
◆ THE EDIFIER ◆

Volume 15

CHURCH of GOD 7th DAY - AUSTRALIA

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REVIVAL IN THE CHURCH

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. John 14:12-14

What have you been asking God for? I hope that you have been asking God to send revival to our Church. I know I have, and know that God is ready to send it. But what if he doesn't send it? There are Churches that have prayed for years for true revival, and yet it has not come. And we question why?

Are we asking outside of his will? No doubt it is God's will to revive a lifeless church! No doubt it is God's will to bring sinners to himself and save their soul! For it is not his will that any should perish. So when we ask for revival, we are asking for something good, we are asking for something that is in the will of God.

Yet, in many places they pray and God doesn't answer. Why not? Could it be that Jesus lied when he said: "If you ask anything in my name I will do it". Maybe the Bible isn't true, and that is why we ask, and do not receive? Maybe we should point the finger at him, and say He is at fault? Or maybe we should be honest, and admit that God is perfect, and He is full of truth, and if there is a problem here, it is with us and not with God. So what are we doing wrong? In the very next verse Jesus makes an unqualified statement. Let's read it:

"If ye love me, keep my commandments". John 14:15

Some men will automatically question obedience as a factor in answered prayers. They will say this verse does not apply, but it does. In the First epistle of John we read:

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight." 1 John 3:22

WILL SIN AND DISOBEDIENCE HINDER OUR PRAYERS?

There is no doubt that the Bible teaches consistently that wilful sin, disobedience and rebellion will keep prayers from being answered, and in Isaiah we have pointed testimony to this:

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." Isaiah 59:1-2

Sin is so often the great barrier hindering the work of the Spirit and preventing revival. **King David said: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psalm 66:18.)** Sin is why churches pray and receive no answer and it must be put away. Nor is there any alternative. There can be no compromise. God will not work as long as there is iniquity covered up.

A magazine dedicated to uplifting and transforming peoples lives through the uncompromised word of God.

THE SIN OF ACHAN

Some men may scoff and say, "My personal sin cannot hinder revival", but those who say such are ignorant of the word of God. In the Book of Joshua, we read that God granted Israel a great victory over Jericho. God worked a miracle and caused the walls of Jericho to come tumbling down. All of Israel shouted for victory. Shortly afterwards Israel faced another enemy, a small city called Ai. And Joshua sent three thousand men to take it, but when they came to the gates, they were turned back by the heathen, and Israel lost 36 soldiers that day. When Joshua received the news he fell to his face seeking God wanting to know why he had forsaken Israel. Do you know why?

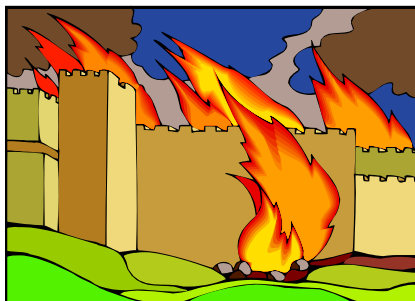
"Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you." **Joshua 7:11-12**

ALL OF ISRAEL HELD ACCOUNTABLE

Here God declares the whole congregation of Israel GUILTY of sin. And God said he would not be with them anymore, until the accursed thing was destroyed. How did the whole of Israel fall into reproach before God? What did this nation do? If we read further we will see that ONE man, Achan, had sinned. When the walls of Jericho fell, he COVETED what he saw and

he took some silver and a wedge of Gold! [Oh how Christians today often covet the riches of the world, and sin to obtain them]. Not only gold and silver, but he took a Babylonian garment also. Things have not changed! Instead of separating from the Baptized paganism of Rome, with her rituals, doctrines and holidays, many Christians take them, and try to incorporate them into the Robe of Christ, but it cannot be! It is sin.

And Achan took these things, and he buried them under his tent, and he thought that no man knew. But GOD knew. He thought, what harm will it do? But what harm it caused! Not only did it cause the congregation to lose the battle, and lead to the death of 36 soldiers, but it cost Achan his life and his children their life!



