



# The Sharon Star

## Love Not The World

*By F.T. Paterson*

"Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:15-17, NIV).

### **The God of this World**

In speaking of the world James is not referring to the world of nature around us or the population that inhabits this earth. He is speaking of the wicked spiritual authority behind this present evil age (Gal 1:4). At what time in creation this spiritual authority came forth scripture does not reveal, but we are made aware that at some point Satan was cast out of Heaven, as Jesus said "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven" (Luke 10:18, KJV). He is known as the god of this world (2 Cor 4:4); prince of the power of the air (Eph 2:2); prince of this world (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11). It appears that when Satan was cast out of Heaven that he was given a measure of authority on this earth. In the account of Jesus temptation, "The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:5-7,

NIV). It appears also that Satan was not cast out alone and one third of the angels followed him. "Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth" (Rev 12:3-4, NIV). This is speaking metaphorically, of course, for these are not the natural stars of the heavens, some being many times larger than the earth, but rather the spiritual creatures that followed Satan in his rebellion.

### **Man's Authority Usurped**

It was God's desire that man, the pinnacle of His creation, would be fruitful, multiply and have dominion over His creation. Satan's desire, however, was that he would be the central figure of authority in the world. Proclaiming, "I will be like the most high" (Isa 14:14). He appeared to man with subtlety convincing him that even though God had said they would die if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it was not true, rather, they would not die but would become like gods knowing good and evil (Gen. 2:4-5). Satan is the father of lies, "He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44, NIV). He came to them with a partial truth, they did not die at that very moment but they did enter into the realm of death, which is the realm of Satan. He not

only told them a lie but he usurped their authority in the world. Instead of the dominion that God had given them over the world, they now were under the dominion of the world and its unseen ruler, the god of this world.

### **God's Judgment on Man**

Because of man's disobedience God pronounced judgment upon them. They were removed from the paradise of God where they fellowshiped with God on a personal level and entered a realm that was cursed by sin. A realm of wickedness, rebellion and disease and it was not long before it manifested itself when Cain rose up in anger and murdered his brother Abel. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgement came upon all men to condemnation" (Rom 5:18, KJV). From that time until the present mankind has lived under the domination of a sin-cursed world. Of course we are speaking of the system that the god of this world has brought upon us, not the natural world of nature. Even as it was by the disobedience of one that we have been infected with a nature of sin, by the obedience of Christ to the cross we are made righteousness, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Rom 5:19, KJV). Without Christ, life in this world has no spiritual purpose, drifting along like a stick in a stream. "To you, who were spiritually dead all the time that you drifted along on the stream of this world's ideas of living,

and obeyed its unseen ruler (who is still operating in those who do not respond to the truth of God), to you Christ has given life! We all lived like that in the past, and followed the impulses and imaginations of our evil nature, being in fact under the wrath of God by nature, like everyone else" (Ephesians 2:1-3, Phillips). This is not to imply that everything in the world is wrong. There is beauty in creation with the earth showing the handiwork of God, beauty in the filial love between family and friends, compassion when there are natural disasters like the tsunami in Asia that brought so much death, suffering and pain in 2004. It was wonderful to see the nations of the world giving of their resources both in food and necessities of life to help the survivors. There are many things in science and medicine that are beneficial to mankind also. I seriously doubt, however, that they were motivated by the forces of evil in the world. Regardless of the presence of evil in the world there are certain qualities which seem to be imbedded in mankind which reach out beyond themselves to others. I have to believe that these are qualities which God has built into us, possibly, a distant reminder of what man was like before the fall. There are of course those who have turned themselves completely over to evil desires. Despots who have no mercy, murdering and committing genocide on those who are of a different race. "This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish" (2 Peter 2:10-12, NIV). All people are not like this and some do have some redeeming qualities. In spite of the power of evil in the world there is some good, but **no matter how good man may be it can never redeem him or make him righteous before God.** "We are all infected and impure with sin. When we proudly display our righteous deeds we find they are but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither

and fall. And our sins, like the wind, sweep us away" (Isa 64:6, NLT). "God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so that we can do the good things he planned for us long ago" (Eph 2:8-10, NLT). "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one" (Rom. 3:10, KJV): "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23).

