

Let my people go!
Ministry of Cpt. Gordon Nelson
The Old Ship of Zion
Only believers "shall take up
serpents" (of the sea). (Mk. 16:18)

MAY 2003

"HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?"

By Gordon F. Nelson

"And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal (to be master), then follow him. And the people answered him not a word."

(1 Ki. 18:21)

Moses declared, *"I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."* (Deu. 30:19)

The life of an "overcomer" is a series of correct choices, and you win them all moving from faith to faith. *"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord."* (2 Cor. 3:18) The devil cannot stand to look upon a winner because he is looking into the very face of the Son of God.

There is a constant war going on! There is no way you can lose if you are willing to fight. We are not called to sit-ins and love-ins, but to war against the enemy. Sometimes you can't quite identify the enemy. You are in a constant warfare for the salvation of your own soul. Why else would the scripture say, *"SAVE YOURSELVES from this untoward generation."* (Acts 2:40) But, you don't fight alone, therefore you cannot lose! The size or the loudness of his voice is nothing when you know the One standing beside you has never, ever lost a battle.

If Goliath roars, "Am I a dog, that an elevator boy, working to earn his way through Oakland Bible Institute (O.B.I.) to get a stick (ordination to the ministry), comest to me, a man of war? Don't you know I have never lost a battle and have the 'pink slip' of ownership to this City Club Hotel in downtown Oakland, and own the real estate? It is signed by the Secretary of State, and there is absolutely nothing you or anyone else can do! In addition, we have a battery of four of the most brilliant defense lawyers in the state of California, besides plenty of money. What have you got, kid?"

I've painted a very graphic fight that took place in Oakland, CA. The odds were continually in question as to the ultimate winner. My ability to hang out to the end of the fight was only because I heard the CAPTAIN OF MY SALVATION'S VOICE! (Heb. 2:10) "And you are going to stop him!" This elevator boy would sell Bibles house to house in Okieville, a nickname we gave poor folk from the

Bible belt states residing in the valley. I remember selling five \$25 Bibles in one house in Okieville. Those “Okies” from Oklahoma truly loved the Bible, and I appreciated the profit from the money to stay in Bible school.

My father was a shipwright in the Naval shipyard across the bay in San Francisco. After graduating from high school, and in my sophomore year of college, I found the Lord in a Salvation Army church in Evanston, IL. I had already received my 1-A draft notification. My girlfriend of three years had suddenly accepted her mother’s religion of the Jehovah’s Witnesses. I never heard about the J.W.’s until she told me, “I am a Jehovah’s Witness.” Here I am, 21 years old, 1-A, and my only girlfriend is telling me she is a Jehovah’s Witness.

Life is a constant series of choices. You choose between black or white; good or evil. I had to choose between keeping my high school girlfriend of three years, or letting her go. I couldn’t have it both ways! Some men would go ahead and marry the woman they love regardless of her mother’s religion suddenly producing a crop.

Every choice you make, especially if you make the right choice, determines whether or not you are a winner. It is in the process of the battle you discover personally, on your own, based on choices you make, that God is an “if’ing” God. You make the choice; either God’s or yours.

Now you can’t get this knowledge from a John Hagee or a Joyce Meyer book of the month club. They are called “The Mind Over Matter Club.” Have you ever heard of it? They even have a ditty for the club that goes something like this:

You mind the mind, dear batter,
Leave the matter to splatter, no matter,
But the mind will subdue the matter, no matter!
Please buy a Hagee or Meyer tape, no matter.
Because Jesus is on the tape, we think
We are talking about the same God, no matter.

One of the greatest sermons that Oral Roberts preached across America under his big tent was called, “The Battle of the Champions!” What a message! Delilah, who had never lost a battle, in one corner versus Samson, who had never lost a battle, in the other corner. Hollywood jumped in on this story to fill in the missing parts, with Delilah, like Judas, going before the lords of the Philistines and agreeing on the price. Delilah said, “If he be a man—only if he is a god—but if he is a man, I will deliver this Samson into your hands.” All the Bible tells us is that immediately after cutting off the “seven locks of hair,” Delilah called to the lords of the Philistines, “*Come up this once, for he hath*

shewed me all his heart. Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and BROUGHT MONEY IN THEIR HAND.” (Jdg. 16:18)

Samson had made a choice. Too often we want to blame God over the choice we made. And then, like King Saul, we even go so far as going to the witch of Endor to gaze into her crystal ball to see what she can conjure up over the choice we made. Saul never repented over his bad choices, and went to hell. Samuel caught King Saul in his lying to the prophet. *“And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?”* (1 Sam. 15:14) Be sure your sin (of bad choices) will find you out!

