

## SOUL WINNING

The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise. Proverbs 11:30

Imagine if you will a prisoner behind fortified walls, a captive in need of deliverance. Yet whenever any rescue attempt is made, the enemy strengthens the barriers rendering your efforts null and void. Often is the scene when we try to win a soul.

So how do we overcome the defensive walls the enemy has in place to set the captive free?

When invading new territory it becomes necessary to know the enemy and know the strategy it will take to accomplish the goal. We can do this by studying the life of Christ, the Master of soul winning.

When looking over a crowd, Matthew wrote Jesus was moved with compassion. He saw individual souls with individual needs. Some he liberated by just appearing in their everyday lives and fulfilling their needs, others he stormed the gates and confronted them with the truth. One he shared the truth with and left him to ponder. Later, we find that same one showing his love by burying the Crucified Savior. In every life, He made a difference.

The secret to winning souls is seen as Jesus moves among the people. He loved them as individuals and was moved by compassion for their needs. He understood no two people are the same. They do not have the same wants or the same needs.

He recognized soul winning was neither haphazard nor accidental. He knew the secret of soul winning was a strategic plan of what, when, where, and how to plant His precious seed. Nothing was mishandle or wasted.

Some people are just starting out while others have been on this journey for quite some time. Yet all can say there is room for improvement.

James tells us, "If any lack wisdom, we are to ask God, who will give it abundantly. (James 1:5) We need God's wisdom to finish His work of reaping the harvest. Let us study that we may become learned, approved students of the Master Teacher; wise as serpents, harmless as doves, nothing mishandled or wasted as we go about the Father's business.



Sister Gail Johnson  
Regional A.B.M. Coordinator

### Message from the Assistant Editor

Here are the deadlines to submit articles for the upcoming new year:

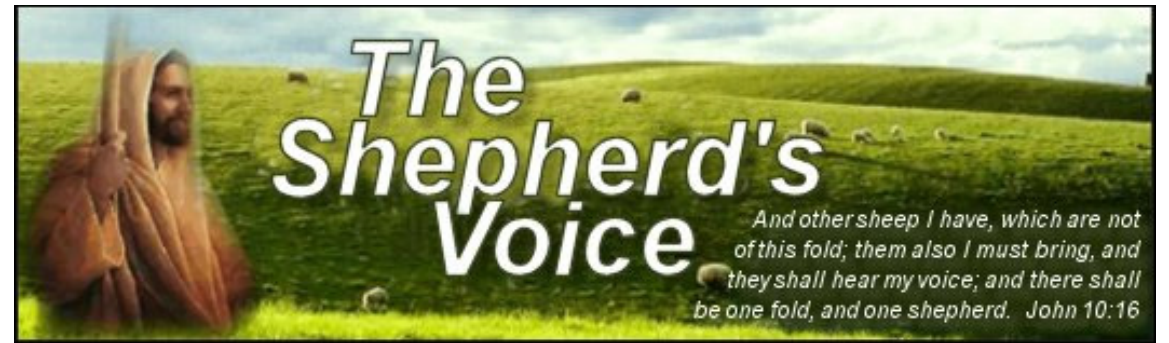
**January 20th, March 20th, May 20th, July 20th, September 20th, and November 20th.** All articles and announcements should be submitted by email or by mail by these dates to get the paper out on time.

Tony Conner—Assistant Editor

To submit articles or subscribe to **The Shepherd's Voice**, send them to Tony Conner at:

**41 Greatwood Drive, White, GA 30184 or [theshepherdsvoice@tcogflga.org](mailto:theshepherdsvoice@tcogflga.org)**

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Sister Campbell was asked to submit a Christmas message for the Evening Light at General Headquarters. Because everyone in the region does not receive this publication, I have asked her to also submit it to the Shepherd's Voice:

## "THOSE (Christmas) THINGS"

The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ...known and celebrated as Christmas...is recorded in both Matthew and Luke. Each account details valuable, precious truths regarding the arrival of the Saviour of the world...to the world! As an introduction to this message, let's first look at Luke's preface to this glorious event in Luke, chapter 1: 1-4:

*"Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of **those things which are most surely believed among us**. Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightiest **know the certainty of those things**, wherein thou hast been instructed."*

Luke penned these words as the Holy Ghost moved upon him, inspiring and dictating every jot and tittle. And that which Luke wrote remains applicable to every generation of time. There are **"those things"** which we, as Christians and particularly as members of The Church of God, have been instructed in, through the ministering of the Word, which are, because of divine revelation, most surely believed among us, His Body! Luke's desire was that Theophilus know the certainty of **"those things"** and God desires no less for us today.

