

The Advocate of Truth





TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

Church Government 3-5

How was the church government set up originally?

Cracked Pots 5

Is there any value in a cracked pot?

Where Art Thou ?..... 6-7

Are our lives so full that we tend to crowd out God?

A Visitor 8

What would you do if a very special person came to visit you?

Eden 9-10

Eden was once lost. Will it be regained again?

If I Had My Life To Live Over10

What would you do differently in your life?

Do We Need To Be Afraid Of What's Coming?

The Sixth Seal 11-13

Many fear the future, should you?

Some Church Signs 13

These signs were found outside many different churches.

Signs Of The Times 14-15

Radical right groups are pushing for final victory.

Questions And Answers 16-17

Will you please define the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit.

The Church Around The World 18-19

Mexico is our topic this month.

The Children's Pages 20-23

Sabbath School Lessons

A Story - "A Hummingbird In The Garage"

Games and Puzzles

The Advocate of Truth is the official organ of The Church of God (7th Day) with headquarters at Salem, West Virginia.

It is published once a month on the fourth Monday of each month by The Advocate of Truth Press, Inc. PO Box 328, Salem, West Virginia 26426. Entered as Second Class Matter on January 22, 1990 (now periodicals) at the Post Office in Salem, West Virginia under the Postal Act of March 3, 1879. The magazine is mailed under the periodicals rate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Your subscription is free. It is paid for by people who are concerned about the truth.

Your contributions are sincerely appreciated. You may request this periodical by sending your mailing address to this address.

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to:

**THE CHURCH OF GOD
PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. Box 328
Salem, WV 26426-0328**

Telephone: 304-782-1411

Fax: 304-782-2248

E-Mail: cogsevday@aol.com

Del DeLong

Bond Tennant.....Editorial Staff

Gary Mills Managing Editor

Ludina Mills.....Children's Page Editor

Fred Hardman Printer

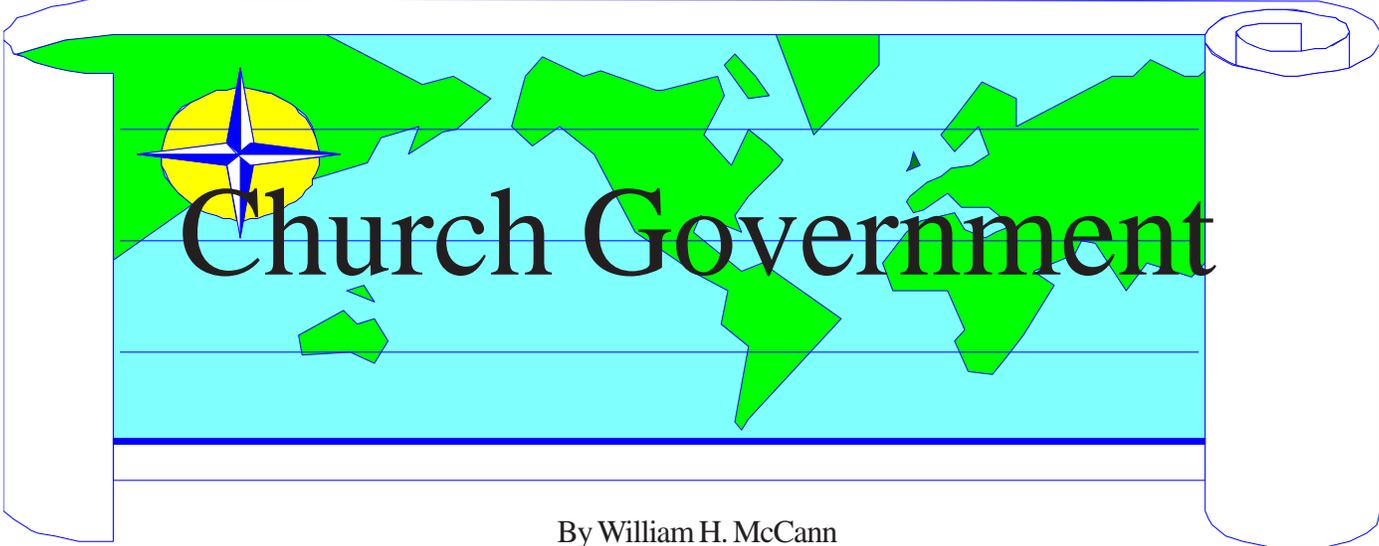
Volume LII

Number 2

August 26, 2002

The Advocate of Truth

USPS 542-940



Church Government

By William H. McCann

Apostolic Government Under Christ

God has government in His church. Jesus called twelve men to be of assistance to Him in the work of propagating the Gospel. Before He chose them for the sacred work, He spent all night in prayer. "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor" (Luke 6:12-16).

After choosing the twelve men whom He named apostles, He appointed other seventy also, "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come" (Luke 10:1).

Government means to direct and supervise, and in Christ's day, it was a servant of the people. Christ brings this out in Luke 22:24-27, "And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth." Lordship was not to be exer-

cised over God's people. The Apostle Peter confirms this in I Peter 5:2-3, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock."

Church government is to be available for advice and direction when problems in the church body as a whole arise. We have references in the New Testament to prove this is God's plan for any problem that may arise.

Apostles and Elders to Settle Problems

Problems arose in the New Testament church that had to be settled, and the ones who were consulted were the apostles and elders that God placed in the church for that purpose. The apostles and elders were consulted when the problem over the Law of Moses arose. This is recorded in Acts 15:1-4, "And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about the question. And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them."

We find that James spoke out what God had laid on

his heart (verse 13-30). It pleased the apostles and elders (verse 23), and the decision was made. We find the decision in Acts 15:28-29, "For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well."

Later, we find that seven men of good report were chosen to look after the monetary affairs of the church. This is found in Acts 6:1-5, "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. The twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And this saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch." Here, we find that the twelve had the oversight of the church and gave the advice of what was to be done. The apostles could now give themselves to preaching, teaching and administering the spiritual matters of the church.

We find that the apostles and elders had a tremendous responsibility to lead, supervise and govern the church at large in spiritual matters. When problems arose, they were to make proper decision after much prayer, study and counsel.

Paul and Timotheus worked in Lysra and Iconimum, and they went through the cities to deliver the decrees for the churches to keep that were ordained by the apostles and elders who were at Jerusalem. "And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:4-5).

The definition of decree, according to Webster's dictionary, is an order with high authority, an edict. The Apostle Paul gave orders at least on two occasions. One was concerning the collection for the needy saints at Jerusa-

lem. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God has prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem" (I Corinthians 16:1-3). The second was in connection with the annual observance of the Lord's Supper. Read I Corinthians 11:19-34. Paul gave orders to keep the ordinances as God gave them to him. "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." (I Corinthians 11:2). God's word tells us, "Where no counsel is the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Proverbs 11:14). "Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in multitude of counselors they are established" (Proverbs 15:22).

The Old Testament government of the church in the wilderness had the same type of government that the New Testament church was patterned after. (Numbers 11:16; 13:1-16). There could be more references given, but these are a few scriptures to show that God had government also in the Old Testament era. Moses found the burden of government too heavy upon himself to bear it alone, and we find seventy men were chosen by Moses to help in the administering of government. God also had twelve men, one from each tribe, to assist in the work of searching out the land of Canaan and to keep order among the tribes. All these references bring out in God's Word that He never had one man alone carry out the responsibility that goes along with government.

