

# THE WORD OF TRUTH

OTIS Q. SELLERS, Editor JANUARY 1948

VOL. X, No. 2

\*\*\*\*\*

## Table of Contents

- \* **How God Redeems a Soul**
  - \* **Faithful or Successful**
- \* **Q&A – on I Thessalonians 2:16**
  - \* **The Editor to His Friends**

\*\*\*\*\*

## *HOW GOD REDEEMS A SOUL*

Beyond all question there is a positive and definite work that God does for the individual which results in a redeemed and forgiven soul. This divine work is set forth in the Word of God, but much of the truth concerning it has become buried under the rubbish heaps of traditional views, human opinions, and religious practices. The full recovery of the truth of God concerning this divine work is an essential task which should be a burden upon the hearts of all who labor for the uncovering and recovering of the truth of God. The honest student does not dare to take it for granted that he is in possession of full and accurate truth upon this all-important subject. Concerning this matter there are 80 many divergent ideas and practices that our marching orders must be: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

In the past twenty-five years I have given much time and thought to considering the divine process which produces the redeemed and forgiven soul. As I now write upon this subject, it is with the determination that this message will be true to the title I have given it. For those who would seek by their own efforts to redeem themselves from the guilt and penalty of sin, I have no message, no instruction, no word of encouragement. Neither will they find any instruction or encouragement in the Word of God. The popular idea that a man by his own efforts can lift himself from the condition into which sin has brought him, is foreign to every truth that God has given. It is not possible for man to forgive and redeem himself. Neither can he do any work or perform any ritual that will cause God to redeem and forgive him. But God can and does redeem. He initiates and carries through that great work which in its end produces the redeemed and forgiven soul.

Has God done this great work for the reader of these lines? Are you among that number who possess a redemption and forgiveness that is truly the work of God? In **Ephesians 1:7** the Apostle Paul declared of himself and of those to whom he wrote:

**In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace.**

The manner in which the truth is stated in this passage gives it a peculiar emphasis. Paul declares that they possess redemption, and that they possess the forgiveness of sins. We must not miss the force of this statement. Just as one who has wealth is wealthy, and the one who has wisdom is wise; even so the one who has redemption is redeemed, and the one who has forgiveness is forgiven. We CAN have redemption through the blood of Christ; we CAN have forgiveness according to the riches of His grace. Therefore, we CAN be redeemed, we CAN be forgiven. What is now needed is to take these words that express a possibility and turn them into words of reality. We need to come to that place in God's dealings with us where we can say: "We DO have forgiveness, we DO have redemption; therefore, we ARE redeemed, and we ARE forgiven."

The words *redemption* and *forgiveness* describe a work that God does for us, and the companion words *redeemed* and *forgiven* describe a state into which this work of God will bring us. When this state is reached it will make it possible for us to sing triumphantly:

Redeemed how I love to proclaim it!  
Redeemed by the blood of the lamb:  
Redeemed through His infinite mercy  
His child and forever I am.

As stated before, the redemption and forgiveness of an individual is solely and entirely the work of God. This being true it follows that there must be a certain work of God, which accomplishes these great facts and which brings the individual into that blessed state from which he can never be removed, into that blessed condition which can never be altered.

By this time I trust that my reader fully realizes that I do not speak of some temporary state when I speak of redemption, or of some passing experience when I speak of forgiveness. I speak of a work of God that brings us into a state and condition from which we can never be removed. When God does His great work of redemption, it becomes a fact that can never be altered; when He forgives a soul, it is a truth that can never be changed. Those who are the objects of this work of God will always stand in His sight as those who are forgiven and redeemed. Redemption and forgiveness are works of God, and it is not like Him to do a work like this, then to undo it or permit it to be undone. This is the great truth declared in **Romans 8:38,39**:

**For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Once redeemed, the soul remains in that condition; once forgiven, the soul continues in that blessed state. This may seem unbelievable to some; nevertheless, this marvelous work is in complete harmony with the character of our great God who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. The One who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us will not hesitate to give us freely that blessed security that we need so sorely. See Romans 8:32.

## **Man's Need of Redemption and Forgiveness**

Man's need of personal redemption is based upon the obvious fact that he is not today as God created him in the beginning. No man born upon this earth since the entrance of sin and death has been what God intended a man should be. This is a great general truth, but it must not remain so general that it has no personal application. Let us honestly face the facts. You are not and I am not what God created men to be or what He intended men should be. And there is nothing in the whole process of life from the cradle to the grave, neither is there any transforming power in death, that

will make us to be this. Unless God Himself does some great work in our behalf, none of us will ever fulfill the purpose for which God originally created the human race.

The goal of all of God's works is in the future, and is characterized by a new heavens and a new earth. When God created man, it was His purpose that human beings, each one in the image and likeness of Himself, should populate the new heavens and earth. He made the first man, Adam, in His image and after His likeness, then gave him the power to multiply and commanded him to do so. See Genesis 1:26-28. If Adam had not sinned, God's creation would have been filled with human beings, each one in the image and likeness of God. But Adam failed through disobedience, so God must do an additional work of forgiving and redeeming sinful men in order to fulfill His purpose in the new heavens and earth.

The entrance of sin into the world through the first man brought about a condition wherein men are not what they were created to be. They fail to represent God, and do not set Him forth. Men are dying and they are sinning. As dying creatures they do not represent the One who is life. As sinning creatures they do not show forth the perfect One. Therefore, they are unfit to be the inhabitants of the new heavens and new earth wherein all things must conform to God. If any human being ever fulfills the purpose for which man was originally created, he will have to be redeemed from that state which is characterized by sin and death. He must be brought into a state of incorruptibility and immortality wherein he will no longer be subject to sin and death. God's redemption brings with it the guarantee that this will someday be accomplished. The time will yet come when in their proper order each one of God's redeemed who is now corruptible will put on incorruptibility and each one now mortal will put on immortality. See I Corinthians 15:54. When God's great gifts of redemption and forgiveness become a reality in our lives, they bring with them a guarantee that we will be a part of the fulfillment of that purpose for which man was originally created. We can never perish, our future is assured; we will be in the image and likeness of God in the new heavens and new earth.

Man's need of personal forgiveness is based upon the fact of his own transgressions. Let there be no confusion at this point. The need for redemption is the result of the sin of Adam which brought in the reign of sin and death, but man's need for forgiveness is based upon the guilt in which his own sins have involved him.

Our need of God's forgiveness is so evident in the life of every one of us, and it is so plainly declared in Scripture that it cannot be disproven or honestly denied. Since there is no difference between men in the eyes of God, since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, every member of the human race stands before God as one who is guilty and who has a penalty charged against him. "The wages of sin is death," is the express declaration of the Word of God.

It is because of the guilt and the penalty resulting from our own sins that forgiveness is needed so urgently by all men. In view of our past sins, present sins and future sins, we need forgiveness so that we may be able to stand in the presence of God as those who are forgiven. The extent of our sins or the character of our sins has no bearing upon our need for forgiveness. All such distinctions have been swept away by one divine declaration:

**For there is no difference for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:22-23.**

"But," I anticipate someone will object, "you speak of forgiveness as if it were something that a man could obtain once and for all, a forgiveness that covers all past, present and future sins."

