Isaiah 45 verses 5 and 6 I [am] the LORD, and there is no other God besides me: I will help you and give you the strength you need you need, even though you don’t acknowledge me as your God. I am doing this so that everyone from the east to the west will know that I am the Lord and that there is no other God besides Me.

Good morning.

God is not our dictator, is He?

Perhaps because you want to draw closer to your Lord and Savior; or perhaps you’re discouraged by your life, or maybe you’re not even conscious of God, but you still sense that there has to be more to life than the sham and anxiety that you experience.

God is our lighthouse. Shall we pray.

Oh Father of all mankind, we find ourselves at this crucial time in our lives. We cannot do anything about the past. We face the future with it’s uncertainty, but we know that You have the answers for each of us, whom You know so well; and that the BEST thing that we can ‘do’, is to acknowledge Your supreme position in our lives. For consecrated and willing hearts we pray in Jesus’ name, Amen.

So let’s put our lives into perspective; how we fit into the whole scheme of things.

Let us talk about the Primacy of God

Primacy means “the fact of being primary, preeminent, or more important”. Of the two parties involved, God and man, God is the more important. Men generally do not generally feel that way, but that’s a mistake.

And preeminent means “surpassing all others; very distinguished in some way”. Actually, all ways.

Some other words for preeminent are: greatest, leading, foremost, best, finest, chief, outstanding, excellent, distinguished, prominent, important, renowned, celebrated, supreme..

It is not that God benefits by being ‘placed on a pedestal’; here, the essential thing is that WE need to give God His proper place in our hearts and minds.

Of Himself God says, “... before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me”. Isaiah 43:10… He also says “Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else;… and there is none like me”, Isaiah 46:9

God is all- powerful, and He created us and continues to guide each of us individually, according to the Master’s plan that is grounded in eternity, to make the best use of our unique talents and station in life.

Life is not easy; we have concerns about the future, like infections that no longer respond to, like the unknown long term effects of genetically modified foods, like the catastrophic earthquake coming to our back yard… like the drunk driver who nobody wants to meet. We see personal difficulties and tragedies in our local neighborhood and the global neighborhood.. So then if God is good, then why is life so hard? It’s like what Job said, “Man [that is] born of a woman [is] of few days, and full of trouble. ” Job 14:1. .. and No, it’s not the woman’s fault.

But God says in his still small voice in Matthew 11:30 “… my yoke [is] easy, and my burden is light”. As we give God His rightful place in our lives, this promise will be realized .

He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it. Matthew 10:39

Proverbs 16:25 There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof [are] the ways of death.

We tend to say, “But Lord! **I** just wanted to…” or “**I** just thought if I could help You… or, You probably hadn’t thought or realized that…”

Well, wouldn’t it be well for us, if we said instead, “Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. ” 1 Samuel 3:9

So here’s the principle; We will not “find” our place in life by “**trying**” to “make something of ourselves”…. But if we give God His rightful place, we will BE in our proper place, and we will HAVE that peace that surpasses all (human) understanding.

Let’s look at where we stand in God’s great creation, (of which we understand so little.) God’s report about Creation states that;

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

"Let there be light: and there was light... and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."

"And God made the firmament, ...And God called the firmament ‘Heaven’. And the evening and the morning were the second day. "

"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together, and let the dry [land] appear... And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass... the herb ... and the fruit tree... And the evening and … morning were the third day."

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament ... to divide the day from the night; ... And let them ... give light upon the earth... And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature ... and fowl [that] may fly ... And God created great whales, and... every winged fowl... And the evening and … morning were the fifth day."

"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind... Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: … let them have dominion ... over all the earth... 1:27 So God created man in his [own] image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said ... have dominion ... over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, [it was] very good. And the evening and … morning were the sixth day.

God’s continued to bless us, hasn’t He?

God saved the best for last. Mankind is the crowning act of Creation, and He remains heavily involved with each one of us;

Jeremiah says 1:5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, [and] I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

And David said “For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.” Psalm 139:13-16 I will praise thee; for I am fearfully [and] wonderfully made: marvellous [are] thy works; and [that] my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, [and] curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all [my members] were written, [which] in continuance were fashioned, when [as yet there was] none of them.

You’ve heard of people “losing” themselves, when for example they might become totally engrossed in some hobby or activity, like texting or playing computer games.

Well, God says that we should lose ourselves in Him; “He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Matthew 10:39

That works against our way of thinking, doesn’t it?