One Man leadership Unsafe

We must settle all matters God's way, as laid down in His word, and follow the words of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-18, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY WORD MAY BE ESTABLISHED. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be

loosed in heaven."

We read of a man called Diotrefes who loved to have preeminence. He cast some out of the church. "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrefes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church" (III John 9-10).

We read in Acts 5:36 of a man named Theudas. "For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to

nought."

After Theudas, we read of Judas of Galilee. "After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed" (Acts 5:37).

We all want to be a part of God's church and be involved in the spreading of God's true message of truth in these last days. What better way can it be done than by being organized God's way?

We can be certain the Church of God, with the Apostolic government, will stand until Christ returns. "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles



Cracked Pots



A water bearer in India had two large pots. Each hung on the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water.

At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived only half full. For a full two years, this went on daily with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, perfect for which it was made. But the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its own imperfections, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do.

After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you. I have been able to deliver only half of my load because this crack in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaws, you have to do

all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

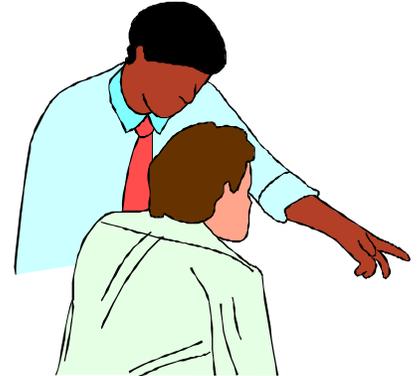
The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw, and I plant flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you've watered them. For two years, I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you being just the way you are, there wouldn't be this beauty to grace the house."

The moral of this story is that each of us has our own unique flaws. We are all cracked pots. But it's the cracks and flaws we each have that make our lives together so very interesting and rewarding. You just have to take each person for what he is, and look for the good in him.

Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape. Remember to appreciate all the different people in your life! Blessings to all my crackpot friends and family too!
-From the Internet

"Where Art Thou?"

By Bond Tennant



"And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked: and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:8-10).

God created man with freedom to choose. In Genesis 3, we read of man's fall into sin. This sin resulted in Adam's expulsion from the Garden in Eden and alienated him from God. All of Adam's posterity would experience the same: guilt, shame, fear and alienation! Adam and Eve hid from God behind gift leaves in the bushes of the Garden. In the cool of the day, God walked in the garden to seek them.

The first question that God asks in Scripture is found here: "Where art Thou?" God did not ask this question just for information. God is omniscient. Therefore, He needed no inquiry as to where the first humans were. The question was reflective and convicting. It was asked for the benefit of Adam and Eve! It probed their hearts and pricked their consciences.

The questions that God did not ask are revealing.

God did not ask, "Have you been a good little boy and a good little girl?" He knows all. He knew they had not been good. He knew about their sin before creation. Likewise, when Jesus comes to us, He does not ask such a question. He knows we all have sinned. "For all have

sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Roman 3:23). Every one of us has gone astray. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isaiah 53:6). If we deny this fact, we deceive ourselves. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (I John 1:8).

God did not ask, "Why have you done this?" Humans are fascinated by "why" questions. Therapists and other professionals seek to discover the answers to the "why" questions. However, even if we understand the motives for our choices, we are not free from sin. Freedom begins with acknowledgment and repentance, not deeper insight.

God did not ask, "What am I going to do now?" God was not caught off guard because He already had a plan. His only plan was the plan of redemption. He knew how this plan would operate. He reveals it throughout the Scriptures to help man understand what is required of him to be in a friendship relationship with his Creator.

God did not explode and say, "How dare you?" He did not storm away and separate Himself from them. Yes, He was offended by their sin, and His heart was broken by their rebellion. His fellowship with man was broken by the choice. God's love constrained him to pursue man. Man moved away, but God pursued him. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

God's first question tells us much about Him. It tells us that:

1. Despite our sins, God has not withdrawn from us. God still loves us and wants to have a relationship with us.

2. God knows the worst about us. Our sins grieve Him, but they do not shock Him. There are no secrets with Him, and it is useless to hide!

3. No matter what we do, God wants our relationship with Him to be restored through our Lord Jesus Christ. He is not reluctant to forgive.

God's first question - "Where art thou?" - is a hard one for all of us. God is calling us out of our hiding places. He is asking us to take a hard look at ourselves. He is calling us to end our game of hide-and-seek.

The response of Adam to God's first question is very interesting. He told God that he was ashamed of what he had done. Immediately, he tried to hide again! This time it was by self defence and blame shifting. He pointed to Eve as the real culprit. This is much like us. We run from self-disclosure, and we refuse ownership of our sin. As our defense mechanisms have stripped away the Holy Spirit, honesty finally comes. When God questions us, we may respond by saying, "Everybody is doing it." We like to take comfort in numbers. We use the logic that if everybody sins, then nobody sins. We may seem to hide in the multitude of sinners. It is like being on a major highway going with the flow of the 65-miles-per-hour traffic in a 55-miles-per-hour zone. We are all speeding. Who is the patrol officer going to stop? We reason that it would be dangerous to go any slower.

Another typical response is, "I'm not so bad. I'm probably better than most people." We may take comfort in thinking that we are better than our neighbor. We may conclude that sin is what we read about in the newspapers or see on television-murder, kidnapping, terrorism, robbery or rape. By using our speeding illustration, we console ourselves by remembering that while everyone else is going 65 in a 55-mile-per-hour zone, we are only going 60. Hence, we come to the conclusion that we aren't so bad! It is an important turning point for us when we realize, by the Holy Spirit, that we are selfish people. Sin is, in essence, the choices we make that come from the inner principle of "I have a right unto myself." This can be exposed when...

*we are more controlled by self than by the Holy

Spirit

*we disregard His Lordship for our own selfish desires

*the standards of the Scriptures are not the standards for our conduct

*we become apathetic to God's voice

*we prostitute ourselves with worldly values, priorities and methods

*we neglect the spiritual disciplines of prayer, Bible study and meditation

*we love human praise and harbor a secret fondness for being noticed by man

*we have a stubborn, unteachable spirit and become harsh and sarcastic toward others

*we display a critical spirit, picking at the flaws we see in others

*we show a jealous disposition, envying others who seem more prosperous, powerful or better positioned

*a spirit of discouragement and unbelief overcomes us in adversity, and we lack confidence in God

*we are indifferent to spiritual matters substituting formality for spiritual reality

*we have a materialistic, hoarding spirit and become stingy with God and others.

Sadly, some of us want to delay our response to God's call. We may say, "Sometime in the future, I'll come out to meet you, God. But before I meet you, I want to keep on doing what I'm doing." Many are afraid that God will take all the enjoyment out of life. Why do many people picture God as some sort of killjoy? Many feel that Jesus came to make us good - and boring. Nothing could be further from the truth! The life of the child of God is a thrill! Two elements, risk and fun, are necessary to have a thrill. Perhaps this is why a roller coaster is called a thrill ride. It is both scary and fun.

Hiding places take different shapes and forms. Life is so filled with things and activities that many can ignore God's call through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Some hide in pleasure, trying to counteract the pain with good times. Many try to anesthetize the pain through addiction.

A favorite place for "good people" to hide is in the church. Many hide behind the pews, the pulpit, the committees and the classrooms. Yet, in their quiet moments, they may hear God call, "Where art thou?"