There are "those Christmas things" which the denominational world believes and, more than likely, are certain of. Some of "those things" include the traditional Christmas wreath and the (supposedly) spiritual meaning behind it...the Christmas carols and the relevance some lyrics have to the true meaning of Christmas...the Christmas presents in signifying the gifts the wise men brought to the Christ child...and the list of Christmas traditions could go on and on. Most, if not all, churches believe in the Christmas story from the Word of God in that the biblical characters are usually portrayed in the annual Christmas plays performed in church sanctuaries across the world. However, as The Church of God, The Body of Christ...what are **"those (Christmas) things" most surely believed among us; "those (Christmas) things" which we know the certainty of** as reflected in and through the Bible characters of the Christmas story?

Luke's preface to the Christmas story was followed in chapter one by the appearance of an angel to Elizabeth and the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Mary, foretelling the birth of John and Jesus. The correlation and importance of the two hold a treasure of Christmas messages, but let's pick up Luke's writings in chapter two

and observe more closely the Christmas Bible characters recorded there and in those of Matthew's account as respects ***“those (Christmas) things”*** which are relevant to the Body of Christ today.

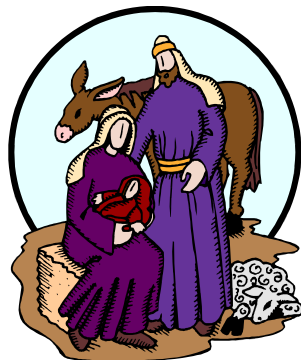
*Luke 1:28-35: Mary, who never compromised her virtue and purity, found favour with God and was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost to carry within her the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ. She was chosen to deliver the Son of God to the world. The Church of God, His Body, who will never be found compromising her virtue and purity, has found favour with Him and has been overshadowed by the Holy Ghost to carry within her the Word of God to be delivered to a lost world!*

*Matthew 1:19-20: Joseph, a just man, was apprehensive about joining himself to Mary until an angel appeared unto him and gave him the assurance he needed through these words... “Fear not...for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.” There are many today who are apprehensive of joining themselves to the one who carries the fullness of The Word within her, The Church of God. But one day they will hear a sound from the heavenly world... “Don't be afraid to join yourself unto her because that which is within her is of the Holy Ghost!”*

*Luke 2:8, 15: The shepherds were abiding in the field, doing their job, keeping watch over their flocks by night. They began to talk one to another and were persuaded to go quickly to find the body of Christ... which the Lord had made known unto them. There are true sheep and true shepherds of God in other folds. Soon and very soon the Lord himself will make known to these shepherds and sheep the place of the Body of Christ...the place where the Truth can be found...The Church of God!! Once they hear from God they will make haste, just as the shepherds did that Christmas night. There were those led to the Body of Christ then...and there are those who will be led to the Body of Christ today!!!*

*Luke 2: 11:12: The King of Kings, Jesus, was found in the humble surroundings of a manger, wrapped in swaddling clothes. No doubt, there were those who refused to believe that He was the Messiah simply because of where He was found. The mentality of the scoffers must have been...As King of Kings He would surely be found in the grandest palace, clothed in the finest of garments! Today, there are those who refuse to believe that The Church of God is the exclusive Body of Christ. She is not noted for the grandest of buildings, and neither is she clothed in the riches of this world. The Body of Christ on that Christmas day was found wrapped in swaddling clothes which was a cloth wrapped tightly around the body as a measure of protection. The Body of Christ on this Christmas day can be found wrapped tightly in the garments of holiness and righteousness, protecting her from the dangers of worldliness!!*

While the world focuses their attention on “those Christmas things” such as parties, shopping, parades, mistletoe, jingle bells and more...let The Church of God be found celebrating and rejoicing over “those (Christmas) things” as outlined in the precious Word of God. As each member of The Body of Christ gathers together with church friends and family members during this special season and reads the Christmas story found in Luke and Matthew, let us all be reminded of “those (Christmas) things” we most surely **believe** among us and **know** the certainty of them all!



