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TAX-EXEMPT

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" MARK 16:15

March 2023

FROM US TO YOU

This newsletter is read by people in countries all over the world. And we all know these are dangerous times for the whole earth, and getting worse as we draw closer to the return of Christ (Revelation 19:11-21). The apostle Paul wrote, *"...There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God—having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them. They are the kind who worm their way into homes [television] and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth"* (2 Timothy 3:1-7 NIV).

However, this message is primarily meant for American Christians. This is not the time for frivolous lifestyles, churchianity (Matt. 15:8-9), or a lukewarm relationship with God (Revelation 3:16). Your nation, America, which was once founded on Christianity, has slidden off of the rock of her salvation (Psalm 89:26), Jesus Christ. For decades, God, and those who love Him, have been blasphemed, mocked, and lampooned in classrooms and the media on a regular basis. And God is tired of it! Other formally Christian nations have committed sins just as bad or worse as America. However, America has been blessed more than any other country. And *"...from everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked"* (Luke 12:48 NIV). Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ made a statement that was never more apropos in regard to America today. He said, *"...Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined, and every city or household divided against itself will not stand"* (Matthew 12:25 NIV). Our country has a divided government, primarily Democrat and Republican. And there is bitter hatred among many.

Two great empires from the past, the Greeks and the Romans, were once so strong that no one could conquer them from outside. They fell apart from within. They became weak from internal corruption. The three things they had in common were, a lavish lifestyle, public sex, and condoned (sometimes promoted) homosexual activity (Romans 1:18-32). It made them weak and vulnerable. America is following the same trend today. That includes human sacrifice. But we call it abortion. Most Americans have, until recently, been blessed with some fancy food and a lavish lifestyle. Pornography is easy to come by. Theaters in New York's Time Square have signs outside the building advertising live sex acts. Another thing the Greek and Roman Empires had in common with America today is sports idolatry. The Olympics were actually started in Greece, and the athletes performed their sports naked.

Have you noticed lately that America is becoming weaker and,

our enemies are becoming stronger and more belligerent toward us, predominantly, Russia, China, and Iran? The United States is not mentioned in the Bible by name. However, there are certain similarities with an end-time city called Mystery Babylon. We wrote about this in our [January 2022 newsletter](#). Mystery Babylon in Revelation, is described as a land that had once been blessed by God, but had then become an evil place where God is treated with contempt and true Christians are persecuted. It is also a land that became rich through world trade. It had a "mother" nation. So it was once a colony. It sits on many waters (Jeremiah 51:12-13) and has a population of mingled people (Jeremiah 50:37 KJV).

Mystery Babylon is also a place that has become so abhorrent to God that He allows it to become weak and vulnerable to its enemies. As a result, a contingent of other nations manages to destroy it in one hour! As mentioned in the January 2022 article, Anne once had a dream about it decades ago. The countries involved in the attack were Russia, China, and at least one Middle Eastern nation, most likely Iran. America has not gotten to the place that is described as "Mystery Babylon" yet. But it is quickly heading in that direction! For decades, it has been influencing the whole world to sin through its entertainment, news media, and political industries. It has shaped and molded other nations like a hammer shapes metal (Jeremiah 50:23-24). However, "Mystery Babylon" is destroyed by her enemies. Read about this in our "Bye Bye Miss American Pie" article in our [Autumn 2011 newsletter](#).

The Bible says, *"The merchants who sold these things and gained their wealth from her will stand far off, terrified at her torment. They will weep and mourn and cry out: Woe! Woe, O great city, dressed in fine linen, purple and scarlet, and glittering with gold, precious stones and pearls! In one hour such great wealth has been brought to ruin! Every sea captain, and all who travel by ship, the sailors, and all who earn their living from the sea, will stand far off. When they see the smoke of her burning, they will exclaim, 'Was there ever a city like this great city?'"* (Revelation 18:15-18 NIV).

