

WHAT A WONDERFUL GOD!

God has revealed himself to me with many names in Scripture. In the first book of the Bible he is introduced as Lord God (2:4), Almighty God (17:1,2) and Everlasting God (21:33). Later I find he is also called Eternal God (Deut. 33:27), Living God (Josh. 3:10) and Lord of hosts (Isa. 1:24). In the New Testament God is affectionately known as Heavenly Father (Matt. 6:26) and Father of lights (Jas. 1:17). And I think to myself...what a wonderful God.

God created me in his own image (Gen. 1:27). He breathed into me the breath of life and made me a living soul (Gen. 2:7). He gave me a sound mind, an inner conscience, and a healthy body. I was born to parents who nourished me and made a loving family and provided for my physical needs. And I think to myself...what a wonderful God!

I was born an American citizen and live in the United States. I enjoy many freedoms and privileges, of which I did not have to personally fight for them. They were handed down to my generation by brave and dying soldiers. As an American, I am granted the gift of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. My country has free elections and a Constitution based on biblical principles, thus I benefit from the freedom of religion, freedom of speech, etc. And I think to myself...What a Wonderful God.

God created my world in six days, rested on the seventh day and behold, "it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). In the springtime I can look at beautiful flowers and green trees. The summer has its yellow sun hoisted against blue skies and white clouds. There are colored leaves in the autumn and frosty weather in the winter. I am amazed by the animals in the woods and in the ocean and in the air. Nature truly is a marvel to behold when I use my five senses to their fullest. And I think to myself...What a Wonderful God!

God saw my loneliness and gave me a help meet, a wife (Gen. 2:18). I feel God created her especially for me. Two wonderful children, who honor their father and mother, complete our earthly family. In addition, he gave me many friends and other human beings with whom I interact: growing, learning, respecting and loving together. And I think to myself...What a Wonderful GOD.

He knew I would need much guidance in this crazy world. So he commissioned different writers from various backgrounds to pen his Word. I have often wondered, where would I be without the Bible? It is my standard and foundation and source of inspiration. It has all the answers for my important questions. The Bible is always there, within reach of my hands and my mind. I meditate frequently on its message. And I think to myself...What A Wonderful GOD!

God gave me a Savior, too - his only begotten Son (John 3:16). Christ Jesus loved me enough to pay for my sins. Though He Himself knew no sin (Heb. 4:15), yet He was put on trial and crucified unjustly. As He hung on the cross, Jesus shed His blood for the remission of my sins. For one brief moment, God had to forsake his Son (Mk. 15:34) because of me. Anyone who is now buried in baptism will also be baptized into His death (Rom. 6:3) and have that hope of eternal salvation. Yes, ANYONE (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38)! And I think to myself...WHAT A WONDERFUL GOD.

When I obeyed the Gospel, God added me to the church (Acts 2:47). Now I have numerous brothers and sisters in Christ throughout the world and I look forward to every assembling together of my spiritual family. I am elated when we sing together, thankful when we pray, uplifted when we study, mindful when we share the Communion, and cheerful when we give. Never underestimate the beauty of Christian fellowship! And I think to myself...WHAT A WONDERFUL GOD!

RAY McMANUS

“I WAS GLAD ...” (Psalms 122:1)

David said, *“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord”* (Psa. 122:1). Yet, with all the diversions in the world today it seems that many do not share this desire. The primary desires seem to be those of the flesh. We are so busy with the things we **“want”** to do, things we **“need”** to do, we do not seem to have time for God. Perhaps we need to take a look at what our **wants** and **needs** really should be.

It would seem that first, we need to increase our faith to the point we **desire** to do **God’s will** more than we **desire** to do these other things that hinder. A person might say, “I love the Lord just as much as anyone else, but I really **needed** to go visit my

folks last Sunday." Is this true? Is there anything we "need" to do more than to serve God? I think not!

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33). This is a command. We show we love God by keeping His commandments. *"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous"* (1 John 5:3). Yet sometimes it seems as though our attendance might be "grievous" to us. The Lord will not accept such service.

Someone might ask, "Is **regular** church attendance required?" The scriptures teach that it is. We have both example and command. *"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them..."* (Acts 20:7). The "breaking of bread" (Lord's Supper) was part of the doctrine as was prayer (Acts 2:41-42).

In Hebrews 10:23-27 we read: *"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching. For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries."*

We have professed our faith. Also, our faith **is** our profession. Most of us are very industrious in our **temporal professions** or occupations. Should we not be even more diligent to attend to our **spiritual** profession? Being a Christian is a full-time work. We should do this "without wavering" - without letting the cares of this life interfere. We are to *"consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"*. If I miss the church service, am I considering others? Do I encourage **them** to love and to good works? On the contrary, I **discourage** them and set a bad example to fellow Christians and to the world about. My actions have expressed my thoughts. I show I love the world more than I love the Lord.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." This clearly indicates that the assembly is a **way** of promoting love and good works. *"As the manner of some is"* shows us this was a problem even then. *"But exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."* We are to exhort one another. Do we check with other members of the congregation

(especially weaker members) to encourage them to be present for the next service? We should. And we should be more diligent to do this as the day for the service nears. If a person misses a service, do we make a special effort to find out why? If a person misses and no one mentions this, he might think: (1) It is all right to miss occasionally if there's something else he'd **rather** do; (2) No one **really** cares. In any case, the person is not "considered" and is not "provoked unto love and good works."

Do we consider attendance a commandment? The next verse (26) shows us clearly that to forsake the assembly **is sinful!** "*For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth*" - indicates connection to the previous thoughts of attendance. Our "knowledge of the truth" should show us this is necessary. If we do not attend, we "sin willfully" and we can expect to be judged for it.

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(Excerpt taken from a tract)

HOW GOD ANSWERS

He prayed for strength that he might achieve;

He was made weak that he might obey.

He prayed for wealth that he might do greater things;

He was given infirmity that he might do better things.

He prayed for riches that he might be happy;

He was given poverty that he might be wise.

He prayed for power that he might have the praise of men;

He was given infirmity that he might feel the need of God.

He prayed for all things that he might enjoy life;

He was given life that he might enjoy all things.

He had received nothing that he asked for.

But he had received all things he hoped for.

His prayer was answered – he was most blessed.

--Author Unknown--

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>PLACE & TIME</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
Feb. 16 -22	Boyertown, PA	Carley Conner and Harry Cobb
March 26 – 28	Valley, AL	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who was David's friend who became a spy for him as Absalom's advisor?
2. God said he would make the sky and earth like two metals if the Israelites disobeyed. Name the two metals.
3. In the Parable of the Talents, how many total talents were entrusted to servants?
4. What was the loud voice like, that John, in the book of Revelation, heard?
5. What were the people doing, after the law was read to them, that Nehemiah asked them to stop doing?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. In what province were the seven churches John wrote about in the first three chapters of Revelation? ASIA (Rev. 1:4)
2. Did God promise to eliminate harmful beasts from the Promised Land? YES (Lev. 26:6)
3. What destroyed the house built upon the sands? THE FLOOD (Luke 6:49)
4. On what did Habakkuk record his vision? TABLETS (Hab. 2:2)
5. What happened when King Uzziah did the forbidden act of burning incense before the Lord? HE WAS STRICKEN WITH LEPROSY ON HIS FOREHEAD (2 Chr. 26:19)