

Glorify You Me

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This was the final public prayer that Jesus was to give. His life had been one of success, difficulty, stress, and strain. He had had those that loved Him greatly and those that hated Him completely and would finally bring about His death. As it states in John 13, as He was preparing for the foot washing, He loved His disciples to the fullest extent with every fiber of His being, and He had the sorrow of having one of them betray Him.

Jesus knew that the end of His life was very near, and in His final prayer He stated something that should help us to have direction and purpose in our lives and should encourage us to finish our course to the very best of our ability:

John 17:1-2 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him."

In verse 1, Jesus is indeed considering what He is about to go through, the final act of finishing the work that the Father had given Him to do. He asks His Father to glorify Him as the Savior of all mankind, the Messiah; to strengthen Him in this most difficult of all His trials; and that He might glorify the Father in showing the tremendous love the Father has for all men everywhere by providing the perfect sacrifice for the world that men might be forgiven of the penalties that all have incurred.

Jesus states that the Father had made Him sovereign over all mankind, to give eternal life to all, which the Father had given to Him.

John 17:3 "And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent."

Basically, what knowing God means is to know the mind of God and to imitate the mind of God. This is what it is about for each one of us here.

John 17:4 "I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do."

This is going to be the key in this sermon, because each of us has a work to do.

John 17:5 "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

Verse 5 could be translated, "Glorify Me alongside of You." The term *glorify* means "to lift up, to praise." It is a wonderful concept.

John 17:6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word."

In other words, "I made Your name known to those that You gave Me," meaning, "I made Your name evident; I made it real to those that You gave Me." The word *manifest* includes the attributes or the character of God. Jesus had made known His character, His law, His will, His plan of mercy—in short, the wonderful Being that God the Father is.

John 17:7-10 "Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me. I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them."

Verse 10 is another key verse.

When we were first called and heard the message by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, our hope was to escape the disastrous end of the age and to go to a place of safety while the rest of the world suffered terribly. We were looking forward to being safe.

Indeed, we knew we had to overcome to achieve this goal, but did we ever stop to think that our goal was not just the Place of Safety or just to be changed into a spirit being? Our goal truly is to glorify God—each one of us: you personally, me personally, young and old!

Just as it states in verse 10, Jesus states that He is glorified in us. How is this accomplished? It is done the same way that He glorified the Father: by completing and finishing the work that was given to Him to accomplish. We, in turn, brethren, glorify God the Father and Jesus Christ by finishing the work given to us to accomplish to the best of our ability! This is the key.

The One who glorified the Father is the One to whom we should look for our understanding of what our role should be in bringing glory to our Father and our Elder Brother, because He did it before us.

Romans 10:1-4 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The *end* simply means that He is the goal, the object, and the aim for everyone who is called.

I Peter 2:21-23 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;

The word *example* is #5261 in *Strong's*. This is the only place in the Bible that it is used, and it means "a sketch; an outline; or a written copy for those called to follow." We should place our feet exactly where Jesus Christ placed His feet.

I will go back to the army experience here. When you go through a minefield through which someone has established a path—indeed, this world is a minefield—you place your feet exactly where he placed his feet, lest you lose a leg or a head or an arm. This is the intent here. To put it another way, we are to imitate Jesus Christ completely, or as has been discussed here at the Feast, we are to follow His pattern exactly.

It was difficult to live under the Roman government that existed at the time of Jesus Christ. To the apostles, who belonged to God, the thought of their Leader leaving them was devastating. How could they function and do what God expected of them without Him?

For us today, we are living in the era that is being referred to as the "post-Christian era": "God is dead," meaning that God's influence and time is over or past. One educator stated publicly that she would be glad when those who were in World War II died along with their morals and religion so that people today could get on with living their lives.

Isaiah 30:9 That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of the LORD.

This is the society in which we live.

Isaiah 30:10 Who say to the seers, "Do not see," and to the prophets, "Do not prophesy to us right things; speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits."