So what's the solution? Jesus said to His disciples, *"In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know"* (John 14:2-4 KJV). Satan is still running this world until Jesus returns. And Satan knows that his time of ruling this planet will soon be over (Revelation 12:12). This world is the Titanic. Jesus is our only hope! He is the lighthouse (John 8:12). Head to Him! Do not be like Lot's wife, who looked back longingly at the things of this world she was losing (Genesis 19:26 & Luke 17:31-33). Nothing this world has is worth the cost of your salvation! (1 John 2:16-17). Please remember to keep us and this ministry in your prayers.

In the Lord's service, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*



Dealing With Discouragement

By Anne Kaestner

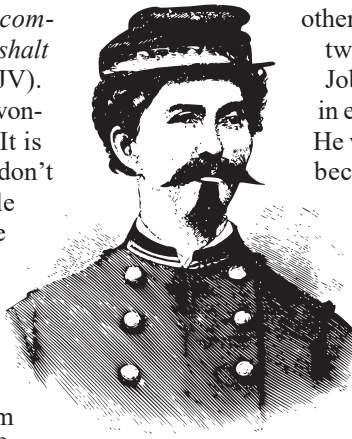
I once heard the story of a minister who lived during the Civil War. He had graduated with top honors from his class at Yale, and became a military chaplain. His love for mankind was so great that he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by President Abraham Lincoln. Even though he had been badly wounded himself, he had consistently gone back into the battle, dragging as many wounded soldiers to safety as he possibly could, both Union and Confederate. He'd offered them all the spiritual comfort and medical aid he was able to supply until he finally passed out from his own wounds. There was blood and gore all around him. So much death. So much hatred. As a result, he eventually became discouraged with his profession. He left the ministry and became a wanderer and a drunkard. When someone asked him why he had given it all up, he responded, "How can I go out in front of a group of people and preach to them about love for mankind, after all of this?" As far as he was concerned, it was hopeless. Mankind was doomed. So he might as well get drunk and try to forget all he had seen. What would you tell someone who asked you a question like that? For most Christians it's a tough one. That's very sad, because the answer is based on the most fundamental principle of the Christian faith. Jesus summed up all the Ten Commandments into two very simple laws. "...*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself...*" (Mark 12:30-31 KJV). Most people have the cart before the horse, and then wonder why they are not going anywhere spiritually! It is impossible to keep the second commandment if you don't keep the first. The minister had graduated from Yale filled with enthusiasm. He was going to make the world a better place. He was going to teach people how to love each other. He was going to set an example of kindness for others to follow. Yet, when his faith was tested, he himself became a casualty of war, and there's nothing like the misery of battle to harden the human heart. There are Vietnam veterans today who have long since recuperated from their physical scars, but the spiritual ones remain. In England, years ago, a Member of Parliament went on a tour of postwar Germany. She saw the Nazi concentration camps where Jews and Christians, who had helped them, were tortured and murdered. When she returned to England, she killed herself. She felt that she had no place to turn with her grief, and had totally given up on the only source she knew of for strength, mankind! How sad it is that the thought never occurred to her that mankind does not have the answers to the problems we face. Only God can change hearts! And only God can heal them! "*For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*" (1 Timothy 2:5 NIV).

The problem the minister had was that he was trying to accomplish a job that only God can do! Simon Peter was able to walk on water when he kept his eyes on Jesus, but the minute he took his eyes off of the Lord and began to look down, he saw how deep the water was, and felt the wind whip by him, and he began to drown. Then he cried out, "Lord save me." "*And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased*" (Matthew 14:31-32 KJV). People, "...*without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him*" (Hebrews 11:6 NIV). In all the Bible, I have found nothing that pleases God more than faith! No matter what your problem might

be, it may seem like a mountain to you, too big, too strong, and too rigid to ever be moved, but "...*Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which He saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever He saith*" (Mark 11:22-23 KJV). A lot of people have misinterpreted this scripture. As a child, I was raised to always capitalize a pronoun when it refers to God. We have made a practice of this in our ministry. However, modern translations of the Bible do not always capitalize pronouns referring to deity. So it is easy for Christians to become confused over verses such as Mark 11:23. As a result, people have misunderstood this scripture and have, consequently, put themselves in the place of God. Nevertheless, Mark 11:23 can't be properly understood unless you include the previous verse. It is God whom we must have faith in, not ourselves! Our desires will not come into fruition unless we pray according to God's will! (James 4:1-4 and 1 John 5:14-15.)

