



Jessa Stephens
Regional VLB Coordinator

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Peter was excited and eager to see Jesus, looking out at Him on the Sea of Galilee, in wonder and awe, trusting Him, that Jesus could do anything! Then Jesus told Peter to “come.” “...and he said, come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus” (Matt.14:29).

This flesh and blood, human man named Peter was actually walking on water! The Scriptures bear out that the waters were more than likely not calm or serene, and that the wind was “boisterous.” To add to it, it was late into the night. Still, even in all this, Peter came, eyes fixed on Jesus!

Then in Matthew 14:30 we see; “...when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me.”

Many times we are just like Peter. We start off well, but then we take our eyes off Jesus. The boisterous wind could represent many things to each of us. We must take our eyes off the things of this earth and fix them steadfastly on Jesus!

This beautiful little chorus says it all!

**Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face.
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.**

Keep your eyes fixed on Jesus, young people. He will not fail you! He will only grow more and more beautiful, the closer we get to Him.

May the Lord bless each of you in a very special way, in this New Year.

Regional VLB Winter Event Saturday, January 19!!

I am excited to announce that our very first regional VLB event will be some fun in the snow in Wheeling, WV. The Edinger family is opening up their home for fellowship! Chili, hot cocoa, and a devotion, with sledding/ice skating afterwards. We will meet at the Edinger family home in Wheeling at 11 A.M. and go sledding afterwards (free) so long as we have enough snow. For a small charge there is ice skating available. More details have been sent out to pastors via email! This is sure to be a blessed time. Hope to see you there!!

Don't hesitate to contact me with any questions! leviandjessa@gmail.com.

We are excited to inform the region that our **General VLB Coordinator Brother Josh Farthing** and his family will be the Evangelist for camp July 8th - 11th!

Make plans now to be a part of our first ever **GLMR Family Youth Camp!**

—Levi & Jessa Stephens

The Church of God

Great Lakes Mountaineer Region



Issue No. 2

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Excerpts from Annual Address of M. A. Tomlinson to the 57th Annual Assembly in 1962

We become members of the Church by covenant. This covenant is similar in some respects to the covenant taken by man and wife in marriage, but it may be even more binding, since Jeremiah refers to it as a perpetual covenant and the marriage covenant is broken by death. In the marriage covenant, two individuals pledge themselves to total acceptance of each other. The young man does not agree to accept the young lady as his bride without her faults or shortcomings. His love for her moves him to accept her in spite of them, and her love for him causes her to accept him. By accepting each other as they are, they are able to build a happy marriage.

When we became members of the Church, we accepted it and all the things it stood for—all of its teachings; all of its helps; all of its departments; all of its auxiliaries. For the members of the Church to be happy and satisfied, they must stand on that covenant of total acceptance of the Church of God. God's plan is for a perfect Church, but that state has not yet been reached. Every individual member must be willing to accept the Church in its present imperfect state and dedicate every ounce of his strength and ability to working unceasingly and untiringly toward its perfection. I do not know of any individuals who make claims to perfection, yet we must take these imperfect individuals, or imperfect materials, and build the perfect church. This is one of the mysteries of God. We may not understand how it will be done, but we have the assurance that it will be. We know that the Lord gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." These verses show that Jesus provided the means whereby the Church will be perfected, and then, as John looked into the future, he saw the time when the Church had reached that perfect state and wrote: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready."

Yes, the Church will reach the standard set for her in the Scripture. The same Bible that teaches that we can be saved teaches that the Church will be perfected. If we believe the Bible on one point, then we must accept it on all others. How will this be accomplished? Through the efforts of dedicated men and women who are willing and eager to work at the job because of their love and devotion to God.

Dedication is a personal matter for each individual. It is up to every minister, member and friend of the Church of God to dedicate himself to the Lord. I cannot do it for you, and neither can your pastor or anyone else. We can preach the Word of God; we can encourage you; and we can pray for you; but when the final decision is made, it is up to you to determine how willing you are to dedicate yourself to God. When your body is presented to the Lord as a living sacrifice, you will be the one to make the presentation.

I want you to learn to sing:
I am not eager, bold or strong,
All that is past:
I am ready *not to do*
At last! At last!

Some of my greatest workers are those shut out from active service, that they may learn to wield the weapon of all prayer.

Are you suddenly called upon to occupy a difficult and responsible position? Launch out on Me. I am trusting you with "the possession of difficulties," and for "This thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works and in all thou putteth thy hands unto" (Deut. 15:10).