"It is okay; you can sin. You can do whatever you want."

Isaiah 30:11 "Get out of the way, turn aside from the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us."

That is exactly the age in which you and I live, brethren. It is difficult for us who live and work in this world with its environment that truly considers God as being unimportant, insignificant, inconsequential, trivial, and, indeed, without any power or authority. God is dead. How do we survive in this kind of an environment? The answer is that we will do it the same way that the apostles did.

John 13:33-14:2 "Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times. Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My

Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

The disciples were deeply concerned as they considered the leaving of Jesus Christ. He said, "You have been called for a specific office and to serve in what I am preparing. I am not going to leave you, but will come again, that you will be with Me in serving in that administrative center." As He comforted them at that time, so He comforts us today. He will come again, and He has offices for us. Be encouraged and do not let down.

John 14:3-4 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know."

Of course, they did not know, but Jesus Christ expected them to know.

John 14:5-6 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

It is only by following the teachings and the example of Jesus Christ that we can be in the Kingdom. He is the Teacher, Mediator, Forerunner, Pathfinder that we are to follow. Put simply, He is the only way!

John 14:7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

He tells the disciples that if they had really observed and paid attention, then they would have also known the Father. The word *known* is *ginosko*, meaning "progressive knowledge or knowledge gained over a period of time by observation." This verse could read, "If you had known Me—had really come to know Me by observing how I live and do things—then you would have seen and known the Father in the same manner."

Of course, brethren, it is the same for us. Once we understand that we see the Father as we study Jesus Christ in His obedience—how He lived, served, and gave Himself to others—we see the exact mind and nature of God the Father in action. As we see Jesus Christ imitating His Father, we see how He glorifies His Father.

John 14:8-9 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

They had lived with Him for three years and had seen Him cast out demons, heal the sick, raise the dead; seen His faithfulness in prayer, in obedience in everything; and knew He came from God and yet could not put it together. Jesus speaks plainly by saying, "If you have seen all that I have done, then you have seen exactly what the Father would have done had He been with you." The term *see* simply means to wake up and perceive what you are looking at—do not just go through life blindly.

John 14:10-11 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. "

The relationship is of the most intimate nature. Jesus Christ and His Father are of one mind in all that They think and do. Though They are separate entities, by the sharing of the same Spirit, They are one. This, brethren, is the goal that has been set for us to attain: to be one in mind and heart with God the Father and Jesus Christ.

John 14:12 "Most 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 My Father."

We can add to that, "He who imitates me." God expects us to imitate Him; He truly does.

Looking at the example of Jesus Christ, we see Him having achieved something for which all of us should be striving. We are not to just go through the motions or to coast; brethren, we are to go on to perfection. As we heard in a sermonette, we must not be slothful or lazy.

Hebrews 5:9-14 And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

These people had gone to sleep, and they needed to be taught the basics again. We do not want this to apply to us; we need to be discerning in mercy, truth, and justice. I am going to read out of the New English Bible:

Hebrews 6:1-3 Let us then stop discussing the rudiments of Christianity. We ought not to be laying over again the foundations of faith in God and of repentance from the deadness of our former ways, by instruction about cleaning rites and the laying on of hands, about the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. Instead, let us advance toward maturity; and so we shall if God permits.

This does not mean doing away with the foundation. Rather, as a builder, after the foundation is laid, one has to build the structure to complete the purpose of the building. We are to reach the fullness and the stature of Jesus Christ. Now from the Jerusalem Bible:

Hebrews 6:1-3 Let us leave behind us, then, all the elementary teaching about Christ and concentrate on its completion, without going over the fundamental doctrines again:

the turning away from dead actions and toward faith in God; the teaching about baptisms and the laying on of hands; the teaching about the resurrections of the dead and eternal judgment. This, God willing, is what we propose to do.

Jesus Christ, who gave mankind the law, kept the law perfectly, understanding what the law was to achieve. What is being discussed here, regarding going on to perfection, is the application of the commandments in all of their intent and splendor in our everyday lives, in whatever situation we find ourselves.