Satan loves it when we misunderstand the Bible, because he is able to cause us to doubt in our relationship with God! That's why he likes to "twist the knife" when we suffer through the anxieties of unanswered prayer. What's worse, the devil will often use other Christians to attack us! Probably the greatest "knife twisters" in the Bible were the "friends" of Job! Poor Job was suffering physically, spiritually, financially, and in every imaginable way. He hadn't done anything wrong! He was a righteous, God-fearing man. But it was precisely because of Job's righteousness that Satan hated him so much. God was proud of Job. He was boasting to Satan about Job's righteousness, and Satan hated it! Therefore, the devil sought to drive a wedge between Job and the Lord. So he chose to belittle Job's faith (see Job 1:9-11). Satan was resentful because he had been unable to attack Job. God had placed Job under His protection through a "hedge" that demons were unable to cross without permission. That same "hedge" is available to us today.

It is a hedge of Holy Spirit fire (Acts 2:3-4)! That's why it's so important for a believer to continually seek a closer walk with God. You need the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the Baptism by spiritual fire, or you will backslide. In the society we live in today, Satan and his demons have become a pervasive force. There's very little that the devil, and his demon cohorts don't influence. Only that which is built on the solid Rock of Christ Jesus is safe! (Matthew 7:24-27.) Therefore, especially these days, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit isn't just a recommendation, it's a necessity if you want to live for Jesus! The Baptism is not salvation. It occurs after you are Born Again (John 3:3). It is not to be confused with water baptism (Matthew 3:11, Acts 1:5, 2:1-18, 8:14-17, 10:47), although many people do receive the Holy Spirit at the same time that they are water baptized. Spiritual Baptism is something only God can give! Moreover, He alone chooses to whom He will give it! His decision is based on how much the person loves Him and the level of their commitment to Him. So pray for this anointing. The Holy Spirit will enable you to have the Power of God working in your life so that you won't be such easy prey for the devil's traps. Job loved and trusted his Savior so much (Job 19:25-27) that he had become strong enough in his walk with God that the Lord knew that He could trust Job even if he went through the fire of severe testing! (James 1:12, 2 Corinthians 8:2, Acts 5:41.) Therefore, God allowed Satan to attack Job with everything he could, but it was to no avail! Sadly, Job's friends saw



how he was suffering and took a self-righteous attitude toward him. God later rebuked them for this, and rewarded Job (Job 42:7-10).

Are you going through a time of testing in your life? A woman executive I worked for years ago, told me how she had gone through a long period of infertility before her son was born. It was painful for her to see everyone else having children when she was unable to conceive. Then she told me how her sister had confronted her one day, accusing her of not being a good Catholic because she wasn't having children as she was expected to. You can imagine the pain the victim felt as a result of this! But several years later, her sister discovered that she was also unable to have children! In another case, a Christian was in severe pain at work due to a sciatic attack. However, his co-workers became resentful that he had been out on sick time. They accused him of faking his bad health. A few weeks later, his primary accuser developed a similar ailment and was doubled up in pain on the job. He didn't think it was so phony when it happened to him! God has said, "...Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity" (Psalms 37:1 KJV). "It is mine to avenge; I will repay. In due time their foot will slip; their day of disaster is near and their doom rushes upon them" (Deuteronomy 32:35 NIV). This has been true many times in my life. I remember lots of people who have maliciously caused me misery in the past, and God has dealt with each one of them personally! So do not become discouraged in your walk with Him, and do not take revenge yourself! Remember the words of Joseph as he spoke to his brothers, who had plotted to kill him years earlier, and had finally decided to sell him into slavery (Genesis 50:19-21).

