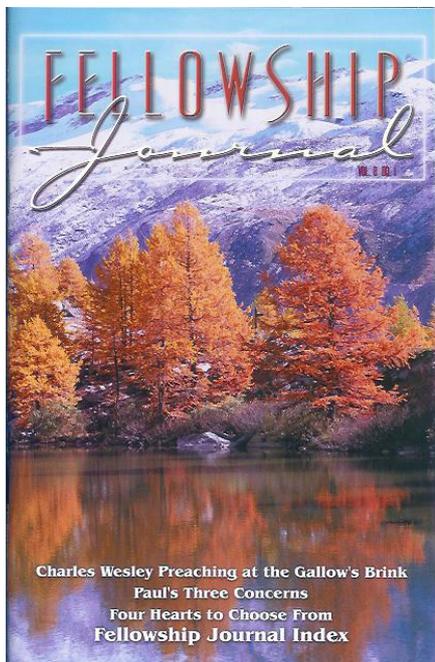


# FELLOWSHIP *Journal*

VOLUME 8, NO. 1 • JANUARY 2009



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A Real Case of a Man  
Ushering Men into  
Eternity

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Four Hearts

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YOUNGSEEKERS

# IGNITE 2009

COMING TO CLEVELAND THIS WINTER

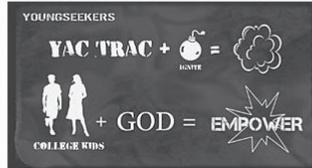
// MOUNTAIN TOP // IGNITE // SUMMER // HISTORY

## // WELCOME ABOUT US



Youngseekers.com is a forum created to help facilitate a good coordination and fellowship of the Spirit among the young people, parents, and serving ones of the churches in the Great Lakes area. On this site we hope you will find helpful information about upcoming regional events for college-age, high school, and junior high students. We have also created a "History" to testify and remind us all of how much the Lord has done among us and in us over these past few years. Any questions or comments can be made via our "Contact Us" page on this web site. [More info about us...](#)

## // UPCOMING EVENTS



## // YOUR PART

If you have any testimonies, pics, or videos to share contact us here.

For information regarding events  
for young people around the Great Lakes  
such as Ignite,  
please visit  
[www.youngseekers.com](http://www.youngseekers.com)

## A Glorious Gospel Incident: Introducing Hope to the Hopeless

*Charles Wesley was John Wesley's brother, and the two often labored together. Both were able preachers, but Charles is more famously known today for the thousands of hymns he wrote. What follows is an instance of his preaching to those in prison awaiting death.*

In a beautiful work of Christian compassion Charles went day after day among the condemned criminals at Newgate prison.

*I visited one of them in his cell [he writes], sick of a fever - a poor black that had robbed his master. I told him of One who came down from heaven to save lost sinners, and him in particular. I described the sufferings of the Son of God, His sorrows, agony and death. He listened with all the signs of eager astonishment; the tears trickled down his cheeks while he cried, "What? Was it for me? Did God suffer all this for so poor a creature as me?"*

Upon visiting the prison again three days later...Charles declared the Gospel's good news to the felons. Even in what he called 'the condemned hole', he saw its effect on them, one by one. But he also experienced its effect afresh within his own heart, ...dealing with these pitiable individuals in this wretched place, he said, 'I had great help and power in prayer....I found myself overwhelmed with the love of Christ to sinners.'

As the day of execution approached, Charles increased his efforts. At night, he and Bray allowed themselves to be locked in with the condemned men; they 'wrestled in mighty prayer' and saw fear and despair give way to peace and joy on one countenance after another.

On the morning of the hanging, a boisterous crowd, intent on making sport of the victims, gathered as usual at Tyburn. As the death cart drew on to the field, Charles Wesley and a few friends were there to meet it. 'The black had spied me coming out of the coach', says Charles, 'and saluted me with his looks. As often as his eyes met mine, he smiled with the most composed, delightful countenance I ever saw.' Charles made his way through the crowd and climbed into the cart, but when the official chaplain tried to do the same, 'The prisoners begged he might not come; and the mob kept him down.'

There in the death cart, disdainful of the jeers of the crowd, Charles again spoke words of Scriptural comfort to the poor victims. He and his companions sang for all to hear:

*Behold the Savior of mankind  
Nail'd to the shameful tree!  
How vast the love that Him inclined  
To bleed and die for thee!*

*Tis done! The precious ransom's paid;  
'Receive My soul', He cries;  
See where He bows His sacred head!  
He bows His head, and dies!*

A rope from an overhead scaffold was placed around the neck of each prisoner. Charles continued his ministrations, praying with them, giving them encouragement and kissing whom he could. As the final moment approached he again broke into song:



*To the dear fountain of Thy blood,  
Incarnate God, I fly;  
Here let me wash my spotted soul,  
From crimes of deepest dye.*

*A guilty, weak and helpless worm,  
Into Thy hands I fall;  
Be Thou my life, my righteousness,  
My Jesus and my all.*

'When the cart drew off,' says Charles, 'not one struggled for life. We left them going to meet their Lord, ready for the Bridegroom... I spoke a few suitable words to the crowd, and returned full of peace and confidence in our friends' happiness. That hour under the gallows was the most blessed hour of my life.'

(taken from *George Whitefield, Vol. 1*, pp. 188-189, Arnold Dallimore)

How deep the Father's love for us,  
How vast beyond all measure,  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure.

How great the pain of searing loss,  
The Father turns His face away,  
As wounds which mar the chosen One  
Bring many sons to glory!

Behold the Man upon the cross,  
My sin upon His shoulders.  
Ashamed I hear my mocking voice  
Call out among the scoffers.

It was my sin that held Him there  
Until it was accomplished!  
His dying breath has brought me life.  
I know that it is finished.

I will not boast in anything,  
No gifts, no power, no wisdom.  
But I will boast in Jesus Christ...  
His death and resurrection.

Why should I gain from His reward?  
I cannot give an answer ...  
But this I know with all my heart  
His wounds have paid my ransom.