After I came back from overseas and before I came into the church, there was a little book that said, "What would Jesus do?" I read the book, but it was really kind of silly. There was a congregation of six hundred people, whose minister said, "How many would like to do what Christ would do for a year?" Six people raised their hands. (You have to wonder what all the rest of the congregation was going to do all this time.) The man who sold alcohol was going to put that in the back and soft drinks in the front; the newspaperman was going to put good news on the front page.

However, the question is that we have to be doing what Jesus Christ wants us to be doing. He wants us to apply the commandments, in all of their intent and splendor, in our everyday lives and in whatever situation in which we find ourselves. In a sense you would say, "What would Jesus Christ do in this situation?" Jesus Christ had the mind of His Father guiding Him in every situation that He faced. Brethren, this is what our Father wants for each one of us when He says, as the New English Bible states, "Let us advance toward maturity!"

More and more, we see the separation of those who have been given the truth from the world around us. Do we realize how very special we are to God, how planned each one of us is, and how much God loves us? I think that many times we do not. As time goes on, we tend to let down and think that we are not too important, but, brethren, we are very important.

Ephesians 1:3-5 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

The apostle Paul spoke this with great emotion at the absolute awesomeness of the gifts that God has given us. We have been redeemed, forgiven; we have gained an overwhelming inheritance with Jesus Christ, as being members of the very God Family. Thus, God is worthy of great praise for all of the plans that He has for us. I do not think that too many of us think much of ourselves, but think about the fact that we were individually chosen before the world was formed. God knew what He was going to do.

The term *hath chosen*—it is staggering to consider this—means "to choose; to personally select from all." You have been personally selected from all, and that should encourage you greatly. The fact that we were called before the foundation of the world, before anything in the creation process was started, shows not only that we were not an afterthought but that we were a very important part of what God is doing. I think that it is extremely important that we do not forget this, and that we should realize that we are special. If we do not think that we are special, we tend to lie down and not do a

good job. We have been chosen in great love for each of us. God predetermined that we not only be called at this time but that we be adopted as first fruits by Jesus Christ Himself—and He was well pleased to do it.

Ephesians 1:6-9 To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself.

We have all wisdom available to us. God has abounded toward us—not toward the world, but toward us—with His plan of salvation, the wisdom and understanding of how to worship Him, wisdom concerning managing our homes and loving our families, in working, in all we need to have a successful life. That has been given to us, and the world does not have it, as you can see by the condition in which it is.

Because we are His, Jesus Christ made known to us the mystery of His will. This is something to which the world is blinded. The word *mystery* means "something that has been concealed." This mystery has been concealed down through the ages except for those whom God has called, and you understand the mystery of what is taking place.

Ephesians 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

The phrase *the dispensation of times* literally means "a household plan" or a plan for the smooth running of a household or some other organization. It indicates stewardship or administration, an arrangement of things, or a plan. As it is applied here, it means that this plan was formed in order (or unto this end) that in the fullness of arranged times, or in the completing of times, Jesus Christ would gather all things in one.

I Corinthians 15:24-28 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death. For "He has put all things under His feet." But when He says "all things are put under Him," it is evident that He who put all things under Him is excepted. Now when all things are made subject to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subject to Him who put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.

This is toward what this plan is heading.

Ephesians 1:11 In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will.

In the One who is going to accomplish all this, Jesus Christ, we have obtained an inheritance in His faithfulness to each one of us and in His plan to save all of mankind.

Romans 8:16-18 The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Ephesians 1:12 That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

We glorify Jesus Christ by trusting in Him, that we should be the occasion, or the means, of celebrating His glory; or that praise should be ascribed to Him because of our salvation and because the way that we live broadcasts the teaching of Jesus Christ. We have to come into a different phase now. By our obedience and faithfulness to God and His laws and in going on toward perfection, we glorify God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Probably each one of us would like to perform some monumental thing to bring glory to God. I know one minister who went to the hospital to anoint a church member and was asked by the doctor if he would anoint several more. So he anointed a few more. The minister commented that he would like to be able to anoint everyone in the hospital and have them all totally healed.