This is exactly the forgiveness I am setting forth. A forgiveness in harmony with the greatness of the grace of God, based upon the fact that Christ died for our sins, and that the blood of Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin. When He died for my sins they were all future; therefore, all I need to do is obtain that forgiveness, which is according to the riches of His grace. This forgiveness cannot

be partial - it cannot come in installments. I repudiate the idea that God's forgiveness covers only those sins committed before we are redeemed, and that those committed afterward are forgiven by confession. I John 1:9 does not teach this, as many make it to do.

The greatest problem that a man faces in his lifetime is that of sin and death. If God has not provided a full solution to this problem, then He has failed to provide for man's greatest and deepest need. But God has not failed. He has met this need by providing redemption and forgiveness. And this has been provided in such a way that the glory of it belongs to God.

This fact leads us to consider the great foundation upon which God's redemption and God's forgiveness is based.

### **Redemption Through The Redeemer**

There is no truth written more plainly in the Word of God than that God's work of redemption is accomplished through His provision of a Redeemer. God's redemption of the sinner is by means of a Redeemer, and this Redeemer is the Son of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ.

The work that had to be done before even one soul could be redeemed is now a finished work. God has provided a Redeemer. Men no longer need to believe a promise that He will provide one, as they had to do before the Cross. They now must believe that a Redeemer has been provided. Jesus Christ has shed the blood, which is the basis of man's redemption. Everything that is essential has been done. No one needs to ascend into heaven to persuade Christ to come down to earth and give Himself as an offering for sin. No one needs to descend into the depths to bring up Christ from the dead. He has died for our sins. He has risen again for our justification. He is even now seated at the right hand of God, ready to become the constant intercessor for all who are redeemed and forgiven. The work of Christ is complete. Full redemption and forgiveness are now possible for any and every member of the human race. Those who proclaim God's message can now go forth and assuredly declare: **"Come, for all things are now ready"**.

The work of Christ is a finished work, and in that work is to be found the greatest possible blessing for all who receive Him. God's table has been spread and His messengers are instructed to invite all to come to the feast.

However, even though God has provided this great boon for the human race, the condition of men is such that none will ever respond to God's invitation if left to themselves. The message that declares redemption in and through Christ and the invitation to partake of it are God's living Word, and they bring no response from any member of the human race. Man's appreciation and desire for such things are dead because of sin. The truth concerning God's great provision for man through Christ is spiritual truth, and the unredeemed man does not respond to that which is spiritual.

When a magnet is brought near to a piece of steel, the steel responds and is drawn to the magnet. If the same magnet is brought into direct contact with a piece of copper there will be neither attraction nor response. Even so it is with man under the dominion of sin and death. He does not, he cannot, respond to the Word of God that sets forth the great work of Christ, no matter how clearly or forcefully this work may be presented to him. This great truth, humiliating as it is to man's thoughts of himself, was emphatically declared by Christ.

**No man can come unto Me. except the Father which hath sent Me draw him. John 6:44.**

And, so that no one could miss this great truth, He repeated it in other words:

**Therefore said I unto you. that no man can come unto Me. except it were given unto Him of My Father. John 6:65.**

These statements are so plain that misunderstanding of them is not honestly possible. To fail to believe them, to fail to think and act in harmony with them, demonstrates a definite lack of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am sure that this would be a more popular message if I did not emphasize the inability and impotency of man in the matter of his coming to Christ. This truth is hurtful to the pride of man, for he vainly believes that he can decide to accept God's offer at any time. He feels that the whole matter of his coming to Christ is one of his own volition. When the Lord declared this humiliating truth, we are told:

**From this time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him. John 6:66.**

In view of man's inability to respond to God's message concerning His great provision in Christ for the sinner, it is evident that if anything is to be accomplished for man by the work of Christ, then God must do that personal work for the individual sinner which makes it possible for him to respond to and become a partaker of the redemption and forgiveness that is in Christ Jesus. In other words, if no man can come to Christ unless he is drawn by the Father, then he must be drawn or he can never come.

### **Human Counterfeits**

At this point I feel it will be good to digress from my subject and utter a word of warning. Man's pride and unbelief are such that when the facts of man's inability and impotency are linked up with the unfaithfulness of many men who claim to be the servants of God, a situation is produced upon which the white light of Scripture needs to be turned. Christ declared that none could come to Him except by the enabling power of God. Because of this divine limitation, churches greedy for members, and evangelists greedy for results have given up the faithful proclamation of the Word of God, to which man by himself cannot respond, and have turned to another message and program to which men apart from God's drawing can and do respond. Since man's interest responds to that which is interesting, since his emotions respond to the emotional, since his sense of humor responds to the humorous, since his "religious nature" responds to ritual, and since he is moved by music, many pastors and evangelists, in order to produce results, have developed messages and programs built mainly upon these things. Their messages usually consist of interesting stories and experiences, humorous and emotional appeals. Certain Scripture passages are used as a thin thread upon which these things are strung. Without a great musical program they would not be able to carry on. They condemn sin, commend righteousness, and exhort men to believe. This jumble ends with an "evangelical ritual" consisting of an invitation to raise the hand for prayer, then a further invitation for those who have raised their hand to come to the front for prayer, or to give their hearts to Christ. Those who respond and who say they "believe in Jesus" are declared to be "saved," and those who refuse to respond to this bit of fleshly ritual are said to have rejected Christ. When the searching rays of God's truth are turned upon these methods, they are seen to be the works of the flesh and not the works of God. Many have been deceived by such methods, causing them to rest in a false hope, or else resulting in disappointment and disillusionment because nothing happened even though they did everything they were told to do. Apropos of this, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer has said:

"This unfruitful condition of the church has created a great temptation for the evangelist to be superficial in his aim and undertakings. His reputation and often his remuneration are dependent upon apparent results; for many pastors and churches have been trained to a vision of quantity in results than to a due regard for quality. If the evangelist understands the divine programme in soul-winning, and purposes to go to the bottom with the churches, and do a teaching work that he may build the necessary Scriptural foundation for abiding fruit, he may often have to do so against the

opposition of pastors and churches. They, expecting a sudden and apparent transformation, are naturally unprepared for the extended period of time and the pastoral instruction that is required to accomplish the necessary work. In undertaking a thorough foundation work in the churches, the evangelist would thus be forsaking his own calling, and assuming the work of the pastor and teacher; and would be a disappointment to those who had called him and on whom he depends, humanly speaking, for his support. His temptation is to secure the apparent results that are expected; for it is not natural for him to follow a programme that would drive him entirely from the ministry which he has chosen." Quoted from *True Evangelism*.

This demand for apparent results has produced a multitude of professing Christians who bear no relationship to Christ; And even though many will insist that some genuine results are obtained where fleshly methods are used, the harm done is so great that honest servants will quickly abandon every such method.

There is a definite work that God does which is for the purpose of bringing the individual into the company of the redeemed and forgiven. God alone can do this work and man can have no part in it. It is a personal and individual work wherein God does it all and man can be only the recipient. Over and over again, when God begins His work, man's first reaction is to try to do something to redeem himself. This hinders God's work. In fact, it can hinder it to such an extent that God's efforts may cease until such time as man admits his inability. In view of this, redeemed men need to know accurately how God redeems a soul so that they can labor in full harmony with the Holy Spirit in order that others may enter into the joys of redemption and forgiveness. When the unredeemed try *to* help God or when the redeemed seek to help God redeem another both alike tread upon the divine prerogatives.