Stuart Townend

ZECH 13:1 In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.

MT 26:28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:

1JN 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son

REV 1:5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the firstborn of many brethren. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

REV 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

# THE BLOOD OF JESUS

## *The Real Rescue Package of God and Much More!*

HEB 9:14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

HEB 10:19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

HEB 12:24 And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, which speaks better things than that of Abel.

HEB 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

1JN 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son purges from us all unrighteousness. He that saith he hath no sin, he maketh himself a liar, and the truth is not in him. And if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And if we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.

## **A New Direction for the Jubilee**

Every month the churches in the metro-Cleveland area gather to enjoy fellowship, feast together before the Lord and receive a portion of ministry from the Lord's Word. A number of brothers felt it would be beneficial to come again to the great matter of the blood of Jesus and consider once more its operation for our very real salvation! God desires a relationship with humanity, and we also desire a relationship with Him. What might be the basis of this relationship that both God and we seek? Nothing but the blood of Jesus! Therefore, in the coming Jubilee gatherings the focus will be upon God's desire and what is required, His provision to satisfy His requirement through the blood of His own Son, and our application of that provision today.

*(Times and location for the gatherings may be found on the following page.)*

# Jubilee Winter '09

January 4, 2009

God's Desire: A Relationship with Man  
Our Condition needing God's Provision

February 1, 2009

God's Provision: The New Covenant  
enacted in the Blood of Jesus Christ

March 1, 2009

Practically living in this Relationship  
with God, others, and myself

Beginning At 9am for Breakfast and  
Meeting At 10am For The Jubilee  
Gathering For Singing and Sharing:



3170 Warren Rd, Cleveland, OH 44111  
Phone: (216) 476-3477  
Website: <http://www.clevelandonline.org/>

Topics, times, and location of upcoming Jubilee gospel gatherings

## PLEASE PRAY ALSO FOR THE FOLLOWING:

Twenty students from several campuses around the Great Lakes have taken a leave of absence from their 2008-2009 school year to participate in a ten month labor. The laboring teams are in Buffalo, New York; Cleveland Heights, Ohio and Minneapolis, Minnesota. They spend their mornings in prayer and fellowship in the Word. Their afternoons are spent studying and visiting people either on a college campus or in the community where they live. They also have had the opportunity to help plan and carry out the fall and spring conferences for college students as well as the winter 'Empower' conference for college students and the 'Ignite' conference for high school and junior high school students. They will continue their labor through May of 2009.

# THE EXPERIENCE OF CHRIST IN PHILIPPIANS

## MESSAGE THIRTY-SIX

### THREE CONCERNS FOR A HEALTHY CHURCH LIFE

In the fourth and final chapter of Philippians, Paul conveys his concern for the well-being of the church life in Philippi, the well-being of the individual believers within the church life, and their financial giving (because it manifests their spiritual growth in a particular way). Those who serve a church (or churches) should share with Paul these crucial concerns.

#### CONCERN 1: CORPORATE HARMONY

The first concern focuses upon the testimony of the church or churches you have fellowship with. The local church must be very healthy, and the mark of a healthy church life is harmony (4:2-3).

True harmony, of course, is not found when everything is merely peaceful, because peacefulness can be a result of death. Some might feel things are quite harmonious only because they are not with each other! The harmony we should care about is a harmony of life, not a harmony of death. The harmony of life is the first sign that a local church is healthy. If, however, there is disagreement and arguing in the church life, there is reason for concern.

As you love the Lord, pursue Christ, give yourself to Christ, and consecrate yourself to serve Christ, are you also one who knows how to keep yourself in harmony with others? Paul mentions the secret of harmony is to only lay hold on Christ. If we take up any topic other than Christ, our harmony will disappear; the church life will not be harmonious. We are here pursuing Christ to gain and possess Christ. We must pay any price so that we can lay hold of Christ as He has laid hold of us. If we lack this realization, we will not be able to pursue harmony with others. This is Paul's first concern.

Therefore, we need the Lord's mercy. In our local church, what is it we care for? We care for Christ, we care to pursue Christ, we care to gain Christ, and we care to possess Christ. Eventually, our desire is that we might be laid hold of by Christ, and lay hold of Christ. If this is our stand and exercise, there should be harmony. Any other thing that arises as an issue, however, will frustrate our harmony.

One brother once told me some liked me, while others did not. I told him that those who liked me were just as wrong as those who disliked me. Brothers, if you love me that is right, because you have to love me: I'm your brother! But when you make anyone an issue, that is wrong. "Titus" should never become an issue. No brother should ever become an issue among the churches. We appreciate each brother and each servant of the Lord, but we cannot allow any servant of the Lord to become an issue among us. All the servants of the Lord are here to serve us and to help us so we might focus on Christ, gain Christ, possess Christ, and eventually be laid hold of by this very Christ. This is the first thing Paul was concerned about.

#### CONCERN 2: INDIVIDUAL RESTFULNESS

Secondly, Paul says, "I'm very concerned about you individuals, that you are not restful." (vv. 4-9) (For a church, the most manifest problem is disharmony. For individuals the most manifest problem is unrestfulness.) You who have labored in this training have enjoyed these nine months, but now that you have come to the final and tenth month, some of you have become nervous, wondering, "What should I do next?" You begin to consider, "If I do this or that, will the brothers be happy with me?" How quickly we lose our restfulness! (Sometimes we are not restful because we do not have the Lord, and sometimes we are not restful because we DO have the Lord, but that is different!)

Paul's concern towards Philippi was, number one, that the church had to be harmonious, and number two, that individual saints had to be in restfulness. The Christian life in principle is a restful life.

One day a sister asked me, "Titus, how can you live?" She told me that she always thought I would want to give up because of the way things seemed to be sometimes. But I was able to tell her that I was very happy, for I experienced restfulness. In chapter 4, Paul gives us the secret to this restfulness, as we will see in the next message.

