



# THE SOWER

Volume 5, Issue 1

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Jan/Feb 2003

## A Godly Way to Handle Persecution

Dear Saints,

God bless you with all good things. As we gear up for another year and make our goals and plans, there is nothing more certain than the fact that we will face adversity. Some of this will be natural. For example, if we want to learn to hang glide or do technical mountain climbing, we will find gravity to be a serious adversary. But this is not a personal thing. Gravity adversely affects everyone who tries to go against it. We understand this, this is not hard to deal with, and we can easily accept it in evaluating the benefits or the consequences of our choices.

We decide to go on a diet this year and are suddenly surrounded by all our favorite foods in abundance. So do we accuse the hostess at our Christmas party of personally attacking us? Not if we want to be invited back. Though this kind of opposition to our commitments can feel almost personal, we recognize it as a natural thing. We realize that as soon as we have made a commitment we will have opportunity to blow it. The universe just seems to work that way.

What is harder to deal with is



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### Starting a Fellowship

By Dan Gallagher  
CES Fellowship Community  
Coordinator

How do we go about starting a fellowship? Wouldn't it be great if we had a simple little formula we could apply and instantly have a fellowship? I don't have a formula, but I do believe that, just like in planting a crop, there are certain

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when we face *personal* opposition to the things we value and decisions we make. Sometimes this opposition is appropriate because we have made a bad decision and those who love us are trying to help us see that what we want to do is harmful to others or ourselves. Such godly opposition hopefully comes in the form of honest disagreement, but without efforts to either control or punish us. These are “the wounds from a friend,” of which Proverbs 27:6 speaks.

Other times the opposition we face is of a more aggressive kind, and involves a person or group going out of their way to “pursue” us to push us to change or to punish us for not doing so. This falls into the category of “persecution,” something that literally means “to be pursued or chased.” God’s Word says that all godly people “will be persecuted” (2 Tim. 3:12 NRSV). The verb is in the indicative future passive, and thus simply states a future fact. The only way to get out of it is to not live in a godly way, and even then we’re going to feel hounded by the consequences of our sins.

So if persecution is part of the program for a faithful believer, how are we supposed to deal with it? Jesus addresses the subject directly, in the context of “the parable of the sower.” The immature will allow persecution to prevent them from growing up spiritually (Matt. 13:21).

Jesus calls them “blessed” who are persecuted for being and doing rightly (Matt. 5:10), implying that if you are not righteous you can expect persecution without being blessed. If we have to choose, let’s order the one with the blessing with it. In Matthew 5:44 Jesus gives us a very definite way of being with those who persecute us. “But I tell

you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

So, ok, fine, we’ll pray for them. We’ll pray for... retaliation, or God’s judgment on them, or for them to fall into a big hole. We’ll get a bumper sticker that says, “I brake to pray for God’s retribution on those who oppose me.”

No, the fact is, we are supposed to learn to *endure* persecution without retaliating as a necessary part of following the Lord. Learning to do so is an important way of demonstrating that we believe that God is our sufficiency. We learn to take solace by doing our best to be faithful to Him and to accept the consequences of doing so in a fallen world orchestrated by the Devil, and antagonistic to godliness.

There is another important reason to learn to endure persecution with no desire for revenge (not even a little bit, Lord? Couldn’t they just fall into a *small* hole?). That is, in seeing ourselves as victims of persecution, we could turn into persecutors ourselves. How could that happen? It happens according to the Drama Triangle, a concept popularized by Daniel Karpman in an article he wrote in 1968, but clearly evidenced in Scripture. The triangle is formed by three interacting players: the persecutor, the victim, and the rescuer. Each role plays off of the others, and traps each player in a dramatic cycle that tumbles them around like they were in a dryer. Once you start playing one role you will play them all eventually.

The persecutor is the villain who attacks the victim, who then cries out for help. Enter the rescuer who thwarts the persecutors evil plans and saves the damsel in distress. Variations of this theme

abound in literary and cinematic art.

For our purposes here, we just need to understand that most persecutors perceive themselves as victims protecting themselves from being victimized again. The Devil, the biggest persecutor we can think of, thinks of himself as a victim of God’s injustice. He just wanted a little independence, after all, and discover his identity apart from his oppressive and controlling Creator, and for that he got booted out of the heavenly castle. He is now trying to “free” others from The Tyrant who imposes His morality on everybody and insists on being the only God.

Thus, Satan is on an unholy vendetta against his Maker, doing his best to chase down and victimize those who believe in God and His Son Jesus Christ. But he does it because he thinks himself a victim, and then fancies himself a rescuer. That’s a good reason to avoid thinking like a victim. The way to break out of the Drama Triangle is to forgive, let Jesus do the rescuing, and leave vengeance to God.

It is a sad reality that most humans who are guilty of persecuting or abusing others are just perpetuating evil that was perpetrated upon them. Victims of child abuse abuse their own children, and so on. Unless we learn to forgive in the depth of our hearts and bless those who have persecuted us, we will unconsciously continue their practices and create victims in our own wake. Yuck!

### Being “Under Attack”

We are most certainly in a spiritual battle, and thus are subjected to a variety of “flaming arrows of the evil one” (Eph. 6:16 NRSV). But we must be careful not

to over dramatize this, or to attribute to the Devil and his minions what is only natural opposition and adversity. If we become “super-spiritual” and see the Devil and demons behind every hindering circumstance, every criticism, or anything that makes us feel bad, we are going to start developing a persecution complex and even paranoia. This happens when we over-personalize the spiritual battle.

