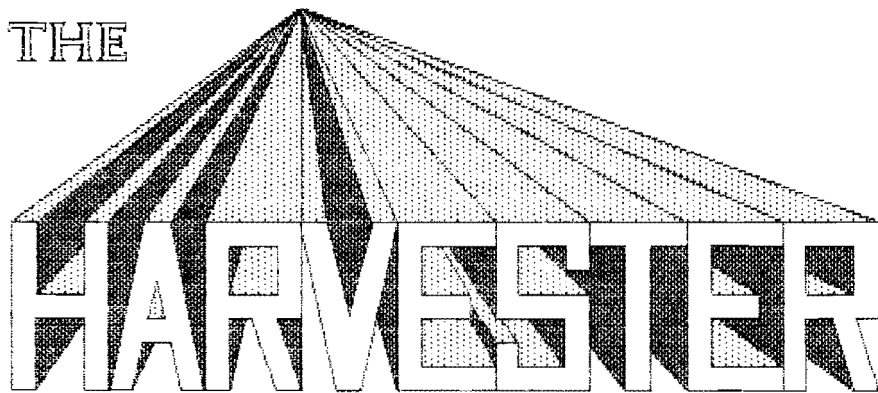


THE



"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]

SEPTEMBER 1991

No. 069

FATHER'S DAY

Recently I was part of a group that went to a restaurant for dinner on a typical warm Sunday afternoon in June. But this wasn't just any Sunday in June, you see, it was Father's Day. And it just so happened that in this group of people there was a man and his daughter. This daughter made sure she was in the front of the group so she could pay for her father's meal. And when we sat down she gave him, not one, but two Father's Day cards. It was heartwarming to see how much this man meant to his daughter. But as I sat there I just couldn't help but think of another father, far, far away. A father who has many children. But many of those children have forsaken him. How many cards or presents

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would this father receive today I wondered? How many of his children would even think about him?

The father I am referring to is God. So often we tend to forget that He is indeed our father. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty"*(II Cor. 6:17) God is our Father, and we as Christians are His children. Being a parent is a very wonderful, but at the same time a very demanding job. Parents tend to worry so much about their children. God worries about us too. But He also expects us to be obedient to Him, just as human parents expect the same from their children. And just as parents will chasten their children when they do something wrong, so also God will chasten us.

The Bible speaks very plainly of God's chastening of His children. *"And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: 'My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; for whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.' If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it"*(Hebrews 12:5-11 NKJ)

Paul also beautifully pointed out our relationship with God. *"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!"*(Rom. 8:14) The word Abba here means nothing more than father. I once heard a brother use the word daddy here instead of father. I think this adds so much more depth and meaning to the passage. We can all picture a young child waiting for his father to return home from work. Then upon his arrival the child runs to him saying with a loud and elated voice, "Daddy, Daddy." Do we have the same affection for our heavenly Father? We should love him even more than we do our human father. *"He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me!"*(Matt. 10:37) Do we really love God as our father?

As children we seldom realize all of the things our parents do for us. The sacrifices they make for us. The same is true with God. He, as our father, does more for us than we will probably ever realize. Jesus pointed out God's attention to our needs: *"For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him!"*(Matt. 6:8) But far too often children fail to realize just how much they really rely upon their parents. They want to be independent, and live life their own way. They think they know it all. Isn't this really what Christ was speaking of in His rebuke to the Laodicean church? *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked!"*(Rev. 3:17) Children often allow youthful pride to cause them to become blind to reality. Let us not find ourselves in the same situation. Let us remember how much we truly depend on God. *"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain*

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also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring!"(Acts 17:28)

But what of those who are rebellious and forsake God? How will He treat those children? *"For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death."*(Matt. 15:4) If those who were disrespectful to their parents under the law of Moses were stoned to death, how much greater will the punishment be for those who show disrespect toward their heavenly Father?

The relationship between a father and his child is probably the most loving and tender relationship man can know. As young children and teenagers we often fail to understand our part in that relationship. Instead of being appreciative for what our parents have done for us, we often want only to break away from them and their authority over us. We naively believe we have all the answers. But life often confronts us with a reality that we never knew existed. We lived a sheltered life while under our parents' care, and never really understood what life was all about.

How similar our relationship is with God. We are truly His sons and daughters. We too, oftentimes want to be rebellious and stubborn. God will give us a little slack and let us experience life on our own for a while. But usually it doesn't take long for us to come to our senses and realize where we really belong. This is no different than the story of the prodigal son told in Luke chapter 15.