This day I place in your hands this pot of holy oil; make use of it freely, My child. Let every circumstance as it arises, every word that pains you, every interruption that would make you impatient, every revelation of your own weakness, be anointed with it!

Remember, "Interruptions are Divine instructions." The sting will go as you learn to see Me in all things. Therefore "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, for it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life, and through "this thing" ye shall prolong your days in the land (Deut. 32:46, 47).

—By Laura A. Barter Snow

Special Thank You!

Nancy and I very much appreciate the Christmas cards and offerings that the region gave us. Thank you also for the cards and offerings sent to our General Overseer, Brother Pimentel.

James & Nancy Smith

Sunday School Average Attendance
For Month of November, 2018
Niles, MI—10
Castalia, OH—17
Fairmont, WV—9
Page, WV—15
Seth, WV—11

News From Fairmont, WV

We had our Christmas dinner at the church on December 9, and our Christmas program with 22 in attendance. We are glad to have a regular place to meet at the YWCA. Pray for us to find a more "Churchy" location. Below are some pictures of our activities.





MY CHILD I have a message for you today; let Me whisper it in your ear, that it may gild with glory any storm clouds which may arise, and smooth the rough places upon which you may have to tread.

It is short—only five words—but let them sink into your inmost soul; use them as a pillow upon which to rest your weary head: *“This thing is from Me.”*

Have you ever thought of it, that all that concerns you, concerns ME, too? For “he that toucheth you, touches the apple of His eye” (Zach. 2:8).

I would have you learn, when temptations assail you, and the “enemy comes in like a flood,” that *this thing is from Me*; that your weakness need My might, and your safety lies in letting Me fight for you.

You are very “precious in My sight” (Isa. 43:4). Therefore it is My special delight to educate you.

Are you in money difficulties? Is it hard to make both ends meet? *This thing is from Me*, for I am your purse-bearer, and would have you draw from and depend upon Me. My supplies are limitless (Phil. 4:19). I would have you prove my promises. Let it not be said of you, *“In this thing ye did not believe the Lord your God”* (Deut. 1:32).

Are you in difficult circumstances, surrounded by people who do not understand you, who never consult

your taste, who put you in the background? *This thing is from Me*. I am the God of circumstances. “Thou camest not to thy place by accident; it is the very place God meant for thee.” Have you not asked to be made humble? See, then I have placed you in the very school where this lesson is taught; your surroundings and companions are only working out My will.

Are you passing through a night of sorrow? *This thing is from Me*. I am the “Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” I have let earthly comforters fail you, that, by turning to Me, you may obtain everlasting consolation (11 Thess. 2:16, 17).

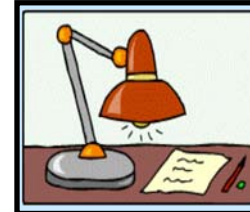
Has some friend disappointed you? One to whom you opened out your heart? *This thing is from Me*. I have allowed this disappointment to come, that you may learn that:

**“The best friend to have is Jesus;
He will hear you when you call,
He will keep you lest you fall,
The best friend to have is Jesus.”**

I want to be your Confidant. Has someone repeated things about you that are untrue? Leave them to Me, and draw closer to Me, thy shelter out of reach of “the strife of tongues,” for “I will bring forth thy righteousness as the light and thy judgment as the noonday” (Psa. 37:6).

Have your plans been upset? Are you bowed down and weary? *This thing is from Me*. You made your plans, then came asking Me to bless them; but I would have you let Me plan for you, and then I take the responsibility; for “This thing is too heavy for thee, thou art not able to perform it thyself alone” (Exo. 18:18). You are only an instrument, not an agent.

Have you longed to do some great work for Me, and instead been laid aside on a bed of pain and weakness? *This thing is from Me*. I could not get your attention in your busy days, and I want to teach you some of My deepest lessons. “They also serve who only stand and wait.”



From the desk of the
Regional Overseer

James T. Smith



New Year's Resolution—Old Year's Reflections

We have come to that point each year when we customarily reflect on the past year's events, and look forward to what could lie ahead of us for the coming year. People typically consider all aspects of their lives, but especially those matters that seem most important to them. These matters may include our physical health, our financial well-being, or the state of our family's and close loved-ones.