The sole work of the servant of God in relationship to lost men is to proclaim the Word. The instructed and faithful servant does this with the full knowledge that men cannot and will not respond to it. Therefore, if anything is ever to be accomplished for man through the death of Jesus Christ, then God must do a personal work for the individual which will make it possible for him to respond to God's Word and through faith become a partaker of the redemption and forgiveness that is in Christ Jesus.

When we proclaim the death of Christ, we proclaim the work that God did for every man. The invitation is in no way limited when we declare that all things are now ready and invite men to partake of the forgiveness and redemption that God has provided. But, I repeat for the sake of emphasis, no man will ever respond to God's gracious invitation until a further work is done. This work is selective and personal. It is separate and distinct from that great general work which God has done for all. It is a specific work of God and it brings the benefits of His greater work within the reach of the individual. It is God going the "second mile" to bring His redemption and forgiveness to man. It is this work of God in behalf of the individual which we will now consider.

## **God Seeking**

In order to have a term to designate this work of God, we will refer to it as God *seeking* the sinner. This designation is fully Scriptural. It can be described as "the goodness of God that leadeth to repentance." However, in speaking of God seeking the sinner, it must not be thought of as an attempt upon the part of God to locate sinful men. These abound on every hand. By "God seeking the sinner" is meant that divine work which brings the sinner to the place where redemption and forgiveness are possible for him on the basis of his faith. Seeking the lost is entirely the work of God. No part of it can be done by man. Every part of it is initiated, undertaken and accomplished by God's Holy Spirit.

God's work of seeking the sinner is absolutely essential. The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost. Without the seeking, none will ever be saved. This divine work is far reaching, and it can best be comprehended if it is considered in its four great aspects. These aspects must not be regarded as four steps, for they are not steps. They are different aspects of the same work. And while they may not all begin simultaneously, they are all present -as God's great work of seeking reaches its climax. The first great aspect is:

## 1. CONVICTION

That every man has a conscience is a truism that is not open to question. The conscience acts as a judge of his conformity or nonconformity to the great moral principles established by God. Conscience judges between right and wrong, and it brings to man a strong feeling of obligation to do what is known to be right and to refrain from what is known to be wrong. The conscience continually and persistently commends each member of the human race when he does right and condemns him when he does wrong. The conscience operates automatically in every man, but the nature of its work is insufficient to bring about that condition in which a man can fulfill the necessary conditions of redemption and forgiveness. What man must do in order to be redeemed will be considered later. Therefore, in speaking of conviction of sin as one aspect of God's work of seeking the lost, no reference is made to that conviction by the conscience (see John 8:9), which by itself can never lead a man to the place where redemption and forgiveness are possible.

The conviction of sin which is a part of the divine work, which makes redemption possible is not the work of the conscience. It is the personal work of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit works upon the sinner from without, not from within as the conscience does. The convicting work of the Spirit is not for the purpose of getting a man to do the right and forsake the wrong. It is in relationship to faith, or belief, in Jesus Christ. This is the testimony of Christ as recorded in **John 16:8-11**.

**And when He is come. He will reprove (convict) the world of sin. and of righteousness. and of judgment: Of sin. because they believe not on Me; of righteousness. because I go to My Father. and ye see Me no more; of judgment because the prince of this world is judged.**

In considering the work of the Holy Spirit wherein men are convicted of sin because they believe not on the Lord Jesus Christ, the reader must not in any manner confuse it with that fleshly and emotional conviction that is given such prominence in many religious circles. In these systems men seek to produce in others or to work up in themselves an acute mental agony for sin which is described as "strong conviction." If this mental agony is accompanied with copious tears and certain breast-beating histrionics, it is held to be the true work of the Spirit. However, when the white light of God's Word is turned upon such dramatics they are found to be only the work of the conscience at the best, and oftentimes nothing more than "the sorrow of this world" (See II Cor. 7:10).

Has the reader of these lines ever arrived at that place wherein there was a definite conviction that he was sinning against Christ because of a duty neglected, an obligation unfulfilled? Honest men often give careful consideration concerning their duties toward parents, family, and friends. At times they may feel they have not performed their full duty toward them, and will seek to correct their failures in these respects. But, has the reader of these lines ever realized that above all he owes a duty toward God in relationship to Jesus Christ? Has the conviction ever come to him that it is dangerous to ignore God's greatest gift? Has he ever become convinced that to fail to believe on Jesus Christ is the all-condemning sin? If so, then that was the work of the Holy Spirit, and it can be identified beyond all question as being one great aspect of God's work of seeking the lost. This is the Holy Spirit convicting men of sin because Jesus Christ has not been believed on in such manner as would lead to receiving Him and trusting Him as Savior and Lord. This gracious work is God reminding men of their duty, calling them to fulfill their obligation and pointing out to them how great a sin they are committing when they fail to believe in Jesus Christ. This work of the Spirit is

sure to bring about a sense of guilt and need, feelings that most men would gladly cast off.

Men may resist the Holy Spirit, they may cast aside the conviction He brings and then swear He has never dealt with them. But where men have not resisted His gracious work, they arrive at the conviction that the greatest sin is for them to ignore, reject, or neglect Jesus Christ, and that the greatest and best work than men can do is "to believe on Him whom God has sent." See John 6:28, 29. Apart from this work of God in the heart, none will ever have any real conviction concerning the claims of Jesus Christ.

The second great aspect of God's work of seeking the sinner is:

## **2. DRAWING**

This important truth is exceedingly plain, being summarized for our learning in several passages of Scripture. In **John 6:44** our Lord declared:

**No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him.**

It has ever been the favorite notion of man that he can do what he likes, repent or not repent, believe or not believe, come to Christ or not come entirely at his own discretion. He likes to think that his coming to Christ is fully within his own power- - that all he needs to do is to decide to come and the matter will be settled. Such ideas are flatly contradicted by the words of our Lord, and since belief in Him demands belief in His words, we have no choice but to take Him at His word and think accordingly..

When God convicts men of the sin of not believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are inclined to thrash around quite a bit in the hope of doing something that will make right a great wrong. They may join a church, say prayers, give a sum of money, or formulate a set of good resolutions in the vain hope that some such act will be equal to receiving Him as Saviour and Lord. Because of man's inability to find "the Way" alone, and because he is prone to take such strange paths that lead nowhere, God draws him to the true Way, that is, to Jesus Christ. See John 14:6.

The sincere follower of Christ will always wonder why Jesus Christ is so attractive and desirable to him and seemingly so unattractive to others. Scripture provides a full answer to this problem. He is unattractive and undesirable to many because He has "no form or comeliness, and when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him." Isaiah 53:2. He is attractive and desirable to many because God has presented His Son before them in such manner as to make Him seem desirable and of transcendent import. Responding to this gracious work they have found Him to be one who is altogether lovely, the fairest among ten thousands. Men by their own powers of perception can see nothing unusual in Christ; at least nothing more than they see in other men. They may credit Him with good moral teachings, and approve His example and self-denial, but they will see little more in Him than they see in other good men of noble spirit. Because of this no man will ever come to God's Christ except the Father draws him.