### CONCERN 3: HANDLING FINANCE

The third portion (vv. 10-19) is how to handle finance, individually and corporately, which is one of the most crucial things in our lives. We have to handle finance as it relates to the Lord's testimony. The Lord told us clearly that we cannot serve both God and mammon (money and what money can buy—Matt. 6:24; Luke 16:13). We cannot serve two masters. Notice that instead of saying “Satan,” the Lord said “money.” Money is the direct means Satan uses to control fallen mankind. Thus, the third thing Paul mentions in chapter four is the matter of finance. The churches should be healthily burdened for the Lord's testimony, and this involves finances.

Many think the poorer you are, the more you love money. When a person becomes wealthy, however, he possibly even desires money more. (Remember, however, that when you die, it will not matter how many zeros follow after in your bank account!) Those who serve the Lord, in principle, are not well-off because they are not involved as much with money. Watchman Nee tried to produce money for the sake of the work, and it brought him troubles. Coworkers have to learn that even should we have nothing, the Lord is our rich supply.

Paul was a grand person. If you were to write a letter to a certain church, how would you conclude it after you have delivered such a portrait of spiritual advancement? Everyone would say, upon seeing the peak in chapter three, “Oh! What a Christ we may enjoy!” Then, however, you have to come back to what is practical, and when you become practical, only three things matter. The first is: the church must be kept in harmony. The second is: the brothers must live a life in restfulness so that they may go on in a healthy fashion with the Lord. (Why does a Christian experience anxiety? Because he or she is not able to touch the Lord. The one who enjoys Christ is the one who has real peacefulness.) Then, the third involves money, as he seems to say: “I am so thankful you are a healthy church; once and twice you sent to meet my need.” (Just afterwards he writes, “I don't care about the money you gave to me. I just want you to have more fruit in your account.”)

To the Corinthians he wrote that money is as a seed (2 Cor. 9:6). When you bury the money as a life-seed, it grows. If you physically bury the paper, of course, it gets rotten after a couple months, but if you should sow money by offering it to the Lord, you reap generously, bountifully, and liberally.

- *Titus Chu*

*Honor all men.  
Love the brotherhood.  
Fear God. Honor the king.*

*(1 Peter 2:17)*

Of all the practical advice given in the New Testament, very few readers have noticed the four items listed in 1 Peter 2:17: *Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

At first glance we think we know what these four things are. Still we must ask, what does it mean to honor all men? Why does he say to love the brotherhood instead of love the church? Why should we fear God, the one who loves us and sent His Son to die for us? How do we honor the king?

### **Honor All Men**

Once the company I worked for sent me to Singapore to do some work. At the end of my time there, the branch manager wanted to honor me, so he took me to his favorite seafood restaurant. He selected the best fish, which was carefully prepared according to his direction and brought to our table. He smiled broadly as he graciously offered me the best part of the fish - the head. Fortunately for me, my host's elderly mother was also at the table, so I was able to transfer the honor to her. Her eyes lit up and she ate the fish head with delight.

We honor men when we give them our best. The best my host could think to offer me was a fish head. We do the same every time we try to honor others by offering them hospitality or some gift. Our best is Christ, and if what we give is less than Him, it is only a fish head.

Peter's own experience taught him how to honor all men. When the lame man at the door of the Temple encountered Peter and John, he asked them for alms. Peter had no money, but he had something much better. He honored this man with the gospel, saying *"Silver and gold have I none; but what I have, that give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk."* (Act 3:6) This man received much more than he expected. He met the living Christ and entered the Temple walking, leaping, and praising God!

Later in Acts 10, Peter was sent by the Lord to the house of Cornelius. This man was an unclean Gentile. Under normal circumstances Peter would never have entered his house. However the Lord told Peter to not consider Cornelius as unclean. Peter honored Cornelius and his entire household by visiting them, bringing with him the gospel of salvation.

We meet people every day and usually have very little feeling about them. However Peter admonishes us to honor all men. We do this by giving them our very best. While they may seem poor, lame, and unclean to us, they deserve our best, and the best we have is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Honoring all men represents the cold gospel. We contact people every day that we will likely never see again. We have only that one chance to honor them. Like the lame man and Cornelius, we have no idea how the Lord has prepared them for this encounter. No one is too lame or unclean to be unworthy of our Christ. This is why Peter tells us to honor all men.

## Honor the King

Although Peter lists this as the last of his four items, honoring the king is closely related to honoring all men, so we will address it second. This is the warm gospel, the gospel to those who know us well.

In the context of Peter's writing, the king represents the government, which establishes the laws for the society in which we live. He sets the rules and he enforces the rules. Peter says we should honor the king by living as good, law-abiding citizens. This kind of living becomes a testimony to those around us, who see us in our daily life.

The hardest ones to share Christ with are those who know us best: our relatives, co-workers, and friends who see us every day. They see how we drive, how we react to daily pressures, and how we handle offense. They hear what comes out of our mouths. They know what we value. We cannot hide from them or pretend we are holier than we really are. In some ways they know us better than we know ourselves.

It doesn't take much to harm our Christian testimony. But if we honor the king in our normal human living, that living itself will often open people to the gospel. While we may feel pressed to immediately share the entire gospel with a stranger who will soon no longer be with us, we should feel no such pressure toward our relatives, co-workers, and friends. Time is on our side. If we are careful to honor the king, they will see our living and eventually open to us. If we have been in prayer for them, we will recognize such opportunities when they come.

## Love the Brotherhood

Peter is the only New Testament writer who uses the word brotherhood like this. The word brotherhood is sweeter than the word church, because it reminds us that the church is not some cold institution or organization, but it is real people, often with real needs. To love the church can be objective, but to love the brotherhood is very subjective.

The apostle John wrote, "But whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him? My Little children, let us not love in word, neither with the tongue; but in deed and truth." (1 John 3:17-18)

James writes similarly, "If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye

warmed and filled; and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; what doth it profit?" (James 2:15-16)

It is normal in the church that at any given time some will be in need. Only those who love the brotherhood will be aware of it. These are the ones who watch the saints, who are with them, and have genuine care. One measure of this kind of love is the number of anonymous personal offerings that pass through the church's offering to the less fortunate among us. Where this is missing, that church has become cold.

