

UPCOMING CONVENTIONS

March 06, 2010—North Georgia District Convention

March 13, 2010— South Georgia District Convention

April 16-17, 2010—Youth Convention

Message from the Assistant Editor

Here are the deadlines to submit articles for this year:

**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. Please mark your calendars.

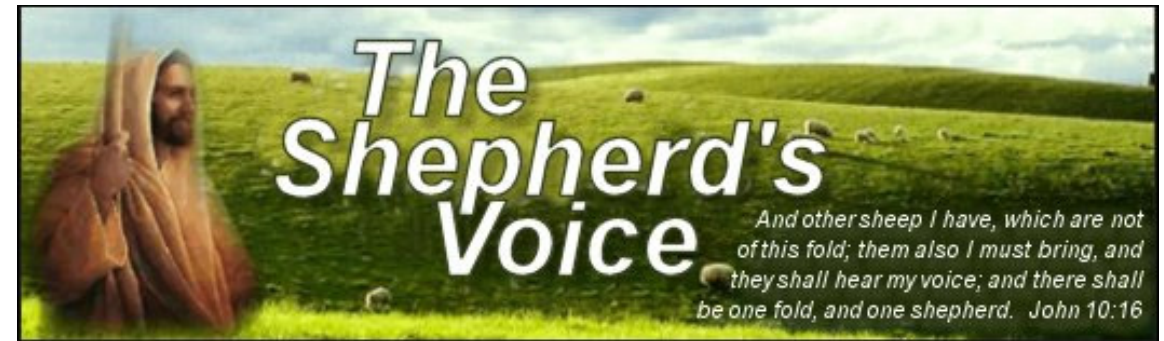
Please make a note of these dates and please submit articles.

The more we hear from our local churches, the more we can be informed on what is going on throughout our region. Pastors, please remember to appoint a local reporter to send articles in for your local church. You can email me the article, mail it to me, or even give me a call if you need to. Whatever is easier for you will work for me. Do not forget that you can view **The Shepherd's Voice** from 2005 up until now online on our Region's web site at <http://www.tcogflga.org>.

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

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A Publication of The Church of God in Florida/Georgia January/ February 2010 Vol. 16 Iss. 01

Jerry W. Campbell—Regional Overseer

Greetings to every member and friend of the glorious Church of God in the Florida / Georgia region! I recently received a letter from our General Overseer, Bishop Stephen Smith and felt the need to share the contents with every local church and individual member. Pastors, I'm asking you to read the letter from the Shepherd's Voice to your congregation.

TO: All State/Regional Overseer of The Church of God
FROM: General Overseer, Stephen E. Smith
SUBJECT: January 14, 2010

Dear Fellow Laborers:

Greeting in the name of Jesus Christ. I hope you enjoyed the Christmas season and have entered the New Year with thankfulness to the Lord for His past blessings and with great expectations for His anointing on your work this year.

I want to encourage you to make this "**The Year of the Holy Ghost**" in The Church of God. On the day of Pentecost God baptized The Church of God with the Holy Ghost and fire. While the book of Acts is commonly called the "Acts of the Apostles", it would not be incorrect to say the book is "The Acts of the Holy Ghost", for it is He who actually did the work through the Apostles and other Church of God members. It was Holy Ghost power that healed the sick and raised the dead. He worked signs and wonders through the hands of the Apostles, and He is the one who convicted, convinced and converted souls.

The Holy Ghost is still the Church's power for service. When the Church came out of the dark ages on June 13, 1903, God again endowed the Church with power to fulfill its commission on earth. Through the Word of God and the work of the Spirit are given the resources we need to evangelize the world, gather God's sheep into the fold, and take us to perfection and the rapture. It is vain to attempt our work without Him, and to have Him will require that we enter into periods of fasting and prayer so we can personally draw closer to the Lord and gain His favor. We will need to preach the experiences of salvation and sanctification, for without these none can receive the Holy Ghost. We will need to show our people the importance of receiving the baptism of the Spirit, and compel them to seek until every member has received the experience. We must not stop there, but challenge ourselves and the membership to seek after the faith and obedience that will produce the "signs following believers" and the "gifts of the Spirit." It is not

enough to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. We must help every member become a Holy Ghost anointed worker.

