROUND, AS WELL AS THE CONDITION THAT HAD DEVELOPED IN BEING MARRIED TO THIS BOY. WHEN THIS NERVOUS BREAKDOWN HIT HER, HER MOTHER CAME AND GOT HER AND TOOK HER OFF INTO SOME OTHER PART OF THE CITY, AND PUT HER UNDER THE CARE OF A PSYCHIATRIST. THE BOY IS NOW BROKEN HEARTED, AND WORRIED HALF TO DEATH. HE SAYS HE LOVES HIS WIFE, BUT HE DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO GET IN CONTACT WITH HER. WHEN HE FOUND MY TELEPHONE NUMBER, HE CALLED ME. HE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT HE COULD DO. TELL ME SOMETHING I CAN DO TO GET MY WIFE BACK. LAST NIGHT HE HAD CALLED THREE TIMES TRYING TO GET HOLD OF ME. WHEN I FINALLY RETURNED THE CALL, I RELATED TO HIM SOME THINGS THAT HE COULD DO, AT LEAST TO SATISFY HIS MIND AS TO WHERE HIS WIFE IS. I TRIED TO KEEP IT AS SIMPLE AS I COULD, AND STILL THE YOUNG MAN ASKED, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THAT LET ME KNOW, HE REALLY DID HAVE A PROBLEM. THERE IS NOT A CHILD HERE THAT I COULD NOT HAVE TOLD THE SAME THINGS, AND THEY WOULD HAVE KNOWN EXACTLY WHAT I MEANT. I FINALLY HAD TO BREAK IT DOWN, REPHRASE IT, AND RESTRUCTURE IT IN A WAY ANY ONE OF THESE CHILDREN COULD HAVE GRASPED. I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER THIS WAS A BOY BORN WITH SOME KIND OF MENTAL PROBLEM, OR WHETHER HE WAS LIKE THOUSANDS THAT HAVE BEEN HOOKED ON DOPE, AND HIS MIND WAS WARPED BECAUSE OF THAT, OR WHAT. NEVERTHELESS HE NEEDS A MIRACLE TO GET EVERYTHING STRAIGHTENED OUT; BUT THERE ARE SOME PREDICAMENTS YOU CAN GET INTO, AND NO ONE HAS A MIRACLE ANSWER. IT IS NOT EVEN WRITTEN THAT WAY IN THE BIBLE, BUT WE HAVE A PROMISE THAT HE (GOD) IS MERCIFUL AND JUST, AND WILLING TO FORGIVE US, SO JUST PRAY THAT HE MIGHT SEE FIT TO GET INTO THAT SITUATION. ANOTHER CALL CAME, AND IT IS JUST PATHETIC TO THINK

HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE, CONSTANTLY FUSSING. IT IS JUST LIKE THEY LIVE WITH TNT IN THEIR HOMES, AND CANNOT CONTROL THAT HUMAN NATURE. I HAVE THOUGHT ALL WEEK, SOME PEOPLE BRING ABOUT THEIR DISASTERS, WHILE OTHERS, THINGS JUST HAPPEN, AND WE DO NOT REALLY SEE WHY. THERE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT MAKE YOU THINK OF THE TRIAL JOB HAD, WHEN THE DEVIL RECEIVED PERMISSION FROM GOD, TO TEST HIM. JOB HAD A TESTIMONY THAT HE WAS A MAN THAT FEARED GOD AND HATED EVIL, AND BECAUSE OF THAT, THE DEVIL HAD IT IN FOR HIM, AND THERE WAS QUITE A CONTEST, AS THE DEVIL TRIED TO GET JOB TO LOSE FAITH IN GOD. DID GOD KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON? HE SURE DID. DOES HE KNOW WHAT THE DEVIL IS DOING TO US, HERE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY? HE SURE DOES; HE USES THE DEVIL TO TEST HIS CHILDREN. THE WORLD ABOUT YOU IS NOT GOING TO GET SWEETER; NOR MORE BEAUTIFUL. IT IS GOING TO GET WORSE AND WORSE, AS THE DEVIL STALKS THIS 20TH CENTURY SOCIETY. HE IS GOING TO GET MORE SUBTLE, AND HIS POWER IS GOING TO GET MORE PREVALENT IN OUR MODERN WORLD. HOW DO I KNOW THAT? BECAUSE MODERN MAN NO LONGER TRUSTS IN THE GUIDANCE OF GOD. SOME OF THE THINGS THAT HAPPEN TO US IN LIFE, IF WE HAD JUST NOT DONE THAT, THEN THIS WOULD NEVER HAVE HAPPENED. OTHER THINGS WILL HAPPEN, AND NO WAY CAN YOU SEARCH THE SITUATION AND FIND WHAT REALLY CAUSED IT. IT IS THAT SOMEWHERE GOD PERMITTED YOU OR ME TO BE TESTED BY VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES.

PREPARING FOR OUR RACE

We will go to the 12th chapter of Hebrews for a text, and the title of our message is, "GOD TRIES US ALL." Not because He does not like us, but because He does. He does not try us because He does not know what we will do, nor what we are; for He does know. He tries us because He is teaching us certain things that are necessary, to portray the type of an image He is seeking to mold inside of us. He is not concerned about the freckles on your face, nor the color of your hair, or eyes, but He is definitely concerned about the image of that inner man dwelling inside of our flesh. This old body can die, and we have the promise He will raise it again in immortality. But there is something about this spirit man inside, He is deeply concerned about. This inner man is what He is working on. This inner man is what Jesus Christ died for. It is to be molded and fashioned into the image and likeness of that only begotten Son, Jesus, who was the Christ. In the first two verses of this 12th chapter, we find it pointing back to the 11th chapter, "**Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.**" What is a witness? If we were in a courtroom, we would look at a witness as someone who has had contact with something that they must relate the facts about what they saw or heard, pertaining to that event, or condition. But in this case, a witness is one that is actually a partaker of the very thing which really we are all in the process of seeking to be a partaker of. That is why Jesus said to His disciples just before He left, And you shall be witnesses unto me, (or for me, and of me,) both in Jerusalem, Judaea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world. Therefore, as we read of witnesses here, we are looking and reading about people who are partakers of something, and the something is the subject we are talking about, so the writer says, "Let us lay aside every weight." Now we are not carrying suitcases, natural weights. But we have got to understand that the language here is symbolic, as Paul breaks this down into an illustrative picture, to communicate to the reader and hearer, the necessity of laying aside every weight, laying aside every unnecessary thing of life, that acts as a hindrance or a pull back, or an obstacle to the spiritual race this inner man is running. We know this, when the Kentucky Derby takes place, there are other men that have ridden these horses in the training process. They may not all be equal in weight, but once those horses are scheduled to enter, all those jockeys are weighed. The equipment is weighed. Every horse goes into the race with equal weight upon their back. Some have to add a little weight to make it all equal to the heaviest jockey that is riding. But we realize this, if this giving up of unnecessary things we hold to in life, has the same affect on our spiritual race, as a man running a hundred yard dash, you would not see such a man running a hundred yard dash with a pair of knee boots on. No. Why? Because he is depending upon the lightest type of equipment on his feet that is possible. Imagine a man in shorts, running a hundred yard dash, wearing a pair of knee boots. Would he not look funny? You know he would, and you also know what his chances of winning would be. Well what else are we to lay aside? "**And the sin which doth so easily beset us,**" (Holds us back, brings us to an exhausting, quick

situation.) The sin is unbelief, many times fostered by being defeated, not gaining victory over certain obstacles, or situations in our life. Many times it causes a person to resort back, even doubting their own experience, their own capability to really run, to pursue, and keep on following and serving the Lord. **“Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.”** This race is not that we are trying to set a record, a hundred yards in so many seconds. No, because the end of this race is not known by actual distance. This race is known by how we participate in the time allotted to us, to live in this present world. Whatever our days of life may be, it means we must run each day, not running against or competing with each other, trying to out do each other, but remembering that there is an enemy against this race, who will set up all kinds of obstacles, and bring about all kinds of situations to create a disappointment, many times to cause us to fall flat on our face, and create setbacks in our activity. So as we run this, we are coping with time, not distance. As we cope with time, then it says, we are to run this race with patience. Now, in distance, yes, many times you have to sacrifice certain things, if you are going to beat someone else to the goal, because you are competing against distance. If for some reason we do not develop a patient, spiritual quality, then the lack of patience on our part has the same affect to our spiritual being, as a athlete who is seeking to run a distance race, when he has failed to keep himself in shape. If his lungs, and his whole system are not in shape, that is why he has to train to get his lungs developed where they will absorb and take in a large capacity of air, feeding oxygen, which he definitely needs. Also the things that he eats makes a difference. But it is toning the muscle, so the muscle can stand the strain and stress, because he is expending energy, as he does so. Therefore, if we can convert all that to a spiritual image, the inner man is not exerting energy as far as muscle, or oxygen, from his lungs, but there is spiritual qualities and attributes he must develop, otherwise he will fall flat on his face and come up a loser. That is what the apostle Paul is laying down here. Let us run the race. Let us run against Satan, in this time we live here, with patience, the race that is set before us. The race is ours to run. The apostle Paul then resorts back to someone that we must look at, as a model, partaker, participator, who Himself came into this world and was made like us. He too had to compete against time, that He might become something for us. Therefore, the apostle Paul, in the second verse, is exhorting you and me to look unto Jesus. Notice here, he is not disassociating the second verse, from what he has just said in the first one. He has admonished us, run this race, lay aside every weight, and the sin of unbelief, which doth so easily get us, so many times, in a bad situation. With patience, let us keep pursuing in time, because we do not know when we will leave this world, or when Jesus will come for us. However in verse 2, we have someone to look at. If we have someone to look at, then we can draw from him certain thoughts that can be applied to that of our own person. It says, **“Looking unto Jesus, the author, (the founder, the model) and finisher, of our faith, (or this race) who for the joy that was set before Him.”** Those words there are reminding you and me that Jesus our Savior, when born into this world, was truly a human being, capable of being tempted and tested, in every area of human existence, as you and I are. Yet we realize the devil tempted Him, basically, in the areas where He would be more liable to falter. Because it is in those areas, if He does falter, He will not achieve in becoming the Savior and model for you and me. But the point is, As a human being in this world, through the flesh, Satan could throw everything at Him, but He had something to look toward, as He was tempted. **“Who for the joy that was set before Him.”** Where did He get that? You have got to realize, Jesus knew what the scriptures in the Old Testament pointed to. In the Psalms, in the writings of the prophets, there is all those prophecies, promises, pointing to the Christ to be, which had not yet been born, but all those promises portrayed what He, in time, would eventually be for you and me, and what we will one day be like, (like Him) when this is all finished. When He could see that, He could see the beauty, the glory of knowing one day what He would be in relationship to creation. Then He could look at Himself and look at those elements, those conditions thrown at Him, and could treat it with a determination not to let any of those things cause Him to waver or falter. As we finish reading this verse, notice, first He is the finisher of our faith, so He was looking at something that kept driving Him onward. And that was the joy that was set before Him. As He kept on going forward, it says, He endured the cross, (tolerated the very thing that brought such an agonizing and painful death to His body.) It is a known fact that to hang a man on a cross, in such a state and condition, to hang there for hours, doctors of the medical world have written articles and I have read them, this is one of the most cruel, painful types of death that a human can suffer. Yet it says right here, Because the joy that He could see before Him made the difference. Brothers and Sisters: I want you to know, (for you may think life is dealing you a hard blow) that this world is terrible, and there is nothing beautiful out there in it. People are all messed up, and it is getting worse all the time. Therefore, if you do not have good contact with Him who has already overcome the

devil, you can be drawn into situations that will really get your lives messed up. That is why I keep saying, Young people, you have not left this world yet, so you still have a life to live; but do not get in a hurry to marry. You ask God to put something in the top of your head, and give you eyes to look things over, before you step across the threshold. For once you have stepped across it, you do not know that everything is going to go just right. You need God on your side.