I’d like to talk about Enoch’s walk with God;

Conflict and Courage Chap. 22 - He Walked with God

 Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years. Genesis 5:21, 22. {CC 28.1}

 Of Enoch it is written that he lived sixty-five years, and begat a son. . . . During these earlier years Enoch had loved and feared God and had kept His commandments. . . . But after the birth of his first son, Enoch reached a higher experience; he was drawn into a closer relationship with God. He realized more fully his own obligations and responsibility as a son of God. And as he saw the child's love for its father, its simple trust in his protection; as he felt the deep, yearning tenderness of his own heart for that firstborn son, he learned a precious lesson of the wonderful love of God to men in the gift of His Son, and the confidence which the children of God may repose in their heavenly Father. The infinite, unfathomable love of God through Christ became the subject of his meditation day and night; and with all the fervor of his soul he sought to reveal that love to the people among whom he dwelt. {CC 28.2}

 Enoch's walk with God was not in a trance or a vision, but in all the duties of his daily life. He did not become a hermit, shutting himself entirely from the world; for

he had a work to do for God in the world. In the family and in his intercourse with men, as a husband and father, a friend, a citizen, he was the steadfast, unwavering servant of the Lord. . . . And this holy walk was continued for three hundred years. There are few Christians who would not be far more earnest and devoted if they knew that they had but a short time to live, or that the coming of Christ was about to take place. But Enoch's faith waxed … stronger (and stronger), his love became more ardent, with the … (passage) of centuries. {CC 28.3}

 He [Enoch] was of one mind with God. . . . If we are of one mind with God, our will will be swallowed up in God's will, and we (will) … follow wherever God leads the way. As a loving child places his hand in that of his father, and walks with him in perfect trust whether it is dark or bright, so the sons and daughters of God are to walk with Jesus through joy or sorrow. {CC 28.4}

Chap. 23 - God Took Him

 Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him. Genesis 5:24. {CC 29.1}

 Enoch, we read, walked with God three hundred years. That was a long time to be in communion with Him. . . . He communed with God because it was agreeable to him, . . . and he loved the society of God. {CC 29.2}

 Enoch was a marked character. Many look upon his life as something above what the generality of mortals can … reach. But Enoch's life and character . . . represent what the lives and characters of all must be, if like Enoch, they are subjects to be translated when Christ shall come. His life was what the life of every individual may be if he … connects (closely) with God. We should remember that Enoch was surrounded with influences so depraved that God brought a flood of waters on the world to destroy its inhabitants for their corruption. {CC 29.3}

 We are living in an evil age. The perils of the last days thicken around us. Because iniquity abounds, the love of many waxes cold. . . . {CC 29.4}

 Enoch's case is before us. . . . He lived in a corrupt age, when moral pollution was teeming all round him; yet he trained his mind to devotion, to love purity. His conversation was upon heavenly things. He educated his mind to run in this channel, and he bore the impress of the divine. His countenance was lighted up with the light which shineth in the face of Jesus. {CC 29.5}

 Enoch had temptations as well as we. He was surrounded with society no more friendly to righteousness than ~~is that which~~ (what) surrounds us. The atmosphere he breathed was tainted with sin and corruption, the same as ours; yet he lived a life of holiness. He was unsullied with the prevailing sins of the age in which he lived. So may we remain pure and uncorrupted. He was a representative of the saints who live … (among) the perils and corruptions of the last days. For his faithful obedience to God he was translated. So, also, the faithful, who are alive and remain, will be translated. They will be removed from a sinful and corrupt world to the pure joys of heaven. {CC 29.6}

 Our present work is to come out from the world and be separate. This is the only way we can walk with God, as did Enoch. {CC 29.7}

Chap. 24 - Looking at Christ

 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 as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18. {CC 30.1}

 In the midst of a life of active labor, Enoch steadfastly maintained his communion with God. The greater and more pressing his labors, the more constant and earnest were his prayers. He continued to exclude himself at certain periods from all society. After remaining for a time among the people, laboring to benefit them by instruction and example, he would withdraw, to spend a season in solitude, hungering and thirsting for that divine knowledge which God alone can impart. Communing thus with God, Enoch came more and more to reflect the divine image. His face was radiant with a holy light, even the light that shineth in the face of Jesus. As he came forth from these divine communings, even the ungodly beheld with awe the impress of heaven upon his countenance. {CC 30.2}