In considering this great truth we must not think of drawing as being some violent process as the steer being dragged to the slaughter house. Neither must we read into John 6:44 the idea that all who are drawn will come to Christ. There is no such idea here. We must not rewrite this passage and make it to say, "All who are forced to come to Christ will come to Him." God does positively draw men to Christ, but there is no guarantee that this gracious work will bring a true response. This drawing works upon the heart of man, without the man knowing it at the time. It causes him to feel that Jesus Christ is worthy of every trust and all faith that he may place in Him. By means of this work God creates the appetite and sets before man the full provision to satisfy his hunger. This provision is Christ.

Has this ever taken place in the life of the reader of these lines? Have you ever felt any earnest desire concerning Christ? Has the idea ever impressed itself upon you that you would do well to enter into partnership with Him in blessed relationship of sinner and Savior-He the Savior, and you the sinner? Have you ever considered that this One would be the "friend that sticketh closer than a brother?" If so, this was God drawing you to Christ. What response did you make to this gracious work?

The third aspect of God's work of seeking is:

### 3. QUICKENING

This specific truth is apt to be misunderstood and lost sight of as many are inclined to confuse it with other truths that are designated by this same term. For example, this word is used in connection with the resurrection of the dead, and it is also used in connection with the gift of life in Christ Jesus. Much of God's work in the lives of men is done through quickening, for this is a truth that can be traced through the Old Testament into the New. Consider the following passages:

**Thou which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Psalm 71:20.**

**So will not we go back from thee: quicken us. and we will call upon Thy name. Psalm 80:18.**

**Quicken Thou me in Thy way. Psalm 119:37.**

**This is my comfort in my affliction: for Thy word hath quickened me. Psalm 119:00.**

**I will never forget Thy precepts: for with them Thou hast quickened me. Psalm 119:93.**

As we pass from the Old Testament into the New we find our Lord declaring:

**It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. John 6:63.**

The specific truth concerning quickening, which we are considering is based upon the fact that men are *dying* while the Word of God is *living*. This is set forth in I Corinthians 15:22, which should read, "As in Adam all are dying," and in Hebrews 4:12 which should read, "For the Word of God is living." In view of these two statements we can say that man is wholly unlike the Scriptures in character-so much so that it is impossible that the Scriptures could ever speak to him as the Word of God. Men may admire the Scripture as literature; they may revel in its poetry and delight in its history, but apart from a divine work in their lives it will never speak to them as a message from God. And so that men can believe in or else reject the record that God has given of His Son, He quickens them to the Word of God. This is an aspect of His work of seeking the lost. This work of the Spirit makes the recipient of it fully responsible before God. When this work has transpired in a man's life, he will be either a believer or an unbeliever. No neutral position will be possible. Belief and unbelief are both positive acts. Men are not born either believers or unbelievers. Man cannot be a believer in that which he has never heard, and man cannot be charged with unbelief until God has quickened him to His Word.

The fact that *quicken* means "to make alive," may cause some to stumble in relationship to this aspect of God's work of seeking the lost. They will confuse this preliminary work with that greater work wherein the believer is given life in Christ. This greater work is described in Romans 6:4-11. This difficulty will disappear when we realize that *quicken* is a means by which God carries on His work in us from His first approach to that time yet future when we will be raised from the dead. There is a quickening that operates as the Word is read. Men are quickened in regard to specific truths, which God would have them embrace. Our mortal bodies are quickened by the Spirit of God so that they can respond to the leading of the Spirit. These are some examples of God's manifold

quicken work in our lives. But the quickening we are considering now is that which takes place in the man who has no relationship whatsoever to God. By it God applies the Word to the heart of man causing it to speak to him as the Word of God.

An illustration of this may be seen in the common type of hand-operated printing press. The paper may be inserted and the press may be in full operation, but no impression is made until the pressman throws the lever, which controls the pressure between type and platen. The paper may come near the type again and again as the machine operates "off pressure" but no impression is made. When the lever is thrown, the type contacts the paper, making an impression that cannot be erased.

Even so it is with man's relationship to the sacred Scriptures. He may come near the Word of God again and again. He may hear it proclaimed, or even read it himself but it makes no impression upon him. It is a living thing; but he is dead to it, so there is no response. Suddenly God quickens him in relationship to it and a divine impression is made which can never be erased. If this gracious work is repudiated, this very Word will rise up to condemn him in the day of judgment. See John 12:48.

Has the reader ever experienced this gracious work? If so, your responsibility before God has increased a thousand fold. You are now among those who have been enlightened and who have tasted the good word of God. What did you do about it?

The reader can answer these questions for himself. We will go on to consider the fourth great aspect of God's work of seeking the lost. This aspect is:

#### **4. CALLING**

This important truth, like that of quickening, must not be confused with another great work of God that bears the same name. We are dealing here with an action of God toward the one who has not believed on His Son. This great truth also flows out of the Old Testament and into the New. In **Proverbs 1:24** God declares:

**Because I have called and you refused; I have stretched out My hand and no man regarded.**

In **II Thessalonians 2:14** Paul declares:

**Whereunto He called you by our gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

In **I Peter 2:9** we find this truth set forth in a passage spoken specifically to believing Israel, but applicable to all who have passed out of darkness into light:

**That you should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.**

This truth may be missed altogether unless we see that there are many "calls" -that is, that God calls repeatedly, and that the new life in Christ Jesus is one call after another. However, the specific calling being presented here is that which takes place in a man's life before he ever embraces Christ.

### **Man's Part**

Along with God's work of convicting us in relationship to the sin of unbelief, of drawing us in relationship to Christ, of quickening us in relationship to His Word, there is also a call in relationship to faith or belief. This is the only thing God desires of the sinner. It is the most He desires from him. It is the goal of all God's work of seeking that men should come to belief or faith in Jesus Christ as God's Son and our Savior. Faith is our part in the work of redemption.

## Faith In Jesus Christ

The tremendous importance of faith in the sight of God is sometimes missed due to a peculiarity in our English Bibles that arises out of the difficulty of turning Greek into English. In English the words *belief* and *faith* are synonymous terms, with belief signifying mental assent and faith implying the ideas of trust and confidence. In Greek, the language in which the New Testament was first written, one word stands for both *faith* and *belief*, so no distinction can be made between these two words when they appear in our English versions. In changing Greek into English, the translators have found it best to use two words, but we should never permit this necessity of translation to confuse us. When we come upon the word *faith*, we should read into it all that inheres in the word *belief*; and, likewise, when we come upon the word *belief*, we should read into it all that inheres in the word *faith*. The supreme importance of faith or belief in relationship to God can be demonstrated by the quotation of certain passages.

**But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name. John 1:12.**

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16.**

**He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God. John 3:18.**

**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him. John 3:36.**

**Then said they unto Him, What shall we do that we might work the works of God?' Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him, whom He hath sent. John 6:28, 29.**

**Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. John 6:47.**

**To him give all the prophets witness, that, through His Name whosoever believe in Him shall receive remission of sins. Acts 10:43.**

**For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Romans 1:16.**

**Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. Romans 3:22.**

**Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Romans 3:28.**

**But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly his faith is counted for righteousness. Romans 4:5.**

**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 5:1.**

If these passages are carefully read and if there is a divine quickening of the mind to the truth they declare, the reader will have the conviction that Jesus Christ and all the blessings that accompany Him are not obtained by working, struggling, praying, giving, or joining. They are obtained by believing, that is, by faith. Therefore, to have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, or to have exercised faith in Him, is the most important and far reaching step that a man can take in his entire lifetime. This is the one thing that God desires most from men. Without faith it is impossible to please Him.