GOODNESS AND SEVERITY OF GOD

Achan and his sons and daughters were stoned, and then burnt with fire. Oh how harsh you might say! But behold the goodness and severity of God. If you do not continue in his Goodness Christian, if you do not abide in the Grace of God, then severity will come your way. You may think under the New Covenant that men escape the stones and the fire, but it is not so! God has hail stones stored up, the weight

of a wicked generation, and his wrath is soon to appear. And then there is a lake that burns with fire and brimstone, for everyone who will not abide in his grace. Now I want you to look at the cure that God offers for this evil: **Joshua 7:19-21**

CONFESSION

"And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me." **Joshua 7:19**

Confession is the first step in cleansing the soul. Confess and forsake your sins and you will find mercy. Confess your sins, and the blood of Jesus will cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

In 2 Chronicles 7:14 the promise of blessing is securely based, however, upon unalterable conditions:

"If my people, which are called by my name," declares the Lord, "shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Hence, nothing short of a broken heart over sin, full confession and restitution will satisfy God. Sin must be forsaken utterly. And not only sorrow for the consequences and punishment of sin, but for sin itself as committed against God. David, though guilty of both murder and adultery, saw

his sin as against God alone. (Psalm 51:4) Mere remorse is not true Godly sorrow unto repentance. Judas, though full of remorse, never repented.

God alone is able to bestow a contrite and broken heart, a sorrow that will result in the confession and forsaking of sin. Nothing short of that will suffice.

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Psalm 51:17)

There are three kinds of confession that must be considered:-

(1) Private Confession; for where the sin has been committed against God alone it need be confessed to no other, but God. (1 John 1:9; Psalm 32:5.)

(2) Personal Confession; for where the sin has been committed against another it must be confessed not only to God but also to the one who has been wronged. Nor will there be any peace until the confession has been made and forgiveness sought. (Matthew 5:23-24)

(3) Public Confession; for where the sin has been committed against the church, that is to say, the entire congregation, or against a group of people the confession must be as public as the transgression. As long as iniquity among the people of God is covered over and unconfessed just so long will the Spirit of God withhold revival. Men must get right with each other in order to be right with God.



TEARS AND ANGUISH, AND YET NOTHING

It is not a common thing today to see souls kneeling at the altar seeking revival and calling upon God with apparent great anguish of heart, but when this does happen, so often, even though they pray with tears, they fail to receive anything. What is the trouble? Let the Word of God answer: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear."

Hence, let us uncover our sin first of all; let us make straight the crooked ways, let us gather out the stones, and then we may ask in faith and expectancy for showers of blessing. Now let us take our sins one by one and deal with each transgression separately. And let us ask ourselves the following questions. It may be that we are guilty and God will speak to us:

Have we forgiven everyone? Is there any malice, spite, or hatred in our hearts? Do we cherish grudges; and have we refused to be reconciled? Do we get angry? Is it true that we still lose our tempers? Does wrath hold us at times in its grip? Is there any feeling of jealousy? When another is preferred before us does it make us envious? Do we get jealous of those who can do things better than we can? Do we get impatient and

irritated? Do little things vex and annoy, or, are we sweet, calm and unruffled under all circumstances? Are we offended easily? When people fail to notice us and pass by without speaking does it hurt? If others are made much of and we are neglected how do we feel about it? Is there any pride in our hearts? Are we puffed up, do we think a great deal of ourselves?

