



# THE TRUMPET

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Voice of the LORD  
Ministries

Vol. 21 No. 12

December 2017



Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.  
Isaiah 9:6

*In a stable in Bethlehem  
Was born the King of all men  
To the shepherds Heavens host proclaimed  
Peace to all men in Jesus name*

*It's the greatest story ever told  
It can't be bought it can't be sold  
It brings to light the darkest sin  
And sets us free to live again*

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Luke 2:7-14

## Bread Crumbs

It is absolutely amazing how quickly a Christian can move from the status of a great victory to the state of despondency and despair. We should understand that immediately following any spiritual victory there will come an increased effort of the powers of darkness to discourage and to offend. The devil works through lies that seem plausible, even while the shout of victory is still on our lips. So beware and be ready for the onslaught of the enemy after a great blessing. This truth is illustrated convincingly in the life of Elijah. After succeeding magnificently on Mount Carmel, after proving the prophets of Baal as powerless charlatans and after leading Israel back to the one true living God, his life is threatened by Queen Jezebel. Instead of believing God, Elijah takes off running. He winds up living in a cave where God comes to him and asks, "what are you doing here?" Elijah recognizes his mistake and returns to Israel to finish what God had started through him. So if you ever find yourself driven by fear and hiding out in a cave, understand that this is not where God desires you to be. Its time to leave that cave of despair, step back out in faith, and do what God has called you to do! 1 Kings 19:9 - And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Pastor Loren Larson

## The Test

Pastor Don Ragsdale

In Luke 22:31-32 Jesus told Peter that Satan desired to sift him as wheat, but Jesus went on and said, BUT, I have prayed for you that your faith fail not. While God allows Satan to come to huff and puff to blow our House down, only the House built upon the Solid Rock Jesus Christ will continue to Stand. Even though your facing the powers of darkness as never before know this the Adversary is out to steal your faith, but Jesus our Advocate with the Father, has prayed for us to keep us in it! So whatever it is that the devil means for evil, God can make it good, and bring about a turn around. For the test is not for your destruction but for a Greater Testimony, of God's saving and sanctifying Grace

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## CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH

**Cousin Leroy**

Ole Leroy called the vet and said, "My horse is very very sick. She's lying down and won't eat anything and is making strange noises." The vet came and looked over the horse and says "You're right - she certainly is ill - and she needs some very strong medicine." He took a bottle out of his box, put two pills into his hand and said, "Give her these. The pills should make her better." "How can I give them to her? She won't eat anything." Leroy asked. The vet handed him a long tube and said "Put this tube in her mouth, then put the pills in the tube and blow. That'll take care of it." The next day the vet came to the farm again to check up on things. "How's your horse?" the vet asked. "No change," Leroy said, "but I've been feeling very ill myself." "Oh?" the vet said, "Why?" "Well, I did what you said," Leroy answered. "I put the tube in the horse's mouth and then put the two pills down it - just like you said." "And?" the vet asked. "She blew first!"

**Cat Church**

Johnny's Mother looked out the window and noticed Him "playing church" with their cat. He had the cat sitting quietly and he was preaching to it. She smiled and went about her work. A while later she heard loud meowing and hissing and ran back to the open window to see Johnny baptizing the cat in a tub of water. She called out, "Johnny, stop that! The cat is afraid of water!" Johnny looked up at her and said, "He should have thought about that before he joined my church."

**The Pilot**

An airplane pilot had had a particularly difficult flight and a rough landing. The airline had a policy which required the first officer to stand at the door while the passengers exited, smile and give them a "Thanks for riding Royal Airlines." But, in light of his bad landing, the pilot had a hard time looking the passengers in the eye, thinking that someone would have a smart comment. Finally, everyone had gotten off except for this sweet little old lady walking with a cane.

She said, "Sonny, mind if I ask you a question?" "Why no, ma'am," replied the pilot, "What is it?" The little old lady said, "Did we land or were we shot down?"

**The Trick**

On a visit to New York, Jack and Bob were broke and so hungry their stomach hurt. Jack talked Bob into going in to a pastry shop. Jack whisked three cookies into his pocket with lightning speed. The baker didn't notice. Bob was shocked, he was hungry but not hungry enough to steal!

