



The Chronicle

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A Glorious Church

Philip C. Bennett

On visiting the General Assembly in August 2010, I was made more aware of the fact that The Church of God is well on her way to perfection. God is breaking down all the barriers. There was such love and unity amongst those in attendance.

There was no difference between black and white or Spanish and English for examples. There was a humility in her leadership which is akin to that shown by Jesus, the lowly Nazarene who had nowhere to lay His head.

When introducing feet washing to the early Church Jesus said: *"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet."* (St. John 13:14)

If we do not allow God to perfect us as individuals, we are going to be left behind as the Church marches on to perfection. At times we may feel that we are ok but God sees in us what we do not see in ourselves. If we will be perfect then self has to die. The Apostle Paul said *"...for when I am weak, then am I strong."* (2 Corinthians 12:10)

We may try to avoid the perfection process but we cannot go to heaven without being made perfect. People will say that we cannot be perfect in this world, but Jesus said:

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

(St. Matthew 5:48)

God does not see perfection as we do. We judge one another from what we see outwardly but God sees the heart. We will be perfected through **obedience, humility and submission**. These are not terms that the world holds in high regard. Sometimes we do things ignorantly without knowing they are wrong, but once the Holy Ghost reveals to us that they are wrong we can no longer plead ignorance. If we still do the wrong God will punish us for disobedience.

A part of our covenant of membership asks if we will walk in the light to the best of our knowledge and ability, yet many members are content to stay at the salvation stage. They fail to go on to *Sanctification* and then to become baptised with the *Holy Ghost*.

Patience and practice will help to make us **perfect**. As Christians, we must be pleasant at all times. We should have a smile even when we do not feel like smiling. We have to love even the unlovable.

Sometimes it seems like we are the only ones being tried and tested, but we are all going through the perfecting process in our own ways.

God knows what needs to be removed from all of us. Some people are proud so God will allow things to happen to humble them and eradicate their pride.

Sometimes God has to bring us to a crisis situation like He did with Jacob. He had been running from himself all his life, but God allowed a situation to develop where he was forced to confront himself.

Jacob had deceived his brother and tricked his father before leaving home and going away for twenty one years. In all that time he lived in Padan-aram but he had not changed. He was still the same Jacob. When it was time for him to leave, God stirred up Laban and his sons against Jacob. This culminated in him no longer feeling comfortable amongst them.

Jacob left Padan-aram to return home but knew that he had to reconcile with his brother. He had done him wrong in the past and had not seen him for all these years. *"And Jacob sent messengers before him to Esau his brother unto the land of Seir, the country of Edom. And he commanded them, saying, Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now: and I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight. And the messengers returned to Jacob, saying, We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him. Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed: and he divided the people that was with him, and the flocks, and herds, and the camels, into two bands; and said, If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape. And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name?"*

And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." (Genesis 32:3-8, 24-28)

Jesus will not leave the purging and the perfecting of His Bride to anyone else. *"That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Ephesians 5:27)*

When we have spots on our garments, we rub or dab them out to remove them as they are a blemish. When we have wrinkles, we straighten them out with a hot iron. *"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God." (Zechariah 13:8-9)*

Right now God is taking the Church through the furnace. The furnace is not a pleasant place to be. It is where the impurities are removed to bring forth the finished article. *"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." (St. Matthew 13:24-30)*

Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is a true sheep. Though they may look like one and even “baa” like one, some do not have the nature of sheep. Jesus said by their fruits ye shall know them (cited from St. Matthew 7:16). Jesus also said that true sheep would hear His voice and follow Him. They would not follow the voice of a stranger (cited from St. John 10:4). Sheep are easily led, but goats are another matter. Goats are **stubborn, self willed** and will butt you down if you get in their way. Having goats in the midst of sheep causes problems due to their different natures.

Stubborn and **self willed** individuals in our congregations will cause problems in our churches. They do not want anyone telling them what to do. It was this mixed multitude that caused Moses all the trouble in the wilderness as he led the children of Israel to the Promised Land.

Much of our problems today are because of this ongoing struggle between **SELF WILL** and **DIVINE WILL** in The Church of God. Self will must be cast out of The Church of God in the same way that Sarah told Abraham to cast out the bond woman and her son. “...for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.” (Genesis 21:10)

The last days perfected Church will not have such people in it. Some people in the Church have hidden under the radar for years. The Holy Ghost is going to do some stirring up and everything that is presently hidden will be revealed.

