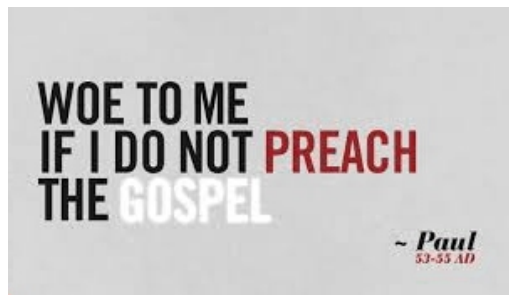


accountable to God for doing.

Lets read what Christ said to His Father at the end of His life."I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do" (John 17:4). After His resurrection, He said to his disciples in John 20: verse 21, "As the Father has sent



Me, **I also send you."**

Before His p h y s i c a l death, what did Christ promise His disciples?

" M o s t

assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the Works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to the Father." (John 14: 12). God has sent us, like those earlier disciples, to become the instrument by which He could proclaim His soon coming kingdom and His truth to the world. We know at Pentecost, God established His church and sent the Holy Spirit to empower His disciples with strength and force needed for preaching His Good News!

Those of us called into God's church at this present time, should consider the following words of our Creator, "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father has given Me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me" (John 5:36). So it is with us, we have been given the ongoing work of Christ, our work and our commitment to it bears witness of our calling, with God's continued hand in leading His church. Christ showed us in John 15, how we could evaluate our relationship with Him. "Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; So shall you be My disciples" (John 15:8).

The foundation of our role in the body of Christ, is for us to be Christ like [putting on the new man]. God's called and converted people are to express the indwelling of His Holy Spirit, which is the power, force, and employment of the fruits of the Holy Spirit, by this we can have the very mind, that is, the very same strength of character and outlook as our Savior, Jesus, the Christ.

We see evidence of what we just read in two verses, one in Philippians 2: 5 and the other in I Peter 4: 1. Phil 2: 5 says, "Let this mind be in you, which

was also in Christ Jesus." In verses I to 4 in this chapter, the Apostle Paul presents the need for unity and to have unselfish humility, in other words, be more concerned with the interest of others. This same thought is expressed in 1 Peter 4:1, " For as much then as Christ has suffered for us in the flesh, Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for He that has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin." Peter is urging us God's called to model our life both in thought and deed after the example of Christ, our Lord.

Perfection of character should be our goal! To do this, Paul challenges each of us, in 2 Cor, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know you not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except you be reprobates? [except you be a failure]" (2 cor 13:5). As we examine and test ourselves, between last Pentecost and the Feast of Trumpets just ahead, lets us consider what we are doing.

In the spirit of the encouraging words of God's angel, in Revelation 3, we find it revealed to us that we have struggled against compromises, even though we are a scattered, small and little group. "I know your works: behold, I have set before you an open Door, and no man can shut it: for you have a little strength, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name" (Rev 3:8). The assembly of Philadelphians, received only words of praise from the Lord.

WHY?, because the saints had been faithful and zealous for good works. In their own human weakness they had trusted in the Lord's word, not Jewish fables as we are told in Titus 1: 14. As a result they had been able to perceive with the truth by living it out in their lives. They had not denied Christ's name, therefore He would set before them an open door of opportunity, that no one would be able to shut.

Further examination requires us to think of another question that is established in Amos 3:3,



"Can two walk together unless they are agreed?" This has meant some really difficult choices, each one of us have had to make as we have encountered these tests and questions both on our own part and from God.

We know from scripture that it is God who can open doors for us. We have seen disciples who were the talk of being God's called out ones, suddenly being scattered in confusion. However, the book of Acts tells us, as the apostles lives moved forward to the day of Pentecost and the empowering of God's Holy Spirit, ascended upon them, God gave them a work [a responsibility] to do. This same memorial day of Pentecost, empowered the Church with God's Holy Spirit to finish the work God had given them, now us, to do.

Recognizing and meditating on that responsibility we can not become "Indifferent." Webster defines this word "indifferent" in several different ways: 1. having a neutral or unbiased disposition. 2. not interested in or concerned about something. 3. apathetic; not easily interested or moved. All mentioned, are characterized by lack of active character. Some of the synonyms of the word "indifferent" are: unconcerned, aloof, detached, disinterested, unimportance, insignificance, coolness, carelessness, apathy, insensibility, and non-chalant. As the Church of God, in Truth, works at trying to help God's called, to understand His truth and His calendar, we are often amazed at some peoples colossal dis-interest in the truth, truth of God's weekly Sabbaths and His annual Holy Day Sabbaths. They probably will never know the truth at this time, they are locked into being called the Laodicean remnant church, that we read of in Rev 12: 17.

