

# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

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## Today-- The Day of Salvation



by Dudley Ross Spears

Everything that exists in this present world has relation to time. Life consists of birth, childhood, adolescence, maturity, old-age and death. The important consideration about time is not how much of it we experience, but what we do with what we have. To express the urgency of using the time God gives us, Paul wrote, "And working together with him we entreat also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain, (for he saith, At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee, and in a day of salvation did I succor thee: behold, now is the acceptable time: behold now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:1-2 ASV). Today is always now to us, for tomorrow is only something we hope for; yesterday is history and now is reality.

The word "also" is important in this text. It ties together what Paul had previously said with his conclusions. In chapter 5, Paul pled with his readers to be reconciled to God, which is dependent on receiving God's grace that brings salvation. He has also stated that the old things are past and everything is made new. (2 Cor. 5:17-19). By this one learns that God has

His calendar of events already completed. He has a day of salvation, a day of being reconciled to Him, a day when responsible humans may receive His grace. Paul is urging his readers, including us, to fit our lives into God's calendar of events. The "now" of the text shows clearly that God's timetable calls for men to be saved in this dispensation of time.

### A Day of Salvation

Paul quotes from Isaiah 49:8. The context of the passage from which Paul quotes shows that the servant (the Messiah) is promised as a glorious light to the Gentiles. The servant would "restore the preserved of Israel." (verse 6). So, the Messiah is promised to both the Jew and the Gentile as the Saviour, Reconciler and Messiah. It is helpful to read the entire text from which Paul quotes.

*"Thus saith Jehovah, In an acceptable time have I answered thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to raise up the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages."*

It is apparent that the Father is listening to the plea of the servant, which is Christ, the Son of God. Prophetically, Isaiah looked down the annals of time to hear the plea of Christ to the Father. The Hebrew writer reminds us that Christ, "who in the days of his flesh, having offered us prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and having been heard for his godly fear." (Heb. 5:7). Later, the same author speaks of Christ as our intercessor, saying, "Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. 7:25).

One of the things that Christ could ask the Father is expressed by the Psalmist. "Ask of me, and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance

and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Psa. 2:8). This would have figured into Christ's denial of the devil's tempting offer to give him what God had already promised. (See Luke 4:5-7). In the text from Isaiah 49, the Father heard the servant and answered Him, "in an acceptable time" which is defined as "the day of salvation." Paul's conclusion is that that time is NOW.

### A Limited Time for Salvation

The acceptable time implies that there is a limited amount of time allotted to this great event in God's calendar. The fact that it is called "time" and "day" implies that both a start and finish must be considered. The day of salvation had its dawning when Christ sent forth His apostles with the world-wide commission. (Matt. 28:19-20). When Peter preached the good news to Gentiles for the first time, he said, ". . . in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:35). The day of Pentecost, the great Jewish feast of "weeks", saw the start of the day of salvation. But the sun will eventually set on this limited time. Time is running out for mankind. Albert Barnes, the noted commentator remarked,

**"There can be no doubt that by this expression is meant the period of the new dispensation, at the commencement of which the Messiah appeared, to effect the work of human redemption, and during which the blessings of that redemption are being communicated to mankind."**

### The Day of Gospel Preaching

Since the communication of the terms of salvation began on the day of Pentecost, the day of salvation may be called also the day of gospel preaching. It is the gospel that saves. (Rom. 1:16). It must be preached to save the lost. (I Cor. 1:21). God depends on His servants to preach it. Paul called himself merely an "earthen vessel" in which had been deposited a great treasure. (2 Cor. 4:7). No other message compares with it. Men cannot be saved by hearing social messages or human philosophy preached. The doctrines men conjure in their minds are but chaff as compared to the wheat of God's word.

The gospel preached is the good

news for the "fulness of time." (Gal. 4:4). Angels appeared to men of the commonest sort to announce the advent of the Son. (Luke 2:8-11). This was according to God's timetable. The expression "fulness of time" is indeed significant. It tells us that a time, set aside by Almighty God, is fulfilled. The fulfillment of time means that the amount of time God set aside in His plan for salvation has now run its course. This is the time when all nations are to hear the gospel. Paul wrote, "For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest ye be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part hath befallen Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11:25). The fall of the Jews, rejecting the Messiah who came to restore them, provoked the Gentiles to accept the gracious offer of salvation. The fulness of the Gentiles suggests their full opportunity to hear the gospel and be saved, just like Jews or any other. The preaching of the gospel is inseparably connected with the day of salvation.

### The Day of Grace and Mercy

Someone has said that "grace is God giving us what we do not deserve, and mercy is God holding back from us what we do deserve." This all happens during the day of salvation. Grace prompted God to offer man the terms of salvation. (Titus 2:11-14). Grace was manifested through Christ Jesus. (John 1:17). Mercy prompts God to allow us to be saved from the awful fate of being lost eternally. (Titus 3:4-5). Like all days, grace and mercy have their limits. As long as the day of salvation remains and the sun does not set, God's grace and mercy are available, but when daylight travels into the darkness of eternity, there will be no more mercy or grace. A graphic description in strong figures is given by John in his Revelation:

*"He also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone. . ."*  
(Rev. 14:10-11a).

Setting all other considerations aside for a moment, we must see that now the wrath of God is mixed with mercy, thus God holds back His holy anger. But this scene tells us that God's wrath in its pure and undiluted form awaits

those who do not take advantage of the time we have now--in the day of salvation.

### Some Brief Conclusions

We must seek salvation now, according to what God has, by His grace, revealed. Men must faithfully preach, now, what God offers mankind and persuade sinners to accept the plan God has revealed, now. The fact that Paul says "now" means that there is no "tomorrow of salvation." There is no plan of salvation for those who are in the grave. We are either pardoned and saved now, or lost eternally. Wise men seek and take advantage of opportunities to better themselves when the opportunity is presented. They do not wait. We urge all who read these feeble words to consider the seriousness of what has been said and be saved, by obeying God, **now**--today is the day of salvation!

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## This Is The Day

by Roger Hills

*"This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it."* (Psalms 118:24).

How will you use this day? Will you waste the time? Or will you serve the Lord? Here are some suggestions:

1. Visit an older person or a shut-in and read the Bible to them.
2. Talk to your best friend about the gospel.
3. Call an unfaithful member about returning to his or her "first love."
4. Be happy rather than sad.
5. Thank God for your blessings instead of asking for more.
6. Apologize for an unkind word spoken in anger.
7. Invite your next door neighbor to attend a service with you.
8. Accomplish whatever task you've been putting off for too long.
9. Set up a home Bible study with a good prospect.
10. Spend several minutes with God in study and in prayer.

*"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."* (Gal. 6:9).

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

**Today:** Volume I, Number 1. Just typing these words excites me. I don't know whether it is ink in the veins or what, but I have always enjoyed trying to write. For several years I have talked about starting a new subscription paper. Well, here it is and now I'm a little scared. I realize that the printed page can influence people--either for good or for bad. I would like to say only those things that could build one up, strengthen him in the faith, and cause him to press forward in a more diligent service for the Lord. But we've also got to be realistic in a new endeavor like this. No matter what may appear in these pages some will be dissatisfied. It is impossible to please all men and, therefore, I admit defeat in that possibility with this first issue. It will be our desire to work at pleasing God and His Son, Jesus Christ. We would like to think that most of our readers would agree with our attempts, but we shall move forward with the goal of bringing glory, honor, and praise to God--and not just acceptance from the readers. We are trying to do good, not evil; we are trying to build up, not tear down; we are trying to look for something positive, not merely the negative.

Others are keenly aware of the power of the printed page, too, and take full advantage of it. Christian Scientists have tried for years to establish reading rooms in every good-sized city and to place Christian Science literature in every public library in the country. Seventh-day Adventists have 44 publishing houses producing literature in 220 languages. A constant stream of books, booklets, and periodicals pour forth from Mormon presses. Billy Graham's **Decision** magazine reaches more than five million each month. Armstrong's **Plain Truth** claimed a circulation of 6,300,000 for the Nov.-Dec. '83 issue and is now being distributed at free vendors in most shopping malls. The **Baptist Standard** reaches 375,000 in

Texas alone. **Awake**, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, claims an average printing each issue of 9,975,000 and is published in 32 languages. The Catholic Church has a circulation of over 25 million of their 431 magazines and newspapers. The **Catholic Register** alone has a circulation of 600,000. And it is estimated that the Communists distribute 50 times as much literature as all religious bodies combined.

## OUR AIM

Our plans are to publish a paper for today's activity family. This is not designed to be just another paper for preachers. We hope there will be something in each issue that will appeal to every age group--youth, teens, young marrieds, etc. It is designed to be edification and meat for the Christian, while at the same time containing milk for the new convert and/or the non-Christian. A discussion of many internal church problems has often confused the non-Christian or new convert. That's not to say that these things don't need to be discussed. I certainly believe members need to be grounded on these issues. But **Today** will try to present the gospel in more of a positive thrust. We hope it will be something you can give to your next door neighbor or send to your barber, doctor, or dentist's office. We shall deal with controversial issues--from apostasy to Zionism--but attempt to deal with the issue and Scriptures related to it.

**Today** shall be devoted to the proclamation of the gospel of Christ through which the righteous are saved and the wicked are condemned. God has revealed that the gospel is His power unto salvation unto those who believe and obey its commands (Rom. 1:16; 6:1-18). We, therefore, simply want to "preach the word" (2 Tim. 4:2), to speak "the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15), and to build people up in the most holy faith.

**Today** is not tied to any man or group of men. There is no connection with any foundation or no ties to the purse strings of any large amounts of money. We will advocate no claims of any human party or human sect. Indeed, we aim to please God rather than man. God being our helper, we shall exalt Jesus Christ and point people to Him and salvation through His blood. He is our Saviour and some day we shall all bow before him in judgment.

## OUR WRITERS

**Today** will not have a staff, *per se*. Some men will have regular columns and others may contribute articles for each month's publications, but we shall not list men's names on some masthead as if to say "Look who all 'lined up' together." I will defend what I write and the other writers will defend what they write. We do not become obligated to personally defend and/or endorse what another person has written. Each writer will be responsible for his own writing. Publication of an article does not necessarily constitute editorial endorsement.

# Today

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### OUR POLICY

Today will not be devoted to unfair controversy and personal sarcasm. We have no desire to "ride a hobby horse" by getting on one subject and ignoring other key issues in society and the religious world. Our policy is to be scriptural, fair, sincere, and faithful in presenting something that can be edifying.

### HELP NEEDED

A major problem with any new journal is building its circulation. We have been encouraged with our first two ad mail-outs. Subscriptions have come in from thirty-five states, Canada, and three foreign countries. But we would like to see this number grow. If you can agree with our aim and our policy, will you show your copy of the paper to

friends and ask them to subscribe? Would you like to send Today to your doctor's office, public library or barber shop? We'd appreciate any help you can give us!

We also solicit articles from writers who are willing to write within the framework of the guidelines stated above--Scriptural, fair, sincere, and faithful in presenting something that can be edifying. There are always some misguided souls who flood the mails with their bitter epistles of attacks on the church and every elder, preacher, Bible teacher, song leader, or other Christian they've ever known. We are not interested in receiving such articles. We don't want a constant diet of "mud in the face," but something that is going to encourage us to do better. If you have such an article, how about sending it to us?

# SIMPLE TEACHING TOOLS

by Jane Britnell

Teaching tools and visual aids to help strengthen our Bible teaching in the home need be neither expensive nor elaborate. If we put on our "thinking caps" we will find that many of the things that are in all of our homes can be used to help us in our Bible teaching with our children.

In most homes the kitchen is the most popular room in the house. The most delicious smells, the warmest conversation, and the closeness of enjoying a special treat there make the kitchen popular. If we elected the kitchen the most popular room, the refrigerator would certainly become the most popular place in that room. Just think how many times each day someone (mother. . . father. . . children) goes to the refrigerator for a drink, a snack, or "just looking"! It's reasonable then that a wise home-Bible-teacher would use this tool (the refrigerator) to her best advantage.

When the children are little, try taping a picture clipped from a magazine on the refrigerator door. While children are in the kitchen the picture is something you can discuss together.

"Look, Johnny! See the picture of the little boy sick in bed? If we had a friend who was sick like that, what could we do to make him feel better? Would you take his lesson sheet from Bible class to him?"

Many of the comments you might make about each picture could stimulate other comments or questions that form the basis of much good

teaching in an informal way. The time to teach a child anything is when the mind is on that particular thing. These short "Bible-lessons-on-the-run" are often more effective than a formal daily Bible lesson. However, formal studies have their place also.

Are your children learning the Twelve Apostles or the Books of the Bible in their classes at the church building? If so, post a list of them on the refrigerator door. Whenever the child comes into the kitchen to pass the time with you and he has nothing special in mind, take advantage of the opportunity.

"I'll bet you can't say the first ten books of the Old Testament!" (Children love to be challenged. But be careful—they may challenge you to do the same thing, so you'd better brush up yourself!)

Does your family learn a weekly (or daily) memory verse? A copy of this can be taped to the refrigerator door on Mom's eyelevel so both she and the children can have an opportunity to work on it several times daily. One homemaker copied 365 Bible verses she wanted to memorize that year on note cards and put them into a recipe box on which she printed the words "Bread of Life". She was able to meditate on and memorize a verse every day by simply putting a new card in her kitchen window every morning. This particular window was over her sink, and with so much time spent over the sink she was able to use those minutes to strengthen her spirit while washing

her dishes.

Magnetic letters (the plastic ones with the small magnets on them) are available at most toy stores and will stick to a refrigerator door. As children begin to read they will be fascinated by messages spelled out in the magnetic letters. If you have children in the primary grades try this: While the children are at school write the location of a scripture on the refrigerator door. Make sure it is not one they would recognize at first glance. Try Isaiah 9:6. Make no comment about it and see how long it takes them to get out their Bibles and find out what that verse said that you thought was important enough to put up for all to see. A good follow-up on this would be to ask the children during a family Bible lesson in the evening what the verse on the refrigerator said.

Yes, after years of these activities, your refrigerator might need a new coat of paint, but that is a small price to pay for such good Bible teaching that is readily available to all of us.

So, look around you, mother teachers. The refrigerator door is not the only teaching tool you have. Consider the bathroom mirror, the cassette tape recorder, the family car (try a religious sing-along while riding and many other things that are available, just waiting for you to "discover" their new usefulness. Good luck!

# Traveling in the Bible Lands

By Ferrell Jenkins

**M**ost Christians, at some time or the other, dream of visiting in the lands where Bible events took place.

Such a tour has rightly been called "*the trip of a lifetime*." We believe the trip should not be taken as a *pilgrimage* that is, as people seeking a shrine at which to worship; it is an educational tour taken for the purpose of making one a better student and teacher of the Bible.

People of all ages visit the Bible Lands. High school and college students can profit greatly. Those who are and those who wish to become mature Bible students will especially appreciate the trip. Rapid air transportation has made it possible to visit the principal areas of Bible activity in two or three weeks. This has an advantage for the working man or woman who only has a short vacation,

or for older people for whom a longer trip would be too tiring. Most trips provide extensions into other areas for those who have more time.

## The Value of Trip

A trip to Bible lands broadens horizons and opens many fields of interest. It lays a broad foundation for Bible study and teaching. The relationship of the land to the Book and to world history is made vivid. To stand in the same spots, seeing and touching the very things mentioned in your Bible reading, has great value. Light is thrown upon many events of Scripture as you see the actual places where these events transpired.

The study of Bible history and geography helps one to understand the Bible events took place in a specific geographical environment. Man is a creature of *space* as well as *time*. To fully understand Israel and her

activities in the Old Testament, we must visualize the dealings she had with her neighbors, Egypt, Edom, the Canaanites, Assyria, Babylon, *et al.* Such a study will help to recreate the time, habits and conditions of the people of old. To know the land of Bible events is to see the significance of certain events and why they happened as they did.

Modernists have attacked the Bible as being inaccurate in its historical statements and geographical descriptions. From here the next step has been to cast reflection on its accuracy in spiritual matters. A study of the Land and the Book convinces us of the historical and geographical

*Vineyards and hillside villages like this one at Mamre, where Abraham pitched his tent, help one to understand the Biblical life style and customs.*



accuracy of the Bible. What better way could this insight be gained than by an actual visit to these places!

Visiting the Bible Lands gives one a first-hand look at various religious groups, Islam, Judaism, and the warring sects of Catholicism and Protestantism. It breaks one's heart to see that hardly anyone in that vast segment of humanity has ever heard a true gospel sermon. Perhaps someone who visits that part of the world will see the need to go there to preach, and perhaps others who have traveled there will see that he gets adequate support.

#### What to See?

We would not want to mislead anyone. Much of what the tourist guides show as "authentic" is far from it. Most of them know the difference and when we let them know the difference and when we let them know and tell them what we are mainly interested in, they do a real good job. You will see various branches of the Catholic church or the Moslems clamoring to show you the "exact" spot where this or that took place, but even the witnessing of this has some value to the Christian. Jack Finegan, speaking of Palestine, suggests that the whole country itself often speaks more clearly than any specific object.

**"Its hills, lakes and rivers, its sky, sun and springtime flowers, must be much the same as they were in Jesus' day. Also, in many villages activities and custom, remain little changed. One still sees the women at the village well, the sower going forth to sow, and the shepherd leading his sheep, exactly as it is said in John 10:4, 'He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him.'"**  
(*Light From the Ancient Past*, p. 221.)

When one sees the land he realizes that even if he does not know where the "exact" spot of some event was, it could not have been far away.

Most tours visit Rome. Here one may see the Appian Way, the Colosseum and the Catacombs and reflect on the activities and persecution of the early Christians in the midst of a pagan society. A visit to the church buildings of Rome and to Vatican City helps one to visualize vast changes that have taken place since those days of simple New Testament Christianity.

In Egypt one may see the Sphinx and the Pyramids which had been standing for centuries when Abraham went down into that land.

The wars which have ravaged the Middle East in the past half century remind one that things have been peaceful in the "promised" land for only short periods of time. But think of seeing Jerusalem, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron. The Sea of Galilee with its calm blue mountain waters, the snake-like Jordan River, and the salty Dead Sea will cause the events of old to flash across your mind in lightning-like succession. The trip across the Plain of Megiddo (this supplies the figure for the Armageddon of Rev. 16:16) will bring about a clearer understanding of many Bible passages.

At Athens and Corinth one can see the sites of the labors of Paul and thinking about what became of these churches he can wonder if the same fate awaits the congregation of which he is a part.

The list is nearly endless. We could go on and on talking about the places and things to be seen on such a trip. Since I began taking tours to the Bible Lands in 1967 many changes have taken place. Some of the ancient monuments have begun to decay. Modern settlements with high-rise apartments have covered hillsides which once were occupied, in humbler times, by Biblical characters. The Bible Lands will not remain an open-air museum.

#### Some Practical Advice

Perhaps we have whetted your appetite for a more accurate

knowledge of Bible lands. I would however, offer some practical advice to one making a trip to the Bible Lands:

**1. Travel With Christians.** I have seen people go with other groups only to return with disappointment. Some groups just go from shrine to another and miss so much of the historical and geographical significance of the land.

**2. Travel With A Knowledgeable Leader.** Just because one calls himself a "tour host" does not mean that he knows anything about the Bible Lands. Even if you would like to lead a group, make your first trip with someone who is experienced. Learn the ropes and you will be less likely to end up with one around your neck (figuratively, of course!).

**3. Prepare Before You Go.** Make some preparation before you visit the Bible Lands. Read some good books on Bible history, geography, archaeology, etc. I suggest *The Wycliffe Historical Geography of Bible Lands*, by Pfeiffer and Vos (Moody Press) as a beginner. But don't make the mistake of waiting too long. You will actually learn more during the year following your tour than you probably ever have before.

**4. Don't Forget The Tax Advantage.** Educational travel can be tax deductible for those who use the material in their work. Many of the preachers and teachers who have traveled with me have taken the tour as a tax deduction.

Are you ready?

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# The Family Affair

Many homes of our day are in deep trouble. One man said, "My home is the place where we fight our private battles." A woman said, "My home is where I work the hardest and am appreciated the least." A young lady said, "My home is where I stay from midnight until daylight." A teenage boy said, "My home is simply a place where I come to eat my meals and change my clothes in order that I may be on my way again."

Most people want to have a happy home, and certainly all who are true Christians are seeking a happy home. The home is vitally important to the church and the nation. Each is dependent on the other for strength. When the home is strong and functions correctly, the church and the nation are strong. When the home is weak, the church and the nation is weak. Many of the problems that we are facing in our nation and world today have their roots in the disintegration of the home.

To have a happy, successful home is no accident. It requires work, planning and cooperation. Each person within the family must be willing to assume his or her responsibility. Thousands of homes are broken each year in this nation, and thousands more are unhappy and unsuccessful. We keep hearing a lot about a generation gap; I'm convinced our big problem is not the **generation** gap, but a **communication** gap. This column will be devoted to different ways of opening the door of communication between husband-wife, parent-child. It will offer suggestions on making the home a place of sharing, caring, and loving.

**\*A PARTNERSHIP.** When is the last time the family discussed life insurance policies, investments, retirement benefits, and death arrangements? Mom and Dad, have you told anyone where you would want to be buried, what preacher you would

want, what songs you would like sung, etc.? Death should not be a scary or morbid subject for the Christian. Now is the time to discuss these things. Don't wait until the other is gone and you have to decide all of these things on the spur of the moment. Marriage is meant to be a partnership--and that even includes making decisions on such important subjects as death and dying. Do you have a will? Do the children know where it is?

**\*MYSTERY NIGHT.** One dad we read about has assigned the day of the month on which his anniversary falls as family mystery night. Every other month he takes them on a surprise mystery outing or activity. All they know in advance is what to wear and when to be ready. The rest is a total surprise until they actually arrive at the place for the event or fun to begin. On alternating months the mystery is just for him and his wife. Again, all she knows is when to be ready and what to wear. This smart dad scans the calendar section of the newspaper each Sunday to pick up on special events, free concerts, lectures, museum displays, theater openings and anything else that would make a good mystery event for the family.

**\*THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH, AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH.** Any family with older children can profit immensely from a dose of this kind of truth every few months. The concept is a no-holds-barred question and answer session among the family members. One person directs any question he wishes to another member of the family. The person must answer the question and answer it **truthfully**. No question may be ridiculed, laughed at, or avoided. After answering, that person gets to ask the next question. The depth of questioning will soon reveal the worth of this simple idea and you may enjoy the trivia as you try to recall events of the past.

**\*THAT ISN'T A WORD.** How many words of three letters or more can you and the family form using the following letters where each word created also includes the letter "F"? Do it together or have a contest and compare the results. The letters are: F plus A, C, E, G, L, R, T, U, W, and X. An average score is 30 in 30 minutes. Can your family beat it?

**\*POPCORN ALL OVER THE FLOOR.** The next T.V. show you watch as a family, spread a clean sheet on the floor and put the popcorn popper in the middle. With everyone sitting on the sheet, take the lid off and plug in the popper. The children will have more fun eating the popcorn as it jumps to the sheet that they will the T.V. show. Sure it's messy, but isn't it fun?

**\*A NIGHT TO REMINISCE.** Right after dinner tonight, reminisce about some of the great times you've had as a family right there at home. Then select one of the best you've thought of and repeat it tonight.

**\*SPECIAL LOVE LETTERS.** Ask the grandparents and other relatives to write a special love letter to each new grandchild. Put these into a scrapbook before the child even leaves the hospital and save these treasures until the child is old enough to understand the words and/or read them for him or herself. How special the letters will make the child feel as he or she is challenged to live up to the ideals and pride expressed in each letter. If you're not expecting any more children, try the same type of thing for your child's next birthday.

**\*FAMILY NOTE NIGHT.** A different version of the above would be to write a note to five people chosen from among: friends you haven't seen for a while, special relatives, some of the shut-ins from church, a preacher you have known over the years, a school teacher, a soccer coach, a Cubmaster, etc. You can each write a different person or all slip individual notes into an envelope to the same person.

**\*COUPONS OF LOVE.** Here's a super idea to give Mom on her birthday, Mother's Day, or on Valentine's Day next month. It can be from Dad and/or the kids. Create a series of "love coupons" which Mom can redeem. The children will generally think of the best ones on their own. Here are some samples: Youngsters

could say, "Good for one breakfast in bed," "Good for one Saturday morning of cleaning up my room," "Good for one free back rub," "Good for five huge hugs and kisses," Older children could say, "Good for a free cleaning of the snow from the sidewalk," "Good for a picnic in the park," "Good for three hours of free babysitting with Junior." From Dad, the coupons might read, "Good for dinner out, anywhere," "Good for one new dress," "Good for a one-night trip without the kids," "Good for a special breakfast out on Sunday morning." Staple the coupons into a booklet with an appropriate cover or punch holes and tie them together with pretty ribbon or yarn.

**\*MOTTO DAY.** Let each family member choose an individual motto to live by during 1984. It can be a Bible verse like, "*I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength*" (Phil. 4:13) or some positive slogan like, "I Can, I Will, and I'm Going To." Pass out poster boards and markers, and let each one make a sign with the motto to hang up in his or her bedroom. Try reading the motto at least once every day.

**\*THIS IS MY COUNTRY.** Imagine the fun tonight of spending an hour or two with your older children making up your own country. Decide on the name, draw a map of its territory, write a history, create a list of laws and a system of government, imagine the dress codes and customs of the people...be as detailed as you want. Discuss some of the "do's" and "don'ts" you have decided for your country. Why? Add to your country's history frequently and keep alert for the opportunity the discussion will afford to reinforce good values, decent morals, and proper role models.

**\*\*"SHUT-IN" SUNDAY.** Visit some older people as a family next Sunday afternoon. According to Edward R. Walsh (recreation superintendent for Westbury, NY), loneliness is one of the leading causes of premature death in America, with "shut-ins" being the most vulnerable. So, bake some cookies or fix a fruit basket, rehearse a song you can sing as a family, put together a picture book of the church members, or collect letters from the church families, then pile in the car and have a great time erasing someone's loneliness.

# "I Wanted To Do It All"

By Ken Weliever

**I**n the October '83 *Reader's Digest* there is an article entitled "I Wanted to Do It All." It is about a man, John Goddard, who at the age of 15 envisioned himself as a great explorer. At that time he wrote down some things that he would like to do in life. He called it "My Life List." On the list he included such things as: Explore the Nile, Amazon and Congo rivers. Climb Mount Everest, Mount Kilimanjaro, the Matterhorn. Ride an elephant, camel, ostrich, and bronco. Retrace the travels of Marco Polo and Alexander the Great. Appear in a Tarzan movie. Read the works of Shakespeare, Plato and Aristotle. Compose a work of music. Write a book. Visit every country in the world. Marry and have children. Visit the moon.

When young Goddard finished his list he had 127 goals. Today, this 59 year old explorer and adventurer, has achieved 106 of these goals. He says, "At fifteen I was very aware of my limitations. I was just an unformed human who had potential like everyone else, and I really wanted to do something with my life. I wanted to do it all, and inspire others. I set up a blueprint of goals so that I would always have something to work for. I was also aware of the people around me who had gotten into ruts, had never taken risks, never challenged themselves in any way. I was determined not to go that route."

## SPIRITUAL APPLICATION

As I read John Goddard's story, I wondered why we Christians could not also have this type of attitude concerning life. We ought to desire to do it all for the Lord, to make a difference, to inspire others. Think about the attributes in Goddard's life that ought to be present in the lives of Christians that will help us in developing our talents, growing spiritually and winning souls for Christ.

(1) Goddard knew he had potential even as a 15 year old boy. I fear that some Christians fail to believe in their potential. Friend, God made you an has endowed you with specific abilities. He has given you potential. As a result, you have a stewardship to fulfill. You

are required to use your abilities to their best advantage. (1 Cor. 4:2).

(2) The most obvious attribute for success is goal setting. Goddard would not have achieved fame and fortune without having set goals. We must do the same to achieve spiritual success. In Hebrews eleven are examples of men of faith with goals. Abraham, Noah, Moses, Daniel all had goals. They were specific, not general. What is your goal spiritually this week, this month, this year? Write it down and be specific.

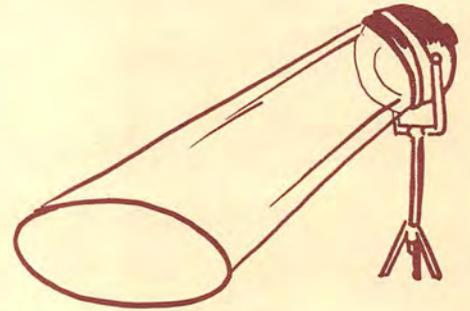
(3) Another lesson we can learn from this story is to avoid getting into ruts. Many people today are mired down in a rut of life. Many Christians are in religious ruts and are unhappy and unfulfilled in their "service" to God. We ought to be living exciting, vibrant lives. No, I don't mean by riding a camel or exploring the Nile river! But by being a channel of service, by sharing and helping other people. There is so much to do, so many people to see, and more to learn! How could a Christian ever get bored?

(4) At the end of the article Goddard suggests "It is helpful to look at your life and ask: 'If I had one more year to live, what would I do?' We all have things we want to achieve. Don't put them off."

Goddard raises a good question for Christians. If you knew that you only had a year to live, would you be doing the same things you are doing now? Would your goals be the same? Would your priorities change? Would you be trying to get the most out of life? Would you not spend it in a way that would benefit you and those you love in eternity? Would you waste time on unimportant things? We are going to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. (2 Cor. 5:10). Therefore, we must make our lives count and use them in a way that will please God.

Jesus said, "... the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Lk. 16:8). Sometimes we can learn some valuable lessons about life from people in the world like John Goddard. Let us learn to live, love and enjoy life in the way God intended that we may inherit eternal life.

# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## A.C. GRIDER



**What can you tell us about your birth and early years?**

Well, I was born in Russell County, Kentucky, on January 15, 1912, which means I'll soon be 72 years old. I graduated from the eighth grade in Russell County and then we moved down to Clay County, Tennessee. My daddy was an oil-well driller and he

took us down there and I went through the eighth grade again in Willow Grove, Tennessee. I went on through high school there.

**Did you get more formal education or are you self-taught?**

I went to David Lipscomb College for one year in 1934 and the spring of '35. I then taught school for three years

and then went on to Tennessee Poly-Technic Institute of Cookeville, Tennessee, just long enough to renew my teacher's certificate again. I didn't graduate from either college, but I attended the two. Then I taught school two or three more years.