WHAT TRUE FAITH WILL ENDURE

Jesus endured this terrible, painful death, despising the shame, and now He is seated at the right hand of the throne of God, because He did not give in to the devil when He was tempted. When you think of the many things that He had done to be a blessing to people, even in that multitude that stood there, and how many of those people had followed Him on different occasions, and heard what He had said, and saw what He did, and yet for some reason or other, they gave in to fear. People just do not want to be identified with something they are afraid will get them mixed up in a problem, or get them in trouble with general society. So they stand back and fold their arms, just as a mere onlooker, and the Bible says, They taunted Him, saying, You saved others, save yourself. Why don't you come on down from the cross? You walked on water. You did this, you did that, why don't you change this, if you are so and so, and what you say you are? How do you think He felt hanging there, with all the pain and suffering in His body, knowing He must die according to the will of the Father, that He might truly fulfill the scriptures? It had to be His blood that was shed for your and my atonement. It had to be His life forfeited, offered up freely, to be the ransom paid for you and me. Therefore, in all that humiliation and shame, and criticism that was thrown at Him, He fulfilled the Father's will. He endured it all, knowing that it was necessary in order that lost humanity be redeemed from the bondage of sin and death. There was no joy in the suffering; the joy was in what He could see on out ahead. He despised the shame and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God, and for over 1900 years, that has been the picture. That was the beginning of some of the joy that He could see before Him, but He must pass through death. He must pass through suffering. He must pass through this terrible hour of criticism, ridicule, and being shamed publicly before His critics. No, it was not the drunks and prostitutes that despised Him, it was a bunch of religious church going Jews who thought they knew the prophets, who thought they knew the scrolls, but stood there crying, Away with such a devil! Away with such a hypocrite! Truth is not a beautiful picture in the eyes of the religious element of the world. They live by tradition, instead of truth. For our spiritual benefit though, let us take this, and apply it as we see it in the 11th chapter. It tells us there, going back to the Old Testament, of many that have lived by faith in times past, and have died in the faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off. We will pick up in verse 30 (Hebrews) . **(30) "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days. (31) By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace. (32) And what shall I more say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets; (33) Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, (34) Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. (35) Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: (36) And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: (37) They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (38) (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains and in dens and caves of the earth. (39) And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: (40) God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."** That faith has been planted inside of us human beings, because it becomes a revelation and an understanding of how to live and please God in the circumstances they are brought into. Because as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said, whether He will or whether He will not, we will not bow. That lets me know they had an inner understanding that it is better to serve God in the light of adversity, in the light of obstacles and circumstances, than to go by the way of the world and lose everything. What is this better thing, than what they had? Keep in mind, they were a people through which God set a type. They did not possess the Holy Ghost as an individual person. They had

the Holy Spirit anointing them, or hovering over them, or directing them, or at times inspiring them, helping them, undertaking for them in their problems and circumstances, still they did not possess it inside. Because the old human nature that we are born with, was held in control by the faith they had in what the law said, Thou shalt not, and thou shalt not, Thou shalt not, and thou shalt do this, and thou shalt do this. That was their revelation, and if they in obedience could do that, they established an image of people who knew how to serve God under every day circumstances. But they, without us, could not finish the thing; God having provided a better way. We live in the dispensation that God has offered to humanity a better way to live for Him, a better way to serve Him, a better way to be confident that He is the true and living God that will keep His promises to them that will obey. Why is it better? Because He puts His Spirit inside of us. Once He put His Spirit inside us, He says, Lo, I am with you always. "ALWAYS." Did you know, This is a day, and we are living in the hour, when every prophecy that must be fulfilled before Jesus comes, is fast being fulfilled, and religion in general is ignorant of what is taking place; for they have no true revelation to guide them? We are getting closer, as the outer world out there gets more carried away by their modern thinking. They say, You crazy people: you do some of the craziest things. You have some of the craziest beliefs. Do you mean to tell me that you believe God will do this, and God will do that? Yes, He will. I want you to know, Regardless of what they criticize you for out there, God does not have to do one thing to prove anything to them. If this brother that lost his finger in a grain auger was to meet certain types of people out there today, they might say, Well, if your God is so good, why did He let that happen? I have even heard people on TV say, If God is a God of love, why did He let this little baby die? Why did He let such a thing happen? Always blaming God for everything. When you look back in the Old Testament, and see what the people of God went through, and how devoted they became, that they would not deny their God, nor give up serving Him, no matter what happened to them, but purposed to serve Him against all odds, you have to realize that they had more than just a hope-so faith in His promises. It might have looked to the heathen, for a little period of time, when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to bow to that image, and the old king got so angry because of it, that he purposed to destroy them, because he was one of those kind, when I make a decree, I want you all to jump. When they said that day, that they would not bow, then he ordered that furnace heated seven times hotter than it had ever been. I wonder what they used that furnace for? To keep the countryside warm? No, it was to execute criminals. I do not believe that was the city incinerator. But it made him so angry, he ordered it heated seven times hotter. You know, some times God lets certain things happen, that we do not understand. But somewhere He is wanting to establish something in the face of some people who will witness the thing. When Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were asked the question, Now you have been testifying that your God can do this, and do that, and that He is worthy of this, and worthy of that, and that He is a God of love and power, and a God of mercy. Are you sure He is all of that? You know, There has to come a time in your life that what you have been testifying to is put to the test. It is one thing to quote what is written in the Bible, but when it comes the time that your very life depends upon the reality of it, what do you say then? If you have been testifying from a living faith, that believes God is all of that, and more too, you will say as those Hebrew boys said, Our God is able to deliver us, but whether He does, or does not, our testimony remains the same, for it is His purpose that we are dedicated to, for we are not our own; we are bought with a price. But the fact that the king got that angry, got that forceful, it brought about such a scene. I imagine there was a pretty good crowd there that day, that just wanted to watch this thing develop. And when they pushed those men in, the old king was high on a perch. He wanted to see them scorch. He wanted to see the fat melt out of them. He was so angry, he wanted to get rid of this bunch of good-for-nothing trash. I believe that we are living in a time when the world population in general, just about has the same attitude toward us. We do not want your religion, it is old fashioned. We believe in God, but we do not believe a person has to be so fanatical about what they believe. If your God is a God of love, like you say He is, He would not send you to hell for taking a little drink with us. They will always try to get you to compromise. Well, when they cast those boys into that furnace, that old king was sitting up there on his perch, and all of a sudden he cried out, How many did you put in there? Three, O King. Then he said, But I see a fourth man, one like the Son of God. There they were walking in the midst of the fire, in a furnace seven times hotter than it had ever been before, walking back and forth. Do you know what? All it had done was singe the cords loose. It loosed their hands. Now imagine a man with a big coat, I do not know what kind of clothes they had on. But it said they had all their clothes on. The king wanted them all on, the more fuel, the better. But all it did was burn the cords that bound their hands and legs, and that enabled these three fellows to walk about in the midst of the fire, with the angel of the Lord. Those

three men had done nothing to deserve that, but if all those things could go on then, I am confident today, as we get closer to the coming of Christ, and as the world out there gets more hostile, with educated people against this way, we are going to see some of this same kind of manifestation. For they do not want Christian influence in our modern society. When they took Christ out of the school, prayer out of the school, and began this rigid enforcement of separation of church and state, it was nothing less than an attack of the devil. I remember when I went to the Henryville School, there were Catholic children, Protestant children, and children that did not go to church at all. If the school teacher said, Let us stand this morning and pledge allegiance, we all stood and pledged allegiance. When she said, Now let us repeat the Lord's prayer, nobody screamed, I am going home and tell Mom. I am going home and tell Dad, and he will come here and skin your head. The devil has stirred up all this nonsense you hear of today. The sad part is, they want the government to spend untold millions of dollars to try to rehabilitate, or re-educate a society that has gone berserk, because they do not want Christ. This nation was founded under God, that all men are created equal. Unbelievers, as instruments in the hands of the devil, have made this nation what it is today, a God hating nation. Therefore, as time draws closer to the coming of the Lord, we just as well as Christians, make up our mind and believe that every event that has ever transpired, that has brought a change in time, in relationship to what God is doing, it has always brought God's people of that hour through a dark period of some kind of trial and test, because it was God's way of showing the world about them, His sovereignty and guidance. When you look back at the story of how God brought Israel out of Egypt, when did He bring her out? When everything was going good? No, He brought Israel out of Egypt when Israel was living in her darkest hour of bondage, and I am persuaded that the darkest hour of this world is just ahead. It will not last a hundred years, nor will it last 50 years, but the darkest hour of this world is fast approaching. You can see by the way conditions are moving, how Satan is stalking mankind, and taking over. People are crying because of these adverse conditions. Society is going berserk, and Christians are becoming worried as they look at all of it. I get letters from different Christian organizations, wanting me to contribute money to help fight certain cases in court, where certain heathen, atheists are bringing court suits against nominal Christians in certain areas. I just got to thinking, You may spend a billion dollars trying to fight that kind of thing, but it is not going to change the nation one bit. Why? Because it never puts this kind of adverse characters behind bars where they belong, so they just keep doing this. It only causes innocent people to spend their life savings, trying to change conditions that has come upon them, because they failed to stand up for their God-given rights when they could have done something about it. If this anti-God gang has tried this kind of thing 60 years ago, someone would have gotten his head skinned. It is a sad picture that we see in the world today. Evil is well thought of, harbored and protected; but God knows where to draw the line. When Israel was brought out of Egypt, they were brought out in the darkest hour of Egypt's history, because God had brought it about; and it was the darkest hour of Israel's period and time of slavery. Therefore, as we live in this day of modern times, and you can see that the world about you does not want a thing to do with your lifestyle, with your belief, nor with your conviction and stand for the truth of God's word: just be assured that God is allowing it to get like this because the end is near. Sure they will speak evil of you; they think you actually are an obstacle in the way of modern progress in the world today. Sooner or later, they will wish we were all dead. All of that makes me realize, it is not going to get easier to live in this modern world; unless you want to compromise and slide along with them, in order to escape the hardships. If you do that, I promise you, There is no reward waiting for you over on the other side; only a sad disappointment. I am confident of this one thing, If there are dark days ahead, (and I am not trying to be a doomsday prophet. That is not the picture.) You know what history and the Bible declare, somewhere out of that darkness, God will lift up something. Because when Satan comes in like a flood, God will lift up a standard for his people.