And just as in that story the father greatly rejoiced to see his wayward son return home, so also God rejoices to see us return back to Him.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!"(1 John 3:1) Indeed I must marvel at the wonderful and marvelous love of God, which allows sinful men to become His sons. Praise God, we are His children! And shouldn't every day be Father's day to us? Let us praise and glorify the wonderful name of our heavenly Father evermore.

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Where did Moses put the new tables of stone, after God had written on them?
2. Who had Jesus scourged the day of His crucifixion?
3. What should a good husband give his wife, according to 1 Peter?
4. Why did Isaiah think he was unworthy to look upon the Lord of Hosts?
5. What did Samson kill as he was on the way to see his future wife?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Whose sin did Jesus say had caused blindness, the blind man's or his parents? NEITHER (John 9:3)

2. How many days after birth was it before a male child was circumcised? EIGHT (Lev. 12:3)
3. What did Jesus have the people to do before He fed them in the feeding of the 5000? SIT DOWN (John 6:10)
4. Who volunteered when the voice of the Lord asked, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" ISAIAH (Isa. 6:8)
5. In Zechariah 8, what two things does the Lord tell the house of Judah that He hates? DEVISING EVIL AGAINST ANOTHER AND LOVING PERJURY (Zech. 8:17)

CHRIST IN THE BIBLE

The apostle Paul writes the next several books of the Bible. In each book he presents a clearer and deeper understanding of the Messiah. This information is vital to the person who desires to live a Christian life.

In the letter to the ROMANS, Paul describes the significance of the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ. This death provided justification for all mankind. It is not enough to believe this fact. A person must also live accordingly: a life of righteousness! Through the death and resurrection of the Second Adam, the believer is redeemed, justified, reconciled, saved, and glorified. The Messiah's righteousness is the gift given to sinful man.

FIRST CORINTHIANS reveals the problems, pressures, and struggles of a church called out of a pagan society. The root of the evil is carnality. The answer is Christ. He is the symbol of unity. He is the morality of God. He is the way of escape. He is the Lord's Supper. He

is the grandest spiritual gift. He is the more excellent way. He is love. Christ is also the resurrection and the life. In every area of the believer's life, the Anointed One is to be found.

In SECOND CORINTHIANS Paul must defend his ministry and present his credentials as an apostle of the Messiah. His best argument lies in the fact that he has become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Likewise, the believer will find the Messiah to be his comfort, triumph, Lord, light, judge, reconciliation, substitute, gift, owner, and power in his daily life.

Salvation on the basis of the law versus salvation on the basis of faith is the subject of Paul's letter to the GALATIANS. It is faith through the Messiah's supreme sacrifice on the cross that man is delivered from the curse of sin, law and self. It is faith in Christ that allows man to have liberty in Christ. It was faith that justified Abraham, not the works of the law. Therefore, it is faith in the Gospel of Grace that leads men to "put on Christ". Finally, faith in the Redeemer produces the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The book of EPHESIANS demonstrates the vital position that the Christian must be in with regard to the Messiah. About thirty five times the phrase "in Christ" (or its equivalent) appears in this epistle. Paul states that the believer is in Christ, in the heavenly places in Christ, chosen in Him, adopted through Christ, in the Beloved, redeemed in Him, given an inheritance in Him, given hope in Him, sealed in Him, made alive together with Christ, raised and seated with Him, created in Christ, brought near by His blood, growing in Christ, a partaker of the promise in Christ, and given access through faith in Him. Thus, the Christian must conduct himself in a manner that truly shows he is "in Christ" and not "in the world".

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
Sept. 1 - 7	Oak Grove Church Liberty, KY	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
Sept. 13-15	Pleasant Ridge Church Woodbury, TN	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
Sept. 15-21	Liberty Church Liberty, KY	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
Sept. 16-20	Lily Church near London, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

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SHOW US

Folks say we do a lot of things
We hadn't oughta had;
We never mean a bit of harm
Nor do them to be bad.

But when a chance just comes along
With fun a-peekin' through
We take it mostly just because
We've nothing else to do.

Kids are an awful problem
All the grownup people say
But honest all we really want
Is just a chance to play.

And all of us from country towns
And from the cities, too,
Will quit what you call mischief
If you show us what to do.

Author Unknown