#### God's Plan of Restoration

It has always been in God's mind to restore man to the place of privilege that Satan usurped from him in the garden. He was to have dominion and power over the world both in the natural and spiritual. He was to share with God the glories of rulership in His Kingdom. We are workers together with Him (1 Cor 6:1). "It is through the Son, at the cost of his own blood, that we are redeemed, freely forgiven through that full and generous grace which has overflowed into our lives and opened our eyes to the truth. For God had allowed us to know the secret of his plan, and it is this: he purposes in his sovereign will that all human history shall be consummated in Christ, that everything that exists in Heaven or earth shall find its perfection and fulfillment in him. And here is the staggering thing - that in all which will one day belong to him we have been promised a share (since we were long ago destined for this by the one who achieves his purposes by his sovereign will)" (Ephesians 1:7-10, Phillips). "All who follow the leading of God's Spirit are God's own sons. Nor are you meant to relapse into the old slavish attitude of fear - you have been adopted into the very family circle of God and you can say with a full heart, "Father, my Father." The Spirit himself endorses our inward conviction that we really are the children of God. Think what that means. If we are his children we share his treasures, and all that Christ claims as his will belong to all of us as well! Yes, if we share in his suffering we shall certainly share in his glory" (Rom. 8:14-17, Phillips). Oh! The glories of walking with God! We are destined for more than we can ever even think or imagine. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nei-

ther have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Cor 2:9-10, KJV).

#### From Theory to Experience

We can rejoice, we can lift up our heads and shout praises to God, we can set our feet to dancing and stand in great awe because He has deemed to reveal these wonderful things to sinful lowly man. It sounds wonderful in theory but we may have some second thoughts when it comes to the practical application of these wonderful truths. Is God really willing to share His glory with us? How is it to come to pass? There are many promises in the word of God but if we never see the fruit of those promises it remains forever as a promise with no fulfillment. I have been privy to these wonderful promises for over fifty years. I have heard them ministered in great power and there is a yearning in my heart to experience what I have heard about. Please don't misunderstand, I have seen many wonderful things wrought by the hand of God. There have been times when the glory of the Almighty seemed to literally touch the earth. At times the veil seemed so thin you could almost see into the eternal realm. I have heard the congregation break forth into spiritual song and sing the songs of Zion like an anointed angel choir.

"There's a longing in my heart for Jesus,

There's a longing in my heart to see His face,

I am weary Oh so weary of traveling here below

There's a longing in my heart for Him."

#### In the World But Not Part of It

We are born into the realm directed and dominated by the god of this world. This is by natural birth and we have no choice in the matter. We are in the world but we do not need to be a part of it; God having provided deliverance through the finished work of Christ on the cross of Calvary. It is an act of faith in that provision (Rom. 5:1) that delivers us from the power of the world. "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into

the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Col 1:12-14, KJV). We are born again, not of the corruptible seed of natural birth but through the incorruptible blood of Jesus Christ. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23, KJV). "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" (John 3:3, NIV) The term 'born again' is used by the world meaning that it is different and improved, such as a born again soap or some other product. In some Christian circles the term is used indiscriminately without real understanding. It is fashionable to claim to be born again even if there is no change in lifestyle. Some of the stars of entertainment claim to be born again without any change in their lifestyle either. To be born again means to repent of our willful ways and make a complete change in our life. Born again means that we are adopted and born in the very family of God. "All who follow the leading of God's Spirit are God's own sons. Nor are you meant to relapse into the old slavish attitude of fear - you have been adopted into the very family circle of God and you can say with a full heart, "Father, my Father" (Rom 8:14-15, Phillips).