**Where did you meet your wife?**

Well, I met her at Willow Grove. I met her in high school and that's where we both graduated. We were married on May 5, 1934, the year I graduated from high school. She was one year behind me, so I went to David Lipscomb while she finished her last year of high school. We will be married fifty years this May. We have one child, Nora Jane Ashbrook. Jane and Lee have two daughters: Kelly is a student at Florida College and Melody is entering high school this year.

**I'm sure you've had many people to ask you what your initials stand for. Is there some special story that goes with that?**

Rather than asking me, I've had people tell me what it stands for. I've had them to call me Alexander Campbell. But it's really a long name, but not a long story. The A stands for Adolphus and the C for Cornelius, at least that's a Scriptural name. My Daddy worked for a man named Adolphus Cornelius Clayton and my Daddy thought so much of him that he named his first son Ivan Clayton Grider, naming him after this man. And then he gave me the man's first two names. So that's how I got stuck with that.

**Where and when did you start preaching?**

The first place I did located work was in Woodriver, Illinois. I preached there for three years beginning in 1942. I spent forty-two years in located work before I quit this past year. I worked with fourteen different congregations in located work during these years.



**Your name has almost become synonymous with a defender of the Truth and a debater. Do you have any idea how many debates you have engaged in over the years?**

I've had about forty-five. I've known of several conversions from the denominations as a result of these debates. I guess one of the most notable ones was in Georgia when I debated a Baptist preacher from the Baptist Temple College in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I baptized six of the Baptists that sat right on the front seat throughout that debate. I baptized them just about as soon as that debate was over.

**If you had your preaching life to do over, do you think you would hold more debates? less? or about the same?**

I think I would hold more if it were possible to schedule them. I've never passed up an opportunity to debate somebody when they wanted to and I've even pressed some to debate on occasion. I certainly wouldn't conduct any less, but more if I could. I feel that a lot of good has been done.

**Of all your debates, what is possibly your fondest memory of any of them?**

I debated a Church of God man in Harriman, Tennessee, and I felt better about that debate up until the time I met Guy Woods on the institutional question in Louisville. He was a Greek scholar and well qualified in his field, but he and Woods both were about as

weak as I ever met when it actually came down to turning the Truth on them. The man was overconfident and I "snowed him under."

**Have you had anything humorous to happen in any of the debates?**

Well, I'll have to think a little bit about that. I've many funny things to happen. I guess the most notable one would be the time I debated the Missionary Baptist preacher while living at Lafayette, Tennessee. I shall never forget the debate with J.E. McDonald when he presented what became known as "McDonald's Goat Chart." McDonald had borrowed a chart apparently from a man by the name of Brown from West Tennessee. He intended for that chart to "carry the day" for the Baptists in Macon County.

The chart was an ingeniously fashioned piece of work which was supposed to forever destroy "Campbellite doctrine." Let me describe the chart as best I can and then relate how I replied to it. At the bottom of the chart were three goats in the water, one stepping up out of the creek while another was being baptized by the third. Then a winding road made its way around and up the mountainside. About half-way up the mountain, in the underbrush, lay an animal which appeared to be dead and which looked somewhat like a goat but also resembled a sheep. At the top of the mountain a goat sat in a big chair with a book in his hand while before

him stood another goat awaiting some kind of decision.

The "Baptist explanation" of the chart, I learned later, went something like this: The Campbellites baptize a goat, hoping to make a sheep out of him. The animal which was dead and hard to recognize beside the road represented, according to the Campbellites, a dead sheep or goat. The Campbellites must wait until they get to the judgement to find out if he is a sheep or a goat. The goat in the chair with the book in his hand is Jesus who is telling a particular Campbellite whether or not he is a sheep and can get into heaven or whether or not he is a goat and must be consigned to hell.

The chart might have been effective if McDonald had gotten a chance to use it. He hung the chart at the beginning of the debate, but I had the first speech. I spoke (as nearly as I can recall my speech) as follows: "The Baptist people have been accused, and I have leveled the accusation, myself, of being unable to depict Baptist doctrine on a chart. But we have been mistaken in this. Mr. McDonald has furnished us with a chart that precisely sets forth Missionary Baptist doctrine so far as becoming a child of God is concerned. I bid you listen as we take note of the chart before us. The chair at the top of the hill represents the authority of the Baptist Church to determine if you are a fit subject to become a Baptist. The goat in the chair is Pastor McDonald who is sitting in judgment upon a candidate. The book in his hand is the Baptist Manual from which McDonald gets his authority to thus judge. The goat before the judgment seat is a poor soul who thinks he is saved and is relating an 'experience' to see if by chance he may become a Baptist. If he makes the tale he tells unreasonable enough, perhaps if he says he saw a body with a thousand heads, or a thousand bodies with a single head, McDonald will label it as a work of the Holy Spirit and rule that he is indeed a good prospect for a Missionary Baptist. If he tells the judge that he desires simply to obey the gospel and thus be saved, McDonald will dismiss him as a child of the Devil and fit only to become a Campbellite.

"But looking at the scene at the creek below, we surmise that the experience related was indeed unreasonable enough to be mistaken



for a work of the Holy Spirit. A vote must have been taken and, as usual, it was an affirmative one. So McDonald has now left the pastor's seat and is planning to baptize the candidate. Now keep in mind he is **not** baptizing this one according to Mark 16:16, as McDonald thinks he is already saved. Nor is he baptizing him according to Acts 2:38, for both preacher and candidate think his sins have already been remitted. He is not baptizing this man according to Romans 6:3 because, according to their misunderstanding, this man is already in Christ. This man is not being baptized according to any verse of Scripture. He is being baptized according to the Baptist Manual.

"But, what about this goat that is stepping so high coming up out of the water. Why, he found the water a little too cold for baptizing. And since McDonald had diligently taught him that baptism was altogether unnecessary, he has decided just to forego baptism and go to heaven out of the Baptist Church.

"And this fellow on the hillside by the way, what of him? Well, he is at the mourner's bench seeking religion. He must stay there until he hears something, or perhaps smells something that he cannot explain. Then he can go stand before McDonald for approval and a vote and then baptism."

By this time the audience was in stitches. Everybody, including perhaps two dozen Baptist preachers, were nearly dying laughing. Most of the Baptist preachers in that section fairly

hated McDonald anyway.

Well, when McDonald came to the floor he was so completely overwhelmed that his only comment was: "Grider made my chart mean something I didn't intend for it to mean." Of course the audience roared again and McDonald was furious. He never did rally from this stunning upset of his plans.

The debate lasted for four days with morning and afternoon sessions. This happened at the first morning session. For the remaining seven sessions, McDonald continued to bring the chart and hang it on the wall, but he kept it rolled up with rubber bands on either end so the audience could not see it. I chided him for four days to unroll the chart so we could have another look at it. He never did.

On Friday afternoon, at the last session, he had again hung the chart, and it came down to my last speech. McDonald was to have the last speech of the debate and I thought he probably had figured out some way to redeem himself during his last speech and that he surely would unroll it for his last speech. So, in the last two minutes of my last speech, I spoke like this: "I am sorry Mr. McDonald has not favored us with another look at the goats. I thought surely he would have something more to present before the debate is over. It is now apparent that Mr. McDonald has conceded defeat on the goat chart. But I plead with him to unroll the chart in his last speech and give us another look. I must know if that poor soul is still at the

mourner's bench. Let's all look now and see if he has 'come through' or is still mourning when he lowers the chart to give us a look." McDonald made his last speech with no reference to the chart, and of course we never got to see it again.

#### **What advise would you give to a preacher in preparing for a debate?**

Well, I don't know. I would be hard pressed to advise anyone along that line. As many as I have had and successful as I think I've been, I don't think anyone else could have done it like I have. It purely is an individual matter. Now I never was too particular about the kind of propositions I signed or anything of the kind about it. Some people get in a jam over this, but I never did get into one. I debated W.T. Russell, for instance, on the impossibility of apostasy. He insisted on writing my proposition for me. He said he wouldn't debate unless he wrote my proposition. He wrote out a nine-line typed out thing. I got up and read it when I got ready to make my affirmation and said, "Now that's the proposition and I don't understand it. I don't have any idea what it means. Mr. Russell wrote it and he wouldn't debate me unless he wrote it. But I can define the issue between us. I say a child of God can go to hell and he says they can't. That's the issue. If that's not plain enough for him, if he doesn't understand that, I'll try in my next speech to make it plainer." Well, he never did even question it. And that was the only reference I ever made to the proposition as he wrote it.

So I say I can't advise anybody else to do a thing like that. I don't know that anybody else can get by with it!

#### **Do you recommend more aggressive-ness?**

Yes, I don't think we ought to wait for somebody else to challenge us. I said when I started out that anytime anybody disagrees with what I said, if we can get together on a time and place, we would just discuss it. I see nothing to be lost by that provided you know what you're doing. I think, maybe, the Truth has been hurt sometimes by people engaging in it that were not qualified and were not real debaters. But if anybody's prepared, I just can't understand the Truth

suffering anywhere. I don't feel like the Truth ever has suffered the least bit in any of my debates.

**Do you think the future will bring about more debates?**

I don't really think it will.

**What do you think is going to be the greatest threat to the church?**

Well, perhaps quarrelling among ourselves over little misunderstandings. That can't keep from taking something away from the real issues. I debated the Baptists three times in one year and I had the Baptists really whipped out, I believe. A lot would have obeyed the Truth except these no-class and no-women teacher brethren got in there and slipped around and told the Baptist preacher that they had challenged me for a debate and so on. It completely turned the attention away from the Baptists and the Baptists never would talk anymore about debating. "No, debate your own brethren," they said. I think maybe that's what's going to happen. I'm afraid it's going to lessen the number of debates on real issues between

liberalism and denominationalism and just be between us over the way we express ourselves.

**Let's move into a different subject. In addition to your Bible, if you had to choose just two or three books for your library, what are the most important to you?**

Well, the one I use more than any and, therefore, the one I would consider the most important would be W.E. Vine's **Expository of New Testament Words**. I use that and I actually use my **Clarke's Commentary** more than any other. It's not that I necessarily think Clarke's is the best; well, I don't think it is the very best. I got it early in my preaching and got used to using it so I rely on it heavily.

**We realize that none of us are assured of a tomorrow. But if the world stands and you continue to be blessed with health, what are your plans for the future?**

It's just to do all of the preaching that I possibly can. I've missed for sickness a few times, but other than that I've preached every Sunday for the

last forty-two years.

I'm teaching a Wednesday night class at the Manslick Road Church and will be preaching on Sundays for the Preston Highway Church in Louisville.

**Do you have plans for any writing?**

I did some articles for the bulletin at Manslick Road and I'll be doing a column in **Searching the Scriptures** for Connie Adams. I may write some articles for other papers, but I don't have any plans for any books.

**If you could write your own eulogy, what would you want it to say? What mark do you hope you have left behind?**

Well, I think the greatest compliment that has ever been paid me, and it's been paid me by nearly everybody, is that everybody can understand what I say and know what I mean. I hope to be remembered as a plain preacher and a definite defender of the faith.

**Readers may write to A.C. Grider at Rt. 4, 1617 Bill Street, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.**

## The Importance Of – TODAY

by Bill Crews

**T**he moments of time march with no more rapid pace for the old than for the young--but they seem to. The moments of time march with no more rapid pace at the end of the year than at the beginning--they just seem to. 1983 was no shorter than 1982, or 1962, or any other year. All have been filled with an equal measure of time.

The beginning of a year is not more important than any other portion of a year. January 1st is no greater nor more pressing than August 1st. All time is but a measure between two eternities, and your whole life's span is but a dot on the pages of time. But the thing that matters is not how long you live, but how you live--whether or not you live so as to be pleasing God, to do His will, to exalt His name.

With respect to time, one thing stands out boldly in God's word--

NOW or TODAY. Good intentions will not save you. You will not be judged upon the basis of how you might have lived tomorrow, but how you lived TODAY. Only the tomorrows that become TODAY go down on your record, and each TODAY becomes part of the past record you must face in the judgment (2 Cor. 5:10; Matt. 16:27; Rev. 20: 12-13).

*"For he saith, At an acceptable time I hearkened unto thee, and in a day of salvation did I succor thee. Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (2 Cor. 6:2). *"But exhort one another day by day, so long as it is called Today"* (Heb. 3:13). Your transgressions, your unfaithfulness, your neglect of yesterday can be blotted out, and you can be saved or restored if you will obey and serve God TODAY. Your

faithfulness and loyalty of yesterday will not deliver you from your unfaithfulness and disloyalty of TODAY (Ezek. 18:21-24). If each TODAY that becomes yours is used diligently doing God's will, you need not be ashamed of any of your yesterdays, and your attitude toward and plans for tomorrow will always be pleasing to God. When death comes upon you, you will make your exit from the stage of this life, the curtain will fall upon your todays and opportunity and preparation will be forever gone for you. Your life will be filled with wasted years, lost opportunities and buried good intentions unless you make your TODAYS what God wants them to be, indeed, what they can be. Do you see why TODAY is so important? Some of you who read these lines need to obey the gospel of Christ and become Christians--TODAY. Some of you need to repent of sins and confess them that you might be restored to the Lord--TODAY. Will you?



## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanon

### WHAT A FRIEND WE HAVE IN JESUS

Joseph Scriven was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1820. He was educated on the Emerald Isle, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1842. He was engaged to a beautiful Irish lass, but tragedy struck. On the eve of their wedding day, his bride-to-be was accidentally drowned. When her body was taken from the pool, Joseph Scriven suffered a shock that was to go with him the rest of his life.

At the age of twenty-five, Scriven migrated from Ireland to Canada in the hope of forgetting. He divided his time between the Pengelley home, where he lived for many years as a private tutor for the children, and that of Mr. James Sackville in Bewdley, on the shores of beautiful Rice Lake.

Falling in love for the second time, he became engaged to Miss Eliza Catherine Roche, the only daughter of Lieutenant Andrew Roche of the Royal Navy. However, she contracted tuberculosis and died in 1860, before their wedding could take place.

Following two such tragic blows, he gave himself more diligently to religious work, became associated with the Plymouth Brethren group, and serving them as a lay-preacher for many years. In addition, he preached for a while in the Bailieboro Baptist Church nearby. He endeared himself to the underprivileged and poor of Lake Rice, Bewdley, and Port Hope, Canada. Clint Bonner said: "It is said that he gave even his clothes to those less fortunate than he. He sought out orphans whom he might help. He sawed wood and did patch carpentry for widows. But he never hired out to work for those able to pay. Some said he was eccentric. Some branded him as strange. But whatever people might have thought, Joseph Scriven devoted his life to helping those less fortunate than he" (A Hymn Is Born, Broadman Press, page 106).

When his body was worn with toil and his mind wearied with disappointment, Mr. Sackville took

him into his home once more, and it was there, in 1886, that Mr. Scriven spent the last days of his life. In his delirium, on October 10, 1886, he staggered from his bedroom and stumbled, exhausted, into a little creek about a hundred yards from the house, drowning in less than six inches of water. Some thought that he might have actually taken his own life. One friend said, "He died on his knees, in the attitude of prayer."

Although three monuments were erected to his memory in and around Bewdley in 1919, to mark the one-hundredth anniversary of his birth, his poem, set to music by C.C. Converse, had long since been enshrined in the hearts of Christians the world over.

No one knows for sure how the poem first got into print. The stories are conflicting. Ernest Emurian said: "Late one night in 1855, weighted down with loneliness and overcome with despondency and sadness, he poured out his heart to God, begging for relief from his burden and promising to serve Him faithfully if only his prayer were answered. . . . In his new-found joy he hurriedly dashed off a very simple poem of several stanzas in which he described his struggle and victory. The poem (was) entitled 'Pray Without Ceasing'. . ." (Living Stories of Famous Hymns, Baker, page 138). But Christopher Idle said: ". . . it was not his own troubles that led him to write this hymn. He sent the words to his mother when she was going through a very distressing time. So, as with many other hymns, a private message has become a source of comfort to people across the world" (Stories of Our Favorite Hymns, Erdmans, page 60). Clint Bonner accepts this latter view and adds: "The poem Joseph Scriven had written to comfort his mother was not intended to be a hymn. He hadn't meant even for anybody else to see it. It was sung for ten years as a hymn before the people of Lake Rice even knew their townsman had written it" (A Hymn Is Born, Broadman Press, page 106).

Bonner and Emurian have both told the story of a copy of the manuscript being found while Scriven was ill. When asked if he had written the then popular hymn, Scriven explained, "The Lord and I did it between us."

Emurian said: "Sackville made a copy for himself and another to send to a religious journal where it was published for the first time."

What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear;  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in pray'r.  
Oh, what peace we often forfeit;  
Oh, what needless pain we bear;  
All because we do not carry  
Everthing to God in pray'r.

### IT IS WELL WITH MY SOUL

Tragedy preceded the writing of the words of this lovely hymn and followed closely the composing of the music. Maybe the history of this hymn will make you appreciate even more the beauty of these words.

The French liner, *S.S. Ville du Havre*, was the most luxurious ship afloat when it sailed from New York in November, 1873. Among her passengers was Mrs. H.G. Spafford of Chicago, making the trip with her four daughters, Maggie, Tanetta, Annie, and Bessie. Mr. Spafford was unable to make the voyage with his family because of business commitments. He had just lost everything he owned in the Great Chicago Fire. He told them "Goodbye," promising to meet them in France in a few weeks.

At two o'clock on the morning of November 22, 1873, when the luxury liner was several days out, and sailing on a quiet sea, she was rammed by the English iron sailing vessel, the *Lochearn*. In two hours the *Ville du Havre*, one of the largest ships afloat, settled to the bottom of the ocean, with a loss of two-hundred twenty-six lives, including the four Spafford children. Nine days later the survivors arrived in Cardiff, Wales. Mrs. Spafford cabled

her husband these two words, "Saved alone." This was Mr. Spafford's second time of testing, coming almost too soon upon the heels of the first. As soon as he could, he booked passage on a ship to Europe to join his wife. On the way over, in December of that same year, 1873, the Captain called him into his cabin and said, "I believe we are now passing over the place where the Ville du Havre went down."

That night he found it hard to sleep. But faith soon conquered doubt, and there, in the mid-Atlantic, out of his heart-break and pain, Mr. Spafford wrote the five stanzas of this touching hymn. When they met some weeks later, Mrs. Spafford said, "I have not lost my children. We are only separated for a little time."

Mr. Spafford later contacted a friend by the name of Philip Paul Bliss, a song leader and composer. Both had been associated with Moody in several evangelistic campaigns, and Bliss had led the singing on a few occasions when Mr. Spafford had been the speaker. At the request of the author, Bliss agreed to set Spafford's poem to music. On the last Friday in November, 1876, in a

meeting in Farwell Hall, Chicago, where more than a thousand ministers were gathered, Bliss introduced *It Is Well With My Soul* as a sacred solo.

A month later, when the ink on the manuscript paper was hardly dry, Mr. and Mrs. Bliss, leaving their two children with his mother, took a train from Buffalo, New York, enroute to Chicago, where a new series of services was scheduled to begin shortly after New Year's Day. They left Buffalo on Friday afternoon, December 29, 1876. At eight o'clock that night, while approaching Ahtabula, Ohio, a bridge crossing a ravine gave way and the train and its seven cars of passengers plunged into the icy river below. Fire broke out almost immediately, killing many who had escaped drowning, but were imprisoned by falling beams and twisted timbers.

Of the one-hundred-sixty passengers, just fifty-nine bodies were eventually accounted for; there were only fourteen survivors. One of them reported that Bliss could have escaped, but, as his wife was hopelessly caught in the wreckage, he remained at her side, and together they met the onrushing flames

and certain death. For three days his friends remained at the scene of the disaster, but they found nothing that could be identified with the thirty-eight-year-old song leader or his wife, although scores of articles were raked from the ashes and gathered from the bottom of the river.

As Ernest Emurian said: "**They have no earthly grave--the four Spafford children who drowned in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and Mr. and Mrs. Bliss who perished in the train wreck in Ohio. But their hymn, which followed one tragedy and preceded another, lives forever in the hearts of Christian people. . .**" (*Living Stories of Famous Hymns*, Baker, page 68).

Written over the dark waters of the Atlantic that had claimed the bodies of his precious daughters, Spafford wrote these words:

**When peace like a river,  
attendeth my way,  
When sorrows like sea-billows roll,  
Whatever my lot,  
Thou hast taught me to say,  
"It is well, it is well  
with my soul."**

## An Operation of the Spirit

by Lloyd Barker

**M**any people worship the emotional and miraculous approach to religion. This is all they see or want to talk about. Thus they miss the beautiful teaching of 1 Cor. 13:8-10. Here we are told plainly that miraculous operations or gifts of the Holy Spirit were at best in "part", would "fail", "cease", and "shall vanish away," "when that which is perfect is come." The rest of verse 10 explains that "which is in part shall be done away" after "the perfect is come." James 1:25 shows that the perfect law of liberty is the complete New Testament, which came in "parts".

There is an "operation" of the Spirit that all should be highly interested in. It is explained in Colossians 2:11-12. Paul tells about spiritual circumcision in verse 11. It is not cutting away of part of the physical body, but the "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision

of Christ." Where is this marvelous operation done? Verse 12 fully explains that we are "buried with Him in baptism, wherein ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead." We all need our sins forgiven--cut away. This is done in Baptism.

Who goes down into the water with us? Christ is buried with us. Who operates? It is called the "OPERATION OF GOD." Who is raised with us? The "with Him" must refer to Christ who "circumcises" us according to verse 11.

John 3:5; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Peter 3:21 and a large number of other scriptures show clearly that baptism is an operation of the Spirit in the process of Christ's blood redeeming us from our sins. This is clearly the baptism of 1 Corinthians 12:13. "By one Spirit" we are "baptized into one body." All acts of obedience to God are revealed "by

one Spirit" in the New Testament. Certainly Baptism in water is no exception. Except the Holy Spirit would have revealed it, we could do nothing pleasing to God.

Even when the Holy Spirit was given to some in a miraculous way, to show Jews that God wanted Gentiles to be saved also, they still were commanded to be baptized. (Acts 10:48.) This had to be water because the Holy Spirit had already come upon them and Peter asked: "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Spirit as well as we?" (Acts 10:47). Then in verse 48 the command is given. Holy Spirit baptism is not and never was a command, because it was not a condition of salvation. But water baptism is part of God's plan unto salvation and thus is to "wash away our sins" (Acts 22:16). This clearly is why it is a command. No one can obey a command to be baptized in the Holy Spirit (the Spirit being the element). But all can obey the command to be baptized in water--by the Spirit's instruction.

# The Book Worm



**PUBLISHERS:** Send all books for review to:

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**MORE THAN CONQUERORS** by William Hendriksen (Baker: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, hardback, 216 pages, \$9.95.

One cannot make a bibliography of works on the book of Revelation without including this book. The first copy-right was in 1940, only to be renewed in 1967. There were 25 printings of the first edition. This new commemorative edition, including a biographical tribute to the author, was published in 1982 and then again in 1983.

William Hendriksen died in January of 1982, leaving his mark on the reading public. His commentary is one of the most readable and sensible studies of the Apocalypse. The author takes the last date of John's writing (approximately 96 A.D.) and shows what the book would have meant to the Christian of the first century.

Although one may not agree exactly with every one of his views, one must be impressed with the authors desire to present only the Truth. If you desire to know Revelation better, I would recommend this commemorative editon. The added subheadings are a helpful feature of this new edition.

**NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY ACTS** by Gareth Reese (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1976, hardback, 1017 pages, \$19.95.

This material first served as a text of the book of Acts for a freshman class. The author has brought together a study to show how Acts of the Apostles is a pivotal book in New Testament studies, giving us information on how the church began and developed in those key years after the ascension and glorification of Jesus.

The study opens with a brief survey of the dates of the major events of New

Testament history, in the gospels, as well as in Acts. The second part is concerned with the matters usually studied in the field of "Higher Criticism," that is, such things as authorship, purpose, date, and place of writing, trustworthiness, as well as the person or persons to which it was addressed. The exegetical notes which follow come from the author's years of teaching Bible in college.

This is one of the most thorough books I have seen on Acts. It is well worth the price.

**UNHOLY DEVOTION** by Harold L. Bussell (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, paperback, 128 pages, \$5.50.

This excellent study shows how and why we need more restrictions without more legalism. The author questions as to whether our signs of spirituality are based on outward signs or inward beliefs.

Bussell has dealt with many youth who fled the religion of their parents to follow the deceptive gleam of some cult. He deals with the methods and appeals of the cults and at the same time shows the weakness of modern denominationalism. Many college students have never been encouraged to think critically. They have been told to accept it because "that's the way we've always done it." Many youth have been lured into cults by a strong sense of belonging, of feeling loved, of feeling disciplined, of having someone to feel like "family" with.

The author says that one of the basic reasons people are leaving the weak, liberal denominations and joining cults is that people who profess to be religious are relying more on their traditions, feelings, or experiences than they are on the Word of God.

This book destroys the false notion that "accepting Jesus" will automatically mean instant success, wealth, and power. Towards the end of the book, Bussell says to judge teachers, not on the basis of our feelings, but on the content of their

message. Yes, we certainly need to get back to doing that today!

**THE RELIGION OF POWER** by Cheryl Forbes (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, Hardback, 164 pages, \$9.95.

Power is big business. Power seems to be a main concern of the world today. Cheryl Forbes was for several years an editor and writer with Christianity Today magazine. She obviously saw much power play among so-called Christians. At one point in her book, she said, "We cannot escape dealing with power. Either we will be suffering from another person's attempts to gain power, or we will be trying to gain power ourselves. In some way, even though we think we have rejected the way of power, we may find ourselves involved."

The author defines what power is, where it comes from, and how it is being abused. She feels that sacrifice, commitment, service, and discipline have been lost in the shuffle for power. The book affirms that our religion is not designed to make us, as some T.V. preachers might suggest, healthy, wealthy, and famous.

Forbes has taken the time to research most books dealing with wanting success because that gives us power. She has concluded from many of her readings that many religious leaders are "building a monument, a permanent structure of some kind, to ensure that his influence and power will not die with his body. Robertson and Bakker are building schools. Oral Roberts has a hospital--and whose praying hands are those sculpted in bronze in front of the hospital? Schuller has completed his Crystal Cathedral. The Billy Graham Center has been opened. Has any other century or any other country seen so many Christian structures named after its Christian leaders?"

We live in a success-oriented, power hungry society. This book is an excellent commentary on what it means to take up the cross and deny self.

**THE MARRIAGE BUILDER** by Lawrence J. Crabb, Jr. (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1982, hardback, 143 pages, \$8.95.

The author holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Illinois. He is now chairman of the department of biblical counseling at Grace Theological Seminary. The author continuously turns the attention of the reader to God and His Word, not some amoral or humanistic thinking like many psychologists.

Now in its third printing, this book helps marriages that are in trouble. Crabb demonstrates that the goal for oneness can be reached only when couples depend on God for needs and turn to their partners with a willingness to work at being one.

The book is divided into two major sections. Part I deals with the goal of marriage and Part II deals with building the foundation. The book shows how a change for the better can take place if only one of the partners is willing to work at it. Dr. Crabb shows how to deal with the problem of oneness.

The book would be excellent reading for any couple that feels they would like for their marriage to be just a little better.

**EERDMANS' HANDBOOK TO CHRISTIANITY IN AMERICA** by Mark A. Noll, et al (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, hardback, 507 pages, \$24.95.

This is one of the most lovely print jobs I have seen in a long time. The book contains over 350 photographs, many in full color, plus maps, charts, and timelines. Sections will make you laugh, others will make you cry, and some may even make you angry.

Although the word "Christian" is used in a loose fashion to describe any person or group engaging in any religion while using the name of Christ, it is a great history book on religions in America. The book is a comprehensive account of the planting, growth, and development of various beliefs in America. Divided into four major historical periods, from colonial times to the present, the editors' narrative is supplemented by essays on people and movements.

The book covers everything from Reformation Europe, Roman Catholicism in America, Puritanism, Presbyterians, Quakers, camp

meetings during the Civil War, Ellen G. White and the Gospel of Health, Joseph Smith, a black God, Dwight L. Moody, the Pentecostal movement, Jehovah's Witnesses, Billy Sunday, Billy Graham, women's liberation, to the electronic church.

I'm sure I'll find myself returning to this book often for research on any major religious movement in the U.S.

**THE LIFE AND TIMES OF JESUS THE MESSIAH** by Alfred Edersheim (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1981, 1523 pages, hardback, \$19.95.

This book was first published in 1883 after the author had spent seven years of continual research in a remote country area. From his in-depth study came this picture of the life of Christ and of the whole Jewish background--not merely of the archaeological details, but of the characteristics of Jewish thought and feeling.

Edersheim was of Jewish extraction; born in Vienna in 1825. This volume makes extensive use of detailed quotations from rabbinic writings. It includes a complete commentary on the four gospels, detailed appendixes, and indexes.

This monumental work, complete in one volume, reconstructs the life and teachings of Jesus against the background of place, society, popular life, and intellectual and religious development. It is the best available on the subject.

**HOW TO TEACH THE BIBLE** by Lucien E. Coleman, Jr. (Broadman: Nashville, Tennessee), 1979, hardback, 265 pages, \$9.95.

The author challenges the reader to first decide what Bible teaching actually is and what a teacher should actually do. He integrates theory and practice in a how-to-do-it book which combines discussion of teachings with skill-building exercises.

This book deals with a wide variety of subjects on improving Bible classes: making the room more conducive to learning, knowing the names of the students, planning learning activities, building a spirit of fellowship, and getting class members involved.

This needs to be added to the library of each local church. Every Bible teacher needs to read it and look for ways of improving their time in the class room.

**GOD'S INERRANT WORD** by John Warwick Montgomery (Bethany House: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1974, paperback, 288 pages, \$6.95.

Warwick serves as editor of what he and six other outstanding scholars have written against what they call "biblical vandalism." This was an international symposium on the trustworthiness of the Scriptures. The authors signed a statement in the front of the book stating: "We believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God: We hold the Bible, as originally given through human agents of revelation, to be infallible and see this as a crucial article of faith with implications for the entire life and practice of all Christian people..."

This book is destined to be one of the most significant statements on the inerrancy of the Scriptures to be published in recent years. In the day of liberal theologians questioning the accuracy of the Word of God, it is refreshing to see these seven scholars raise their voice in a defense of the enerrancy of God's Word.