Samson repented of his bad choice, and Saul who didn’t went to hell! One repented, one did not! This is no big time riddle is it? You either lean on God to make a choice for you, or go ahead and use that fat head of yours called *“the carnal mind”* which *“is enmity against God.”* (Rom. 8:7)

Jesus said it right, *“IF* (there is that strange word again. Religion takes the “if’ing” out!) *any man will DO his will, he shall KNOW of the doctrine.”* (Jn. 7:17)

Harold Camping, having never engaged the enemy one time, wants to teach doctrine as he understands the fruit from the Tree planted in Dallas (Dallas Theological Seminary). Gene Edwards ate from that same Tree for 31 years as a Southern Baptist. Gene gleaned from this eating a newfound “door.” He spread his good news over TBN while being interviewed by Benny Hinn, that “the door” Jesus was talking about was a woman’s vagina.

You don’t acquire the KNOWING or KNOWLEDGE from books. There is none written. Be my guest, you can now be the first to hit the bestseller list. Nor does it come from eating off of a Tree planted in Dallas, called “The John Darby Tree.”

No! No! No! It is by IF’ing you do, or IF’ing you don’t! You’ll learn something about doctrine regardless of your choice. You married the woman, you married the man. Why? Next we ask, was it a mind choice, or a God choice for your life? Only if it is a God choice will He deliver you, because only then is He responsible for the bad choice. IF—IF—IF any DO his will!

Religion wants to not only abort babies, but all IF’ings of the Bible, screaming, “It is enough; I can’t stand it anymore!”

I’m speaking from the front lines, ever fighting the enemy. I’d never have it any other way. This is how I know Harold Camping is a liar, and the truth is nowhere to be found in him. You don’t know that. I do for sure!

I'm in the fight all the time. You're in a love-in or sit-in. A warrior has no time for such tommyrot! That is the reason I know, and you are forever trying to figure it out.

According to the Illuminati's timetable, we have only seven years until the year 2010, and the Age of Aquarius begins, at which time the Antichrist will already have shown his ugly face. Do you think you'll figure it out by then?

You can't even be saved without first joining the "If'ing Club." My God, how religion despises that club membership! I'm sorry, but I'm a charter member. I joined the club when I was 21 years old when a Salvation Army Captain showed me the scripture in John 6:37, "*All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and HIM THAT COMETH TO ME I will in no wise cast out.*" I understand that scripture to read, IF I wanted Him, He'd wrap His arms of love around me and see that nothing evil would ever bother me again. You correct me if I have the wrong interpretation. My God, I'm so glad I joined God's "If'ing Club"! It costs to be a member. Jesus paid a big price to create the club. It cost Him all He had. Should I be a freeloader? The guilt and shame I could not bear, that I should get by for less.

No one is saved by doctrine! If you could be saved by just believing the correct doctrine, you'd be no better than the Catholic church. I spent the first four years of my life in a Catholic school from kindergarten through the third grade, in the St. Joseph's Catholic Church on W. Jackson Blvd, in a large tenement house that rose directly from the sidewalk in Chicago. Hollywood made movies called "The Dead End Kids." This was the kind of neighborhood where I spent my most formidable years. With this kind of background I grew up at a very tender age. My father was the black sheep of his family, son of a Baptist preacher, who married a girl due to her nationality, not her religion. She had no religion, but she loved her children. I was sent to the Catholic school because it was close to the house.

We studied religion every day for four hours from 8 a.m. to Noon. I could recite my catechism verbatim, just as a Southern Baptist's child studies the Bible. We had to learn mathematics, reading, writing, all in the afternoon when our mind was weak and our body tired. All this education boiled down to one thing. Believe all this dogma, and the Catholic church will save you. But does any doctrine save?

How are the Episcopalians, the Methodist, or any religion any different?

"How long halt ye between two opinions?"

On Saturdays we had no school. We had the alleyways to play "kick the can" and "hide-and-go-seek." But the real excitement for the kids who lived in these tenement houses came walking down the sidewalk, an older man of small stature. All the kids became excited, but I was too young to understand why. Every Saturday, about the same hour, this same man would come walking down the sidewalk across the street from my house and suddenly turn into the alleyway with all the kids packed in behind

him as he stood against the wall and masturbated for their, and apparently his own benefit. After the climax came, they all screamed, only to repeat this all again the next Saturday morning. I was too small and young to ever understand why the kids all screamed, or even got excited. I was too small to get through the crowd.