#### **Two Natures**

"Those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun" (2 Cor 5:17, NLT)! In reality what this means is that we receive a new nature, the nature of Christ. It does not mean that we are free of the old nature for it is still alive within us. We now have two natures, the carnal and the spiritual, which are at odds with each other. "Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. If your sinful nature controls your mind, there is death. But if the Holy Spirit controls your mind, there is life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God" (Rom 8:5-8, NLT). To grow in the Spirit the whole of our Christian life must now be focused on

overcoming the carnal or fleshly nature. Paul gives a commentary in the seventh chapter of Romans on the spiritual battle between the carnal and spiritual nature. "I love to do God's will so far as my new nature is concerned; but there is something else deep within me, in my lower nature, that is at war with my mind and wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. In my mind I want to be God's willing servant, but instead I find myself still enslaved to sin" (Rom 7:22-23, TLB).

#### **Walking In the Spirit**

"So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want" (Gal 5:16-17, NIV). We are continually at war with our sinful nature and when we think we have got the better of him he attacks from another direction. The only way we can overcome the desires of our lower nature is by walking in the Spirit. One thing is for certain that we cannot win the battle in our own strength. Satan, in the form of a dragon, is cast to the earth along with his angels. In Revelation 12 he is called the accuser of the brethren. It does not say so but it is in keeping with his nature to continue to wreak havoc in the earth. Those on the earth overcame him, not in themselves, but by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony (Rev 12:11). Truly the blood of Christ will never lose its power. It was the blood that was shed to redeem us, it was the blood that quickened our spirit and brought us to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and it is the blood that will strengthen us for the battles of life. They also overcame him by the word of their testimony. Their testimony was more than words, it was their lives displayed to those around them. Our lives speak so loud sometimes that you can't hear what we say. James tells us to be not only hearers of the word but to be doers. We may be able to preach and quote much of the word but unless we measure up to what it says it accomplishes little.

#### **Warfare With The Flesh**

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, (Matt. 4), gives us some insights into the types of temptations we

all face at times. These were the temptations that Jesus was faced with. He had fasted for forty days and was hungry. Satan appealed to his flesh by suggesting that he turn the stones into bread, which, as the Son of God, He had power to do. His answer, "Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4, NIV). It is possible to feed the flesh and be hungry in the spirit, feeding on the things of the world instead of the things of God. Satan then suggested that if He was the Son of God that he cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. His answer, "Do not put the Lord your God to the test" (Matt. 4:7, NIV). None of us, of course, has the power to leap tall buildings in a single bound or jump from the empire state building but there are those who have tried very fool hardy stunts. In Niagara Falls they have a museum displaying the many vehicles that men have used to go over the falls in. Some made it and some did not, but it did not deter others from trying it. They finally passed a law that made it illegal. They do it because they think they can and they long for the adoration and roar of the crowd. In the final test Satan took Him to a high mountain where he could see all the kingdoms of the earth and said "if you will worship me I will give you all this." Jesus answer "Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only" (Matt. 4:10, NIV). The last test, pride of accomplishment, has been the downfall of many. We are born into a society that loves the successful. We are taught from childhood that success is the ultimate and if we are not successful we are not worthwhile. When Satan offered Jesus the kingdoms of the world he was really saying this is a way you can accomplish what you came to do without the agony of the cross. You can become King of Kings and Lord of Lords right here and now, you don't have to wait for God's plan to bring it about. We also must be careful that we don't get caught up in the success of this world to the extent that we become unsuccessful in the spirit. "For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:16, NKJV). The lust of the flesh is like a waiting predator always there waiting for us to let our guard down. Feed the flesh and the

spirit will starve; conversely feed the spirit and the flesh will starve. "Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us" (1 Peter 2:11-12, NIV). The lust of the eyes is, in fact, gluttony not only for food but for possessions as well. "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed" (John 6:27, KJV). "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal" (Matt 6:20, KJV). "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition" (1 Tim 6:9, KJV). The pride of life is pride. "Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican" (Luke 18:10-11, KJV). "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:13-14, KJV).

### Overcoming Temptation

It is not long after we commit our life to Christ that the god of this world brings all his forces to bear on bringing us back under his domination. He causes us to doubt our experience with the Lord. He tells us; "You are not really saved, if you were you would not have these unwholesome thoughts or, you are not good enough." Of course these are the thoughts he put in your mind in the first place. He is very skillful in his craftiness, deceiving us with arguments that will cause us to go astray. He comes to us as an angel of light, (2 Cor 11:14), and as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, (1 Peter 5:8). He is a master of deception and is able to make the temptation fit

us personally. He knows exactly what will affect us. It may not affect others but it will be presented in such a way as to lead us astray. Praise God we have the Lord on our side and if we look to Him there is nothing that the enemy can bring against us to lead us astray. "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it" (1 Cor 10:13, NIV). "Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you" (James 4:7-8, NIV).