"You see how clever I am? You'll never beat that!" Jack said. Bob turned and said to the baker, "Give me a cookie, I can show you a trick!" The baker gave him the cookie which Bob promptly eats. Then he said to the baker: "Give me another cookie for my trick." The baker is getting suspicious but he gives it to him. He eats this one too. Then he says again: "Give me one more cookie..." The baker is getting angry now but gives him one anyway. Bob eats this one too. Now the baker is really mad, and he yells: "And where is your famous trick?" To which Bob replied: "Look in my friends pocket!"



**VOTL**  
Voice of the LORD

*From the Pastor's Desk*

Pastor Billy R. Douglas

**The Empty Chair**

And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. 2 Samuel 12:22-23

The words of King David no doubt strike a chord in the heart of each one of us. He was mourning the death of his child. He had wept, fasted, prayed to God...but the child died anyway. Yet during this hard time in his life David found a truth to hold to...a peace that can only come from the Lord. As we gather with our family and friends for Thanksgiving and Christmas there will be an empty chair or chairs around the table that serve to remind us of loved ones who have went home to be with the Lord. As I thought on this the Holy Spirit brought something to mind that was a comfort to me and I pray that it in some way will comfort you as well. Just as there are empty chairs around our table as we gather, there are empty chairs around that great table in Heaven...those chairs await you and me. And just as King David said...we cannot bring our loved ones back to us but we can most assuredly go to them! If we keep our faith and our trust in Jesus Christ we can have the comfort of knowing that one day in the portals of Heaven we will once again gather around the table with our loved ones. I want to share a poem that I found recently. I am not sure who wrote it but I knew as soon as I read it that the Lord wanted me to share it with you...

Time cannot heal the emptiness

Or fill the empty chair

The one that's in the family room

I see it empty there

Or the chair that's at the table

Where together we would dine

Although I sit there still

The only hands that pray are mine

Still I give thanks to God each day

I pray this prayer comes true

You save an empty chair for me

When I come home to you

I know that the holidays are hard and bring much grief to so many. I have even heard people say that they "hate the holidays" because of the pain of missing loved ones who have passed on. Trust me when I tell you that those who have gone home to be with the Lord would not want us grieving ourselves to death because of their passing. They are happy with the Lord...happier than they ever were in this old world. And they would want us to be happy as well. Take comfort in the fact today that even though they cannot come to be with us in this old world and once again fill their empty chair, we will one day take our place at that great marriage supper in Heaven and fill the empty chair that awaits us there.

Merry Christmas and may the LORD Bless and keep you is our prayer. Pastor Billy R Douglas

**“DID NOT OUR HEART BURN WITHIN US”**

By: Evangelist Mike Heltsley

Luke 24:13-35 - And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. 14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened. 15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. 16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. 17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad? 18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? 19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: 20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. 21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; 23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. 24 And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. 25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: 26 Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? 27 And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. 30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them. 31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. 32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? 33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread. Luke 24:32 - And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

We celebrate the Resurrection as a day of great victory. But as we read in our text, those disciples that were from Emmaus, on their way home, had broken hearts, and was very sad as they remembered the days that they had spent with Christ. On their journey home they met Jesus, in which they didn't recognize Him, and began to pour out their heart to this Stranger. Let's go with Jesus and these discouraged, backslid disciples. 1. NOTICE HOW JESUS MENDED THEIR BROKEN HEARTS (VV. 13-21) As they journeyed to Emmaus, they talked sadly of recent events. In their sadness, Jesus draws near, and as He listened to their conversation, He discovers their broken hearts. A. Their conversation reveals their broken hearts. 1. Discouraged hearts are broken hearts. 2. Depressed hearts are broken hearts. 3. Resigned hearts are broken hearts. B. See how Jesus begin to mend their hearts. 1. He walks with them even though they don't recognize Him. 2. He asks them what is wrong. - (Luke 24:17) "And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?") 3. He addresses their hurts. "What things" - (Luke 24:19) "And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:") C. Jesus is the healer of broken hearts. 2. NOTICE HOW JESUS RESTORED THEIR BACK-SLIDDEN HEARTS (VV. 22-27) They had believed in Him; now they just said nice things about Him. They had expected miracles; now they doubted His resurrection. A. They were slow of heart to believe - (Luke 24:25) "Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:") 1. Once they had dared; now they are doubtful. 2. Once they had expected redemption; now they retreat. 3. Once they were thrilled; now they are chilled. B. Jesus restores their back-slidden hearts. 1. He teaches them the Scriptures. 2. They saw that the Scriptures spoke of Him. 3. Faith is restored by taking and applying the Bible. 3. HOW JESUS SETS OUR HEARTS AFIRE AND OPENED THEIR EYES (VV. 28-32) A. By talking with them. - (Luke 24:32) "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?") B. By the Word of God. C. Fellowship with them - (Luke 24:27-29 - And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. 28 And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. 29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.) D. The breaking of bread & His pierced hands - (Luke 24:30) "And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.") 4. WHAT BURNING HEARTS DID FOR THESE DISCIPLES (VV. 34-35) A. Made them change directions - (Luke 24:33) "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them," B. Made them seek out other Christians and meet with them. - (Luke 24:33) "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them," C. Made them a blessing to others. - (Luke 24:34-35) "Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. 35 - And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread." Let us ask God to consume our hearts like never before.