God has declared this; therefore, let men keep silence and cease to say or think that faith can be dispensed with.

To have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or to believe on Him as the only begotten Son of God is simply to believe the record that God has given of His Son. There is no ritual or ceremony involved in or connected with our believing in the Lord Jesus. It is useless to devise or to perform one that others have devised. Faith in Jesus Christ is belief in God's record of Him. We believe this record in the same way we believe any other record, witness, or testimony. There are no two ways of believing anything. There is no difference between believing what men say and believing what God says, except that none can and none will believe God apart from that divine work of seeking which makes faith or belief possible. But, let it be noted carefully, it is God that seeks us. It is the testimony of Scripture that "there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:11. We can do no work that will clear the way for us to come to God. God does do a work that makes it possible for us to believe in Him. We begin in our faith by believing the record God has given of His Son, even though later our belief in the record becomes our trust in a person, Christ Jesus. This is that to which God calls. This is the goal of God's work of seeking. He would bring the one sought to faith in Jesus Christ. And, apart from God's work of seeking, faith in Jesus Christ is not possible.

It must be noted that God's work of seeking brings man to the place where he can believe, but it does not make a believer of him. Just as there is no such thing as sin apart from someone sinning, even so there is no such thing as belief (or faith) apart from someone believing. Faith is not a commodity that can be purchased in the market. It is produced only by believing. He that comes to God must believe, that is, he must come by faith.

Many of God's people have become so enamored with the misconception which they call "instantaneous salvation" that it is impossible for them to find either time or place for that gracious work of God which brings the sinner to the place where faith is possible, and where redemption and forgiveness can become personal realities. Their preconception stands in the way of the Biblical revelation concerning how God redeems and forgives :a soul. They begin the work of God with the sinner believing rather than God seeking.

That men will believe apart from hearing is expressly denied in Scripture (see Romans 10:14), and true hearing cannot be instantaneous. Such response to a message would be rashness rather than faith. However, the whole tendency of the human :race is toward speed, so men who announce themselves as God's servants find it impossible to allow God time to do His work which prepares the soul for an intelligent choice of Christ as Savior. These unfaithful servants have developed some cheap and easy short-cuts by which they can produce a reasonable facsimile of the redeemed and forgiven soul in the space of less than two hours-the time required for a song-service and a sermon.

A redeemed and forgiven soul is God's own masterpiece and all honor for producing it belongs alone to Him. Only Rembrandt could paint a "Rembrandt," and Titian alone could paint a "Titian." Men have produced some excellent imitations of these, and those who are considered art experts have declared them to be genuine. It may be true that some of these imitations are equal in art to the original, but the fact remains that only Rembrandt could paint a "Rembrandt."

Wholly apart from divine power, and by the use of human methods men are able to produce what they call "saved souls" or "children of God." And for the purposes of "counting results," or even for the purposes of nominal church membership these imitations are better than the original. Such converts as these will increase the membership of a church, they will swell the attendance, and, if they have personal standing in the community they will increase its influence. Since they care little for the Word, they raise no questions about truth or practice; they confess the established creed; they contribute without question as to whether they are supporting a work of God or not. Such "converts" often serve the purpose of the church much better than the truly redeemed and forgiven soul whom

God has brought into relationship to Himself. Many churches can tolerate no divided allegiance; therefore, they cannot use the one who puts loyalty to the Word above loyalty to the creed, and who puts loyalty to God above denominational loyalty. Let us honestly face the facts. The soul whom God has redeemed, forgiven, and brought to Himself, makes very poor membership material for many churches.

An illustration of the great truths of God seeking and man believing may be seen in the marriage laws that are common in this country. The law declares that a full legal union is contracted when the parties have secured a license to marry, and when a proper ceremony is performed by one legally authorized to do so. These two things constitute a legal marriage. If either one is missing, there is no legal union. A license alone, without the ceremony, does not constitute a marriage. It makes a marriage possible, but the license alone accomplishes no union. Either of the parties who secured it can tear it up, as it imposes no obligation.

Even so it is with the truths presented in this study. Three things are required to produce the redeemed and forgiven soul. The death of Christ upon the Cross, the seeking work of God which prepares the sinner for faith in Christ, and the faith or belief of the individual. Since Jesus Christ has already died upon Calvary, there is nothing for God or man to do in regard to this. It is a finished work. Christ died for the ungodly. The two things that remain must be accomplished in the lifetime of the individual. God must seek him and he must believe. The seeking work of God does not redeem. It makes possible the faith of the individual, and apart from it faith is not possible. Faith is an absolute essential, for without faith it is impossible to please God.

Many are led by human efforts to make a "profession of faith" in Jesus Christ apart from God's great preparatory work, but it does not result in union with Him. No more than a wedding ceremony without a license makes a legal marriage. Furthermore, there have been multitudes who have been prepared by God for faith but they have never responded with the faith that God so much desires. Many have been convicted of their sin of unbelief, drawn to Christ, quickened to the Word and called to respond by believing. But, they have refused to respond, or else they have tried to offer to God some substitute for faith. He has asked them for the bread of faith, but they have answered by giving Him the stone of unbelief.

And it is just at this point that a faithful warning must be sounded. God's great preparatory work of seeking is sure to bring real exercise of heart and mind to the one who is the recipient of it. The personal reactions to this exercise will vary according to the personality of the individual, since God is responsible only for the work, not our feelings or reactions to it.

For example, many pilots have described their feelings when they discovered that their plane was on fire or that their gas tanks were empty. Their feelings and reactions varied according to their personalities; nevertheless, they all declare that such experiences were quite disconcerting.

Even so it is when one discovers his true state before God as the result of God's seeking work. The feelings about this will vary according to the individual. Some will be very much upset because of it, others will feel distress or despair. It cannot fail to exercise every recipient of it to a certain extent. And because of this, some will immediately seek for relief from it. They want no such exercise of heart to disturb them, and they will seek ways to bring it to an end. Many, like the swimmer who thinks he is drowning, will thrash about in an earnest desire to help themselves. They will seek to quiet the voice of God by a round of religious activities. They will join churches, be baptized, and partake of sacraments. In fact, the ministry of many religious organizations is designed solely for the purpose of quieting and comforting people who have become exercised and upset by the seeking work of the Lord. They tell men that they are right, at the very time that the Spirit is making a personal effort to tell them they are wrong. They lead men into religious activities and ceremonies when God would lead them to Christ. May those who read these lines, who have come to know Jesus

Christ, never be guilty of hindering God's work of seeking the sinner. Let us recognize the divine efforts in the lives of men and be willing humbly to cooperate as the Spirit does His work. May we never be guilty of trying to assure someone that he is saved, when the Holy Spirit is seeking to convince him that he is lost.

At this point, a word concerning the recognition of the Spirit's work in our lives or in the lives of others will not be amiss. God's action of convicting, drawing, quickening, and calling is truly God speaking to us. Even though today in this time of the silence of God, He does not speak with audible voice; nevertheless, He does speak to men by the truth He impresses upon their hearts. This is another case of God's Spirit bearing witness to the spirits of men. In seeking to recognize His work so that we may cooperate with it, we will do well to be guided by the experience of Elijah as recorded in I Kings 19:10-13.