**MEET MY FRIEND DAVID** by Jane McWhorter (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1982, paperback, 99 pages, \$4.60.

What do you think of when you think of King David? Do you remember him for writing many of the Psalms? As a great king? As an adulterer and murderer? As a penitent child falling on his face and crying out for forgiveness? This delightful little book carries you through all of his life.

McWhorter has brought out many of the little, uneventful, often unnoticed happenings which truly tell us what David was really like. She not only views the Old Testament king when he was on the mountain peaks of his life, but also zooms in for a closer look at some of the valleys he was in at times.

Whether for a class or personal study, this book brings King David alive.

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# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “FIRST”

**Greek Word:** protos

**Meaning:** first, foremost, most important, most prominent, etc.

This adjective occurs exactly one hundred times in the Greek New Testament and behaves much as our English word *first* does. Notice that it not only means *first* in a chronological sense: e.g. “This is our baby’s first tooth.” And it not only means *first* in a spatial sense: e.g. “He is standing first in the line.” But it also can mean *first* in importance or prominence: e.g. “My career comes first,” or, “My children are first with me.” These distinctions may help us with a passage or two in the scriptures.

In the Revelation of John the Lord finds fault with the church at Ephesus because she has “*Left her first love*” (2:4). Does this mean that the Ephesians had loved no one or thing before they learned to love Jesus? No. If the Ephesians were at all normal human beings they had loved families, careers, hobbies, amusements and perhaps various forms of sin before they had ever heard of Jesus. So the idea of the passage is that though very little fault was found with the Ephesian church outwardly (Rev. 2:2-3) she was rotting from the inside out. Jesus was no longer first, i.e., most important, in her life. And each of us must ask himself daily whether any thing or person stands first before Jesus in his life. The Lord will not like it (Lk. 14:26-27).

In Ephesians 6:1-3 Paul tells children that to honor father and mother is “*the first commandment with promise.*” Does he mean that turning to the ten commandments in the Old Testament (Ex. 20:1-17; Dt. 5:6-21) we will find no other commandment before this one that has a promise connected with it? Possibly, if Paul means a very specific sort of promise. But in Exodus 20:6, well before Exodus 20:12 and the commandment to honor father and mother, the Lord promises “*mercy*

*unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*”

So it may be that Paul is telling young people in Ephesians 6:1-3 that the commandment to honor parents is a commandment of great importance, with a promise attached to it. “**Perhaps. . . especially as there is no article before the noun in the Greek, we should take the meaning. . . a ‘primary commandment’**” (F. Foulkes, *Tyndale Commentary, in loc.*) In Matthew this word *first* is used similarly to describe a “primary” commandment, a commandment of greatest importance (22:37-40).

If this is the case Paul is saying children should obey their parents because this is a commandment of greatest importance, primary, fundamental, with a wonderful promise attached to it. In Romans 1:30 and 2 Timothy 3:2 we learn that decadent societies are characterized by disobedience to parents. Paul’s words in Ephesians 6:1-3 offer us the other side of the coin: Obedient children preserve a people and give them long life on the earth. That is to say that the home is God’s training ground for responsible citizenship and church membership. Neglect of the family relationship spells disaster for a nation, indeed, for the whole earth.

## “TO DESIRE”

**Hebrew Word:** teshuqa

**Meaning:** desire, longing

This word is used three times in the Hebrew Old Testament. In the Song of Solomon (7:10) it refers to the healthy desire of the young shepherd lover for his beloved Shulamite maiden from whom he is separated by the lustful King Solomon. His longing is a pure and simple desire to be with the young woman whom he loves.

But what of the other two uses? (Gen. 3:16 and 4:7). It becomes apparent in these contexts that more is intended than simple innocent desire. In Gen. 4:7 Brown, Driver and Briggs suggests that the *desire* is that “**of a beast to devour.**” Cain is told that if he

chooses to surrender himself to evil that “sin lieth at the door.” One pictures a beast of prey waiting to pounce on the person within the moment he opens the door and steps out. And the idea of this diabolical destructive longing leads to one or two thoughts concerning the relationship of husband and wife in the final passage.

In Gen. 3:16 this word is used in a context of punishment for the sin Eve committed in Eden. This context must be borne in mind when we ask what the Lord intended when He said, “. . . *thy desire shall be to thy husband. . .*” Was He talking about *innocent* desire here, or was He perchance introducing humankind to the proverbial “war between the sexes”?

Initially God had intended that man and woman should live in harmony. The subjection of woman to man, a creation ordinance (cf. 1 Cor. 11:7-9; 1 Tim. 2:13), was intended to be a beautiful relationship characterized by reciprocal love and selfless mutual care. But now the tendency so evident in subsequent history for man to bear his “rule” (Gen. 3:16) over woman in a barbarous fashion begins. And woman’s answer to this repressive exploitation of her mind and body is a “**desire bordering upon disease. . . a violent craving**” (Keil and Delitzsch). Here is the desire not for healthy communion of body and soul with the man, but for the means to counter his dominance with nagging insistence for more of everything than the beleaguered breadwinner can produce, or buy.

In this twisted relationship the man says, “*I am the boss; shut-up or I will beat you!*” The woman says, “*I deserve more of your time and attention. I want better furniture. A better man would provide a better house for me to live in.*” as Derek Kidner has said, “**While even pagan marriage can rise far above this, the pull of sin is always toward it**” (Tyndale Commentary, in loc.). And just as husbands and wives must struggle to overcome the physical

aspects of the post-Edenic curse (Gen. 3:16-24), so must they struggle constantly to hold this spiritual problem at bay. Husbands and wives should often read together the description of the Christ's beautiful relationship with His bride, the church, in Ephesians 5:22-31. The lion crouches at the door for those who don't.

### "LAW"

**Hebrew Word: torah**

**Meaning: law, direction, instruction**

When we hear the word law we are inclined to think of a particular regulation or a body of particular regulations in the form of a code of laws. And that is a habit of long-standing among Bible students. The rabbis of Jesus' time had neatly summarized all the requirements of Old Testament law under 613 regulations that they felt covered the entire field and constituted all that God required of a good Jew. Our feelings about the word law in the Bible, and references to the Old Testament Law in particular, are possible shaded somewhat by this tradition.

But when we turn to the Old Testament and begin reading we are surprised to find in this body of "law" all kinds of literature: history, poetry, wisdom literature, and prophecy, as well as specific regulations. And all of this is called "the law" by Jesus (Jn. 10:34; cf. Psa. 82:6 and Jn. 15:25; cf. Psa. 35:19;69:4). How can this be so if law in the Old Testament is nothing more than a body of rules? The answer to this question lies in the very flavor of the word **torah**.

This word conveys far more than the idea of a rule or set of rules by which to govern ones life. It conveys, as well, the idea of instruction and direction and counsel from the giver of the law. For instance, though this word is used often to describe the first five books of Moses in which there are many regulations as such (Deut. 17:18), it is also used to describe the counsel of the wise men of the Old Testament period. "*The law of the wise is a foundation of life, to depart from the snares of death*" (Prov. 13:14).

It is also used to describe the good example of a godly wife and mother. "*She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness*" (Prov. 31:26). The Prophet Isaiah exhorts the people of Israel to

"*give ear unto the law of our God*" (Isa. 1:10). In context it may be seen that the people of Judah were bending over backwards to observe many of the regulations of the law but had lost the spirit of the law (instruction, counsel from God) and were satisfied with their purely legalistic observances (Isa. 1:11-20). Isaiah is calling them to a careful reassessment of the state of their hearts (Isa. 1:19-20).

### "CROOKED," "UNTOWARD," "FROWARD"

**Greek Word: skolios**

**Meaning: curved, crooked, mortally crooked, perverse**

Occasionally we are saddened to learn that a friend or family member is suffering from scoliosis, a lateral curvature of the spine that can require a lengthy regimen of therapy and sometimes surgery. This problem derives its name from our word **skolios** whose literal meaning is simply, crooked.

It is used four times in the Greek New Testament, but only once in the literal sense of the word. "*Every valley shall be filled. . .the crooked shall be made straight*" (Lk. 3:5).

But in Acts 2:40 Peter exhorts his listeners to save themselves from "*this untoward generation*" using the word figuratively. Paul encourages the Philippian Christians to behave blamelessly in the midst of a "*crooked and perverse generation*" using the word in the same sense (Phil. 2:15). The idea is that those who stand opposed to God, outside Christ, are twisted and crooked in their outlook. They are preserving their lives in an unnatural rebellion against their maker.

In the final use of the word in the New Testament Peter asks Christians who are servants to be subject to their masters with all fear, "*not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward*" (1 Pet. 2:18). During the Roman period slaves were often owned by people who were terribly twisted and crooked in their thinking and conduct. Cruelty and unreasonable demands on the servants often resulted from this frowardness. Then, and now, Christians were expected to bear up under twisted cruel treatment, giving the best service they could, for the Lord's sake.

## The Struggle Of A Young Mother

by Rick Lanning

Last night I grew to appreciate young mothers even more than I already did. You see, I am a young father but also a gospel preacher. Therefore, I see weekly young mothers struggling with their infants trying to take care of their 1001 wants and needs, all the while I am seeking to speak and they are desperately seeking to listen; but usually to no avail. Last night, for the first time in my life, I got a taste of a young mother's trials. It was Wednesday evening and it so happened someone else was giving the closing lesson and invitation which allowed me to sit with my wife and young four-month-old for the first time ever. I, like all new papas, held him proudly on my lap. He sat there quietly on my knee while I thought to myself, "There is nothing to it." But now the lesson begins.

He went from stage one (happy and content) to stage ten (crying) in record time. In between those stages he, 1.squirmed; 2.began whimpering; 3.wet diapers; 4.squirmed harder; 5.began moaning; 6.dirtied diapers; 7.rejected toy; 8.spit up on daddy's suit; 9. squirmed while raising octave of crying a notch or two. Please note, this was all within a very few minutes. I began to feel sorry for the speaker and those around me (roles are reversed for the first time since I was the baby). So, as any young mother would do, up I came and out I went with the little one. I walked him to soothe his nerves (and mine) while he thanked me by wetting and spitting up on me some more. Finally the *short*, ten-minute talk (which lasted an eternity) was over! Where's Mama?

Young mothers, I've related this story to you for a reason. Not that you might just get a chuckle, but that you will hear from a preacher the words, "I APPRECIATE YOU." While sometimes you may think (and wish) you were a thousand miles from church services because you are receiving no benefit from the worship, please remember: 1.God is proud of you; 2.I am grateful for you; 3.That baby is ever learning, even from this, and will grow up to be a shining light to the world because of you. PRESS ON!

## “You Asked For It”

by Bob Crawley

A Question - Answer Column

**Question: “Is it disrespectful to use ‘You’ in our prayers? Some of our members think we should always say ‘Thou’ when we are talking to God.”**



**Reply:** We must unquestionably have the utmost respect for God and should express it in all our speaking, either to Him in prayer or in talking about Him to others. Some of us, especially the older ones, grew up hearing godly people pray using a style of speech characterized by “thee, thou, thy, thine” and “ye.” With these pronouns we also heard such verb forms as “doeth” for “does,” “dost” for “do,” “goeth” for “go,” etc. To us it has become quite natural both to hear and to use such style of speech in prayers.

Some have come to regard this style of speech as uniquely biblical, religious, or pious. This is probably because they have encouraged it only in the church and is reading their Bible, a Bible which, for most of them, is the King James Version (first published in 1611 during the reign of James I of England). What seems to them to be especially religious is, in reality, merely old fashioned. If they were to become familiar with other literature from the same period (about the same time as the writing of William Shakespeare) they would realize that the “thee” and “thou” style of speech was as much the language of the street as of the church, of the gutter as well as the pulpit, and of cursing as well as of

praying. Such words do not, then, of themselves, signify respect. To insist upon a particular old fashioned style of speech and attribute to it an exclusively religious superiority is to make the same mistake which is made by the Amish people, and others, in requiring a dress code which is not particularly spiritual but merely out of date.

In the Bible there is no difference in the form of the pronouns used for prayer and for other forms of speech. While it is true that in Matthew 6:9-13 (in the King James Version), in the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, he is quoted as using “thy” and “thine.” This is not, however, because it is addressed to God for notice that in the preceding four verses he uses “thou,” “thy,” and “ye” in speaking to his disciples in ordinary conversation. Neither is such speech peculiarly the language of respect for observe that in Acts 13:10, in the same version, the apostle Paul uses the same style of speech to denounce the contemptible Elymus the sorcerer. Be aware, too, that the language of the original New Testament writing (the Greek of the first century A.D.) likewise makes no distinction between the form of the pronouns used for prayer and those used for other occasions.

Respect or disrespect are matters of the attitude of the heart and are not determined by whether one uses modern or old fashioned styles of speech. The truly respectful person will use those words which most naturally express the respect which he has when praying to God. The younger among us will need to be patient with those of us who find it natural to use the old style, which has become so traditional with us. And we, who for so many years have been used to hearing the prayers prayed in the style of the era of King James I, of England, will need to realize that those who address God in a dignified, but more up-to-date style are no less respectful than we.

## Refreshment, Renewal and Revival

by David Holder

**A**nother year has slipped away and a new year is already in progress. Traditionally, the beginning of the year is a time to take a brief glance backward and a serious, sobering look ahead. This is a good tradition because it causes us to do some evaluating and planning. The end of the year provides a good time for us to wind up unfinished projects and wind down for a little rest. A new year provides a fresh start and a new beginning with new goals and attitudes. We need times like this periodically for the good of our physical, mental, and spiritual health.

God provided similar times for His people in Old Testament days with sabbaths, special commemorative days and feasts, and even a year of jubilee. Apparently God was well aware of man's habitual nature. He knew the tendency of folks to get wound up, caught up, and worn down. So God set aside times for resting, remembering and recuperating. God did a similar thing in the New Testament with the first day of the week assembly and the Lord's Supper, through these have uniquely spiritual emphases. Our society had provided for us physically and mentally with days off from work and national holidays. These are important and valuable times for all of us. Sometimes we have the tendency to neglect the assembly, to work overtime rather than rest, and to cram holidays with too many activities. When we do so we deprive ourselves of needed rest and important remembering.

All of these special days and seasons give us opportunities to spend more time with family, friends, and brethren. We can also spend more time with God in prayer, study, and meditation. We will be reminded of the beauty of family ties, friendship, and brotherhood. Even more importantly, we will be reminded of the goodness and graciousness of our God and we can be deeply grateful for all that He is and all that He has done for us. All of this surely will bring refreshment to the body, renewal to the heart, and revival to the soul.

# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 16



I would hope that when they were real young that I had raised them in the Lord and taught them the right way. I think if you start with this foundation, they they will be good Christian children and when they become teenagers they will make right decisions. Sure they'll fall once in a while, but as parents we'll need to be there to pick them back up.

If a child makes a mistake once, they maybe it really was a mistake. It's the second time it happens when something needs to really be done.

As a parent, I am going to try to be as open with my children as possible and I hope they will be with me, also.

**Robin Underwood**  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14



I would discipline in the best way I knew how. I would try not to spoil and yet have compassion, patience, and love (Psa. 103:13; Prov. 13:24; 19:18). I would bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord for this is the most important thing of all, and if we do not do this, we are sinning (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6).

The child will have questions in his/her life as to why he/she can't do certain things. I would explain why and give book, chapter, and verse. I would try to understand his/her point of view, but this is not a one-way street. I

would try to get the child to understand that he/she has responsibilities, also (Eph. 6:1-2).

I am sure that I would make mistakes, just as all will. Everyone makes mistakes, but we must try to learn from them.

This is a hard question for me to answer, since I have not been a parent and haven't been faced with a parent's problems. But, to sum up as best as I can, I would try to grow in my Christian responsibilities as a parent and bring about the spiritual growth of the teenager.

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



I would make sure, in every possible way, that they had a good religious upbringing. I would bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord so that they would obey the gospel. I would hope that they would marry a Christian and bring up their children in the church.

I would discipline them in every way. I would get on to them when they needed it, but praise them when they deserved it. I would teach them to be nice to others and not to make fun of other people.

I would allow my children many choices in things. I would let them choose their own clothes, within a reasonable price. I would let them choose their own recreational fun and entertainment, as long as it is within God's standards. I would hope they would choose their friends wisely. In family matters, I would include them in plans and let them have a choice in the matter before making final plans. I think that children need to make some choices in their lives to prepare them for adults.

**Gretchen Manco**  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 14



I think, first of all, I'd have to know their needs and wants and which of them I could and should fulfill. The best way to know how to help them make decisions is to place myself in that same position and be able to say "yes" or "no". I'm going to teach them not to be afraid to say no, because nobody gets to do everything they want. They need to be concerned if they make a mistake and be willing to work harder in the future. Everyone can learn from their mistakes.

I think there should be three goals in the life of any parent of a teenager: (1) being able to recognize the teen's need, (2) establishing goals to meet their needs, and (3) working with the teen in order to succeed.

I am convinced that other things should be brought into the household. There must be love for God, love for others, and respect for others.

**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 16



I would center my efforts in raising him/her on two areas. These ideas would be good discipline and establishing a knowledge of the Bible within him/her.

In disciplining my teenager, I would try to reward him/her for things well done as well as punishing him for actions deserving it. Too many times today, teenagers go undisciplined and lose a sense of responsibility. If a parent can correctly discipline a child, it can have good effects throughout their life.

Another aspect which deserves a lot of attention in raising a teenager is teaching that teen a basic Bible knowledge. By helping my teenager

*(Continued on page 22.)*

# The Resurrection Of Christ

By Ron Mosby

**D**o you really believe that Jesus of Nazareth actually lived here upon this earth? Do you also believe the same Jesus died on the cross and was buried? Do you also believe that same Jesus of Nazareth was raised bodily from the tomb just three days after His death on the cross? Is there really good and sufficient evidence to justify our faith in the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? To any honest and fair-minded person, the answers to all of the above questions will be in the affirmative!

We often read in amazement at the many miracles Christ wrought among men while He walked upon the earth. We marvel at the many signs and wonders performed by His apostles and prophets as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. But, actually, there is but one miracle that should attract and hold our attention above all the rest. It is the miracle of miracles! If it can be substantiated by good evidence then all the other miracles will stand. If it cannot be substantiated then all other miracles must fall because all other miracles are dependent upon this one big miracle!

And just what is this big miracle of all miracles? It is the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the grave. This is the big one! It is the great and divine demonstration of the faith and has more supporting evidence than most any other historical event in all history. Assuming that Jesus Christ actually lived, died, and was buried, let us briefly examine just some of the internal evidence of the Bible that should establish the fact of the resurrection of that same Jesus from the grave without the least shadow of a doubt.

## Character Of The Tomb

The record says that Christ was buried in a NEW tomb "*wherein never man before was laid*" (Luke 23:53; John 19:41). Hence, no error could be made by mistaking the grave clothes or bones of former dead. Joseph of Arimathaea had no doubt purchased the tomb for himself and his own family but had not used it as yet. The tomb was also cut in SOLID ROCK (Matthew 27:60; Mark 15:46). This

being true, no valid claim could be made that there was another entrance (or exit) to the tomb. There are modernists who try to discount the death of Christ by suggesting that He merely fainted or lapsed into a coma. This is known as the "Swoon Theory." Even if such a theory had any merit (which to this writer it does not), Jesus, in His weakened condition, would have been powerless to have emerged from this tomb hewn out of solid rock.

Also, the tomb was sealed with a great stone (Mark 16:4). We are told the hewn tombs in Palestine were usually closed by a circular stone, weighing several tons. The stone by its own weight when released would roll into the slanted groove hewn out in the tomb. But once in place, it would require the joint effort of several men to remove it. Besides this, Pilate had the great stone sealed to make it sure (Matthew 27:66). Again, even if there was a chance that Jesus was not really dead, in His weakened condition, He could not have removed the sealed stone under His own power. When the two women found the great stone rolled away, they hastened to tell Jesus' disciples what had happened. Peter and John came running to the tomb. Peter went inside and examined carefully the contents (Luke 24:12; John 20:7). He found not only that the grave clothes had been left in the tomb but that they were neatly folded and the head cloth, not together with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. This fact alone is enough to discount the alleged finding of the missing burial shroud of Christ in the news lately which pictured the garment all in one piece. The creditable witnesses, Peter and John, actually *saw* this evidence with their very own eyes! There is no way they could have made such a positive statement about the grave clothes had they not seen it themselves. If a grave robber had taken the body of Jesus they would doubtless have taken the body, grave clothes and all.

## Problem Of The Body

Some unbelievers have theorized that the body of Jesus was stolen. Even if such a theory was a remote

possibility, the question still remains, who would have stolen it? The disciples of the Lord *could* not have stolen the body and disposed of it successfully because of the fact that the tomb was sealed and made sure by the Roman guard (Matthew 27:62, 66). The Jews *would* not since it was for their best interest (they thought) to keep Jesus in the grave because of His own prophecy that in three days He would come forth from the grave (Matthew 16:21; 20:19; 27:63; John 2:18-22). The Jews were the ones who urged Pilate to seal the tomb and make it sure (Matthew 27:62-66). The Romans *dared* not steal the body since the penalty of death awaited the soldier who let go any prisoner who was under his jurisdiction (Matthew 28:11-15; Acts 16:27). It took a large sum of money to persuade the soldiers to spread the lie that the disciples of Jesus came by night and stole His body while they were sleeping! Now just think about that one! How could you testify to anything while you were asleep? There was also promised security from the governor should he hear of what happened. Modernists try to evade the force of this argument by saying the Roman government was in a state of degradation in enforcing its laws at this time. The account of the attempted suicide of the Philippian jailer shows this accusation to be untrue (Acts 16:27).

We are told by the famous historian, Josephus, that the Roman guard probably numbered from fifteen to sixty men. He writes: "**There were thousands of hostile Jews in Jerusalem at this time. Jerusalem covered about 300 acres, streets were narrow; buildings crowded; where would they hide the body?**" There were 250,000 natives of Jerusalem and around three million were there for the passover. Also, the body of Christ had been branded and marked on the cross so there could be no mistake about its identity (Luke 24:39). Hence, it is highly improbable that His body was stolen.

## His Appearances

Christ's resurrection does not rest on heresay evidence. He appeared to several different individuals and groups on several different occasions.

First, He appeared to Mary Magdalene as recorded in John 20:16; Mark 16:9). He appeared to the two men on the as recorded in John 20:16; Mark 16:9). He appeared to the two men on the road to Emmaus and revealed Himself to them (Luke 24:13). He appeared to the ten when they were meeting on the first day of the week in the upper room (John 20:19). Exactly one week later, probably for the benefit of "doubting Thomas," He appeared unto the eleven in the same way and place (John 20:26). He appeared to six other brethren early one morning and ate breakfast with them. Among the brethren on this occasion were Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, and the sons of Zebedee (John 21:2). He then appeared to over 500 brethren at once many of whom remained alive for many years to tell of it (1 Corinthians 15:6). Last of all, He appeared to the apostle Paul while he was still called Saul (1 Corinthians 15:8).

#### Concluding Thoughts

The evidence, therefore is overwhelming that Jesus of Nazareth came forth from the tomb of Joseph of Ari-

mathaea. Paul wrote to the Romans and sighted the resurrection of Christ as the divine demonstration of the faith when he wrote: "...Concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead..." (Romans 1:3-4). Peter based our lively hope as Christians on the fact of the resurrection of Christ when he wrote: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you..." (1 Peter 1:3-4).

Paul states the ten horrible consequences to the Corinthians if Christ be not raised from the dead. Read and count them in 1 Corinthians 15:12-32. The resurrection and appearances of Christ was the very foundation of the gospel that Paul preached to the Corin-

thians who had once believed it and stood by it until their faith began to waver due to the false teachers who had troubled them (1 Corinthians 15:3-11). Paul wrote to Timothy and the prime thing he wanted him to remember was the resurrection of the Christ, when he wrote: "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel...it is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him: if we suffer, we shall reign with Him: if we deny Him, He will deny us: if we believe not, yet He abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself" (2 Timothy 2:8, 11-13). Do you believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead? God's assurance to the world that the Judgment Day lies ahead is based upon the fact that He has raised His Son from the dead as we read in Acts 17:31. Let us live for Him Who died for us.

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(Continued from page 20.)

with his/her Bible lessons, as well as studying with him/her at sometime during the day, a solid base of Scriptures can be established. This foundation, if firmly built, can lead to a stronger life mentally, and most importantly, spiritually for the years to come.



Ginger Clark  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13

I would try to raise my children like my parents raised me because they did an excellent job and I know it wasn't easy.

I know what kind of trouble teenagers get into. I pray each day that I won't get into that kind of trouble. I hope that I would be a good enough parent that my children will not get into trouble. If they do get into trouble I hope they will come right out to me and say, "Mom, I've done something that I shouldn't have done." The hard

## Life and Laughter

### Who Can I Trust?

A young lady was walking along the beach, when a little boy approached and asked, "Do you believe in God?"

The girl nodded, considerably surprised.

"And do you always go to church on Sunday?"

Yes, I do," replied the girl, getting more and more interested.

"And read the Bible?"

"At every opportunity."

The little boy was noticeably relieved. "Well, then," he said, "Will you hold my quarter while I go wading for sea shells?"

part to that situation is what should I (the parent) do? I could slap that child across the head, or I could sit down like an adult and be understanding, caring, and gentle, and face the problem and work things out. I hope that I would pick the second way. A child needs to know that you are there and that you can help.

### No Help Comes

Little six-year old Joey always enjoyed sitting on the front pew with his father, the preacher. One day he said, "Daddy, I notice that before you preach every Sunday you bow your head for a moment and close your eyes. Why do you do that?"

His father answered, "Well, son, I do that to ask God to help me to deliver a good sermon."

The little boy thought about that for a minute and then replied, "Daddy, then why doesn't He?"

### The Wrong One

In a Bible class of three-year-olds, the teacher asked, "And who was Matthew?" There was no answer.

She then said, "Well, who was John? Certainly you remember him." Still there was no answer.

"Now, come on children," said the teacher. "You're letting me down. Surely someone knows who Peter was; now speak up!"

A soft voice came from the back row, "I fink he wuz a wabbit."

# Have We Found The "Missing Link"?

By Tom Moody

**H**OW NICE IT WOULD BE to have a dollar for everytime some such headline concerning "the missing link" has appeared in newspapers!

But, as is often the case, the headline promises more than the facts deliver. The first fallacy is the suggestion that a mere single "link" is all evolutionists need. It does not make too much sense to be looking for a "link" before you even know there is

a "chain".

Paragraph one of the article states that fossil bones which have been found in Kenya "could belong to the much-sought-after common ancestor of humans and apes. . .". The article later refers to the "newly discovered creature". One might get the impression that a complete skeleton of some beast like nothing else known to exist had been found. However, the AP article reveals that the team led by

Richard Leakey found:

1. Part of a lower jaw.
2. An upper jaw.
3. Teeth.
4. A few bones "from below the head".

But were the bones found all together so that without doubt they belong to the same animal? The news report states that the lower jaw portion was found in July. Other bones were found in August, and still others were not found until September. And still, only a handful of bones had been found.

Is this clearly an intermediate creature, indicating some kind of part man/part ape? Is this not what we would expect from "the missing link"? The report says that this creature had a very short face "like that of an orangutan". They estimate that it was about the size of a "female orangutan". They believe it is likely an "ancestor of orangutans". Good readers, it is remotely possible that these scientists have merely found the bones - not of "missing link" - but of an ORANGUTAN??

Are evolutionists excited over this find because its only explanation - or, at least a probable explanation - is that it is indeed "the missing link"? According to the article, scientists said the discovery could be explained in one of four ways. Two of these explanations involve the idea of this creature being a common ancestor of apes and men. Another explanation offered is that "it is the predecessor of another branch of apes that died out early". (Note: no mention of man.) Finally, the scientists say it is possible that these bones are of a creature which is "solely the ancestor of orangutans". So after all, this "astounding discovery" may just be the bones of another ape!

Those of us who believe that God created living things to reproduce after their own kind (Genesis 1), and thus that human beings are not the descendants of apes, should not throw in the towel yet. Richard Leakey has a long way to go before he has proven that a few scattered bones found in Kenya are the left-overs of the "missing link".

## Scientists may have found evolution's 'missing link'

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a dry river bed in Kenya, scientists have discovered fossil bones that could belong to the much-sought-after common ancestor of humans and apes, referred to as the "missing link," a key figure in evolutionary theory.

The National Geographic Society announced yesterday that an expedition it sponsored found the fossils in an isolated region of northern Kenya called Buluk.

The scientists, led by Richard Leakey of the National Museums of Kenya and Alan Walker of Johns Hopkins University, made the discovery while on the first major expedition to the area.

Dr. Meave Leakey, wife of the co-leader, found part of a lower jaw from the creature in July during preliminary digging along the weathered-out river channel. The full expedition found an upper jaw, teeth and a few bones from below the head during August and September.

Researchers said the newly discovered creature was quite similar to an ape in appearance, with a very short face like that of an orangutan. The creature probably was about the size of a male chimpanzee or female orangutan, standing about 4 feet high and weighing 120 to 150 pounds.

If the bones prove as old as preliminary chemical dating indicates, then the creature could represent the ancestral bridge between man and the great apes in Africa, and orangutans and their predecessors in Asia, the researchers said.

The initial dating of between 16 million years and 18 million years is

supported by finding nearby animal fossils whose age is known from other locations, the researchers said.

Dr. David Pilbeam of Harvard University, an expert on ancient apes, called the discovery "a major find."

"The Buluk specimen date from about the time Africa and Asia were linked because of continental drift," Pilbeam said. "At that time, species crossed both ways and this could have been the time the ancestors of the orangutan moved into Asia."

Scientists said the discovery could be explained in one of four ways: the specimen is the ancestor of all apes on both continents as well as man; it is only ancestor to African apes and man; it is solely the ancestor of orangutans; or it is the predecessor of another branch of apes that died out early.

Walker said he favors the first alternative because of certain characteristics in the bones and teeth. But he cautioned that confirmation awaits discovery of more specimen and detailed examination of the samples.

The new fossils are very similar to a creature known as sivapithecus, one of a group of apelike creatures known as the ramapithecines. The oldest fossils of these types have been found only in Asia and date back between 8 million and 13 million years ago.

Because the new specimen are much older and were found in Africa, they support the theory that all apes arose in Africa, scientists said. No fossils of a possible orangutan ancestor have previously been found in Africa.