Well, if we have a *personal* adversary, shouldn't we be taking it pretty *personally* when we get attacked? First of all, we must remember what the Word says in 1 Corinthians 10:13 (NRSV) “No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone.” Tires are going to blow, sleet is going to fall, arguments are going to happen and friends are going to betray us. In all these things we are still “more than conquerors” and can see the hand of our delivering God, to whom we must keep looking steadfastly. When we over-dramatize the adverse circumstances and invest them with all kinds of spiritual significance, we may just be setting ourselves up for more spiritual problems as well as look pretty silly in the process.

Enduring persecution and not responding in kind does not mean, however, that we never respond at all. In both Jesus' and Paul's examples we can learn that there is a time for answering our accusers and even “silencing” them. Titus 1:9-13 addresses the need for the Christian leader to “have a firm grasp of the word...so that he may be able both to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.” And, speaking of those who oppose sound teaching, Paul says, “There are also many rebellious people, idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the

circumcision; they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for sordid gain what it is not right to teach.” What is Paul's method of “silencing” these people? “Rebuke them sharply.” And his motivation? “So that they may become sound in the faith.”

No doubt when Titus followed Paul's advice, these people felt “attacked,” and probably thought that the two men were “persecuting” them. But there is a big difference between speaking truthfully in accordance with Scripture (and with a godly motive) and misleading God's people away from sound teaching and practice.

We must stick with Paul's exhortation to Timothy, “to preach with sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict it.” Sound doctrine concerning persecution is that we endure it patiently, responding not to defend ourselves but to affirm the truth of God's Word and to protect His people from evil.

Again we must avoid the extremes—of living to avoid persecution or becoming so used to it that we become indifferent to it. We need to learn to endure it patiently, pray for mercy on those who persecute us, let the pain remind us of Jesus and all he went through for us, and keep faithful to our calling despite opposition.

Enduring with you,

*Mark & Karen Anne  
Graeser, John & Elizabeth  
Lynn, John & Jenivee  
Schoenheit, and  
Gary & Karen Theisen*

*(Starting A Fellowship continued  
from page 1)*

things we can do to increase the odds of our success. No farmer would ever expect to have a great harvest if he merely walked into an unprepared field and tossed seeds into the air. The good farmer prepares the field, tills the soil, and properly plants the seed. His diligence in watering, weeding, and fertilizing directly affects the size of his harvest. I believe that, just like the farmer, there are certain fundamental things we can do to affect the success of our fellowships.

A fellowship can be any gathering of saints who come together to glorify the Father and His Son. The objective of the fellowship is “to make disciples” and help us all conform to the image of Christ. That gives us a lot of latitude in activities and options that can be called a “fellowship.” A fellowship does not have to be a teaching fellowship; it could be a prayer fellowship, a music fellowship, a healing fellowship, or whatever else you think of. However, all fellowship activities should direct us to Christ.

During the past few years, I've found that prosperous fellowships have a few common elements, which I've listed below. Let me know if you have others that I've overlooked.

- *Have a nucleus of at least two committed partners.* I believe it is very important to team up with others who share the same vision and heart for the success of the fellowship. This is not to say that you couldn't do it on your own, but it is very helpful to share the load with another. Also, there are going to be times when you

feel worn down and your partner will be able to help lift you up. I'm reminded how Jesus sent his disciples out witnessing to the towns in groups of two's. There's a lesson in that for us to learn.

- **Stay consistent.** It's important to set a time and place where you will be meeting, and then stick to it. Fellowships have the greatest success when they meet consistently each week, on the same day, same time, and at the same place. In general, when you meet every other week, people can get confused about which week you meet. Meeting inconsistently allows people an easy reason to talk themselves out of coming.

- **Stay committed.** Your commitment to the success of the fellowship is vital. Life has its way of popping up with all types of reasons that talk us out of meeting. I guarantee that once you make the vow to start fellowshiping, the enemy will throw everything your way to distract you. There were many nights when no one came but my wife, Lori, but we still faithfully sat down for prayer and reading the Word together. God must be very proud when we stay faithful to our vows for service to Him. This is another good reason why it's very helpful to have a partner, so that if one wants to quit, the other can encourage him.

- **Pray often.** I hesitate to write this as number four because it is really number one. When you begin to fellowship and serve God's children, you have just volunteered for service on the front line of the spiritual

battle, and prayer is your principal offensive weapon. You will need to pray often and fervently for your fellowship. When we first started, Lori and I would pray every day over breakfast for the fellowship, and most especially for the Lord to open doors for us to speak the Word, which brings me to the next item.

- **Talk to people.** You can't expect people to come if you don't invite them. I know that most of us are frightened by the prospect of "witnessing" to people. I've tried to stop thinking of it as witnessing. Instead, I think of it as: I have something great and I want to share it with others. Don't talk to people with the agenda of trying to get them to your fellowship—they'll see through that in a heartbeat. Rather, find out about them, what's happening in their lives, what are they looking for, how can you serve them? Remember, it's the goodness of God that leads men unto repentance. You be the vehicle by which God's love is communicated to them.

- **Stay flexible.** You don't want to have a lot of predetermined concepts on what your fellowship should look like. The Lord knows the needs of those around you, so stay flexible to his direction. Every human is different and unique, so stay sensitive and ready to adjust to meet their needs. I know of one person who kept trying to have a teaching fellowship, but it failed continuously. Finally, he gave up, the Lord took it in an entirely different direction, and it flourished.