*Sister Campbell and I wish every member and friend in the great region of Florida and Georgia a very Merry Christmas!*

Jerry W. Campbell  
Regional Overseer

## CHURCH of PROPHECY MARKER ASSOCIATION

As the children of our God and Savior Jesus Christ, we have been quickened together with him, having forgiving us of all our transgressions. If ye then be risen with Christ we are to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. We are to set our affection on things above, not on things of the earth. For we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. So when Christ who is our life shall appear, then we also shall appear with him in glory. As Gods children we are to have mortified our members which are upon earth, we are to “put-off” things like fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupis-

cence, covetness, because the wrath of God will come upon disobedient children for these things sake. But he also says, to “put-off” these also, which is anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouths, and lie not to one another because we have “put-on” the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who hath created him. “Putting-off” these deeds is not the end, but we are to “Put-On” some things that we should be made into the image of him. He says Put-On therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering. Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave YOU, so also do ye. And above all these things put -ON charity which is the bond of perfectness.

As a living Marker, its not enough to just PUT-OFF the deeds of the old man, for we will be walking in our own self righteousness and ideas and opinions. But we must PUT-ON the ways and things of Christ that this world can SEE, not just the absence of the old man, but the presence and image of the only begotten son of God walking through us. To be the soldiers of God we must Put-On the armor, to be able to stand the wiles of Satan. Eph 6:10-11 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. (11) Put-on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We must put it all on to be able to withstand in these last evil days and shine for the world to see the Church. In Rom 13:10-14 Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (11) And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. (12) The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore “cast off” the works of darkness, and let us “put on” the armor of light. (13) Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. (14) But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof. For the wrath of God will come upon all disobedience in his children.

We are to be the light of this world set upon a hill that all can see. God has given unto us the light, and we must be that light ourselves not the silent cold stones of the past, but the earthen vessels of the future and of the glory of God within us. Walking in the light he has given to the Church of God in the arise shine prophecy, we must allow him to take-off the old man and restore the new man in his fullness and original glory and put-on the image of Christ. Isa 60:1-3 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. (2) For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. (3) And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. The last days markers will be living beacons of Gods light and glory working within their hearts, walking in love and forgiveness and mercy. The people will be attracted to the light and kings will come to the brightness of it.



Therefore we will be a living marker, to shine the way to the Glorious Church of God. Let your light so shine, that others may see your good works and glorify you Father which is in heaven. (Matt 5:16) A Church of Prophecy Marker, isn't just a stone sitting on a corner somewhere. Its an individual who has gotten saved, joined The Church of God and has allowed God to fashion him into a pillar and a marker that this world can look upon and see the great works of God manifesting within his heart and life.

I encourage all of you to join the CPMA of The Church of God, it will be the last days effects on this worlds people walking in gross darkness, and it will be a wonderful blessing for you to be a part of this Association.

Rick Razsi - Regional CPMA Coordinator  
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## “FAITHFUL SERVANTS”

MERRY CHRISTMAS — This is the season to be thankful for all things.



Psalms 23: The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

These verses reminds me that the Lord is our shepherd, he will take care of us in all things of life. He will lead us in the paths of righteousness, for his name's sake. He will anoint us to do his work. As we become the "Faithful Servants" that the Lord wants us to be, the windows of heaven will open. We will receive blessings on top of blessings.

The WMB Theme for this 2009-2010 is "FAITHFUL SERVANTS". As we remember that the Lord is our shepherd, we can do all things through Christ Jesus that strengthens us. The doors will be opened by our love, works, prayers, fasting, and giving for The Church of God. So sisters let the doors open for you. I am looking for that day, when we will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Call me at anytime, if you need me to come to your local church or pray with you about a special need, etc. I am praying for you that God will bless you for all you do.

Sister Carolyn Wilson - Regional W M B Coordinator



## News from the Fold

On November 14, 2009, thirteen members were reunited to The Church of God in Barberville, Florida, with Brother Rosalino Lorenzo as appointed pastor. Welcome home saints!

Progress Report for The Church of God @ Hazlehurst New Building: We have just finished putting up the sheet rock in the ceiling and getting it taped and mud primer on. We will be putting popcorn texture on and painting walls and putting up trim on the ceiling along with lights this coming week. We still need a septic tank installed, vinyl siding on and rug installed, but we are along ways from where we started from. Thank God for his strength and guidance. Keep us in your prayers. We have been given free, a Beautiful Sign made of granite and I hope you will come join us when we have our unveiling of the CPMA Marker for The Church of God sign at Hazlehurst.