I got thinking about that, and I said to him that then there would be no patients and everyone would be out of a job. He would end up being hated. That is how my mind works, anyway; I apologize.

Again, our example is to follow Jesus Christ.

John 1:4-9 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

This is really an important scripture, and it is going to be important as it applies to you. What is being stated here is that until Jesus Christ appeared, the world had been living in darkness with no hope of coming to understand the way of living that would produce happiness, peace, and godly character, leading to eternal life.

As *Barnes' Notes* puts it, "Light is that by which we see objects distinctly. The light of the sun enables us to discern the form, the distance, the magnitude, and the relation of objects, and prevents the perplexities and dangers which results from a state of darkness." Light is in all languages and is, therefore, used to mean *knowledge*—whatever enables us to discern our duty and saves us from the evils of ignorance and error. Whatsoever does make evident is light.

John 12:35-36 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

Jesus came into the world as the Logos, or Word of God, as the Teacher or Instructor of mankind. Since we are to follow in His footsteps, it is interesting to note what our role is to be, the title we are to be given, and how we are to fulfill our position. In II Corinthians 3:2-3, Paul tells us that we are the epistle of Christ, the letter of God. People can read that letter by the way that we conduct our lives and by the example that we set.

Matthew 5:13-16 "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

You begin to see your title; you begin to see what your job description is. We have a very important office: we are to be "the light," just as Jesus was the light. The word *you* here is emphatic, and means that **you**, as a member of God's church, are the light.

Concerning salt, it says that it is indeed a flavor enhancer; but in this case, the reference is to the preserving qualities it possesses. When rubbed on meat, it slows down putrefaction. The *Expositors' Commentary* makes the following comment:

The point is that Jesus' disciples are to act as a preservative in the world by conforming to "kingdom" norms (or as Jesus Christ lived). If they are called to be a moral disinfectant where moral standards are low, constantly changing or non-existent....They can discharge this function only if they themselves retain their virtue.

From *The Berean*:

Our Savior Jesus Christ tells us in Matthew 5:13-14 that we are the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world"—we who are also the weak and the foolish of this world (I Corinthians 1:27). Mentally, when we hear such praises from God, some of us look both ways and behind, and say, "He must be talking about someone else." We struggle to overcome, and we feel we are always "a day late and a dollar short." Though we wish with all our heart that we were more like God, His image in us seems all the more elusive.

But Jesus did not lie in saying these things. As salt gives food a rich, pleasant taste, we are those who are to give a good flavor to the lives of those we encounter. There should be something in our conduct that shows the fruit of the life to which God has called us.

He goes on to say that, if we are not "radiating with flavor"—reflecting the teachings of God in our lives—what use are we, especially to God Himself? Salt without flavor has no use, and it can even be detrimental to the things it comes in contact with. Maybe its best use is to be put on icy roads, to be ground under the tires of vehicles and then washed away.

In Christ's other metaphor, light illuminates what was once dark; it reveals things that were hidden. Though we may be poor, considered old and over the hill, uneducated and

obscure, when we live our lives as He instructs, we are a brilliant beacon to this tired and confused world. Our lives can shine a spotlight on the solutions to many common problems experienced by our friends and neighbors.

Jesus points out that we should not hide our light under a basket (verse 15), but live it in the open for all to see. We can set a proper example of the abundant way to live. We should give everyone we meet the light of our loving concern, the light of our honesty, the light of joy and peace, the light of godly family relations, the light of good work habits, and all the other rays of light contained in God's way.

In doing this, we will initially bring attention upon ourselves, and this may at times become uncomfortable. Righteousness has an uncanny tendency to bring out the worst in carnal human beings. Ultimately, however, we will glorify God the Father and His Son by it, promoting the cause of the Kingdom of God.