- **Focus on the goals.** The purpose of fellowshiping is to promote the Good News of salvation and to make disciples (Matt. 28:19). The fellowship should be a place to learn and grow in the Lord. You don't have to be a teaching fellowship to avail yourself of classes, books, and tapes. Your gatherings should be promoting sound teaching and producing spiritual growth in you and those that attend. Don't make the mistake of running a club instead of a fellowship. A club can be fun but not very profitable spiritually.

- **Just do it.** Sorry to borrow a common phrase, but there is a lot of truth to it. We have a tendency to discount ourselves or to think that, "I'll start once I get the house in order, or learn more of the Word, or..." Well, you get the idea. We may have fear, but the only thing that causes us to fail is giving in to those fears. Our desiring to have a fellowship is a beautiful thing in God's sight.

It melts the Lord's heart to see you striving to serve the good news of the Gospel to the world. A primary way to do that is by taking the lead and starting a fellowship. I encourage you to figuratively drive a stake in the ground of your town, claim this soil for the Lord, and take a vow to do your best to serve the Bread of Life to your community through your new fellowship.

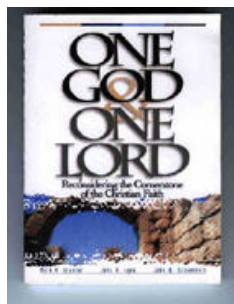
*If you have already started a fellowship and would like to be connected to the CES Fellowship Community for mutual support and edification, let Dan know by calling 916-784-7117 or e-mailing him at CESwest@rcsis.net.*

## Leadership Team Meeting 2002 Tapes Available

You can now own a set of the tapes of this dynamic gathering of saints who participated in a weekend of strategic planning and workshops designed to equip leaders to serve more effectively and to help this ministry grow. You will be able to hear all the committee reports, ideas for all aspects of the ministry and programs for outreach that are in the planning stages. We know that many more saints would have liked to have been a part of this event, and now you can be via the tapes.

The cost is only \$25 (plus S&H).

Order online at [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)  
or see page 6 of the enclosed price list.



*“Who do  
you say  
that I am?”*

This question, once posed by Jesus Christ to his disciples, is the question every human being will one day have to answer. Can there be a more vital truth than the identity of the Son of God, the Savior of mankind, the only way to salvation? What percentage of people on the earth today do you think know the real answer? Let's just say it is miniscule at best, and how heartbreaking is that to God and the Lord Jesus Christ?

It took us five years to write our book titled *One God & One Lord: Reconsidering the Cornerstone of*

*the Christian Faith*. Written with much heart and compassion, it answers the above question in painstaking detail, and is thus bringing deliverance to people around the world.

How many? Over 3,000 and growing daily. At least that's how many we have sold or given away since the book came out in early 2000. As of January 1, we have 120 soft cover in stock. That means that by about February we will need to print another 1000 copies. That will cost us close to \$15,000, which we do not have now.

We know that God will somehow provide for us to print this wonderful book, because of the great truth it contains, truth hidden for centuries, truth that cost countless people their lives, truth that will set people free. We are letting you know this in case you want to be the "somehow" God provides. If He touches your heart, and you share with us all or part of the amount we need... THANK YOU!

Mark Graeser & Bob Maffit



We want to extend a very special thank you to Bob Maffit for his yeoman's effort in volunteering hundreds of hours to editing the *One God & One Lord* book (3rd edition). You're a blessing, Bob!



## Calendar Corner



### 2003

**January 31 to February 2**  
*West Coast Conference*  
Santa Clara, CA

**February 13-16**  
*One Flesh Couples' Retreat*  
Hidden Falls Camp &  
Conference Center  
Bedford, IN  
(by invitation only)

**March 28-30\***  
*Women's Conference*  
Kalamazoo, MI

**April 11-13\***  
*Praise & Worship Conference*  
Dallas, TX

**June 28 to July 4**  
*Teens & Twenties Camp*  
Camp Hope, NC

**July 20-25**  
*CES Family Camp*  
Pokagon State Park, IN  
Call as soon as you can. Rooms fill up fast!  
877-768-2928

**September 18-21**  
*CES Leadership Team Meeting*  
Indianapolis, IN

**October 10-12**  
*Men's Conference*  
Hidden Falls Camp &  
Conference Center  
Bedford, IN

Register online at  
[www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

\* See flyers in this issue!

### ***44 Acre Camp in Southern Indiana Acquired by Friends of CES!***

Dan and Lori Gallagher of Roseville, California have been looking for property to buy near the CES Home Office for almost a year. They were thinking of a few acres and a small house for them to stay in while visiting on CES business, but God had bigger plans. Providentially, we found out about a 44 acre Christian camp near Martinsville, Indiana that was slated to go to auction on Saturday, December 7.

We let Dan and Lori know about the camp, which sits atop a beautiful ridge and includes a house, 2 barns, a full gymnasium, 12 A-frame chalets, a dining hall with industrial kitchen and meeting room, a bath house, a pond, a tennis court, and more. Dan and Lori made an offer to the bank that was forcing the auction and the bank accepted it *the day before the auction*.

The owner had been unable to find an investor to help him develop the camp according to his vision, which was to make it a Christian camp that would benefit the community.

Dan and Lori plan to work with us to make the camp available for CES functions as soon as possible. The place needs a little TLC, so keep your ear to the ground for an announcement about ways that you or your fellowship might help us get the camp ready to receive CES campers. At present, Dan and Lori are the owners of the property, and have shouldered all the risk involved. They saw a great opportunity and seized it.