The Thessalonian church had this indifference toward truth. The Apostle Paul wrote about them. "With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that Perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause god shall send them a strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thess 2: 10-12).

M. Scott Peck wrote in his book "The Road Less Traveled" Pg. 50, "Truth is avoided when it is painful. We can revise our maps only when we have the discipline to overcome that pain. To have such Discipline, we must be totally dedicated to truth. That is to say, we must always hold truth to be more

important, more Vital to our self-interest, than our comfort. Conversely, we must Always consider our personal discomfort relatively Unimportant and, indeed, even welcome it in the service of the Search for **truth.**"

An indifferent person that's been called to salvation, will not accept any truth that will be painful to him, even if he knows what the inspired Proverbs 23:, tell him he is to do: "Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, And understanding" (Prov 23:23). You and I know brethren that are indifferent toward any number of spiritual things. Some are indifferent toward keeping God's annual Holy Days. Some are indifferent about studying new truth. Many want to continue postponing God's annual Holy Days, while others are just bored with church and with the whole Sabbath obligation!

The truth is a treasure to be gained at any cost and never to be relinquished, whatever the temptation! Let me refresh your mind with a story I have quoted before: "There was a ship discovered many years ago among the icebergs of the arctic ocean, with the captains body frozen while making His last entry in the log book. The crew was found, some in their hammocks and some in the cabin, all frozen, the last date in the log book showed that for thirteen years that vessel had been moving among the icebergs: "A drifting burial chamber, Manned by a frozen crew."

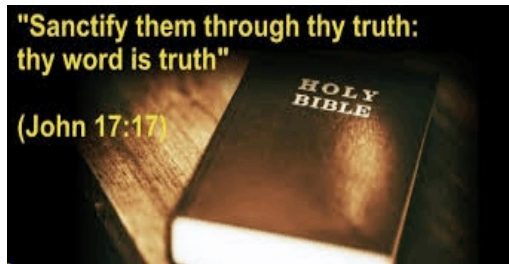
That's a thoughtful, sobering story. Taking it to heart lets not be "Indifferent," which could cause any one of us to drift frozen in time, as Laodiceans seem to be. Jesus, the Christ gave His called, two choices in Rev 3:15, "I could wish you were cold or hot." The Lord wants us to be one way or the other. In other words, He wants us to be zealous and active or dead, but not somewhere in between.

It is the lukewarm, and the indifferent, who cannot be reached. They think they are fine the way



they are. The Lord told the Laodiceans to repent in Rev. 3:1, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent!" Repent was the first words out of Christ's mouth when He began to preach in Matt 4:17.

We are living in a time of the greatest gospel revelation in history. There are more preachers, more books, more gospel media saturation than ever, yet there is more distress, affliction and troubled minds among God's people. It appears that God has begun to wrap up life as we know it. He is accomplishing this by allowing the world to have more problems, along



with a great magnitude of personal problem and a wave of evil, that we have **never experienced before.**

Consequently, the called of God are being forced to choose sides. The Lord is not letting us be "fence sitters" any more. Lukewarmness is no longer being tolerated, and, no one is exempt from God's purging. We're all in the "fire" together. But, rather than get burned up from indifference, ignorance, apathy and fear, we should find out how to use these difficult times to our advantage, to grow in **Godly truth** and character! Some are indifferent in their concern for one another. Christ requires a new and higher standard of love, according to what we find said in John 13: 34 - 35, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, [students] if you have love one to another." If we have genuine love for one another, other things will take care of themselves.

The Apostle Paul expressed this in Rom 13: 8, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." Paul is speaking of earnest outgoing concern, for he that loves another has fulfilled the law." As God's faithful called disciples let us truly show love and care for one another. Let us take seriously the Lord's "new commandment" to truly learn to love one another, so that we can be a winning team, not the indifferent, lukewarm Laodicean team.

In the last book in the Old Testament, Malachi, the book that means my messenger, we are given some

thoughtful information. "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: And the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name. And they shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spares his own son that serves him. Then shall you return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serves God and him that serves Him not" (Malachi 3: 16-18).