You are a product of your own environment. I thank God that my Dad landed a job in a nursery in Evanston, in the suburbs of Chicago. That single move probably saved me from Catholicism and a life of crime. After that hellish hole on W. Jackson Blvd. in Chicago, moving to Evanston was like being resurrected from hell, and we were now living in heaven.

God alone knows who is predestinated. To think otherwise is crazy. But when your track record continually is all in the win column, you begin to wonder, Why me, Lord? God alone can read your heart.

God is a God of war! Have you never read Exodus 15:3, *"The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name!"* Christians are so sheltered from this reality they can't venture out to see why there is all the excitement over Mel Gibson's movie, "The Passion." They are like me standing as a babe in the alleyway of W. Jackson Blvd. bewildered as to the excitement.

Mel Gibson gives a true picture of Jesus Christ as a warrior, battle torn and bleeding. Bible schools show a distortion of this Jesus. Men go to hell simply because they refuse to enlist in the battle. Jesus only assigns honor badges to warriors!

God called me to be a Captain because I had on my fatigues ready for war! I had just triumphed over Goliath when I was so decorated. I was a stripling, carrying about the head of Goliath who had roared one too many times. "If you have one of these non-profit incorporations, a battery of lawyers, and plenty of money, you can do anything and get by!"

God heard the words that came out of the man's mouth, and before he had even completed his declaration, this Commander-in-Chief of the heaven and the earth spoke orders unto me, "And you're going to stop him!" I was sitting in the audience of 2,000 people listening to Goliath bellow. Why me? I'm just the elevator boy, only permitted to speak one time from that same microphone. Everyone enjoyed the sermon. I remember that for some reason I wore suspenders. I'd draw on those suspenders and the crowd would roar! Tom Patten was particularly pleased!

I never knew any better than to preach what the Commander-in-Chief told me to preach. The next time I was asked to preach, Bebe Patten wanted to know what I was going to preach. I told her in private, "Dr. Patten, God has told me to preach on 'What makes these preachers strut?'" Her immediate

response was, “Oh no, you’re not going to preach that sermon in this church!” That was the end of my preaching career at the Patten’s.

Immediately, the Patten’s turned to a 15-year old girl, Betty Burke, who could strut and walk as if she were Bebe’s own daughter. Betty Burke became the president of the Faith Class, the second class to graduate from O.B.I., of which I was a member. I had already given the name for the class, and established the class motto before Miss Burke’s rise to the presidency. Betty Burke and I had a mutual respect for one another; we were friends.

Of course her name was in the high scale advertising that only the Pattens could propagate. I was still the elevator boy, now barred totally from the church podium. Although, when I met the Kingfish at the local coffee shop, he did express how much he had thoroughly enjoyed my sermon, still laughing and joking over how I would draw on those suspenders! Then he opened his mouth and said to me, “If you stick with us, we’ll give you your own tent to preach in.” My immediate response to the offer was, “You keep your hands off me. I belong to God, and I’m not ready! When God promotes me, I can stand.”

It was following that conversation that 15-year old Betty Burke was chosen by the Patten’s. Betty wore the identical clothing as Bebe Patten, and could preach like a child protégée of Bebe’s. They were like Bobbsey twins, but Betty always carried up the rear when they marched down the aisle of the church together toward the pulpit. What a time we had, and I enjoyed every minute of it. I had never had more fun in my entire life.

Here was another choice I was making. Life is the summation of the choices you make during your lifetime. It never quits! The next choice you’ll make is based entirely upon how you handled the last one. Then, to your utter surprise, you’ll hear the voice of the Commander-in-Chief because He is always observing His army in the field. The Commander-in-Chief suddenly barks an order to the Commander in the field, “Look here, Holy Ghost, I like this soldier and his field performance record. See if you can’t shove him up to the front lines where the fight gets hot! I’d like to see this young elevator boy in action on duty when his very life is being threatened all the time.”

“Yes, sir, Commander-in-Chief, we’ll both see directly whether he is all mouth and no guts.” The orders came through immediately after this blundering idiot on stage defied the armies of the Living God, “Am I a dog, that an elevator boy with a stick comes to fight me, a man of war?”

We sing “Onward Christian Soldiers,” but when the war is actually red hot, and bullets of lies are being propelled, we aren’t prepared for the God of War’s display of the repeat performance of live actors on stage. My God, not David and Goliath?