Praise God for the people in our community who are so ready and willing to give of their abundance to bless the whole Body of Christ.

#### **2 Corinthians 8:14 and 15 (NRSV)**

(14) It is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance.

(15) As it is written, "The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little."

### ***Free Indeed Update***

The Free Indeed video teaching series continues to be aired around the country. Dale Christiansen of Pocatello, Idaho recently sent this press release to us that he submitted to his local media. To find out how to get Free Indeed broadcast in your area, contact Jenivee Schoenheit at [jeniveels@aol.com](mailto:jeniveels@aol.com).

#### **For Immediate Release**

Beginning Sunday, December 15 on Pocatello Vision 12, a video series titled "Free Indeed" will air every Sunday and Wednesday at 11 p.m. It is presented by well-known author, teacher, and Old Testament scholar John Schoenheit of Christian Educational Services. This series explores Scripture from the standpoint of where it came from, how it was translated, and how we can trust it. To take a fresh look at Scripture and add to your enjoyment of the Bible, tune in real time or set your VCR for viewing later. Thirty-eight one-hour segments are scheduled, with more to follow.

### ***Have You Heard These Teachings?***

Jesus Christ & You  
(Jan/Feb 92)

Have you ever interrupted a vision from God? Peter did. This teaching very humorously and poignantly chronicles the Apostle Peter's relationship with Jesus Christ, showing how each Christian can closely identify with Peter. The same Lord who looked on Peter's heart, not his human weaknesses, will work with you to help you grow in faith and in the quality of your service to Him. By John Lynn

The Joy & Rewards of Sexual Purity (May 02)

Three dynamic women from the CES community team up to encourage the listeners to remain sexually pure, or to receive God's forgiveness and then make a new commitment to sexual purity. Nancy Berwid speaks of God's design for sexuality to be expressed in marriage, and shares her inspiring testimony about her experience of God restoring her to a place of purity after many years of disobedience to God's Word. Karen Theisen shares from her wealth of experience studying this subject biblically and teaching sexual abstinence to teenagers. Kathy Lunardini, an experienced public health nurse, then shares on sexually transmitted diseases (this part is graphic, and parental discretion is advised). Taken together, these sharings provide a powerful and persuasive package that will help anyone, but especially young people, get on the right track and glorify God with their God-designed bodies.

To order see pages 2 and 3 of the enclosed price list or order online at [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

## *Family News, Views, and Feedback*

*Do you have something to share with the CES family of believers that would edify, encourage, and inspire? If so, send it to us and we may publish it. To contact any of these folks, contact us and we will forward it on.*

*(We reserve the right to edit for readability and length, and unless you tell us otherwise, we will print your name, city, and state.)*

Dear Sower,

I saw the title of your book *One God & One Lord* and was wondering if it supports the doctrine of the Trinity or refutes it. I have never accepted the Trinity as biblical, but rather something put in place by man centuries after Jesus' death at the hands of a Roman emperor. I have a friend, however, who thinks I am doomed to hell for not accepting the three-gods-in-one concept.

God gave us the Bible as our instruction manual, and therefore it was written in concepts that we could understand. Therefore, we understand what a father is and what a son is relationship-wise. Why, if he were speaking to himself, did Jesus cry out asking his Father to let the cup (his impending torture and death) pass from him? Or make the comment that not as HE willed, but as the Father willed. If they were the same essential being, would they not have the same will? Or we understand the concept of someone's "right-hand man" (speaking of which, how do you sit at your own right hand?). The God of the Old Testament was represented as a single being. The "God" of the New Testament (by way of the Trinity doctrine) is a triune God, similar to the triune gods that were worshiped then AND during the times that the Old Testament was written.

Just sharing some of my reasons on the subject, not picking

an argument with you, if you are a believer of the Trinity doctrine.

Thanks,

Murphy

Dear Sower,

I truly appreciate you taking the time to respond to my letter. To me, there is nothing more important than understanding who Jesus Christ was and is. I am honest enough to admit that my views have changed more than once since I became a Christian in 1984 at the age of 19.

Never comfortable with the Trinitarian theory, yet never bold enough to challenge the rank and file "orthodox" church, for years I simply chose to put this issue on the back burner until last summer (2001). At that time, I began to explore the Oneness (Modalist) idea and thought for sure that I had found the viewpoint that made the most sense of the scriptures, but then I could not reconcile the prayer life of our Lord & Savior to His Father in heaven.

How can one person or personality carry on a meaningful relationship between two modes or manifestations? As the Trinity doctrine added up to too many persons in the Godhead, so Oneness came up one person short of the dynamic relationship portrayed in the New Testament between the Father and the Son.

I am in the process of reading your book *One God and One Lord*. What a blessing it has been so far as so many questions have already been answered.

It is such a joy to discover a viewpoint of the Lord Jesus that neither diminishes who he was and is nor waters down what he accomplished on our behalf.

Most refreshing of all is to read of your freedom to express love & appreciation for Jesus as well as our need to obey him and to grow in the grace and knowledge of him. And why do we do this? Because it brings glory to God our Father.

I just placed an order for some of the audio tapes and CDs on your site that I am greatly looking forward to. I know they will be a blessing to me and others who have ears to hear.

Peace & health,

Dave

### ***Would You Like To Help?***

It is almost time to reprint  
*One God & One Lord*.

We need \$15,000 and currently  
have \$2,700.