For myself, the most important area of concern is in regard to my have serving the Lord. How well have I served the Lord? Did I do all that He called on me to perform? Was I diligent to persevere through difficulties to achieve what He wanted of me? Did I try to do it all myself, or did I lean upon His guidance and anointing to be successful? Looking forward until the new year, what does the Lord have in store for me? What can I be doing now, to be prepared for what He has in store?

That last question above is where I'd like to focus this month's thought that I would like to share with you. None of us know just what the coming year will bring. So, how can we begin to prepare for what lies ahead? When considering this question for myself, the Lord brought me to the words that the Apostle Paul shared with Bishop Timothy as he wrote his last letter from the Roman prison.

In reflecting upon his past service to the Lord, Paul tells us in 2 Timothy 4:7 *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”* This left Paul with a calm assurance regarding his future, as he went on to say in 2 Timothy 4:8 *“Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”*

Regarding what Timothy should do in preparation for his future service that he would render unto the Lord, Paul gave him the following admonition: 2 Timothy 2:15 *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

Paul could not tell Timothy exactly what would be his future in his service to the Lord. But Paul could instruct him in how to prepare for whatever the Lord should send his way.

A whole sermon or series of lesson materials could be prepared in a study of these instructions from Paul. I wish to focus on one point (one word): Study. This word has many interpretations: involving gaining knowledge and understanding, as well as how to properly apply what has been studied and learned.

Our first thought on this matter is our studying the Word of God, the Bible. This is certainly an ongoing process that will never end. To successfully study the Word, we would want the most capable teacher to teach us. That is none other than Christ Himself, and the Comforter He has left to *“lead us and guide us into all truth.”* Time and again, the Lord has taken me back to a passage of scripture that I though I thoroughly understood, only to have Him open a new perspective or understanding.

To study means more than simply to gain an intellectual understanding, it also means putting that which we have learned into meaningful application. Someone who serves or apprentices himself to a Master, is know as an understudy. In this sense, we all are understudies of Christ. We are His disciples, seeking to discipline our lives to match His. This should not be a new resolution for us, but the continuation of the path we are on—to be like Him in all things. May this new year find you seeking new ways to measure to the example Christ has set before us. May continual study of His word and its application to our lives be a center point of what motivates us and drives us forward into the new year's work.

An Inspirational Mini Sermon

From the Book **MUSE WITH ME** by R. O. Covey

Can You Afford the Tuition?

It has been suggested that *“The trouble with each generation is that it hasn’t read the minutes of the last meeting.”*

Human nature has a way of mistrusting the voice of experience. It wants its own way; to learn for itself. Well, that’s the surest way to learn, but it costs a lot, and wastes a lot of time.

The “church in the wilderness” had made so many blunders that Paul wanted to help the Church of God to avoid those same mistakes. He wrote: *“Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come”* (1 Cor. 10:11).

But—if you insist on “first-hand information,” go ahead and enroll in “The School of Experience.” The tuition is high, but then—you’re paying the bill!

Spared By Witnessing

(A Testimony From The Past)

Wind-whipped snow mounted three-to-four foot drifts, and many streets in the area were closed, hampering workers. My husband left early for the Santa Fe shop.

Answering a knock at the door, a uniformed man showed me his badge. It was not unusual for a worker to enter, read the meter, and leave. However, this man did not work for Edison, as his pass had implied. And he didn’t leave. He asked if I was alone.

“No, I’m not alone” I answered. “The Lord Jesus is with me. The meter is over there.” And I began to sing softly. He walked to the table and picked up a butcher knife.

An inward drawing power to witness came on me. I stopped singing and said, “Now you’ve done it. One sin leads to another. Aren’t you supposed to be a man? A man doesn’t do those things. Perhaps you will be able to stand against others, but not Jesus, my Lord and Saviour. How will you answer Him? Will you attempt to reason? Will you attempt to produce your own arguments? Will you run to see what this person or that one says? But listen—no way of escape. Nevertheless, God makes provision in His Word for the failures of man—for you. If you confess your sins, He is faithful and just, and will forgive you, and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. He not only promises to forgive us but also to cleanse us. What a gracious provision!”

The man threw the knife on the table and rushed out of the door, slamming it behind him. An hour later, a neighbor was found beaten and raped.

God promises victory. It belongs to me; it belongs to you, as a child of His. Believe it and you will see that those things which are impossible with men are possible with God. It will thrill you to see that chains of sin-habits are snapped by His mighty power.