### You Are A Chosen People

The Church which is the body of Christ should be a place where holiness is displayed to the world. As Christians our lives should radiate the life of Christ. Sad to say this is not always the case and it has ever been so. "God's name is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you" (Rom 2:24, NIV). This is referring to the nation of Israel which were the recipients of the promises of God; they said one thing and did another. This is the promise that God blessed Israel with: "Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, **you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.** These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites" (Ex 19:5-6, NIV). They did not obey the Lord fully as they were asked to and committed spiritual adultery with the pagan gods of the nations around them. This same promise of being a holy nation was given to the church. There is a difference; to the nation of Israel God said '**you will be a holy nation,**' to the church He said '**you are a holy nation.**' "**But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,** a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (1 Peter 2:9-10, NIV). Israel was very diligent to keep the letter of the law in the outward sense but inwardly they did not keep the spirit of the law. "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is

that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom 2:28-29, KJV). Christ came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matt 5:17, NIV). We can depend on traditions that have been handed down from previous generations. Traditions that may have had some meaning in time past but the purpose and understanding of them has been lost leaving an empty tradition. These traditions being devoid of the Spirit will not justify us before God. Depending on church ordinances, certain attire and foods to make us right before God. These traditions may seem very righteous but they will never save us or make us righteous before God. Our only advocate is Jesus Christ who died that we might be made righteous before God. "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Eph 2:8-10, NIV).

### Friendship With The World

On the other end of the spectrum, in the world the boundaries of righteousness tend to change with the times. There is no clear distinction between good and evil. It is important that there is a recognizable difference between the world and the church. It is like a ship on the ocean, as long as the ship rides the waves all is well. However if the ocean gets into the ship it will not be long before the ship is swallowed up by the ocean. So it is with the church. She is in the world but if the world gets into the church the world will soon take over. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God" (James 4:4, KJV). As was mentioned before, we are in the world but we are not part of it. The philosophies of this world sound very convincing when examined with the natural mind. If we allow the mind of the Spirit to guide our thinking the errors of the natural mind are soon made evident. "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the

way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers" (Ps 1:1, NIV). We are assailed day and night by the counsel of the ungodly. The media spews out the message of ungodly counsel. The message seems to be that we live in an enlightened age and if we follow the way of holiness we are old fashioned, that there is no harm in indulging the flesh and partaking of the ways of the world.

#### **Alcohol: A Point In Question**

I would like to focus on alcohol for a moment. There are those that say that a glass of wine with a meal is quite acceptable for a Christian because partaking moderately will not be a problem, does not even the bible tell us to be moderate in all things? Let's say for a moment that it is only one glass. There is still the matter of example. The ungodly observe and what do they see? As far as they are concerned our life-style is not any different from those in the world. The Word of God is very plain, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thess 5:22, KJV). Not only is the use of alcohol an example as to our life-style, it could also lead another Christian astray. **You** may be able to use alcohol without any ill effect while another person may not be able to control its use. As Christians our life-style should not cause another to stumble in their Christian walk. "It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall" (Rom 14:20-21, NIV). Another argument put forth is that they drank wine in both the old and new testament. That is true, they did and probably still do. Paul told Timothy to take a little wine for his stomach sake. There was a reason for his admonition. Timothy had stomach problems and water was not agreeing with him. "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Tim 5:23, KJV). Having visited some of the overseas countries myself I know that their water is often a problem and can cause real stomach problems. That is at least one reason that wine was used in biblical times and even today. Alcohol lowers our resistance to moderation and one glass can lead to more. Under the influence of alcohol our judgment is impaired and though we may never consider driving in that condition normally, after drinking we may do it because we think we are still capable.