OUR TRUE EXAMPLE

Let us notice how Paul continues on, in the following verses. Why would his thought go in the direction he takes, starting in verse 3? He has just talked about the people who live by faith, and what some of them got. He has just told us how we are compassed about with that kind of a multitude of witnesses. We have all those Old Testament saints as a multitude of witnesses, in defense of the faith that you and I have. There they are in heaven today. Then he comes to Christ and shows us what He endured, that He may become something for you and me, that would set the better way in motion. That is why we are not advised to look at the old testament saints for a

model, but only to look at them for encouragement. They endured all those trials without the indwelling presence of the Holy Ghost. Therefore, we should have the hope and confidence that we can endure, because we have the better thing, the very Spirit of God dwelling inside of us. The apostle Paul says to you and me, (Hebrews 12:3) **(3) “For consider Him, (take a good look at Jesus) that endured such (opposition, or) contradiction of sinners against himself, (Pay attention to Him, observe Him, that endured, put up with such a contradictory way of accusation of sinners against Himself.) Lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”** You know, all through the ages, to every human generation, in every church that has ever been spiritual for God, no matter what decade it lived, if you will just observe and watch certain people, that have been so dealt with by God, sometimes they have had to come through hardships, knocks and bangs, and the world looks upon them and says, Indeed I would not live for their God if He allows that kind of thing to happen to His children. But at the same time, other people who observe that person, Somehow or other they see a testimony of faith cultivated, and an image of a person’s life becoming an example. That is what causes some people to say, It is worth it. I want to serve God the same way. No, you do not follow the flesh, but there is a spiritual conduct and an image of the person, you can look to for encouragement, when the going gets rough. This has happened on the field of battle, many times. Back some time ago, probably more than a year ago, when they were showing some of the things on television that took place in the Normandy invasion, they were interviewing some of those soldiers who had gone back over there, more or less, as a memorial to the Normandy invasion. One of those soldiers that had been a tank man, said when their tank went ashore, he was so scared, they carried a forty five revolver as a weapon, so if their tank was knocked out and they were forced to get out of the thing, but he was so scared that he was tempted to throw his revolver away, for fear that he would get so afraid he might kill himself. But then he made mention of another soldier, and it was just watching that other soldier that gave him confidence that everything would come out all right. You know, how true that is many times. Your Christian life can bring you through some very dark dismal ordeals. It brings you to a place, you almost wish it was all over. But somewhere you are made to look at something, and that something is to spark an encouragement in you, that will not let you give up. Don’t throw your faith away. Don’t throw in the towel. That is why it says here, Lest ye be wearied, become afraid, lose courage, lose hope, it isn’t worth it. Oh sometimes people look at the world, so and so out there, maybe their neighbor that never has to go through half what they do. Yes, but did you ever stop to think where they are going? Let’s look at that. Where are they going? Do they have the hope of eternal life? You know they do not. This world is the only world they will ever live in. This world is the only place they will ever have anything to be happy about. Like I have heard it said, If your God is a healer, why do you take an aspirin? If your God is this, why do you do that? Up here at Borden, when I was a kid, they had an old depot attendant, Joe Davis was his name. He lived to be 86 years old. Do you know what he bragged? I have never been sick a day in my life. He smoked a big old cigar from morning until night. You could smell Joe Davis coming, and you could smell him going. But he said this, he slept with his window open and ate an orange every day. Even so, there is no salvation in that. I just wonder where he is at today. If you try to compare this Christian faith to certain things out there in the world, you are comparing it to the wrong thing. You have got to compare it to the image and picture you see in the Bible. Yes, consider Him, take a look at Jesus, watch Him, observe Him. He is our model. He looked straight into the face of His enemies, His accusers, and the point is, He suffered physically, an ordeal in death to give you and I something that is going to be real for eternity. Now if He could do that, to become something, and there was joy in it, then I am thankful to say today, There is a joy in serving God. I do not care what comes or goes, what is up or down, there is a joy in knowing you are serving a God that will one day take you to glory to live in immortality. Then life’s battles will all be over. Saints, I want to be in the ranks that can stand in that glorious group, knowing that by faith we stood the test, won the battle, and finished the course, scripturally. Not because we were worthy, but because His grace was sufficient to give you and I the courage and strength to endure it. I could not care less what the world thinks about this Christian life. They think we are all crazy, but if it wasn’t for us holding this society together, God would have blown it all to pieces long ago. What does He care about their flesh? Let us look at this next verse, and hear Paul say, **(4) “Ye have not resisted unto blood, striving against sin. (5) And Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children.”** Notice as we read this, I want you to catch the reason why Paul would put this in here, where he has been writing about all those who lived by faith, using Jesus as our example, because of what He went through. Now the point is, Jesus went through all that He did, that He might be an example for all of us to follow after. In other words, He is the perfect model of what God wants all of His redeemed family to be like. He did

not have to be chastened, nor corrected. But even though He did not have to be chastened or corrected, did that keep Him from sufferings, shame, humiliation, harassment, and afflictions? No, it was heaped upon Him. Why? So it could be proven that He is a human being. Even though the eternal God dwelt in Him, He was still just as much a human, as any one of us; only He was without inherited sin. Look what they called Him at times. Now we know He has got a devil. If someone was to say, Why, they have a devil; You would cry a barrel of tears. You would almost have a nervous breakdown. Did He act like that? No, it was His lot to take it. He accepted that kind of criticism, and He did not try to get even with anyone. Why? Because He wanted to become something that could help you and me. Therefore, if He could do that, then God is seeking to make you and me like that also. Let us finish verse 5 now. You will find a reference like this in Proverbs. **“My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him.”** There are times when adversity can get us to feeling mighty low, but if we are truly children of God, we can never give up and quit the race, nor will we go around looking for the easy way out. Whether we are being chastened, tested, or just plain abused by the devil, we still have an example to look to, for we could never be treated worse than He was. Therefore, God will not beg you to shape up and do right. Instead, He might say, You do that, and I’ll kick you in the seat of the pants. That is what He ought to do; when He has done so much for us. Why? Because we are not to live by feelings. If we are a child of His, He does not want us to play around like that, allowing our fleshly feelings to rule us, and cause us to make excuses, as though we are going to get God to come down and act like that. No, God knows what He is doing. He tries us all, and He knows exactly what to do, and what to use to try you and me. Is He mad at us? No. Is He trying to tear us up? No. He just wants to get our attention, so that we will pay more attention to Him; and be a little more receptive and more alert to what He is really doing. If Jesus was willing to suffer for me, then somewhere there must be in me a willingness to take a little bit of the same in return. Because Jesus says in another place, If they called the master of the house, Beelzebub, how much more will they call the servants of the house the same thing. A servant is not above his lord, that he should escape or be treated any better than what his own master is.

TESTING IS SURE TO COME

We will read a few verses from the 1st chapter of James, that will fit right in with what we have been talking about; how God tries us all. If we notice in the religious world at large, today, you hear of very few testimonies that really show how these people are dealt with by God. Everything has become a cut and dried thing. They can tell you what all they are doing because they belong to such and such, but very few have a testimony of God’s divine guidance in their lives. You hear very few say, Well the Lord brought me through a severe test. I learned this. I learned that. I have heard these full gospel business men’s testimonies. I have heard of men raising so many potatoes and tell how many million dollars they earned in so many months. But I have never heard a one of them testify of the truth that God led them into. I am not interested in their potato patches. I do not care if they started out poor, and wound up rich. If there is not a testimony of truth that they have seen, I am not interested. All of that is just a trick to get you to leave truth and go the way of the devil. The devil can offer you the same thing. He can either make you a poor man right quick, or he can make you a rich man right quick. But Brothers and Sisters, it is not just to pump something into your head, it is that the truth you understand, eventually becomes applied to your inner person, and your inner person is molded and shaped and fashioned, more and more, to reflect the image and likeness of Jesus, as Paul wrote in one epistle, We are changed from glory to glory, which means we are changed from revelation to revelation. No, we do not get a revelation today, and throw it away for another one tomorrow. But it means, as God gives us a glimpse of truth, something that is to be applied to our spiritual understanding, as we walk in that and that becomes applicable to us, and we learn how it is to reflect in us, then again He will lead us to another truth. Therefore, we are growing in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, to be more in His likeness. Now in James, 1st chapter, just a few verses, and I want to say, I thank the Lord for His grace. Life can be filled with a lot of tests, just like this young man in the letter we heard read. I like the testimony of the young man, because I can see a young man, that even though he is going through a lot of trials, somewhere down the road of life God will make that man a shining light, and an instrument to help lift up others. If God has called you to be an instrument to help lift up others, you can rest assured, you are going to get the works thrown at you. This thing of going to a Bible School for a few months, or years, and getting a degree in theology, is not going to help you in this. The Bible was not written by men who learned

what they wrote about in a Bible School. Those men had the works thrown at them. They had all kinds of trials and tests, everything the devil could throw at them. Why? That is the way God makes a man out of you. Therefore, as James writes this Epistle, what he is talking about is not foreign to his understanding. He is not talking about something that is only applicable to someone else. James is talking about something that is applicable to every Christian that dares to serve God, and walk with Him in truth. They are going to walk right down these verses. (1) **“James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.”** He is writing to Jewish Christians, his brethren that are in dispersion, in isolated places among the Gentiles. (2) **“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers, (or different) temptations.”** The word temptations actually means testings. Many times we do not understand what testings are, so think of this. An industry that is known for the manufacturing of certain types of products, if they come up with a new design, before that product is released to the public, it has got to be proved by many testings and trials, going under conditions similar to what it might be facing, once it is sold to the general public. Take for instance, a car. They come up with a design for the engine. A man can sit down with paper, and design an engine. Whether it is a three cylinder, six cylinder, or eight cylinder, he wants this engine to meet certain qualities of performance. He can figure all that in, but once that engine is molded, and assembled into a piece of mechanical equipment, what do they do? Do they just install it in a body of some kind and sell it to the public? No, they have all kinds of testing apparatus they hook it up to. They will rev it up, and put it under stress. They generate extreme heat pressure, and so forth. Why do they do that? To see what that engine can take. If it meets certain conditions, then and then alone can they put it in mass production, and make each part for each engine, off the same pattern. Every once in awhile though, they reach in and pull an engine off. They want to see, that through all this mass production, they are not slipping up on anything. They will put that engine under the same type of tests the actual pattern was subjected to in the beginning. Quality is proved in testings. Our Savior, that we read about in the four gospels, was tested and tried. We do not read much about Him until after He was baptized and anointed. But after that, not only was He led by the Spirit into the desert, where He gave Himself to fasting and prayer for 40 days, but then He was actually approached by the devil, and tempted, or tested in ways no other human being had ever been faced with. Think of it. God’s own son, anointed with the Holy Ghost, which was God Himself, coming into Him in the fulness of His power and Godhead qualities. Yet He led His own Son to be literally tested by Satanic powers. A lot of people will tell you, Oh, once you get the Holy Ghost, the way is easy then; you need that to overcome the devil. Well that is true. We are not going to overcome him unless we do have the Holy Ghost, but just because we have it, that is no sign we go to sleep, slumber, and snore. Sooner or later we are going to get the devil thrown at us. God can let him be thrown at us by any kind of situation that pleases Him. He is out to make something out of us, that will enable us to fulfill our part in His redemption plan. He makes something out of us that is workable, and useful. Furthermore, we are the only thing in this world, that can possibly reflect the very image of the one who was tempted and tested in every way that you and I are. He never once gave in to that Satanic influence. Therefore James says, (2) **“Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; (3) Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”** Now you do not go out looking for trouble. You just go about your usual duties and let trouble find you, as God sees fit to allow it. The Bible just instructs us to count it all joy when you fall into it, not that we should go looking for it. Because when God permits the devil to bring some kind of test about in your life, it is never because He is displeased, nor because He does not like you. It is because the time has come that He wants to mold something of Himself in you. For Him to mold something in you or me, of Himself, our flesh, the human makeup that we are, has to face certain Satanic oppositions to the flesh nature, bringing about an opportunity for God to apply the spiritual elements that are essential. That through that test, our life might come out reflecting more of what He wants us to look like. We fall into divers temptations, not jump into them. The devil will never show you where it will take place; therefore, you do not know when some kind of test may come. Does that mean we get up each day afraid to do anything, because somewhere in front of us, there is probably a hole we might fall into? No, God does not ask us to live day by day, afraid of what we may face. He wants us to get up, with an assurance that no matter what may befall us before the day is over, His grace is sufficient, and He knows all about it. We know that all things work together for good, to who? For everyone? No, not for everyone. All scripture is not applicable to the world. Scripture is applicable in most cases, only to the believer. All scripture was written for the child of God. For his admonition and his learning, and his instruction, his information, and for the up building of his spiritual character and image, as he walks with God. That is why the scripture, as the