The Mount School in York, England, is a boarding school for teenage girls, it was started by the Quakers in 1831. The school motto is "Faithfulness in Little Things." That's a great motto for all of us. Christ stressed this principle in His parable of the talents. Some servants were given more coins than others, but all were expected to invest them wisely. Those who did so proved they could be trusted with more.

It reminds us of the old adage that says: "If you need help getting something done, find the busiest person you know and get them involved. The point is that busy people tend to be productive, efficient, organized, and motivated. It is possible to be too busy, of course, but when God is looking for workers. He doesn't select those sitting around doing nothing, He wants people who are working where they are, blooming where they're planted, faithful in whatever talent He has already given them, and are dependable in little things. If we will be faithful where we are, the Lord will entrust us with more. Luke 16: 10 says. "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much" Little things are little things; but faithfulness in little things is a great thing.

If we were to become lukewarm and "Indifferent" in the very things God designed for us, we would lose our identity as His called people. Being lukewarm and indifferent is easy to recognize, because change in action stands out like a sore thumb! People will know we are God's servants By what? By our flowery words? NO, I don't think so. By our good deeds? Lots of people do good things. NO, they will know we are God's servants by seeing Christ's genuine truth, loyalty, love and compassion in and through our actions.

President Abraham Lincoln said on April 30, 1863; "We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. We have been preserved, these many years, in peace and prosperity. We have grown

in numbers, wealth and power, as no Other nation has ever grown. **But we have forgotten God.** We Have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us; and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these Blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own, intoxicated with unbroken success. We have become Too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to God that made us! It behooves us, then to humble ourselves before the offended Power, to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness."

Why did I quote Abraham Lincoln? Because there is a tendency to forget God and friends when we have plenty. We are reminded of that in the book of Deuteronomy: "And it shall be, when the Lord your God shall have brought you into the land which He swear unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you great and goodly cities, which you built not, and houses full of all good things, which you filled not, and wells dug, which you dug not, vineyards and olive trees, which you planted not; when you shalt have eaten and be full; Then beware lest you forget the Lord, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage" (Deu 6:10 -12).

Brethren, don't let this Laodicean attitude of indifference influence your life and cause you to sin against your creator God by not having the proper concern and love one for another. Paul was inspired to tell us in 1 Cor 12: 25 - 27, 'There should be no schism [division] in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

The day of Pentecost was a reminder of God empowering us with His Holy Spirit to finish the responsibilities He has given us to do. Zechariah 4: 6 tell us, it is "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the Lord of hosts." Paul understanding this verse, he wrote a letter to Timothy, while he was a prisoner in Rome. Paul had heard many who had been called were departing the faith. False ministers, teaching false doctrines had gained a foothold with the church, after seeing the great times of miracles, and the remarkable commitment that grew out of "first love" had all but disappeared.

Paul in 2 Tim 4, felt it necessary to admonish and to encourage Timothy, by writing him. "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables, [un-truths, and lies] But watch you in all things, endure afflictions, do the Work of an evangelist, make full proof of your ministry" (2Tim 4: 2 - 5).

God is examining and testing us at this end age, as well as blessing our efforts to both hold on to the truth and to begin to once again bear fruit in the service to God! The door is open for us to be even more productive, and for the Church of God, in Truth, to reach out with the truth of God's word. Among our various efforts: are weekly letters, news updates, a bi-monthly magazine, sermon tapes, prerecorded sermons on the Internet, answering questions.

God is allowing His work to move forward, each Sabbath, and annual Holy Days through meeting together on the phone conferencing line and live Internet streaming. These are astounding and remarkable facilities that were not available to the people of God just a few years ago. Now, we literally are able to assemble together in spite, not letting our widely separated locations stop us.

In addition to reminding us of our role in the on going challenging service to God, let each of us in no way diminish the importance God places on our individual shoulders. We need to fervently stir up the gift, talents of God's Spirit in us, to do individually what we have been gifted with.

David gives us a example to follow in Psalm 62:8: "Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him." God is a refuge for us, our focus must remain on those things yet to be accomplished, which God has given to us to complete. Our opportunities are boundless if we stay close to God, always seeking to obey Him and to do those things that are pleasing in His sight! With all attentiveness, let us all heed Jude's striking words, "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most Holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." 📖

James Russell