Alcohol affects each person differently. As they say in the world, 'some are able to hold their liquor better than others.' If a person has a low tolerance to alcohol, one drink could impair their driving ability to the point where it is not safe to drive. We hear every day of people being killed by impaired drivers. Consider what this would mean for your life. It is not uncommon to spend time in jail for impaired driving especially if there has been an injury or death. It could restrict your travel to foreign countries, affect your job opportunities and bring shame on you and your family. This would be bad enough, but greater than this would be the guilt you would bear knowing that you could have prevented the injury or death of another person. In the court, at your hearing you would be faced with seeing the loved ones of that person in their sorrow. Examine this very carefully; would it be worth it for the fleeting pleasure of alcohol? One thing is for certain; if alcohol is not used there is no worry of these things ever happening.

#### **Alcohol A Major Problem**

The world's answer to the alcohol problem is to tell us to learn to drink responsibly. As has been mentioned before, alcohol can impair our responsibility and make us irresponsible. There are so many problems connected with the use of alcohol. If alcohol is not the leading cause of marriage breakup, abuse, altercations and many of the other social problems in our society today, it is certainly high up on the list. Mothers who drink while pregnant put their babies at risk of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS). This is a situation in which the child can suffer brain damage, behavioral problems and the inability to take responsibility for their actions, to name some of the effects. I am not trying to put forth some strange doctrine, for as long as I have been a Christian, which is a good number of years, I was always taught to refrain from alcohol. The scripture is quite clear on the subject as well. "Live life, then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as men who do not know the meaning and purpose of life but as those who do. Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days. Don't be vague but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of God. Don't get your stimulus from wine (for there is always the danger of

excessive drinking)" (Eph 5:15-21, Phillips). "And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations: And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean" (Lev 10:8-10, KJV). "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Prov 20:1, KJV). "It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall" (Rom 14:20-21, NIV).

#### **All Things Lawful**

"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any" (1 Cor 6:12, KJV). The Living Bible says it this way; "I can do anything I want to **if Christ has not said no**, but some of these things aren't good for me. Even if I am allowed to do them, I'll refuse to if I think they might get such a grip on me that I can't easily stop when I want to" (TLB). Alcohol is not evil in itself but the way it is used is a problem. This is not a case of laying down rules as to where we can go or what we can do, rather what will bring us closer to God or take us away. As Christians we should live a life of separation from the influence of the world. "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor 6:16-17, KJV).

#### **Conclusion Of The Matter**

When we give our hearts to the Lord there is a foundation laid that we can build on. It is a foundation of righteousness and is a sure and solid place on which to build our Christian lives. It all depends on the material that we use for building. If we build with the permanent material of a life that is set apart unto the Lord, that which we are building will be blessed of God. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth

shall prosper" (Ps 1:3). If we build with the material of a life guided by the ungodly counsel of this world the building will not stand the storms of life. "The ungodly are not so; but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous" (Ps 1:4-5). "By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be

saved, but only as one escaping through the flames" (1 Cor 3:10-15, NIV). Every man's life is built upon some foundation, some on the foundation of philosophy, some on the foundation of wealth and possessions, while others build their lives on pleasure and catering to their human nature. The foundation that God has supplied for us to build on is the rock Christ Jesus, the scripture calls it a rock of offence: "Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Peter 2:6-8, KJV). This is the foundation stone that we must build our Christian

lives upon, the rock Christ Jesus. He it is who said: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash" (Matt 7:24-27, NIV). Friendship with the world will be our downfall while a life set apart to the Lord will stand the storms of life.

"Here is my final conclusion: Fear God and obey his commands, for this is the duty of every person. God will judge us for everything we do, including every secret thing, whether good or bad" (Eccl 12:13-14, NLT).

# Keep Your Marriage Vow!

By Andy Snoke

Marriage. What a blessing it can be! It is a little slice of heaven, served here on earth. To love another human being more than any other, and to be loved the same in return, is truly an unspeakable joy. Mysterious and wonderful!

This wonderful union called marriage, BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN FOR LIFE, is the handiwork of God. It was crafted in the heavenlies, and ordained by our Creator and Lord. It was the first "institution" instituted by God!