In the first and second centuries, the unbelievers noticed the believers' care for one another. It was markedly different from the lack of concern found in their society. This love for the brotherhood caused many to turn to Christ in spite of the very real danger of persecution and martyrdom. This too is the gospel.

## **Fear God**

According to the parable in Matthew 25:14-30, God has given each of us at least one talent. Those who invest this talent and get a return will receive the Lord's blessing. Those who bury their talent will receive His wrath. Christians have no fear of the final judgment, as do the unbelievers, for their sins are all forgiven. But we should fear disappointing the Lord and missing His blessing.

What is the talent we have received from the Lord? Many Christians spend their entire lives trying to answer this question. They assume that their talent is some mysterious power or gift that will turn them into super-Christians. If this is the case, then most of us will end up experiencing the Lord's wrath, because most never discover such a super-gift. We never turn into God's super-heroes. Instead we should develop the common gifts God has given to every Christian. These include the Bible, prayer, and the anointing spirit.

The Bible doesn't seem like a super-gift, but those who spend time in it know otherwise. It contains words that are able to change our lives. It contains words that are able to comfort those around us. It contains words that enable us to know God. It contains words that enable us to overcome the enemy. Without it we are left to our

religious imagination. Many godly men sacrificed their lives that we could have the Bible today. No wonder the Lord will be displeased if we do not invest ourselves in it. It does not take very long to read a book such as Galatians or Ephesians. If we read it enough times, we will know what is in it, and we will receive the blessing.

Prayer also seems common, but most do not pray. They make no investment in prayer. Perhaps this is because we think we must pray lengthy prayers at set times. When the disciples asked the Lord for a lesson on prayer (Luke 11:1-4), he did not give them a lengthy prayer or tell them to set up a prayer schedule. The model prayer that He gave, which most know as the Lord's Prayer, takes less than a minute to repeat. The Lord was telling them to pray short, instant prayers. Whenever something comes to our mind, we should pray for it that instant. This overcomes our short memory, for we might not remember to pray for that item if we wait for our set time of prayer. It also fulfills Paul's admonition to pray without ceasing (1 Thes 5:17). Once this is our habit, if we add up all our time spent in instant prayers, we may find that we actually pray many hours in a day.

Finally we come to the anointing, which many find mysterious and hard to understand. But 1 John 2:20 says, "You have an anointing from the Holy One," and verse 27 says "And as for you, the anointing which ye received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any one teach you; but as His anointing teacheth you concerning all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it taught you, ye abide in Him." Every Christian has been given the anointing Spirit. It abides in us and teaches us to abide in Christ. It is every Christian's responsibility to nurture this mutual abiding relationship by learning how to follow the anointing.

The Bible is God's objective word to us. Prayer is how we go to God subjectively. The anointing Spirit is how God comes to us subjectively. These are the common talents God has given every Christian. If we fear disappointing God and want to win His smile, we will invest ourselves in each of them.

With this understanding, 1 Peter 2:17 is a good verse to print out and hang on our refrigerators. We all need such a daily reminder:  
*Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.*

- Dave Shields

# The Growth of the Seed

## The Four Hearts in Matthew 13

### **Two Aspects of Being a "Seed"**

The principle of being a seed has to do with being full of life and yet buried and hidden and even put to death so that the life which is hidden might fully develop and bear its fruit. The life we must contain to become fruitful to God, however, does not come from our own human life. It is the Lord Jesus who must be sown into us, for He is the unique Seed who came to be multiplied in us (John 12:24). Those born of God through regeneration have what is of God as a seed abiding in them (1 John 3:9). They have been regenerated with the incorruptible seed of God's living and abiding word (1 Pet. 1:23). Now that we as believers have received such a seed within us, we need to learn how to provide the best means for it to grow, and this is a matter of what kind of soil (or ground or earth) our heart provides.

### **Four Kinds of Hearts**

In Matthew 13:3-23, the Lord likened Himself to a sower who went out sowing seeds. The seeds He sowed landed on four different types of soil, representing four different kinds of hearts. As we shall see, these hearts are actually related to one another, and can be summarized as follows: the heart with traffic (v. 4, 19); the heart with rocks (v. 5-6, 20-21); the heart with thorns (v. 7, 22); and the good heart which bears fruit (v. 8, 23). Only the fourth and last heart gives the seed the proper growth. We recognize that this parable shows four different kinds of hearts, but this parable shows more than that. It is actually about the growth of Christ in the heart. How do we know this? Because the thorns, which are from the third kind of heart, grow in the shallow ground, which is the second kind of heart. Thorns grow on dry, shallow places. Any soil that is rich and deep rarely has thorns. This indicates that these four kinds of hearts can be seen as progressive and related to one another. They can also be four possible conditions in the same heart.

## **The Definition of the Heart**

First we must ask, "What is the heart?" We know that man has a body, a soul, and a spirit. Our spirit is made up of our conscience, intuition, and fellowship. Our soul is made up of our mind, emotion, and will. What, then, is our heart? Our heart is our soul plus our conscience. When the conscience regulates a person's soul, then that person has a good heart. When a person does not have a good conscience to regulate his soul, then he has a bad heart. If we say that a certain man is evil, and has an evil heart, what that really means is that he has an evil conscience, and out of his evil conscience he has an evil living.

Thus, to have a good heart requires a good conscience, and a good conscience comes from the healthy experience of the human spirit. What is it to have a healthy experience of the spirit? The experience of our spirit begins with the intuition. When we have a desire to be in the Lord's presence, and the Lord moves within us, this is a matter of our intuition. In turn, this generates fellowship, and we begin to fellowship more with the Lord. It is out of such fellowship that we experience a good conscience. Then, when we have a good conscience, we also have a good heart. Our conscience determines what kind of person we are. When we talk about the heart, we should realize that in large part we are talking about the conscience. A person who has a good heart is someone who has a good conscience operating within him.