man of the world reads it, makes him mad, because he knows he could not live by it. The Spirit of God does something for you inside, you can not live it in yourself, but once you know He is in there, He is in there to help you live the way the Bible tells us to live. He does not have a test for you just as soon as you get saved. He will bring you through that, let you go a little season, feeling that nothing could go wrong, then He lets Satan attack you. But not before you have had time to grow a little in stature.

PERSONAL TESTIMONY

When we were still in the Methodist Church, I knew He had saved me, because He had taken that desire for smoking away from me, and gave me a desire to know what His word says. He put a hunger for His word in my heart that I had never had before. Yet in those days while we were still in the Methodist Church, I never felt tested, I never felt life was dealing me a hard blow. After I gave my heart to the Lord, it just seemed like in those first months, everything went perfectly. Everything was beautiful. I was so thankful that God had saved me. My, this is a wonderful Christian life. After we met Bro. Branham, and left the Methodist Church, I actually thought those people in Methodism would really turn loose on us with all kinds of artillery. But as I look back, they hardly recognized that we had left. Do you want to know when our troubles really started? After we received the Holy Ghost and started going to the Branham Tabernacle, and God took His servant off the scene, then all hell broke loose. As I look back now, many of those trials were tests to see how this truth would be embraced in my life. Brothers and Sisters, I am glad today, that we passed the test. We only stood the test by the grace of God. I know there are thousands of people the world over, that are thankful today, that someone stood the test, without being caught up in all that nonsense of deifying God's prophet messenger. There are people out in the world today, that from the external viewpoint are living just as clean a life as I am. It is their mind that is all warped and twisted by every kind of picture some of these carnal revelations present, that do not even fit this book. Is that what Jesus Christ died to produce? You know it isn't. Does testings in every area of the human society produce the same thing? No. Many times the same things that happened to me, happen to others, but they are never recognized out there, so that they can produce anything that God will accept. Therefore, all scripture is not for everyone. It is for the true born again children of God. If God allows you and me, as children of His, to face some kind of test in our Christian life, is it just because He wants to put us under pressure, and put our mind in a state of oppression, and discouragement? It may momentarily seem like that is what it is. If God sees in you or me, that there is the quality of a certain attribute, He wants to see enlarged in us, is it in our flesh? No, it is in our spiritual makeup. How we are to walk with God, in the realm of the Spirit He has put within us, and the testing that He allows us to go through, is for the perfecting of our inner self. James says this testing worketh patience. What is patience? It is the ability to look a situation right in the face for what it is, without allowing it to cast you down. You may not understand why the test lasts so long, and you may not always understand the outcome; but if you and I are children of God, once the thing is over, we can be assured that it has worked together with other things, for good on our part. A lot depends on how we react though, for if God is allowing this trial to teach us to have some patience, and we get so upset we react in just the opposite way, do you think God will just give up? NO! ABSOLUTELY NOT! He will let the thing keep coming at you until you do respond the right way. Your load may seem heavy at times, and you may feel bad, because of the pressure; but deep within, you should be able to say, Lord I do not understand everything that is happening; it looks bad to my natural self, but something inside reminds me how you promised you would never leave or forsake me, and I know you will not let the devil throw anything at me, above or beyond what I am able to bear. Therefore, whatever it is that you are desiring to mold in me, you just have your way. Then, instead of cracking up, and saying, I am going to quit it, it just isn't worth all of this, you are going to say, Not my will, but thine be done. That is exactly what Jesus said. In the natural self that He was as a man, He went to the garden, and there He prayed like a man, because as a man, He feared death. He said, Father if it be thy will, grant it to pass from me. That was His first prayer. It looked dark to Him. A test many times, looks dark to you and me. But once we are in a test, you will never run from it, because many times there are conditions brought about, you cannot run from, for you are locked up in it. When God is out to mold an attribute of patience in you, the sooner you recognize it, the better it will be for you; for what He wants to hear, is for you to say, Lord, just have your way. Brothers and Sisters, when God sees that Spirit attribute of His nature, become so blended with your spirit nature, that it begins to reflect that quality of Him, you can rest assured, He will cause that test to be lifted. It will fade into the background, because

something has been stamped inside that will reflect what God is after, for as long as you live. As I have looked back at some of the ordeals that befell us after Bro. Branham's death, I have said this, If I would have known, while we were still in Methodism, what would come about if we left that system, I would have wanted to stay right there. Why do I say that? Because no one looks forward to these testings. Dad always taught me, If you want to stay out of trouble, stay at home and mind your own business. Well you can run from trouble a lot of the time, but if you dare to walk with God, many times He will lead you right into a pack of it. You would not plan it, but God just lets the devil set the stage. Instead of it being out there through the world, it will many times be through religious circles. Let me go back a few years, and give reference to something I mentioned already. God has many ways to bring about testings in us, just like what I said about divine healing. When we first started going to the Tabernacle, and seeing Bro. Branham as he prayed for the sick, and things like that, I formed an opinion. I had not heard Bro. Branham mention one thing about it being wrong to go to a doctor or to take an aspirin. But because I saw him pray for sick people and God healed them, I just assumed it to be that way. Saints, do not build your convictions on just mere assumption; you need to know the facts first. I just assumed that if you are going to believe in divine healing, that surely means you cannot go to a doctor. You will never know how the devil whipped me and my wife over just that very thing. Just as sure as you begin to feel like you are grasping the belief, and assurance in divine healing, and that He is a God that knows all about your colds, headaches, and everything, you are going to be tested. It was in the month of March, and probably in the year of 1953, in a church over in Louisville, The Church of the Open Door, where a fellow by the name of Cauble pastored. Bro. Branham started a meeting on Wednesday night, that ran through the weekend. Knowing in advance that this meeting was going to be held, I had made all necessary preparations to go, because we had just started going to the Branham Tabernacle in the fall of 1952, so I was determined to go to those meetings, and get everything out of them, that I possibly could. However, the very day those meetings started, the devil hit me with a bad cold, and at that time, every time I took a bad cold, it always settled in my sinus cavities, and my head would just throb. Many times it was so bad I would go into the house and stick my forehead in a pan of hot water, trying to get relief from it. I thought when I awoke that morning, knowing that the meeting was to start that night: Oh Lord, I feel so bad, how am I going to be able to go to the meeting? We had made such plans. I could not do a thing all that day, but just lie around the house with the windows shades pulled down, and my head throbbing. However, along about 4:30 P.M. I could feel that just begin to lift off of me. I was able to get up and milk the cows, and get the livestock fed, and by the time for us to start getting dressed, my head no longer hurt. By the time we got to church, I felt as good as if I had never had the problem. I will never forget sitting there that night, and enjoying how the Holy Spirit used that man of God, and how I rejoiced over it all. I went home that night rejoicing over what I had heard and seen. The next morning, it was the same story. I awoke with my head just simply feeling like it could burst open any minute. Well to cut the story short, I went through the rest of the week, feeling like that every day, and then going to the meetings every night feeling fine. I said, Lord, I do not understand this at all, what is happening? When Monday morning came, my head felt fine, I had no headache; and again said, Lord, I do not understand. When I wanted to go to that meeting and feel good, and enjoy everything, every day has been a torment with this miserable headache, and now that the meeting is over, I do not hurt at all. Well as I look back now, it was all because there were certain things God wanted to put in my spirit mind. For it was through these experiences that I began to realize, God knows everything that is wrong with you, and He will take care of it in it's appointed time. Just a few short weeks later, that thing hit me again, and I had the same misery as before. But then God healed me, and I have never been bothered with it again. I have sinus headaches, like a great number of other people in this part of the country, but they are not the same thing as what I have been describing to you. Those were brought about by actual cold infection, but when I had that dream that night, and saw the hand of God come, and perform that operation on my sinuses, I could say, Thank you Lord. You knew when to take care of the thing, because from a little boy up until then, I had been plagued with that. Even when I was in the army, and we were heading for the Philippines, that thing hit me, and I suffered terribly with it. They put me in the hospital, but all they had then was sulfa drugs and Vicks salve. However I have said all of that, to say this, God brings you through certain things to teach you and instill in you an understanding by experience, about these things, so that your life can relate according to what the picture says pertaining to them.

IN TRIALS - WE GAIN PATIENCE

James says in verse 3, **“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.”** Oh yes, God is going to try every one of us. He has not promised that we will not be tried. In fact, He has promised that He will try us. That is why Romans 8:28-29, could be written like it was. Therefore, we know that all things work together for good to us, no matter what they are, nor how they come, nor what they look like. All things work together for good to those that love God, because those that love God, are those who were foreknown of Him, and called according to His purpose. In other words, God has designed the whole thing, that in the end, we will be molded into the very image of His only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ. Therefore, the trying of our faith worketh patience. The trying of our faith, as it comes against certain trials and tests in our life, the end result is, patience. A divine attribute of God is instilled in you. Let me use an example. Some people are born in life with a very impatient personality. The least little thing can set them off, because of their lack of patience. If something does not work right the first time, they will go into a rage of profanity, and get themselves so worked up they become blinded to what they are supposed to be doing, and they look like they could explode just any time. Well does the new birth experience automatically give you patience? We all know it does not; but it does give us a desire to want to be different. Therefore, God just begins to allow situations to confront us, that will make way for this attribute to be instilled in us. When a test hits us, if we do not react properly as children of God, our heavenly Father places conviction upon us, and allows the test to hit us again; and He will keep it up until we do react the right way. Patience in us, will cause us to face every situation unshaken and undisturbed. Therefore, if we are coming up short in this area, just remember this, you are being watched, and those who are watching you, take great delight in seeing you fall short on a virtue they know the children of God are supposed to have. If you mash your finger, there is no fit you can throw, that will make it feel one bit better. But you can say, Lord I just ask you to take away the pain; and I assure you, that will do more good than throwing a fit. Brothers and Sisters: Children of God must continue to live in a world that is very hostile to attributes of God, so do not be surprised when they make fun of you because of the simple faith and confidence you have in your Creator. Remember, you cannot please God, and the people of the world, both at the same time; you have to make a choice constantly. Satan has turned the world upside down, so to speak, and left natural mankind without anything of stability to anchor their lives to. All concept of Godly principles has been pushed into the background, and every sort of demon spirit has been turned loose upon them, so it is only natural that they should be against the true children of God. But remember this, Jesus prayed for every one of us in His prayer recorded in the 17th chapter of John. He said, Father: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Then as He continued praying he said, **“Neither pray I for these alone, (those living then) but for all them also which shall believe on me through their word.”** Marriages are breaking up, and orphanages are filled with children from these broken homes, and every way you turn, there is someone crying for help of some kind, simply because man has forsaken his Creator. He has become a victim, and fell heir to Satanic perversions, and manipulations, and all of that lead to a tragic end. Therefore, it is only by the grace of God that you and I get out of here with any of the qualities of our God in our life. What we have of the qualities of God, is not because of our own ability to possess them, God Himself has worked conditions to mold them in us, while the world has gone berserk, while the world is crying help. The world is crying, Rehabilitate. Christianity is not rehabilitation. It is regeneration. It is being made new again.