I Peter 2:11-12 (N.E.B) I beg you as an alien in a foreign land, to abstain from the lusts of the flesh which are a war with the soul. Let your behavior be as such as even pagans can recognize as good, and then when they malign you as criminals now, they will come to see for themselves that you live good lives, and will give glory to God on the day when He comes to hold the assize (or inquest).

Are we to parade our religion for others to see with a big show?

James Beaubelle, a man that I have come to really like and appreciate, works as a supervisor in a large factory. One of the men that he supervised had a foul mouth and just cursed all the time. James told him that he (James) would appreciate it if he could stop that since James was on a personal self-improvement program. There was silence for a moment, and the man said, "You know, I think I should be on a personal self-improvement program, as well." James handled that really well, and he set an example of doing what is right.

I would like to share this story with you: We were at a restaurant before Christmas, standing with another couple. As you know, I tend to tell jokes occasionally, and I was sharing a few jokes with this couple. When it came time to sit down, they asked us if we would like to join them for dinner. The lady said, "Isn't the Christmas season wonderful?" I replied, "No, it is not." She asked, "What do you mean?" I responded, "If you celebrate birthdays, who do you give the birthday present to? At Christmas, does Jesus Christ get a present? No, He does not. While they are marketing, they do not give a thought to what Jesus has done. Even the pet store says, 'Buy a Christmas gift for your dog.' What does that do for religion and for the sacrifice that He gave for mankind?" And the lady said, "That is right." I stopped there and did not go any further. When we left, we were good friends.

We are to live Ephesians 5:

Ephesians 5:21-33 Submitting to one another in the fear of God. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that

she should be holy and without blemish. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

We are to submit ourselves one to another. In doing so, we set an example of what a marriage should be and shed a perfect light.

Ephesians 6:1-3 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth."

The children, those still living at home, are directly addressed in church. Paul says something that in today's society is thought to be pretty silly: Paul tells the children in the congregation to obey their parents. In today's young person's world, obedience to parents is not even considered. Teen television and teen music present a world where there are no penalties and where living as does Lindsey Lohan and Brittany Spears is cool, and that is really where it is at.

What is marketed is popularity, money, sexuality, and the apparent good times. What is not mentioned is the constant changing of partners, the heartache, the addictions, possible disease, and, eventually, the loneliness. Fitting in with the peer group is what is important!

It has been a long time since I have seen the peer group in action, but I did when I was in Denver visiting my sister-in-law. She had just come home from the hospital, and they were having a little party for her. I came in after attending church and put on some jeans and a shirt in which to relax and donned my Adidas tennis shoes, which I did not lace because I wanted to be comfortable. When I walked into the room, this eighteen-year-old girl told me that I was "gangster." I inquired, "Gangster?" She said, "You are bad, boss, cool.." I can understand cool. I guess it is cool to wear tennis shoes that are not tied. I thought it was my Adidas, size 14.

Peer groups do this. They have standards that are not in the home. Indeed, parents may not be into what one's friends at school may be touting, but parents have learned many of life's lessons. Now you become 18, 16, 15, and you become cool (or gangster, whatever that is). Your parents have taken care of you when you were sick, have worked to provide for you, have given you a home, food, and clothes. Perhaps they have served in the military and seen friends killed, been through other trials, made mistakes, and truly realize the seriousness of life. It is important that you listen to them.

Parents have a great deal to offer and, indeed, should be listened to in order to save one from the many booby traps that this world offers. It truly does. I think of the girls in the church that have gotten pregnant against plain advice, because parents "did not know what they were talking about." Believe me, there are very many traps.

Sadly, in today's world, many parents pursue "the good life." They want to be "gangster," and they ignore their families. Paul instructs the fathers to bring their children up in the training of God, doing their best to take the time needed and do it with wisdom and seriousness but, if at all possible,

without provoking them. With a family such as this together, it is indeed a light to a world that seems to have lost its way when it comes to family.