When a marriage is built by two willing partners on the foundation of Christ, when it functions according to the truths of the scriptures, and when it is diligently protected and nourished by both husband and wife, there is nothing on earth like it!!

During our 30 years of marriage (at the time of this writing), I continue to be amazed as well as blessed by the institution of marriage.

After spending 30 years of days and nights together, we find that we still treasure our quality time with one another. We enjoy and look forward to our

evening walks silhouetted by the warm setting sun, hand in hand, punctuated with sweet conversation. After 30 years we still have much to say to one another.

If I wore the same jacket for 30 years, I would be tired of it. If I wore the same shoes for 30 years, I would be tired of them. But after 30 years of marriage we still love our time together. Our love is still fresh, alive, and growing. How is this possible? By a commitment to God and to our "promise" to each other and to God.

A good marriage is not "made in heaven," it is built on earth from the pattern given by God. A good marriage does not just automatically work well, it takes great effort, and pays divine dividends!

Pilots can easily travel for thousands of miles, for hours at a time, by placing the planes on "autopilot." The computer will fly the plane for them in many cases. In marriage, there is no "autopilot." It takes genuine, loving effort, and hard work. Anyone and everyone can have a good marriage, providing both are willing to build it.

A good marriage begins of course with falling in love with one another. But a good marriage grows and is successful by building itself on a promise. The first step towards a good marriage is the unwavering commitment by both parties to that vow made to God and one another before many witnesses.

At the wedding ceremony, it is customary for a couple to invite their family and friends to share in their momentous occasion as they exchange their vows with one another.

Actually, the audience is in attendance to hear with their own ears, a sacred promise, a sacred vow made to God and to one another.

The vow often goes something like this:

*"I promise my love and faithfulness to you, above all others, in sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, for better or worse, until death do us part."*

A good marriage is a result of spending the rest of your years keeping that sacred vow!

Love is not just an emotion. Emotions come and go. Emotions are fickle

and inconsistent. Love is a commitment, a promise to one another. The "promise" keeps a man or woman from looking for another partner, when things are not perfect at home. It makes a person examine everything that they do, to determine if their activity strengthens or weakens their marriage.

Paul gives instructions, or rather "commands" that husbands and wives must follow. He states:

Eph. 5:22-23, *Wives, be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body.

But as the church is subject to the Christ, so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it;

that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself: for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church; because we are members of his body.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.

Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife *see* that she respect her husband" (ASV).

It is important for married couples to guard their marriage from wrongful influence. Flee from temptation! I think it is important that husbands have male friends to fellowship with, and wives to have female friends to fellowship with. Men should not be "chummy" towards other women, and the women should not be "chummy" towards other men. Your hearts should always be on guard.

Happy couples consistently make time for one another. Quality time together, (from time to time!) is an investment. Happy couples also have learned to respect and treasure the thoughts and opinions of each other. *This is a learned art, it does not come naturally.*

The Christian book stores are full of books that offer good advice on improving marriages. But little can help a couple

that does not take their "vow" seriously.

That sacred "vow," that promise made to and before God, should and must be taken very seriously, and kept for life. The "promise" will provide an atmosphere of blessing. Trials will come, testings will come, but the "promise" is the foundation that keeps the home strong.

Keep your promise to God, keep your wedding vow to each other, God expects you too!

**ADDRESS  
CORRECTION**  
Gilbert Price  
3029 Mt. Fisher Dr.  
Cranbrook, BC  
V1C 6K8  
Phone 250-426-5727

**King's House Retreat Center, Henry, IL**  
**Friday, April 28 - Sunday, April 30, 2006**

King's House, site of the gathering, is located in the town of Henry, IL. From I 80 go south on 180 which runs into S 29. Follow S 29 to E 18 in Henry, from E 18 turn north on RT26 and watch for the Global Mission signs.

From I 74 take 116 east to Rt. 26 in East Peoria. Go north on Rt. 26 to Henry, IL and watch for Global Mission signs.