## **Do we need a Justice League or will ONE Man do?**

Pastor Steve Huston - 103 N. Division Ave. Fremont, Michigan 49412

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

“What’s your super power?” That question has been floating around social media for quite some time now and is often heard being asked, mostly, among the millennial generation. With the increase of super-hero movies, television shows, comic sales and action figures, we spend incredible amounts of money on this genre—telling Hollywood, give us more. Despite Tina Turner’s 1985 hit song, We Don’t Need Another Hero, fantasy heroes have grown in popularity and are here to stay. Hmm, why is that? People long for someone to save their embattled mind, to pull them out of the ash-heap of their self-inflicted wounds and troubles. Many may deny the one true God, but they are still looking for a “god” to save them. Subconsciously, some may even be looking for a super-hero that will save them from God Himself. Super-heroes, in part, provide a reprieve from reality, giving us a false sense of security that everything is going to be okay. Men, rejecting the God of the Bible, attempt to create God in their own image. We look at the “shiny armored” comic book heroes of yesteryear and see that today they have grown much darker. If it is okay for our heroes to act in an unrighteous manner, surely we can do likewise. If we recreate God in our own image—not concerned with holiness or being just—we need not live up to a righteous or holy standard of living either. When our heroes don’t live by a standard of absolute truth, why must we? In comic book or cinema lore, man’s greatest enemies are portrayed as “a giant interstellar starfish” or meteor hurtling toward earth from outer space, genetically mutated monsters or super villains, and at times, some natural disaster. However, in real life the monsters we need saving from are monsters like addiction to pornography, alcohol, drugs, sex, and the list goes on. In truth, man’s greatest enemy is Satan and the original sin which lies in the heart of each of us—drawing us away from holiness and into further sin. Justice League’s Batman, played by Ben Affleck, who has been fighting his own monsters of alcohol abuse, marital turmoil (pending divorce), and an accusation of sexual impropriety—in the wake of Hollywood’s sexual harassment scandal—ponders the need of a real “super-hero.” As USA Today quotes Affleck, “There’s a lot of stuff going on in the world, from natural to man-made disasters, and it’s really scary. Part of the appeal of this genre is wish fulfillment: Wouldn’t it be nice if there was somebody who can save us from all this, save us from ourselves, save us from the consequences of our actions and save us from people who are evil?” Even “Batman” is powerless over the chains of sin. No Justice League “super-hero” can beat the devil or the sin which resides within each of us fallen creatures. Within each “super-hero” and within each of us is the monster of sin that rages to be unleashed. In the midst of such personal woe; in the midst of such chaos and crime; in the midst of such spiritual wanderlust; there IS one—and ONLY One—who can save us from the monster of Satan, sin, and self. There is only One who can see us through every disaster and evil—either protecting us from or taking us through to eternal glory. There is only One who can save us from the eternal consequences of our actions. That One is the only real god-man, the only Savior of mankind. He is the Man Jesus Christ—the promised Messiah. By the grace of God, because He loved the world so much, He sent His only begotten Son. Jesus (Emmanuel—“God with us”) came so that if we would believe on Him, we would be saved. No super-hero needed; no need to embrace victimhood; simply believe and embrace the One who was the Victim of our sin. By His stripes we are healed. Experience His cleansing power, being saved to the uttermost, and be transformed by His amazing love! Ben Affleck straightforwardly echoes the cry of every man, woman, and child, in search of a “super-hero.” Little do they realize that their cry can only be answered by the gospel of Jesus Christ. He alone has come to destroy the works of the devil, to save His people from their sin, and to make men free. Our purpose is holy living and sharing the truth of this wonderful Savior—telling of His atoning work on the cross. Our lives are to be a witness to this saving grace and to make it known to others. Take every opportunity to speak of mankind’s only REAL Savior. Wouldn’t it be nice if someone would give this answer: “Yes Mr. Affleck, it would be ‘nice if there was somebody who can save us from all this, save us from ourselves, save us from the consequences of our actions and save us from people who are evil’—and there is. His name is Jesus.”