In Elijah's day the hand of God could not be seen in Israel. He did not appear to be at work there, either in blessing or in judgment. Elijah declared to God that they had forsaken His covenant, overthrown His altars, killed His prophets, and were seeking to kill him. No work of God counteracting all this was in evidence to Elijah, so he made bitter complaint. The Lord replied by telling Elijah to go and stand upon the mount before Him. As he stood there the Lord passed by. A great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind came an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. Following the fire came a still small voice, and this proved to be the presence of God. This voice told Elijah that even though there was no dramatic evidence of His work, He had reserved to Himself seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Even so today the seeking work of God can best be likened to the "voice of a gentle whisper." Nevertheless, we must not doubt its reality because of this. Men may desire the spectacular and sensational, and feel that anything that lacks these elements is not of God. But let it be remembered that what man cannot do with sledgehammer blows, God can do by speaking a word.

The writer of this pamphlet anticipates that it will cause many questions. He feels that the truth presented in these pages will be rejected by some because it does not seem to match step by step their experiences. If all experiences were normal, this difficulty would be dealt with. But they are so varied and abnormal that to consider even one person's experience would be of no value. This whole matter resolves itself into whether the Word must fit someone's experience, or whether all experiences must fit the Word of God.

Others will be disappointed because a Scripture passage has not been given for every point of truth presented. Many are so used to having things proven or disproven by passages of Scripture that they demand every teacher use the same method. This is not an honest method of handling the Word of God. While it is true that some great truths are epitomized in a single declaration, other truths are based upon "the volume (summary) of the Book" See Hebrews 10:7. Many men hold truths because of the summary of truth they have gained from their studies in the Word. We could well wish that every truth had been epitomized in a single passage, but God has not seen fit to do it this way. To reject a truth because it cannot be found by reading a single verse is to reject truth because it does not rest upon the surface.

Others will have difficulty in receiving these truths because of ideas founded upon favorite passages, which have been separated from the body of truth. Many believe that Romans 8:29, 30 presents the divine steps by which God redeems and forgives a soul. These steps are taken to be God's foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification. This misunderstanding arises from lack of truth concerning the purpose that God was accomplishing in the thirty-three years of the Acts period. In verse 28 Paul speaks of those "called according to His purpose." **It was God's**

**declared purpose at that time to bless a remnant in Israel, not the whole of Israel. See Romans 9:27.** He did this very thing, fully accomplishing His purpose in the Acts period. **See Romans 9:28 and 11:5.** It was also His purpose to visit the Gentiles and take out from among them a people for His Name. This He did and fully completed in the same period. Because of this purpose, a purpose that was to be completed in about one generation, God's foreknowledge operated in regard to what He would do for certain Jews and Gentiles. His purposes could allow no resistance or opposition. Therefore, He set these Jews and Gentiles apart beforehand, called them, justified them and glorified them. Every detail was complete when Paul as His ambassador announced that the salvation of God had been sent to the Gentiles. See Acts 28:28. It is in the present period of time while the Salvation of God is among the Gentiles that the truths presented here have their full and complete application. They do not apply in the Acts period.

### **Before The Cross**

These same truths, in a measure, can also be seen in operation in Old Testament times. When Adam was in the condition where sin had brought him, he was sought by the Lord. The question, "Where art thou?" does not mean that God did not know his exact hiding place. It carries the force of "Where do you stand?" or "Where are you now?" It was intended to exercise Adam and prepare him for the message, which would bring him to faith.

The one who prayerfully studies the book of Job will know that every statement made by Job's companions cannot be taken as full and accurate truth. What they said must be considered in the light of other revelations. But there is no question but what Elihu in his discourse recorded in **Job 33** set forth some far-reaching truths.

**For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night when deep sleep falleth upon men in slumberings upon the bed: Then He openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction. That He may Withdraw man from His purpose and hide pride from him. He keepeth back his soul from the pit. and his life from perishing with the sword. He is chastened also with pain upon his bed. and the multitude of his bones with strong pain. So that his life abhorreth bread and his soul dainty meat. His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen; and his bones that were not seen stick out. Yea, his soul draweth near to the grave and his life to the destroyers.**

**If there be a messenger with Him, an interpreter, one among a thousand to shew unto man His uprightness: Then He is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. Job 33:14-24.**

**He looketh upon men and if any say I have sinned and perverted that which was right and it profited me not: He will deliver his soul from going into the pit. And his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man to bring back his soul from the pit to be enlightened with the light of the living. Job 33:27-30.**

It is evident that the truths stated here are somewhat interwoven with Elihu's own ideas as he attempts to interpret Job's sufferings. Furthermore, some of these truths are not applicable under the dispensation of the grace of God. Nevertheless, it is evident that today God does speak to men over and over but they fail to recognize it. He does open the ears of men when He quickens them to His Word. He does seal their instruction, for all men who have been sought by God come under a new responsibility. It is true today that when men take their place as sinners and put their trust in the Savior of sinners, they are delivered from destruction and their lives see the light. Yes, these things God works oftentimes with men.

## The Believers Part

"What is our part"? many believers will ask. This question is easily answered by all who have accepted the divine limitations and restriction, which the truth places upon their service. The part of the believer in all of this is to proclaim the Word. We cannot convict, we cannot draw, we cannot quicken, we cannot call, but we can proclaim the Word. This is essential, for the Word must be before men before they can be quickened to it.

Furthermore, God does not like to see His seed that we sow go to waste. If we desire God to do His preparatory work in someone's life, let us proclaim the Word to them, back it up by prayer and leave the results to God.

**THE END**

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***FAITHFUL OR SUCCESSFUL***

In all our witness for God, faithfulness is the one great requisite. It is not required of stewards that they be successful, but it is required that they be faithful. See I Corinthians 4:2. We are not commissioned to accomplish certain things, but we are commanded to be faithful in our testimony. God has not commissioned us to "save souls" but to "preach the Word." Saving souls is His prerogative, preaching the Word is our privilege. If men will not hear it, if they will not receive it, we are not told to seek for something else, which they will hear and receive. Paul says "the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine," but we are not told to find something which they will endure. We are to continue to "preach the Word."

People today look for "results," and unless we are able to show some, or to present some report of great accomplishments, our work is considered by all to be a failure. But we have nothing whatever to do with "results." What we have to do with is our faithfulness. Results are God's responsibility, but for our faithfulness, we are responsible.

Are we working for ourselves, or for the Lord? If we are working for the Lord, is it not for Him to decide what His purposes are? Is it not for Him to decide what the results are to be? (Reprinted from Vol. 1, No.1 of *The Word of Truth*.)

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS***

### **Question on I Thessalonians 2:16**

**QUESTION:** Pastor J. C. O'Hair points to I Thessalonians 2:16 as evidence that Israel had been judged and set aside. What is your opinion of this?