## Merry Christmas From Children's Ministries



Happy birthday Jesus or Santa Claus is coming to town. Interesting choice. If you ask the world its "Look up, Santa Claus is coming" but it should be "Look up, Jesus is coming". John 4:35 "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest"

Every year we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and we are closer than ever to His coming. Each lesson taught, each sermon preached this holiday season should include not only the story of His birth but His coming again. If you ever look at a wheat field you will notice that the stalks are not all the same height. Some are shorter than others. Well in my mind those shorter stalks are our precious little ones. You see our children may not be adults yet but they are certainly ready for harvest! A question arises among many Christian families during this time of year. Should we teach our children that "Santa Claus" is real? It is not my intention to tell you what your stand on this issue should be but let me pose some points to ponder.

The first commandment states- "Thou shalt have no other gods before me". The second commandment states- "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments". The ninth commandment states- "Thou shalt not bear falsewitness against thy neighbor." Do we find lying to our children is acceptable if "all in good fun" yet at the same time we teach them that to lie is a sin? How would you like to be invited to your birthday party only to find someone else the guest of honor?



My own children were never taught to believe in Santa Claus and to this day you will not see them on "Dr. Phil" telling the world how abused they were because they did not get to believe in Santa. In our house Santa was just a fictional character of the holiday season and we did not forbid his presence in our house. Instead they were taught about the real Saint Nicholas who gave to the poor children as charity to show the love of God. He tried to do it anonymously because he wanted all the glory to go to God. Once again I am not trying to impose my personal views but it is a subject I believe should be prayed about. This very special Christmas season who are our children looking up to see? This scripture tells us what we need to be concentrating on.

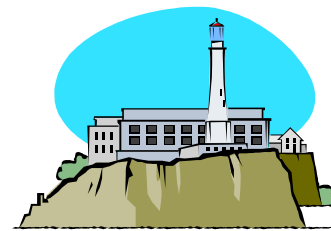
Isa 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be forever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.



If you do not have children in your local church at this time "Children's Ministries" is still for you! God could send you a harvested family from one Sunday to the next. Are you ready to harvest the whole family or just the tall ones?

Merry Christmas from mine to yours! - Sister Melodie Steptoe

## PRISON MINISTRY



The Prison Ministry Team has sent out over 100 Christmas cards to inmates and to inmate members, Please pray for them during the Holiday season. I hope each of you have a Wonderful Christmas and a Blessed New Year through Jesus Christ Our Lord.

Regional Prison Ministry Coordinator - Rick Razi

912-310-8200

rick\_prisonministryteam@yahoo.com

# A VESSEL OF HONOR: ASCENDING TO WORSHIP

*Grayson B. Kent, Regional VLB Coordinator*

We typically render worship as adoration toward God and associate it with good, uplifting, or even ecstatic feelings. Worship is often focused upward and can embody the qualities of holiness, reverence, and awe. We see ourselves as givers and God as the recipient. However, our adoration and our intimate quest to know God should never stop us short of exercising His will on earth. There is an element of service in worship that God expects for His children. A vessel of honor must be willing to fulfill the beckoning call of the Master's service.

As youth, having been raised in a culture that in many ways denies the value of personal potential and talents, we are often overwhelmed by the fear of failure. Fear can cause an individual to live life with a spirit of regret. It will cause an individual to talk about what could have been, what should have been, and what would have been instead of focusing on what has been, is being, and will be. A lack of confidence stifles growth and development.