## **Christmas WITHOUT The X**

So often these days we see Christmas with the 'Christ' taken out and replaced with an 'X'. It's almost as if it's a nameless celebration. We as Christians know how far from the truth that is. We read here of angels appearing to the shepherds and declaring the birth of Jesus, the Son of David - who is the Christ (the Messiah). It is in no way a 'nameless' event, but a wonderful celebration of the greatest event - the birth of Christ and the reconciliation to God He brought to us all. So let's keep the 'Christ' in Christmas. Christmas must always start with Christ For He has saved us and changed our lives. Written by M.S. Lowndes



### Orange Juice Cake

- 1 pkg. yellow butter cake mix
- 1 pkg. instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 c. orange juice
- 1/2 c. oil
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 c. chopped pecans

#### ICING:

- 1 c. sugar
- 1 stick butter
- 1/2 c. orange juice

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Mix cake mix, pudding, eggs, oil and orange juice. Grease and flour bundt or tube pan. Pour chopped nuts in bottom. Add batter and bake about 45 minutes. **ICING DIRECTIONS:** Cook 4 minutes. Pour over cake while still in pan. Let cool and remove.

### Corn Casserole

- 1 can cream style corn
- 1 can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 box jiffy corn muffin mix
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 2 eggs
- 1 stick butter
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 2 cups shredded cheese

Place onion and butter in a microwave safe casserole dish. Cook 5 minutes. Add jiffy mix, sour cream, eggs, and corn. Cook for 45 minutes in oven at 300 degrees. Sprinkle with cheese and cook for 10 more minutes.

### Candied Walnuts

by Amy Willis

- 1 c brown sugar
- 1/2 c granulated sugar
- 1/2 c sour cream
- Dash of salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 1/2 c  
walnut halves

Combine brown sugar, granulated sugar and sour cream in a small saucepan. Cook over med heat stirring until it boils. Continue to boil until mixture reaches soft ball stage, 240 degrees on a candy thermometer. Stir in vanilla and salt. Pour candy over walnuts in a mixing bowl. Mix well till evenly coated. Turn out onto wax paper and cool.

### Snickers Fudge

- 2 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips
- 1 (3 3/4 ounce) Snickers candy bars, chopped
- 1 (12 ounce) can milk chocolate frosting:

Line an 8-inch square pan with foil, extending foil over the edges. Spray lightly with nonstick cooking spray. Set aside. Microwave chips in medium microwave safe bowl on high for 1-2 minutes or until chips are melted, stirring occasionally. Add frosting and candy bars. Blend well. Spread in sprayed foil-lined pan. Refrigerate 1 hour or until firm. Remove fudge from pan by lifting the foil. Remove foil from fudge. Cut into squares.

### Homemade Hot Chocolate

- 8 cups whole milk
- 1 box (8 envelopes) hot chocolate mix
- 1 bag milk chocolate chips
- 1 can eagle brand milk

Put whole milk in sauce pan. Let it get warm. Add hot chocolate envelopes and stir until dissolved. Add chocolate chips and eagle brand milk. Stir constantly until chips are melted and mixture is hot. Can also be done in crock pot if you prefer.



**Potato Casserole**  
by Joyce Dame

- 2 lb. tater tots or hash browns, thawed and crumbled
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 16 oz. sour cream
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 cups corn flake crumbs

Combine soup, onion, and cheese. Melt butter and pour over potatoes. Add potatoes to soup mixture. Cover with corn flakes. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour at 350 degrees.