EVENTS THAT ARE FULFILLING GOD’S PURPOSE

Verse 4 says, **“But let patience have her perfect work.”** Look upon it as something that He wants to blend into our spirit make up, and the more of that divine attribute we allow Him to mold into us, the less Satan has any opportunity to really weaken us, in any other future trial. What is this then? **“But let patience (Let that attribute) have her perfect work.”** Or let it be applied for the intended purpose, for what He has put it there. **“That ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing.”** No Christian is born again, and then left empty of divine attributes. That is why Jesus died upon the cross, to make it possible that even though we did not know how to live for God, nor how to reflect a God-like life, God might instill these qualities and attributes into us, that causes the world to look upon us as misfits. Saints: I am so glad that the Lord saved me when He did. I would see the world we live in now, as a horrible place to live if I did not have confidence in God to see me through to the end. As a child growing up, I saw how life was then, socially, and then see how it is today, and believe me, if

we did not have the Bible to tell us it would be this way in the end time, it would be hard for the natural mind to understand how it could go from that, to this, in such a short time. Since the Bible says it is to be this way, we know there is not a thing in the world that we can do to change it, so let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect, (made complete, and in the end lacking or) wanting nothing. Saints, it is not you and I that make the choice, when, or how our test is to be applied. It is He that does it. Therefore, as He allows the test, then we have to accept it, even though we may say, God, I do not understand. It is going to be hard on my flesh, but by your grace, I know you will take me through it. I also know that once it is all over, I will understand, and look back, and say, Thank you Lord. God will never bring you through a test, without in the end, you having something that you will appreciate. As we get closer to the coming of the Lord, and as we face the end of time, looking at the nation of Israel, no doubt we are going to see things transpire there, that will fulfill the scriptures. It behooves you and I to realize that our God is very aware of where we are, what we are doing, and what He wants to do with us, to get us ready for the coming of the Bridegroom. Not only is God dealing with a Gentile bride church, to get her ready to meet the Bridegroom, He is also dealing with certain elements of the Jews there in Israel, to get them ready to receive the two prophets of Revelation 11:3, once time advances to that point. Let me just give you a little background of what I have in my mind that we can look at. We believe that we are living in the very end time, and know that there is only about 11 more years until this 20th century ends. 2000 A. D., will have arrived, this is of course, according to the Julian calendar we use. At any rate, man is nearing the end of 6000 years of recorded history. That is six Millenniums, six dispensational days of his struggle, his conflict, since the first man became tainted with sin. That goes back to the very beginning of his origin. We believe, according to Bible chronology, that approximately every 2000 years, some major change takes place. Not that we have that many to look back to, and I certainly would not want to be dogmatic about it, but all signs point to the possibility that this six thousand years of man's time has brought him to the threshold of the Millennium that has been talked about for so long, the one thousand years that Christ will rule of earth, from the temple in Jerusalem. However, God Himself is the one that designed days, and such like, and He is the one who will bring it all to a close. But according to past records, we know that approximately every 2000 years, there is something that definitely takes place, and naturally the Gentile bride of Christ expects it to be so again. The Bible does specifically state that Jesus Christ will rule and reign for 1000 years, and that the righteous will be changed into immortality, and will be allowed to rule and reign with Him for the space of 1000 years. Therefore, if we truly are in the final years of this 20th century, this 2000 year, towards the end of Gentile time, and we are warned by the Bible, Watch ye therefore and pray, that day come not upon you unaware. Because as a snare shall it come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Certainly we realize that the world population is not looking for the end. They are really planning, by their own carnal ways of figuring things, a great utopia in the future. However to their disappointment, it is going to be just exactly the way the Bible said it would be. We see that confirmed in this election, where for the first time in Israel's 40 year history, there is an element of the religious side which has always been in the minority, being recognized. They have been recognized in the Knesset, but always in the minority, never seeming to have a voice that could sway the political tendencies. A man by the name of Rabbi Kahaney was in the Knesset in their final elections, maybe four years back. He brought about a lot of political squabbles. For 40 years it has been mainly the secular, political minded Jew, that has been in the forefront. I suppose in the plan of God, He just used that element of Judaism, to be the fighting element, and to be the political element, which would be strong for the reconstruction and rebirth of the political nation. But if time was allowed to go on uninterrupted, the actual spiritual and religious picture that we read about in the Bible would never come about, because the secular Jew holds the political advantage. Within the element of the secular Jew, there is much squabbling, and the religious Jews who have gone back there, have played a part, but they have had a lesser voice. They never have been allowed to bring about conditions to really show the real spiritual purpose God has ordained that Israel be reborn and reinstated in the land for. But in this one election, they got enough seats, and the Lecud party under Shamir, seems to be in a position now. Shamir himself is religious, but he is not like the Orthodox. He has both his religious convictions, and his political feelings. So he blends a little religion with his political ideology, and this has brought on a lot of the see-saw, back and forth situation there. It has actually divided the Israeli society. In the book that Rabbi Kahaney wrote, which I read portions of, he informs in this book how that after Israel was recognized as a state, and was allowed that territorial recognition that was granted by the U.N. in 1948, the secular Jews maneuvered things. This secular element, the political element that was there in the land of Israel,

who mainly formed the political side of what became their government, when other Jews made known their desire to immigrate back, would do their utmost to try to get the secular Jew, the professional Jew, the doctor, the lawyer, and the scientist; but really the deep Orthodox, Rabbinical, or Messianic believing element, were sometimes hard pressed to get the same recognition. There was one place in the book that talked about an element of youth, children that no longer had parents, because they had been destroyed in the great Holocaust. Before these children were allowed to come back into the land of Israel, in the places where they were being detained, they put them through courses, trying to take out of their mind that fervent, Messianic hope, and loyalty to the religious side, and began trying to put into them more of a secular, social, materialistic outlook, so that when they would come back, they would try to create a secular, materialistic state. This is why you could see, it has not been the Orthodox Jew that the United States government has pressured other nations to let go. When we hear about the Civil Rights pressure put on Russia, to let the Jews in Russia go home, it was not the Orthodox religious Jew, it was the scientist, the lawyer, the art man, the writer, the professor, the proclaimer of some kind of culture, they wanted. They were Jews as a race of people, but not necessarily Messianic or Orthodox. That has been the tendencies for 40 years, and it even tells in his book, of the conflict that many times the Orthodox Jews have had. Even how they have really been persecuted by their own fellow countrymen. Why am I saying all of this? It is to say this: That condition cannot go on forever. Somewhere up ahead God will tip the balance, and bring about conditions within that realm, that begins to change the picture, because God did not bring back the Jew into that land just to create another state that is scientifically modernized, materialistically minded, without the Messianic hope and promise that is laid out in the scriptures. Now, we can see how the secular side of Judaism has suffered from the element of the Arab in the land, who are just as secular minded, though Moslem in belief. They hide their religion in a political cloak, therefore, they are ready to declare a holy war at the drop of a hat. We begin to realize that there is pressure being put on, but out of the pressure, something will evolve, that is going to bring about a furtherance of God's purpose. If so, what can we look for in the realm of our position? There is one thing sure, we cannot look at ourselves and expect that the Gentile religious element of society just continually goes from decade to decade with the same general philosophy and outlook as it has always had in the past, without somewhere that element of Gentile Christendom from whence God will make up a true Gentile bride, is going to be dealt with by the Spirit of God, to bring it to its scriptural position, thereby fulfilling every scripture related to what the church, the bride is to be in the end time.

GENTILES HAVE A PART TO PLAY

We live in a western society now, that has been politically affected, but keep in mind, almost 2000 years ago, when Christianity was born, from every area of the nations then known to mankind, Satan fought it. It was treated like some kind of harmful pollutant, that would corrupt society. In fact, it was the only thing that portrayed any righteousness or morality, or spirituality, in which God was invested. Yet it was ridiculed, and they even tried their best to destroy it. Christianity never has been accepted and rejoiced over, by the overall society. It was in the news last night, how there is a fast growing tendency for people to turn to cults. They referred back to the Jones ordeal in South America, where 913 people died. It spoke of this Indian man out there in the state of Oregon, of Moonie and all these other elements. It spoke of how occultism is on the rise, seeking membership, converts to its way of life. Brothers and Sisters, the United States is the only nation where occultism has a holiday. Some of these other nations simply will not allow any such. First off, there is not enough money there for such stuff to thrive on. It is hard enough for the real bride of Christ to exist under the economical conditions that exists in some areas of the world. I am saying all of that, to say this, if we are sitting here, claiming in our heart to be children of God, and expecting to be in the bride, then this book we have is going to be thrown at us, as God creates conditions to mold our spirit, and to make our flesh come in line with it. God has not spared the Jew their trials, the pressure internationally, and racially, to bring about His purpose, for He is never defeated. The element of secular Jews do not yet see God's plan. They are taking advantage of all the political and materialistic advantages that are accessible to them, while they sit there secluded, feeling secure, with no intention of changing. In fact, Rabbi Kahaney brought out in his book, how the secular Jew is looking upon the Messianic hope Jews, as sort of being a scourge, or a plague. Things take strange turns, and this is why I have said many times, the civil rights movement that sprang up in this nation, in its original beginning, served a good purpose. But 20 some years later, the devil has taken it, and everything has been