My soul is stirred as I write about this. It seems the devil is doing well in his work, taking the world deeper into iniquity each day, brining about distress among nations. The stage is being set for the soon coming Great Tribulation, with all of its woes and sorrows. We alone have the full message that will redeem men and help them escape the wrath to come. We are the Lord's only Church. He has no other and He will look to no other to get the work done. He has given us the tools, the Word and the Spirit, to overthrow Satan's power and carry the message to every nook and corner of the world. The leadership of the Church, that is you and I, must step up higher in our experience and get bolder in our preaching of the gospel. Better methods and more money are not the answer. God is looking for better men, men who are focused on their calling, men who will join the Apostle Paul in counting all earthly riches and accomplishments as dung, and from our heart tell the Lord we are willing to spend and be spent for His cause.

Overseers, I am appealing to you to capture the spirit of evangelism. Talk about it, preach it, and spread it in your State/Region. Let's get the spirit that will "Win the Lost at any cost." Stir your pastors to schedule outreach efforts, prayer times, house to house visitation, prayer evangelism, revivals, and any other effort the Holy Ghost approves to win souls. The work of the Spirit is to save souls, establish them in The Church of God, and put them on the work force of the Church.

Each of us at General Headquarters is willing to do what we can to help you. I have asked our General Auxiliary Coordinators, Evangelism Director, and all other General Headquarters Appointees, as much as possible, to be available for revivals each year, as well as attend conventions and other activities where they can be of service.

We do not have funds to employ full time evangelists for the Church, but most of these men and women can help fill the need for evangelists and would love to assist your area in revival work. Feel free to call any one of us, and if we are available at the time of your need we will come.

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God's Plans or Our Plans? - Linda L. Cox—Monticello Ridge—Waynesville, GA.

(Read Genesis 39:6-12) After Joseph was brought down to Egypt he was sold to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. Potiphar trusted him and Joseph found grace in his sight. The Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake. Being betrayed by his own brothers; Joseph could have given up on the Lord. Just imagine being thrown into a pit when it looks like there is no way out. Satan doesn't stop at one attack; he continues fighting; he never gives up. But, God had plans for Joseph, just like He has for you and me.

Potiphar's wife also had plans for Joseph, she thought he was going to be an easy catch. With her fair speech and flattering lips she thought no man could resist her. She was a tool in the hand of Satan to try and bring Joseph down. Joseph was not blind to this woman's beauty neither was he naive to her alluring ways. He probably could hear Satan whispering to him; your master will never know. Joseph why do you keep running away and avoiding her? She likes you, and she is rich. Think of all she could do for you. But Joseph was not like every man, he was God's man.

Long before the fiery trial of his master's wife's lustful obsession for him, Joseph had been taught that this was wrong and he had already made the decision in his heart not to sin against God. The right road may seem narrow, but we need to realize it is the road that will not lead us to destruction. Along time ago, Joseph had made up his mind that he was not going to be another statistic of a long line of adulterous men in Bible history. The power to make the right choices lies within each of us to stand steadfast in opposition to the devil or to surrender our integrity to him.

Joseph lost his position in Potiphar's house and was thrown in prison. Satan, our adversary, works overtime to infiltrate our minds with doubts and fears to bring about a spirit of discouragement. If we were a rock, and he a hammer and chisel, he would chisel away at us if given the power through the door of discouragement. But thank God there is hope! The Lord is our Shelter hi the time of storms. He is the Rock in whom we can hide. He's our peace and joy. He is our every thing. We might stumble and fall sometimes, but when we realize we can not arise and walk in our own strength, He reaches out and takes us by the hand and says, "Arise, my little one arise." In the power of God's might we can fight these battles and never give in. So as saints of God we need to do our best and the Lord will do the rest.