### **The First Heart: The Heart with Traffic**

The first heart in Matthew 13 is the heart with worldly traffic. The ground at the wayside is hardened by too much traffic, so that the seeds are not able to penetrate. This shows us that no matter how good our spirit is, no matter how good our conscience is, when too much traffic goes through us the seed does not have the place to grow properly. The growth of the seed in our heart is not just based on our desire to love the Lord and follow Him. It is based on our ability to handle the traffic. Traffic will always come. We should not decide to become a monk so that there is no more traffic in our lives. There is no traffic in a monastery, but there are no seeds either. In the church life, on the other hand, the seed is not only sown into us initially but keeps being sown into us through the constant speaking of the truth. However, for the seed to grow we need to properly handle the traffic in our heart. Many times when a lot of traffic goes through us we lose our ability to let the seed grow. We let all the things that we are doing become our priority. But we have also experienced being busy with a lot of things, yet we are still kept in the Lord's presence. This should be our normal experience. We should be able to let traffic go through us without being occupied and without being so anxious. When we let things occupy us, they can become a traffic to harden our heart. In the midst of all our activities we should tell the Lord, "Lord, keep my heart from being caught with these things, so that Your seed can grow." Then we will be saved from frustrations.

Our problem is that we know the Lord cares for us, but we care for ourselves

more. This causes our heart to be like the wayside. Many things go through us, until we are so busy that eventually there is very little chance for the Lord to grow properly. We will always have things going through us. We will always have some traffic, but our heart should still be at peace. We must keep ourselves restful before the Lord. We should not get into anxiety, we should not get into excitement, and we should not be occupied with too many activities. When we are so busy that we are overwhelmed then we must ask the Lord for a restful heart. "Lord, don't let my heart be crowded with so much traffic that Your seed has no place to grow." This is to deal with our heart. When our conscience is good and we do not let the traffic affect us so much, then our heart can become the good soil.

### **The Second Heart: The Heart with Rocks**

The second heart is the rocky heart, which is related to the self-life. The first heart is hardened outwardly, but the second heart is hardened because of rocks which are hidden inwardly. A person may be pleasant and well-behaved outwardly, but inwardly he is untouchable. It is the untouchable person whose heart is rocky. For example, suppose a brother comes to the conclusion, "I don't need to listen to any man. I don't need to listen to the brothers in the church. I only answer to Christ!" This means that he is untouchable. When a person says, "I am responsible only to Christ," it really means, "I only love myself." Such a person has not realized that Christ is also with His Body. Christ is too far away for us to be responsible only to Him directly. Of course, we surely must answer to the Lord. We must abide in the Lord's anointing, we must let the Lord lead us, and we must do everything in His presence. But at the same time we must realize that Christ is also in and with His Body. We should not say, "I can bypass the church. I can bypass the brothers. I am responsible only to Christ!" Then we will get ourselves into trouble. This means that we are untouchable. Our heart has become hard.

How does the heart become hard? It becomes hard when the self-life is offended. When the self-life is offended there is no more room for the Lord to grow. Yet the church life is always offending our self-life. The church life can be filled with offenses. When offenses are not dealt with and become an accumulation, it means that the heart has become rocky. We need to remember what Peter said: "How often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" (Matt. 18:22). What does it mean for there to be "seven times"? It means that there is a rocky heart. Perhaps a brother offended Peter, but the first time he could handle it. His conscience was still good. But eventually after a second time, and a third time, and a fourth time Peter was filled with frustrations. Within Peter a rocky heart was produced. But when he went to the Lord, the Lord told him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but, up to seventy times seven" (Matt. 18:23). This word must have softened Peter's heart. Otherwise, how could the Lord still use him? We must realize that when offenses accumulate, the heart becomes rocky. When there is a rocky heart, the seed cannot grow.

In the church life we must learn how to let go of our offenses. The saints will often offend us. Those we love will offend us, and those who love us will offend us. The ones we raise up will offend us, and the ones who raise us up will offend us. It is impossible for no one to offend us. If no one offends us, our church life is actually just a social life. The church life should be like a family. In a family, the husband offends his wife, the wife offends her husband, the parents offend their children, and the children offend their parents. But in a healthy family, there is always enough love to dissolve the offenses. In the church life, however, when the offenses build up over a long period of time, there may not be enough love to dissolve the offenses. This is why we must pray, "Lord, I don't want my heart to be rocky. I need Your mercy, so that no matter what happens, offenses do not accumulate within me."

The moment we begin to consider a brother or sister who offended us, a little rock begins to grow in our heart. It may be small, but it still frustrates the growth of the Lord and the growth of the truth within us. We must realize that the reason we are offended is because we love ourselves. Not only do we love ourselves, but we insist on our self-life. This means that we insist on our way. When we love ourselves, and we insist on our way, then that is when the rocks begin to come in. This is why some brothers are filled with bitterness, complaints, murmurings, and offenses. How can this happen? It happens when we cannot forgive the offenses, when we love our self-life, and when we insist on our way. If this is the case, then eventually nothing can grow. Because all our love is utilized for ourselves, there is no more love to dissolve the offenses. When all our love is focused only on ourselves, then there is no more room for the Lord to grow within us. We must ask the Lord to keep our heart soft, so that the seed can grow.

### **The Third Heart: The Heart with Thorns**

In the second heart, the heart with the rocky places, it is difficult for the seed to grow. However, it is very easy for thorns to grow. Thorns need very little dirt to grow in. We have just seen that when we love ourselves too much we can have a rocky heart with shallow ground. That shallow ground can then become the next kind of heart, which is like a field filled with thorns. What are the thorns? Thorns signify a curse, because they grew after God cursed the ground (Gen. 3:17-18). The third kind of heart is one that is preoccupied with all kinds of curses. Then the Lord told us specifically that the thorns signify the anxiety of this age and the deceitfulness of riches (Matt. 13:22). This means that everything we like, and everything we pursue, can actually become a curse to us. Thorns grow very fast, and choke whatever is healthy. Thorns are alive, but their life is a cursed life. When thorns grow in our heart it means that we are preoccupied with all kinds of curses.