A VISITOR

Ruth went to her mailbox, and there was only one letter. She picked it up and looked at it before opening it, but then she looked at the envelope again. There was no stamp, no postmark, only her name and address. She read the letter:

Dear Ruth, I'm going to be in your neighborhood tomorrow afternoon, and I'd like to stop by for a visit. Love always, Jesus

Her hands were shaking as she placed the letter on the table. "Why would the Lord want to visit me? I'm nobody special. I don't have anything to offer."

With that thought, Ruth remembered her empty kitchen cabinets. "Oh my goodness, I really don't have anything to offer. I'll have to run down to the store and buy something for dinner." She reached for her purse and counted out its contents of five dollars and forty cents. "Well, I can get some bread and cold cuts at least."

She threw on her coat and hurried out the door. A loaf of French bread, a half-pound of sliced turkey and a carton of milk left Ruth with a grand total of twelve cents to last her until Monday. Nonetheless, she felt good as she headed home, her meager offerings tucked under her arm.

"Hey lady, can you help us, lady?" Ruth had been so absorbed in her dinner plan that she hadn't even noticed two figures huddled in the alleyway. They were a man and woman, both of them dressed in little more than rags. "Look, lady, I ain't got a job, ya know, and my wife and I have been living out here on the street, and, well, now it's getting cold, and we're getting kinda hungry. If you could help us, lady, we'd really appreciate it." Ruth looked at them. Both were dirty, and they smelled badly. Frankly, she was certain that they could get some kind of work if they really wanted to.

"Sir, I'd like to help you, but I'm a poor woman myself. All I have is a few cold cuts and some bread, and I'm having an important guest for dinner tonight. I was planning on serving that to him." "Yeah, well, okay lady, I understand. Thanks anyway." The man put his arms around the woman's shoulders, turned and headed back into the alley. As she watched them leave, Ruth felt a familiar twinge in her heart. "Sir, wait!" The couple stopped and turned as she ran down the alley after them. "Look, why don't you take this food. I'll find something else to serve my guest." She handed the man her grocery bag. "Thank you lady. Thank you very much!"

"Yes, thank you!" It was the man's wife, and Ruth could see now that she was shivering. "You know, I've got another coat at home. Here, why don't you take this one?" Ruth unbuttoned her jacket and slipped it over the woman's shoulders. Then smiling, she turned and walked to the street without anything to serve her guest. "Thank you lady! Thank you very much!"

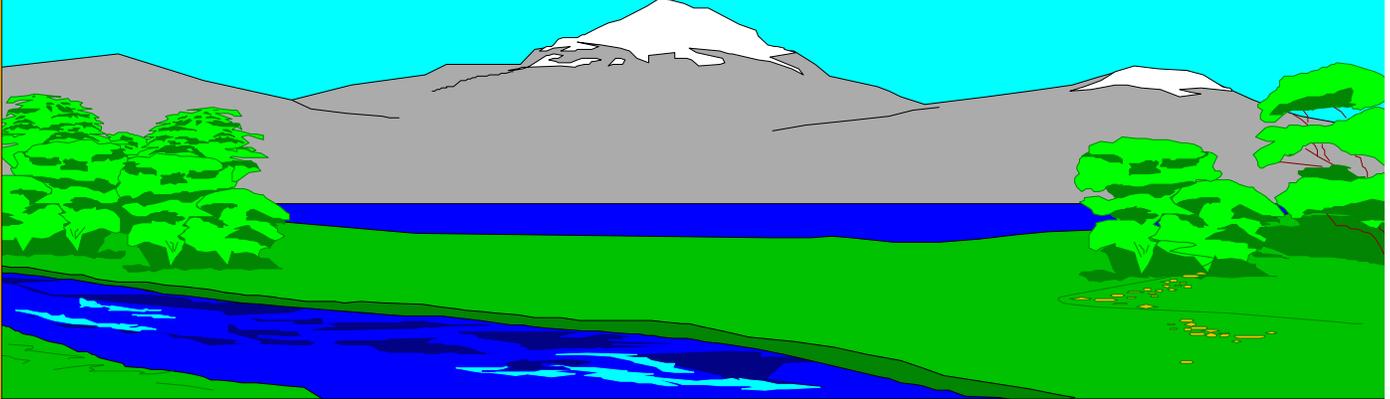
Ruth was chilled by the time she reached her front door, and was worried too. The Lord was coming to visit, and she didn't have anything to offer Him. She fumbled through her purse for the door key. But as she did, she noticed another envelope in her mailbox. "That's odd. The mailman doesn't come twice in one day." She took the envelope out of the box and opened it. It read: Dear Ruth, It was so good to see you again. Thank you for the lovely meal. And thank you, too, for the beautiful coat. Love always, Jesus

The air was still cold, but even without her coat, Ruth no longer noticed.

From the Internet

EDEN

By Daniel Sanchez



The American Heritage Dictionary renders Eden as: 1) The first home of Adam and Eve; 2) A state of bliss; ultimate happiness.

If we think about this subject, we think about the immortality that man had before sin entered into the picture. God warned Adam and Eve, by His command, "...of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:16-17).

It was when Adam and Eve failed to heed God's warning that the curse of the almighty God was inflicted upon them, and they were driven out of the garden of Eden. Obviously, the tree of life was there in that garden, and man could no longer eat of its fruit and thus live for ever.

An angel stood guard at the entrance of the garden with a flaming sword to guard it, so that man could not come into the garden. It was a sorrowful time when the Garden of Eden was no longer accessible

The questions now come to mind: Where is Eden now? Can we gain entry to this form of paradise? There are those who say that, if we will be faithful, we can go and eat of the tree of life in the midst of that Paradise in heaven. They use the following text to support their claims. Revelation 2:7 reads as follows: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."

Some religious scholars use other texts to prove we

will go to heaven, like II Corinthians 12:2-4 and Luke 23:42-43. They use these texts to try to prove that we will go to heaven, and eat of the tree of life where Jesus is now.

When Jesus was on the cross, He promised one of the malefactors, "today thou shalt be with me in paradise". But Jesus did not go to paradise that day, the next day or even the following day. He stayed in the grave three days and three nights, thus fulfilling His promise that he would remain three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. See Matthew 12:40. The prophets foretold of His death and resurrection before it happened.

John wrote in Revelation 22:14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city. The city of God is the new Jerusalem that will come down from heaven when Jesus returns, and this is where the tree of life is located. The overcomers will obtain that promise at His return to earth when He will restore all things that were lost. Eden is the number one priority, when Jesus brings His kingdom with Him. The water of life that will proceed from the throne of God and will water the earth, while the tree of life will grow on both sides of the bank of the river, and its the leaves will be for healing of the nations. See Ezekiel 47:1-12.

Yes, the tree of life will be restored during the Millennium or 1000 years of Christ's reign on earth where all the overcomers will live.

When talking to the thief on the cross, the reason why Jesus said "thou shalt be with me in paradise" is because

Eden had to be restored once again when Jesus sets up His kingdom

To say that we will go to heaven is not the doctrine of Christ. One reason why is because Jesus said, "outside the city will be dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whosoever maketh a lie", and this does not occur in heaven.

In conclusion, paradise will be on earth, not in heaven, and Jesus will reign with His saints here on the earth for a thousand years. We will once again have paradise or Eden on earth. Be careful when you read God's Word, and do not allow private interpretations to enter your mind.

He who hath an ear let them hear, saith the Lord.

If I Had My Life To Live Over

By Erma Bombeck

(This was written after she found out she was dying from cancer.)

I would have gone to bed when I was sick instead of pretending the earth would go into a holding pattern if I weren't there for the day.

I would have burned the pink candle sculpted like a rose before it melted in storage.