**ANSWER:** The declaration "the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost" is one that requires examination. Men may use this as proof of the correctness of their position, but if it is carefully examined it may teach the opposite. As the passage stands in the *King James Version* it would seem

to declare that all the wrath which the unbelieving Jews would ever experience was that which they were experiencing when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. What else can this mean? If the wrath of God had already come upon them to the uttermost, then what further wrath could they experience? The fact that this could not be true, for they had suffered very little, is enough to send a careful student to the Word to check this passage.

The various Versions do not offer much help, but for the help of the student, here they are:

*King James:* **For the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.**

*Revised Standard:* **But God's wrath has come upon them at last.**

*Weymouth:* **God's anger in its severest form has overtaken them.**

*Rotherham:* **But anger hath overtaken them at length.**

*Goodspeed:* **But God's wrath has overtaken them at last.**

The passage deals with the Jews in Judea. They were the ones who had killed the Lord Jesus, who killed their own prophets, who persecuted the apostles, who were not pleasing to God and contrary to all mankind. Because of these sins the wrath of God had come upon them in the severest form. The Jerusalem branch had been cut off from the good olive tree. This probably happened at Acts 7 when they stoned Stephen, re-enacting Calvary and saying anew "We will not have this man to reign over us." No more terrible thing could have happened to an Israelite than to be cut off by God. They had been warned of this in Acts 3:23. They had not heeded the warning and the terrible blow had fallen. "Behold therefore the severity of God," are Paul's words concerning this judgment.

The evidence is conclusive that I Thessalonians was written from Corinth shortly after Paul departed from Thessalonica. About six years after this, he wrote the Roman epistle. In it he declares that the gospel is to the Jew first (1:16); the Jew had the advantage and circumcision was profitable (3:1-2); Paul the greatest sinner in Israel had not been cast away for his sins, and he uses this fact as proof that God had not cast away His people (11:1-2); God was doing a work designed to provoke Israel to jealousy (11:11); the good olive tree was still standing (11:24); the Gentiles were partakers of Israel's spiritual things, and, therefore in debt to Israel (15:27). How could all these blessed facts be true of a people upon whom the wrath of God had come to the uttermost?

\*\*\*\*\*

## ***THE EDITOR TO HIS FRIENDS***

\*\*\*\*The Editor and Mrs. Sellers sends greetings from Southern California to all the friends of this ministry, and a very special greeting to the many personal friends in Michigan and Illinois from whom we were separated by the move here. If any feel that we have neglected or forgotten them, we beg them to be lenient in their judgment of us. Our move to California severed us from several hundred families in Michigan and Illinois whom we use to see quite regularly. We have not been able to keep our promise to write to them, but we assure them that they are in our minds and on our hearts. We trust that they will receive this magazine as a personal communication from us. See 3 John 1:13,14.

\*\*\*\*After a long delay an issue of *The Word of Truth* finally comes to our readers from our new headquarters in Southern California. They will please note that this issue is Volume 10, Number 2. The previous issue (Vol. 10, No.1) was mailed from Grand Rapids in July. This means that five months have elapsed between issues. We have tried to keep our friends informed of our activities through a bulletin mailed in September from Grand Rapids, and a letter mailed in November from Los Angeles. If our friends received these, they have all material sent out since last May. We are somewhat hesitant about using space in writing of ourselves, but our friends insist on hearing of our activities, and we feel we owe them at least a brief report.

Mrs. Sellers, Jane and I left Grand Rapids on Friday, September 12. The last six weeks there was certainly the busiest and most strenuous period of our lives. Our friends will understand this better if we say that there were one hundred seventy-five boxes of books to be packed and shipped. This was only a part of all that had to be done. But finally the last possible thing was packed, the last good-bye was said and we were ready to go. As we knelt in prayer before our departure, we felt overwhelmed because of the goodness of our great God who had provided the sorely needed wisdom, strength, and health required for the task of closing up our affairs in Grand Rapids. Our feelings were mixed between sorrow at leaving the place where we had lived for eleven happy and fruitful years, and joy in the fact that at long last we were departing for our new field of service.

Our first night was spent in Chicago, where on Saturday we were met by Herbert Baudistel who had come by train from New Jersey. He had originally planned to drive through with Jerry Brandsma, but due to circumstances which arose, Jerry was not able to join us in the work here. Going on to Jacksonville, Illinois, we stayed there for two nights in order to rest up a bit and spend a final day with Jane, whom we left at Mac Murray College to finish her final year. On Monday morning we headed West and arrived in Los Angeles on Tuesday, September 23. We enjoyed every moment of the eleven days enroute, doing all the things and taking in all the sights that the average tourist does. It was a wonderful vacation and a, good rest. It was good for us that it was, in view of the strenuous days that followed our arrival in Los Angeles.

As we made our first careful inspection of our new headquarters at 607 South Kenmore Avenue we decided that every inch of it had to be thoroughly cleaned and renovated, every closet and cupboard had to be painted, and the entire kitchen had to be torn out and completely remodeled. A thousand-and-one other things demanded attention. Old houses such as this are usually neglected from owner to owner until someone comes along who decides upon complete renovation. This was our decision, so the work began the next morning and has continued without cessation for the four months we have been here. Progress is slow due to the fact we are doing most of the work ourselves, with the major portion of the credit going to Herbert Baudistel and Elroy Robinson.

Before the first week was over, a second major decision had to be made. Mrs. Sellers and I came here with the full intention that 607 South Kenmore was to be the headquarters of our ministry and that another place was to be purchased as our home. After our arrival here it became evident that much of our personal funds would have to go into this place; therefore, we would not be able to maintain two places. In view of this we decided that the only way the work could be established here was for us to make this our home as well as our headquarters so that our means and energies could be expended on this place. In view of this decision we have been faced with the necessity of turning this into a home as well as a headquarters for our work. This decision was out of necessity rather than out of desire, but we now see that it was a wise move and are quite happy in the present arrangement, even though we do not expect to continue it indefinitely. The genius of Mrs. Sellers and the hard work of Elroy Robinson and Herbert Baudistel has turned it into a very attractive place.

\*\*\*\*The first meeting of THE LOS ANGELES BIBLE FELLOWSHIP was held on September 28, the first Sunday after our arrival. Services are now being held every Sunday morning at 11:00 and every Sunday evening at 7:30 in the auditorium at 245 South Lucas Street. The response to our ministry in Los Angeles has been most gratifying. We will appreciate it if our readers will tell their friends in Los Angeles about these meetings. We have already assembled a deeply interested and enthusiastic group, and it is our expectation that these will form the nucleus of a strong testimony to the Word of God in this great city.

\*\*\*\*The classes of the Institute began on October 7, two weeks after our arrival here. We meet four mornings each week from Tuesday to Friday for intensive Bible study. This Institute is not a formal school, patterned after the schools of this world. It is a fellowship of students of which the Editor is one. The others are Elroy B. Robinson, Herbert H. Baudistel, John C. Ribbens and Hershey Julien. Our studies are centered solely in the Word so that we may redeem the time. The only study, which is not strictly Biblical is the two hours spent each week studying Greek, the language in which the New Testament was first written. Our friends must not think of these men as mere beginners. One is a University Graduate and two are College graduates. They are all here solely because of a desire to gain greater knowledge of the Word of God. We give no credits, issue no diplomas, graduate nobody. Visitors are welcome to attend the sessions of the Institute, but we ask them to telephone us first and make arrangements. Our telephone number in Los Angeles is FAirfax 0555.