Any amount that you would  
like to contribute would be  
greatly appreciated.

See page 5 for more information.

Dear Sower,

God bless you and your family. I believe Karl Weaver told you about baby Chancellor who was born blind. At fellowship in our home (which Karl taught on Ephesians and the power within us) the child and his parents came. We prayed for the child and Karl took him and the parents aside for some private prayer. That week a foundation for the blind came through and said that they would pay all expenses for treatment. This is such a blessing since they have no insurance due to the father being out of work for some time now. Then today the child was seen by a doctor at a special clinic for the blind (another act of God through our Lord) and we found out the child is NOT blind. His retinas are fine. The doctor said there is still some muscle problems that they are going to test but that surgery and corrective lenses would be likely to correct this.

Praise God for the work He enables us to do for the Body!!!

Greg Watters and the Gang  
Ft. Worth, TX

Dear Sower,

This Men's Conference blessed me more than I have ever been blessed in my life. I didn't want the weekend to end, but when I really thought about it, I was ready. I want to get out into the world and practice my newfound courage. I want to start tearing down those "high places" — the idols in my own life — and help others do likewise.

Gary Reeve  
Encinitas, CA

## *News and Feedback from our International Community*

Dear Sower,

Greetings to you, and to all the saints with you all the time. I have received your letter, and I am so thankful for all your prayer, your love for me.

I am feeling well by now, doing good. God has renewed my strength, and healed me physically. In the past I was suffering sickness for close to one year, but, I am happy hearing from you, my dearly beloved brother John Lynn, and receiving the word of challenge, the word of encouragement, and your prayer, I agree with your word, I agree with your prayer, and I was release, and have physically healed from the diabetes, and high blood, my urine is now normal, and I have a good rest with my heart normal beat. I praise the Lord for all he has done to me, thanks for your prayer.

As of now, I back teaching the truth to the people. I have used the books and tapes you have sent to me. My place is very far, it is a remote area. I need to travel up to ten hours from the heart of Tagum City. But, in all in all in spite of the distance in spite of the area which is so far and in a remote place, I have joy in my heart teaching the truth I have learned from the CES. You know, I was with you, I was in the CES for a long time, and since the time I embrace the truth in the CES I have peace and I was so much blessed in the truth. Thank you so much for remembering me always in your prayers.

I will close for now, to hear from you is a big encouragement

for me and for my family, in the place like our place which very far in in a remote Barrio to receive mails from a dearly beloved brother like you is a big encouragement knowing that there are brother who love us, until next time. I love you, bye for now.

Edgar V. Labus  
Davao City, Philippines

Dear Sower,

God bless you richly in Christ our Lord. After the first CES national leadership conference held in one of the Davao's best convention Center, Felis Resort, we the elders presented our individual priority projects in our individual location and we just listed down our ongoing projects. But Brother Dan Gallagher saw the need for a CES Convention Center where in we will be gathering each year with all the national leaders with less expenses than we do have last May.

Our plan is to have at least five hectares of land equivalent to 11 acres more or less where we have to build our Bible College and have our American Brothers will stay for about three to four months and do the teaching sessions within that certain period. Within that particular place we will also build another building for the convention center where in we have to cater conferences, conventions, public or private institutions and companies for the said CES Convention Center to earn and then finance the Bible college and other projects. The remaining vacant land will be

planted with mangoes for additional income. Ask the CES team who was able to visit the Philippines and let them tell you how sweet and delicious is the Philippine mangoes.

The estimated price for the 11 acres is 7-10 million pesos or (\$140,000-200,000.) and the estimated building cost will reach as much as 15-20 million Pesos or (\$300,000-500,000) USD. These are all estimated initial budget for the dream of having a CES Bible college and Convention Center in the Philippines specifically in Davao City. We all know that that amount is quite huge and beyond our capacity to acquire. But the Bible says "...Let your requests be made known to God." Let us both lift this dream to God and see what he will do for this greatest dream of ours.

God bless you and let us see each other in our prayers.

Willie Matub  
Davao City, Philippines

Dear Sower,

I am Shelumiel Delima, son of Rey Delima. I am 29 years old married and have two kids ages 4 & 2 yrs old. I am recently pursuing my masteral degree in Theology at Baptist Theological College-Cebu Graduate School of Theology (BTC-CGST) in Mandaue City, Cebu. Though this school is quite traditional in some of their teachings, this is the only Bible school in the whole Cebu province which is recognized by the Commission on Higher Education here in our country as well as the PABATS (an organization of Bible schools in the Philippines). I am taking this course because I desire to be in the ministry as a fulltime

minister, and finishing this degree will be of much help to me because here in the Philippines people tend to look up to a minister's credential and qualification. And when I will already be in the ministry, I am quite assured that I will be able to gain respect from these people when I will be imparting or sharing the Word of God to them, especially teachings that are quite new to them like the CES teaching. I am quite confident about this because the curriculum of my course includes Greek Studies 1, 2, & 3; that is grammar and exegesis. Besides, upon studying this course I am able to prove further the validity and the accuracy of the CES teachings during classroom discussions and debates, wherein I am able to ask questions from my instructors and professors about the inconsistencies and some controversial traditional teachings where I found out that even they could not fully explain or defend their traditional doctrine, which only proves that such doctrines were really erroneous and lack validity.