I would have talked less and listened more.

I would have eaten the popcorn in the 'good' living room and worried much less about the dirt when someone wanted to light a fire in the fireplace.

I would have taken the time to listen to my grandfather ramble about his youth.

I would have shared more of the responsibility carried by my husband.

I would have sat on the lawn with my children and not worried about grass stains.

I would have cried and laughed less while watching television and more while watching life.

I would never have bought anything just because it was practical, wouldn't show soil, or was guaranteed to last a lifetime.

Instead of wishing away nine months of pregnancy, I'd have cherished every moment and realized that the wonderment growing inside me was the only chance in life to assist God in a miracle.

When my kids kissed me impetuously, I would never have said, "Later, now go get washed up for dinner." There would have been more "I love you's" and more "I'm sorry's."

But mostly, given another shot at life, I would seize every minute...look at it and really see it..live it...and never give it back.

Stop sweating the small stuff.

Don't worry about who doesn't like you, who has more, or who's doing what.

Instead, let's cherish the relationships we have with those who do love us.

Let's think about what God has blessed us with and what we are doing each day to promote ourselves mentally, physically, emotionally as well as spiritually.

Life is too short to let it pass you by.

We only have one shot at this, and then it's gone.

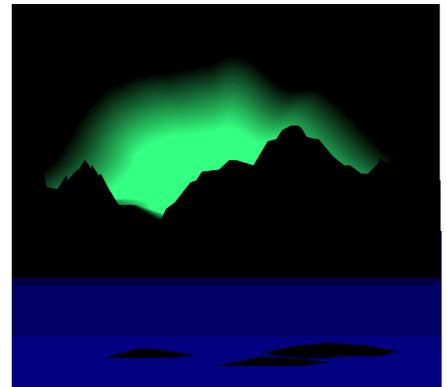
I hope you all have a blessed day.

Do We Need To Be Afraid Of What's Coming?



The Sixth Seal

By Del DeLong



The future is a mystery to many people, but those who read the Word of God and understand its prophecies know some of the events that will soon come to pass. Some of these events are very disturbing. One such event can be found in Revelation 6:12-17. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken by a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

These scriptures describe a time of great fear and turmoil on the earth. The scene begins with the opening of the sixth seal. The seals represent time periods. Jesus was the only one found worthy to open the seven seals from the book. He became worthy at his death and resurrection. From that time on, He removed the seals one by one and certain events followed the opening of each seal. We are now living in the time of the fifth seal, so the events of the sixth seal have not happened yet. Jesus will

soon return to catch up His saints. The people who will be left on the earth will experience the turmoil of this sixth seal. They will see Jesus and the kingdom that He brings with Him, because they ask the mountains and rocks to fall on them to hide them from His face.

No one who is left on the earth will be exempt from the terrible turmoil that will be taking place. From kings to mighty men, rich men to bond men, and chief captains to freemen - all will be trying to hide from the face of Jesus and the wrath of God that will soon come.

This turmoil in itself will be great. We are told of a great earthquake that will come and move every mountain and every island, and it will move them all out of their places. It is hard for us to imagine such a great earthquake which will affect the whole earth. Clouds of smoke, dust, and ash will be spewed into the air making the sun to appear black and the moon will appear as crimson through the haze.

Stars, in the form of meteors, will be crashing into the earth, and we all know the devastation they will cause. Through all of this, the atmosphere will be cleared in a certain place, like a scroll opening up. All will be able to see the New Jerusalem that Jesus brings with Him when He comes for His saints.

The view that we see here in Revelation is shown to us in other places in the Bible. Jesus tells us of these events in Matthew 24:29-31. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from

heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to another."

If we are one of His elect, we will be caught away from the turmoil that is taking place on the earth. The sixth seal will bring great fear to a lot of men.

In Isaiah 24:19-23, we see another view of this awesome event. "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall and not rise again. And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

We can see here the Lord will set up His kingdom in Jerusalem.. The city of God will be positioned over the old city of Jerusalem. It will appear as a sea of glass, clear as crystal. Its composition will be pure gold, and it will cover such a large area that it will look like a sea. Those who have prevailed will have their home here. "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass having the harps of God" (Revelation 15:2). The overcomers here are the saints of God. This city is described in greater detail later on in the book of Revelation. "And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal: And the building of the wall of it was of jasper; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass" (Revelation 21:10-11,18). Read more of this chapter to get a detailed look at this beautiful city. This city will be

the home of the saints who will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air at the first resurrection. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6). Who will be in that city? "Blessed and holy are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14). His saints will be in that protected area, but who are these saints and what are the requirements for one to become a saint? "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12). God has given us commandments to live by. One of his commandments is that we eat only clean meats. Another one of his commandments is that we pay our tithes and give offerings. Ten of his commandments are listed in Exodus 20. These commandments are all requirements. The second part is the faith of Jesus. We must accept Jesus as our personal savior. We must become baptized in his name. We must partake of the Lord's Supper once a year in the manner He prescribed. We must love our neighbor as our self. We must follow the example of his life.

We can now see the events of the sixth seal happen at the time Jesus will return to earth, resurrect his saints, and catch up the remaining saints who are alive at that time. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). The question must now be asked. What will happen to those who are not caught up and remain on the earth? The answer is obvious - they will have to endure the happenings of the sixth seal. They will go through that horrendous earth quake. Panic and fear will be the rule, as the leaders themselves tremble at the awesome sights, sounds, and happenings of the sixth seal.

The wrath of God will soon be poured out upon the face of the earth. After the seventh seal is removed and silence occurs for a short time, seven angels will descend upon the earth with vials full of the seven last plagues. "And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the

wrath of God upon the earth" (Revelation 16:1). These vials will be poured out one at a time, and each vial will contain a plague. All seven plagues make up the wrath of God.

God is so angry at the sin and actions of the people here on the earth, that He will punish the wicked of the earth with these seven last plagues. The sixth seal is not one of those plagues, so when those left on the earth experience the events of the sixth seal, they will be seeing just the beginning of what is about to come. The righteous will be enjoying the safe haven of the new Jerusalem, the City of God, at this time. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou has made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling" (Psalms 91:7-10).

The righteous or saints of God will be standing on the Sea of Glass, the new Jerusalem, at that time and throughout the time of the seven last plagues. That beautiful city will be above the earth over the old city of Jerusalem during these times.

Should we be afraid of what is to come? A better question might be: are you a child of God who will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air when Jesus returns to earth with His kingdom? If the answer to that question is yes, then there will be no need to fear what's coming. If your answer is no, I do not keep all of God's commandments, and I do not follow the testimony of Jesus, then you will be on the earth when God's wrath will be poured out.

It really comes down to you and the choices you make now. God's gift of eternal life is free. All you have to do is become a child of God, and this gift will be given you along with all of God's protection. If you decide to remain a child of the world, then you really do need to fear what will soon come.

In upcoming articles we will discuss the seven last plagues in greater detail, and we will take a closer look at the New Jerusalem, the city of God, that Jesus brings with Him when He returns. Study the scriptures so that you will know what must soon come to pass.