If we refuse to be admonished, we will eventually be rejected.

God will have a **glorious Church** not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. 📖

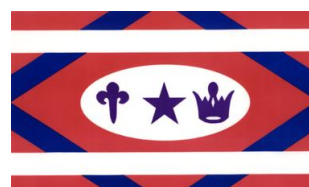


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From the Overseer's Desk

Much has taken place over the last few months in our church circle. We bade farewell to Deacon Cranston Harrison (Pops) who passed away on 21st September 2010. Pops was like part of the furniture and it will be strange not having him around.

The concert and dinner at Handsworth Church in October 2010 was a great success and enjoyed by all in attendance. Sister Angela Clarke did a great job in moderating this event.

I would like to thank the team that travelled to London on Saturday 6th November 2010 to help Sister Clarke in the evangelistic initiative. Many homes were visited, tracts distributed and people encouraged. Only God knows the full extent of what was accomplished. A few of us stayed over for the Sunday service and were a great encouragement to the members and friends in London. Please pray for Sister Angela and her family as well as the work in London. If you feel led to contribute financially to the work in London, please do so through the National Office.

Our National Ministers' Convention on Saturday 13th November 2010 was a time of spiritual refreshing. Everyone on the programme was truly anointed of God. After the event, there were expressions of regret that it finished all too quickly.

The last few months have been extremely busy for me, helping to care for my father and all the preparation following his death; but I would like to thank everyone for your prayers, gifts and encouragement to myself and the family.

By the time you read this, Christmas will have passed. I do hope that you all had a very enjoyable celebration with your families and friends and you kept in focus the reason for the season - God's great Gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. *"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)

Upcoming dates for your diary

National Youth Convention
23rd April 2011

National Convention
8th - 10th July 2011

Sunday School Department



The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Ray Prince - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The new general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2010-2011 is:

'The Promise of His Coming'

(2 Peter 3:4)

In the month of November 2010, my household was stricken with the flu virus which resulted in both Sister Claudia and Sister Riah being unable to attend service. Brother Nathan and myself were able to attend, but were suffering with mild symptoms. On arrival to Sunday service, many more members were also suffering from the flu virus and were unable to attend service. The Pastor suggested that we had two prayer meetings at the homes of the sick for the evening service. My home was one which held a prayer meeting.

The brethren came and all gave encouragement to my family and I. 1 Peter 4:1 was read:

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."

This scripture was a wonderful blessing to my soul and also humbled me and put things into perspective.

We must not forget that Christ suffered and if we are to reign with Him we will also suffer. The scripture reminds us to **"arm yourselves"** because **"...he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."** The devil knows that I am not going back into sin. In fact I am determined not to go back into sin, just like the words of the chorus says *"Goodbye world, I'll stay no longer with you. Goodbye pleasures of sin, I'll stay no longer with you. I've made up my mind to go God's way..."* The devil will send every obstacle to make us lose our way. Let us make up our minds that we are not going back into sin.

The devil only has one option to offer us - death, while Christ has two options - life or death. The promise of His coming is no joke, it is real. We will suffer because we have turned our backs on sin, but our reward is sure if we faint not.



Victory Leaders Band

VLB/EVANGELISM BOOST

Claudine Brown - National Victory Leaders Band/Evangelism Co-ordinator

The new general Victory Leaders Band theme for the assembly year 2010-2011 is:
'Lovers of the Truth'

Greetings readers. As I write I am listening to a song*, the chorus of which goes *"We lift our hands, we lift our hearts Lord, we celebrate our Champion! Hallelujah for the King who reigns victorious!"* Immediately, I am reminded of a recent Sunday School lesson which has had a major impact upon me regarding God's immaculate plan of redemption and atonement. As children of God, we should remember Christ's humble beginnings and thank God for His plan of salvation for each one of us. Lately, I have been thinking what it must have been like for Christ to know that He was born to die and YET to go on teaching, preaching, healing and working upon His Father's programme. Imagine if we knew we had the same fate - would we be as faithful in our ministry? Oh, how I thank You Jesus. You truly are our Champion!!