Have we been dishonest? Is our business open and above reproach? Are we honest in our statements or do we exaggerate and thus convey false impressions? Have we been gossiping about people? Do we slander the character of others? Are we talebearers and busybodies? Do we criticize unlovingly, harshly, severely? Are we always finding fault and looking for the flaws in others? Do we rob God? Have we stolen time and money that belongs to Him? Are we guilty of the sin of unbelief? In spite of all He has done for us do we still refuse to believe the promises of His Word? Have we committed the sin of prayerlessness? Are we intercessors? Do we pray? How much time are we spending on our knees? Have we crowded prayer out of our lives? Are we neglecting God's Word? Are we burdened for the salvation of souls? Have we a love for the lost? Have we failed to confess Christ openly? Are we ashamed of Jesus? Are we witnessing daily? Are our lives filled with lightness and without serious purpose? Would the world by our actions consider us on its side? Have we wronged any one and failed to make restitution? Are we worried or anxious?

Continued on page six

Ten Commandments of Grace

Grace has been called God's Riches At Christ's Expense. It has been said of grace that if peace (shalom) was the characteristic or keyword of the Old Testament for the Hebrews, then grace has become the Christian's word in the New Testament. Grace is a very, very important concept for Christians and the depth of meaning to be gleaned from the Greek word 'charis', translated as 'grace', and the importance of grace in Christianity, should never be underestimated.

Holman's Bible Dictionary gives the following definition as the central meaning of grace for Christians – 'Grace is the undeserved acceptance and love received from another, especially the characteristic attitude of God in providing salvation for sinners through Jesus Christ'. The meaning of 'charis' is even broader than this, as you will see as you consider the 10 commandments of grace below which I have derived from 10 verses.

1. Sing with grace in your heart (Colossians 3:16)

The word 'charis' includes joy and thanksgiving, so we follow this instruction when we sing to God with joy and thanksgiving in our hearts.

2. Accept that God's grace is sufficient for you (2 Corinthians 12:9)

This is instructing us to be content with God's provision in our lives. Don't think that God's gifts to us, such as the Holy Spirit, the Word, forgiveness, and the promise of eternal life, amongst many other things, are not enough to sustain us – they are!

3. Let your speech always be with grace (Colossians 4:5-6)

This command is not so easy to understand in terms of the central meaning of grace as defined above, but 'charis' is very broad.



As salt makes our food more acceptable or attractive to eat, how we say things should make what we say more acceptable or attractive. The Apostle Paul also writes in Ephesians 4:29 'Let no corrupt communication proceed from your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification that it may impart grace to the hearers'.

4. Do not receive God's grace in vain (2 Corinthians 6:1)

We obey this command by continuing in the faith until death. Also, if our lives are not bringing God's blessing to others, are we really using the grace God has shown us for any good purpose?

5. Grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18)

By showing undeserved kindness more and more to people who have perhaps wronged us or with people who don't deserve our love, or whom at least we think don't deserve our love, we are growing in grace.

6. Let your heart be established with grace (Hebrews 13:9)

We need to be strong and built up in the central aspects of Christianity, such as grace, and not with foods or every wind of doctrine which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

7. Thou shalt not frustrate the grace of God (Galatians 2:21)

In context some of the Galatians were frustrating God's grace, or setting it aside, because false teachers had caused them to think that they needed to earn God's grace, when in fact God had already given it to them. We too might frustrate God's grace if we try to earn what He gives us freely.

8. Be strong in God's grace (2 Timothy 2:1)

We must not only grow in grace, it must be one of our strengths. For it to be one of our strengths we will obviously then need to give grace priority in our lives.

9. Be a good steward of God's *Continued from page eight* grace (1 Peter 4:10)

The grace we have been given by God, just as the talent given to each servant in the parable, should not be buried in our lives, but rather should be used wisely for the maximum benefit of others and the kingdom of God.

10. Receive God's grace (Galatians 3:14)

We obey this command by believing in Jesus as Lord and Saviour, by repenting of our sins and then by accepting God's forgiveness or pardon.

God is truly gracious toward us and His grace is truly amazing.