In religion and Bible school, they sing The Battle Hymn of the Republic, but never The Battle Hymn of the God of War. You don't even know the words! Only warriors recognize this song as victory and the complete annihilation of the enemy! The title to the song—The Song of Moses (Ex. 15:1-19)

*I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously:
the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.
The LORD is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation:
he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation;
my father's God, and I will exalt him.
The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.
Pharaoh's chariots and his host hath he cast into the sea:
his chosen captains also are drowned in the Red sea.
The depths have covered them: they sank into the bottom as a stone.
Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power:
thy right hand, O LORD, hath dashed in pieces the enemy.*

The Song continues on for thirteen more verses. This is the song of victory that Miriam and all the women sang while running upon the banks of the Red Sea looking at the dead bodies of the Egyptians as they washed ashore, leaping over the bodies as they sang, “*The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name!*”

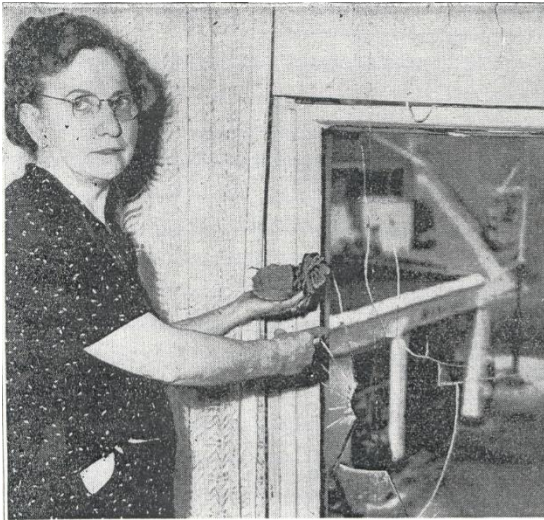
It was never because Moses was great, but because we serve an Awesome God. How can you know that, worrying over how some verse in the Septuagint is translated? You only learn the secrets of God while in full array fighting on the frontlines! Sure it is hazardous!

When you come out of a denominational church into a full gospel experience with the Lord, you'll hear those Holy Rollers talking about “having the victory.” Really, once again, I'm as much in the dark to what Pentecostals call “the victory,” as I was as a child standing around an elderly man with his back to the wall. Those children were screaming with excitement over what?

I came into Pentecostalism with the same bewilderment. In Toronto, Canada they can bark like dogs. Is that what “the victory” is? These Holy Rollers come to church to roll. Is that “the victory”? What is having the victory?

How could you possibly enjoy victory and never have enlisted for war? When I started my siege of the Alamo (Patten's indictment), these same students started yelling, “Vengeance is mine...saith the Lord!” They were thus standing in the way of my achieving “victory,” accusing me of arson. The

president of the student body, Mrs. Linda Galovich, called an emergency prayer meeting for God to strike me dead. If I'm dead, how can I achieve any victory?



VANDALISM—Mrs. Elof Hagglund holds a rock with a red rose attached which was tossed through a window of her Oakland home.

Her husband and son were witnesses in the fraud trial of Evangelist C. Thomas Patten, now awaiting sentence on five counts of grand theft.

I had two shots of sugar put in my gas tank with no insurance coverage. I moved to Sutter Creek shortly after this! My father was still at O.B.I. and came to me almost daily with reports from Tom Patten. "Tell your son to back off. I don't know what Rooster will do to him." Rooster was Tom's brother from the Tennessee Hills knife-fighting neighborhood, who wore the knife scars on his body for an unbeliever to see.

Rooster was killed in a bike riding accident, however it could well have been Rooster who made an attempt on my life when I had the Patten case at the Grand Jury level.

On a Sunday morning, while crossing E. 14th Street to go to the church, a speeding car suddenly came right at me and my first-born son I held in my arms. I jumped aside, the car only missing me by ¼ inch. I heard a big bang, and saw my wife flying through the air like she had been shot out of a cannon. The police measured the distance she flew at 62 feet from the crosswalk she had been in. "Oh, it's so glorious serving Jesus Christ!" (Joyce Meyer)

I soon got the message that somebody was trying to kill me. It sinks in! So I went out to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Borchard in Richmond. They also had been fleeced of their retirement money by the Patten's. They represented one count of the five counts of grand theft that Dr. Bebe Patten and her spouse were being charge with at the grand jury level.

I had been hiding out for my life for several days when God suddenly spoke to me, "I want you to go to Patten's church tonight." What? I couldn't believe this! Here I am hiding out for my life, and You want me to go to Tom Patten's church while the Patten case is before the Grand Jury of Alameda County? Talk about a soldier in battle fatigues! I was really being tested. How far can a person go serving this God of War?