Also, keep in mind that it takes numerous years for God's plans to fully develop, so don't become despondent if evildoers seem to prosper for a time while you are suffering. Eventually, God always has the last laugh (see Psalm 2:2-4, 37:12-13, and 59:5-10) and He defends the innocent, and those who fear Him (Genesis 42:18, Exodus 18:21, Ecclesiastes 8:12-13 and 12:13, 1 Peter 2:17, Revelation 14:7). Some Bible scholars believe that Noah spent a very long time building his ark. I believe that he was probably lampooned and castigated for fifty years or more. It would seem unlikely, considering the wickedness of the time, that Noah received much help from anyone other than his immediate family. Moreover, "*The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance*" (2 Peter 3:9 NIV). So God probably waited one or more generations before the cup of iniquity was full, and the Almighty had tolerated all He would take. Then, in His anger, He sealed up the ark and let the rain drown the earth. "*And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth*" (Genesis 7:17 KJV). There is a parallel here. Jesus was tested for 40 days before His ministry officially began (Matthew 4:2-3). When we make our salvation in Him, He becomes our Holy Ark. And because God allowed His own Son to be lifted up on the Cross of Calvary for us, we can also be lifted above the waters of destruction and fear and trust in Him! (Matthew 14:28-29 and Luke 17:26-30.)

When you love and serve Jesus, you are going to encounter enemies! You may go out of your way to be nice to people and to make friends, but sooner or later you're going to be tested. When your friends want you to lie for them, will you go along with it to make them happy, or will you take a stand for Jesus and refuse to commit this sin (Revelation 21:8)? If you truly remain faithful to Christ, you're going to make the devil mad! Your accusers won't tell you that they hate you because you love Jesus, they'll come up

with some other excuse! New believers are often targets of this abuse. You may be filled with the love and joy of God only to discover that you have suddenly become very unpopular with your family, peers, or neighbors. They'll claim that you are acting superior or that you think that you are better than them. In reality, it may not be you at all. If the Holy Spirit is strong in you, He will bring them under conviction whenever they are in your presence. You may not even have to open your mouth. If you live for Jesus every day, your lifestyle alone will be enough to shed God's Holy illumination on their evil deeds. And sin hates to be exposed to the light, because Light (John 8:12 and 9:5) destroys darkness. Therefore, those who want to continue to live in darkness, don't want the Holy Light in you to beam down on them (Isaiah 29:15-16, Proverbs 4:14-19). However, do not always assume that you are suffering because you love Jesus! Over the years, my husband and I have known a lot of Christians who all claimed to be suffering for their faith, when in reality, it was because of their own sin! It's a pitfall many Christians fall into. It's so much easier to blame God! Quite frankly, we have discovered that, too many believers have been going around with a bad attitude! You're supposed to stand on the Rock of Christ. You're not supposed to go around wearing a chip on your shoulder! I once knew a very annoying young woman when I worked in New York City years ago. She thought that she was better than everyone else because she was a Christian. In reality, we are not saved because we are worthy of salvation. We have had the opportunity to become saved because God took pity on us even though we are unworthy! (Isaiah 64:6, Luke 11:13, Romans 5:6-8.) Jesus didn't wash the feet of His disciples because He liked clean feet. He washed their feet to teach us humility! (John 13:3-16 and 1 Peter 5:6-7.) So make sure that your own heart is free from sin, that is, selfishness, pride, and idolatry, before you start blaming your troubles on your Christian faith!