—Arlene C. McGriff—From WWM March 9, 1974

Note: Sister Arlene McGriff, now deceased, is the mother of Melvin McGriff, Sr. who constructed our General Headquarters building in 1994 and his wife served as Private Secretary to General Overseer, Robert J. Pruitt for awhile.



Don Bolyard
BTI REGIONAL COORDINATOR

Let’s start the new year by being wise men and women. Matthew 2:1, 2, 10 says, *“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.”*

If we are saved, we have found our King and Saviour, and we should be rejoicing with great joy as we pray and search His Word for revelation of Him and his Church.

Jeremiah 15:16 says, *“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.”*

Proverbs 1:5, 6 says, *“A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings.”*

So let’s be wise men and women this year, and eat up His Word, that we may learn and understand the true interpretation that God is revealing to His Church. It will bring great joy to our hearts!!!!



Jenny Lonz
Regional Sunday School
Coordinator

A New Year’s Commitment

Happy New Year! Our Lord and Savior has been so gracious to give us all a new year to work for Him and His Church; a new year to *“Embrace the Vision”* that He has for Sunday School and a new year to draw ourselves closer and closer to His perfect will.

Are you fully committed in every aspect of your life to the work of the Lord? Are you where He wants you to be? I challenge you this year to commit all your ways to

Him. Step out in faith to allow God to mold you and make you into that perfect image He desires you to be.

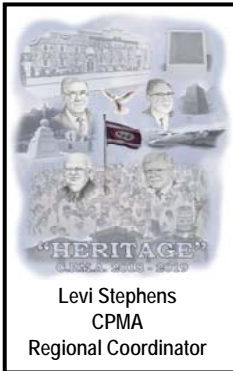
“Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon-day” (Psa. 37:5, 6). *“Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established”* (Prov. 16:3). We want to see our Sunday Schools grow and see more experiences with those that attend. If we are fully committed, the Lord will bring it to pass.

We know that God can do anything. When we allow Jesus to be everything in us, we will be amazed at just what He will do!

Unpleasant Things

When things come into your life that are unpleasant, what do you do? When you find an answer to this question, be sure that it is in direct harmony with the Bible, and this will help you to know you have a Bible experience. You like Bible experiences, don’t you?

— A. J. Tomlinson, WWM May 31, 1924



In Joshua chapters 9 and 10 we are told about a group of Canaanites called Gibeonites. Due to their lineage or heritage as Canaanites they were to be destroyed by Israel under Joshua's judgeship. The response of other Canaanites was to resist and fight the Word of God given as a command and promise to Israel. The Gibeonites approached their circumstance differently, and of course not wanting to be destroyed in God's judgment against them, they decided to take the risk of tricking Israel into making a covenant with them.

Israel soon discovered the trick that was played on them and made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the House of God (Israel). Here is where we can understand something very significant to us today. They gladly agreed to Joshua's terms and thus gave up their old lives, future generations, and lands (their natural born heritage) to be servants in the House of God! They didn't try to compromise with Israel on the requirements but instead readily agreed! We all have had a heritage in this world that instead of giving up, we could have tried to fight for. But look now brothers and sisters what you are a part of, the heritage of The Church of God!!!! In 2 Samuel 21 David was in a position where he needed to right a wrong done to the Gibeonites by King Saul who had broken Israel's covenant with them, which David made right. Although we may never know for sure, I wonder if the Psalmist was thinking of how the Gibeonites testimony of coming to know the LORD is much the same as everyone else's! Psalms 84:10 *"For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of wickedness."*



February CPMA Membership Drive!

Our planned drive to be 100% in **CPMA** memberships (\$10.00) for the Region may possibly need to be **CANCELLED!** Why you ask? Our local churches are already making a lot of progress with our 3 churches in WV at 100%! Congratulations to Seth, Page, and Fairmont, WV churches that have made the goal. CPMA Coordinators please take up the challenge to be 100% in your local church by the end of February. As someone once told me *"Drives are Lives, and Goals are Souls!"*

WHO IS SHE?