**COOKBOOK**

We still have copies of our church cookbook for sale and they would make GREAT Christmas gifts!

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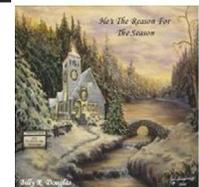
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- 12.O Come All Ye Faithful
- 13.Beautiful Star Of Bethlehem
- 14.C H R I S T M A S
- 15.Sleep Little Baby
- 16.Come On Ring Those Bells
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### O Little Town Of Bethlehem

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Micah 5:2

In the same way that God's "wondrous gift" came to Bethlehem, silently, so Christ comes into our lives today and casts out our sins and fears if we are willing to have Him abide in our lives. Then "the dear Christ enters in." How beautifully the glorious message of Christmas is told in this well-phrased hymn by Phillips Brooks, one of America's most outstanding ministers of the twentieth century. During a trip to the Holy Land in 1865, Brooks went to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem on Christmas Eve and worshiped there. He was deeply moved by this experience. Three years later, while pastoring the Holy Trinity Church in Philadelphia, Brooks desired to have a special carol for the children to sing in their Sunday school Christmas program. Recalling the peaceful scene in the little town of Bethlehem, Brooks completed the writing of the text in just one evening. He gave a copy of the words to his organist, Lewis R. Redner, and requested him to compose a melody that would be easy for the children to sing. On the evening just before the program was to be given, Redner awakened suddenly from his sleep with the present melody in his mind-and he quickly wrote it out. "O Little Town of Bethlehem" has been a favorite with children and adults around the world since that time....

"O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light-the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary-and gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wond'ring love. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heav'n. No ear may hear His coming, but, in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive Him still the dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray; cast out our sin and enter in-be born in us today. We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell; O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!"

*from Amazing Grace: 366 Inspiring Hymn Stories for Daily Devotions.*

### The Jesus In The Manger

Katy Kauffman

Whenever I see a manger scene, whether it's a foot tall or life-size, I always look at the baby Jesus. Does He look realistic enough? So many nativities give Him a peaceful look, and I imagine He did have one (when He wasn't crying). But over time, I had forgotten the fullness of who was in that manger two thousand years ago until I started reading the book of Revelation. I read again that Jesus is ...The Alpha and the Omega. The First and the Last. He who lives, and was dead, and ... [is] alive forevermore! The first chapter of Revelation shows us who Jesus is, and gives us a description of His appearance as John saw Him. A golden band wrapped around His chest and floor-length garment. His head and hair were white, and His eyes looked like a flame. His feet were as refined brass, and His voice sounded like many waters. His countenance shone like the sun. Glorious. Majestic. Amazing. John was so awestruck that he fell at Jesus' feet like a dead man. This is our Jesus, the Jesus who came to earth as a baby the first Christmas night. The God of the universe, the Creator of all that is, allowed Himself to be wrapped in our skin, to have a beating heart, and to need food and water like we do. The majestic King of heaven set aside His golden band and crown to wear swaddling clothes. To walk dusty streets. To love those who wouldn't love Him back. The baby in the manger is Lord of all. I believe that the shepherds understood who they saw when they found Jesus the night He was born. The angels had told them. Prophecy had promised Him. Christ the Lord had come at last. Peace arrived and goodwill toward mankind. The shepherds' response to the angels' declaration is the same response God wants us to have today. Seeking Jesus. Praising God. Telling others. When we take in what Scripture tells us about Jesus, the proper response is to seek Him and worship Him. It's to praise God and share with others who Jesus is and that He has come to seek and save the lost. No longer do we have to roam through life trying to satisfy our hearts our way or to make sense of the world in our own wisdom. We can know God, find all we need in His love and provision, and have purpose. This Christmas, let's be "shepherds" that share about the Jesus who saves. And like John, the writer of Revelation, let's fall before Jesus in awe and walk with Him in love. May the Jesus who was in the manger be the Savior and Lord of your heart and the Peace and Goodwill you seek. May He be the light of your life and the light you share with others in this special season and all year long. Merry Christmas!