*Suggested Group Bible Study

The scriptures in brackets above can be used to present a very challenging and edifying Bible study. Just go through each text one by one firstly asking if the group can identify the command relating to grace in the verse and then secondly by asking them to explain the meaning of the command. (two one hour sessions may be needed to complete this study adequately)

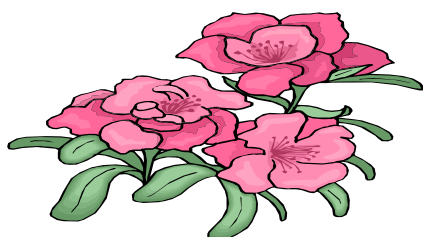
When Christianity is obtained at a discount, it is not the real article. All it has is a name—a shell without content. That's all the hypocrite wants anyway. He is interested only in the possible social or economic values which church membership will bring. He gets a big discount to be sure, but the article which comes into his possession is a fake. Along with the spurious article, he may gain the whole world, and still lose his soul (Matthew 16 : 26).

Christianity's cost is high. The price is you. And yet paradoxically, Christianity costs nothing. The thirsty one buys wine and milk without money and without price. Christ is all he needs, and Christ is free (Isa 55:1). In getting Christ, we must want all of Christ and not just part of Him. This is just the point at which many want the discount, but Christ will not offer Himself at a discount.

Therefore, my friends serve God with your whole heart while He may be found, and do it now before it is too late.

David Kidd

Editor's Note : This article appeared nearly 52 years ago in the August 19, 1957 issue of The Bible Advocate and Herald of the Coming Kingdom. Tiemen DeWind served as minister in the Church of God (Seventh Day) and he passed away in 1980, at the age 81.



Light for Life

Deciphering

'The Da Vinci Code'

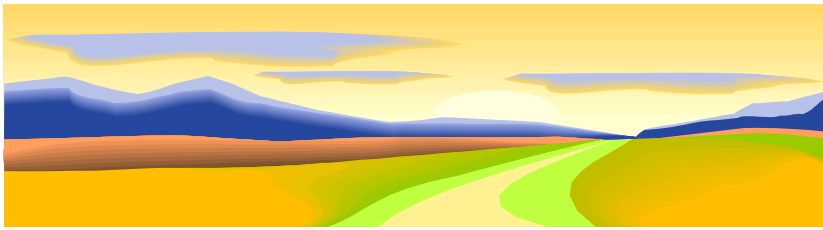
: Fact or Fiction?



The Da Vinci Code, a best selling novel, (and now a movie) mixes the mysteries of art history with theological cover-ups and has a strong dose of controversy as well.



**Please send for the free
booklet, to find out the
truth about the
Da Vinci Code**



GOD, I NEED YOU

**I missed You today as I got up late,
And rushed around my morning in haste.**

**My day seemed different, unseemingly long -
As I dragged through work, tired and
forlorn.**

**“God, where did You go?” I’m asking you
now,
As in the traffic I sit—just tryin’ to get home.**

**Too tired to cook, let’s do pizza, “no prayer”-
Fall asleep watching TV, so unaware.**

**You wake me up early my Bible in view -
Please help me to remember -**

I really need You.

- Judi Williams

*Selected from ‘Afterglow’ a newsletter for seniors.
Sponsored by the North American Women’s Ministries.*

Continued from page three

Are we failing to trust God for our needs? Are we guilty of lustful thoughts? Do we allow our minds to harbour impure and unholy imaginations? Do we hate sin? Do we have any secret sin? Are we holy in heart and in life?

Are you willing to let God search and try you? These are the things that hinder the work of God in the midst of His people. Let us be honest and call them by their right name. ‘SIN’ is the word that God uses. And the sooner we admit that we have sinned and are ready to confess and forsake it the sooner we can expect God to hear us and work in mighty power. Why deceive ourselves? We cannot deceive God. Then let us remove the obstacle, the hindering thing before we take another step. *“If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged.” “Judgment must begin at the house of God.”*

This has been the history of revival work all down the centuries. First the sin must be uncovered and taken from the midst. Then and not until then, the Spirit of God will come upon us and Revival will happen. I want to close with the following verse:

*“... for as soon as Zion travailed,
she brought forth her children.”*
Isaiah 66:8

This is a most fundamental element in the work of God. Can children be born without pain and travail? Yet how many expect spiritual births without travail. Oh, my brethren, nothing, absolutely nothing short of soul - travail will bring forth spiritual children!