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## BARTON W. STONE

Barton W. Stone was one of the most prominent figures in the early restoration movement. He was born at Port Tobacco, Maryland on December 24, 1772. After the death of his father in 1775, the family moved to Virginia in 1779.

When young Stone received his inheritance in 1790, he determined to spend the money in obtaining an education. With plans of becoming a lawyer, he enrolled in David Caldwell's Academy, a small college in North Carolina. While at the Academy he had the opportunity to hear the great Presbyterian revivalist James McGready. Stone felt uncomfortable with McGready's emphasis on the wrath of God. The next year Stone was converted to the Presbyterian church, under the preaching of William Hodge, and soon decided to preach.

To enter the ministry he had to

preach a "trial sermon" before the Orange Presbytery. The assigned subject was the doctrine of the "Trinity." After the sermon was delivered, he received his license to preach, and began his work at two small congregations in Kentucky. After a few months he became discouraged and moved back to Virginia.

Late in 1798 he received notice of his formal ordination into the Presbyterian ministry. This was one of the most difficult times in his life. Stone spoke of this in his biography. **"Knowing that at my ordination I should be required to adopt the Confession of Faith, as the system of doctrines taught in the Bible, I determined to give it a careful examination once more. This was to me almost the beginning of sorrows. I stumbled at the doctrine of the Trinity as taught in the Confession; I labored**

**to believe it, but could not conscientiously subscribe to it. Doubts, too, arose in my mind on the doctrines of election, reprobation and predestination, as there taught. . .The Presbytery came together, and a large congregation attended. . .They labored, but in vain, to remove my difficulties and objections. They ask me how far I was willing to receive the confession? I told them, as far as I saw it was consistent with the word of God. . .No objection being made, I was ordained"** (Biography of Eld. Barton Warren Stone, pages 29,30).

The inward struggle Stone went through against the dogmas of men has been repeated by many individuals. Because of his love of the truth Stone rose to a place of prominence among the people of God in his day.

In 1801 Stone visited Logan County, Kentucky to witness a great camp meeting. Under the "hell-fire and brimstone" preaching of James McGready were stirred into such a frenzy that many men "fell down as men slain in battle," some would shout and sing, others would dance. McGready was simply presenting men as sinners, and calling on them to repent. Old-School Presbyterianism was opposed to this spirit of revival. Stone returned to Cane Ridge in August of the same year and started a massive revival there. More than 10,000 (some estimates say 30,000) people assembled together for six days to hear men preach "free salvation urged upon all by faith and repentance."

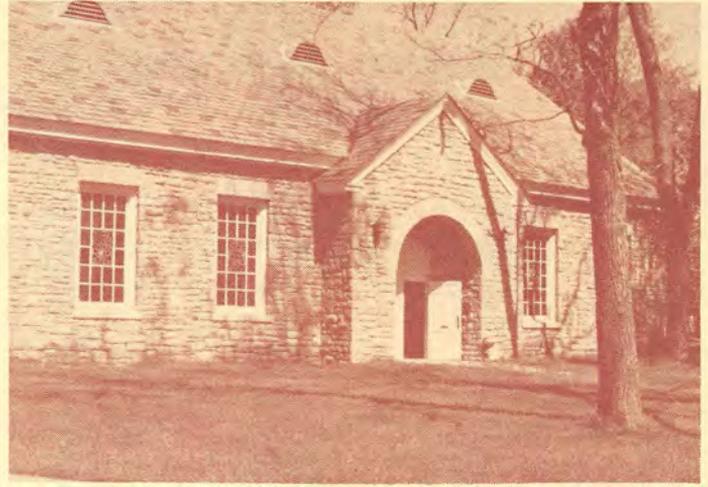
The doctrine of "salvation for all" was not in harmony with the Presbyterian doctrine of predestination and limited atonement. Charges of "heresy" were hurled at the men who sided with Stone during the revival. **"The Presbytery of Springfield, Ohio, arraigned McNemara on the charge of**



*Red River Meetinghouse, where Stone heard James McGready preach during the great revival of 1801. The building is located just a few miles outside of Russellville, Kentucky, in Logan County.*



*The original Cane Ridge meetinghouse, located near Paris, KY.*



*The Cane Ridge meetinghouse is inside this "shrine" put up by the Christian church in 1954.*

heresy, and the case came before the synod at Lexington, Ky. Foreseeing their fate before that body, Stone, McNemara, Thompson, Dunlavy and Marshall drew up a protest, declaring their independence and withdrawal from the jurisdiction of the synod" (The Church, The Falling Away, and the Restoration, J.W. Shepherd, pg. 164).

These men formed their own association, the Springfield Presbytery. Five months later they realized that their organization had no scriptural right to exist. "The Last Will And Testament of the Springfield Presbytery," a now famous document, was signed to announce the dissolution of that body.

"Under the name of the Springfield Presbytery, these men went ahead preaching and organizing churches. They soon saw, however, that the name they wore was unscriptural, and that it savored of a party spirit. So, along with human creeds, they threw it overboard and adopted the name "Christian" - the name given by divine appointment to the disciples first at Antioch. They also published a tract on the name, written by Elder Rice Haggard, who had joined them a short time before. Perhaps, the reader will recall that Rice Haggard was a part of the O'Kelly-Republican-Methodist movement, which began at Manikin Town, N.C., on Christmas Day, 1793. At the first important meeting of that body at 'Old Lebanon Church,' Surrey County, Virginia, Rice Haggard stood up with a copy of the New Testament in his hand and said: 'Brethren, this is a sufficient rule of faith and practice,

and by it we are told that the disciples were called 'Christians,' and I move that henceforth and forever the followers of Christ be known as 'Christians' simply.' It is, therefore, interesting to know that this staunch fighter for the New Testament and the same 'Christian' is now a part of the 'Stone Movement,' and the latter is using his tract to further their fight for a return to primitive Christianity" (The Gospel Advocate, L.L. Brigance, July 13, 1933, pg. 658).

In 1826 Stone began publication of *The Christian Messenger*, a 24 page monthly magazine. Later, John T. Johnson became co-editor of the paper.

A formal merger of the Stone and Campbell movements was accomplished at Lexington, Ky., on January 1, 1832.

Despite poor health, Stone continued to preach and point men back to the "primitive church." He died at the home of his daughter in Hannibal, Mo., on November 9, 1844. His mortal remains are in the cemetery at Cane Ridge.

Upon learning of Stone's death, Alexander Campbell wrote, "In the heat of controversy he may, indeed, like most other men, have been carried too far on some points; still he was an honored instrument of bringing many out of the ranks of human tradition, and putting into their hands the Book of Books, as their only confession of faith and rule of life, and will no doubt, on this account, as well as others, long continue to be a blessing to those who, by his instrumentality, have already been, or may hereafter be, translated into the fullness of the blessings of the gospel of Christ."

Engraved on his tombstone at Cane Ridge are the words "minister of the Gospel of Christ and distinguished reformer of the nineteenth century."

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# The Poet's Page

## DID I?

The pages from the calendar  
Have been taken one by one;  
Can I look back with happiness  
Upon the deeds I've done?

Did I in the year that's gone before  
Knock upon some one's shut-in door?  
Was there some one that was burdened  
with care  
Whose burdens I am told to share?

Did I visit the sick one who needed me?  
Have I been what God intended I'd be?  
Did I help the friend with a kindly deed?  
Did I give to a soul that was in need?

Did I hold back from the Lord above?  
Who has given me double my worth in  
love?  
Did I read the word of God each day?  
Did I for my friends and loved ones pray?

Did I lay aside every weight of sin?  
Did I let the light of His love shine in?  
If God is not pleased with the things I've  
done  
I need a new leaf; I've spoiled this one!

Now there is a new year about to arrive  
Lord help me to do better; May I so strive  
That when this New Year has passed  
me by

I won't have to ask "Oh, Lord, did I?"

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## EACH DAY

I cannot change my yesterdays,  
For they are past and gone.  
With all their sorrows and their joys  
Their faults and victories won.

I cannot see my days to come,  
They are in other hands.  
No anxious thoughts of mine can check,  
Or speed life's trickling sands.

So why grieve o'er my yesterdays,  
Or brood on coming years?  
Better labor, laugh and love,  
Each day as it appears.

--Author unknown

## I WILL NEVER TURN AROUND

Money they have offered me;  
It I did not receive.  
Big churches they have promised me,  
The truth I will never leave.

I have received threats from brethren;  
They have denied me a place to  
preach.  
But I shall cling to the gospel  
And seek those whom I can teach.

A big name they have promised me;  
If I preach what they want to hear.  
Start preaching on love and mercy,  
Stop teaching on fornication and  
the drinking of beer!

I will never have a big name  
Nor many places to preach,  
But with God's help I will be faithful  
While heaven I hope to reach!

--Ron Daly  
Pine Bluff, AR

## FOR TODAY

I do not ask the Lord, "Why me?";  
When troubles come my way;  
I only ask His presence here  
With me, for just today.

Tomorrow I shall pray again  
That He will lead me through,  
And every moment I shall know  
His love, His strength anew.

The weak are ever stumbling,  
Please give me courage anew,  
But just today I'm thankful  
That you will see me through.

--Caroline White  
Bowling Green, KY

## POSSESSED

He said that he possessed religion.  
I observed, and came to see.  
I don't want a possessed religion,  
But one that possesses me.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## HOW GOOD WILL YOUR EXCUSES BE?

How good will your excuses be  
The day our Lord returns?  
Will He find you watching there  
Or filled with vain concerns?

How good will your excuses be  
If Jesus were to ask,  
"Why did you choose last Sunday morn  
To tend to earthly tasks?"

Could you look him in the eyes  
And answer without shame,  
"Although I chose to work instead,  
I love you just the same."

"I'm sorry friend," the Lord might say  
"I'll have to pass you by,  
It's for the faithful saints I've come  
to live with me on high."

How good will your excuses be  
If he came back and found  
The saints all gathered worshipping  
And you were not around.

"But, Lord, I had to study hard,  
My schoolwork so demanded."  
"My child," perhaps you'll hear him ask,  
"Is that what God commanded?"

How good will your excuse be  
If you should hear him say,  
"Why did you not give all you could  
Or take the time to pray?"

How good will your excuses be?  
Only time will tell.  
A poor excuse is all it takes,  
To guide a soul to Hell.

--Phyllis Drew  
Bloomington, IL

## HEART PROBLEMS

Two things will hurt the human heart  
Far more than any other.  
They are: running up a hill,  
And. . . running down a brother!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **"MAIL-ORDER" MINISTERS ARE IN TAX TROUBLE**

The Internal Revenue Service says it will collect \$1.5 million in back taxes from more than 80 persons who were "ordained" to the ministry by mail.

The "mail-order ministers," members of the Life Science Church founded by self-proclaimed archbishop William Drexler, had bought their credentials for sums ranging from \$560 to \$4,000.

Drexler, a former lawyer, was convicted in 1982 for conspiracy and tax evasion. He had told Life Science Church "ministers" that by forming a church, taking a vow of poverty, and then donating all their assets to the church, they could avoid taxes.

The IRS, however, has argued successfully that mail-order churches do not qualify as churches, for they exist for the benefit of their founders and not exclusively for religious purposes.

## **MEMBER OF CHURCH OF SATAN LOSES HIS CASE**

A U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago has ruled that Donald Lee Childs, a member of the Church of Satan, Order of the Goat, does not have a constitutional right to hold satanic services while confined to prison.

Attorneys for Childs had argued that he should be allowed to practice his beliefs behind bars. They asked the court to order that he be provided a place to use as a chapel and permitted to use paraphernalia essential to his worship, including a crystal ball, incense, candles, and pigeons to sacrifice.

The court disagreed, noting that a crystal ball could be used as a weapon, candles are fire hazards, and incense could mask odors of illegal substances. Furthermore, the court said, jail is a restriction of First Amendment rights and the prison had no legal

obligation to provide Childs with a chapel, much less to permit animal sacrifice.

## **PRO-FAMILY RALLIES HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL ALL ACROSS THE COUNTRY**

The most severe rainstorm to hit southern Arizona in a century failed to stop 13,000 people from gathering for a pro-family rally in Tempe. Dr. James Dobson, best-selling author and lecturer on the family, highlighted "Focus on the Family Week" declared by Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt.

Rally organizers were concerned that flooding and traffic jams would prevent people from attending, but the storm subsided shortly before the two-hour event.

A record-breaking crowd of more than 18,000 also filled Denver's McNichols Arena when Dobson was there. The audience was the largest ever attracted to the coliseum for a speaking engagement, according to officials.

Regarding the issue of abortion and parental rights, Dobson has been pointing out the irony of a recent court decision that said government-funded clinics are not required to notify parents when a teenager is given contraceptives or an abortion. "A 14-year old girl can have an abortion without her parents' knowledge," Dobson said, "but she can't have her ears pierced without their permission."

## **ANOTHER ADVENTIST SCHOLAR IS IN JEOPARDY**

When Ronald Graybill turned in his doctoral dissertation at Johns Hopkins University, he thought nobody except his academic review committee would read the dissertation on Ellen White for at least five years. But two copies were released by mistake and now Graybill is in danger of losing his job as associate secretary of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Ellen G.

White Foundation.

The central controversy in the Adventist church is the position of Ellen White. The Revisionist Adventists, including most of the church's theologians, contend that the founder and prophet of Adventism would not approve of the high authority her writings are accorded in church circles today.

Before she died in 1915, White established the foundation that bears her name for the purpose of controlling her writings and distributing her assets. Partly because of his high position with the White Foundation, Graybill was thought to hold a traditional view of White. His dissertation has challenged that perception. In November he was ordered by the foundation's board of trustees to take an administrative leave of absence.

In his dissertation, Graybill excerpts from her personal letters, some of which have never been published. He discusses the problems White had with her husband and children.

Whereas conservative Adventists have cited White's meager formal education as evidence that her writings were inspired, Graybill shows that she may have been better educated and simply more intelligent than most have realized. In short, Graybill's account has spawned the notion that he is the latest prominent Seventh-day Adventist to come out of the closet against Ellen White.

## **TWO MORE NEW RELIGIOUS PAPERS DEBUT**

The Preacher said, ". . . of making many books there is no end" (Eccl. 12:12). I'm convinced the same thing could be said concerning the starting of religious journals. In addition to **Today** making its debut this month, two more subscription papers have begun.

**Catholicism Examined** is an 8-page bulletin-size paper devoted to bringing good, quality articles on a much-needed area of study. The paper is designed for only a five-year publication. The men serving as co-editors are Greg Litmer and David Riggs, both ex-Catholics. They are dedicated students of the Bible, love the Lord and the souls of men around them. It is their desire to present their materials in a forceful manner, but with tact, tenderness, and love. The subscription price is \$3.50 for an annual subscription. The paper will be published monthly. Bundles can be sent to one address at the monthly rate of \$5.00 for 25 copies, \$8.50 for 50 copies, or \$15.00 for 100 copies. Send your check today to: Catholicism Examined, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

**Christianity Magazine** is another paper printing Volume I - Number 1 this month. The annual subscription price is \$12.00. The paper has four editors: Dee Bowman, Paul Earnhart, Ed Harrell, and Brent Lewis. Each editor will contribute two regular columns to the magazine. Twelve pages of each issue will address a central theme. Twelve authors will write on a discreet and concrete topic in short articles. Each issue of the paper will be directed by one of the four editors on a rotating basis. All questions about subscriptions should be sent to: Christianity Magazine, P.O. Box 16488, Jacksonville, FL 32216.

#### **A CAPPELLA RECORDINGS AVAILABLE**

The Favorite Hymns Quartet has just released their sixth recording, **Precious Memories**. Nothing stirs the emotions more than does the hearing and singing of an old hymn. Through these we are made to remember our God, our family, our friends and all we hold to be so dear and precious to us.

This new release contains such favorites as "Jesus, Hold My Hand," "Precious Memories," "The Last Mile of the Way," "In The Garden," "Safe in the Arms of Jesus," "Shall I Crusify My Lord?" and more. It is available on album or cassette for \$7.95 (plus 86¢ postage).

Their earlier releases were **Singing Thy Praise, Jesus Is Wonderful, My God and I, Faith Is The Victory, and Stand Up For Jesus**. These first five recordings are available on album, 8-track, or cassette for \$6.95 (plus 86¢

postage).

Send your order to: The Book Shelf, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

#### **MORMONS ARE HAVING PROBLEMS**

The Associated Press has reported that the Mormons are having a problem with homosexuality. The article says an organization of 1,200 Latter Day Saints gay men and women is called "Affirmation." It states that 75% of the membership are former church missionaries.

The D & D Institute for Research and Education, which specializes in homosexual issues estimates that "there are up to 61,000 gay men and women in Salt Lake County alone," according to the article.

There are two gay bars within a few blocks of the Mormon Tabernacle, according to Michael White, writer of the article. This past summer gays sponsored a "Gay Day" at a local amusement park.

#### **TRYING TO MAKE CHRISTIANS LOOK FOOLISH**

Has someone recently approached you asking you to sign a petition to the Federal Communications Commission to combat Madalyn Murray O'Hair? Have you seen the many bulletin articles explaining that O'Hair is working to force religious programming off the air?

Since 1975 the FCC has received more than 22 million unnecessary protests. They have declared clearly, "Despite persistent rumors to the contrary, the Federal Communications Commission is **not** considering a petition to ban the broadcast of religious programming."

William J. Murray, son of the famous atheist, is a preacher in Dallas. He charges that the American Atheist Center in Austin, Texas, is behind all of these false petitions. He argues that they are being circulated largely through the Baptist and Assembly of God churches. The atheistic tactic is designed to make Christians fight something that doesn't even exist and this will "make Christians look foolish before the FCC." He claims the printing of the petitions was done by the atheists.

If Mr. Murray is right, his mother and her friends have certainly been successful in their efforts! I continue to have bulletins crossing my desk with

articles and/or a copy of this petition. We must stop this ridiculous waste of time and money.

#### **THE LOCAL FEUD CONTINUES**

All of us have heard about congregational quarrels, but this one in Vicksburg, Mississippi, seems to be a strange one. The E.P. News Service reports that Rick McAlister and B.F. Gerald are continuing a battle for the pulpit of the First Methodist Protestant Church that started on August 14. McAlister held two services inside the meeting house; Gerald held a service in the parking lot. The feud started when the Methodist Protestant Conference fired McAlister. He says they fired him because he admitted blacks to the church and baptized by immersion.

#### **PUBLIC DISCUSSION ON CATHOLICISM**

The Needham-Nugent Discussion is scheduled for Monday night, January 30, at the building of the Manatee County Church of Christ in Bradenton, Florida. James Needham preaches for the Palm River Church of Christ in Tampa. James Nugent is a Roman Catholic priest with a parish in Bradenton.

The proposition for the discussion will be: The church of which I am a member was/is the original church that Jesus built. Both speakers will have a 30-minute speech on the proposition, followed by a 15-minute rebuttal by each, then an open forum with audience participation.

This discussion was arranged by Kenneth E. Thomas, of Bradenton. You may call on him for any further information you need at (813) 746-2237 or 746-7014.

#### **FREE BOOKLET AVAILABLE**

L.R. Hester has had a tract based on Romans 3:21-26 printed for distribution. Essentiality of both God's grace and man's obedience is emphasized. The author solicits help of churches and brethren in distribution. If you would like a free copy, mail your request to him at 102 Regent Street, Henderson, TX 75652.

#### **ANOTHER FALSE STORY**

It seems that about every three years or so a story starts "making the rounds" again in various church bulletins. One that has been very popular for the past twenty-five years

is the one about Prince Edward Island. The story usually goes something like this: "Prince Edward Island, with a population of 90,000 has only 13 policemen. There is no unemployment and the problem of divorce has been extremely rare in the past sixty years. Since 1947 there has not been a single assault on a wife, desertion of family, or neglect of children. There is no penitentiary. In some years it has had as few as two auto accidents for every 10,000 cars. How do you account for this amazing record? In 1900, alcohol was abolished from the island and has never been allowed to return."

This makes for a wonderful story, but there is one major problem--none of it is true. I wrote to the Charlottetown Chamber of Commerce (which includes Prince Edward Island) and told them of the story. They wrote back and said: "Your story on Prince Edward Island must be a hoax. Should you be interested in the real Prince Edward Island, please advise."

### GREETING CARDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

Do you know of a couple celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary or beyond, or someone 80 years old or beyond? If so, why not send their name, address, and the appropriate date to the President and they will receive a greeting card from the White House? Include your name with the request and the name(s) and address of each person or couple. Write six weeks in advance to: Greetings Office, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500.

### SOME WALK, SOME CRAWL TO THE STATUE OF THE VIRGIN MARY

More than 1 million Mexicans, some crawling on their knees, visited the Basilica of Guadalupe the middle of December in a show of devotion to the Virgin Mary. They believe she appeared in Mexico City miraculously 452 years ago. In this overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country, many Mexicans say the Virgin of Guadalupe continues to work miracles in answer to prayers.

Devotion to the Catholic figure known as the mother of Jesus runs deep through four centuries of Mexican tradition and is evident in the brightly colored images of her that are on constant display in many homes,

cars and offices. "It is a devotion so deeply rooted that there is hardly a family that does not keep something that reminds them of the Virgin--a medallion or scapular," said Francisco Ramirez Meza, spokesman for the Mexican Bishops Conference.

Monsignor Guillermo Schulenburg, abbot of the basilica, said 12 million pilgrims visit the church every year, including as many as 1.5 million on December 12, the anniversary of the day when the Virgin supposedly made the last of four appearances to an Indian named Juan Diego. It was in fact the concept of the "Virgin Morena" (the dark-complexioned Virgin) that helped to forge the cultural union between the Spanish conquerors of the 16th century and the indigenous Aztecs of old Mexico.

### FLORIDA COLLEGE PLANS ANNUAL LECTURESHIP

A record crowd of 1,409 filled Conn Gym at Florida College for their 1983 annual lectureship. Even more are expected for this year's lectures from January 30-February 2. The theme for this year will be "Ministering Obedience to Christ"--a look at Second Corinthians. The schedule for the lectureship looks like this:

#### Morning Lectures: Tuesday

- 9:00 Spiritual Comfort (II Cor. 1:1-11)  
Phil Morr
- 10:00 Triumph in Christ (II Cor. 2:12-17)  
Thaxter Dickey
- 11:00 Hearts and Stones (II Cor. ch. 3)  
Walton Weaver
- 12:00 The Gospel in Earthen Vessels (II Cor. 4:1-12)  
Jay Guyer

#### Morning Lectures: Wednesday

- 9:00 Reconciliation: a New Ministry and a New Message (II Cor. 5:11-6:2)  
Ed Brand
- 10:00 The Christian's Separation (II Cor. 6:11-17)  
Arvid McGuire
- 11:00 Penitent Christians (II Cor. ch. 7)  
John Humphries
- 12:00 Gracious Christians (II Cor. chs. 8-9)  
W.C. Hinton, Jr.

#### Morning Lectures: Thursday

- 9:00 Divine Jealousy (II Cor. ch. 11)  
Don Alexander

- 10:00 The Christian's Sufficiency (II Cor. 12:1-10)  
Kenneth Chumbley
- 11:00 Merchandising the Church (II Cor. 12:13-21)  
Barney Keith
- 12:00 Approved Christians (II Cor. ch. 13)  
Sam Binkley

### Evening Lectures

- Monday 7:30 Making Plans in Christ (II Cor. 1:12-24)  
Paul Earnhart
- Tuesday 7:30 Sorrow and Joy in Christ (II Cor. ch. 2)  
Peter J. Wilson
- Wednesday 7:30 Seeing the Unseen (II Cor. 4:16-5:10)  
Bob Owen
- Thursday 7:30 The Christian's Warfare (II Cor. 10:1-6)  
Robert Jackson

If you have any questions or need any further information, write to President Bob Owens, Florida College, Temple Terrace, FL 33617.

### CLOTHES DO MAKE THE PERSON

Special education teacher Karta Kaur Khalsa says she has no choice. Her commitment to the Sikh religion requires her to wear a white turban in her classroom at Cal Young Middle School in Eugene, Oregon.

The Eugene School Board says it has no choice either: It suspended Khalsa--also known as Janet Cooper--with pay because of a state law forbidding teachers from wearing religious dress in the classroom. "They had to do it and they did--no hard feelings," Khalsa said on December 8. "I think the law they're having to use is probably unconstitutional."

Now state officials must decide whether the law requires them to revoke her teaching certificate.

### A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

If you are publishing a church bulletin, please see that my name is added to your mailing list. We try to pick up some of our news and notes from bulletins across the country.

# FIELD REPORTS

**Bill Calame, RFD 1-Box 261, Orrington, ME 04474:**

During the month of October, several people who had left the Bangor church two years ago, returned to worship with us again. The group that had been meeting in the Bangor YWCA no longer exist. A few of them did go to the church in Brewer, Maine, but the majority of them returned here. They have manifested an attitude of repentance and things are proceeding harmoniously in the Bangor church. This, plus two baptisms recently, have swelled our ranks. Our Sunday morning assembly now runs in the 80's. Just this past Sunday the men met in order to adopt a budget for 1984. Our contribution has increased considerably and we will be able to do some things this year that we have been unable to do in the past. We have already begun to increase our efforts in the areas of evangelism and edification. At the present we are making a concentrated effort to enroll as many people as possible in Bible correspondence courses. We are also hoping to have more special meetings this coming year. We have already planned to have brother L.A. Mott to come in February to conduct two weeks of Bible classes. We are also hoping to have a gospel meeting next summer and our annual lecture program in the fall. Speaking of our lecture program, we conducted it this past November 12th. Its theme was "Spirituality in the Home". We were all edified by the lessons we heard on this most timely theme.

**Gardner Hall, P.O. Box 686, West Paterson, NJ 07424:**

Eastern Correctional Institute is an imposing looking prison in the Catskill Mountains of New York. On December 17, I made the two hour drive up to the town of Napanoch where the prison is located to be at the baptism of Angel Abraham with whom we have been studying for over a year, mainly through correspondence. Angel is an impressive young man who has studied the Bible extensively and who decided several months ago that he wanted to be baptized for the remission of his sins. But to be baptized, Angel had to obtain permission from his chaplain who is a member of the charismatic movement. The chaplain responded that he would be glad to baptize Angel at the next scheduled baptism, December 17, and we were unable to get permission for a baptism any sooner. . . .The prison chapel was filled with about 150 shouting and jumping pentecostal prisoners and guests. I am always saddened to see so many sincere but mistaken people. As for myself, I felt as out of place amidst the rocking and rolling as a ham sandwich at a Jewish picnic and tried to take an unobtrusive seat in the back. . . .In the midst of all this, Angel was baptized by the chaplain along with 12 other prisoners. But unlike the other prisoners, Angel was immersed with a scriptural understanding of the purpose of his baptism. I longed to tell the other sincere and happy prisoners that they were being baptized for a human reason but was forced by the

circumstances to maintain my peace as they acted in ignorance. Perhaps Angel will one day be able to help them obey Christ instead of human traditions.

**Ken Weleiver, 4050 80th Avenue North, Pinellas Park, FL 33565:**

In June of 1983, I concluded eight years and eight months of work with the church in Palmetto, Florida. This has been the longest time I have located with one church and it was the longest stay of any preacher in the 45 year history of the Palmetto congregation. Both the brethren there and myself feel that these two facts alone bespeak many positive aspects of our work together. Space doesn't permit a review of that entire work. However, during that time we accomplished the appointment of elders and deacons, the erection of a much needed meeting house and the development of a comprehensive teaching program. It is to the credit of the brethren there that these and other things were accomplished. I was happy to have been a part of whatever success we enjoyed together.

Since July, we have been laboring with the Skyview church in Pinellas Park, which is located in North St. Petersburg. We have had seven baptisms, all of which were adults who were either "unchurched" or came out of denominational error. One lady had formerly practiced Catholicism, but was searching for the Truth. Four families have placed membership with us, including one lady who was restored who had been living in adultery. Although some say it can't or won't be done, this sister repented of her sin and severed the illicit relationship and is now very faithful. In fact, she was instrumental in contacts that so far have led to five baptisms.

I am excited about an opportunity to preach a meeting in January in Waipahu, Hawaii. This will be a first for me. We are looking forward to a good year in 1984. I believe that people are more receptive to the gospel than ever. They are searching; it is up to us to find them and teach them.

**Keith E. Clayton, 55 East Street, Bristol, VT 05443:**

I have only two mildly-cold contacts left before I go random door knocking again. The daughter of a member here has a boyfriend who said he would reconsider his previous negative disposition toward a Bible study with me. He is to give me an answer within a week. My neighbor has said he will talk with me about it after the holy days.

Our attendance is holding at 21 souls (13 Christians). We are having a little problem with a few being spiritually weak, but we are working with them and praying for them. We love them and desire to feed them with the pure milk of the Word and fellowship. Growth in the Truth will cure these problems.

Our lectureship is now scheduled for the weekend of February 24th, 1984, Lord willing. The general theme will be "Walking In The

Light," with various subtopics under that heading: Authority, Scriptural Worship, Scriptural Work & Organization of the Church, Personal Evangelism, The Home, Morality. The speakers, respectively are: Jeff Kingry, Troy Adams, James Jones, Herb Braswell, Ralph Smart.

**R.T. Mitchell, P.O. Box 61029, Fairbanks, AK 99706-1029:**

I recently preached a week-long meeting in Anchorage. In addition to preaching each evening, I also taught 4 morning class sessions on "How We Got The Bible." Attendance was good for both the meeting and the classes. . .

From Anchorage I drove to Soldotna and preached 3 times on Sunday. . . The brethren in Soldotna are few in number and without a preacher. The Soldotna-Kenai area is one of the fastest growing areas in the U.S. at present. Does anyone know of a preacher willing to move there?

After worship in Soldotna, I drove to Anchorage, spent the night and then drove to Valdez. . .to visit with Kelley & Celeste Bush and their 2 children. The Bushes are the only Christians in Valdez. I took them some tapes of our recent gospel meetings plus some tracts and miscellaneous materials. I was able to spend a few hours with these fine people. Their faith and zeal are impressive! They are doing a fine job of teaching their son and daughter the Word of God. . .

All in all, this trip took nearly 2 weeks and I drove about 1500 miles.

**Carlos Capelli, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina:**

The Lord has continued to richly bless the efforts in Boulogne. Another four precious souls were added to our spiritual family--the church. . . I was studying with them some weeks, answering their questions and teaching them about the New Testament church and Christianity.