I can recall that, when our children were small, we could take them to a restaurant without them playing with their silverware or glasses or climbing up on the booth and looking over at the next table. People would come by and say, "How did you do that?" It was as if it were the biggest mystery in the world. I remember something that Ted Armstrong said: "You can train a dumb dog, but you cannot train your children?" I never forgot that.

My son wrote me a nice letter in which he said, "Thanks for raising me like you did. How come you are so easy on Spencer [my grandson]?"

Ephesians 6:5 Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ.

What he is saying here is totally foreign in today's workplace. Paul instructs us to work for our employer as if we were working for Jesus Christ directly—not just going through the motions but doing the best job possible. Those who have authority over others are to be fair, honest, and just in their dealings. We are indeed called to be special, and I hope that you realize this.

Philippians 2:12-16 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.

That is what your job is, brethren. Paul tells us to let the mind of Jesus Christ to be in us, and then we are told to obey because it is God who works in us. Because God is actively working in our lives, we are to not give any occasion to others that we might be accused of doing what was wrong. We are to be harmless, meaning "unmixed." We are to be sincere, simple in the sense of being without guile, as the children of God. In short, what is being said is that, amidst all this moral blackness, we are to shine, to stand out as bright stars at midnight. That is your calling.

Is it easy to be a light? It was not easy to be *the* Light. The Son of God came to the earth to be a sacrifice for the world, and His own people hated Him as does the world. We see that even though the truth was continually presented, the religious establishment wanted Him dead. We see them plotting in Luke 20 to get Him to speak against Caesar by not paying taxes, that they might turn Him over to the authorities to kill Him. We again see them in John 8, trying to find fault with Him, when they brought the woman caught in adultery to Him, that they might accuse Him. Matthew 26, we see them plotting to kill Him.

John 15:18-19 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

If we are going to follow Jesus Christ, it is not going to be all roses. They will not like it that you keep the Sabbath and the Holy Days.

In short, Christ says, "You have seen the example of My life and how even though I had the best of purposes—I continually told the truth; I healed, cast out demons, and raised the dead—despite all of this, the world governed by Satan fully hated Me. If you were given to the way this world lives, it would love you; but because you are not, because I have chosen you out of the world to follow in My footsteps, the bottom line is that you will be hated, as well. You are not going to be liked or appreciated, and you are going to be laughed at."

We must work to overcome! However, there is much more to this calling than setting a good example, because God wants us to learn something from it. Each of us must overcome human nature and resist the pulls of Satan's world and his demons. All this must be done to imitate and to glorify Jesus Christ. As He was tried, we are to be tried, as well.

Hebrews 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In verse 16, we see that we are to come before the throne of grace boldly, because we know that Jesus Christ will understand our trial, pain, difficulty, wrong pulls, and the weaknesses that we face.

Verse 15 is the verse on which I would like to focus, because it applies to us. As we read in *Barnes' Notes*,

Our High Priest is not cold and unfeeling. That is, we have one who is abundantly qualified to sympathize with us in our afflictions, and to whom, therefore, we may look for aid and support in trials. Had we a high priest who was cold and heartless; who simply performed the external duties of his office without entering into the sympathies of those who came to seek for pardon; who had never experienced any trials, and who felt himself above those who sought his aid, we should necessarily feel disheartened in attempting to overcome our sins, and to live to God. His coldness would repel us; his stateliness would awe us; his distance and reserve would keep us away, and perhaps render us indifferent to all desire to be saved. But tenderness and sympathy attract those who are feeble, and kindness does more than anything else to encourage those who have to encounter difficulties and dangers. Such tenderness and sympathy has our Great High Priest...He was subjected to all the kinds of trial to which we can be, and he is, therefore, able to sympathize with us and to aid us. He was tempted—in the literal sense; he was persecuted; he was poor; he was despised; he suffered physical pain; he endured the sorrows of a lingering and most cruel death.