cloaked behind it. The devil has cloaked himself in civil rights, equal rights, and he is bound and determined that this modern world is going to become a world that all of this immorality, indecency, and all these other atheistic elements can coexist side by side in. Something starts out good, but in the end winds up bad. We do not live in a nation yet, like Christians did 1900 and some years ago. It was very easy for them to be hauled off in the night, and put in jail, for just being a Christian, because the general society despised it. Christians did not participate in the every day practice of drunkenness, the festivity, the immorality, the indecency that went on, and because they did not participate in that, society looked upon them as misfits. Well Christianity is to be a light to something. Not just co-exist with it. Our nation was founded under Christian leadership, and the Christian people for many decades have had a freedom, politically and religiously, to worship God according to the dictates of their hearts. So it has established a social and moral nation that has persecuted Christians from the political standpoint, as in ancient times. But the devil will use other things to harass you and me every chance he gets, believe me. When the apostle Paul wrote the letter to the Hebrews, remember, the word Hebrew, applied to Jews outside the homeland, because the word Hebrew means foreigner. Therefore, any Jew existing outside the homeland, the promised land of Israel, was looked upon by Gentiles, wherever he was, as a foreigner. That is where the word Hebrew, in the Jewish language, comes from. Joseph and his people in Egypt, were called by the Egyptians, Hebrews, or foreigners. The Jewish people carried off into Babylonian captivity, were looked upon by the ancient Babylonians as Hebrews, foreigners, because they were displaced outside their homeland. Now the Jew in his homeland, is not a foreigner. That is his heritage. Therefore, the book of Hebrews was written to Jewish Christians, who were foreigners, because they were living outside the homeland. Theologians have a controversy over who the author of the epistle to the Hebrews is. They said it has a "Paul" trait to it. But I say, when we look at the proximity of when it was written, just shortly before Paul was martyred, while he was a prisoner in Rome, all of the other apostles had already been martyred by that time, so when you read this book of Hebrews, this is why I have to say, it had to be written by the apostle Paul. He was in jail, yes, yet he approached the law and its relationship to the dispensation of grace, as being the types and shadows upon which the dispensation of grace was to be established. When we come to the 11th chapter, he gives a chronological picture of what faith is, and he starts with Abel. He comes right down the line, showing you how each one of these men, Abel, Enoch, Noah, coming right on down to Abraham and Sarah, and right on down the line to Jacob, Joseph, David and on and on. He closes out the chapter by saying how God delivered some from the fiery furnace, and from the edge of the sword. They were spared from being exterminated, because of the faith and confidence they had. They established a testimony, just as the three Hebrew children did when they escaped the fiery furnace after saying, God is able; but whether He does or does not, we will not bow to that image. They were thrown in there, and God spared them from the expected results, giving them that testimony. In Hebrews this same writer tells us of these great patriarchs of faith, then of others which were sawn asunder, martyred in cruel ways, and so forth. What is the difference? Is God a respecter of persons? Is this a testimony that some have faith to be spared supernaturally, while others are just too low in faith, so they have to perish? No. The point is this, there was a faith, a picture of something inside the bosom of every one, and there was none of them going to deny his God. But he would die for the confidence and faith he had in his Creator, his Lord and Master. When you reach the end of the 11th chapter, do you realize, Paul has covered every one from Abel, right down to the last patriarch of the Old Testament? All, who by Jewish history, could be looked upon and esteemed as a patriarch of the faith, and he did not have to name every one of them. He did that to establish a platform in a spiritual sense, showing that those people would not receive the promise without us, therefore the race was not over. The plan was not finished, for God had provided a better way. Not for those that have already gone on, but for those that are the oncoming ones, who too will run the race by faith. They will have to fight the same devil. They will have to overcome by the same determination that those Old Testament saints overcame by, yet through a better way. That could be none other than the fact that the new dispensation will have the Spirit of God inside of believers, not just over them, or invisible to them, as it was the children of Israel. When we can possess this better thing inside of us, does that make the devil any weaker? Not at all. It just means we should realize that we have something in us, that we should not have to rely upon the flesh side of things, as much as the children of Israel did.

THE JOY SET BEFORE JESUS

When Paul continued to write, in what we call the 12th chapter of Hebrews, he begins painting to you and I a beautiful picture of the man called Jesus, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame of it. His joy was because of what He Himself saw in the prophets and the Psalms, pertaining to His future relationship to the plan of God. We know this, In another writing in Hebrews, that final test of suffering and death Jesus faced, looking at that point of death, was just as real to Him as death would be to you and me. To Him, it was dying for a reason that He was really not responsible for. In reality He had no death reigning in His fleshly body. He had no sin, so He was guiltless. Death was not something to be used as a punishment to Him. We do know that He saw in the scriptures, that He had been put here to be tempted and tried in every way, through all the areas of fleshly humanity, that He might be able to show forth to us, within this better way, having a better picture and understanding of the plan of God, that He would not be spared in any area of His human makeup. Brothers and Sisters, When He came down to that final hour of His greatest test, Paul says He sought it with tears, that if possible, this cup of suffering would pass from Him. This lets us know that He was a man praying, which showed the real humanity side of Him. He really had physical human feelings just like we do. He had a mentality that was related to the total human being that He was. Sure he had the fullness of the Godhead qualities in Him, but we must realize, it was not that headship in Him, being tested. It was the human side of Him, the Son of God, being tested. He had to be tested; and in the testing a record was recorded as to how He went about it, for all who would be tested in like manner, to look back upon. That is why in one of the gospels we read, that in His garden experience, just before He was arrested, He withdraws a little distance, and is heard crying, If it be Thy will, grant this cup to pass from me. That is your and my reaction every time we find ourselves overtaken by some kind of condition that looks like our flesh may have to suffer a little. Lord, I can't see my way through it. However in the mind of Jesus, He knew the Psalms, and the other prophets, how in those prophecies pertaining to Him, it was written, a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, and of how He is chastened and bruised for our iniquities and such like. Therefore, He saw Himself ordained to die. The second time He goes back, and as He falls to His knees, He is still emotionally affected. He is still a nervous piece of humanity, in a terrible state, psychologically, but then He said, Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done. What does this tell us? Mentally, He is beginning to realize that He has got to bring these thoughts under subjection to the will and mind of the Father. He knew that if He was to triumph and be the fulfillment of all those prophecies, so that He can be something for you and me, He must overcome this. He must accept it willingly. Because by accepting that test which will lead Him to death, physically, and much suffering. He knows that beyond that He will be raised from the dead, never to die any more, and never to go through that ordeal again. Therefore, He could look beyond suffering, shame, the ridiculing, that the multitudes threw at Him. Of course we did not live then; but I am confident that those who did live in that era of time, were humanly, much like the people of today. At least we know it was the same devil, causing them to react like they did. They saw their Messiah in literal fleshly form, but they could not see Him as being the fulfillment of the scriptures. He was a man they were ready to get rid of, by any means possible. Because to them, He was just a devil. However, this is why we see that Jesus, who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, though despising the shame. He just refused to consider all the humiliation those sinners were throwing at Him. Imagine Him hanging there, suffering in agony, His body literally racked with the pain of torture that such an execution could bring upon Him, and down on the ground, looking up at Him, were all that bunch of religious Jews humiliating Him, taunting Him, and laughing. For three and one half years He had walked among them, preached to them, healed the sick and done many good things, and not one of those things caused that bunch to change their mind and attitude. That is why we can say, He endured the cross, despising the shame. In other words, considering all the criticism, it did not make Him faint and say, It is not worth it. Rather, He died willing; He accepted it. We know by His final prayer in the garden, that He realized this is the only way, this is the proper way, this was the right way for Him to become something for you and me. Then He could look at it with a different feeling inside. I accept. I accept gladly. You know, when you accept a test gladly, then really the pain of the test is never as severe as you thought it would be. It seems to be lighter. You are able to look beyond it, because you know that somewhere, whether it is tomorrow, or next week, all of it is going to pass. Because of that, He became the author, (the originator) and the perfecter of our faith. And that faith is something that you and I have, that through the leadership of the Holy Ghost, we are able to definitely overcome, following Him as our example. I noticed this, as Paul wrote Hebrews, and as the apostle James wrote the epistle of James, and Peter wrote his 1st epistle, in all three writings, each man touched upon this same subject. They each related it in a different

language structure, but each one is pointing to the fact of how God deals with you and I by trying us, and testing us. For what reason? That He might perfect, and mold in you and me the image of a child of His, that He has changed from the old person we once were, to a new person in Christ, and it is through these trials and tests, He leads us from day to day, from year to year, and deals with us accordingly, into whatever He has called you and me to be, in the body of Christ. He definitely deals with us accordingly. Naturally we can expect that at times these tests will be severe, but they are never to destroy us. That is the way we need to look at the tests. No wonder James said, "Count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations." You are not walking down the road, purposely looking for it. No! You fall suddenly, and you are in it, and you wonder, Why did it happen. It is God who allows the devil to come along and throw something at us in an area of our life, to affect our communion, our attitude with Him, but through it all, it is to mold us and make us be a little more like the Savior, who died for us at Calvary. Now, if He spared not His own Son from being tempted and tried in the flesh, which is what Paul says in Hebrews, He spared not His own Son. Why then would we faint, when we find ourselves tested. We should not. Should we? Many people get the idea, Oh, God never chastens me. If you are a child of God, He does. If you are a child of God, He will definitely chasten you. There is not a child of God that does not go through some kind of correction or chastisement of the Lord. The sad part of it is, people many times are reluctant to admit it. Why is this chastening? You may ask. It is because of the natural flesh tendencies we are born with, and have within us, it is not our nature to serve God obediently. With Jesus, it was a different picture. He was not born with a sinful nature, to be reluctant, or to be stubborn, or rebellious. His motive was to live to please the Father. His obstacles were not to chasten Him. His flesh was pressured to show that He could take it and not falter, not give up, or faint. However, you and I, many times, if we find ourselves chastened or tested, we begin to resort to grumbling. We want to escape the whole thing and forget about it. Well, if we are living just before the end time, we can expect ourselves to face spiritual opposition from the devil, and through it, God is not going to destroy us; He is going to bring us closer to Himself, closer to Him in the Spirit. It is a matter of submitting ourselves to the will and mind of God, through the revelation of His word, so that the true life of Christ is really molded within us. Here in the 12th chapter of Hebrews, I want to read the 11th verse, "**Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous:** (Oh yes, that is the person's feeling.) **Nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which we exercised thereby.**" We are corrected, and schooled by that thing. (12) "**Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.**" That is language that speaks of our fleshly reaction. Did you ever see a person that has come through a lot of ups and downs and everything, and you meet them, and when you talk with them, socially, they act exactly like this; their very appearance speaks of defeat: I just don't know where I am going. Saints, I am trying to show something. What does that attitude tell you? Inside, is a spirit person that is looking at the obstacles of life, and they are looking at them in such a natural way, they can not see God in anything. Therefore, their speech is weak. As they get weaker, their hands just flop around like an old weight on a clock. The knees just give: I don't care, I would just as soon die tonight. Have you not met people in life, that make you think of that very scripture? I have seen people just like that. They have no confidence in anything. They look at everything in the natural. Well Brothers and Sisters, with that kind of attitude, it is going to be hard for that type of person to please God. When I say that though, I am not saying that such a person is not a child of God. That person just has to wake up and realize that this is what Paul was referring to: Wherefore lift up the hands, straighten up the backbone, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths. Brothers and Sisters: a person with that kind of sloppy, no care kind of attitude, they never could walk a straight line if they needed to. They just wander, and weave all over the place. It says, make straight paths for your feet. It means you have to be alert, and look exactly at what you are doing, day by day; for if you go slumping through the woods like this, you are sure to snag your foot on something, and right on your face you will go. But if we can straighten up and look up, it means you are responsible for every snag you stump your toe on. Whenever we look where we are going and watch what we are stepping in, we are not as likely to fall flat on our face. Verse 13, "**And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame, (floppy, or uncontrolled) be turned out of the way. But let it rather be healed.** (14) **Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:** (15) **Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.**" Let us now go right back into James. James exhorts, "**Brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.**" The translators use the word temptations, but really the word means divers testings. These are testings that God permitted the enemy to throw at you and me at various times