What determines whether something is a curse or not? It is based on whether we know how to put it aside. A car, for example, is not a curse by itself. The Lord can provide us with a car as a blessing. But when we struggle for a car and become preoccupied with it, then it becomes a curse. Whatever we are preoccupied with

becomes a curse to us. We do need certain things in our human life. First we need a family. Then we need a house. We need a car. We need a career. We need a bank account. All of these are normal. For any human being, these are normal. We should have these things and enjoy them. But when we are preoccupied with them, they become a curse. For example, we don't need to fight for a house. God will provide us with one. To live in a house is normal, because we need a place to stay. But when we struggle for a house, then it becomes a preoccupying curse.

A person who is preoccupied cannot grow properly before the Lord. We must realize that the Christian life is a life joined to Christ. "He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. 6:17). Our life is a life in the spirit. The Lord leads us, strengthens us, comforts us, and stands with us in our spirit. In our spirit, there is a restfulness, there is a peacefulness, and there is joy. So in our spirit we should be restful before the Lord. We do not need to be preoccupied. When we are restful in the Lord, then the thorns will not grow, because we will not be preoccupied with anything.

Thorns have a form of life. They may even be green, which is a color of life. They may seem quite harmless. But when the thorns grow in a field they quickly choke whatever is growing nearby. Everything that should grow cannot grow because the thorns are there. It is significant that the thorns are often green. This should scare us. The thorns have life. Many times brothers feel defensive when they want something in the world. They say, "This is just the normal human life. What's wrong with it?" What they are seeking for may be normal, but if they are preoccupied with it, it has become thorns to them. It has become something living to choke what is good in them. Anything which becomes a preoccupation, no matter how normal it seems, will choke the normal process of growth.

### **The Anxiety of the Age and the Deceitfulness of Riches**

The thorns signify two things: the anxiety of the age and the deceitfulness of riches. The anxiety of the age refers to things which are legal and which we need to survive. Even legal things become thorns when they preoccupy us. This is why the Lord told us not to be anxious over such matters as food and clothing (Matt. 6:31). He knows our needs and will take care of us. After the legal things, there is something further. This is called the deceitfulness of riches. After we have what we need, we often want something better. The Lord provided us a house, but we want a better house. The Lord provided us a car, but we want a better car. We think that this is normal, but it is actually very deceitful. These riches themselves are deceitful. They are like thorns which are living and waiting to choke the healthy growth. Everything that we seek after is trying to cheat us, but for some reason we think that it is normal. "I should live in a certain kind of house. I should drive in a certain kind of car." These are all deceitful. If the Lord provides us something, we should take it. If we have the leading of the Lord to purchase something, we should buy it. But if we say, "That's it! That's what I want!" then that becomes the deceitfulness of riches.

The third kind of heart, the ground with thorns, is made up of two items. First

there is the anxiety of this age. This age makes us anxious for too many things, including many needs which are legitimate. Everyone on this earth must handle the necessities for their living. This produces the anxiety of the age. We should handle this anxiety by trusting in the Lord and His provision, and by being restful concerning all our needs. Then secondly, even after our needs are fulfilled, there is the deceitfulness of riches. Riches come in to deceive us. None of us can bypass this. Everyone on this earth desires to upgrade the quality of their living. So we must learn to be before the Lord. "I have Christ. I walk with Christ, and I enjoy the Lord's presence. Wherever I am, and whatever I have, I am totally satisfied." Such an exercise before the Lord will deal with all the thorns. This will cause us to have the fourth kind of heart, the good earth.

### **Responding to the First Three Kinds of Hearts**

Before we come to the good earth, we must remember how to respond to the first three conditions of the heart. We should learn not to let our heart be hardened by a lot of traffic. To keep our heart from being rocky and shallow, we should not love ourselves, insist on our self-life, nor allow offenses to accumulate. To deal with the thorns, which are preoccupying curses, we should be satisfied with Christ and His provision for us. The rocks are inward, and the thorns are outward. The rocks within us prevent the Lord from having room to grow. The thorns outside of us bring us into anxiety or deceitfulness and choke the healthy growth. So there are three kinds of hearts: those with traffic, those with rocks, and those with thorns. These three kinds of hearts all apply to us. We must be before the Lord about each condition within us.

### **The Fourth Heart: The Good Earth**

Eventually the Lord tells us that there is a fourth kind of heart, which is the good earth. "But the one sown on the good earth, this is he who hears the word and understands, who by all means bears fruit and produces, one a hundred-fold, and one sixty-fold, and one thirty-fold" (Matt. 13:23). We might ask ourselves, is the fourth kind of heart born this way? Is the good earth born the good earth? The answer is that every human being is born with the same kind of heart in which many negative things can grow and take place. This is true of everyone. There is no exception. Everyone's heart by nature can become like the first three hearts. So then, whose heart is the good earth? Even among us who love the Lord so much, do we feel that we already have a good heart? Isn't there traffic going through us all the time, causing our heart to become hard? While we are so desirous to love the Lord, aren't there many rocks within us, and aren't these rocks sometimes very large? Aren't we anxious about so many things? Not one of us can say, "Praise the Lord, with me there is no traffic, rocks, or thorns. Within me the Lord is totally free to grow."

For example, none of us has a heart without any rocks. The only difference is that some of us may have a lot of rocks, and some may have only a little. But when

any of us hear a word that is not in our favor, we get offended. Every one of us is selfish. We are always looking after our own interests and insisting on our own way. This is why our hearts are rocky. Furthermore, everyone in this world is under the curse. The thorns came because of God's curse after man fell. Everyone lives under God's curse. Who can say that in his life he is out of God's curse already? That is impossible until at least the age of the millennium. Eventually we have to admit that now we live in an age of impossibility. Who can say that there is no traffic? Who can say their heart has no rocks? Who can say that the outside world has no effect on their existence? Who can say, "Praise the Lord, I have a good heart! My heart is just the good earth!" No one can. Basically we must come to the conclusion that there is no good earth. Not one of us has a good heart. In the end, it seems that we are all hopeless.