SOME CHURCH SIGNS

Submitted by Kathy and Lee Petit
(found on the Internet)

- The best vitamin for a Christian is B1.*
- Under the same management for over 2000 years*
- Soul food served here.*
- Tithe if you love Jesus, anyone can honk.*
- Don't wait for the hearse to take you to church.*
- Don't give up. Moses was once a basket case.*
- Life has many choices. Eternal life has two.*
- What's yours?*
- Worry is interest paid on trouble before it is due.*
- Wal-Mart isn't the only saving place.*
- Preach the Gospel at all times.*
- Use words if necessary.*
- Prevent truth decay. Brush up on your Bible.*
- It's hard to stumble when you are down on your knees.*
- What part of "THOU SHALT NOT" don't you understand?*
- A clear conscience makes a soft pillow.*
- "The wages of sin is death." Repent before payday.*
- Never give the Devil a ride. He will want to drive.*
- Can't sleep? Try counting your blessings.*
- Forbidden fruit creates many jams.*
- Christians keep the faith..., but not from others.*
- Satan subtracts and divides.*
- God adds and multiplies.*
- If you do not want to reap the fruits of sin, stay out of the Devil's orchard.*
- To belittle is to be little.*
- Don't let the littleness in others bring out the littleness in you.*
- God answers kneemail.*
- Try Jesus. If you don't like Him, the Devil will always take you back.*



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

*The following articles appeared in **THE REPORT** which is published in Canada.*

The real battle lines

Radical rights groups are pushing for final victory -enforced acceptance by Mike Mastromatteo

Canada is rapidly becoming a brave new world, observers say, where tolerance has come to mean promoting the views and activities of groups that despise traditional morality at the expense of basic human rights for those who disagree.

Consider the following:

Last December the Toronto District School Board instituted a human rights policy designed to eliminate "homophobia" on the part of students, teachers, staff and visitors to school property. But parents' groups have complained that the policy marginalizes Christians and other faith groups who believe homosexual behavior is inherently disordered.

Meanwhile, Trinity Western University (TWU) in Langley, B.C., is gearing up to defend its five-year teacher training program before Canada's Supreme Court later this spring. Four years ago the B.C. College of Teachers (BCCT) denied TWU's application for full provincial accreditation because the college insists that its 2,700 students adhere to a code of behavior based on the Bible. Students must agree not to engage in all forms of sexual promiscuity, including homosexuality. The case has been in the courts ever since.

Not satisfied to merely promote homosexuality, Toronto school trustees shelved a religious accommodation policy in order to give priority to their proposed Human Rights Policy and Procedures. Ostensibly designed

to protect all human rights, the document calls for antihomophobia teaching to "permeate all subject areas." Nearly 500 parents showed up to protest the new policy, but the board approved it anyway. Debate at the trustee's meeting was limited on the grounds that the public's prevailing homophobia could have meant the policy's demise.

Gail Nyberg, chairwoman of the Toronto District School Board, says the new policy was developed over an 18-month period with numerous public meetings and more than 3,000 written interventions from concerned groups. "Our foundation statement and companion documents were consulted to death and they reflect the majority of responses received," she said. It does cause me concern that some members of our community, mostly notably in the Muslim community, (feel) we are infringing on their rights to believe that homosexuality is a sin. The Muslim community can continue to believe what they like, but everyone must be treated in an equitable manner."

Toronto school trustees have not heard the last from Muslim parents. "We don't want (homosexuality) pushed on our kids," Idrahin El-Sayed, president of the Toronto District Muslim Education Assembly, told trustees, "and we won't stand for it to be in our school."

Non-Muslim parents are also preparing to resist. "Our organization opposes this policy," says Peter Stock, national affairs director for the Canada Family Action Coalition. "We've encouraged our members to take a stand against it, just as members of the radical gay community are promoting it."

Mr. Stock notes that the Toronto school policy was "forced through" by homosexual activists who have few children actually enrolled in Toronto school system. "They

are the biggest backers of the antidiscrimination policy," he says. "This is one of their recruiting tactics."

The homosexual agenda is also meeting growing resistance on the west coast. At first, TWU officials tried to avoid offending the BCCT by saying as little as possible about their accreditation application outside of court. But in the weeks leading up to the Supreme Court hearing TWU has prepared a \$125,000 public relations campaign to rally public support. More than 200 "background information" packages, containing fact sheets and a 10-minute video, have been mailed to media outlets and government officials. "The issue is about the rights of Canadians to go to the workplace and be judged on their basic knowledge, competency and skills, not on their views on sexual orientation," said TWU executive vice-president Guy Saffold in the National Post.

Heather Stilwell, chairwoman of the Surrey, B.C., school board, says that those who oppose the homosexual agenda are right to insist on being heard. And, she adds, they may find that a strong stand for traditional morality benefits them politically.

Mrs. Stilwell, whose own career in politics was launched out of opposition to the introduction of gay-friendly textbooks in Surrey kindergartens and Grad 1 classes, was convincingly reelected to the Surrey school board last November. Militant gay advocacy and other antifamily initiatives succeed, she says, only when small elites are allowed to gain control of the public policy agenda.

"I think we at the Surrey School Board are able to give a voice to people who are really in the mainstream but are somehow made to feel alone," Mrs. Stilwell says. "I've been surprised by the support we continue to receive in our efforts. It's as if it has become safe once again to be on-side for the family."

Comment

Accept means to receive and approve favorably. Tolerate means to bear or put up with someone or something that is not especially liked.

In this evil world, children of God must tolerate many things which are forbidden by the Word of God, but they must not accept them.

It seems like in many cases those who call good evil and evil good get the upper hand forcing those, who strive to live by God's Word, to accept evil which is condemned by God is one form of persecution.

Jesus said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:10).

It's still A.D.

Popular culture begins the third millennium with a new interest in Jesus by Marianne Ward

Hollywood marriages break up all the time. So news three weeks ago of a split between media mogul Ted Turner and actress Jane Fonda may not have seemed unusual. But the reported reason certainly was. According to WorldNetDaily (www.worldnetdaily.com), friends say the split was due to Fonda's embrace of "born again evangelical Christianity" about two years ago. Not surprisingly, her conversion may have put a strain on her marriage. Husband Ted once attacked Christianity as a "religion for losers." It is probably too soon to make Ms. Fonda a poster girl for Christianity, but she is part of a trend toward a growing interest in the founder of Christianity at the turn of the millennium. The wishy washy "spirituality" of the '90s increasingly has a face on it, that of Jesus Christ.

Consider the following sample of events from around the world, ranging from the silly to the substantial:

In November, British singer Cliff Richards released a song called "Millennium Prayer," a rendition of the Lord's Prayer set to the tune of "Auld Lang Syne." Mainstream radio stations refused to play it, and rocker George Michael dismissed it as vile. But supposedly nonreligious Britishers put his song at the top of the charts for four weeks.

In December, the A&E Network aired a special edition of its popular show Biography that focused on the life of Jesus.

Jesus made the cover of Maclean's magazine November 29.

The National Post printed a 104-page supplement January 1 entitled 2,000 Years of Christianity. The newspaper sold 400,000 copies that day and fielded orders for another 25,000.

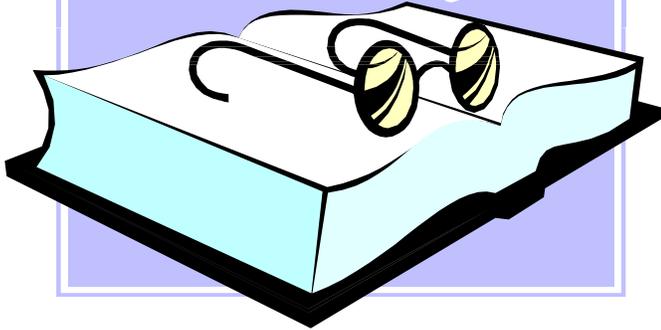
Comment

Many are fascinated with Jesus, but very few really know Jesus and have a personal relationship with Him. Anyone can find out about the life of Jesus by studying history, but very few are willing to follow in His footsteps.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps" (I Peter 2:21).