Elsa de Basilio was a member of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. Her husband had an accident in his work and is invalid. The pentecostals told them to look for a miracle. The "pastor" claimed to be able to place his hands on the man and he would be able to walk. Sister Elsa took her husband to the Pentecost Church during four years, that is much time for to do a miracle! Sister Elsa wanted me to speak with "the pastor". I accepted and had a debate with a "pastor" and 10 men. The debate was 3 hours, but none of the 11 men could sustain their false theory about "miracle health". Sister Elsa was convinced of the false teaching and obeyed the gospel with the other three sisters.

**Eliseo A. Sikat, 180 Lopez Street, Calapan F-303, Oriental Mindoro, Rep. of Philippines:**

Rejoice with us, brethren, for the obedience to the gospel of twelve persons for the salvation of their souls. Three of these were the fruits of our labors in Aurora and those nine were in Bangaban. We had Bible lectures during daytime and gospel preaching during the nights from November 15th to November 18th in Bangaban. Brother Leopoldo Agustin is the preacher in Bangaban who invited me to be the speaker in the public gospel preachings.

# CLASSIFIEDS

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**GOSPEL ANCHOR** (monthly) \$8.00 per year. A Magazine for the Mature Christian. P.O. Box 36033, Louisville, KY 40233.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

February 1984

Number 2

## "I Can Do All Things In Him That Strengtheneth Me"

### Phil. 4:13

by **Berry Kercheville**

How am I going to survive the temptations that come upon me every hour? How will I endure in times of want and poverty? Will I continue to serve the Lord during prosperity? How long will I be able to withstand the pressure of my job? How well will I maintain my spirituality over the next ten, twenty, or even forty years? Will I endure unto the end? Will I grow to the maturity Christ expects of me? Paul answered these very common but trying questions: "*I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.*"

The questions above reflect the uncertainty of life. The wise preacher of Ecclesiastes said, "*In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him*" (Ecc. 7:14). And again, "*...for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him*" (Ecc. 3:22). It is this inability to know the events of tomorrow that is at the root of man's disappointments and thus man's failure to obtain contentment and joy in his life. Our decisions are very regularly based on the prognostications of tomorrow. We want to know tomorrow's weather. We want to know who will be the next president. We want to know if we will have a job next year. We want to know if the stock market will go up or if interest rates

will stabilize. And why do we want to know? Other than simple curiosity, we have determined that knowing something about the future will give us an edge in obtaining what we want out of this life. And God knew we would be that way. Thus the Preacher said, "*I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him*" (Ecc. 3:14). It is not wrong to attempt to make wise decisions about one's future. But God still proclaims He does not want us to know what will come after us that we might FEAR BEFORE HIM.

This then is the key. Paul said in Phil 4:12 that he had learned a secret—the secret to being content in whatever state he was in. And the secret was Christ: "*I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me.*" Since we cannot know what will be after us and since disappointments will constantly interrupt our best laid plans, we must put our trust in Him who knows all and who has the power to help us overcome.

But let us be more specific. While it is true that I find this strength "*in*

*Him,*" I need to know how to avail myself of that strength. Earlier in Philippians four, Paul gave the prescription for being strengthened in Christ to do all things.

There was the matter of "*rejoicing in the Lord always.*" I fail to see the point of a Christian being unhappy in light of all the Lord has done for us and the plans He has made for us. This is the first way I can avail myself of the Lord's strength, by rejoicing in who I am because of Him.

There needs to be constant recognition that "*the Lord is at hand.*" The Lord is always nearby, He is ready to help. And therefore the admonition to "*be anxious for nothing.*" The Lord is at the door and available, therefore we are commanded not to worry but instead to avail ourselves of His strength through prayer and supplication.

And finally, to be able to do all things through Christ who strengthens, we need a proper mental attitude. Paul said, "*I can...*" He had a positive mental outlook, not based on his own abilities, but the strength of Christ. Such a mental attitude involves thinking on good, pure and holy things (Phil. 4:8). It involves being "*content with such things as ye have*" (Heb. 13:5) and not allowing one's life to become entangled in covetousness.

Yes, I can do all things in Him that

strengtheneth me. With the Lord at hand ready to help answering my prayers coupled with my proper mental attitude--I can. I can grow in Christ meeting his expectations of me. I can

be a productive fruitful part of the Lord's church. I can aid those in need. I can teach the lost. I can endure the trials. I can overcome sin. I can resist temptations. I can persevere unto the

end and obtain the crown of righteousness. "I can do all things in Him that strengtheneth me."

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## Women-- Important Individuals, Powerful Examples

by Don Givens

She was a vital part of God's plan for Israel, (Jacob was her son).

**4. The Hebrew Midwives** - (Shiphrah and Puah) - ex. 1:15

They were an important part of God's plan for His nation in Egypt.

The Hebrew midwives respected God and His purposes. They saved God's people. Risked their lives!

God appreciated their efforts and rewarded them: (Exodus 1:16-21)

God did not overlook their bravery; He treated them as very special individuals.

**5. Jochebed** - Ex. 2:1-10

The mother of Moses. (Ex. 6:20)

A mother's deep love is seen in her. She had much courage and faith in God.

God rewarded her faith; He so arranged it that the mother could be with her child in his most formative years and teach him of the true God and Hebrew ways! (Heb. 11:23)

**6. Miriam** - Ex. 15:20.

(Sister to Aaron and Moses)

A courageous, intelligent, and faithful woman.

One of the leaders of Israel (Ex. 15:20, 21 and Micah 6:4)

She was a prophetess who led the women in worship to the God of Israel.

God held her responsible for her actions. (Num. 12)

God treated her as an important individual, and spoke to her directly from a pillar of cloud. (Num. 12:5)

"The people did not journey until Miriam was brought in." (Num. 12:15)

**7. Rahab** - Joshua 2.

Resident of heathen city of Jericho.

Declared her great faith. (Heb. 11:31)

She risked her very life. God rewarded her by saving her from destruction. (Josh. 6:25)

Rahab is an ancestress of Jesus Christ. (Mt. 1:5)

**8. Deborah** - Judges 4

She was a counselor, a prophetess, and a judge of Israel.

A woman of great capabilities who was close to God. (See the "Song of Deborah" - Judges 5)

**9. Hannah** - I Sam. 1

(Mother of Samuel the great prophet)

In great distress she fervently prayed to God for a son. She had a very close relationship with the God of Heaven: (See Hannah's prayer of praise - I Sam. 2:1-10)

God blessed her; Hannah rejoiced, and kept her oath.

**10. Abigail** - I Sam. 25

A godly, intelligent, and beautiful woman. (v.3). She was married to a "surlly" and evil man (Nabal).

She persuaded David not to shed blood unnecessarily. Had a humble attitude of intercession. She desired peace rather than violence. (v. 32, 33) David followed her advice.

**11. Jhasheba** - II Kings 11:1-3

She saved young king Joash from being murdered. Risked her life. Was good in the midst of evil.

**12. Esther**

In the right place, at the right time, and had the right attitude to save the Israelites.

Here was a woman willing to die to accomplish God's will.

God rewarded her bravery and humility.

She proved herself to be not only "fair and beautiful" but also highly intelligent. (Esther 2:7; chpts. 5 and 7)

### SUMMARY:

From a study of women in the Old Testament we learn:

1. God considered women to be of great importance and value.
2. Women were vital to God's plan.
3. They are intelligent individuals, responsible for their decisions.
4. Women were very influential, having a definite effect on the world around them.
5. God praised the faithful women, and showed His loving concern for all.

How does God view the influence and value of women?

Everyone wants to feel important, valuable, significant, and esteemed.

God has consistently, both in the Old Testament and New Testament, recognized the value and great importance of women.

He views women as special creatures, to be treated with loving care and concern.

He considers women to be intelligent persons, and holds them responsible for their actions.

In the Scriptures, women are *influential* human beings, and they are *essential* parts of God's plans for the course of history (Gal. 4:4).



### Influential Women of the Old Testament

**1. Sarah** - Gen. 17:15,16; Gen. 18:10; Rom. 9:9 "Mother" of Hebrew nation.

Pattern of the new covenant. . . . we are "sons of this freewoman" Gal. 4:22-31.

**2. Lot's wife** - Gen. 13; 14; 19.

Living in the midst of filth and perversity.

God tried to save her, but she would not cooperate. Gen. 19:17-26; Lk. 17:32

**3. Rebekah** - Wife of Isaac.

"Two nations" were in her womb. Gen. 25:23; Rom. 9:10-13.

# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## USING GOD'S STANDARD

A young boy came running into the house very excited shouting, "Mother, Mother, I am nine feet tall!" His mother reminded him that he was exaggerating and was talking nonsense. He responded that he knew for a fact that he was nine feet tall.

"What makes you think so?" she asked.

"Because I measured myself," he replied.

"How did you measure yourself?" his mother inquired.

"I took off my shoe," said the boy, "and measured myself with that. It is just the same size of my foot, and I really am nine feet tall."

This little lad was very sincere in believing he was nine feet tall, but he was using the wrong measure. Man is also prone to measure himself by his own ruler, especially when it comes to his religion. The solution to the problem of religious division if we want to please God is to go to His Word for the only standard of authority. The Bible is the **only** true and reliable standard for us to use. Where there is no scripture there is no divine authority. Trusting in self or in human wisdom is always wrong. We are told to walk by faith, not by what just seems to be best in our own eyes (1 Cor. 1:18-ff; 2 Cor. 5:7). Many false standards are used by those in the denominations and many brethren are following their example. Let us consider some of these:

### EMOTIONALISM

Some people try to determine truth by the way they feel about it. Emotionalism is a false standard and proves nothing to be right or wrong. When I was living in Indiana and studying with a woman, she said, "I wouldn't give my feelings for all the Bibles in the world." One frequently heard statement is, "I know that I am saved because I can feel it in my heart." The Bible says, "*He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool*" (Prov. 28:26). We need to be

mindful of the fact that our feelings depend on what we believe (look at the example of Jacob mourning for Joseph in Genesis 37), while faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Saul of Tarsus is a perfect example. He hunted, persecuted and imprisoned Christians. He did it with a clean conscience and actually felt good about it (Acts 26:9), but he was wrong in doing it. God did not say that you can know that you are saved by the way you feel. This is a false standard.

### FAMILY TRAINING

Many people will use their parents and grandparents as the measure for right and wrong. Many say, "They were members of the same church that I am, and what was good enough for them is good enough for me." Most people are what they are, religiously, on the basis of what their parents were. Very few have ever stopped to consider that their ancestors could have been wrong. There is too much hand-me-down religion today. It is the wrong standard to rely upon tradition and family training. You are following after the very thing that Jesus condemned: "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition" (Matt. 15:6). Perhaps you have had an opportunity to study, learn and develop more than your parents. We think nothing of changing politics or of buying a Buick when Dad always bought a Chevrolet. We make many decisions and do many things against the will of our parents. The reason, possibly, that we hold back on the question of religion is because it is the most important decisions in our life. But a love for Jesus must be a greater love than a love for our family. Jesus said, "*He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me*" (Matt. 10:37).

After practicing something for five, ten, or twenty years, many people think that is the way it has always been done. This is why the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship, sprinkling infants, calling the preacher titles like Reverend, etc., are used in many churches. Tradition is used instead of book, chapter, and verse.

Can you read in the Bible of the church to which your parents are a member? If not, leave that church. Use the Bible as your measure.

### TESTIMONY OF GREAT MEN

When I asked one man for authority for one thing that he was engaged in, he named three preachers that believed in doing it. My first thought was, "So what?" The testimony of great men is often used instead of the Bible. Some honest people will read from **Johnson's Notes on the New Testament**, or a commentary from Albert Barnes or Adam Clark, or some other writer that they consider to be a scholar, and take the word of these men over the Word of God. All men are fallable and we can not have so much confidence in them, but we can remain faithful to God even if these men depart from the faith. Our faith must not

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stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God (1 Cor. 2:5; Rom. 1:16).

The authority of God makes a practice right or wrong and not how many men have believed in that practice. One might find one thousand great men, including every editor of religious journals and writer of various commentaries, that believe a certain doctrine, but that does not make it truth. The Bible is what makes a thing truth!

Several use the creedbooks and writings of men as their spiritual standards. Conferences are held and these man-made creeds can be changed by a majority vote. They write what their group is to believe and/or practice. By what authority can they do that? NONE! Writers of the Bible were empowered with the Spirit of God and knew the will of God. Modern men coming up with these modern doctrines have no power.

#### THE "DO GOOD" POLICY

Some people seek to justify their unscriptural practices by saying, "Look at all of the good that it does." Their feelings are that if it does good it must be right. This theory is that the end justifies the means. There are many things that are within themselves good, but that should not be

practiced by the church. God's work must be done so as to please Him or good is not done. The only way we can know that it pleases Him is to have authority from His Word to do it. His Word is the standard of authority that furnishes us unto every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Promising a child a candy bar if he will come to Bible class, providing a recreational hall for fun and games, or even sending church funds to a private enterprise cannot be brushed off with a "look at all of the good that it does." There must be book, chapter, and verse or else one is using the wrong standard.

#### ONLY ONE STANDARD

Let us be content to do God's will because God wants it that way. His Word is the only standard that can be appealed to for our decisions. It is a genuine rule for all of us. It is "*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Let us speak where the Bible speaks, be silent where the Bible is silent, do Bible things in Bible ways and give them Bible names. This is the true standard!

## HURT FEELINGS

by Bill Crews

**H**as anyone ever hurt your feelings? That's like asking, "Are you human?" It happens in families, in neighborhoods, in schools, in offices and plants; and it happens in churches. Some people are always hurting others' feelings, and either not realizing it or not caring. Others are always getting their feelings hurt, and either not seeing it or not willing to do anything about it.

I think that most readers already understand what I am talking about, but let me enlarge upon it. Webster's *New World Dictionary* gives ten definitions of the word "feeling." The one that fits: "5. pl. sensitivities; susceptibilities: as, her feelings are easily hurt." One definition of "sensitive" is: "6. easily offended, disturbed, shocked, irritated, etc., as by the actions of others; high-strung, tense, and touchy." Let me make some observations that I hope you will find helpful.

Hurt feelings can be a real problem. They alienate people. They build walls. They destroy relationships. They make people unhappy and miserable. They affect physical health and mental outlook. They often lead to far more serious problems. They can end friendships, break up marriages, and divide churches. They can cause precious

souls to be lost.

Let us not be so insensitive that nothing can move us or affect us. If nothing can hurt your feelings, you have gone too far. But let us not be so touchy and sensitive that we are always getting our feelings hurt, like the proverbial person with "a chip on his shoulder." Surely no one wants to have the reputation of having to be "handled with kid gloves" by everyone lest his feelings be hurt.

Let us not be so tactless, so thoughtless, or so cruel that we are always hurting someone's feelings. Some like this may go through life blind to themselves, not seeing what they are doing. Some like this may think that allowances ought to be made for them because that's "just their nature." And some may go out of their way, deliberately and with knowledge, to hurt the feelings of others. But let us not go to the other extreme and be unwilling to do or say anything that might hurt someone's feelings. That would lead us to compromise the truth and surrender our convictions (see Matt. 15:12-14 and context).

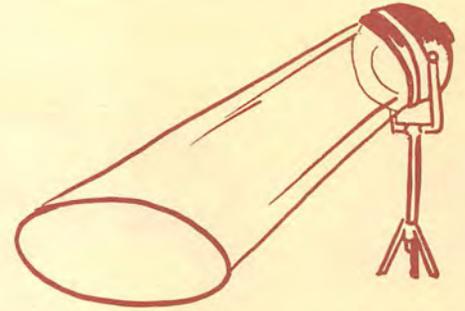
People are ever getting their feelings hurt over trivial and insignificant matters. They weren't invited to some one's get-together--they just know that it was deliberate. Someone failed to speak to them or

ignored them--that, too, just had to be deliberate. Someone did speak to them--but with the wrong expression on the face, or the wrong tone of voice, or the wrong words. They heard things were being said about them. They believe people are making fun of them. They are convinced someone has mistreated their child. Nobody appreciates them. Nobody commends them. Etc, etc. The least we can do is to be sure that it really happened and that it is a serious matter, before we allow our feelings to be hurt.

Now the right way to handle hurt feelings is to say nothing to the one who hurt us, but to act hurt until he can guess why? NO! To tell anyone we can expect the one who hurt us? NO! The only one who needs to be informed is the one who hurt us, and if we regard it as a matter of sin against us, Matt. 18:15ff tells us what we must do! Well, the right way to handle hurt feelings is to stop coming to Bible classes and services? NEVER! That's a case of taking it out on the Lord, of sinning ourselves of *being* wrong.

Most of the cases of hurt feelings would never come to pass if we all tried to be more considerate and tactful and less touchy and sensitive. And if we all would handle such matters as God would have us to handle them, there would be no bitter and destructive after-fruit.

# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## HAROLD COMER

**How long have you been preaching?**

I've been preaching for twenty-seven years. I've been with the College View Church here in Florence for ten-and-a-half years.

**What is one of the most exciting things about working in a college town?**

I think right now in America the college students are the most susceptible and most responsive to teaching. Now it wasn't that way in 1970 and it's gradually evolved into that situation. It may not be that way for a long time, but they really are a group that have an attitude right now that make them very responsive.

**What do you feel is one of the most important keys involved in working with college students?**

The first thing is that you've got to be interested in them. Any congregation almost anywhere in America has some college population close by. It may just be a junior college, but there is some place around them that they can be interested in. You don't have to be close to a college. It's just that you, basically, have to be interested in them.

You've then got to establish some kind of core group. You've got to work to get those first two or three, build up to about eight, and then you've established a group function. You can then work to expand from eight on into eighteen or twenty and work on up from there.



**What is the greatest drawing card for college students?**

They recognize the morality factor in faithful brethren. I think the biggest leverage we have is in living decent, moral lives. That is what a lot of college students are looking for. That's the door opener. Once they recognize that you are seriously interested in living the right kind of life, then they are ready to start to listen to what you say. College students have a sense of fairness about them, in a sense of open-mindedness that gives you the opportunity then to convert them.

**Has the congregation here always been interested in the college students or is this something new for most of them?**

They were interested, but didn't know what to do. They didn't have the contact with the college student, not because they weren't concerned but they just waited for the kids to come. They didn't do the things to find the kids.

You've got to get the whole group interested in them. The students are aware of what the rest of the congregation thinks about them.



**What have you learned over the years from trial and error?**

The most important thing is that you've got to take an interest. The second thing is that you've got to build that core group and build some bridges into the college situation--which means you've got to be visible on campus. Posters are the easiest way to be visible on campus without a great deal of expense.

We probably get more advertising value out of posters than we do in the college paper. Now, we advertise in the college paper, but you don't get much response out of the ads.

What you do get much response out of is when you use a young preacher. You have him on campus and that says to the college students that you're serious about working with them and you're interested in their age. So you have the contact by the symbol of the young preacher and by that you've certainly shown that you're interested. That's an important point, too, in building up a group.

**Do you say anything special in your ads?**

Basically, we let them know that we're there. At the first of the year, we

say something about Bible classes, special subjects we're advertising, or just anything to catch their attention. We must let them know we're there so they'll think about us.

**Why do you feel College View has been so successful in working with college students when there are larger congregations in larger college towns that are not having this kind of success?**

The general rule about college students is that in institutional churches nine out of ten college students are going to be unfaithful. In conservative churches, it will vary according to the work of the congregation but you better at least say four out of ten will be unfaithful even when you do a great job; six or seven out of ten are going to be unfaithful when you're just waiting for them to come in to you.

Only about three out of ten students that are faithful at home, then move away and go to a college where there's a good, conservative church, will attend regularly. There are two or three others, depending on the way you're doing things, that may be helped to remain faithful or be stimulated. But even when you're doing a good job, basically, four out of

ten kids that are faithful at home are going to be unfaithful when they go away to college.

**Do you think most parents realize this?**

Most parents don't begin to understand what a dangerous time it is when their kid goes to college. After all, they've been going to church, they're going to go to church. They don't make any contact with the church. The parents don't go to the college town. They need to go three or four times and go to worship with the student. The parents don't establish a contact with the student's local congregation; therefore, four out of ten hide even when you're looking for them.

Parents need to know that if they want their child to even half way have any chance at being faithful, they've got to be at that local congregation. And they can't listen to the gripes that the student makes because the weaker student is going to have something wrong with every congregation in town. Here in this area, they've got eight congregations they can go to and it's surprising what's wrong with all of those churches if you listen to the weak.

Generally, you've got to say that most college students don't have any preparation to make the choice to go to a conservative church. Now, two or three out of ten do. We're a lot better than the institutional people. Their figures are terrible, where only one out of ten will have any contact with their people on a regular basis. Part of it is because they push hard for their stronger kids to go into their church-supported schools; therefore, the kids that go to the state schools are often the ones that wanted to get away from religion and establish their own independence.

**Do you have any special plans for next fall?**

Some years we can really accomplish more personal work than others. We, basically, started with a new group this year. We try to get good leadership established. This year we're much more of a north-Alabama group, say in comparison to other years when we were more of a Florida College-transfer group. What I see is them growing together more as a group and

blending more. They've now set goals to reach others.

When we do a good job in the fall, we may get fifty, seventy five, or even a hundred different visitors--denominational and institutional. When we're not doing very well, we'll just get twenty-five, thirty, or forty. So we look for the falls that we get them really talking on the campus and get a lot of visitors in. We can then sort through those visitors and end up with anywhere from three to ten that we can teach and either baptize, restore, or bring out of institutionalism.

**Are all of your activities held in the church's building?**

The kids have some personal work sessions on the campus. The congregation's classes are almost always here at the building. I do a class on Thursday nights that is not a congregational activity, it's an individual activity. We meet in apartments, houses, or at the river. We study for an hour and talk and then spend some time together. We have one of those sessions every week.

**You mentioned earlier using a young preacher. How long does a young man work with you at College View?**

Most of our young men have stayed for two years. We look for a single man because they can work with their time schedule and hours that are much more flexible. But we want a single young man with a goal that he wants to preach full-time. That's about the only two conditions that we set.

The key to a young man being around is that they need to preach. They'll get restless if they're not preaching every Sunday. So we set it up that we expect them to go out on Sundays and preach. We don't expect them to have a class or other responsibilities here on Sundays. They're much happier when they're preaching every Sunday. A young preacher may not realize it, but he needs to preach to the same group of people. He needs to have all their problems, all of their worries, and all of that responsibility. He'll then feel a lot more valuable.

**Is there certain advice that you give each young preacher?**

One of the greatest joys in working with these young preachers is the

opportunity to just go out to lunch together or ride to a gospel meeting and talk about preaching. I don't have any certain set speech I give to everyone, but I do have a lot of different speeches. Somewhere along the way I wind up giving these to each young man. We talk about certain characteristics about preaching and certain attitudes about preachers and about congregations. I've got a little speech on almost all areas.

I expect them to get a lot by just being around. They learn by growing through the experiences. That's probably the best way they do learn. I encourage them to see what's going on, sitting in on the elders' meetings, seeing the problems that come, and being able to stand on the sidelines and watch you handle it. What I do is to explain the situation of what's going on so they'll know the difference between what they think they see and what's sometimes actually happening. You can sort of dissect a situation and explain motivation and several things to them.

I know when I started preaching, I almost expected a congregation to have two groups in them and almost expected there to be a fight. The reason I thought that was because I thought there was always an "us" and a "them" in every congregation. The first congregation I went to, I remember thinking, "I wonder who the 'them' is." So, obviously, if I move into a congregation and pick out a "them", then they're going to end up as an opposition group somewhere. One of the things I've learned is that there isn't a "them" unless I make them. If I treat everyone equally, fairly, and am concerned about them, then you can go into a group and work together. So I try to give young preachers a real picture of what congregations are like, leadership, the people, and how to motivate them.

**What do you teach them about their study habits, use of the office, etc.?**

I try to teach the young preachers about the value of an office. Most of what I do would be on organizing the library or buying the books you use.

All of the young men I've worked with have been good students. I've never had to push any of them to work. They've all been good workers and most of them have had good back-

grounds and foundations. They've all been committed.

You wind up explaining things as to why some things work and how it works. Let's take the use of an office. I believe we should make people feel at ease and relaxed. Use that to quickly get on in to what you want to talk about.

**I understand, too, that you've taken some studies in psychology and sociology. Do you feel these have helped you as a preacher?**

I have an interest in what makes people do what they do. I have a natural interest in motivation. I think that just makes me inquire. I just want to know why they are what they are. It may seem to other people that I'm greatly interested in psychology and counseling, but I don't believe I'm a counselor. I never set out to do that. I just take an interest in people and whoever wants to talk to me can. I guess I just think that we need to pray for wisdom and that we need to be interested in people.

I want to just be a preacher that's interested in other people and tries to understand. I do think there's a responsibility to try to understand. That means that I do read things that might help. But all I'm interested in is learning why people are what they are.

My responsibility is to preach, study, and do all those other things expected of me, but I think a preacher also has a responsibility to love other people and be interested in them. I think you've got to bear their burdens and weep with those that weep. You've got to empathize. I think you've also got a responsibility to try to understand people, that helps to develop being skilled or apt to teach. There are other commandments such as "*Walk in wisdom toward them that are without*" in Col. 4:5.

All of this shows that you have a responsibility to try to understand. And that will naturally make a person that listens. I think that's what a lot of people want. And that harmonizes with certain theories of counseling, but I think my emphasis is that I've got to follow certain Biblical commandments. I've got to be interested, I've got to care about them, and I've got to be willing to help if I can.

### **Do you view yourself as a counselor?**

No! If someone calls and asks if I'm a counselor, I tell them I'm just a preacher that's interested and care and I understand. But I guess, basically, I do follow some techniques that agree with a lot of counselling theories--that is to let the person do the talking. But, Biblically, that is just care, love, empathy, weeping with those that weep, and it proves to be a value.

### **Do you see inherent dangers in preachers doing more counseling?**

When you start to see yourself counseling, there are many rules you have to keep. When you start to talk to people about their problems or let them talk to you, there are some real important rules.

Obviously, there is a great danger in the male-female relationship when you are talking about very serious problems. When a female perceives that her husband won't listen to her and you're a person who listens, then there is a danger of some misplaced feelings. Some books call it transference, which means that they transfer feelings to you that really don't belong to you. So there is that danger of someone perceiving you in a way that you really are not. Or it could be your transferring feelings to them.

Of course, talking about intimate problems could be a real danger. I would think that you'd really have to have some stricter rules. You'd have to try to understand yourself and your feelings and then their feelings. You'd have to recognize that this is an artificial situation.

Obviously, you're never around the office with a female alone for a great period of time. Since you do need to talk to them, you must follow some protective rules. Anytime there's a female coming in, I make sure my wife knows. She tries to run by if she can. Or I let the young preacher or the elders know so they can drop by. I don't necessarily have them sitting there all the time, but they are in and out. We keep a daily record so anyone can see who's been there and who hasn't. I keep an openness about it.

If I make a rule that I would never talk to a female alone, that would eliminate a great portion of my teaching. I have an awful lot of studies where we talk about the plan of salvation or

something where it's real hard to get two college girls to come in at the same time. But I'm not here alone without somebody knowing about it and somebody being encouraged to come by.

### **Have you found a certain key in motivating churches?**

I jokingly say, "Catch them when they're down." Bro. Gardner Hall once said, "Don't ever move to a congregation when they're up." That just simply means that it's easier to get a congregation motivated when they know they need to be motivated. They have to know that.

The second thing is that you've got to be able to have a vision. The preacher has to be able to see it and be motivated himself. If you're fervent in spirit and deeply interested in doing it, then that's conveyed. I think enthusiasm is catching. The times I've failed is when I'm saying all the words but I'm pessimistic myself.

### **You spent three years preaching in Australia. Were you able to see any great differences in people there and here?**

The big difference was that the Australians were a little bit more fair-minded and you could look for seekers. Seekers are people that have no tie with any member and they are just looking for the one true church somewhere. There are a very few of them but there were a few more in

Australia, percentage wise, than there are in America.

We would do a better job looking for seekers in Australia because we were more peculiar looking--meaning that we were a small group, we were a little too American, we were different. People would at least look at us when they were looking for the one true church.

### **What do you predict for churches here for the next five years?**

I personally think we're going to enter a period where churches are going to start growing again. I think the signs of society suggest that there will be a period of church growth. I think non-institutional churches grew much more than they ever realized. Most of our growth was in starting new congregations and many of those new congregations were quite small. I don't think the institutional churches have begun to comprehend how much growth we've had in the last twenty years.

Here in this area we grew at about a six percent rate during this twenty-year period, while they were just running us down and talking about how small we were. We doubled their rate and it's never dawned on them yet as to how successful we really were.

### **Is there a certain group that we will be more successful with?**



We are leaving a no-growth period as far as the church is concerned and moving into a one-percent growth. We have three most opportune areas in America right now. The greatest opportunity with the college students that I've already mentioned. You can get more converts and change more lives and get more permanence out of them.

The second area is young white-collars who are moving around. If you'll work to find them and develop a core group, you'll probably change more lives spiritually quicker, with longer terms results, second only to the college students.

The third group that's the most responsive right now will be the emerging minorities--in other words, the educated blacks. Mexicans that are upgrading their social and cultural styles, etc. The emerging minorities may pose a problem in some areas as to how to intergrate them and work them in, but from all I can see they are a real receptive group.

And a fourth group we might add would be the circle of friends around

each member, when the member is living a happy, moral life. That's what most average congregations are going to grow from.

### **Is there anything special we need to do in preparing for the future?**

The young white-collars mean that you've got to advertise a little bit. You've got to develop a core group and you've got to show specific interest in them. They're the people that's moving around. They're going to be the greatest social group to enlarge in the next few years. We're going to loose most blue-collar workers. Blue-collar congregations are going to gradually be shifted into white-collar churches. Nobody wants a congregation to set out to be something socially. Basically, Biblically, you've got to be as broad as you can possibly be as far as your desire and objective. But the truth is that every congregation that is in an area where there are a number of congregations and you can choose between, then every church will gradually become more and more like

themselves. If anyone is greatly different from them, they will feel a little uncomfortable; anyone that is like them is going to feel comfortable. The desire of every congregation has to be that there is neither bond nor free, neither male nor female. We want everybody. We've got to try to reach everybody. But we recognize that in metropolitan areas where there are several congregations that congregations are going to assume individual characteristics and appeal to certain social or racial groups.

Some don't like saying that because if you're a blue-collar congregation now, then you've got a sad future. Those jobs are getting less and less at a very rapid rate right now. What's increasing are service jobs, information jobs, white-collar jobs. That's what people are having to go to. A congregation that doesn't move into that group is doomed.