*Tye Tribbett feat. Israel Houghton "Champion"

We thank God for an awesome Ministers' Convention. The new auxiliary themes are inspiring. I pray that you all get excited about our *'Lovers of the Truth'* theme as we continue to explore it throughout the year! What is truth? Truth is reality, the actual state of a matter. Jesus provided us with a definition of 'truth' in His prayer to the Father in St. John 17:17. He said *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."*

Everything God has spoken in His Word is the truth. As The Church of God, the truth is our business! It is precious to us and not only have we promised to live by it, we have been commissioned to teach and preach it to the whole world. There are so many imitations of the truth out there. Imitations are cheaper and more accessible to some. As the Church, we know that truth does not come in different shapes and sizes – one size fits all. Truth is still truth even when it is rejected by the majority. Some people say that the truth hurts! Hebrews 4:12 tells us that *"...the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* And because the truth hurts, some are quicker to love a lie.

As the theme suggests, knowing the truth or even where to find it is not enough to keep us in the Church. There are non-believers and backsliders out there who know the truth but choose not to live by it. We therefore need to develop a love and a passion for it. Then we will handle it with care and will be enthused to share it with others. Let us not misuse the truth by bragging with it or angrily shoving it at non-believers. We are instructed in God's Word to speak the truth in love (cited from Ephesians 4:15).

To echo the sentiments of our dear former General Overseer, Bishop Robert Pruitt in his article "*Buy the Truth and Sell it Not*" (The Evening Light, June 1995 issue), we must not let the truth slip through our fingers. Youth, if we get it wrong now, the generations that follow us in The Church of God will get it wrong also. Then the generation after that will live by an even more distorted version of the doctrine. We have to uphold the standard *now*.

In closing, Bishop Pruitt in the abovementioned article stated:

"But God will have a holy people who will love the truth. They will live in His truth regardless of the price. They will be most eager and willing to pay the price, whatever it may be. It is time for that people to allow God to make their presence known in the earth and to come together to finish the work that must be done before the Bridegroom comes for the Bride."

Finally, please make a note of the following dates in the VLB calendar for 2011. The finer details are to follow.

5th February 2011 Youth Seminar at Long Lane, Halesowen

25th February 2011 National Quiz at Long Lane, Halesowen

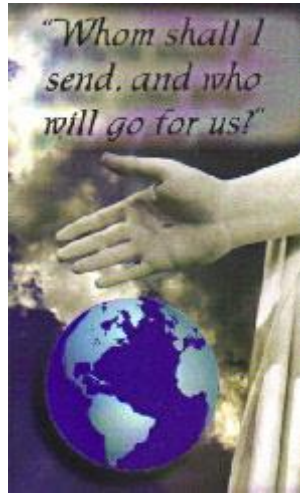
**19th March 2011 Sponsored Walk
(to raise funds for our Youth Convention
and Camp)**

23rd April 2011 Youth Convention at Long Lane, Halesowen

27th - 29th July 2011 Youth Camp

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a prosperous New Year from the VLB/Evangelism department.

God bless you.



WMB BOOST

Claudia Prince - National Women's Missionary Band Co-ordinator

The new general Women's Missionary Band theme for the assembly year 2010-2011 is:

"...Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?..."

(Isaiah 6:8)

What a wonderful theme. We are living in a Godless society, in a country where Christianity is seen as the unimportant religion. This is a question for us all, are we willing to go? The job seems impossible to do, doesn't it? Yes it does, but we are not asked to think about the job. We are asked to "Go ye *into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" (St. Mark 16:15) then in St. Matthew 28:19-20 Christ said that we should "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, **I am with you always**, even unto the end of the world. Amen." You can see from the highlighted words above that He promised that He will be with us ALWAYS. No matter how tough being a missionary is, He promised that He will be with us. We do not need to worry, just tell souls about Him and He will do the rest.

The theme "**Whom shall I send**" applies to all of us. We are all disciples of Christ and when we accepted Him, that was not the end of it. In accepting Christ we said that we would be a witness for Him. The Israelites made a covenant with God and said "...All that the LORD hath spoken we will do..." (Exodus 19:8) but they went back on their promise to God. The latter shall be greater than the former, so let us not be like the Israelites and go back on our promise to the Lord. Let us do our very best for God and His Church.

I hope all our members had a very happy **CHRIST**mas. We should give God all the glory for what **CHRIST**mas is really about.

Happy New Year and God bless you all.

Home Going Celebration

The funeral service for the late Deacon Cranston Harrison took place at Trinity Methodist Church, Handsworth on Tuesday 12th October 2010. This was the same venue where he tied the knot with Armena Taylor-Harrison some four years earlier.