In fact my American professor in Church History, Dr. David Prestly, admitted in class that in his twenty years of teaching, there is still confusion in his mind when it comes to the subject of Trinity. Another instance was my professor in Evangelical Theology, who has currently finished his Masters of Divinity Degree at Dallas Theological Seminary, once stated in class that TRINITY CANNOT BE FOUND in the OT. These professors have come to admit their respective statements when during the class discussion, I meticulously asked and inquired about the topic. These professors are actually Trinitarian but they themselves could not help admitting the non-clarity of their doctrine when asked

to explain more about it. I did the inquiry and the asking because I wanted to find out if their traditional teachings and doctrines could stand against CES teachings that I happen to acquire from your various seminars and from my father's constant discussion with me. Upon listening to their respective explanation, I am further convinced that indeed adhering to CES teaching is the right way to do and that I am in the right track. I hope to be in the fulltime ministry and be able to really share this teaching as soon as I'll be able to finish my masteral degree which will be on April 2003.

Right now, there is a church here in Cebu which is newly planted but was not able to grow because the pastor is always out busy with his other activities. I have the burden to take the opportunity to be of help to this church and might even end up pastoring the said church because the pastor who planted it is looking for somebody who could take care of the said church on his behalf. I need your help in prayer about this plan. I would really like to consider this opportunity because by having my own flock, I would be able to have the chance to share CES teaching to my own soon-to-be disciples.

Lastly, I would also ask for your prayer about my studies, that I would be able to finish it by God's grace and providence, especially now that I am about to graduate and there are so many school requirements aside from the tuition and miscellaneous fees.

Thank you and God bless!

In Christ,

Shelumiel Delima  
Cebu City, Philippines

## Frequently Asked Questions ...

(There are many more FAQ's posted on our website: [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org))

*Q. What should be a Christian's attitude toward money and material possessions? How are Christians to help the poor and needy, including the Christians in the Sudan region of Africa who are being murdered, exiled, raped, enslaved, etc.? Will we be judged at the Bema according to how selfishly we lived, whether we helped the poor and the outcasts, or whether we didn't?*

B.H., WV

A. There are a number of passages of Scripture that direct us to help the poor and needy, and some are in the context of the future judgments. Jesus speaks of the judgment of Israel when he says the following in Matthew 25:41-46 (NRSV):

(41) **Then** he will say to those at his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me...;

(42) for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

(43) I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.'

(44) **Then** they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?'

(45) **Then** he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'

(46) And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

We know that Jesus was speaking to people before the Day

of Pentecost, and therefore before the time when salvation was offered by grace. The time of judgment of which he speaks is the "sheep and goat" judgment of Israel. For the Christian Church, the future judgment at the Bema is for rewards only, not salvation, because we are already assured of that.

But we can and should apply the truth of this passage to the judgment for the Church, and recognize that taking care of the poor is one of the things that matters very much to the Lord. That is one reason why Christians need to be a part of a community, because the many things that can be done to help the poor are best offered by a community pooling its resources.

For instance, CES is able to distribute more than 10% of its resources to help our poor brethren in developing countries because of the financial provision that comes in to support our vision. Our supporters can participate in an organized effort to support those poor Christians who we know are deeply committed to the Gospel and who are working hard to benefit their fellow countrymen.

It would be hard for our supporters to develop their own relationship with the poor in other countries through their own travel and research, but we have been to the Philippines, Africa, Haiti, etc., and have reported back on what we have found and who we believe are good people to invest in. In this way the Body of Christ works together to benefit all. The poor are helped and the wealthier are given an opportunity to help.

Do you have a tough question that you'd like to ask us? Here's a forum to do so.

Regarding the tragic situation in the Sudan, we are trying to keep people in our community informed about it through news items in *The Contender*, but we have not yet heard of any specific organization that we could recommend that is able to help the Sudanese Christians. We are sure there are such groups, but we have not heard of them yet.

The same conditions exist for many Christians in countries with Islamic governments, and in the few remaining Communist countries. These people all need help and support from their Christian brethren, especially prayer support.

But we know that it is not enough to just offer prayers for the needy. As 1 John 3:17 and 18 (NRSV) says, "How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."

Throughout Church History, the compassionate Christian response to human need has been one of the best advertisements for our faith. No other religion has given so much to so many for so little in return. Hospitals, schools, shelters, food, and clothing have been provided by Christian relief efforts since the first century. There should be no question in our minds about the value of these works and how they please the Lord who inspires them.

Nevertheless, there is a balance involved—a balance between the social aspects of the Gospel and the doctrinal aspects. If all we do is feed the poor, but never preach the Word, we keep people alive for a while but do not give them the opportunity for everlasting life in the Age to Come. If all we do is teach and preach to poor people

without helping them with the practical necessities of life, we are not really serving them in a godly way. Both are needed.

In our travels overseas, we have seen firsthand the intense and pervasive poverty among the people in developing countries. Despair envelopes those who suffer the daily indignities of such brutal conditions, and also overwhelms the visitor. Where does one even begin to help? We have come to the conviction that we must start by helping them understand God's Word that feeds their faith and helps them begin to overcome their circumstances.

As we keep building the Word of God in the lives of leaders, we see more and more ways that we can help them. At first we thought that we could help them only by giving them money to live on, so they could devote themselves to their ministries. But we found over time that we were not strengthening them or helping the leaders to lead their people by example as much as we might. So on our last trip to the Philippines we instituted a new program of encouraging entrepreneurship among the leaders associated with us. We are encouraging them to think of ways they can start businesses that will earn money as well as provide jobs for their fellow believers. So far, the program, limited as it is has been, has been a success. If anyone would like to contribute toward this effort to empower CES leaders to start businesses, let us know.

