

THE

# HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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## KEEPING THE PEACE

Peace is freedom from war, strife, disagreement, and quarrels. Peace is an undisturbed state of mind, an absence of mental conflict. Peace is accord, harmony, serenity, calm, quiet, and tranquillity. We are at peace if we live in a state of harmony, a state of quiet or repose. To hold one's peace is to be silent. To keep the peace is to prevent violation of good order. To make peace is to end hostilities and to create harmony.

Paul had several things to say about peace (1 Tim. 2:1-2). We are to live peaceful lives. We are to live quiet lives. We are to live in peace, in godliness, and in holiness. Paul also wrote, *"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at*

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*peace with everyone."* (Rom. 12:18) The peace that God gives us is secured through the blood of Christ (Col. 1:18-20).

Peace is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace (Rom. 8:6). We are to be filled with peace (Rom. 15:13). Much of what Paul felt about peace is summed up in Eph. 4:2-3 when he said, *"Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*

Today, as Christians, we are to maintain peace with God, peace with self, peace with family, peace with society, and peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ. To maintain peace, we must work at it.

**PEACE WITH GOD.** We will never have peace with God until we make His ways our ways. *"Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole (total) duty of man."* (Eccl. 12:13b) The key to having peace with God is to attain life through the Spirit as instructed in Romans 8. There we learn that the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace. Until we are spiritually led and spiritually fed, we will not find that indwelling peace that comes from knowing God.

**PEACE WITH SELF.** When we have peace with God, we will have peace with self. This life is filled with problems. There is only one way that we can gain some control of these problems and that is to not control them but to allow God that control. As we find rest for our souls, we find peace with self. There is no other way. Life's problems are often too strong for us to handle without God's peace.

**PEACE WITH FAMILY.** Today, many families are in trouble. They do not function as God desires. Many of these problems stem from the fact that the husband fails to be the spiritual leader of his family. The Bible is very explicit about the roles of the husband and the wife, their duties and obligations to each other, their children, and to God. Unless the husband and wife have their spiritual life in order and unless they have found God's peace, there is little chance that their children will find God's peace. Spouses must follow the pattern provided by God; that is, the pattern illustrated by the relationship between Christ and His church.

Today, we see couples -- even in the church of our Lord -- that are not even civil toward each other. Things are often said between husband and wife that need not be said. Often, the spouse is treated worse than one's contacts within the world; this should not be the case. Each married person must work to create a peaceful and loving marriage. We must work with our spouse to maintain peace and to have a home filled with peace. We must address not only the issues of speaking wrongfully toward each other, abuse, addiction, and infidelity, but we must also address those 'blah' stretches that settle into every marriage from time to time and cause marital problems. Our spouse is our lover, our life sharer, and our best friend. This is God's way. This He demands. It takes years of dedication and hard work to create a peaceful and loving marriage. Without dedication and work, there is no peaceful family.

Without a peaceful family, we have introduced more dysfunctional children into a dysfunctional world. How can we expect our children to respond to the

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peace provided by our God when we fail to display that peace within our marriage? Be assured that we are not going to experience a peaceful and a God-filled marriage and family unless we make a genuine effort to be a peacemaker with our family.

Every married person should let his or her heart soar with determination that he or she is going to create a marriage, a Godly marriage, one filled with love and peace that expresses over and over the words of the song, "until the twelfth of never, I'll still be loving you." Peace-filled families are a result of peaceful marriages. Children learn from their parents the real meaning of a marriage filled with inner peace.

**PEACE WITH SOCIETY.** Peace with society also includes peace in the work place, peace in the marketplace, peace everywhere without the home. If we have worked to create peace with God, peace with self, and peace with family, we simply take these same principles into our relationship with society.

**PEACE WITH THE CHURCH.** In dealing with our brothers and sisters, we must be "*swift to hear, slow to speak, and slow to wrath*" (Jas. 1:19). A

few unkind words can destroy years of God's work. We must think carefully, not only about what we say, but when we should say it, and how we should say it. Never be self seeking. Always be a peacemaker because *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."* (Matt. 5:9)

What can we do to become peacemakers with our brothers and sisters? We can be a peacemaker when we function as the elders are to function. They are not to lord it over the flock. They are to be examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3). If elders are commanded to not lord over the church, we certainly should not lord over the church. Elders must often be peacemakers. Deacons are not overseers. They are servants. As servants in the early church, they had to be peacemakers. Each of us can be a peacemaker if we are at peace with God and with ourselves. Instead of lording it over our brothers and sisters, we need to seek the peace and be examples to others within the body. The Bible tells us that we are to put honor on our brothers and sisters, living in harmony with one another (Rom. 12:16).