Pastor James Donkor Dugger
(Ghana, Africa)

The Youth Section

Jesus is



All the words listed below are in the puzzle—left, right, up, down or diagonally.

F	O	D	E	F	I	L	F	O	D	A	E	R	B	A
I	U	G	R	I	E	T	S	I	R	H	C	I	S	U
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T	E	R	H	A	D	P	A	U	P	J	D	I	E	O
A	D	P	T	N	L	N	E	R	E	D	O	N	M	R
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D	M	O	O	E	R	M	T	O	S	G	F	O	D	F
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S	N	I	E	I	L	S	I	S	G	A	M	G	P	C
H	K	O	E	K	L	O	K	S	H	L	I	S	L	D
R	P	N	E	V	A	E	H	M	O	R	F	N	A	M

Alpha and Omega, Amen, Author of Life, Bread of Life, Chief Shepherd,
 Christ, First and Last, Great Shepherd, I am, Image of God, King Eternal,
 King of kings, King of the Ages, King of the Jews, Lamb of God,
 Lord of All, Man from Heaven, Our Holiness, Our Protection,
 Our Redemption, Rabbi, Righteous One, Son of Man.

Insights From the Past



RELIGION AT A DISCOUNT

By Tiemen DeWind

Retail merchants justifiably complain that too much merchandise is available these days at a discount. Because of this, they find it very difficult to make an equitable profit. It seems that many of us are guilty of trying to get it wholesale.

Discount houses flourish. This is, no doubt, bad enough when we are dealing in merchandise, but there are many people today who want their religion at a discount also. If they can get their Christianity at a reduced, wholesale price, they will take it; otherwise, they will leave it. When Christ makes His demands upon their lives, they try to get Him to lower His price.

Christ said, "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24). Yet people will reply, "Just a little love for mammon please." Jesus said, "Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:20). Still they say, "May not I have just a bit of affection for earth?" He required, "Follow thou me" (John 21:22). But they all beg, "Can't I take something along?" You see, they do not want religion which is too stern in its requirements. They want a cheaper variety—not cheaper of course as to its benefits, but cheaper as to its demands. They want religion at a discount.

You, no doubt, remember the story of how Jesus drove some evil spirits out of a demon-possessed man, and into a herd of swine that was grazing on a hillside along the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The swine ran in confusion down the slopes to their death in the water. The citizens asked Jesus to leave their shores. It was too expensive to have Him around. Oh, He might cure a demonic or two, but what was that compared to the value of several thousand pigs? They wanted Jesus all right, but not at this high price? They wanted Him at a discount.

However, Jesus does not offer Himself at a reduced price, just as the Bible says, "My son, give me thy heart . . ." (Proverbs 23 : 26). Yes, Jesus wants us, and He gets us when He gets our hearts. He does not wish to be one guest among many, but the one guest forever in our lives. But when He becomes just that guest, He is costly, for we commit ourselves to Him. We lay everything we are and hope to be on the altar of His service.

Continued on page five



Maintaining Spiritual Health

Five Part Devotional

Keeping physically fit has its rewards: energy, reduced vulnerability to sickness and accident, better manoeuvrability, enhanced relationships, raised spirits, and sound sleep. Better health improves almost everything else.

Similarly, godly living is enhanced by wholesome spiritual activity. It establishes a relationship with God and assures we are part of eternity. It increases our appetite for what is good and gives eternal purpose to our existence. It makes and keeps us ready. All effort put into spiritual fitness is enhancing; nothing is wasted. Let the wise get started and keep active!

Please send for the free booklet

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