The building was packed to capacity as friends and family gathered to pay their last respects. The service was moderated by the National Overseer of The Church of God in England, Philip Bennett. The coffin entered the church draped in The Church of God flag under which Deacon Harrison had been a faithful member for 62 years. Deacon Harrison epitomized the scripture in 1 Corinthians 4:2 which states: *“Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.”*

It was good to see so many former members of The Church of God in attendance. Family and friends alike shared their fond memories of Deacon Harrison. His unflappable nature was nearly always mentioned.

Bishop Robert J. Hawkins, Jr. the former National Overseer and now World Missions Co-ordinator for The Church of God preached the message. Bishop Hawkins and his wife came all the way from the USA for the funeral. In his address, Bishop Hawkins made reference to the faithfulness of Deacon Harrison and threw out the challenge to the family to pick up the mantle. There was a spirit of rejoicing throughout the service which was unlike a traditional funeral as we celebrated the passing out ceremony of a great man of God. The internment took place at the cemetery in Handsworth.

It will be strange to not have Deacon Harrison around as he had been one of the foundation stones for The Church of God in England. We hope to meet him again in *“the sweet forever.”* To quote a line from the popular song, *‘The Christian’s Goodnight’* by Sarah Doudney: **Only “Good night”, beloved, not “farewell!”...Good night! Good night! Good night!**

Brother Philip Bennett
Reporter

What's happening in **London Church?**

“I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.”

(Isaiah 41:18)

We praise God for His continued mercy towards us the brethren and friends in London. The Lord has been blessing us in our Sunday School and morning worship services. To God be the glory!!

On Saturday 6th November 2010, we conducted our first Outreach Day. We were privileged to have the help and support of the brethren in Birmingham. Members from Long Lane and Druids Heath churches assisted with knocking on doors and handing out leaflets and tracts. The Lord helped us to knock on over 300 doors. Most people were eager to hear the Good News about God.

The day ended with the group singing in the local park. We thank God for being with us and for giving us the strength to do His work.

A number of the brethren from Birmingham stayed over to attend our Sunday worship service and we were privileged to have them share their testimonies and encouragements. The National Overseer, Pastor Bennett addressed the congregation. We were encouraged to hold fast to our faith and to be examples in our local communities.

The brethren and friends of The Church of God in London are a committed group of people, who have given their time and effort to the Lord and His Church. We have a hunger and thirst for His Word. The Sunday school department is flourishing and the Lord has blessed us with children who love the Lord and are eager to study His Word. We are persuaded that God is with us. He has demonstrated this in different ways: through His Word, our personal experiences with Him and His glorious presence in each and every one of our services. He has given us the confidence to stand up for the truth and the determination to hold out to the end.

On behalf of the brethren and friends in London, I extend special thanks to those who participated in our Outreach Day. To those who could not make it but prayed for us, God bless you.

Sister Angela Clarke
Reporter

What's happening in **Druids Heath Church?**

On Sunday 24th October 2010 the theme for our CPMA service was **The Fruit of the Spirit**.

“But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.”

(Galatians 5:22-23)

One of the CPMA leaders conducted a teaching session about the benefits of eating fruit and the nutritional values for the body. A beautiful array of fruit was displayed throughout the service. There are nine fruits of the Spirit taken from Galatians 5:22-23: **Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance**. Nine exhortations were given, one on each fruit of the Spirit. The CPMA leader also compared a temporal piece of fruit with a fruit of the Spirit.

We learnt how well all the fruits work together to compose the fruit basket. The CPMA leader further explained that each fruit carried out a particular role and had the essential vitamins that the body needed. Eating just one piece of fruit is not as effective as eating five. The physical body requires the essential vitamins that all the fruits have when consumed together. This also helps the body to function properly.

We were encouraged to have all the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:23 states “...*against such there is no law.*” We should all possess the fruit of the Spirit in order to please God and have a good spiritual balance.

Praise the Lord!

Sister Koreen Wilson
Reporter

Special Note:

The Chronicle is an official publication of The Church of God (England) with Philip C. Bennett National Overseer and Editor. Articles intended for publication in the next issue of *The Chronicle* should be received **before 28th February 2011**. These submissions will be for the Jan-Mar 2011 issue. Please send to: Karen Richards, 12 Cherhill Covert, Druids Heath, Birmingham, B14 5YB. Email: kazgirl_uk@yahoo.com

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