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Will you please define the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit?

Answer: The passage that draws a clear contrast between the life-style of the Spirit filled child of God and that of the sinful human nature is found in Galatians 5:16-26. The Apostle Paul discusses the general difference in life-styles by emphasizing that the Spirit and the flesh are at war with each other. He also includes a specific list of both the works of the flesh and of the fruit of the Spirit.

The works of the flesh is the sinful element in human nature with its corrupt desires. Those who practice the works of the flesh cannot inherit the kingdom of God. Therefore, they must be resisted and put to death in a continual warfare that the believer wages through the Holy Spirit.

The works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21) include:

1. "Adultery" This is sexual relations of a married person with someone other than his or her spouse.
2. "Fornication" This is immoral sexual conduct and intercourse. This includes taking pleasure in pornographic pictures, films or writing. It also includes adultery. In I Corinthians 5:1, the Apostle Paul wrote: "It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife."
3. "Uncleanness" This includes sexual sins, evil deeds and vices. It also includes evil thoughts and desires of the heart. "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetous-

ness let it not be once named among you, a becometh saints" (Ephesians 5:3). "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry" (Colossians 3:5).

4. "Lasciviousness" This is following one's passions and desires to the point of having no shame or public decency. "And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed" (II Corinthians 12:21).

5. "Idolatry" This is the worship of spirits, persons or graven images. It also is making any person, institution or thing greater to or equal to God and His Word. Read Colossians 3:5 again.

6. "Witchcraft" This is sorcery, spiritism, black magic, worship of demons and use of drugs to produce "spiritual" experiences.

7. "Hatred" This is intense hostile intentions and acts, extreme dislike or enmity.

8. "Variance" This is quarreling and antagonism. It also includes struggling for superiority.

9. "Emulations" This is resentfulness and the envying of another's success.

10. "Wrath" this is explosive anger or rage which flares into violent words and deeds.

11. "Strife" This is selfish ambition and the seeking of power. "For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debts, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbiting, whisperings, swellings, tumults" (II

Corinthians 12:20).

12. "Seditions" This is introducing divisive teachings not supported by the word of God. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

13. "Heresies" this is division within the congregation into selfish groups or cliques which destroy the unity of the church. "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you" (I Corinthians 11:19).

14. "Envyings" This is resentful dislike of another person who has something that one desires.

15. "Murders" This is the killing of a person unlawfully and with malice.

16. "Drunkeness" This is the impairing of one's mental or physical control by alcoholic drink.

17. "Revellings" This means excessive feasting and revelry. It is a party spirit involving alcohol, drugs, sex, or the like.

Contrasted to the works of the flesh is a single-minded life-style called "the fruit of the Spirit." This fruit is produced in God's children as they allow the Holy Spirit to direct and influence their lives. By doing this, they destroy the power of sin, especially the works of the flesh. They walk in fellowship with God.

The fruit of the Spirit includes:

1. "Love" This is the caring and seeking for the highest good of another person without motive by personal gain. "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor" (Ephesians 5:2). Also Read I Corinthians 13.

2. "Joy" This is the feeling of gladness based on the love, grace, blessings, promises and nearness of God that belong to those who believe in Christ. "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy, For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now" (Philippians 1:3-5).

3. "Peace" This is the quietness of heart and mind based on the knowledge that all is well between the believer and the Heavenly Father. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

4. "Longsuffering" This is endurance, patience and

being slow to anger or despair. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2).

5. "Gentleness" This is not wanting to hurt someone or give him or her pain. "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).

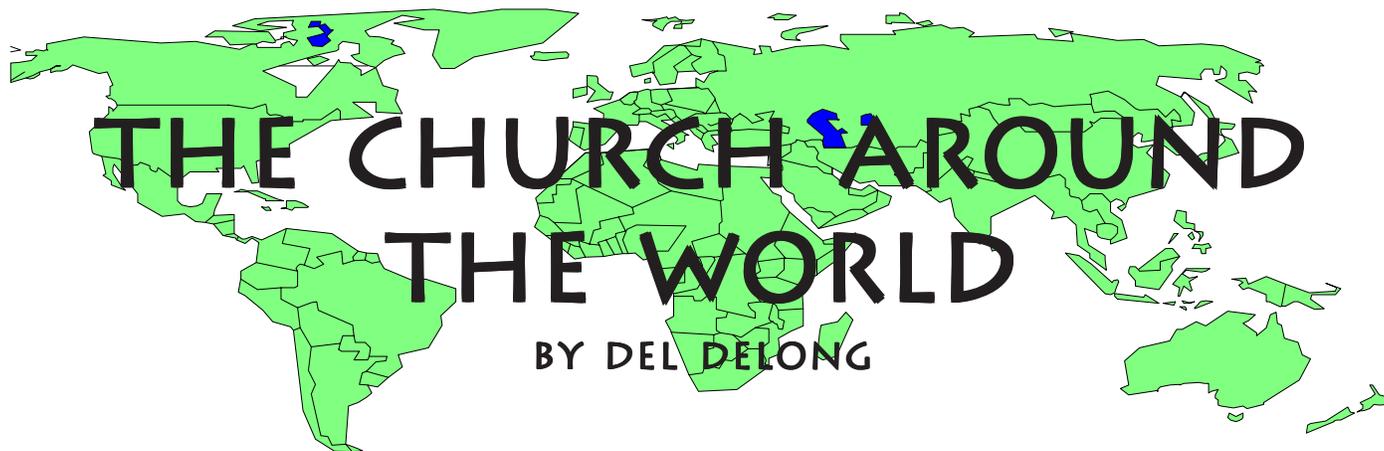
6. "Goodness" This is zeal for truth and righteousness and a hatred for evil. It can be expressed in acts of kindness or in rebuking and correcting evil. Read Luke 7:37-50 and Matthew 2:12-13).

7. "Faith" This is firm and unswerving loyalty and adherence to a person to whom one is united by promise, commitment, trustworthiness and honesty. "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone" (Matthew 23:23). "For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" (Romans 3:3). "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses" (I Timothy 6:12). "And the things that thou has heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Timothy 2:2). "Not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10).

8. "Meekness" This is restraint coupled with strength and courage. It describes a person who can be angry when anger is needed and humbly submissive when submission is needed. "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth" (II Timothy 2:25).

9. "Temperance" This is having control or mastery over one's own desires and passions. "And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible" (I Corinthians 9:25).

Children of God must practice these virtues without ceasing. They will never discover a law prohibiting them from living according to these principles!



MEXICO

The following is a report made by Brother Moises Torres

After our council meeting in Salem, W. Va., last December, I got back to California where I continued to visit the churches in this area. The church here is growing constantly. Some of our outstanding pastors are Tomas Olivares, Manuel Gonzalez, and Ruben Calderon.