**Readers may write to Harold Comer at 521 Cumberland, Florence, AL 35630.**



## **Playing with Sin is like Playing with Fire... Sooner or later you get Burned.**

**by Ken Weliever**

Solomon gave some good advise to his son in the long ago as he personified wisdom as it spoke regarding the issues of life. He exhorted his son to avoid the flattery of the evil woman and to refrain from lusts which could destroy him. To emphasize the consequences of such behavior, the following questions were raised:

*"Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27-28)*

The answer to those questions is obvious. But what is not so obvious to most people is that you cannot play with sin without getting burned. Sin

can destroy both the body and the soul! Yet, many continue to embrace sin and think they can escape without so much as getting singed!

The sin of morality can destroy the love of a good wife, wreck a home and leave the children without a father. The sin of alcohol can bring a man to social, moral, domestic and financial ruin! The sin of lying can sever the best of friendships and leave its scars for years and years to come. The sin of envy can cause one to be so miserable that he can hardly stand himself, let alone other people. The sin of rebellion and lawlessness can even lead to a life of imprisonment. The sin of cheating and stealing may bring embarrassment and even a jail sentence to the one

caught.

To those self-deceived persons who are engaged in such sins, consider a principle stated in the Old Testament: *"Be sure your sin will find you out."* (Num. 32:23). There is an eastern proverb that says, "Curses, like chickens, always come home to roost." Dear reader, we cannot escape from our sins.

However, worse that our sins betraying us and suffering all of the afore mentioned consequences, sin separates us from the fellowship of God and will cause us to be lost in eternity. The prophet of God said, *"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"* (Isa. 59:2). Furthermore, Jesus said, *"And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."*

Yes, playing with sin is like playing with fire. . . sooner or later you get burned.

# THIS THING CALLED LOVE

by Mason Harris

**H**e had driven a long way to talk with me. And now as he sat in my office and talked of the difficulties in his marriage he said, "I still love my wife, but I am not in love with her." Interpreted, I think he meant, "I still have kind feelings for my wife, but she does not excite me any more. The fire has gone out of our marriage." If he had just hummed and moaned a little, I might have thought he was singing me a country song. The lyric was right and I have learned that I am no real judge of music. But this wasn't a song. These were the words from a long time friend who was about to end his marriage to be with someone who was giving him more excitement.

In our throw-away society we have come to think that when an item gives us trouble it is easier and less expensive to replace it with a new one than to fix the old one. But this is not always true of all things. There are some things that are worth fixing. And the marriage relationship is one of them. And do not say it can't be done! When two partners are willing to work at it, a marriage can be saved. But they must care enough to deliberately plan and work at making it a successful relationship.

Before a magnificent building can be completed, plans must be carefully drawn and hours of labor must be spent. In our competitive business world, building a successful business requires planning, working, adapting, and keeping a clear image of objectives to be reached. And in our changing society, a successful marriage is built by two people who love each other and are determined to make their marriage a success. To them the word love means more than a word whispered in a romantic setting or spoken in a moment of passion. It is a word whose meaning keeps them faithful in times of prosperity and sustains them in more difficult times--when funds are short, when sickness threatens, when trials darken their path, and in short, when everything else seems to be against them. Ah, what is this thing called love?

## EROS

The Greeks had different words to express what we try to say with the one word, love. One word is *Eros*, from which we get the word Erotic. This has to do with feelings, emotions, and especially sexual desire. It is acquisitive in nature, setting out to capture that which it likes in another person, and it is basically selfish in that it seeks to control and dominate the one who is loved for one's own satisfaction. Such is the case when a man or a woman is interested more in sexual conquest and self-satisfaction than in the feelings and the welfare of the person whose favors they seek.

The extreme is seen in the rapist who ignores the smooth talk and uses force rather than seduction. But a more common practice might be when a man speaks of his great love for a woman (not his wife) and seeks to get her into bed with him--all because he loves her so much. Desire would be a more accurate word to describe his feelings. Instead of whispering in her ear that he loves her, he might more truthfully say, "I want you." Observe the selfish nature of his action. The woman in the picture may be a Christian with a strong desire to keep herself pure and free from immoral involvements. But he could not care less about how she feels, or the feelings of guilt she would suffer afterward if she were to give in to him. He is thinking only of himself and how this will make him feel.

But outside the marriage is not the only place where this kind of love exists. Many marriages have existed for years where no evidence of affection is shown outside of the bedroom, and sometimes very little within it. A complaint often heard from wives with marriage problems is, "He never tells me he loves me, nor shows any appreciation or affection, except when he is interested in sex. And even then he thinks only of himself." Where *Eros* rules, such complaints are common. Without doubt many marriages have been based on this type of love with little or nothing else to sustain them. In such cases, when the

new wears off the relationship, boredom and restlessness may set in and lead to either or both parties to look for new adventures. Each person entering into the marriage relationship needs, and has the right to expect, fulfillment. But if each one thinks only of one's own satisfaction there will be little effort to fulfill the needs of the other. As a result, both will have unsatisfied needs.

## PHILIA

Our English word love translates yet another Greek word, *Philia*. We may be more familiar with the verb *Phileo*. This word describes a warm, tender feeling which can include the physical relation between man and woman, but goes beyond this to include much more. Such love may develop because of physical appearance and personality, and, as someone has suggested, it may wane because of a change in either or both. This may explain why some people fail in marriage. A husband may no longer take the time to open a door for his wife, take her by the arm in crossing a busy street, hold her chair for her, or the many other things he did in order to get her interest and gain her love when they were courting. But what makes him think he can keep her love if he ceases to do the things that won her heart in the first place? If these little things were important when they were courting, why are they less important now that they are married? Is it because of a legal document that says she belongs to him? Ah, without wanting to speak evil of the marriage license, perhaps we have put too much trust in it. Courts have shown us already how easy it is to put it aside.

Many girls who were very careful about their personal appearance and manners, and who were quite complimentary of their beloved in everything he said or did when they were courting, have turned into women with little pride in themselves and no word of praise for their husband in anything. Again we ask why these little things are no longer regarded as important. Are we back to that piece of paper that says, "You are Mine, and I

am Yours--for better or for worse?" Well, respect for that piece of paper and what it means may keep some together, but it may not keep them loving each other. For while it may be true that *Philia* love describes a beautiful relation between two people, the truth is that its light may flicker and its warmth may grow cold.

#### AGAPE

Someone has said that love can be known only from the actions it prompts. Think, then, of the great love that the Father has for the world, that he would give his Son to die on the cross for our good! *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16). And again, *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"* (1 John 3:1). Our English word love in both passages translates yet another word from the Greek text. It is the word *Agape*. And I do not know of a better example of this kind of love, than of the Father giving his Son to die for us and to make it possible for us to be called his children. *Agape* love is different from *Eros* love in that it is totally unselfish and seeks the interest, welfare and happiness of the other person above one's own desires. And while *Philia* love is a reaction of the heart (like falling in love), *Agape* love is more a decision of the mind. *Agape* love does not spring from the feelings and natural inclinations because of some desirable traits found in another person. God did not show his love to us and make it possible for us to be his children because we were so loveable. To the contrary. Paul said, *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

Now, husbands, hear this: It is *Agape* love that Paul used when he said, *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it"* (Eph. 5:25). Paul did not use the word that expresses *Philia* love, but *Agape* love. Notice that he said, *"As Christ loved the church."* Did Christ love the church for the good the church could do him? Was it a selfish love? And did Christ love the church because it was so loveable? No, the kind of love Christ had for the church caused him to seek its own good. So Paul calls upon the

husbands to love their wives in an unselfish way. In an article on this subject, Ernest Mellor expressed it this way:

**"Agape love seeks to create value, not acquire it. It seeks to affirm, not possess, the beloved. It is different from Eros that seeks to pull love to itself, to own and control; Agape love is more like an artesian well that overflows generously. It is a love that gives; it is distributive, conferring love on the other person so that his or her value and development, security and satisfaction, lovability and capability are encouraged as much as one's own."** (*Living in the Here and Now*, Vol. 9, No. 3).

Think of the way this love will secure any relationship, but especially the marriage relationship. For illustration only, let us borrow a couple of familiar names. Adam has needs that can be met only by a companion. And Eve has needs that can be met only by a companion. They meet, fall in love, and decide to marry. Adam determines that he will do everything he can to fulfill Eve's needs and to make her happy. And Eve determines that she will do everything within her power to fulfill Adam's needs and to make him happy. Each has a worthwhile goal, but if the goal is to be reached, there are two things at least that each must know about the other. What makes him/her happy; what makes him/her unhappy? When each one knows this about the other, they know what to do and what not to do. Unfortunately, many husbands and wives never bother to learn this much about each other. So, for years they may fail to do even the little things that would make the other happy; or, they may continue to do the little things that makes the other unhappy. Then one day the last proverbial straw is added and the marriage ends in divorce.

But in our illustration, Adam and Eve are determined to make each other happy. So they learn what to do and what to avoid. Now, in the performance of this *Agape* love, which one realizes the happiness and fulfillment God intended to be enjoyed in marriage? Both, of course. But what about a relationship based on selfishness where each does everything to satisfy his/her own personal needs and tries to manipulate the other to help him/her? Neither will find

happiness intended in marriage.

As it relates to the sexual needs, Paul said it this way: *"Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not the power of her own body, but the husband: And likewise also the husband hath not the power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"* (1 Cor. 7:3-5). The wife who invents a headache, or the husband who feigns work fatigue to ignore the spouse's sexual needs is in violation to Paul's teaching and defeats a purpose in marriage.

Finally, concerning *Agape*, Mr. Mellor continues:

**"This is the kind of love that gives marriage its stability by providing commitment and dependability. Moreover, Agape teaches us that marriage is not living for each other, but it is two, uniting and joining hands to serve in a spiritual purpose together. Combining Eros and Agape is the secret to the experience of true love in marriage and to the blending together of the essence of loving and being in love. May we all grow in that direction."** (*Ibid*).

In marriage, two different personalities enter into an arrangement to live together as husband and wife, each to be the answer to the other's emotional and physical needs. Sometimes these personalities are such that very little adjustment is needed for them to have a very happy life together. But sometimes the conditioning influences in their past lives help to develop them into very different personalities. Sometimes the personality difference may be accented by educational, financial, and class background differences. When this is true, whether or not the marriage will survive depends greatly on the kind of love they have for each other, and how well prepared they are to make adjustments in their own personal lives. If there is *Eros* love only, the marriage probably will not survive. If they have *Philia* love it might survive. But if each has for the other a blending of physical desire, affection, and a desire to help, they will overcome the obstacles and their marriage will not

only survive, but it will provide each with the happiness that God intended for the relationship to offer.

A man and a woman may get caught up in a whirlwind of emotion and passion and make a decision which will affect their whole lives. But when the whirlwind is over and the passion is soothed, then comes the part of marriage that they may not have considered. Now the words come back

to them from somewhere out of the past: ". . .for better or for worse." Unfortunately each may want that which is better, and let the other have that which is worse. Some want to receive recognition, love, companionship, and sexual fulfillment, but they do not want to give those things to another. But what they fail to realize is that when they fail to give these things, they may cut off their own supply.

Jesus said, "Give, and it shall be given you...For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Of all the areas this may cover, I can think of none where this is more true than in marriage and the practice of *Agape* love.

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## Is Jesus Mentioned In History?

by L. Scott Mann

**T**he question often comes to the minds of many Christians in light of the religious skepticism that we face. We have read the Bible account of Jesus; his life and his death. But does secular history make any mention of Him? The answer is an unequivocal "Yes." We will note three examples of Christ and Christian sources outside of the N. T.

In A.D. 49 rioting broke out in the large Jewish ghetto in Rome. The violence was so uncontrollable that Emperor Cladius, issued a decree commanding all Jews to leave the city. This corresponds exactly with what is said by inspiration in Acts 18:2 when Paul arrived in Corinth finding Aquila and Priscilla who had recently come from Rome "because Cladius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome."

Equally interesting is what history records as the reason for the rioting. The Roman author Suetonius, writing in about A.D. 120 in his *Life of Claudius*, states that the Emperor "expelled the Jews from Rome, on account of the riots in which they were constantly indulging, at the instigation of Chrestus." "Chrestus" was a common misspelling of the name Christ. The incident referred to is probably the introduction of Christianity to the Jews in Rome. Suetonius appears to have mistakenly understood the report about "Chrestus" to have indicated that the man was present during the rioting. Indeed Christ did cause the rioting, but it was in a completely different way; the teaching of His disciples induced the riots.

In A.D. 111 Pliny the Younger was made Governor of Bithynia in northwest Asia Minor. Pliny seemed

unable to make any decision on his own and wrote volumous letters, which have been preserved, to the Emperor Trajan inquiring how he should act in given situations. In one of these letters, the Governor queries Trajan concerning the trial of Christians with whom he had never before had to deal. He described their worship as follows: "They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before sunrise and reciting an antiphonal hymn to Christ as God, and binding themselves with an oath--not to commit any crime, but to abstain from all acts of theft, robbery and adultery, from breaches of faith, from repudiating trust when called upon to honour it...and meet again to partake food." Such is a pagan's observation of the worship of Christians in the second century.

Well known to most Bible students is Josephus who was born about A.D. 37. He was spared from death at the crushing of the Galilean resistance in A.D. 67 by predicting that Vespasian, then the commander of the Roman army, was the promised Messiah of the O.T. and would soon become Emperor of Rome. He then began recording Jewish history although, quite understandably, the Jews regarded him as a traitor. Naturally, Josephus wrote his histories remembering that he must not offend his readers, the Romans, a factor which sometimes prevented him from accurately reporting the truth.

Josephus recorded the death of John the Baptizer in this manner: "Herod killed him in spite of the fact that he was a good man, who taught the Jews to practice virtue, to show righteousness towards one another . . . and to form a community by means of baptism" (*Antiquities* vii. 116-19). Although he later confuses the

purpose of this baptism with the Essene baptism of the Qumran Josephus' account does correspond with the Biblical record of John's life and death.

The Jewish historian also refers to Jesus several times. In relating the acts of Annas, the High Priest, he writes, "He convened a judicial session of the Sanhedrin and brought before it the brother of Jesus the so-called Christ - James by name - and some others, whom he charged with breaking the law and handed over to be stoned to death" (*Antiquities* xx. 200). An account of the troubles that befell Pontius Pilate gives the impression that Josephus believed Jesus to be the Christ (*Antiquities* xviii. 63ff). Although the original reference to Jesus and Pilate was probably written by Josephus most scholars have discounted the citation of Jesus as being the Christ as a gloss by an over zealous Christian copyist sometime after Josephus. It is well known that Josephus, a Pharisee, did not believe Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah.

Several other sources could be mentioned in addition to these. The early church "Fathers" left volumes of writings. The Jewish Talmud, compiled several centuries after Christ, contains many derogatory references to Jesus. Do not, however, look to secular history to confirm your faith in the Biblical account, this is the reverse of the reasoning we must use. God has provided valid historical accounts by various authors which have been recorded by inspiration. These are sufficient to produce faith unto salvation. The record is credible, reliable, and unshakable. It has withstood centuries of criticism. If secular history agrees with the Bible-believe it; if it does not-believe God!

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## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanon

### LOVE DIVINE

Samuel Wesley was an Anglican minister in Epworth, England. He constantly marveled at the seemingly inexhaustible patience of his wife, Susanna, in the way she reared their nineteen children. He also marveled at her methodical upbringing of the nine that lived to maturity.

Each of the Wesley children had his well-defined chores. Each was awakened by the clock. Each learned to talk by repeating the Lord's prayer. Each was taught the alphabet on his fifth birthday--not a day earlier, not one day later. And the first line each of the Wesley children learned to read was the first line of the Bible.

While observing Susanna working with one of the boys one day, he said, "I wonder at your patience. You have told that same thing to that child twenty times."

"Had I satisfied myself by saying the matter only nineteen times," Susanna replied, "I should have lost all my labor. You see, it was the twentieth time that crowned the whole."

One day in 1735, after John and Charles Wesley were grown men, they journeyed from London back to Epworth to seek their mother's patience and advice once again. General James Oglethorpe had invited them to go to the new colony of Georgia as missionaries to settlers at Savannah.

Their mother replied, "Had I twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so well employed, though I should never see them again."

After completing such a missionary journey and then returning from Georgia, Charles began a half century of hymn writing. John began his preaching crusade. But both men claim they would never have made the voyage that changed the course of religious history but for the counsel of their mother. While they were students at Oxford, these Wesley brothers had led an organization called the "Holy Club," which, it is said, was the beginning of the Methodist denomination.

Nobody knows exactly how many

hymns Charles wrote. But none can deny that he wrote a greater number of hymn-poets than any other writer. It is generally estimated that his total output approximates sixty-five hundred.

Charles looked at the words of court composer Henry Purcell and Poet Laureate John Dryden, a powerful combination in late seventeenth-century England. Their patriotic song-part of the opera *King Arthur*--gave honor to Venus, Jove and Cupid. He felt they had been given enough honors for long enough; so he wrote new words to be sung to Purcell's tune. Instead of pagan legends, Wesley's verses were full of the Bible; instead of glorifying the mythical deities of Mount Olympus, he wrote in praise of Jesus. The words were penned in 1747:

**Love divine, all loves excelling,**

**Joy of heaven, to earth come down;**

**Fix in us Thy humble dwelling;**

**All Thy faithful mercies crown.**

**Jesus, Thou art all compassion,**

**Pure, unbounded love Thou art;**

**Visit us with Thy salvation;**

**Enter every trembling heart.**

### Stand Up, Stand Up For Jesus

The dying words of an Episcopal preacher inspired a Presbyterian preacher to write a poem. Set to a tune originally composed for a secular song, it has become one of the most militant hymns for Christians to sing.

The Episcopalian was young Dudley Atkins Tyng; called a bold, fearless and uncompromising preacher like his father, Stephen H. Tyng, also a preacher. Following his graduation from college and seminary, and several years as his father's assistant at The Church of the Epiphany in Philadelphia, Dudley held pastorates of his own in several eastern cities before settling down as his father's successor in the large and wealthy Philadelphia church in 1854, his twenty-ninth year.

Dudley soon became well known and respected as both an author and a preacher, but he was not the kind of preacher who "beat around the bush."

As the anti-slavery sentiment grew, he expressed his convictions about the matter from the pulpit. Consequently, before his second year was up there were loud rumblings from the more conservative members of the congregation; outspoken critics were demanding his removal!

At the suggestion of some of the younger progressive leaders, Tyng resigned from The Church of the Epiphany as of November 4, 1856. With a group of faithful followers he organized "The Church of the Covenant," securing a hall on Filbert Street as a meeting place.

In addition to his duties as pastor of a new, growing congregation, Tyng began noonday lectures at the Y.M.C.A. As his reputation grew, larger and larger crowds came to hear him. His boldness in preaching his convictions only increased his popularity and effectiveness.

In 1858, there was a great city-wide revival campaign in Philadelphia. All of the Protestant denominations joined together in the mammoth movement. Services were held morning and evening in convention halls, church buildings, and even theaters. Various preachers and members came from all parts of the nation. For this was the forerunner of the great revival campaigns of the latter half of the last century.

On Tuesday, March 30, 1858, over 5,000 men gathered in Jayne's Hall (then at 621 Chestnut Street) for a mass meeting sponsored by the Y.M.C.A. Tyng preached from Exodus 10:11 "*Ye that are men, go and serve the Lord.*" According to their denominational understanding, over 1,000 of the men were converted; the sermon was called "one of the most successful of the times"; the entire city was being aroused; a religious awakening was gaining force.

During the sermon the preacher said, **I must tell my Master's errand, and I would rather that this right arm were amputated at the trunk than that I should come short of my duty to you in**

delivering God's message" (as quoted by Ernest Emurian, **LIVING STORIES OF FAMOUS HYMNS**, Baker, page 122)

The next week he returned to his family in the country. For a brief rest from his studies, he went to a nearby barn to watch workmen operate a corn-shelling apparatus. When he thoughtlessly moved too close to the machinery, a sleeve of his coat caught in a moving cog; the arm was lacerated severely, the main artery severed and the median nerve injured. Four days later, mortification having set in, his right arm was amputated very close to the shoulder. Anxiety prevailed for his life. Doctors and a score of ministers gathered at his bedside. The dying Mr. Tyng tried to sing "Rock of Ages," but he was too weak.

The young man's minister-father leaned close to the bed to hear the last words of his son. "Tell them," was the faint whisper, "to stand up for Jesus. Stand up for Jesus, father, stand up for Jesus. And tell my brethren of the ministry, wherever you meet them, to stand up for Jesus."

The following Sunday, Tyng's friend, a Presbyterian minister by the name of George Duffield, Jr., preached to his people from Ephesians 6:14, "*Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth.*" For his conclusion, he read an original poem of six stanzas. A member of the congregation had the verses printed on leaflets for use in the Sunday school. Someone sent one of the leaflets, without Duffield's knowledge, to a Baptist periodical.

Thirty years earlier composer George James Webb had written a secular song entitled, *'Tis Dawn, the Lark is Singing*. Duffield's words and Webb's melody made a lovely combination.

In 1864 Mr. Duffield was visiting Union army camps when he heard the soldiers singing the poem he had written. Until then he didn't even know he had written a hymn--a hymn that had been inspired six years earlier by the last words of a dying preacher.

**Stand up, stand up for Jesus,  
Ye soldiers of the cross;  
Lift high His royal banner,  
It must not suffer loss:  
From vict'ry unto vict'ry  
His army shall He lead,  
Till ev'ry foe is vanquished,  
And Christ is Lord indeed.**

# FATHER FORGETS

by Livingston Larned

**L**isten, son. I am saying this as you lie asleep, one little paw crumpled under your cheek and the blond curls stickily wet on your damp forehead. I have stolen into your room alone. Just a few minutes ago, as I sat reading my paper in the library, a stifling wave of remorse swept over me. Guiltily I came to your bedside.

These were the things I was thinking, son:

I had been cross to you. I scolded you as you were dressing for school because you gave your face merely a dab with a towel. I took you to task for not cleaning your shoes. I called out angrily when you threw some of your things on the floor.

At breakfast I found fault, too. You spilled things. You gulped down your food. You put your elbows on the table. You spread butter too thick on your bread. As you started off to play and I made for my train, you turned and waved a hand and called, "Good-bye, Daddy!" I frowned and said in reply, "Hold your shoulders back!"

Then it began all over again in the late afternoon. As I came up the road, I spied you down on your knees, playing marbles. There were holes in

your stockings. I humiliated you before your boy-friends by marching you ahead of me to the house. Stockings were expensive - if you had to buy them you would be more careful! Imagine that, son, from a father!

Do you remember how you came in timidly, when I was reading in the library later, with sort of a hurt look in your eyes? When I glanced up over my paper, impatient at the interruption, you hesitated at the door. "What is it you want?" I snapped.

You said nothing, but you ran across in one tempestuous plunge and threw your arms around my neck and kissed me. Your small arms tightened with an affection that God set blooming in your heart and which even neglect could not wither. And then you were gone, pattering up the stairs.

Well, son, it was shortly afterwards that my paper slipped from my hands and a terrible sickening fear came over me. What has habit been doing to me? The habit of finding fault, of reprimanding - this was my reward to you for being a boy. It was not that I did not love you; it was that I expected

too much of youth. I was measuring you by the yardstick of my own years.

There was so much that was good and fine and true in your character. The little heart in you was as big as the dawn itself over the wide hills. This was shown by your spontaneous impulse to rush in and kiss me goodnight. Nothing else matters tonight, son. I have come to your bedside in the darkness and I have knelt there, ashamed!

It is a feeble atonement; I know you would not understand these things if I told them to you during your waking hours. But tomorrow I will be a real daddy! I will chum with you, suffer when you suffer, and laugh when you laugh. I will bite my tongue when impatient words come. I will keep saying, as if it were a ritual, "He is nothing but a boy - a little boy."

I am afraid I have visualized you as a man. Yet as I see you now, son, crumpled and weary in your cot, I see that you are still a baby. Yesterday you were in your mother's arms, your head on her shoulder. I have asked too much, too much.

# The Book Worm



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*SINCE YOU ASKED* by Bill Flatt (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 194 pages, \$5.95.

The author is a licensed counseling psychologist and an experienced preacher. This book grew out of the author speaking at various congregations on mental health and the Bible. Flatt believes that good mental health includes not only how to relate to the people around you, not only how you handle your problems, but mainly how to relate constructively to God. The book covers such subjects as anger, fear, guilt, depression, divorce, death, grief, self-esteem, sex, failure, and much more. Each chapter is divided into questions and answers. It is a very readable book. It's the type that one can read in one sitting or pick it up and read just one section as time will allow. I really enjoyed the book.

*THE FALL OF UNBELIEF* by Roger E. Dickson (Choate Publications: Winona, Mississippi), 1982, hardback, 511 pages, \$12.00.

With evolution, modernism, liberalism, and unbelief running rampant over the country, it is important to have books written by men that will defend God and His Word. Dickson has done an excellent job in speeding up the fall of unbelief. The book begins with a definition of Christian apologetics and Christian evidences. It then moves into areas of evidence and belief, inductive and deductive reasoning, and the strength of evidence. Various chapters show the fallacies of evolution and the evidences for belief in Genesis 1, the flood, faith in God, inspiration and revelation.

The author tackles such problems as the gap theory in Genesis 1, fossils, theistic evolutionists, carbon-14

dating, mutations, DNA, "ape-man", and other subjects that your teen-agers are confronted with almost daily. This would be an excellent book of evidences to read and have your students read.

*PREACHING TO PREACHERS ABOUT PREACHING* by John Waddey (Choate Publications: Winona, Mississippi), 1977, hardback, 165 pages, \$5.00.

It is not uncommon to hear of a young man starting out with goals of preaching for life, only to run into a problem that he didn't expect and then give up his noble work. It is the author's conviction that the prospective preacher needs a realistic view of what is before him as he prepares to do the work of an evangelist. Waddey looks at some wrong motives for preaching and then examines the proper motives.

Preaching is not a **job**, it is a **life**. One can get tired of his job and quit it, but he can't quit his life. Waddey has tried to prepare the young man that wants to enter into this life. The various chapters of this book were originally written as separate papers, each complete in itself. Choate Publications has done many young preachers, elders, deacons, and other saints a service in printing this volume. If all would read this book, it could bridge the gap that exists in some congregations.

One section alone, "Where Do Preachers Come From?", is worth the price of the book. The author shows that it is the church's responsibility to train the young men to develop into gospel preachers. "From its inception, the church had to produce public teachers and train them in order to fulfill its world-wide teaching mission. Long before the first Christian college was established for the purpose of educating and training young men to preach, the church had met this responsibility. . ."

If the congregation with which you worship has a library, be sure to add this book to the shelves.

*DISCOVERING JERUSALEM* by Nahman Avigad (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Tennessee), 1980, hardback, 270 pages, \$24.95.

No city is mentioned in the Bible more than Jerusalem. No book has been written to help us understand this city better than *Discovering Jerusalem*. The author is professor emeritus of archaeology at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He studied architecture in Brno, Czechoslovakia, and received his master's degree and doctorate in archaeology and Bible studies at Hebrew University.

Archaeological work in Jerusalem began with Charles Warren in 1867, and no other city has been excavated so many times. And because of the political and religious obstacles, no city has been so difficult to explore. When the Israelis returned to the Jewish Quarter in 1967, three archaeological institutions underwrote large-scale, systematic excavations at individual sites. Avigad was asked to direct these excavations. Work commenced in September 1969 and continued for ten years. This book is the first English-language account of the excavation and archaeological reconstruction of Jerusalem's Upper City.

This book, illustrated with more than 300 photos and drawings, allows you to look over the shoulder of Avigad and the excavation team. You almost feel like you are there witnessing the discovery of some of these great treasures of the city's past. Evidence is given for the "Burnt House," the first dwelling to show irrefutable and graphic effects of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

If you have ever been to Jerusalem, or are contemplating making a trip there soon, you will find this book fascinating.

*HOW TO WIN OVER EMOTIONS* by J.J. Turner (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 144 pages, \$3.95.

This is Turner's fifth book in a series on positive Christian living

books. He shows that man is an emotional being, but the wrong kind of emotions must be overcome by the person who is to be the very image of Christ. Not only does the author tell what some of the wrong emotions are, but he shows how to overcome them.

Fear, guilt, anger, an unforgiving spirit, stress, depression, and low self-esteem are destroying many wanting to be strong Christians. This little book will help answer many of your questions and point you to the right road to happiness and peace of mind. It would be excellent for a Bible class as well as personal study.

**GETTING MORE DONE IN LESS TIME & HAVING MORE FUN DOING IT!** by Mike Phillips (Bethany House: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1982, paperback, 160 pages, \$4.95.

Have you ever had one of those days that you just seemed to run out of time before you completed all of the events you wanted to accomplish for the day? If so, you need to read this challenging book. This is a practical book showing how to cope with your busy schedule.

Phillips gives you the three keys of discipline, efficiency, and decisiveness, the bases for coping with daily duties. He shows you how to supervise other people--your children, the members of the church, or your employees. He then gives principles for problem-solving.

The book is designed to help you get done what you absolutely have to get done so you can have more time to do what you really want to do. I think you'll enjoy reading it.

**FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH** by John Waddey (Choate Publications: Winona, Mississippi), 1980, hardback, 176 pages, \$6.00.

This book deals with material on moral issues. The first part of the book is primarily lessons that the author either preached or published in various religious journals. The second part consists of a sampling of letters to editors which have been published over the years.

The author discusses such subjects as women's liberation, homosexuality, pornography, divorce, unwed mothers, and a host of other moral issues. The divisions are very short and easy to read. The letters-to-the-editor section

is rather dated (covering such things as Anita Bryant, Rosalyn Carter, etc.), but it is worth having as examples on how to tactfully but forcefully deal with a moral issue. The author encourages Christians to get involved in writing letters to the editor.

**AN ESCHATOLOGY OF VICTORY** by J. Marcellus Kik (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing: Phillipsburg, New Jersey), 1971, paperback, 268 pages, \$5.95.

In response to a growing demand, P & R Publishing has reprinted what used to be two separate volumes. This book contains Kik's expositions on Matthew 24 and Revelation 20.

The author explains the differences between the premillennialist, the amillennialist, and the postmillennialist--three different views on a thousand-year reign and the Lord's kingdom. Kik does a scholarly job in bringing together into one volume the various views that have been taken.