However, that being said, if you really love Jesus and are stunned by the hostility of those around you, be aware of where the attacks are coming from! For Satan and his demons will be out to destroy your faith! (1 Peter 5:8-10.) God will allow you to go through tests like this so that you will grow stronger in your walk with Him (Ecclesiastes 1:18, Genesis 37:4-28, and Matthew 13:54-58). If I hadn't gone through so many gut-wrenching tests in my life, I wouldn't have learned enough to even write these newsletters. I did not learn spiritual truths in school, I learned them through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 1:18 through 2:16). Moreover, in my case, God started when I was a child, and I still haven't stopped learning from Him! We get a lot of letters from new believers in this ministry, or Christians who have only been Born Again for a few years. They are filled with enthusiasm, and can't wait to start teaching others about God! I understand how they feel, because I went through the same emotions when I was newly saved, many years ago, and then again after receiving a refilling of the Holy Spirit in the mid 1970's. You feel as if you'll explode if you don't go out and start telling people about Jesus! It comes from an anointing the Holy Spirit gives to us each time we reach a new plateau in our relationship with the Lord. Nevertheless, try to see yourself the way God sees you. As a new believer, you are a "new babe in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1-3, 1 Peter 2:2). As such, God doesn't consider you mature enough in your walk with Him to be able to teach others. He sees you as a seedling that has freshly been elevated above the earth. The earth represents this world of which we all used to be a part (John 15:19, 17:14-16, 1 John 2:15-17, James 4:4). Remember that God made Adam's body from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7). Eve's body came from Adam, so it was also made of dust. The dust

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was soil, the type that you grow plants in. More specifically, Adam was made from clay. Therefore, God remembers our origin in Adam, our original ancestor, and, in His eyes, we are also made from clay (Job 4:18-19, Psalm 40:2, Isaiah 29:16, 45:9, 64:8, Jeremiah 18:1-6, Romans 9:20-22)! As a little seedling, you have just risen out of the earth (Colossians 3:2-5, 1 Peter 4:1-5), and are nourished by the sun, which brings you light (John 8:12) and helps you to grow. But you are not yet ready to bring forth good fruit for God, because fruit comes from mature branches, not from little seedlings that are so vulnerable themselves! It takes a long time for a seedling to grow into maturity. Fruit doesn't pop up instantaneously! Long before the branches are able to bring forth good fruit, they are exposed to the elements. As a new believer, you will also feel the fierce wind of oppression. You'll have your share of rainy days when you won't feel the light at all. You will need to die to yourself (John 3:30-31, 1 Peter 2:24) through many winters, and be reborn in Christ continually, to be transformed by the constant renewing of your mind (Romans 12:2). Moreover, good fruit (Galatians 5:22-25 and Ephesians 5:9) will not develop from you unless you continue to get your nourishment from the Holy Vine, Jesus Christ (John 15:4-5)!

Obviously, Jesus would not be so concerned about you falling away from Him if He didn't believe that it could happen. The Lord said, *"And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in Me"* (Matthew 11:6 KJV). What did Jesus mean? About 40 years ago, I was walking home from the train station after work, talking to a friend about Christianity, when some young men approached us from behind. One of them laughed at me and made a comment about the fact that I was carrying a Bible. But the Holy Spirit was powerful inside my heart, and I looked him directly in the eye and asked him about his own relationship with Jesus Christ. Suddenly the smirk from his face disappeared, and he took on a very serious look. He had once accepted the Lord's salvation, but, like those of the seed in Matthew 13:20-21, he had become discouraged and had given up on his walk with God. "I used to go around preaching about Jesus," he told me, "but all that happened was that I ended up getting into arguments with people." "That used to happen to me too," I replied. He looked relieved to hear that. "You need the Baptism in the Holy Spirit," I said. "He will give you the Power and boldness that you need to truly live for Jesus." The man's friends had walked on ahead, and my girlfriend asked me if I'd be alright if she didn't wait. I told her I would. After they left, I began to pray over the man, that God would give Him the Power and anointing he needed to truly live for Jesus. When you have the Holy Spirit in your heart and life, you have a Holy Fire protecting you from Satan's direct attacks (Deuteronomy 9:3, Ezra 9:9, Psalm 5:11, Numbers 14:9). But don't make the mistake of thinking that you are any match for the devil on your own power, because none of us are. We need to remain faithful to our Vine, to receive our nourishment totally from Him, or we will never bear good fruit for God! Contrary to earthly human desire, we cannot grow our own good fruit (Genesis 4:3-12). Jesus is Lord of the Harvest (Matthew 9:38 through 10:1, Luke 10:2-3, Mark 16:15-18, and Ephesians 2:8-10), not us! It is He who tills the soil and plants His seed in our hearts (Matthew 13:1-43). That's why the only good fruit that grows in us is the fruit of God's own planting (Galatians 5:22-26, Ephesians 5:8-11)! So remember what happens to a tree that doesn't bare good fruit (Isaiah 3:14, 5:1-10, Jeremiah 12:10-13, Matthew 3:10-12, 20:1-16 and 21:33-44, Luke 13:6-9) and be warned!