The long range vision of our work in developing nations integrates both the doctrinal and the practical, teaching the Word and helping people with "the world's goods." Both are necessary to help lift people out of spiritual and financial poverty and enable them to get the Word out in their countries.

You asked about the proper attitude toward money. Again we see a balance, and I recommend you listen to Dan Gallagher's January 2003 Tape of the Month on the stewardship model of handling finances.

There are two extremes between which the stewardship model is suspended. One is the "poverty model," which elevates poverty as the ideal state for a Christian because only in poverty are we truly dependent upon God. The monastic movement of the Middle Ages was based upon the idea that the most spiritual lifestyle centered around the renunciation of all material goods in order to concentrate on spiritual things. Ironically, the monasteries often became very wealthy landowners, and monks were typically very well fed, prompting an exponential growth of the monastic movement. Monasteries were viewed as the surest way to salvation and a secure place to live with one's basic necessities provided.

The other extreme is a product of 20th Century Christianity, mirroring the expansive economic growth of the Industrial Revolution and the Information Age. That is the "prosperity model," which assumes that financial prosperity is the ideal state of being, and argues that God's will is financial prosperity for every believing believer.

The poverty model does not do justice to the nature of God as abundant provider. It is not wealth, per se, that presents problems for believers, but trusting in it, as it is written:

**1 Timothy 6:17 (NRSV)**

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not ... to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our

enjoyment.

The prosperity model does not do justice to the wonderful faith of many believers through history who lived in dire economic conditions with extreme disparity between the rich and the poor. The poor have little recourse in economies that favor the rich, and they have no access to capital or assets that would help them work their way out of poverty. Christians who are raised in such conditions cannot be told that they are poor because they are failing to believe God. Perhaps in America this is true to an extent, because if a person is truly motivated and has a little luck or providence, he or she can sometimes lift themselves out of poverty.

Even in a prosperous country like the USA, however, many Christian poor are often without much recourse economically, and work at jobs that barely allow them to survive. Though they may not have much in the way of money, they can be abundant in all the things that money can't buy, like the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:22,23). God's Word plainly warns us against thinking that financial abundance is an indicator of spirituality or faith (1 Tim. 6:5-11).

The stewardship model is a balance between the two extremes, recognizing all finances and material things as belonging to God. Our part is to steward what He has given us, and "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Luke 12:48 — NRSV).

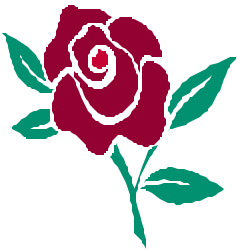
Dan Gallagher and John Lynn are collaborating on a booklet that addresses your questions in more depth, but I have given you the basics. Scripture directs us so succinctly to work hard "to have something to share with the needy" (Eph. 4:28 — NRSV).

*Mark Graeser*

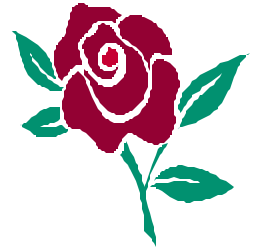
# ***CES Midwest Women's Conference!***

Friday, March 28, 10 a.m. to Sunday, March 30, 12:30 p.m.

## **Celebrating Generational Strengths For Such A Time As This**



Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel  
100 W Michigan Ave  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007  
888-333-3333 269-343-3333



**No matter what season of life you find yourself in, God has something for you for such a time as this.**

- Room rate: \$85 (Up to four persons per room)
- Hotel registration deadline: March 6  
After March 6<sup>th</sup> rooms are not guaranteed and will start at \$135 per night
- CES early registration (before March 14): \$85 adult, \$50 for teen and preteen, \$50 additional family members (sister, grandma, aunt, etc)  
(Includes lunch on Friday and dinner on Saturday)
- Registration (after March 14): \$100 adult, \$65 teen and preteen, \$65 additional family members
- Please register as soon as possible, seating is limited
- No children's fellowship provided
- Registration: Friday, March 28, 9 a.m.  
Conference runs from: Fri. 10 a.m. - Sun. 12:30 p.m.
- Free shuttle service is available through the hotel
- If you have any questions please contact Karen Theisen at [theiphon@aol.com](mailto:theiphon@aol.com)
- Teens encouraged to come, preteens at parents discretion.

Names of attendees: (age if under 21) (MWC03)

Mailing Address:

Home:

Work:

Cell:

Fax:

E-mail:

Number of persons attending:

Total Cost:

Visa/Master/Discover/AMEX :

Exp.

**Register Online!**

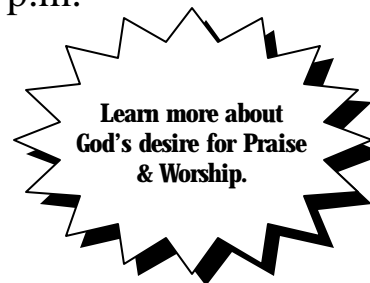
Please make checks payable to Christian Educational Services and mail your form to:  
CES, 2144 E. 52nd St, Indianapolis, IN 46205, call 317-255-6189, or fax to 317-255-6249.  
You may also register online at [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)  
*Thank you and God Bless you!*

**Register Online!**

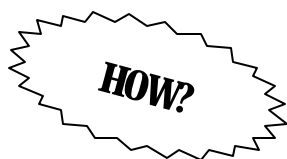
# CES Praise & Worship Conference

Friday, April 11, 9 a.m. to Sunday, April 13, 12:30 p.m.