Kik draws from numerous sources and his own studies to define such things as the coming in the clouds, the meaning of "generation", the end of the age, the first resurrection, the angel with the chain, etc.

The book would not be recommended reading for everyone, but it is an excellent study for one wanting to do some research and deeper studying.

**STUDIES IN I CORINTHIANS** by Dub McClish (Valid Publications: Denton, Texas), 1982, hardback, 478 pages, \$13.00.

The first annual Denton lectures were held in November 1982. This book is the product of that lectureship. The forty-one divisions of the lectureship and book serve as an exhaustive study of the first epistle of the apostle Paul to the Corinthian Church. The speakers and writers made excellent applications to current situations today.

The book is divided into expositions of selected texts, answering false doctrines relating to I Corinthians, difficult passages, and a special forum on marriage-divorce, remarriage. The detailed table of contents make it easy to locate whatever verse you are wanting to study. It is a book of excellent quality and will be valuable in future studies.

**STUDIES IN HEBREWS** by Dub McClish (Valid Publications: Denton, Texas), 1983, hardback, 512 pages, \$13.00.

This book was the product of the second annual Denton lectures. After reading their first lecture book I doubted that they could ever equal a book of such importance, but I believe they did. This book clearly shows the superiority and utter exclusiveness of the religion of Christ.

The book follows the basic format of the first one: expositions of selected texts, answering false doctrines relating to Hebrews, difficult passages, and then a forum. This volume's forum was on controversial issues. It covers such things as the authority of elders, how the worlds were framed, the kingdom, and the reign of Christ.

These first two books have been of such excellent quality, I am already looking forward to the third one. I would recommend these for anyone's library.

**PREPARING FOR ADOLESCENCE** by James Dobson (Vision House: Santa Ana, California), 1978, paperback, 192 pages, \$4.95.

I have been a fan of Dr. James Dobson for several years. Everything he writes gets right into the area where we live. He has a way of being tough, yet tender. His insight, concern, and obvious sincerity quickly win the friendship of the readers. Once starting his books, you don't want to put them down.

This book discusses the feelings of inferiority, handling group pressure, the dangers of drug abuse and alcoholism, physical changes, misconceptions about romantic love, and the list goes on.

This is a good study for a young person or the parent or teacher of an adolescent. With slight motivation, it would be an excellent study for a V.B.S. or Junior High Bible class.



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# DEPRESSED CHRISTIANS

by Jeffery Kingry

It is surprising how subtly error can be accepted and brethren never be aware of it. The age of "Expert Knowledge" has brought with it an attitude of mind that continually defers to the "specialist". While this might be a good idea if one wants to build a house, or a bridge, in areas of the spirit, however Christians should not defer to the "expert". Yet, defer exactly what brethren do when they are confronted with problems of spirit or behavior - they accept the world's terminology of "mental illness" and yield to the specialist. This article is not designed to combat the false doctrines of Transactional Analysis, Reality Therapy, Psychoanalysis, Rogerianism, Freudianism, Behaviorism, Sensitivity Training, Human Potential Workshops, Drug Therapy, Electroshock therapy, etc. ad nauseum. Suffice to say that any approach to human behavior, and the problems of the human spirit must be Biblical.

Error arises when brethren assume that the Bible offers no relevant help in dealing with "mental illness." There are fine Christians who have pursued professional mental health degrees in colleges because they do not believe the Bible offers the solutions to "mental illness" that they seek. In their effort to synthesize their faith in Christ with their unbelief in His power to aid man, they seek to express worldly concepts in a Biblical framework. The slanderer, false accuser, evil speaker, and the implacable become "paranoid" or "schizophrenic". The drunkard becomes the "alcoholic". The hateful, unforgiving, grudge-holding person becomes "sick" and therefore beyond the ability of the Christian to confront and change through the proper use of the power of God in the Gospel. To be sure, it takes spiritual wisdom to help. Advising a drunkard to obey the Gospel and be faithful till death offers little in the way of practical help for drunkenness. That is an answer for his soul's salvation, but his immediate need is to overcome his addiction to alcohol. The Christian must "study to answer."

Let me suggest that there are some

problems that confront Christians on a fairly regular basis that we must develop the Biblical tools to deal with. The institutional crisis of this generation brought out a wealth of Bible study and discussion which helped to focus the Christian's attention on what the Bible has to say about the church. The same might be said about other "issues" that have arisen from time to time. But, there is a far greater individual need among brethren for the Biblical answers to the results of depression, guilt, or anger than there ever was to some of these popular areas of examination.

## SPIRIT AND FLESH

First of all, let us consider our terms to assure we are all thinking about the same thing. Man has a dual nature, the spirit dwelling in the flesh. The flesh has a semi-autonomous characteristic that makes it sometimes difficult to control. The flush of anger, the cold grip of dread, the passion of lust, the ache of rejection are all the products of the flesh. Over these feelings we have little control. Paul wrote, "For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh and these two are contrary one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17). This battle between the desires, emotions, and physiological promptings of the body often cause conflict and testing (temptation) for the Christian. Paul noted that intellectually, spiritually, as a matter of will (or what he wanted to do) he had nothing but delight in God's will. But, he also saw in his life the practical problem of the body's response to any situation. Too often it brought Paul into bondage to the law of sin in his body. He could inevitably trust his body to want the wrong thing. If he wanted to study, his body was tired, his eyes red and heavy, his stomach complaining. If he wanted to return good for evil, the blood thumping in his head, the dryness of his throat, the physical upheaval of the body to injustice or threat made it difficult to return a soft answer or a wise one. "O, wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of

this death? . . . So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:13-25).

This conflict is a reality. We should not deny it. Men who say that they are unmoved by the criticism or judgment of others are either hardened or insensitive, or they are deceiving themselves. Brethren who say that they feel no temptation to wrath, pre-eminence, sexual impurity, envy, hatred, or depression are either unaware that such sins are the fruit of the desire of the body, or else they cannot bear to see themselves as they are. Recognizing that all men are "drawn away by the desires of the flesh" should put us on guard against our own reaction to how we "feel" about anything.

The solution for the Christian to temptation is to determine to "walk no more after the flesh" (Rom. 8:4). It is put several ways in the scripture: "For we walk by faith and not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7); "Walk in the spirit and ye shall not fulfill the desires of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16); "Walk no longer as the Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, with darkened understanding, alienated from the life of God through their ignorance" (Eph. 4:17); "If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth" (1 Jno. 1:7); "For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sin. . . did work in our body to bring forth fruit unto death" (Rom. 7:5); "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that after the spirit do mind the things of the spirit. For to be minding the things of the flesh is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the minding of the flesh is enmity against God: For the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. 8:5ff). There are many other passages along this same line, but they all give different views of the same thing. Man has a problem. His spirit, which is like God (Jas. 3:9; 2 Cor. 4:7, 16; 5:1ff), is enclosed in the body, which is like the world (2 Pet. 1:4; 1 Jno. 2:16ff; Tit. 2:12).

## FEELINGS AND WILL

Therefore it is important that the Christian realize that there is a distinct division between how he feels about any situation and what he wills concerning it. There is confusion in the world about feelings. We hear people use the expression "feel" to mean "will", i.e. "I feel that this is right. I feel that this is wrong. I'm sorry, I don't feel the same way you do about it. How do you feel about this?" etc. The body feels. The spirit wills. One of the greatest examples of this was the final temptation of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. "He took Peter, James, and John with him. Distress and anguish came over him; And he said unto them, 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye hear and keep watch'" (Mk. 14:32ff). Jesus experienced the dread and sorrow of His condition. He was rejected by even His closest friends. He saw and dreaded the injustice, contempt, rejection, and pain of His coming "trial" and execution. He knew He was to "suffer many things at the hands of the chief priests and gentiles". Jesus went into the garden and fell down in prayer that, if it were possible, He might not have to endure His time of suffering. And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me:". Jesus did not want to die. His body cried out in fear and anguish. But the will of Jesus remained in control. "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt". The pain caused by the conflict in what the Father wanted, and what the man Jesus wanted was reconciled when Jesus submitted completely to his Father. His body reacted violently to his will, "And being in agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke 22:44).

Since Jesus is the "author and finisher of our faith" and His example of enduring the shame and pain of the cross brought Him eternal glory again with His Father, we should consider His example. Sometimes when we are wronged, rejected, or feel angry at our failings we need to consider Jesus lest we grow depressed. We have not yet shed our blood in our efforts to find a life of quality in the Lord. Sure, we have disappointments. People often let us down. People get the wrong idea, make harsh judgments, and reject us as

unworthy. So what is new? We need to call to mind our Father's words, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when you are rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loves, he chastens, and he scourges every son he receives" (Heb. 12:1ff). We have all had fathers who spanked us rightly and wrongly sometimes, yet we give them honor. Why should we not be in subjection to the Father of the spirits, and find life in Him? God's chastening is to make us "partakers of his holiness". While it is true that the pain of doing what is right in the face of all emotion is not a pleasant thing, nevertheless, after we practice doing it, the body ultimately comes around, and it produces the fruit of God's peace in our lives (12:11ff).

## HOW TO DEAL WITH DEPRESSION

The Bible does not use the modern word "depression", but it uses the concept. The physiological and emotional reaction of the body to "depression" are many. They can be relatively minor like the "weeps" (feeling like one might cry at any time for no apparent reason), muscle aches, lack of energy or interest in doing anything, loss of appetite, and digestive disorders. Over a long period of time these physiological reactions will become more severe - elevated blood pressure, ulcers, colitis, asthma, kidney and urinary tract infections. It is possible to die of physiological complications of depression. Heart trouble brought on by prolonged depression is the most commonly known. Dr. S.I. McMillan in his book **None Of These Diseases** lists fifty-one diseases of the body induced by the conflict between the spirit and the flesh.

David described the result of concealing his sin and the depression that it brought him. "Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: As a great burden, they are too heavy for me" (Psa. 38:1-4). David felt like he was drowning. Helplessness and hopelessness is one of the emotional reactions of depression. He felt like he was being crushed and pressed down by a burden he could not bear. "I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all day long" (38:6).

Joylessness, gloom, sadness, melancholy, cynicism - are all terms used to describe the feeling David describes here. The trouble, the mourning he felt affects his posture. It can also affect ones face, "The show of their face doth witness against them; and they declare their sin, they hide it not. . . they have rewarded evil unto themselves" (Isa. 3:9). David related that he suffered from a common disorder of depression, urinary tract infection: "My loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh" (38:7). He had no energy, he felt "feeble and sore broken". He was worn out and totally crushed. Because of the trouble he felt he groaned with the pain (38:8). His heart pounded like a boy giving his first sermon, his strength deserted him, his eyes lost their sparkle, nothing pleased him or brought any brightness into his life (38:10).

He felt loss of affection. It is almost inevitable that depressed people tend to feel alienated and separate from others. "My lovers and my friends stand aloof from my sore, and my kinsmen stand afar off" (38:11). It begins with a loss of affection and warmth for ones spouse and children and continues to include self-loathing. One ceases to care about oneself, loved ones, or anyone. The depressed sometimes place the blame on others.

David could not deal with his hostility and irritability towards those he felt rejected him or rejected what was right (38:12,16,19,20). Instead of dealing with his anger in a godly way, "But I was as a deaf man, heard not; and I was as a dumb man that openeth not his mouth. Thus I was as a man that heareth not, and in whose mouth are no reproofs" (38:13,14).

David suffered from insomnia, awakening after fitful sleep to red and weary eyes. "I am weary with my groaning; all the night I make my bed to swim, I water my couch with tears. Mine eye is consumed because of grief" (Psa. 6:6,7). The first red tag to look for in insomnia is the presence of depression.

What is the solution? Let us first look at what David did. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord does not charge with iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept my silence, my bones waxed old through

*my roaring all day long. . . I acknowledged my son unto thee, an mine iniquities I have not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. . . For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance” (Psa. 32:1-3,5-7).*

*“Lord, all my longing is known to you, my groaning is heard by you. . . for in thee, O lord, do I hope: thou wilt answer, O Lord, my God. . . For I will declare mine iniquity: I will be sorry for my sins. . . and now Lord, what wait I for? My hope is in thee!” (Psa. 38:9,15,18; 39:7).*

David realized he felt badly about something. His feeling was related and intimately connected with something he did or believed or had experienced. Feeling follows action, not the other way around. The original initiator is the will of man. One feels confident only when one is prepared by behavior. If one fails to prepare, then one feels insecure.

Cain's offering to God was rejected, while Able was accepted. The reaction of Cain to the rejection was first anger, then a depressed state of mind that led him to murder his brother - an object of resentment and envy. God saw the face of Cain, and that he was moping around. He told Cain, *“Why are you angry? Why is there that fallen look on your face? If you do the right thing, will you not be accepted? And when you do what is not right, then sin lies at your door. It waits to rule over you, but you must overcome it” (Gen. 4:6ff).*

The cause and cure of depression are found here. Why suffer pain for doing what is wrong? Do what is right, and you will overcome the temptation of the flesh which waits like a crouching beast outside your door. Overcome the beast by doing what is right. The feeling follows the action.

The cause of some of David's depression was the action of others. *“I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle while the wicked is before me. I was dumb with silence, I held my peace, even from good; and my sorrow was stirred. My heart was*

*hot within me, and while I was musing the fire burned. . .” (39:1-3). “For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs on my head: therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased O Lord, to deliver me. . . let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek my soul to destroy it . . . who wish me evil. . . let them be desolate for a reward of their shame who say to me, Aha! Aha!” (Psa. 40:12-15).*

Whenever we feel insult, injury, rejection, or failure our body reacts to it. If we indulge ourselves in being angry about it, feel sorry for ourselves, and indulge these fleshly passions, then the inevitable result will be the depression that we have been discussing. In all of these passages we find that the cause of depression was sinful reaction to pain of one kind or another. Let's be practical here. It is impossible to control either our circumstances or the life of others. We can plan, persuade, rage, take precautions and still things don't turn out the way we wish. We are not judged by other's actions, but by our own. We cannot control others or even our circumstances. But, we can control **how we react to them.** The Bible addressed the Christian at the point of his reaction to the world around him. How does a Christian react to the hurt given him by others?

The Sermon On The Mount is a statement of the Christ-like life. Study it. How do people like to be thought of? Everyone wants to be esteemed and valued. They want to have a warm, good view of themselves. Yet, Jesus said, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, they that mourn, the meek, those persecuted, the reviled, those falsely charged with evil” (5:3-11).* The Christian is not just to repudiate murder, but hatred, contempt and wrath as well (5:21-26). The Christian is not only put off sexual impurity, but a “dirty mind” as well (5:27-33). We are to give more than is our share. We are to endure more than we should have to be expected to. If someone hits our face, we would have a right to return a “slap for a slap”. But Jesus said “give him the other cheek too.” If someone imposed on us to take them a mile, we might take them the mile and no more. Jesus said, “take him two miles.” Our money is our own to use as

we see fit. Yet Jesus says “the one who asks for help or to borrow, turn not away.” We are to bless those who curse us, do good to those who hurt us, pray for those who use us and our “good nature” for selfish ends, and give us a hard time after we do them good (5:33-48). There is another lesson in these verses.

### MODERN EXAMPLES

But, what does this mean to the Christian who is depressed? It means that their feeling must reflect a bad choice somewhere. Make a list of the things that make you depressed. Consider some of these:

- \*Change in finances
- \*Personal injury or loss
- \*Marriage
- \*Pregnancy
- \*Business readjustment
- \*Change in work
- \*In-law trouble
- \*Wife's working
- \*Overweight/underweight
- \*Vacation
- \*Doctrinal differences in the church
- \*Backed up work at home
- \*Disappointment
- \*Arguments with spouse, boss, or brethren
- \*Retirement
- \*Sexual problems with spouse
- \*Credit problems
- \*Personal achievement
- \*Change in living conditions
- \*Christmas
- \*Changing a doctrinal position
- \*Disheveled/dirty house
- \*Unfulfilled expectations
- \*Loss of a loved one
- \*Loss of job
- \*Change in family health
- \*New family member
- \*Loss of a close friend
- \*Departure of son/daughter from home
- \*Change in work, schools, church, sleep, habits, etc.
- \*Violations of the law
- \*Criticism by brethren
- \*Personal failure/private sin

Any one of these, or a combination of these, if the Christian makes the wrong reaction to them can bring about depression. Whenever we react selfishly rather than in a godly manner to injury, rejection, or insult we will “feel badly”.

When the Christian has identified what it is that they feel badly about,

then they need to follow the instructions of Paul in Ephesians 4.

### PUT OFF AND PUT ON

One of the problems brethren have long had with human behavior is a limited view of what God requires. Pore through some sermon outline books, or the index of old issues of some journal published by brethren. Inevitably, the bulk of material written or preached deals with someone's failing in one area or another. They deal with what we are to "put off" in this world. There will be articles on immodest dress, smoking, drunkenness, gossip, institutionalism, false doctrine, etc. But, where are the articles on modesty, humility, simplicity, self-control, virtue, sacrifice, duty, honor, etc. We know the wrong way to do many things. What is the noble way to do the opposite? Paul points out that turning away from sin is ultimately not enough. To fulfill repentance one must "bring forth fruits appropriate to repentance."

*"The truth in Jesus is that you are to put off the old man in your manner of living, the old man that is rotted through according to deceitful desires; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (4:21-24).*

It is not enough merely to pray God for forgiveness, but to structure our lives for practicing righteousness. *"No disciple seems to be pleasant at the moment, but rather painful: nevertheless afterward, it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed"* (Heb. 12:11-13). The Hebrew writer compares the process of making new habits to a lame man walking down the road. His turned ankle, or weak knee will not take the cross-country jaunt, or the rocky field. He must choose a straight and clear road that he might walk and give his limbs time to heal. The Christian trying to change a way of habit must set up some structure in their life to make it easier for themselves to recover their strength.

Paul tells us, in part, how to do

this. By practicing the opposite of the sin that has hurt us, we can overcome its effects. For instance, what makes a man a thief? Not just that he takes something that isn't his, but it is a reflection of selfishness that would benefit self at the expense of someone else. The thief would take to enrich himself by impoverishing the one who labored honestly for it. Look at what Paul writes.

*"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands that thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (4:28).*

It was not enough to quit stealing. The Christian must work at an honest job--for what? To take care of his own needs? Even the gentile and Publican do the same. No, "to give to him that needeth." The thief ceases to be a thief as he moves from selfishness to sacrifice, from victimizing others to helping others, from taking something to which he has no right to giving to those who have no right. No benevolence is "owed", it is always a gift. Love is by grace, not by law.

*"Put away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another" (4:25).*

It is not enough merely to quit telling lies. The Christian must look for opportunities to tell truth - to communicate true things. Truth is not a passive thing, it is an active thing ("Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"). The reason one lies is to preserve dignity, image, value, or gain by representing a different reality to others. It prolongs and validates sin. The man who schemes and conspires to hurt another, and then smiles and denies any animosity is keeping any reconciliation from ever being accomplished. The man who says, "I have no problems" when his life is filled with them can never find solutions. Why tell the truth? "Because we belong to one another." Denying a wound will not make it go away.

*"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (4:29).*

Corrupt communication is not just things like anger, evil-speaking, malicious words. Those are dealt with in verses 31,32. Corrupt communication is not just filthy talk, inappro-

priate jesting, or ignorant argumentation. Those are dealt with in 5:4. Corrupt means "rotten, decayed, that which is passing away." Communication comes from the Greek word *logos* or "word", the very expression used to describe what Jesus represented when He came into the world (Jno. 1:1ff). Paul's words here mean, do not ever open your mouth to speak in such a way that your words tear down and destroy what Jesus came to this earth to build up. We can interpret the passage better by seeing what is to replace such speech: "good to the use of building others up, which serve good favor (sometimes undeserved) to those who hear". Such a command! Have you ever watched young adults get together socially and spend the evening subtly, wittily, and humorously tear different brethren limb from limb? To preserve their image of themselves as Godly people brethren do not feel that they can come right out and make such harsh, carnal, and presumptuous judgments. So behind the guise of wit or humor they murder their brother. *"A man that tells falsehood against his neighbor is a maul, and a sword, and a sharp arrow. As a mad man who throws hot burning coals, arrows, and death, so is the man that deceives his neighbor, and says, I was just joking"* (Prov. 25:18;26:18,19). Yet, consider the brother who always weighs his words, and finds good to say about his enemies, and praises the true strengths of his friends? How do you feel towards the brother that leaves you feeling like you have learned something valuable? We value the friendship of the man or woman who speaks in such a way as to garner our trust, affection, and loyalty.

There are many "Put off-Put on" passages in the Bible. There is an affirmative, active good that we can do for every sin we may find in our lives. The process to overcome our feeling of being "pressed down" is to repent of sin, ask God's forgiveness, and "put on" a new way of living to take the place of the old. We must make practical plans to make it easier on ourselves to do the right thing, lest we fall back into the old way of reacting improperly. And we must pray for God's help and protection while we grow stronger in virtue day by day.

# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

"I caught my big brother smoking at a basketball game. What should I do?"



**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13

After the game, at home, by ourselves I'll tell him that I saw him smoking and I will ask him if he wants to talk about his problem. If he does, I'll ask him why he smokes. He might say, "Because all my friends do it and they want me to do it also." I would say, "Just because your friends do it **does not** mean you have to smoke also. If they make you do anything you don't want to do, I would say they are not very good friends!" The second answer he might give me is, "Because, I feel **big** when I smoke." I say, "Your mind might think that you are **big** when you smoke, but other people will think that you are **small** or **little**." The third answer, "Because it makes me feel good." I would say, "No it doesn't! It poisons you! It makes your lungs dirty, it makes your mind go crazy, it also makes your body functions not be able to work like they ought to work. It can also turn into a habit that you cannot control. You need to stop right now!" He would probably say, "What will I say to my friends; what will they say to me?" I would say, "You can say to them that they are not the kind of friends to be around with." They might say, "Well, if you don't want to *be with it* we don't want to be with you." Your answer to this can be that smoking is not the way to *be with it*. You can have cancer and other diseases by *being with it*. "I can do without you!" Then walk away from them and don't go back to them unless they **change!**

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 16



I would confront my brother and make sure that I have all the facts right. Then I would tell him that he is being a bad example for his friends. Also that he could be ruining his health.

Then if he didn't stop I think I would have to tell my parents and have them deal with it.

I would also see if there was something bothering him which might make him start smoking.

**Gretchen Manco**  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 14



If I caught my brother smoking at a game, I would immediately, **after** it was over, go to him and find out why he had been smoking and ask if there could be anything that I could do. I would not tell our parents at first. That's his decision and should take responsibility in telling them. If he neglects this responsibility I would have to tell them. Smoking cigarettes is not just another bad habit. It can lead to many things both physical and spiritual. For one; it can cause cancer and other disorders in the body; but most of all you are defiling the temple of the Lord. It is said that the body is the house of the Lord. It houses the soul. To me, to see my brother smoking, would not only mean he was hurting his physical self; he was hurting his spiritual trust in God. The drugs in cigarettes are "downers". They are said to calm you down and

help relieve "stress". This is **not** true. It may calm you down, but the pressure is still there. We need to turn to the Lord if we have troubles, not to "calmers" or other "outlets". I would pray for my brother that he might see what he is doing and that he may quit and never do it again.

**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 16



If I were to find my big brother smoking at a basketball game, the first thing I would do is to confront him at some time and tell him that I know he has been smoking. I would ask him why he started and if he thought it was O.K. Then I would try and get him to quit and leave it at that.

However, if I ever saw him smoking again I would probably go to my parents and tell them of the situation. I think this would be the best way to do because not only do I think that smoking is a sin but it has also been proven hazardous to one's health. I don't think anyone should smoke for any reasons. Therefore, I would take all measures possible to try and persuade my brother to quit.

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



If I caught my big brother smoking at a game, I would ask him, first, why he was smoking. I would ask him if it was because of his friends smoking and offering him cigarettes. If that wasn't why, I would ask if he liked cigarettes and was really smoking them for enjoyment. If he said it was because of pressure from friends I would show him that it didn't matter what they say and that he should try to not be of the world. I would then ask if he knew how

harmful cigarettes are. If he said he liked them I would, again, try to convince him how harmful they are.

I would show him that bringing harm on the body is sin. We are to keep

our body healthy because it is the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Then I would ask him if he liked cigarettes enough to lose his soul rather than quit smoking.

I would tell him that he should set a good example. It sets a bad example to me and other people who see him smoking. I hope then he would realize that smoking isn't worth it.

# OLD TIME RELIGION IN A MODERN WORLD

by Guthrie Dean

**B**y "old time religion" I mean the old gospel, the old salvation, and the old way of life, as described in the New Testament. Christ is still the answer for all our needs in this modern world. (Mat. 11:28-30; John 10:1, 14:6).

We must realize that we are living in changing times; and we must stay abreast of the times, or we have no hope of redeeming the new generation. Simply longing for "the good old days" is but an imaginary trip into fantasy-land. Many years ago king Solomon wrote as follows, "Say not thou, *What is the cause that the former days were better than these*" (Eccl. 7:10). What we need to do is to make THESE DAYS as good as possible; and stop living in the past. We are living in a "turned on", "now", "laid back", "do your own thing" generation. Christians are sickened by the rise in divorce, crime, and unbelief. But is going to take more than wishful thinking, and tip-toeing through the tulips, to reach this generation. May I be so presumptuous as to offer some ideas which just might help us bring back the old time religion in a modern world?

**1. Let your light shine** (Matt. 5:16). The darker the night the brighter the light.

**2. Be optimistic.** Say along with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me" (Phil. 4:13); "If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31); and "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"

(1 Cor. 10:13).

**3. Prepare yourself for the battle of truth.** "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Eph. 6:13).

**4. Avoid unreasonable and harsh statements and unfair criticism.** This is especially discouraging to young people. We must meet them on their level and seek to bring them up to the Rock of Ages, where they can find real peace of mind and the answers to their every day needs. One preacher recently wrote in his bulletin that those who smoke smell like billy-goats; and he left the impression that he did not want to be around them. Perhaps he didn't mean to leave such an impression, but the conclusion was, he was marking off the 50,000,000 Americans who do smoke. Another preacher wrote to the effect that if he caught anyone trying to get into the services where he preached, wearing T-shirts that he didn't approve of, or women wearing pant-suits, or girls wearing jeans, or boys with long hair; he would personally escort them out of the meeting house. Brethren, we can't convert people to Christ with that sort of attitude. Jesus said, "be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16). Personal workers should also learn not to allow their prejudices to prevent them from reaching the lost, by driving away the very people they are trying to save. We must avoid selfrighteousness, and the holier-than-thou approach. Jesus allowed the thieves, liars, fornicators, and prostitutes to sit in His audiences. Are we better than our own Lord?

**5. Accentuate the positive.** A constant bombardment of rebuke and negativism can kill the spirit of an entire congregation. And we wonder why so many churches today are full of bickering, fault-finding, back-biting, and criticism. Elders, preachers, teachers, and parents can help set the tenor of this generation; by presenting the good news of salvation, and by accentuating the positive. After all, people get enough bad news from the newspapers, radio, television, and the wicked world around them. The church should be a place of refuge, a city of hope, and a temple of the Holy Spirit. Convince the hearers that the "old time religion" of the New Testament is exactly what they need in these modern times. Convict them of sin; and then point them to Jesus. He can make for them a better life here, and an eternal home in the heavens.

**6. Do something about it.** Don't offer a lot of "do's" and "don't's"; and sit back and say that you have done your duty; "now the blood is on the other fellow's head." Do something about the youth, the struggling newlyweds, the poor, the sick, the bereaved, the widows, the orphans, and the faltering brother. One more word of criticism may push such a one over the brink into a state of hopeless despair. Go, visit, phone, write, talk with, encourage, set a good example; and above all, treat others as your equals. Anyone can point out the evils about us; but only the brave-hearted will do anything about it. Do something!

# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett



## “FOREBEARING” or “PATIENT”

**Greek Word:** *anexikakos*

**Meaning:** Bearing evil without resentment, patient

This word occurs only in 2 Tim. 2:24 in the New Testament, but is freighted with meaning from pre-Christian times. In secular Greek it was a medical term. Nigel Turner writes, “A fragment of an extant treatise on therapeutics explains that the constitution of a patient must be considered, whether he is *en tois loipois anexikakos* (‘generally of a good endurance’), whether able to bear thirst, etc.” (Christian Words, Nelson, p.321).

In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament apocryphal book, Wisdom of Solomon, evil men are said to torment the righteous man: “With outrage and torture let us put him to the test, that we may learn his gentleness, and prove his *patience* under wrong” (Wis. Sol 2:19).

From these two non-Biblical examples it can be seen that this word means exactly what its roots imply: *anexi*, to bear; and *kakos*, evil.

In 2 Tim. 2:24 Paul is trying to help Timothy see that one who tries to teach another the way of the Lord must not only be gentle and apt to teach but able and willing to stand up under abuse and outrage. There is great pleasure in teaching those who wish to be taught. It is another matter to approach those who are hateful, abusive and cruel. But the “servant of the Lord” must be willing to tackle both.

## “BE SOBER, BE OF SOUND MIND”

**Greek Word:** *sophronein*

**Meaning:** Be of sound mind, be in ones right mind

This word is particularly interesting because of its relevance to the plight of modern man. Soaring suicide rates, rampant alcoholism and drug addiction, and hospital mental-wards filled beyond capacity testify that modern Americans are finding it

difficult to be of sound mind. And yet in 1 Pet. 4:7 the apostle urges Christians to be “sober” (K.J.V.) or “of sound mind” (A.S.V.).

This verb is a compound of two words. The first is the verb *sozein*, to save or keep safe, and is the word the Philippian Jailor used in Acts 16:30 when he asked Paul and Silas, “What must I do to be saved?” The second is the word *phronesis* which means, the mind. And so our word means, literally, to preserve ones mind. We use modern equivalents every day, positive and negative: “I am trying to keep my sanity”; “He’s lost his marbles”; “She’s gone bananas”; “I’m going out of my gourd.”

The idea of the word is that the practice of *sophronein* is the practice of sane, balanced living. The individual who lives this way is not blown about by every wind of rumor, nor panicked by the falling of every shadow. He is deliberately keeping hold of himself and living sensibly, even when surrounded by madness and chaos in the lives of others.

*Sophronein* is used six times in the Greek New Testament. In Mark 5:15 and Luke 8:35 it is used of the Gadarene demoniac, “in his right mind,” after Jesus had cast the demons out of him. In 2 Cor. 5:13 Paul indicates that whether his conduct appears to be that of a man beside himself or “sober” it is for the good of his brethren.