- Who is She—that was established in the top of the mountain?
- Who is She—that is exalted above the hills?
- Who is She—that is as fair as the sun at noonday?
- Who is She—that is lifting up the standard?
- Who is She—that He hath given an ensign or banner?
- Who is She—that is being brought before rulers?
- Who is She—that is being persecuted for righteousness sake?
- Who is She—that came up from the wilderness?
- Who is She—that is a chosen generation?
- Who is She—that is a royal priesthood?
- Who is She—that is the Holy Nation?
- Who is She—that is teaching the all things?
- Who is She—that is the only one of her mother?
- Who is She—that is hated for His name's sake?
- Who is She—that is teaching them to observe all things?
- Who is She—that is gathering out the stones?
- Who is She—that fled into the wilderness?
- Who is She—that the old serpent cast out a flood after?
- Who is She—that the earth helped?
- Who is She—that the dragon was wroth with?
- Who is She—that was arrayed in fine linen?
- Who is She—that hath made herself ready?
- Who is She—She is **The Church of God!**

— H. M. Meredith



Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. —Revelation 19:7

Photos From The Past



Shown above are Yvonne and Rhonda Hunt and Brother Robe in a nursing home visitation in Fairmont, WV.

—from January 5, 1974 WWM



Great Lakes Mountaineer Regional Church News

News from Page and Seth, West Virginia



The Churches of Page and Seth, WV met for a joint Sunday School and worship service on Sunday the 16th at the Page Church. Fellowship followed with our annual joint Christmas dinner in the fellowship hall. There were twenty-four present for Sunday School with a few others coming in later. During our Christmas dinner last year two people gave their hearts to the Lord.

News From Castalia, Ohio

In November all the wonderful ladies from our church got together and planned to come to my house (Rose Williams) for a surprise house warming party. We all had plenty of good food and fellowship and they brought presents with them, which included a beautiful Christmas tree and a bunch of ornaments to go on it. We all had fun decorating the tree and it is beautiful!

We had a candle sale to help with our church expenses. Also we had our Christmas banquet on the 23rd of December here at our church. We want to wish everyone a Happy New Year!!!!

GLMR Birthday Calendar

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- January 8—Walter Lofton—Seth, WV
- January 11—Jason Bolyard—Castalia, OH
- January 14—Don Bolyard—Castalia, OH
- January 18—Carol Atha—Page, WV

Please submit your February birthdays no later than January 20th.
Thanks!

ATTENTION PASTORS, COORDINATORS and REPORTERS

After producing a couple of issues of our regional paper we see the need to establish a cut off date for news, auxiliary boosts, birthdays, etc.

Please try to have these to me by the 20th of each month.

Thank you and God bless you for helping make our paper a success.

Walter Lofton, Editor



George and Juanita Atha
Pastor at Page, WV



George and Juanita Atha were married June 27, 1964 in Cleveland, Ohio. They raised eight children along with two of their grandchildren.

They started attending the Church of God of Prophecy in April, 1972. He served as Sunday School Superintendent and teacher of the youth and did maintenance work for the church along with helping out in hotdog sales. While a member there he studied the Body of Christ course.

Following the disruption of the Church in 1993 he left the Church of God of Prophecy and joined The Church of God. He was a member of the Falls View Church which was near their present location. He was set forth as a trial deacon by Regional Overseer, Stephen E. Smith on January 7, 2005. He completed the BTI correspondence course and was ordained a deacon on July 11, 2005 and received his preaching deacon's license.

The Falls View Church defected from The Church of God and joined the North Carolina group who had previously pulled out of the Church and went on their own. He went to Page to begin a new work in 2005 which resulted in a Church with a handful of faithful members.

In May, 2007 two members were gained from Seth, WV followed by seven more from the Seth area up through 2013. Two of these deceased leaving a net gain of seven members living in the Seth area which is about fifty miles from Page.

In 2014 the Church at Seth was set in order with seven members from the Church at Page. The Page Church currently has a total of twelve members.

In February, 2015 we moved from a storefront building into a newly purchased church building about a half mile up the road. This building needed a lot of work. We recently installed a new metal roof and will need to work on replacing the floor joists soon.

Brother Atha has pastored the Church at Page for the last thirteen years.

FATHER KNOWS BEST

A certain father was severely criticized for punishing his small daughter after she had gone to play, even though forgetfully, into a forbidden pasture field with a friend. Just a few days later a deadly rattlesnake was killed in that field, and the father's point was made clear by his beloved daughter, and to his critics as well.

It may not always be clear to us in the beginning, why God's plan for our salvation is so specific in its requirements, but we will be so glad that we met the conditions when, at the end of the age, we behold the doom of the unredeemed!

—Selected

Being right occasionally is not enough. A stopped clock is right twice a day.