# A Word for TODAY!



**By Sister Michelle Deuling**

**Verse for Today:** Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

**Additional passages for Today:** 1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

**Thought for Today:** To "Prove" something, you test it to show the truth of the character of the product. The Christian character will reveal what is that good, acceptable and perfect will of God.

**Story for Today:** Christmas was only weeks away and the air smelled of snow. All the children were bouncing around excitedly as they waited for their hot cup of chocolate milk that would help warm them up from the inside while the fire in the fireplace worked to heat them from the outside. The sledding had been a lot of fun although the snow and cold winds had chilled most of them in short order. Ash and Mandy were a couple of the older teens that had volunteered to help with the many children that had gathered to enjoy the winter-wonderland. Ash had made of profession of faith in Jesus Christ at a very early age and had been involved in the church for all his life that he could remember. He continued not only to learn in class but, his personal devotions and the time he spent with his family each day helped him to grow in his walk with the Lord. However, Mandy was a rather new believer with only a few months of the Christian life under her belt. She also struggled to grow in her walk as a new Christian since her parents were atheists that were constantly tempting her to do other fun things on Sunday to try to keep her from even going to church. Ash and Mandy joined the other workers that were gathering around the fire. Lindsey was in the middle of what appeared to be a character assassination on a girl that Ash had just learned was going through a very rough time. Ash knew that it was his responsibility as a follower of Christ to stop this line of gossip even if there was a hint of truth to what was being said. Lindsey was none to pleased and decided to have a little fun at Mandy's expense since Ash was so intent on ruining her fun. She began by telling stories from years ago. Mandy wasn't comfortable with this but what could she do. She and Lindsey had been friends for many years and it wasn't until Mandy had come to Christ that they had stopped spending almost every minute of the day together. As Lindsey began to share about personal poor choices that Mandy had made, Mandy could feel the start of anger that she hadn't experienced in quite some time. She tried to get Lindsey to stop by laughing off the situation and telling her that no one really wanted to hear about those things and that it wasn't the kind of thing that should be discussed in front of the children. Lindsey didn't take the hint and seemed to delight in Mandy's discomfort. As the talk continued, Mandy realized that she had a choice to make. She wasn't in control of Lindsey and couldn't stop her from talking. She was, however, in control of Mandy and could control what she said and did. She began to pray that God would forgive her for every situation that Lindsey disclosed. (She had asked God to forgive her in the past but not for each of these incidents.) Then she asked God to give her wisdom. She also asked God to take away any and all anger and help her to forgive Lindsey. She prayed that God would draw Lindsey to salvation as she thanked Him for the work he had done and was doing in her. She knew if this had happened last year, she would not have responded well. She would have been very angry and would have made Lindsey regret opening her mouth. How freeing it was to have peace rather than anger. She was so grateful that God was working in her life. That he had brought along friends like Ash to help her learn to understand and grow. She was grateful that she didn't have to live as she had in her past and that she was forgiven. All of this happened in about a minute. Mandy began to sing praises to God in spite of the words she could hear Lindsey speaking against her. As she sang quietly, more voices joined her and it wasn't long until the group was singing as one and Lindsey was silenced.

**Questions for Today:** When testing comes your way, do you live up to the proof that you are a "Christian," a little example of the Lord Jesus Christ? Or do the results prove that your character is not Christ-like but merely reflects the things taught in this fallen world? It's not too late to change! Pray and seek the Lord. He promises that those that seek will find Him!



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## PRAYER LIST

If you would like to send a picture of a loved one, a special prayer request or when you send a name to be added to our prayer list we will place it in our Prayer Box. Our Prayer Box sits on the altar at VOTL Tabernacle and your prayer requests are prayed over daily and in our services.

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Jamey Howell	Terry & Phyllis Dickenson	Pennie & Logan Heltsley	Amy Kluck
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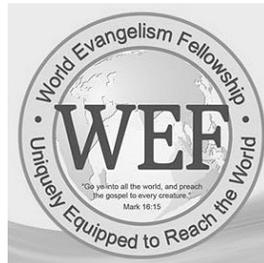
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## ***"The Message of the Cross"***

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15



## **VOTL Tabernacle**

**216 Hill St. Livermore, KY**

**Services**

**Sunday Morning Service 11 AM**

**Everyone Welcome**

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**P.O. Box 541 - Livermore, KY 42352**

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