\*\*\*\*The first SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AREA MEETING was held on Sunday, November 16. The response was so encouraging that we have determined to make these special meetings a regular feature of our work. Out of the studies in the Institute many truths have been developed and some of the fruits of these studies were presented by the brethren who are in the Institute fellowship. Although the meeting is now history, we feel our friends will be interested in the program.

10:00 A.M.-THEN SHALL THE END COME

A Study in Matthew 24 by Hershey Julien.

11:00 A.M.-SALVATION IS OF THE JEWS

A Study in John 4, by Otis Q. Sellers.

3:00 P 1 PM.-CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD

A Study in Acts 2:21, by Herbert H. Baudistel. WHAT HAPPENED AT ACTS 13?

Dispensational Study, by Elroy B. Robinson. 2 TIMOTHY: PRE OR POST, ACTS 28:28?

A Study in Chronology, by Otis Q. Sellers.

7:30 P.M.-THE CASE OF JUDAS ISCARIOT

The Problem of Matthew 27:5 and Acts 1:18, by Hershey Julien.

THE MANY AND THE ALL

A Study of Romans 5:12-21, by Otis Q. Sellers.

The next meeting of this kind will be held on Sunday, February 15. There will be services morning, afternoon and evening. At least eight studies will be presented, so plan toward this so you can be present. Programs announcing the subjects and speakers will be sent to all readers in the Southern California area.

\*\*\*\*We are fully aware of the governmental restrictions, which make it impossible for the friends of this ministry in Great Britain to send gifts for the support of this work. Due to an oversight, a gift envelope and a return envelope was sent to all our readers outside the United States with the bulletins mailed in September. We wanted them to have the bulletin as it gave a report of our activities, but did not wish by enclosing the envelopes to suggest they try to do the impossible. Friends in the British Isles must not try to send money to us through the mails. This is a violation of the present restrictions and may cause them trouble. Most letters are being opened by the British government for custom inspection.

\*\*\*\*It is my conviction that frankness and clarity of speech will do much to avoid misunderstandings among friends. It is in the spirit of this conviction that I write the following lines, as we are faced with a major problem that can be solved only by setting it forth to our readers. It is a well known fact that Southern California is a visitors and vacationers paradise. Its glorious scenery, numerous attractions and pleasant climate draw people by the millions every year. There is a saying here that if a man has only two friends they will both visit him if he lives in California. Others say if he has one friend and one enemy they will both visit him. Out of the many families who receive *The Word Of Truth*, it seems that hundreds of them want to visit California, this winter, and most of these would like to visit with us because of the fellowship in the Word it would make possible. We would enjoy entertaining them if time and strength permitted, but this would mean that much of our ministry would have to come to an end as our lives would be devoted to running a rooming house and restaurant. Everyone in California faces the same problem due to the enormous influx of visitors every year. Because of this we are not able to arrange for accommodations for visitors in other homes. It would be an imposition upon our part to ask such a favor of anyone. Our situation is such that we are able to offer hospitality only to those whom we have invited to be our guests.

We are exceedingly anxious to have the friends of this ministry visit Los Angeles and fellowship with us in the services we conduct here. There are two services every Sunday. The sessions of our school are open to visitors. However, we must ask each visitor to arrange for their own accommodations as this is a service we cannot offer. As stated before, this has no reference to those friends whom we have invited or will invite in the future.

\*\*\*\*In this issue we offer to our readers one of the most important studies we have ever published. The message on *How God Redeems a Soul* has been presented to at least eight groups in the past three years. Hundreds have declared that they have been greatly helped by it and have urged us to publish it. We had planned to issue it as a pamphlet, but decided to print it in the magazine in order to give it the widest possible distribution. We now desire to reprint it as a pamphlet in order to fill an expected demand for additional copies. We will need at least \$300.00 in order to do this. If you find help in this message and would like to make possible its wider distribution, your gifts to make this possible will be greatly appreciated.

\*\*\*\*We urgently need the material support of all our friends in the work we are doing. Under the designation of THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY we are performing the following services:

1. We are writing and publishing this Bible magazine and by this means sending forth a witness to and a ministry of the Word of God rightly divided. As you hold this copy in your hand it may seem to be a very simple matter to send it forth, but each issue represents many many hours of study and writing, also the overcoming of a multitude of problems, which arise in connection with the printing of each issue. This work is done as a "labor of love." Our friends can read this issue and form their own opinion as to the value of this ministry, and its worthiness as an object of their support.

2. We are also publishing and distributing numerous pamphlets dealing with major Biblical themes. Some of these are sold for a price, but the price is very low, and for each copy we sell we give away two or three. Our latest pamphlets on *The Dispensation of the Grace of God* and *Acts*

28:28, *A Dispensational Boundary Line* can be read by any who desire to weigh the value of this ministry. These were offered free to all our readers and most of them accepted the offer. We desire to publish many more pamphlets such as these, but must have help from our friends in doing it.

3. We make possible and direct a small school where four men are being developed as teachers of the Word. All of these men will gladly give testimony concerning the value of this training. Two of these men, Elroy Robinson and Herbert Baudistel, make their home with us at not one cent of cost to them. In return for this they work at repairing and renovating our new headquarters.

4. We conduct a radio ministry in Grand Rapids, Michigan and Chicago, Illinois, presenting a sincere and unrestricted testimony to the Word of God, rightly divided. Friends in the Grand Rapids area can hear this ministry every Sunday from 9:00 to 9:30 A.M. over WLAV. Friends in the Chicago area can hear it every Sunday over WAIT from 1:15 to 1:30 P.M.

5. We are seeking to establish a witness to the Word of God in Los Angeles, in which everything will be subordinated to the proclamation of the Sacred Scriptures. We seek no funds for this from those outside of this area. Those who attend these meetings must assume full responsibility for the support of them. The greater part of my living is provided by this group, thus making it possible for me to give my time to many other ministries.

6. We are seeking to provide a building in which all these activities may be centered. We have purchased the property at 607 South Kenmore Avenue for this purpose, and we expect that as the work grows to use it fully for these various ministries. We have assumed exceedingly heavy obligations in doing this and need the help of all our friends in carrying the load.

Much of our time and thought during 1947 had to be devoted to the changes we have made. These changes have disrupted our work to a greater extent than we ever anticipated. We are not yet fully reorganized and set up for the work we are doing, but expect to be in a very short time. We will then be ready to perform a greater ministry for our friends than ever before, and we will need their help as it has never been needed before. What we have said may be construed by our critics as boasting of our labors, but it will be understood by our friends as a sincere and honest presentation of the work we are doing. We want our friends to know what they are supporting, for we do not ask them to give to something blindly.

\*\*\*\*Mrs. Sellers joins me in sending thanks to all the friends who sent us greetings at the Christmas and New Year Season. We would like to acknowledge everyone of these with a personal note of appreciation, but as this is impossible, we take this means of saying "Thank you." It was our extreme pleasure to have our daughter Jane and my sister Helen with us for two weeks. Jane saw California for the first time and is very much in love with it. At present, we plan to be in the middle-west in May for her graduation. This will also give us opportunity for ministry at various places, in that vicinity. Fellowships desiring this ministry should contact :me at once so that an itinerary can be announced in our next issue.

**End, Vol. X, No. 2**