James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Satan will not flee from those who entertain thoughts of sin in any way,. He is just waiting for the welcoming sign to be hung out so he can set up camp on your doorstep. We cannot compromise with sin. A partial separation from sin means no commitment to the Lord. We must surrender all to be fully committed.

Like I said, "God had plans for Joseph." He had dreams to interpret, He had a dynasty to run. Joseph was used of God to save not only the nation of Israel, but the surrounding nations from a famine that was coming. Who will look opposition in the face and say, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" God has plans for all of us. We have the unsaved, the backslider, the uncertain, and the defeated who needs a Joseph in their lives. Will we raise the white flag of surrender or will we commit our self to the fight for the lost?

I pray that we all will make the right choice and choose God's plans and not ours. May the Lord of Glory say to all of us on that day thou good and faithful servant enter thou into the joys of the Lord. Can you say praise the Lord?

Greetings to All From “Children’s Ministries”



We hope and pray everyone had a wonderful holiday season and you are ready and excited about the New Year! God is already moving and blessing in all areas so it’s “Baton down the hatches and full steam ahead into 2010” for The Church of God.

In December my husband’s family had the blessing of seeing God do a miracle for their 83 year old mother. Her colon cancer was detected and completely removed. She went through major surgery like a 20

year old and we have an almost full bottle of painkiller sitting unused in the cupboard. She is not a glutton for punishment she simply did not need it. Truly we serve a mighty God. When we went back to the oncologist he told her and us one very important thing. All individuals should be doing puzzles such as cross-words, soduko (number games) and many others. He said doing this helps prevent Alzheimer’s Disease.

This disease eats away at the human brain until we cease to function.

This got me to thinking about how much we study the Word of God. If we have a lazy or “hit or miss’ study life we could become susceptible to spiritual Alzheimer’s Disease and eventually cease to function and suffer a spiritual death.

So, with this in mind, I hope to offer some puzzles for our younger readers to keep their brains spiritually as well as physically healthy. I have chosen a “Christmas” puzzle since we have just come out of the holiday season and things should be fresh in our minds. (Unless you went into a sugar coma like I did)

Yes! I know you adults are secretly doing this puzzle too!

Let the Games begin!!!

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|
| Bennorw _____ | ghiinns arst _____ |
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| Aiintvy _____ | aeglns _____ |
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CHRISTMAS ANAGRAM (unscramble the words)

Answers in next issue!

God Bless,
Melodie Steptoe
Children’s Ministries

Each year until Jesus comes for the Church must be a “Year of the Holy Ghost.” We must not have any fruitless years, but redeem the time and stay busy doing the work the Head of the Church has given us to do. We must not allow ourselves to give less than our best.

I hope you are feeling what I feel as I think on these things. My spirit feels a strong conviction from the Lord concerning our need of Holy Ghost anointing and power, and I deeply want to see the Church move into its finest hour for the Lord. How wonderful if it could be said of each of us, as it was about Barnabas, “For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.” Let’s make sure we meet this criteria, and then help our pastors and membership get focused and working on God’s priorities – winning and keeping souls. Then we will also see many people added to the Church.

God bless and guide each of you. The King of kings and Lord of lords sees your sacrifices and He will not fail to reward you.

For Christ and His Church,

Stephen E. Smith, General Overseer

The Church of God

Pastors, leaders, members, let’s get behind these anointed instructions from our General Overseer. Let’s do all we can, every time we can to make this “The Year of the Holy Ghost!” Let it be reported of the region that every member is saved, sanctified, and baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire!!

Jerry W. Campbell
Regional Overseer

NOTE FROM THE REGIONAL OVERSEER: The region is entering District Convention season. Every member is encouraged to make a special effort to attend these important gatherings! My wife and I look forward to being in fellowship with each of you. You don’t want to miss, if at all possible you convention...the Holy Ghost is moving and He has blessings on top of blessings for His sheep!!