We can display that peace demanded by Jesus and be His peacemaker when we learn what Jesus meant when He said, *"If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone . . ."* (John 8:1-11). We can display that peace demanded by Jesus and be His peacemaker when we learn what Jesus meant when He said that the greatest one in the church must be a servant of the others (Matt. 20:20-28). We can display that peace demanded by Jesus and be His peacemaker when we learn what Jesus meant when He said that the greatest one in the church must be as humble as a child (Matt. 18:1-9).

We must be humble toward each other, serving our brothers and sisters; not crushing them with unkind and unthoughtful words. We must be peacemakers. We are to be as Paul wrote in Eph. 4:2-3; that is, we are to be completely humble and gentle, we are to be patient, we are to bear with one another in love, and we are to make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit.

To have peace with our brothers and sisters, it takes action on our part. Paul provides us the names of eight works that divide the church. They are: hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, and envy. (Gal. 5:19-21) Let's make a dedicated effort to keep these out of the church. Over the last forty years, many brothers and sisters departed the church because stones were thrown when peace should have been sought.

God does not ask us to have peace in our lives; He demands it. We must live peaceful and quiet lives. *"Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the sons of God."* God demands that we live peaceful and quiet lives with Him, with ourself, with our family, with our society, and with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Let peace reign through His church. Let peace reign through the brotherhood. Jesus said, *"Peace I leave you; my peace I give you."* (John 14:27)

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Editor's Note: Due to its length, the above article was not published in its entirety. However, the majority of it and the key points do appear as it was submitted.

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Which prophet was hand-picked to be educated for three years and then brought into the king's service?
2. To whose cries are the ears of the Lord attentive?
3. In the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, what did the rich man say was causing his agony?
4. The dragon which appeared in Revelation has how many heads?
5. What two things did Jacob do when he first met Rachel?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. In what two cities did Jeroboam locate the two golden calves he had made for worship? **DAN AND BETHEL** (1 Ki. 12:29)
2. As the Israelites prepared to leave Mt. Sinai for the promised land, why did God refuse to travel in their midst? **THE LORD MIGHT DESTROY THEM FOR THEIR STIFF-NECKED WAYS** (Exo. 33:3)
3. How many times should one warn a divisive person? **TWICE** (Titus 3:10)
4. If you fear the Lord and shun evil, what does Proverbs promise it will bring to your body? **HEALTH** (Prov. 3:8)
5. What book of the New Testament is referred to in Acts as "*the former treatise*"? **LUKE** (Acts 1:1; Lk. 1:3)

# **GOSPEL MEETINGS**

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
October 11 - 13	Summit, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
October 13 - 20	Liberty, KY	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
November 1 - 3	Hokes Bluff Church Gadsden, AL	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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## **THE BIBLE: YET IT LIVES!**

Generation follows generation -- yet it lives.  
 Nations rise and fall -- yet it lives.  
 Kings, dictators, presidents come and go -- yet it lives.  
 Hated, despised, cursed -- yet it lives.  
 Doubted, suspected, criticized -- yet it lives.  
 Condemned by atheists -- yet it lives.  
 Scoffed at by scorners -- yet it lives.  
 Exaggerated by fanatics -- yet it lives.  
 Misconstrued and misstated -- yet it lives.  
 Ranted and raved about -- yet it lives.  
 Its inspiration denied -- yet it lives.

Yet it lives -- as a lamp to our feet.  
 Yet it lives -- as a light to our path.  
 Yet it lives -- as the gate to heaven.  
 Yet it lives -- as a standard for childhood.  
 Yet it lives -- as a guide for youth.  
 Yet it lives -- as an inspiration for the matured.  
 Yet it lives -- as a comfort for the aged.  
 Yet it lives -- as food for the hungry.  
 Yet it lives -- as water for the thirsty.  
 Yet it lives -- as rest for the weary.  
 Yet it lives -- as light for the heathen.  
 Yet it lives -- as salvation for the sinner.  
 Yet it lives -- as grace for the Christian.