Yet the Lord did say that there is a condition of the heart which He called the good earth. The way He described it was in verse twenty-three, which we will quote again: "But the one sown on the good earth, this is he who hears the word and understands, who by all means bears fruit and produces, one a hundred-fold, and one sixty-fold, and one thirty-fold." The Lord not only said that there is the good earth, but He showed us the process it goes through. In this verse there is also the hearing of the word and the understanding of the word. To understand here means to grasp. First we hear the word, and then we understand it. We are able to grasp the word's meaning. Then out of this, by all means, we will bear fruit and produce something. The Lord used the words "by all means." What does this mean? It means to make an effort, to pay the price.

### **The Good Earth: A Heart Ready to be Plowed**

How does this apply to us? We need to simply tell the Lord, "Lord, I may have a heart with traffic. I may have a rocky heart. I may have a thorny heart. But Lord, I will pay any price so that my heart can be the good earth. Lord, I am ready. I am willing." The good earth is a heart that is rich and moist. It is a heart that has the readiness to bear fruit. What does this mean practically? This means that the heart is ready to be plowed. If we want the fruit to come out of us, our heart must be ready to be plowed. There is a verse in the Psalms, "the plowers plowed upon my back" (Psa. 129:3). This means that when God works with us, and deals with our person, He is actually plowing us. To plow is to take away all the frustrations which can hinder the growth of the seed. To be plowed is to be purged of stones and thorns. God has a way to purge us out. When we have a lot of stones in our heart, then God will come in to plow. He will allow some environment to come. He will arrange some situations. He will work out some experiences just to purge the rocks within us. If we want to be the good earth, and our heart is truly ready, it means that we are telling the Lord, "I am ready for you to plow."

It is easy for God to come in and plow when our heart is ready. He will take away whatever the obstacles are which frustrate the growth of the seed. When we have

too much traffic and our heart has become hard, then God will soften it. When we have rocks within us which make our heart too shallow, then God will purge them out. When we have thorns outside of us which are choking our growth, then God will clear the ground. He will plow us and purge us. He will take care of our heart, and make it the good earth.

No heart is automatically ready for the seeds to grow. We should not take this parable in a doctrinal way. We should not think that there are four kinds of hearts, and ask, "Which kind of heart do I have?" All of us have the first three hearts. We have a heart of traffic, a heart of rocks, and a heart of thorns. But we may not have the fourth heart, the good earth. So we must tell the Lord, "I know I have the first three hearts, and Lord, I'm not the good earth. So Lord, have mercy! I give myself to You. By all means, do whatever You want to do in me. I consecrate myself to You. You can plow me. You can purge me. You can do whatever You must do. You can arrange all the environments, arrange all the situations, give me all the leadings, and do all the things within me so that my heart can be a place for You to grow." Then our heart can become the good earth.

The good earth is not what we think. It's not that our heart just spontaneously becomes the good earth. Every person has the characteristics of the first three hearts, but no person naturally has the last one. No one has a good heart. A good heart means a tender heart. Again, this comes from telling the Lord, "I give You the freedom. By any means, I endeavor to work with You. Whatever You desire, I will cooperate. I will not murmur. I will not exercise self-effort. I will just submit myself to You. Lord, by all means, do something within me. I will pay any price to become fruitful." Only this kind of person can become the good earth for the seed to grow.

### **Bearing Fruit to Meet the Needs of God and Man**

We should also remember that when the seed grows and bears fruit, it produces a hundred-fold, sixty-fold, or thirty-fold. These numbers are significant. To produce thirty-fold is to meet God's need, because three is the number of God. To produce sixty-fold is to meet man's need, because six is the number of man. And to produce a hundred-fold is to meet both God and man's need, because ten is a number of fullness. That is why the good earth is so valuable. When our heart is the good earth, it will bear fruit thirty-fold to meet God's need, sixty-fold to meet man's need, and a hundred-fold to meet God's and man's need in a full way. Eventually our existence becomes so precious and so valuable to the Lord in His economy.

When we consider these four hearts, we must tell the Lord, "Lord, I am hopeless, but I am also thankful. I can completely give myself to You, so that You may by all means be able to work with me. I would like to be the good earth for the seed within me to grow. I pray that I can become a blessing to Your economy. I pray that I can bear fruit to meet Your need and the need of mankind." How wonderful this is! May the Lord have mercy on us, that we would allow Him to make our heart into the good earth."

*- Titus Chu*

## **Introduction to the Index**

I have had the benefit of working with material of the type contained in these issues in a way few have, and realize others normally do not have the privilege to have gained what I have by that exercise. I, of course, have it laid upon me as a responsibility of sorts, and therefore often initially approach the words spoken much like anyone else—in ignorance of what the mass of words really contain. Because of my commitment, however, I end up becoming engaged with what was ministered, regardless how I initially viewed the enterprise. This has been my blessing. The reader hopefully benefits from some of this labor, but even though it may be more approachable in its edited form, I am concerned that it is still not appropriately taken advantage of.

I considered giving my own testimonies of what I came to appreciate from each conference or series of messages I have labored upon. Would that incite something? (For instance, when laboring over what Titus shared on the ministry of the apostle John, I came to realize the situation John faced at the end of the age of the apostles really matched ours, and that Peter faced a challenge I had not before appreciated. I came to understand when working on the conference regarding the church in Antioch how the example of their church life opens a great door for us today. When editing messages on Moses, I came to appreciate how God will use a man who, in his own eyes, is “all washed up.” There is much more, of course. I have been helped to see things in the Word I doubt I could have realized on my own.) I began to make a list, but then held up for lack of peace.

Please consider the following index as a long menu of various dishes that have been presented over the past years in this publication. Remarkably, articles from all issues of the Fellowship Journal are available online at [www.clevelandonline.org](http://www.clevelandonline.org) (with the current exception of the experimental Volume 4, Number 12). Many recent issues are also now available in a more readable facsimile format at [www.ministrymessages.org](http://www.ministrymessages.org). Thankfully, issues at both websites lack many of the errors found in what was originally produced, particularly after I became responsible for getting issues to the printer. For this, I am grateful.