 Enoch kept the Lord ever before him. . . . He made Christ his constant companion. He was in the world, and performed his duties to the world; but he was ever under the influence of Jesus. He reflected Christ's character, exhibiting the same qualities of goodness, mercy, tender compassion, sympathy, forbearance, meekness, humility, and love. His association with Christ day by day transformed him into the image of Him with whom he was so intimately connected. Day by day he was growing away from his own way into Christ's way, the heavenly, the divine, in(to) … (Christ’s) thoughts and feelings. {CC 30.3}

 If we (ever) keep the Lord … before us, allowing our hearts to go out in thanksgiving and praise …, **we… (will) have a continual freshness in our religious life**. Our prayers will take the form of a conversation with God as we would talk with a friend. He will speak His mysteries to us personally. Often there will come to us a sweet, joyful sense of the presence of Jesus. Often our hearts will burn within us as He draws nigh to commune with us as He did with Enoch. When this is in truth the experience of the Christian, there is seen in his life a simplicity, a humility, meekness, and lowliness of heart, that show to all with whom he associates that he has been with Jesus and learned of Him. {CC 30.4}

Sometimes it’s come up in Sabbath School class, How do we maintain our relationship… We look at ourselves, and that doesn’t work.

Chap. 25 - An Open Door

 By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. Hebrews 11:5. {CC 31.1}

 When we learn to walk by faith and not by feeling, we shall have help from God just when we need it, and His peace will come into our hearts. It was this simple life of obedience and trust that Enoch lived. If we learn this lesson of simple trust, ours may be the testimony that he received, that he pleased God. {CC 31.2}

 In every phase of your character building you are to please God. This you may do; for Enoch pleased Him though living in a degenerate age. And there are Enochs in this our day. {CC 31.3}

 For three hundred years Enoch had been seeking purity of heart, that he might be in harmony with heaven. For three centuries he had walked with God. Day by day he had longed for a closer union; nearer and nearer had grown the communion, until God took him to Himself. He had stood at the threshold of the eternal world, only a step between him and the land of the blest; and now the portals opened, the walk with God, so long pursued on earth, continued, and he passed through the gates of the hol y city,--the first from among men to enter there. {CC 31.4}

 With the word of God in his hands, every human being, wherever his lot in life may be …, may have such companionship as he shall choose. In its pages he may hold converse with the noblest and best of the human race, and may listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men. . . . He may dwell in this world in the atmosphere of heaven, imparting to earth's sorrowing and tempted ones thoughts of hope and longings for holiness; . . . like him of old who walked with God, drawing nearer and nearer the threshold of the eternal world, until the portals shall open, and he shall enter there. He will find himself no stranger. The voices that will greet him are the voices of the holy ones, who, unseen, were on earth his companions--voices that here he learned to distinguish and to love. He (through) who… the word of God has lived in fellowship with heaven, will find himself at home in heaven's companionship. {CC 31.5}

Have your hearts been stirred, thinking about this? And so they should be, for we have an organic connection with our heavenly Father.

“Organic” means, “denoting a relationship between elements of something such that they fit together harmoniously as necessary parts of a whole.” … we are not whole, until we are united with our loving Creator… And His love is not complete, without us.

It should be our life-purpose to glorify Christ. This is the greatest purpose,,, that has inspired Christians in every age.

The Signs of the Times January 28, 1903 Lessons From the

First Chapter of Revelation.

In HIM, we will find the satisfaction of our sanctified hearts’ desires. We will find our place in the community of the blessed. The longings of our heart will be met, whatever (our station in life) ~~life’ s station~~, we will have the assurance that we have not lived this life in vain.

Hear what other Bible writers have said about their choice to follow Christ;

“But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear …, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. ” Acts 20:24

“Epaphras, who is [one] of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, **always labouring fervently for you in prayers**, that … (we) may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Colossians 4:12

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 as by the Spirit of the Lord. 2 Corinthians 3:18. {CC 30.1}

And so Christ says, “Come unto me, all [ye] that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28

I think it’s important for us to hear these things because life is so distracting. We step out of this sanctuary, and we’re assailed with things of the world, … garage sales, signs..

How does His invitation sound to you? Let me ask, if two days from today, on Monday, you received word that you were informed that you were the benefactor of a large inheritance, including a home in another place, is that something that you would be willing change and get used to? Of course you would. So there is nothing in your past life that says you have to stay the same. Christ invites us to come home to Him, where we belong.

Shall we pray.

Father, We have a tired world to lose, and a new world to gain, along with all Your other children. May we not forget Your invitation, and seek Your face in all things of life, as You have always sought ours. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.

Father, how can we thank You? We cannot count the ways. Might we always turn to You in good times and hard times, for You are our Lord and You will finish the work. In Jesus’ name we pray, Amen.