January (the last weekend in 2002): I attended the conference of general Spanish speaking ministers, which was held in Jaral del Progreso, Gb. Mexico. Over 90 members of the ministry from this country and abroad came to this event. Our main subjects were *“Comparing our doctrine with modern science and technology,”* and *“Where does the Holy Spirit go when we die?”*

After this meeting I had to go to a little town called Juarez, Tlaxcala to officiate a funeral. Five members of our ministry there, located three hours drive from Mexico City, instantly died in a terrible accident on Sunday the 27th. They are Pastor Eleazar Islas Alvarez, 49 years old, and his two sons Juan Pablo Islas de la Rosa y Eleazar Islas de la Rosa, 18 and 21 years old. His brother Cornelio Islas Alvarez, 42 years old, and his brother in law Cornelio de la Rosa, 38 years old were also killed. This happened when a big tractor trailer crashed into the Ford Guayin in which they were driving. They all were members of our ministry and members of one family... It was very hard for us to stand in front of the five coffins containing the destroyed bodies of our brothers. It was only with the help of the Holy Spirit that we could lead this service during these hard times. Almost all the inhabitants of this little town accompanied the bodies to the cemetery. Brothers Rafael Mendoza, Josue Torres, and myself officiated this service.

We had a good reaping season of baptized members in

Mexico in the last Bible year. Over 70 new members were baptized into the body of Christ in all the localities of the church in this country.

February (the last weekend in Los Angeles, CA): I laid my hands on nine new members of the church for the reception of the Holy Spirit. They were baptized in a river near this city. Another four souls will be ready for baptism very soon. I also officiated the Lord’s Supper (at the appointed time) on March 27, 2002, after sundown. Sixty baptized members partook of the holy emblems on this occasion.

In the second half of April, 2002, I went to the city of Guadalajara, Mexico to officiate at another three funeral services. Brother Jose Contreras called and asked me to pray for him in the Hospital. I prayed for him and he died in my arms fifteen minutes later. Cancer was the main problem in his body. Two more died, three and eight days later. From there I travel to Jaral, Gto., to dedicate some children, and to talk to some other candidates ready for baptism. This coming Sabbath I will be in the city of Queretaro, Mexico to dedicate a new temple there. This temple will have a capacity to shelter more than 200 members, and its cost has approximately been of 35,000 U.S. Dollars. The temple in Monterrey city is in its last phases of construction, and another temple in Panuco, Veracruz (close to the Gulf of Mexico) is almost finished. Of course, we consider these as blessings from our God. It seems that as the time passes, and the church grows more and more everywhere that we have less time to accomplish everything. Please pray for the church around the world.



Baptism taking place near Mexico City



Nine newly baptized members



Some of our member who died in the tragic traffic accident are pictured here.



The newly completed church in Queretaro, Mexico

LESSON I

THE CREATION

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1.

Golden Text: Genesis 1:1.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

1. What did God create on the first day and the second day? Genesis 1:3-5,7-8.
2. What was created on the third and fourth day? Genesis 1:10, 12-14, 16-19.
3. What was created on the fifth and sixth day? Genesis 1:20-23,25-26,31.
4. What did God do when he finished his creation? Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:11.
5. Who was with God when the heaven and the earth was created? John 1:1-3.

NOTE: Another name for Jesus is "The Word". In Genesis 1:26 God was talking to Jesus when he said "Let us make man in our image...".

6. Was God happy with what He created? Genesis 1:31; Revelation 4:11.

LESSON II

GOD MADE MAN

Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:7-23.

Golden Text: Genesis 2:7 (first part).

"And the Lord formed man from the dust of the ground..."

1. Who did God create man to look like, and how did he create him? Genesis 1:27; 2:7.

2. After God created man, what did He do with him? Genesis 2:15.

3. What orders did God give to the man? Genesis 2:16-17.

4. Why did God make a woman for the man? Genesis 2:18.

5. How did God make the woman? Genesis 2:21,23.

6. What was the name of the man that God had created? Genesis 2:19.

7. For what did God bring the animals to Adam? Genesis 2:19-20.

LESSON III

MAN AND WOMAN'S DISOBEDIENCE

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:1-12.

Golden Text: Genesis 3:4.

"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

1. What was the most subtle of all the beasts in the garden? Genesis 3:1.

NOTE: Subtle means sly, clever, and deceiving.

2. Why did God tell the woman not to eat of the tree that was in the middle of the garden? Genesis 3:3.

3. What did the serpent answer when the woman told him that she should not eat of the tree? Genesis 3:4-5.

4. What did the woman do then? Genesis 3:6 (first part).

5. To whom did she give some of the fruit to eat? Genesis 3:6 (last part).

6. What happened after they had disobeyed God? Genesis 3:7.

7. What did they do when they heard God walking in the garden? Genesis 3:8.

8. When God couldn't find Adam, what did he ask? Genesis 3:9.

9. What was Adam's reason for hiding? Genesis 3:10.

10. What did he ask Adam, and what was Adam's reply? Genesis 3:11-12.

NOTE: We will continue this lesson next week.



LESSON IV

MAN AND WOMAN'S DISOBEDIENCE
(CONTINUED)

Scripture Reading: Genesis 3:13-14.

Golden Text: Genesis 3:20.

"And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living."

1. What did God ask of the woman and what was her answer? Genesis 3:13.

2. What did God say and do to the serpent? Genesis 3:14.

3. What curse did God put on Adam and his wife? Genesis 3:16-19.

4. What did God name his wife and why? Genesis 3:20.

5. What did God make for Adam and Eve? Genesis 3:21.

6. When God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden, what were they to do? Genesis 3:23.

7. What did God place at the east of the Garden of Eden? Genesis 3:24.

"Yes you did too!"

"I did not!"

Thus the little quarrel started,
Thus by unkind little words,
Two fond friends were parted.

"I am sorry."

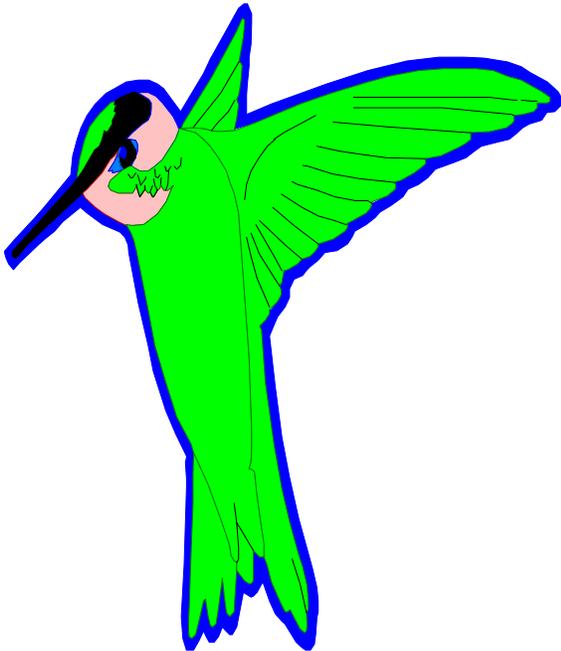
"So am I."

Thus the little quarrel ended,
Thus by loving little words
Two fond hearts were mended.

By Benjamin Keech.

Answers to: A Scrabble Type Puzzle

1. Hummingbird-Helicopter
2. Eye-Camera
3. Mind-Computer
4. Ear-Receiver
5. Shade-House
6. Bird-Airplane
7. Fish-Submarine
8. Ducks-Ships
9. Rain-Sprinkler
10. Scent-Perfume



A HUMMINGBIRD IN THE GARAGE

by Roberta Palmer Sharley

Mother drove the car into the garage. As she opened the car door to get out, she heard a strange whirring sound in the garage. "Shhh," she whispered softly to the three children in the car. "Wait here a minute."

Kevin, Harry and Annie wondered why mother said that. They sat quietly and watched Mother. The whirring noise was quite loud.

Mother walked - oh, so slowly - over to the garage window. The children could see something fluttering at the window.