I had never heard about this God of War in Bible school. We only solaced ourselves in love. The "we just lo-o-ove everybody" doctrine. Vengeance we leave to God. If He wants to strike him dead—hop to it! But, please! Of course, I know it's crazy to argue for very long with the Commander on the field, the Holy Ghost.

So, I packed up and moved out of Mr. and Mrs. Borchard's house. "Thanks for the hospitality, but the field Commander, the Holy Ghost, has issued new orders--Go to church tonight!" That was a Sunday night, with the largest crowd of the entire week. It meant having to sit in the balcony, if I could get in alive, I thought!

I must have taken a cab, for it necessitated the carrying of my suitcase with me to church. As I was making my way up a long entranceway to the theater where church was being conducted, the Kingfish was busy taking up an offering. There was no time limit on a C. (for Cash) Thomas Patten offering.

I got halfway up the aisle and this brave soldier of the cross suddenly buckled. I told the Commander-in-Chief, "I have failed in the line of duty. Please pull off any stripes of valor I am wearing off my shoulder." I was about to finish my request when suddenly, bursting with tremendous volume, I heard Tom Patten booming through the curtain dividing the theater from the foyer saying, "If I take this money you have given and throw it in Lake Merritt, it is nobody's business but mine!" Wow! Just what I needed to hear! "Soldier reporting for duty, Commander! Please cancel my last request!" I started marching and was now at the entrance to the theater. The head usher, Bro. Kiniken, blocked my entrance with some stupid questions about my relationship with Patten and asked, "Are you here to see the boss?" I answered, "Yes, I'm here to see him, and yes, we have our differences!" About this time the Kingfish spotted me being detained from going to church, and bellowed from the platform, "It's the law, Kiniken, you gotta let him in, but even a jackass should have more brains than to attend a church where he is not wanted." If the Kingfish only knew how much I fully agreed with his assessment.

Then came the march up the stairs to a seat in the high balcony. The place was packed. As I was climbing the stairs, carrying that suitcase, Tom Patten began raving, "There goes the man who threatens to blow this place higher than a kite!" Then Bebe couldn't hold her cool any longer, "Gordon is Judas, he put his hand in the sop by going to the District Attorney," she screamed into the mike.

Finally, I got seated with that suitcase. His offering completed, Tom came up to where I was sitting to get me to repent and go down to the altar for forgiveness. "But Tom, you sold our church when you promised the hinges would first rust off the door before you'd ever sell it. You're the one that needs to go to the altar." With that the Kingfish left the balcony and returned to the foyer. Upon my descent from the balcony to the foyer, I could hear Patten explaining to the Hunter twins how Gordon buncoed on him. "Believe me, if I was still in the world, I'd have shot a man for that."

About that time, Patten suddenly turned white as a ghost and came stuttering and stammering back to me, "Wh-wh-what you got in that suitcase?" I couldn't believe that Patten believed I had a bomb in that suitcase and was literally going to blow the place up higher than a kite! If I had caught on to his

belief system sooner, I could have just thrown the suitcase at Patten, saying, “Catch it!” and he’d have died of a heart attack right there in church!

I tell you, the Field Commander really knows when to strike the enemy completely off guard and unprotected. It is only up front where the fighting gets the hottest that you acquire real understanding and knowledge that is hidden from “the wise and the prudent.”

The following day I had to review and ask myself why the Commander told me to go to church. Then the light bulb went on! To save your life, dummy! You are just a foot soldier in this operation. His is not to reason why, only to do or die (if needs be). In this case I knew I was slated for death, but now I must see the Kingfish himself and convey that same message to him. So, I told Tom Patten about what really happened the night before.

I personally told Tom Patten loud and clear, “You advertised to 2,000 people your hatred for me. If anything ever happens to me physically or otherwise, you’re the first person that will be charged. As far as those fires are concerned, I talked to the woman next door to the church. She said she saw a man coming out of the church. He wore a gray suit. Jerry Cage has never worn anything but gray. You better heed this message I’m giving you!”

From that hour, I never again feared for my life. When the weak take on the rich and the strong, you had better have God on your side. Paul said, *“We are fools for Christ's sake, but ye are wise in Christ; we are weak, but ye are strong; ye are honourable, but we are despised.”* (1 Cor. 4:10) You are even despised by the Christian community by winning against the rich and powerful.

The only reason I’m alive and well today is because I was obedient in the line of fire.

“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” (Isa. 55:7-9)

“I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong...but time and chance happeneth to them all.” (Ecc. 9:11)