It will be especially painful if the attacks you are receiving coincide with unanswered prayer, and you begin to wonder if God is even listening anymore! Over the years, I have had many unanswered prayers. I have wrestled with them, wondering why the Lord didn't give me what I requested. I would always pray using the words "in the name of Jesus" (John 14:14, 15:16) but that didn't seem to make a difference. I couldn't understand it. Weren't those the magic words? I was serving God, loving Him, but not always getting what I wanted. Many other Christians have gone through this type of pain. Then one evening in 1989, while I was praying for the needs of this ministry, I asked the Lord to speed up the process of our incorporation. I knew that we wouldn't be able to become tax-exempt until after we became incorporated. The stress of the situation had been weighing on me and, like any employee who goes to their boss when they have a problem at work, I took my problems to my boss, my Heavenly Father. Strangely enough on that one occasion I didn't use the words "In the name of Jesus" when I prayed. I simply made my request to God. I'll never forget what happened. The Lord spoke directly into my mind and said in the most loving and caring of ways, "Of course I'll grant your request. You are asking for it in the name of Jesus." It was then that I realized that there is no magic power to simply saying the words. Our prayers will only be answered to our satisfaction when they are made according to the will of God, in order to accomplish the work He has given us! For example, if my secretary comes to

me and tells me that there are no pens left in the supply cabinet, I'm going to make sure that she gets the pens she needs. Why? It's because she is doing the work that I gave her, and so it's my responsibility, as her employer, to see that she gets the tools of her trade. Now, what if she came to me and asked me to supply her with nail polish instead? That's a request that I wouldn't grant, because it is not in keeping with my will as her employer. It's the same way with God! The Lord loves us and of course, He will acquiesce to our desires as well as our needs, as long as they don't conflict with His plan for our lives. But His primary objective is that we become humble enough before Him so that He can mold us and create in us the work of His choosing.

There is no room for discouragement in the lives of those who keep their eyes on Jesus and refuse to look down at the situation that consumes them. There is no mountain that God will not remove for those who love Him and are living according to His direction. Not only will He cast it into the sea, but your tormentors will eventually be swallowed up in the water as well (Exodus 15:4)! Mankind cannot change the human heart. Jesus is Lord of the Harvest (Luke 10:2-3), not us! The military chaplain failed because he believed that Christianity meant putting people first, and teaching brotherly love. It does not! This world is a wicked place, and those who set out with the idea of looking for the good in people will always be discouraged (Jeremiah 17:5-10). Unless you put God first in your life, you will never receive the one ingredient necessary in order to really love others, God's love (1 John 4:16)! The reason why so many Christians fail to succeed is because they don't trust Him! They prefer to do things their own way, and expect God to make their plans work. People, God's not interested in doing your will, even if you think you are saving souls for Him. Jesus has His own agenda. He's the leader, and it is our job to follow Him, not the other way around! You cannot do God's job for Him. He wants us to obediently step out of the way and allow the Holy Spirit to do the work through us! Human endeavors and hard work alone will not solve the problems of mankind! Only God has the solution (John 14:6), and it is found in the shed blood of Christ, and obedience to Him!