The Harvey Hotel DFW Airport  
4545 West Carpenter Freeway  
Irving, TX 75063  
972-929-4500



**Dynamic Teachings!**  
**Great Fellowship!**



## Psalm 66:4

All the earth shall worship you  
And sing praises to you;  
They shall sing praises to your name.



- Room rate: \$79 (**\$169 after March 22!**)  
(Up to four persons per room)
- CES early registration (by March 22): \$75 adult (13 and up), which includes Saturday dinner.
- CES registration (after March 22): \$100
- \$35 (cost of dinner Saturday) for kids under 13 eating with us and people who have never attended a CES event before. Invite your friends you want to bring to Christ!
- Registration: Fri., 9-10 a.m.
- Opening Session: Fri., 10 a.m.
- Closing Session: Sun., 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Children's fellowship will be provided.
- Shuttles will be available from the airport to the hotel by Total Enterprise.

Names of attendees: \_\_\_\_\_ (PWC)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of persons attending: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Cost: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa/Master/Discover/AMEX : \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Christian Educational Services and mail this form to:  
CES, 2144 East 52nd St, Indianapolis, IN 46205, or call 317-255-6189, or fax to 317-255-6249.  
You may also register online at [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org).

Register  
Online!

Register  
Online!

# ***THE CES PARTNERSHIP PLAN***

**TOGETHER WE ARE REACHING OUT AND TEACHING ABOUT  
THE GREATNESS AND GOODNESS OF GOD AND HIS SON,  
OUR LORD JESUS, ALL AROUND THE WORLD!**

Partners will receive: a subscription to *The Contender*, Tape/CD of the Month, Partnership newsletter  
*One Vision, One Heart*, and a 15% discount on CES merchandise.



## **TOGETHER WE CAN!**



Your partnership plan will begin on the date of your first contribution and will continue until you tell us otherwise. If you wish to change your pledge at any time, please let us know. We are so thankful for your hearts to partner with us. Together we are making a difference, "Speaking the Truth in Love" all around the world!

Your pledge allows us to forecast a monthly operating budget, plan publications, seminars, and international events. We are confident that the Lord will bless you back for your commitment. Our promise to you is to spend every penny wisely and honestly before our Lord Jesus.

PLEASE NOTE: The IRS requires you to deduct our cost of the materials we give you from your total annual gift. You will receive a reminder, along with our cost for the material, with your year-end financial summary.

Fill out the appropriate information below or sign up online at [www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

(Look for the Partnership Plan link in the Online Catalog.)

My monthly pledge is \$: \_\_\_\_\_  
(\$20 minimum)

I am enclosing a check for \$: \_\_\_\_\_

Audio Tape or Compact Disc  
(please circle one)

I will contribute via a check, cash, or money order

Charge my credit card or debit card on or about the 12th of every month. My credit card number is provided below, or I will call with that information.

Set up an automatic monthly bank draft, processed during the first week of each month. We will send you an authorization form.

Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Cor. 9:7 and 8).

I prefer to waive receipt of *all* materials and the 15% discount.  
(The above IRS regulation will not apply if you choose this option)

\_\_\_\_\_  
I prefer to waive receipt of part of the materials/15% discount. Please indicate above what you do *not* wish to receive. (The above IRS regulation will only apply toward those materials you choose to receive.)

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Visa/MasterCard/Discover/AMEX: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Sign Up Online at  
[www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

Please make checks payable to CES and mail your form to:  
2144 E. 52nd St, Indianapolis, IN 46205 or call 317-255-6189, or fax 317-255-6249.

*Thank you and God bless you. What a blessing you are!*

Sign Up Online at  
[www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)



# Would You Like To Help?

It's about time to reprint the soft cover version of *One God & One Lord*. As of January 1st, we have received \$2,700 toward the \$15,000 needed. Any amount you would like to contribute to this worthy cause would be a great blessing. (see page 5 for more details)

## Cultivating Wholeness

West Coast Conference  
Friday, January 31, 10 a.m. to Sunday, February 2, 12:30 p.m.  
Santa Clara Marriott, Santa Clara, CA  
(see flyer in the last issue of *The Sower*)

REGISTER ONLINE  
AT:  
[www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

## Celebrating Generational Strengths

Midwest Women's Conference  
Friday, March 28, 10 a.m. to Sunday, March 30, 12:30 p.m.  
Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel, Kalamazoo, MI  
(see enclosed flyer)

REGISTER ONLINE  
AT:  
[www.CESonline.org](http://www.CESonline.org)

## Dallas Praise & Worship Conference

Friday, April 11, 9 a.m. to Sunday, April 13, 12:30 p.m.  
The Harvey Hotel DFW Airport, Irving, TX  
(see enclosed flyer)

## CES Family Camp

Pokagon State Park, IN July 20-25.

If you are planning to camp or use an RV at this years Family Camp you will need to make reservations as soon as possible. Reservations can be made six months in advance (Jan. 21). Go online at <http://www.indiana.reserveworld.com> or call 866-622-6746.



2144 East 52nd Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46205  
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“Forwarding Service Requested”

TIME SENSITIVE MATERIAL  
PLEASE EXPEDITE

If you are not a Partner with us (or a regular contributor), please prayerfully consider supporting us in this way. We honestly believe that CES is an excellent investment that will bring dividends to those who stand with us financially.

(see Partnership Plan form page 14)

*Together We Can!*