in our Christian life, as we walk with Him, to cause us to become aware of a need. We need to learn to use the sword of the Spirit, to combat the enemy of our soul, just like Jesus, our example, did. But God wants our attitude and motive to be pure, so that we are not just constantly thinking about our own personal flesh, when we engage in this spiritual warfare. God always seeks to apply something inside of you and me, that is part of His characteristics, so the tests must come against our flesh person, which always before studied everything out in the natural, reasoning everything out to suit the natural self, not being able to look at the thing by faith, and spiritual understanding. Sure, it looks terrible, but I know that God is going to make a way through it all. Yes, in the midst of a trial, it seems very rough, very hard to cope with, but when it is all over and you look back, you can say to yourself, God is so good. I tell you, when you hear of people driving down a highway and see a car go out of control, coming right at them, and under normal circumstances it would hit them head on, there is not a thing in the world you can do to change that picture except, just cry out, God help me! Maybe there is someone killed, but for some reason or other, that child of God that was hit, just spun around, car totally wrecked, and yet walked away with hardly a scratch. You just have to say, God was on the scene. Satan may try to kill us many times in life, but he cannot do it until God's purpose is fulfilled in us. He can afflict us, but he cannot go beyond what God will allow. In Psalms 34:19, David said, **“Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.”** No that is not speaking of headaches and mashed fingers. The term afflictions, is applicable to persecutions, situations, circumstances of life that Satan causes to come upon us, but out of that God delivers us all. When the three Hebrew children were thrown in the fiery furnace, that was the furnace of affliction. When God delivered the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage, slavery, and servitude, where they whipped them, and abused them in every way they could think of, He delivered them from all their afflictions. Many times, these testings can become afflictions, thrown at you and me in many ways, but it is always to work God's purpose in us. Therefore, if God does something to take something out of you and me, it is always an element of our fleshly nature, which is many times reluctant to do what God wants done, and in the right way. He allows it, so He can remove something of the flesh nature, and replace it with something of His divine nature. That is why it says, **“But let patience have her perfect (or complete) work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.”** This is why many times, people become so impatient, when they find themselves in trying circumstances.

SEEING THE HAND OF GOD IN LIFE'S TRIALS

I am going to tell you a story of something that took place many years ago. It is a true story. My mother did not know I was going to tell this. If this would have happened years ago among Pentecostal people, they would probably have written a story about it. My father was injured as a young boy, by falling across a wagon bed. Then he had the flu during WWI, and the affects of it settled in his back. After he and my mother married, he started having problems with his back, down in his lower back. It gradually got worse, and sometime after I, and then my sister were born, in the process of time, he began to go to various doctors. Well, I grant you, they did not have all the technology they have today. Many times the things those doctors said, and conditions diagnosed, were just according to the general run of complaints and symptoms, and such like. To hurry the story along, by the time we come to the year of 1930, the depression had hit. There was no work. What little money he did have, he spent on 28 different doctors. As a little boy, I remember waking up at night and hearing Daddy walking the floor. I have heard him say mother, Will you get me a hot water bottle? Now it is hard many times, for a child to realize what is going on. But the depression had hit, and we had no social security, no welfare, or anything like that, back then. But I am sure glad, a dollar was a dollar. Things were not as inflated as they are now. My Dad had almost reached the place where he was crying, and praying to die, because his back hurt him so badly at night. I did not know these things as a child. Mother did not relate these things to my sister and me. She kept them all in her own heart. Finally she read the local paper, that was printed in Pekin, the old Pekin Banner. A young doctor by the name of Willy Green had just finished medical school, and came to Pekin. He set up practice with his father, who was also named Willy Green. When mother read that, she begged Dad to go down and see him. Dad said, They are all alike. I am not giving credit to a doctor, but the thing is, doctors back then, I believe, had a little more conscience and reliance upon the Creator, than this new breed of today, that want to put their trust and confidence in technology. He finally submitted to Mother's plea and went down. As that young doctor examined him and asked him, What did the other doctors way? Sciatic rheumatism, lumbago, weak back,

and on and on. He looked at him and said, Any man would have a weak back, when it is eaten up with tuberculosis. Dad said, Do you mean that is what my trouble is? He said, I'll stake my life on it. He took him to Louisville, on the following Tuesday. He drove the car himself, and took Dad over there and x-rayed him. It showed exactly the 3rd and 4th vertebrae, up from the tail bone, it was just like two ice cream cones, tip against tip, ready to break through. He said, You could bend over to tie your shoe, and that could snap your spinal chord and you would be dead just that quick. I wouldn't give you a nickel for your life. Now the analysis of it all is, There was no medicine then, no antibiotics to fight tuberculosis, as there is now. The doctor was left to design and use something, that I have to say, The Creator put in him. He had a blacksmith make a frame out of galvanized gas pipe, the size of a screen door, and laced that with canvas, and made two of them, and put a 9 inch curve in them. I had come home from school as a little boy in the 1st grade, when I saw the doctor and my mother out in the front yard with two sticks of wood, bending these pipes to put a 9 inch curve in them. I did not know what this was all about, but I did know as they brought them into the house, for they fixed some wooden blocks on the head part of the bed, and on the foot part of the bed, and put one of these frames on there. The doctor said to my Dad, Get on there. After he got on there, the doctor said, I am going to ask you if you can stay on there six months? Well in the end, he was on them, back and forth, first on his stomach, then on his back, for two whole years. The next six months, he was put on another bed with a wooden floor in it, with just two comforts as a pad. Now I will tell this, Some of you young women in here, let me ask this, If your husband was to get sick, and be in a bad shape for years, I wonder if you would stay with him? Would you stay with him and care for him through all his sickness? After all, you swore you could when you took the oath, For better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in health and in sickness, until death do us part. My mother told me later, that the picture looked very dark. How would a young mother care for two small children just starting to school. What security would she have? She said she cried herself to sleep many nights. Then one night in a dream, she saw a terrible storm taking place, and as she saw herself on the outside looking at this storm rolling, the sky became black with clouds. She knew a terrible storm was getting ready to hit, so she began to say, What will we do? Then all of a sudden, she saw those clouds, just like there came a divide, and in the center of that, a big beautiful white cloud came rising up into the sky, and on top of that white cloud was a man like a prophet, and he looked at her and said, Don't be afraid, everything will be all right. When she woke up out of that, she never cried any more. But at the end of the three years, my Dad had to learn to walk all over again. He walked a period of time on crutches. I will never forget, for I was a little older then. I had a little red wagon, and when he got up, the doctor had designed a brace for him to wear. His recovery was slow, but he learned to walk. He had not been anywhere for three years, and mother had not been anywhere either, during all that time, so we would put him in that little red wagon, and mother would pull, while my sister and I would push, and down the gravel road we would go, to visit our neighbors. Now if you would have seen us, it was quite a sight, but we were glad Dad was off of that frame, and that he was still alive. My Dad lived until 1966, and I saw him make cross ties and do a lot of hard manual labor before he died. I say all of that, to say this, My mother did not know then, what we know now. But God showed her in that dream that everything would be all right. Yes, the storm was bad, because it was in a depression, and the health of my father was coupled with that. That made it look very dark for a young woman with two small children. Nevertheless she went through it, and I have to say this, If you think you, or your neighbor, or your brother or sister, are facing hard trials, they are not to destroy you. If you are a child of God, somewhere in it all God is going to take care of you. If He has promised to meet our needs, then the thing we have to do is rely on Him to do that. I know this, If we will learn to rely upon Him to do that, He is going to put a people together here in the end time, that not only has been called out of denominationalism, but they are called together, to see a truth, believe that truth, and find their place in the body of Christ, doing their part to add other souls to that number. Sure there will be trials, tests, circumstances beyond their control to cope with, but God has a purpose in it all. He will bring you through every bit of it, and position you right where He want you. You do not do the choosing. You do not do the selecting. You do not set the terms. It is God who does it all, and we just fill our place. All God asks you and I to do is believe, and trust Him, and rely upon Him, and no matter how dark it gets, He will make a way. How do I know that? Because He has promised, Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world. I will never forsake you. We can have that assurance. That is why the Old Testament saints could leave a testimony, so that we could look back and talk about the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, those that escaped the ends of the sword, women that received their dead back to life again, and women that were barren giving birth to children. All of these things were how God dealt in the

Old Testament, and now we are living in a better dispensation. We have a better promise. We have a better picture. We have a better assurance, that since He is now in us, we do not have to step outside, to see if we can see a pillar of fire in the air. I do not have to go to the temple any more, to see if the Shekinah glory is still in the holy place. No sir! He is right inside of us, and we just need to learn how to respect Him in there. That is where He has got to be in this dispensation, in the tabernacle of our hearts and lives. If the revelation of His word is in there, then no wonder Paul could say, In the world you will have fears, persecutions, and such like, but inside there can be peace and joy, if you will just have confidence in the word of God, and believe that God will do exactly what He has said He will do, supply all of our needs. Therefore Saints: If you see your brother, or your sister going through some kind of trial, pray for them. Pray that God will have His perfect way. Through it all, God will establish some kind of testimony. He will establish a picture of His sovereign dealings, that will be a testimony of encouragement to others that are seeking to come and walk this way.

GOD'S WORD IS OUR COMFORT

Brothers and Sisters, as Israel has struggled, I believe with all my heart, her spiritual awakening will come about, finally, when God has dealt with an element of that society in such drastic measures, as to make them realize they need something more than the United States, to guarantee them their God given rights and privileges. When God delivered them out of Egypt, they did not have a nation to trust in, to deliver them. They trusted in Him, and that is exactly what each and everyone of us is going to have to learn to do, no matter what hits us. Furthermore, we should not sit around licking our wounds, and dwelling upon those things that have befallen us. The apostle Paul suffered much persecution, and endured many other physical hardships, but I like what he said in Philippians 3:13-14, and we should all follow his example; for he said this, **(13) "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, (14) I PRESS TOWARD THE MARK FOR THE PRIZE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF GOD, IN CHRIST JESUS. To be found in the perfect will of God, is more precious than silver and gold, and more to be desired, than deliverance from all of our problems in life."** I realize, when I think back over the last two and a half weeks, it makes you feel sometimes that you preach like this just to bring on troubles, and problems for people; but that is not the way it works. God knew there would be situations hit people, so He brings His word on, to be a comfort, a staying force to help people ride out the storm. When He permits tests to fall our way, He knows why they are permitted, when they will hit us, and He also knows through each test, what it is to accomplish. God never allows you and me to suffer something just because He enjoys it, but if we are children of His, we will learn something for our spiritual benefit through it all, just like our brother testified of tonight. We are living in the end time. We are getting drastically close to the end. I will soon be 65 years old, and do not know how much longer God will let me live. I am not even worried about it. But I know this, the closer we get to the end, the more spiritual God's people will become. It will be necessary for them to become more spiritual. It is that spiritual walk with God and that contact each individual has with His Creator, that is going to show to the outside, that there is a people in the earth today, that are not just religious, but they are true children of God, and they know they are children of His. They are spiritual because they have no other desire than to be that. You do not have to make yourself spiritual any more than a rooster makes himself crow. Maybe some of you have watched young roosters, as they begin learning to crow. I have watched them, how for the first two or three times, they will get in some of the most unusual positions you ever have seen. He will throw his little head back and just try so hard, and you think he has got laryngitis or some kind of throat problem. But after a while he gets that old crow turned up and gets those vocal chords just right, and in just a few tries he has it just right, and from then on, crowing comes natural. He is glad he can crow. My point in saying all of that is, as you learn to walk with God in truth, you do not have to try to be spiritual. Being spiritual is an attribute of what God cultivates within us. All we have to have is the desire, the want to. If that is within us, then God will lead us on, that our lives will correspond exactly with what the word portrays. Therefore, in a test, whatever God brings you or me through, it is always that He is cultivating something. God is very concerned about cultivating something between you and me. Let us go back to James for a minute or two. The apostle James must have known what he was saying when he worded things the way he did in this letter. As he is writing to Christians scattered abroad, sooner or later someone will get hold of this letter, and read it. James must have been very concerned that out of reading it, they would benefit by it. Therefore he does not say, Count it very negative when you see problems come. No, No! He just reverses it. He said, Count it