Over the years, some have come to me and said, "I just do not feel I am going to make it. I could never be one of the 144,000." When I was younger in the church, I thought by the time I turned 50, I would have it all down. Then it was 60, then 65, then 70, then 75. I have come to the understanding that all of us will be fighting us all of our lives, especially as the world around us crumbles faster in every way. We are seeing the result of sin on the end-time world. I am sure that every one of us has

been pulled into this world's thinking, in the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life, allowing the idols of this life to entrap us; and we have hated ourselves for it and truly wondered if we could possibly make it.

I had a big, husky truck driver named Paul come to me some years ago. He said, "Mr. Reid, can I speak to you?" I said, "Sure, come on in." He broke down and sobbed. I said, "Paul, what is the matter?" He said, "I cannot stop smoking." Now, for those who sit in judgment and would say, "Just do not buy cigarettes. What is your problem?" That is not the answer. It is the same thing when people overspend on their credit cards, or if a person is into gossiping and wants to quit. It is tough! We have to understand these things.

Once I called John Ritenbaugh and told him that I was fighting this problem, and I went on and on for about twenty minutes. I expected some great, wonderful answer from him. John said, "Well, I am glad that you do not have my sins." The point that I am making is that he fights, too. We all fight; nobody gets away free on this one.

We must remember that Jesus Christ had the Holy Spirit from birth, but we had however many years to live this world's way of life before we were called, thus we have much of living Satan's disobedience in us against which to fight. This has to make us understand what those that we have to rule have gone through. This nature is in all of us, and we all have the fight.

Romans 7:18-25 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

I am going to read Romans 7:25 from the New International Bible:

Romans 7:25 Miserable creature that I am, who is there to rescue me out of this body doomed to death? God alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Thanks be to God! In a word then, I myself, subject to God's law as a rational being, am yet, in my unspiritual nature, a slave to the law of sin.

Did Paul relax and kick back and say, "God is going to take care of it for me?" No, Paul did not do that, as we will read. I will read this from the New English Bible:

I Corinthians 9:24-27 You know (do you not?), that at the sports, all the runners run the race, though only one wins the prize. Like them, I run to win! But every athlete goes into strict training. They do it to win a fading wreath; we, a wreath that never fades. For my part, I run with a clear goal before me; I am like a boxer, who does not beat the air; I bruise my own body and make it know its master, for fear that after preaching to others, I should find myself rejected.

That is tough, but we have to do it. Paul never coasted!

Brethren, why are we to glorify in Jesus Christ? Why is Jesus Christ the goal toward which we are to strive? Why is He the example, sketch, outline, copy, or steps that we are to follow exactly to the best of our ability? Finally, why are we to suffer difficulties, trials, and rejection similar to those Jesus had to face? We must, that we, like Jesus, might be found faithful, true, and resisting Satan and the world around us. Also, we are to be found having understanding of what it takes to overcome, thus being compassionate saviors under Jesus Christ. Why?

Revelation 5:9-10 And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth."

That is what it is all about, brethren; that is our calling. Revelation 5 tells us that Jesus Christ redeemed us by His blood out of every kindred, tongue, and nation, to be kings and priests and to reign on earth. These days that we keep at this time of the year picture that time in the World Tomorrow when Jesus will rule, and we will be at last able to help heal this tired, worn-out world. Because of partaking of Jesus' sufferings, we will have the mind—the love, the patience, the kindness, the empathy, the mercy, the gentleness—to be wonderful teachers and helpers of those whom we are given to help. We will have understanding of the pain and suffering through which they have gone.

In conclusion, our job is to glorify God the Father and Jesus Christ by following their examples, by overcoming, and by becoming a proper light to this lost world. If we do this to the best of our ability, as we prepare to stand before God the Father as Jesus Christ did, we will be able to say, "I have finished the work that you gave me to do. Now please glorify me alongside of You." And He will.