Sister Campbell and I would like to express our gratitude and appreciation for the wonderful, generous love offerings received during the Christmas holiday! Your gestures of love helped us to have a GREAT Christmas!!! God bless each and every one of you...we love you more than words can say!!!!

SUNDAY SCHOOL

“The Haven of Rest”

My soul in sad exile was out on life’s sea,
So burdened with sin, and distressed,
Till I heard a sweet voice saying, “Make me your choice!”
And I entered the Haven of Rest.

Chorus:

I’ve anchored my soul in the Haven of Rest,
I’ll sail the wide seas no more;
The tempest may sweep o’er the wild, stormy deep,
In Jesus I’m safe ever more.



Recently, I have been listening to the old song “The Haven of Rest” in my devotions. Every time I hear it waves of peace begin to roll over my soul, gratitude fills my heart, and praises begin to flow.

But for many in the world around us, the sea of life is churning with waves violently crashing against their vessel. They have no peace, and their heart is filled with fear. The chaos of world events and the reality of personal lack have their lives in turmoil.

Now is the perfect time to reach out with the arm of Sunday School, bring them in and teach them that there is Someone who can speak peace to their hearts and bring order to their lives, Someone who can bring hope to a hopeless situation and turn sorrow into gladness.

Let us teach them of the Savior who says, “... my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” John 14:27b

Let us give the invitation:

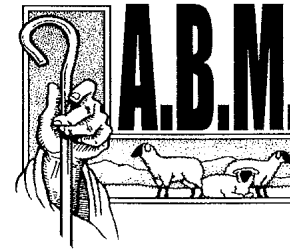
“O come to the Savior He patiently waits
To save by His power divine;
Come, anchor your soul in the Haven of Rest,
And say. “My Beloved is mine.”

Lyrics: Henry Lake Gilmour
Music: George D. Moore

Sister Sarah S. White

FL/GA Regional Sunday School Coordinator

Love in Comparison



During the month of February, thousands of dollars are spent nationwide to convey the simple message ‘I love you’. In keeping with the theme of this celebration of love, my children studied the word ‘love’ as referred to in the Word. Out of that study, came a new understanding about the affection of the heart. Their journey began with Deuteronomy 6:5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (KJV).

They understood this simply to love the Lord with all our being. This scripture eventually led them to the next scripture. If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Luke 14:26.

Refusing to believe what he had just read, my son made a beeline to me. He totally rejected the idea of hating anyone in his family and refused to believe that a God he served would even ask it of him.

I, in turn asked several thought provoking questions. “Do you believe Jesus would countermand the Father’s commandment, to ‘Honour thy father and thy mother’—a commandment with a promise? (Deu. 5:16) Or, Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it? (Eph. 5:25) and how can we hate if we are of God and He is love and commands us to love another?”

His answer was no. We then took his Bible and began researching the answers.

The scripture reference in the Scofield Bible states: “Terms which define the emotions or affections are frequently comparative. Natural affection is to be, as compared with the Christian’s devotedness to Christ, as if it were hate” (p.1361).

Levi was still perplexed.

Finally, we found what we were looking for. A reference that succinctly explained Christ’s comment to this worried young man of mine.

The first chapter of Malachi refers to God’s love for Jacob. He tells the people that he loved Jacob but hated Esau.

Once again I referred my son to the reference which stated that God’s statement was comparative not absolute. In Genesis we read of the blessings promised to Esau and his descendants (Gen. 27:38-40). Yet, when we compare them to the blessings given to Jacob, it is like the difference between love and hate. Therefore, our love for family, no matter how great that love may be, when compared to our love for God should seem like hate. (Scofield, p. 1220)

I had to smile when I saw that understanding had come. My son was grinning from ear to ear. We both began to laugh when I asked, “Does your love for mama look like hate according to your love for God?”

Still smiling, he shook his head. “Nope, I’m not quite there yet.”

When in comparison, how does your love look?

Gail Johnson
FL/GA Regional ABM Coordinator