- *John Berglund*

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*[Articles from previous Issues are available for viewing online at [clevelandonline.org](http://clevelandonline.org). Beginning with Volume 5, issues are also available in .pdf format at [ministrymessages.org](http://ministrymessages.org). Announcements printed in the Fellowship Journal concerning new books, upcoming conferences, websites, etc., are not included in this index, although that which is of informational value concerning past events is listed (such as pictures from conferences, etc., placed on the inside of issue covers, although such are only to be found in printed copies). Pictures considered part of an article are not referenced separately. Articles are listed by title and order of appearance in the printed journal. If no authorship is given, none was named.]*

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Was It in Vain? Be Steadfast... Knowing that Your Labor Is Not in Vain in the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58) (Nigel Tomes)

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To Serve in Humanity with Divinity: Message Two: The Pattern of Our Brother Paul in the Book of Romans (Titus Chu)

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Our Understanding: The Lord’s Recovery (David Shields)

The Days May Yet Grow Darker [poem] (M. E. Barber)

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Five: Journeying Through the Stages of Life (Titus Chu)

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Sacrifice Leads Us to Consecration (Del Martin)

The Impact of the Printing Press: Few Inventions Have Been More Useful in the Lord's Work  
(James Reetzke)

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Living Portraits: Robert C. Chapman (1803–1902): Eighty Years of Living Christ  
(Nigel Tomes)

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Apology (John Berglund)

2006 Labor Day Conference in Cleveland: The Apostle John's Concluding Ministry for the Church Life Then and Now: Message One (Titus Chu)

2006 Labor Day Conference in Cleveland: The Apostle John's Concluding Ministry for the Church Life Then and Now: Message Two (Titus Chu)

2006 Labor Day Conference in Cleveland: The Apostle John's Concluding Ministry for the Church Life Then and Now: Message Three (Titus Chu)

2006 Labor Day Conference in Cleveland: The Apostle John's Concluding Ministry for the Church Life Then and Now: Message Four (Titus Chu)

2006 Labor Day Conference in Cleveland: The Apostle John's Concluding Ministry for the Church Life Then and Now: Message Five (Titus Chu)

Is the Recovery on the Road to Rome? (Nigel Tomes)

**Volume 6, Number 1 (January 2007) 36 pp.**

Encouragement to Imbibe (John Berglund)

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College Training in Montreal 2006: Moses and the Israelites: Experiencing God's Great Salvation in Exodus (Titus Chu)

[song: "Though I love You, Lord..."]

The Test of Oneness (Dave Shields)

The Reason God Measures Things to Us (Titus Chu)

The Experience of Christ in Philippians: Living Out the Oneness as Luminaries through the One Living, One Pursuing and One Fellowship (book excerpt from The Oneness and the One Accord by Titus Chu)

LSM's Quarantine of Titus Chu: Does the Evidence Justify the Verdict? (Nigel Tomes)

From the Ministry of Witness Lee [1Cor 16:12]

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Near Sullivan, Ohio...Properties for Various Gatherings (pictures, inside back cover)

**Volume 6, Number 2 (March 2007) "The Significance of Antioch" 64 pp.**

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[Letter to Titus Chu from brothers in West Africa]  
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(photo collage from Goshen "Coffee Shop", inside front cover)

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Repentance (song by "J.G.")

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The Experience of Christ in Philippians: Message Thirty-Four [sic]: Weeping Over a Walk, Rejoicing Over a Commonwealth [Philippians 3:18-21] (Titus Chu)

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Vision Month for College-Aged Brothers and Sisters: Running a Life of Excellency: Message One (Titus Chu) [embedded: Titus on the matter of songs]

The Experience of Christ in Philippians: Message Thirty-Five [sic]: Eagerly Awaiting a Savior Who Will Conform Our Bodies to His Body in Glory [Philippians 3:20-21] (Titus Chu)

[from the Preface of "More of Christ: Seeing the Heavenly Man" by Rex Beck]

More of Christ: Seeing the Heavenly Man: Chapter 13: The Heavenly Man as the Source and Sphere of Corporate Unity (Rex Beck)

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Joshua: A Life of Service: Message Five: Rising Up and Fighting to Enter the Land (2) (Titus Chu)

(pictures from Uganda on inside back cover)

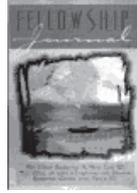
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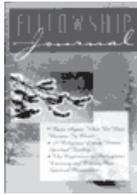
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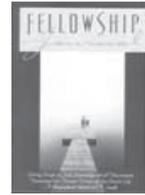
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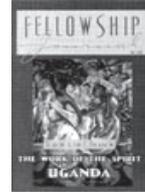
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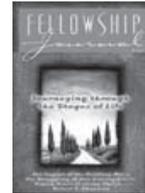
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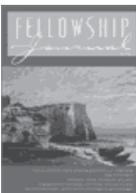
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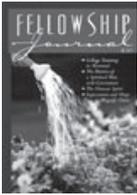
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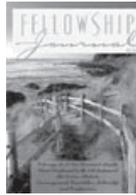
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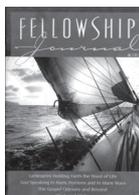


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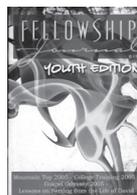
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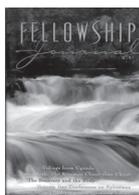
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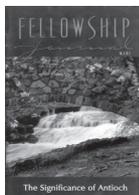
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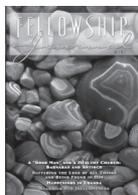
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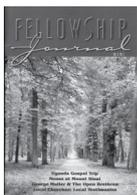
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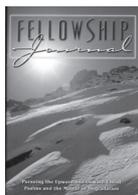
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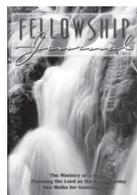
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