We will begin on Friday evening and end on Sunday after lunch. Room price includes room with private bath, linens, meals and meeting rooms. We will collect from individuals at the retreat.

<b>CHARGES FOR ROOM &amp; BOARD:</b>	<b>SEND RESERVATIONS, BY APR. 16 TO:</b>
Age 0-3 ..... No charge	Randall G. Snoke,
Age 4-12 ..... \$25	128 Tanglewood Lane,
Age 13-Adult ..... \$100	East Peoria, IL 61611
	Phone (309) 694-7048
	E-mail: <a href="mailto:rgsnoke@juno.com">rgsnoke@juno.com</a>

**RESERVATION FORM FOR  FEAST OR  CAMP 2006**

**Please check one of the above. Cut out and mail**

Please fill in ALL information and cut out and mail to the following address: ROOM RESERVATIONS, Sharon Children's Homes and Schools, Box 878, North Battleford, Sask., S9A 2Z3. Mail as soon as possible. If you are unable to attend, please cancel your reservation, otherwise we will have to charge you for the room held open for you. **YOU MUST RESERVE** your room, we cannot hold accommodation without you supplying us with the information outlined in the blank application. You will NOT receive written confirmation from us UNLESS we cannot supply your requirements. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated and helpful. **THANK YOU.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Adults: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Children: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Arrival \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Departure \_\_\_\_\_

## DATES OF IMPORTANCE

Big Spring, Texas ..... Jan. 27 - 29, 2006  
 North Carolina Winter Camp ..... Feb. 24-26, 2006  
 Feast North Battleford ..... April 13-16, 2006  
 Illinois Gathering (King's House) .... May 5, 6, 7, 2006  
 Edmonton Young Peoples ..... May 20-26, 2006  
 Camp North Battleford ..... July 2-9, 2006  
 Pinelow Summer Family Camp ..... Aug. 7 - 13, 2006  
 Hidden Acres ..... Sept. 1-4, 2006  
 Park Valley ..... Sept. 1-4, 2006  
 Winkler ..... Sept. 1 - 4, 2006  
 Minden Meetings ..... Sept. 22-24, 2006  
 Pinelow Family Camp ..... Nov. 9-12, 2006

## NORTH CAROLINA CAMP MEETING July 23 - 29, 2006 Greensboro College, Greensboro, NC

Greensboro College is located near downtown Greensboro at 815 West Market Street, Greensboro 27401. Market Street is the major west to east street through the center of town and major thoroughfares to the center of town will get you there. For detailed directions see: [http://www.gborocollege.edu/quick\\_links/directions.php](http://www.gborocollege.edu/quick_links/directions.php).

For a detailed campus map, please go to <http://www.gborocollege.edu/media/campusmap.pdf>. You can easily zoom in and see the buildings which we will use: Hill Hall - registration & lodging, and Finch Chapel - meetings.

Check-in time begins at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 23. Meals will be served in the college dining hall beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, July 23, followed by the first meeting at 7:30 p.m. The camp will conclude with the noon meal on Saturday, July 29. Buildings are air conditioned. Swimming pool and other recreational facilities are available.

**CHARGES FOR ROOM & BOARD:**

Age 0-8 ..... No Charge  
 Age 9-Adult ..... \$125.00 per week or \$25.00 per day  
 Family Rate ..... \$500.00 per week or \$100.00 per day

You may bring linens (single bed), towels & pillows or these can be rented at \$10.50 per set.

**SEND RESERVATIONS TO:**

Global Missions® Regional Camp  
 c/o Mrs. Anita Love  
 112 Queensbury Rd., Winston Salem, NC 27104  
 or call: Anita Love 336-765-9271  
 or E-Mail <aslove1@triad.rr.com>

Flight arrangements may be made to Greensboro, NC (GSO)

For Airport pickup call Dave Heath at 336-841-0607 or E-mail <DDPACK@juno.com>

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## CALLED HOME

**Lorne Dale**  
 December 8, 2005  
 Eston, SK

**A. Erwin Livingston**  
 January 19, 2006  
 North Battleford, SK

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:  
**Sharon Children's Homes and Schools**  
 Box 878, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, S9A 2Z3

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