"It is a little hummingbird that has gotten in here and can't find the way out." Mother said to herself.

She looked at the hummingbird's sharp beak. "Will he try to peck me if I catch it?" Mother wondered. Then she thought, "But I can not leave the frightened little bird here to die. I must help him."

So Mother stood by the side of the window and tried to show him the way out. But the boards around the window were rather wide, and it seemed the hummingbird must have thought that the window was the only way out. He fluttered excitedly back and forth on the window.

"It looks as if I will have to catch you, then, little friend," Mother softly told the bird.

She cupped her hands and soon caught the tired hummingbird. Would it peck her, she wondered? But it didn't even try to move. Mother carried it gently over to the car and said, "Look children, a hummingbird. Would you like to pet it before I let it go?"

"Can't we keep it?" Harry asked as he gently stroked the tiny head with one finger.

"We want it to be happy, don't we?" asked Mother. "It will be happier if we let it go.

"See its long bill, Kevin? Do you know why God gave such a small bird a long bill like this? She added.

Kevin shook his head.

"I know," said Harry, "Because it gets food from "way inside the flowers-sweet, sweet food, like I get when I suck on clover petals."

Mother smiled. "That's right," she said. "The sweet food is called 'nectar.' But now it is time to let our friend fly away."

They all went to the garage door and watched as Mother opened her hands. The hummingbird sat for a moment looking around. Then, suddenly, away he flew like a flash.

"Whirr," went his wings, so fast they could not even be seen. Mother and the children watched him until he was out of sight.

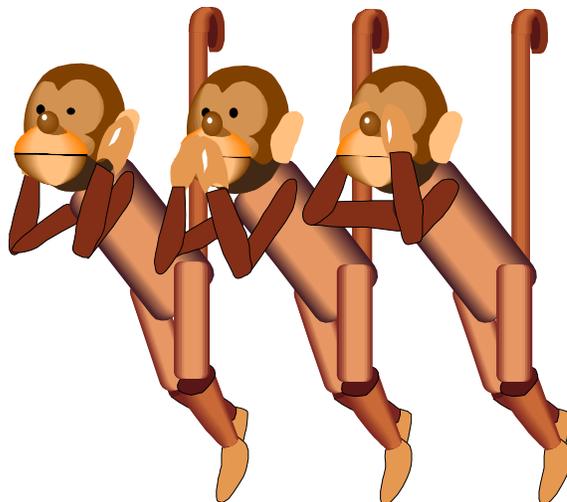
The hummingbird is just one of God's many wonderful creations for us to admire. People today are always trying to think of new things to even to create on their own. But many of their ideas and past inventions come from something God created first. Let's remember our heavenly Fathers words as found in Isaiah 65:18. *"But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I created."*

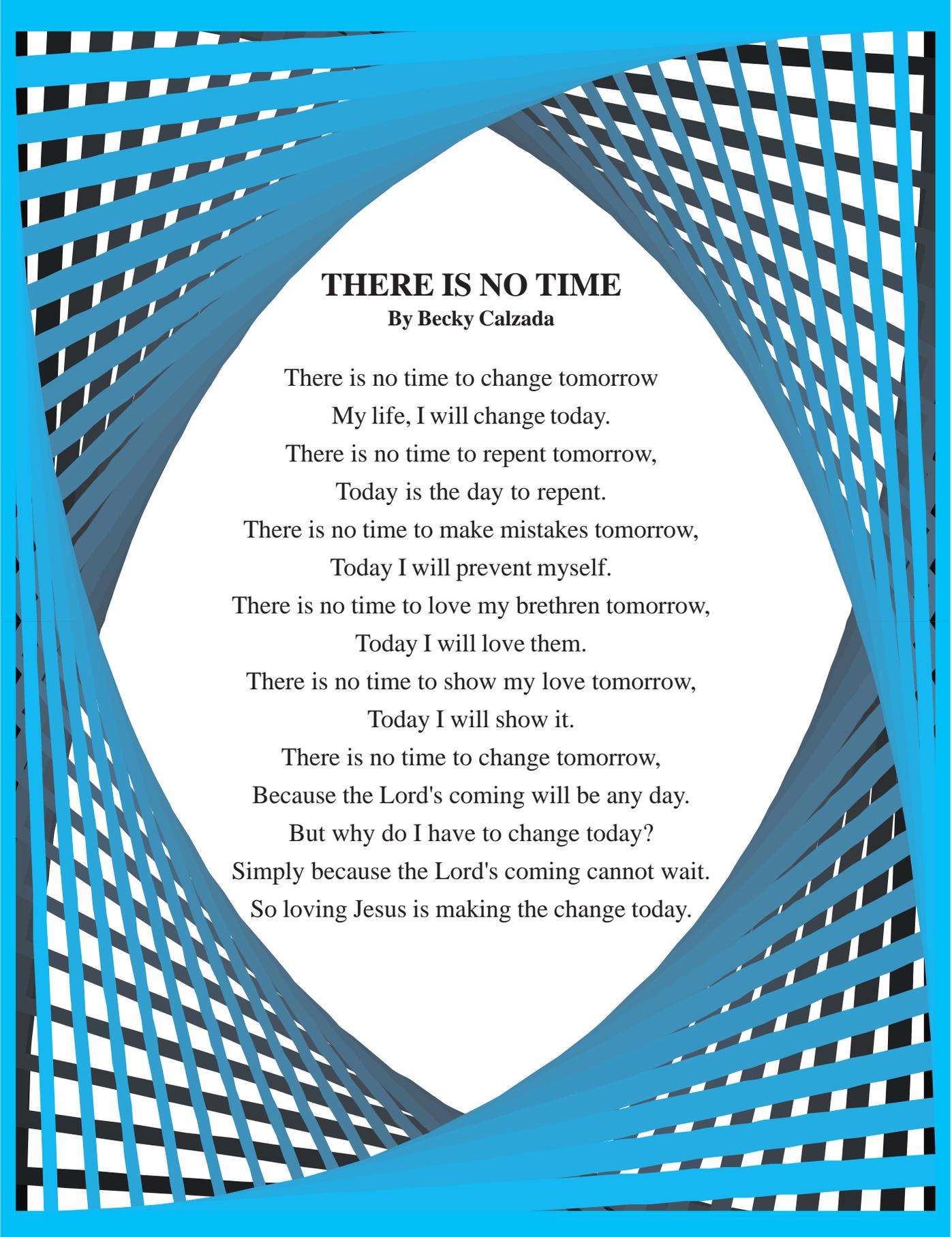
A SCRABBLE TYPE PUZZLE

Many things that people have made are just imitations of God's creation. In the double puzzles below, the horizontal lines are things God has created.

The vertical lines are man's imitation of it.

1. It flies straight up, down and sideways.
2. It sees.
3. It thinks.
4. It hears.
5. It protects its occupant.
6. It flies.
7. It swims under water.
8. They swim on top of the water.
9. It waters the lawn.
10. It gives a particular fragrance.





THERE IS NO TIME

By Becky Calzada

There is no time to change tomorrow

My life, I will change today.

There is no time to repent tomorrow,

Today is the day to repent.

There is no time to make mistakes tomorrow,

Today I will prevent myself.

There is no time to love my brethren tomorrow,

Today I will love them.

There is no time to show my love tomorrow,

Today I will show it.

There is no time to change tomorrow,

Because the Lord's coming will be any day.

But why do I have to change today?

Simply because the Lord's coming cannot wait.

So loving Jesus is making the change today.