A story of an immigrant to America who was not familiar with the English language illustrates this very point. Being a prideful and proper individual, he was terrified of failing at speaking English effectively. He went to an interpreter and asked him to teach him three English words by which he could order food while he was in America. He requested that the words be simple and easy to remember, because he wanted to no room for error. The interpreter taught him three words - hamburger, french fry, and coke. Day after day, for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, the immigrant went to restaurants and order nothing more than "hamburger, french fry, and coke". Eventually the man grew tired of having "hamburger, french fry, and coke" for breakfast, so he returned to the interpreter and requested three additional words for breakfast foods. He reminds the interpreter how anxious and fearful he is about failing in his attempt to communicate in the English language. He states, "I don't want to be laughed at, and I don't want people to hear me make a mistake." The interpreter recommended, "Go into a restaurant in the morning and order these three things - eggs, toast, and juice." Excited about his newly acquired knowledge of the English language, he briskly ran to a restaurant the following morning. When approach by the waitress who requested his order, he said, "eggs!" Quickly, she responded, "what kind? scrambled, boiled? what kind? over-easy, over medium? do you want them with cheese?" Somewhat confused, he continued, "toast!" She inquired, "what kind? white bread, wheat bread, rye bread? french toast, seven grain bread?" He responded, "juice!" Somewhat frustrated, she asked, "what kind? grape juice, apple juice, orange juice, grapefruit juice? tomato juice?" Much to his dismay, he realized that the people were beginning to stare and him and his inability to communicate. Panicking from the inside-out, he quickly uttered to the waitress, "hamburger, french fry, coke!"

A lot of people live a "hamburger, french fry, coke" life. Overwhelmed with the fear that we will fail, we settle for the same thing over and over. This method of living never takes risks, never tries, never stretches, or never attempts anything other than that which is known to be successful when viewed through the perspective of human eyes.

While our human fears and vision desire to play it safe, Matthew 25:14-28 reveal that doing so is viewed as a displeasure in the eyes of the Master Potter. Often we desire not to fault the man who hid his talents. One might say that he desired to protect that which was the Master's. However, verse twenty-five reveals the true attitude which drove him to action. "And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth:...." The Master's perspective was quite different. Verse 26 exposes the true feelings of the Master. "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest...."

When we are so fearful that we don't venture out in worship or try to perform our service beyond our own expectations, we fail to fulfill the full purpose that God has placed on our lives. This is not a pop-culture teaching or mindset. God expects us to live as vessels of faith, people who do not allow a spirit of fear to talk us out of His service.

A tourist saw an old farmer sitting on his porch at an old home-place. He was sitting in his overalls chewing on a straw. He was situated on top of seventy-five acres of barren land. The curious tourist asked, "Do you own this land?" The farmer said, "yup." Confused, the tourist asked, "will you be planting cotton in your fields?" Quickly,

the farmer responded, "nope! The boil weevils might come and eat it." The tourist then asked about corn. The farmer replied, "nope, I'm afraid the locust might come and devour it." Confused as to the farmer's motives, the tourist asked, "well what about raising some cattle in your field?" The farmer said, "The price of the cattle might drop before I get ready to sell them." Frustrated, the tourist asked, "well what are you going to do with your land?" The farmer responded, "nothing! absolutely nothing!"

If we are not careful in our spiritual journey, we will become just like the farmer. We have been given a plot of earth (this body, our vessel) that is just waiting to burst forth with unknown and unmeasurable potential for fruitful growth. Nevertheless, if we simply sit back and do not venture to nurture the earth (our vessels) through worship and service, we will never render due justice to God from our potential that He has placed within us.

If you will ever achieve spiritual significance, you must cast aside the spirit of fear and step out into the unknown areas of your God-given potential. This pursuit requires a strong degree of faith, and it requires full reliance on the Father for provision and sustenance during the maturing process. "But without faith, it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Hebrews 11:6).

Faith is critical in becoming a vessel of honor ascending in worship. James recognizes that "faith without works is dead..." (James 2:20).

Much like the farmer's barren fields, a vessel of no service is a barren or empty vessel. It may appear to be a good vessel on the outside bearing the shape of a Christian life. It may even have a clean or purified inside. However, if the vessel fails to meet its purpose - to carry substance - it fails to serve its intended purpose. Likewise, if we, as children of God, fail to have real substance on the inside of us fulfilling our purpose for creation, then our existence is hypocritical. Having a form (or qualifications) of godliness but denying the power (purpose of service) thereof is blatant disregard to the command to ascend in worship and service to God.

How can we avoid failure? How can we be relieved of the fear of failing? Peter encourages us to "...give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall..." (2 Peter 1:10). The confirmation of the Holy Ghost and His anointing is durable, lasting, and sustaining. Full of the Holy Ghost and progressing forward in spiritual confidence, we can ascend into the fullness of worship in service fit for the Master's use.



## UPCOMING DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

**January 23, 2010—North Florida District Convention**

**February 06, 2010—South Florida District Convention**

**March 06, 2010—North Georgia District Convention**

**March 13, 2010—South Georgia District Convention**