all joy. In other words, it is looking at the situation the right way. I know the way the world looks at things, there are people in the world that will say, there are so many in the world that are ordained to disaster, and there is not one thing you can do about it. Now that is a dismal way to look at things, is it not? Through the disaster you never figure that you are going to benefit anything out of it. But whatever does befall us, we know that in the end, we may not in this life benefit to the fullest extent, but the point is, The life to come is where it is going to show. Nevertheless in this life, there are things we will benefit by. We may not be aware of the benefitting point, but the main thing is, that we count it all joy. Because through the trial or test, when it is all over, and we see the hand of God undertaking for our situation, then how grateful we are to know God was with us all the time. He did not let us sink. He did not let us be destroyed. Well, in the 4th verse we see James speaking of patience, **“But let patience have her perfect work.”** What is the end result? The end result is that we become more mature, complete, developed children of God. There is something elsewhere though. Verse 5, **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and up braideth not; and it shall be given him.”** Now what kind of wisdom is James talking about? It sure isn't the wisdom that we would learn by going to college. This is the tragedy that has befallen Christendom through the centuries of time. This is why we have seen untold numbers of people who think that is what wisdom is. I am not against an education, but the wisdom we have to look at here, is a wisdom to know how to look at the problems of life that you are confronted with, and with a wise way of looking at it, eventually you will have the understanding of what to do about it. In the eyes of the world, it will look like you are a fool. Do you know, the closer we get to the end, the more and more real genuine Holy Ghost filled Christians are going to look like a cactus in the middle of a desert. Did you know a cactus in the middle of the desert is the only thing that a jackrabbit can get water out of. It is the only thing that bears fruit in dry places. This world is becoming a desert of spirituality. But I am thankful that there is a people here, the world right now does not see. The world right now does not want them. But I believe with all my heart, that some of the world, not all of the world, but some of the world, before this thing is all wrapped up, and God has taken His Church home, are going to be made to realize that there are some people here that really do reflect Jesus. They are going to say, God is with those people. However, the only way those people can reflect Jesus, is for them to be a people molded and fashioned into vessels that are subject to the leading of the Holy Ghost at all times. This wisdom has nothing to do with pouring chemicals from one test tube to another. It is a wisdom related to spiritual things that affect your and my spiritual life, as to how we grow, and what we do as we seek to walk with God. This is an experience that I had many years ago. It was when we started the church down here on State Street. In those first two and half or three years, there were a lot of little problems. To me, they were mountains, because long before I ever started the little work down here, I thought being the pastor of a church was the last thing I ever wanted to be. In my heart I said, No, I want to be an evangelist. I just do not want to be a pastor. But as it wound up, the thing I did not want to be, is the thing I had to be. I realize now, there were things that I needed to learn. Things I needed to know about what people go through, what affects people, what affects a body of people when you are trying to lead a small element of people. There were little things that would just flutter around all the time, and I began to realize that I was just a child. I did not know how to cope with these things. I used to think every preacher that came down the road with a Bible, should be given the pulpit, because I myself felt so small. Well, as long as I had that kind of attitude, they just came by the dozens, and they would take advantage. One Thursday evening, when we came to the little building, there sat a black Cadillac. A man jumped out, came walking over to me, and introduced himself as an international evangelist of such and such an association. He had just come out of Alaska, had been up to Bro. Branham's and inquired where he might have a meeting, and said Bro. Branham suggested he come to New Albany, that Bro. Junie might need an evangelist. I finally learned that many times these characters use someone's name and words to further their own purpose. We let him have the pulpit that night, but I kept noticing how he would look up for an instant, then he would look down at the pages of his Bible. I learned that the sermon he preached was one of Oral Roberts' sermons. I thought, Well that is Oral Roberts' sermon, why is he preaching that? Then he said, this place is not large enough. I have got to get a larger building. Well, he went all over Louisville trying to find a larger building, and do you know what? The Lord would not let him have anything but a Senior Citizens building over on Dixie Highway. Then he did not have any song books, and some of the people went together and bought song books. Another sister went to an Assemblies of God Church over there, because she knew they had another bible stand down in the basement, and they loaned him that. He started the meeting, I believe it was on Sunday or Monday night, and there was only a handful of people there. He had come into the area with this

big expectation, that he had to have a large auditorium, because there would be thousands of people come. Well I went on Tuesday night and thought to myself, God, if you are in this thing, let something be done. I did not go back, because the whole meeting came to a close that night, with a flop. I did not go back on Wednesday night. Then Thursday night, when I came to church, there he sat again. The whole thing had been a flop, and he knew he had been a great big windbag. Then I said to myself, Lord, I am going to try him tonight. I have got to prove to myself that this man is nothing. So I let him preach again. He would take his handkerchief and place it a certain way, and I wondered why he rolled it. He laid it up between his Bible and us. The front of the Bible stand was not like this one, it did not have the recessed part inside, it was just strictly open. He kept that handkerchief just like that, and kept glancing down and looking at it. I thought, I am going to see what he is reading out of. We had an old wood stove, that was our heat there in the old building. I was sitting behind him and as I did, I looked over his shoulder, and he had his whole sermon written out, and inserted in the pages of his Bible, so that when he turned a page, his sermon would be there. It was another one of Oral Roberts' sermons. I stirred up the fire, put a stick of wood in the stove, and went back to sit down. I said to myself, Now I know he is just one of those characters out trying to make a name for himself. Here is what he did. He left the area not even returning the Bible stand. There was so much rent due on the building, he had to hock a jack out of his car to buy gas at a filling station on Dixie Highway, down from this Senior Citizens building. These are things I found out later. I said, Lord, I have learned a lesson. Not every preacher that comes down the road, is a man of God. I said Lord, I have got to know something. I really began to pray, and ask God, Give me wisdom. I have got to know how to look at these things. As I really began to pray and ask the Lord to help me, and to give me wisdom to know how to deal with these things, I saw myself in a dream with Bro. Branham. He had come down for some reason, to practice shooting a 22 rifle. I took a bale of hay and sat it up on the bank of the road, and we walked up the road, and watched that there was no cars coming, and we had a target on that bale of hay. First he would shoot, and we would walk down to see where he had shot, and then walk back up, and I would take my turn. We were both hitting in the same spot. As we walked back up this time from seeing where he had hit, I took the rifle, getting ready to aim, when all of a sudden I heard a noise to my left. Way out across the field in front, I saw a huge thing, like a monument, began to come up out of the earth, right at the far end of the field. That monument kept rising and rising and rising, until it looked like it almost touched the clouds. I became startled watching it, but immediately there was a huge clock that appeared in the summit of it. Then all of a sudden there was a huge nest, like a large eagle or something had built on top of that. Off in the distance, I saw a strange looking bird come and light in the nest as though it was going to lay it's eggs and hatch them. As I looked at the monument, I looked at the clock and saw the minute hand was almost on twelve o'clock. I lifted the rifle to shoot this strange looking bird, but out of the corner of my eye, I looked at Bro. Branham's face. He never said one word, but I read his facial expression. His expression was, Junie, if you knew what that bird was, you would not shoot it. I looked at him and said, What is that? He said, That is a foresight bird. Try to look it up in the dictionary. There is no such bird. But look up the word foresight. I woke up with foresight on my mind. I went to the dictionary and got my answer. From that moment on, I began to realize, there are some things in life you do not get hasty with. That is why I was not to be too hasty shooting at that bird just for the fun of it. Just let it set there. Well I can see now, that bird sat on top of that monument where it could see everything, and if you are a child of God walking in this world, it may look awfully dark at times, round about you. There may be conditions develop around you, many times it will look like things are all tangled up. But if you ever ask God to give you wisdom to know how to look at it, He will lift you up high enough, and you will see the surroundings of the problem. It is not a wisdom we possess every day, and use like a vending machine. But it is something God will activate, so we can see properly. When you learn chemistry, that is a wisdom and knowledge you can use any minute, 24 hours of the day. How many understand me? When you learn how to work on a transmission, that wisdom and knowledge is there all the time. But the wisdom that God has is not something you can put in your pocket and drag around, or carry it a suitcase. It is something you have to cherish and count as valuable. The reason I say that, is because when we go to the book of Proverbs, we read about that very thing. Naturally, we all reach places in life where we feel we have a need for wisdom, and God knows we are going to need it, walking in this perplexed, crazy world, so turn with me to Proverbs, for this is where we find out how we have to approach it. Proverbs, 2nd chapter, beginning with verse 1. **(1) "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; (2) So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding, (because it has to work together,) (3) Yea if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy**

voice for understanding; (4) If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures. (In other words, it is something that is valuable. It is something to be treasured.) **(5) Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. (6) For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of His mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. (7) He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: He is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.** (That is one thing we have to learn. We have to learn to establish a picture in our mind, that there are certain things right, and we never detour from them. It is like a middle of the road, a mark, there is the middle line. Drifting too far to the right, or either way, many times finds us in the ditch.) **(8) He keepeth the paths of judgment, and preserveth the way of His saints. (9) Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and preserveth the way of His saints. Then shalt thou understand righteousness, and judgment, and equity: yea, every good path. (10) When wisdom entereth into thine heart, and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul; (11) Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee.”** Go over into the 3rd chapter, verse 5. **(5) “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (6) In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths. (7) Be not wise in thine own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. (8) It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. (9) Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the firstfruits of all thine increase; (10) So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. (11) My Son,** (Listen to this, we find this in what Paul was referring to in Hebrews.) **despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction; (12) For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth. (13) Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. (14) For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.”** Christianity, as a whole is void and destitute of those things. But I believe God has a people who is going to have it. You cannot walk into a bank and get it. Nor can you walk into a church building and get it. No. It does not work like that. It is something that God gives. God imparts it. But we have to choose certain ways in life, to allow God to prepare us. He will do those very things, because He desires to. God is always desiring to bless His children, but too much of the time, we are not in any shape for Him to bless us. He first has to chasten us. Nevertheless, we can always be assured, That all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose. Hallelujah! I will close with that. May God bless you every one. Amen!

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1715 Old Potters Lane, Jeffersonville, IN 47129
Phone: 812-282-4926 | Fax: 812-737-2757



For more information email: info@thecontender.org