In Romans 12:3 Paul uses this word to address a problem that very talented Christians may have to deal with. The individual who is blessed with great ability may be tempted to think of himself more highly than he ought to think. Paul exhorts him to “think soberly” about himself instead. The conceited preacher, elder, Bible teacher, singer or songleader is not “preserving his sanity” if he takes compliments too much to heart.

In Titus 2:6 Paul uses *sophronein* to exhort younger men to be what he has already said aged men should be in Titus 2:2. In verse 2 Paul uses the

word *nephalios* (from *nephein*, to be temperate in the use of wine, be sober, well-balanced, self controlled). In verse 6 he uses *sophronein* synonymously with *nephalios* implying that the conduct of a Christian ought to be the opposite of the out-of-control person who is high on alcohol or tripping out on drugs.

The text with which we began is 1 Pet. 4:7. Here Peter commands Christians to be of sound mind, to preserve their sanity, so they may pray. “Be sober. . .unto prayer” (A.S.V.).

This must surely be a challenge to the Christian who lives in a nerve-racking environment. Screaming children, an unstable work situation, tensions at school, any number of things can so upset the child of God that he is tempted to say, “How can I pray when I am going crazy?” Peter’s answer is, “Get hold of yourself (be sober); settle down enough to start praying.” And Paul tells us that this kind of effort and prayer will lead to even deeper soundness of mind, a soundness of mind characterized by the “peace of God that passes all understanding” (Phil. 4:4-7).

Let me suggest, from a practical standpoint, that our bodies often follow our minds into a new way of thinking and doing. If we feel we simply cannot calm down enough to pray (i.e. “be sober. . .unto prayer”) there are three things we might do to push our minds into sufficient quietness to get started: 1) Start reading a favorite passage of scripture **aloud**; 2) Recite passages of scripture from memory **aloud** (Philippians is excellent for reading or reciting in this connection); 3) Start counting your blessings **aloud**. Try to think about what is being read or recited. Soon, you will be able to pray; you will be “sober, sane, stable. . .unto prayer.”



# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## JAMES O'KELLY

After Jesus spoke the parable of the sower in Luke 8, he explained to his disciples that the *"seed of the kingdom is the word of God"* (Luke 8:11). This seed, like a grain of corn, will always produce after its kind. As long as men sow the pure word of God, Christians will be produced. Unfortunately, during the dark ages, precious little of the seed was sown. For centuries the church was in apostasy. In his book, *Attitudes and Consequences*, brother Homer Haily stated:

**"Not until we reach the nineteenth century do we find sweeping movements and efforts to restore the original plan and purpose of God in all its points. There had been many attempts at 'reformation,' noble and far reaching in their influence, but there had been only one concerted effort at 'restoration.' Christianity had and has suffered more from human leadership and human philosophy than**

**from any other curse. . .the attitude of those first century Christians was that God had acted for their salvation and through Christ had spoken the final word for their redemption. . .but as time passed and innovations crept in, as untaught individuals became nominal Christians, changes began to be made. The pattern was altered, attitudes were no longer as of former years, until gradually the pristine simplicity was marred and covered, until the original simple plan of God could no longer be recognized."**

In this article we would like to examine one man's attempt to "restore" the New Testament church during the late 1700's. The man under consideration is James O'Kelly, a Methodist circuit rider from North Carolina.

The Methodist church had been operating as a sect within the Anglican church since the early 1760's. John

Wesley sent Francis Ashbury to America in 1771 as his "ambassador." Ashbury's rule of "pay, pray, obey" did not set well with most people.

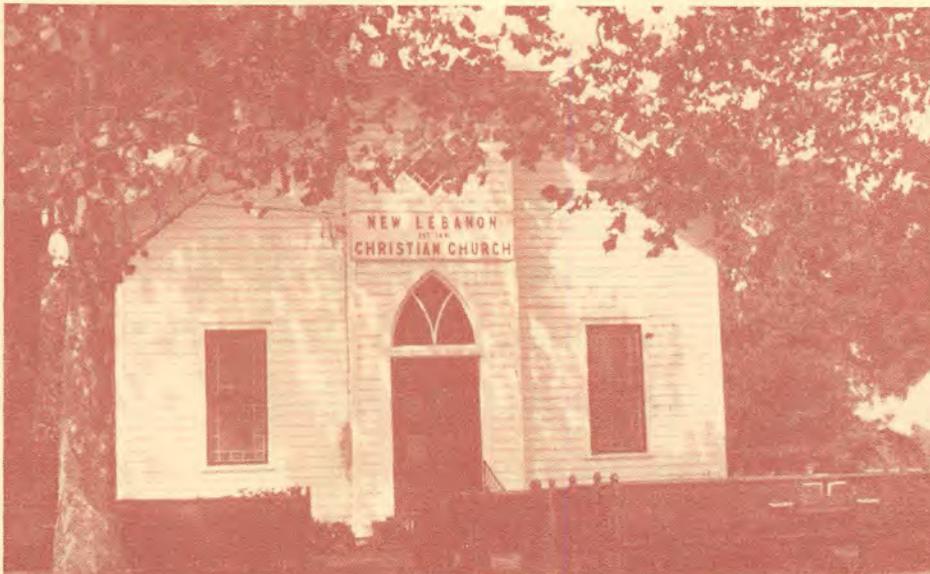
After the American Revolution, Wesley urged his followers in America to withdraw from the Anglican Church and form a new denomination. As the result of the "Christmas Conference" in 1784, the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. Asbury was appointed as superintendent. According to historian Earl West, there was too much English in the system and too much Irish in the man for O'Kelly to accept Asbury.

O'Kelly accepted the role of "Presiding elder" for southern Virginia. He served in this capacity until 1792 when he grew tired of the Episcopal form of government practiced in the Methodist church. The next year O'Kelly and his followers circulated a petition to make changes in Methodist church government. A church conference voted to support Asbury. O'Kelly then announced his plan to leave the Methodist church. On December 25, 1793, the "Republican Methodist Church" was formed.

Within a few months the new church had over 1,000 members. In 1794, at a meeting held in the Old Lebanon Church near Surrey, Virginia, they dropped the name "Republican Methodist" and ordained elders in every congregation. At the suggestion of Rice Haggard, the name "Christian" was adopted. This divinely given name was used in Acts 11:26, where the *"disciples were called christians first at Antioch."* Haggard was later associated with Barton W. Stone and the restoration movement in Kentucky.

The frame meetinghouse at Old Lebanon was destroyed in 1890. Two

*New meetinghouse used by the Lebanon Christian Church.*

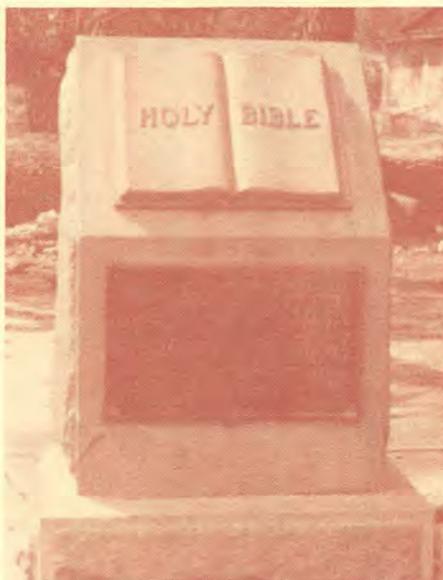


historical markers stand in place of the old building. The new meetinghouse is at Elberon, Virginia.

**IN PERSPECTIVE:** This early church had many problems. O'Kelly believed that sprinkling was as good as immersion till he died in 1826. The important thing for us to notice is the direction he was heading. He desired the autonomy of every congregation and stressed the sufficiency of the name "christian." On his tombstone are carved the words "Southern Champion of Religious Freedom."

In future articles we will look at other independent efforts to restore the New Testament church.

2612 South Villa Dr.  
Evansville, IN 47714



*The photo to the left shows the marker set up by the Southern Christian Convention in 1922. See the inscription below.*



*Inscription on monument.*

# ISAAC NEVER PLAYED PAC-MAN

*by Dalton Key*

**W**e still sing it but I wonder if we really mean it. "**O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made.**" I doubt the phrase "awesome wonder" describes our attitude toward God as well as it once did. We no longer "**stand amazed in the presence of Jesus the Nazarene.**" In fact, nothing really amazes us anymore. Godly fear has given way to a matter-of-fact, ho-hum complacency. Vance Havner speaks of "losing the wonder," and we wonder if he may not be right in leveling such an accusation. Are we losing the wonder?

This we do know. Our awe for God is currently being challenged by the slick, synthetic, not so cheap imitations of divine power displayed on the movie, television, and video screens throughout the world. The Genesis account of creation once amazed us and filled us with wonder. The mighty miracles of the Bible once impressed us and flooded our hearts with faith in the all-powerful God. But now our children (and many of us older children) can gaze upon the screen and witness entire galaxies being pulverized by laser beams and nuclear blasts! Divine fact is given a backseat to

human fiction. The real, actual miracles of scripture, without the promotional push of Madison Avenue's think-tank, are made to appear lifeless against the backdrop of the media's imaginary, mock miracles.

Not long ago, my son Benjamin, now a full five and one-half years of age, asked me, "Daddy, can God do everything Superman can do?" I doubt that Abraham ever fielded such a question from Isaac. Poor Isaac was forced to grow into manhood without the many technological advances (?) of our day. Isaac never played Pac-man. He never parted with countless quarters within the local video arcade in Beersheba. Poor Isaac never saw Star Wars. He never thrilled at the exploits of Saturday morning Super Heroes. Poor, deprived, underprivileged Isaac?

Underprivileged? Don't you believe it. Isaac received a spiritual heritage which many of our children are being denied. Isaac didn't know much about video, but he did know about God. He was reared to stand in fearful awe of the might and majesty of the great I AM. He could distinguish between the real and the imaginary, something which many of our more "enlightened" youngsters have difficulty doing.

This brings to mind a contest of sorts conducted in an Egyptian court back in the days of Moses. We recall the sorcerers of Pharaoh feebly attempting to imitate God's miracle of transforming a rod into a serpent. By some means the magicians were able to mimic the marvel. No doubt the Egyptians, for a moment at least, looked upon the powers of Pharaoh as mightier than the power of God. Yet they were soon to receive a liberal education. They looked in amazement as Aaron's rod swallowed up the rods of the sorcerers, thus proving once and for all times who possesses the greater power. God's might has always had the power to swallow up the pseudo, synthetic serpents of men. Pharaoh's henchmen may have mimicked God's miracle, but they by no means matched it!

We are living in the best times and the worst times. Our modern world is both a challenge and a threat. Let's not be duped into confusing fact for fiction and fiction for fact. And above all, let's not allow Hollywood's "hype" to take from us our godly, God-directed awe. Men may mimic God, but they will never match him.

I don't know about Coke, but I do know this about God: He is The REAL thing." May we never forget it.

P.O. Box 563  
Liberal, KS 67901

# The Poet's Page

## SAFE IN HIS CARE

Help me, Lord, to keep on trusting,  
Even when the way is bleak,  
And my throat is sore from crying,  
And my voice can hardly speak.

Take away my pain and sorrow,  
Let me feel Thy presence near;  
Help me walk in sweet progression  
Attend by Thy force: No fear  
Of What is come before me,  
No looking back at things that were--  
Grant me grace to live each moment  
With the things that be, assured.

If my human strength would falter  
Under barbs and heavy load,  
Come Thou here and ease my burden  
Lest I totter down the road.  
If my spirit wanes in trying,  
And faint tenors take command,  
Fire me, Lord, to keep on walking:  
Guided, strengthened, by Thy hand.

--Caroline White  
Bowling Green, KY

## THE FELLOW I CALL ME

I wish that I could be as patient  
With the other folks I see  
As I am when I am dealing  
With the fellow I call me.  
I like to think I show forbearance  
In 'most everything I do,  
But I'll admit it's not so easy  
When I have to deal with you.

I always try to be impartial  
In my contacts every day;  
But, I allow "me" certain freedoms  
I'd condemn in "them" and "they".  
I have certain "little failings",  
Yet, I'll admit that it is true  
I would call then "horrid conduct"  
If I spotted them in you.

There's no doubt our major problems  
Are the weaknesses of man.  
I can spot 'em in the lowest  
Or the highest in the land.  
But if I really want to cure 'em,  
It is pretty plain to see,  
That I'll have to start by working  
On the fellow I call me.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## THE THORN IN THE FLESH

Although he said not what it was,  
Paul knew from whence it came.  
"A thorn in the flesh, that I have,  
"And Satan is to blame."

Concerning this, Paul said he prayed,  
Not one time, nay, but three.  
But then the Lord replying said,  
"My grace sufficeth thee."

Now if that thorn were yours, my friend,  
Do you think you'd be mad?  
And then say, "The Lord's to blame,"  
For all the pain you had?

If you think that is what Paul did,  
Then, neighbor, you are wrong.  
For his reply was simply this:  
"In weakness I am strong."

--Steve Cawthon  
Fayetteville, AR

## THE PATHWAY OF LIFE

As down the pathway of life we stride;  
May we always keep Jesus at our side.  
He will help us our burdens to bear;  
And we know He will always be there;  
For He leaves us not to walk alone;  
Down the long narrow road that  
takes us home.

--Elizabeth Reinertsen  
Bowling Green, KY

## GOT IT?

I know that you think  
That you understood  
Whatever you thought that I said.  
But I don't think the things  
That you think that I thought  
Would ever have entered my head!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## A WORD OF PRAYER

Oh, God, creator of the seas,  
And heav'n and earth and gentle breeze,  
And flow'r and fish, and all that breathes;  
Hear now, our pray'r, from bended knees.

Heal the sick if thy will,  
Repent our hearts when we speak ill,  
Our souls with goodness, over spill  
And with thy Word, our bosoms fill.

In self-service keep us poor,  
Help us bear the cross He bore,  
Ever mindful, He's the door,  
May we love our Savior more.

Spreading joy where'er we're driv'n,  
Informing souls that Christ is ris'n.  
May we forgive and be forgiv'n,  
The sins which would deny us heav'n.

Bless our leaders, 'tis our call,  
May we edify - without gall,  
Redeeming souls of them that fall,  
Speaking truth, to one and all.

May we smite the devil's den,  
By word and deed, by voice and pen;  
And take with grace, what'er you send,  
In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

--Duane D. Huntley  
Athens, AL

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## QUOTES ABOUT THE BIBLE

Instead of the Ten Commandments, quotations of American Presidents about the Bible are on display in Campbellsville, Kentucky, public schools. A 1980 U.S. Supreme Court decision struck down a Kentucky law requiring the posting of the Ten Commandments. When the Campbellsville school district opened its new high school, the board of education voted to decorate the walls with the words of Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, Abraham Lincoln, Dwight Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan.

## THE MAN WITH THE MOST MARRIAGES

If there were an award for the greatest misunderstanding of the Bible, 75-year-old Glynn Scotty Wolfe would be in the running. He was recently "honored" in Las Vegas, Nevada, as America's most-married man after taking his 26th bride at a wedding chapel on the Strip. Wearing a black tuxedo and a large smile, Wolfe walked out of the chapel with his new bride, 38-year-old Christine Camacho--the oldest of his string of brides. On his way out, someone congratulated him and handed him a copy of *The Guinness Book of World Records*, which lists him as the man with the most marriages in "the monogamous world." He has been divorced 25 times.

"I feel wonderful," said Mr. Wolfe, a resident of Blythe, California, and the owner of a small hotel there. "Marriage is the greatest adventure in the world next to death. It's always fun." Wolfe said he met his new bride 10 years ago. "She knows all about me, and she knows some of my old wives," he said. He added that she is the oldest of his string of brides with none of the others being older than 22 when they married.

Wolfe was first wed in 1927. His longest marriage lasted nearly five years, and the shortest ended after 19 days. He has fathered 40 children. "I married two of the wives twice," he said. Then, frowning, he added, "I have 24 mothers-in-law."

When asked about these many marriages, Wolfe tried to cite Bible passages. "It's better than living in adultery. I think everyone ought to get married instead of living together," he added.

## SECT CHARGED WITH CHILD ABUSE

Officials in Island Pond, Vermont, are investigating charges of widespread child abuse in a religious commune known as the Northeast Kingdom Community Church. Charges of assault and child abuse were filed against elders Charles Wiseman and Timothy Pendergrass after two children were treated for injuries sustained from alleged disciplinary beatings.

Wiseman was accused of beating a 13-year-old girl who suffered cuts and bruises over most of her body. She had been accused of engaging in sexual play with two eight-year-old boys. Pendergrass was charged with beating a 12-year-old boy with a two-by-four board after the child allegedly made fun of another commune member.

The sect is comprised mostly of families who moved to Vermont from Chattanooga, Tennessee, in 1978, following allegations of child abuse among the group there. Cult members live in communal homes and surrender all personal belongings to church leaders.

In recent years at least three similar sects have been accused of child abuse, but in each of those cases, children were beaten to death. Last year a 12-year-old boy died after a beating at the House of Judah in South Haven,

Michigan. In 1982, a two-year-old boy died of injuries sustained from a beating in a commune in Charles Town, West Virginia, and a three-year-old boy died after a prolonged beating in a commune near Rensselaer, Indiana.

In each of these cases, the parents were charged with manslaughter.

## GIRL'S BODY BURIED BY COURT ORDER

The body of Faith Anne Aliano, which lay in her parents' home in Clayton, New Jersey, for almost three months while they prayed for her resurrection, was finally buried on the order of a Superior Court judge.

Michael and Ann Marie Aliano, whose 10-year-old daughter died of diabetes, kept her body wrapped in camphor, held worship services in the next room and prayed for the girl's resurrection.

Officials discovered the body in the couple's home after they were informed of the situation by a member of the Alianos' church. An autopsy showed that the girl had died from hemorrhaging caused by a lack of treatment for her diabetes.

Aliano told Judge Samuel G. DeSimone, "There's no doubt in my mind that God is going to raise my daughter from the dead."

## AN EXCHANGE OF MAGAZINES

After publisher Larry Flynt sent free subscriptions to *Hustler* magazine to all members of the U.S. Senate, Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, sent Flynt a gift subscription to *Christianity Today*.

Flynt had written to the senators saying he hoped *Hustler*, a pornographic magazine, would improve their understanding of their constituents' perspective. He said he felt voters would be happy to know that those who represent them have a subscription to "their favorite

magazine.”

Grassley, terming himself as an evangelical, sent Flynt **Christianity Today** with a note urging him to “peruse its pages, and you will give yourself sharper perceptions when dealing with my kind of Iowa mind.”

### **BELIEVES TO HAVE FOUND MOSES' ALTAR**

Archaeologist Adam Zartel believes he has uncovered an altar built by Moses and Joshua on Mount Ebal. He began to dig at the mountain site on the West Bank in 1982.

Zartel and his workers carefully excavated a 27-foot-high stone altar filled with ashes and sheep bones. He believes the altar dates from the 12th century B.C. and believes it was built during the Exodus.

### **NO MORE TOBACCO ADS**

The **Saturday Evening Post** has announced that effective with its March, 1984, issue, it will no longer accept tobacco advertising. The question of whether to continue accepting tobacco ads has been in the forefront since January, 1982, when the **Post** was purchased by The Benjamin Franklin Society, a non-profit corporation whose purposes are to disseminate medical and nutritional knowledge and to foster and support research on cancer and other diseases.

### **SCHOOL PRAYER AMENDMENT**

Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker, Republican of Tennessee, introduced a constitutional amendment January 27 to allow prayer in public schools and other public buildings. “I believe that being able to pray in schools is a fundamental right that should be enjoyed by all children. I do not wish to force anyone to hold my religious beliefs, I only seek to allow those children to pray who wish to,” Mr. Baker said. President Reagan called for such an amendment in his State of the Union message January 23.

Two other school prayer amendments are pending in the Senate. Sen. Strom Thurmond, Republican of South Carolina, has a proposal that would allow oral prayer but would prohibit the government from writing an approved prayer. Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, Republican of Utah, has proposed allowing a moment of silence or meditation in schools.

### **SCRIPTURES AVAILABLE IN 1,785 LANGUAGES**

A Boro family from the north-eastern part of India and a Moore family, part of a tribe from Africa's Upper Volta, shared in the realization of a longfelt wish in 1983. Both were among the 4.7 million people who for the first time had the complete Bible available in their own language, according to the American Bible Society.

During the year, 23 languages were added to the list of those which now have a portion, at least one book, of the Bible. Another language, with no previous Scriptures, now has a New Testament. These brought the 1983 year-end total up to 1,785 languages in which at least one book of the Bible had been published since printing was invented over 500 years ago.

By December 31, the complete Bible had been published in 283 languages, four more than the previous year. In addition to Boro and Moore, the new languages with full Bibles are Kakwa, spoken in Uganda, and Tinata Tuna, a tribal language of Papua New Guinea.

There are now 572 languages with a New Testament but still no complete Bible. This is an increase of 26 above the previous year's total.

### **EXTREMISTS STOP SHOWING OF RELIGIOUS FILM**

Religious extremists in Yadalam, India, broke up a public showing of the film “Jesus” and chased after the three Baptist who brought it to the village. The preacher who arranged the showing in the Kannada language said he feels compelled to return to build a ministry there. He and the two Indian Baptist Mission representatives with him were unharmed because village people blocked the extremist from the Baptists' car as they hastily packed.

Trouble started when villagers were interrupted about 20 minutes into the film by a group of Rashsyriya Sewal Samaj volunteers, uniformed and wielding sticks. A loud whistle sounded, and voices ordered the film be stopped. But the villagers demanded the showing continue. Then someone switched off electricity for the entire town. Amid mud throwing and yelling, the Baptists packed to leave and headed for the car.

More religious extremists arrived, but the crowd of villagers, angered at

the intrusion, protected the Baptists and promised they would arrange another showing of the film. The extremists then chased the car on foot as it left the village.

Rashsyriya Sewak Samaj, which claims responsibility for assassinating Indian nationalist leader Mahatma Gandhi because of his good will toward religious minorities, has been opposing all teaching concerning Jesus Christ in the area for several years.

### **PUBLIC DEBATE SCHEDULED**

Eddie K. Garrett (Primitive Baptist) and Thomas N. Thrasher (Christian) are scheduled to engage in a public debate on “unconditional salvation” on March 12-13, 15-16. This will be the third debate between these men since 1971. The sessions will be held in the building of the Piney Chapel Church of Christ, Alabama Highway 20 (Alternate U.S. 72), Hillsboro, Alabama. This is approximately 8 miles west of Decatur. Sessions are to begin at 7:30 each evening. For additional information, telephone (205) 353-3085.

### **FETUS IN A JAR**

The display of a human fetus in a jar during an abortion discussion involving school-age children has caused much uproar. The priest of the Catholic parish that runs the school says the teacher's use of it showed “justifiable, but perhaps excessive zeal.”

Several parents, whose children attend the school run by St. Sebastian Catholic Church in Moline Acres, Missouri, said they completely approved of showing the fetus.

But the most unusual part of the whole story is a yet unanswered question: Where did the fetus come from? The priest assumed the teacher brought it into class. “I didn't do it,” maintains Josephine Mulholland, the teacher accused of bringing it in. She contends that a student brought it in and gave the jar to a science teacher who, in turn, passed it along to colleagues. Now, if this be true, where did the student get it?

### **GIDEON BIBLES DECLARED ILLEGAL**

Two public school superintendents have stopped the practice of distributing New Testaments to fifth-grade students in Asheboro, North Carolina, and in

schools throughout Randolph County, claiming that Bible distribution violates the Constitution.

The Gideons International has been distributing the testaments there for more than 10 years. According to Charles Copple, president of the Asheboro chapter of Gideons, students were never pressured into accepting the New Testaments, which were placed in the classrooms. Students were told that they were available.

Nevertheless, the school superintendents saw the practice as a violation of the First Amendment's prohibition against government establishment of religion and ended the practice this year.

### MOONIES LAUNCH NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

The Unification Church has launched an unprecedented national campaign to increase its membership. For the next three years, international teams of followers of Sun Myung Moon, the church's leader, will rotate from city to city at three-week intervals. Fifty teams of 25 to 50 members each are planning crusades in the nation's major cities.

They plan to spread their cultic belief that Moon is the new messiah whose purpose is to complete the unfinished work of Christ. The membership drive is accompanied by a message that America is in trouble if it does not "stand up against immorality and communism."

### CHURCH CHARGED WITH SEX DISCRIMINATION

The Church of Sweden has been reprimanded for sex discrimination. The denomination was ordered to award \$1,000 to Sylva Edvall, a woman who was denied a position as pastor of a congregation in Goeteborg. Edvall appealed to the Swedish government after the job was given to a man with less experience and fewer qualifications. The government then ordered the church to give her the position and a \$1,000 settlement.

### FREE BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

The Lord's church in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, has reprinted several booklets written by their preacher, David J. Riggs. They are offering a free copy of each booklet to anyone that makes the request. Requests should be sent to: David J. Riggs, P.O. Box 331, Oak Ridge, TN 37830.

# In Memory

### D.C. BOWMAN

We are saddened at the death of our good friend and faithful brother in Christ, brother D.C. Bowman. Brother Bowman suffered a heart attack about midnight last Thursday night and never regained consciousness. He was a "charter" member of the Caprock church and one of the most faithful and dependable men I have ever known. The church and his family was the whole of his life. His love for God was reflected in his love for his good wife, Elsie, and their children, Dee, Jay, Lowell, and Monty. He led his family in reading the Bible and singing God's praises in their home. This resulted in a very close family that respected and loved each other. They worked together, played together, and attended church together as regularly as the church met. All of the boys are good song leaders and two (Dee and Jay) are excellent and well known and respected gospel preachers. Dee preaches for the Southside church in Pasadena (Houston), Texas, and Jay preaches for the North Park church in Abilene. Both of these men started preaching at the Caprock church. Of course bro. Bowman would be the first to admit that he was able to be all that he was and did in his home and life because of the faithfulness of his loving wife and mother of his home. Their home was always a happy place overflowing with hospitality. They loved and respected and made close friends with gospel preachers. When the Indiana Avenue church was started by members of the Caprock church, the Bowman family went with them and have been faithful members from then till now. This whole family have been close friends of mine since I first met them in 1955, and I feel a personal loss in his passing. The brethren here at Caprock wish to express their deepest sympathy to sister Bowman, Elsie, and to the boys, Dee, Jay, Lowell and Monty, and to all the family. We pray that God's blessings will be with you in your bereavement.

--Grover Stevens  
Lubbock, Texas

### LINA J. WINLAND

It is with deepest sadness that we accept the passing of sister Lina Winland. One is not permitted to know many women in a life time like her. She was gracious, loving and kind. She loved the Lord Jesus Christ and His church. She never ceased to have the visiting preacher and his wife in her home for a meal when she was able. From May 1978 she spent much of her time in the hospital with much pain. The last two years of her life she had to be helped in and out of her home and the church building, but she missed very few services of the church. May the good Lord bless our memory of her in the church here at Wellsburg. I thank my God in heaven that I have been physically able to care for Lina through-out her five years of illness; all because we loved each other.

When Lina and I were first married she told me, "When I die I want brother Bernard Crow to preach at my funeral." Her request was granted. We are very thankful to brother Crow for a wonderful lesson, well put together, to me it was second to none.

Lina was born July 21, 1903, in Tyler County, West Virginia, the daughter of A.B. and Armatha Thomas Carrol. She died January 12, 1984. Lina and I were married July 21, 1972, by, and in the home of, our dear friend, Weldon E. Warnock in Paden City (now living in Xenia, Ohio).

I want to thank everyone for being so good to me during this time of sorrow and grief, and may God keep me strong to help with the work in the church for which His Son died that we might live.

--G.O. Winland  
Wellsburg, West Virginia

### ROBERT DILLINGER

Robert Dillinger passed from this life on Tuesday, December 20, at the age of 83. He had spent most of his life in Hamilton County, Indiana, and had lived for a number of years in the Noblesville area. Almost fifty years of his life were spent preaching the gospel for small churches. He also worked for Public Service Indiana for forty-four years. Brother Dillinger was instrumental in starting the Lafayette Road Church of Christ in Noblesville and served as one of its elders for a period of time. Funeral services were conducted by Johnie P. Edwards on Friday, December 23, 1983.

--Johnie P. Edwards  
Noblesville, IN

### ROLAND ARCHER

We conducted three separate studies and on November 28th, both Roland and Fran Archer of North Berwick, Maine, were baptized into Christ. Roland was terminally ill with cancer and it was necessary to rent a hot tub in Portland. We were able to have complete privacy and brought these two souls into Christ on that occasion.

Twenty-four hours later, Roland entered Maine Medical Center for the last time and at 2:15 A.M., on December 14th, he went to sleep in Jesus. We visited with him and read from the Scriptures and prayed each day he was in the hospital. Once, he told me he knew the Lord wanted him to teach others, but he did not have time left. I assured him that his example to others in his family who were not Christians would live on and that he was teaching through that; we noted the example of Abel (he being dead yet speaks). On another occasion, I told him I could not stay as long as I usually did because I had a Bible class. His response was that I needed to go and teach as much as possible so that others could know the truth!

Just after his baptism, he put his arm around his sister in the flesh and told her the reason he had resisted being a part of the various churches during his life was because "they were unscriptural." Fran remained strong during this final phase of the illness. She, Dorothy and I are continuing to study together each week in order to strengthen her in the faith.

On Saturday, Dec. 17th, I conducted Roland's funeral. We have lost a dear brother in the Lord, but rejoice in his obedience to the Gospel.

--James C. Jones  
Scarborough, Maine

# FIELD REPORTS

**Homer Hailey, 760 Los Lomitas Rd., Tucson, AZ 85704:**

I am still hard at work on (my commentary on) Isaiah. I had hoped to have the first draft finished by now, but am at least two months behind. Also, am preaching for the little congregation thirty miles north of here. Two sermons and a lesson on Sunday, and I go up on Wednesday nights for a class. I need to be doing a lot more, but I'm too consumed with Isaiah, and it's too far to get to know the people.

**Steve Wallace, Auf der Hoell 12, 6791 Niedermohr 3, Federal Republic of Germany**

At the Ramstein church, we are in the process of getting our Bible correspondence course underway, having received the proofs from Phil Morr, an evangelist in Michigan. Bro. Morr has used this particular tool in his work in both the U.S. and England.

In spite of a "slow down" during the holiday season, things picked up some with some new faces visiting services.

At the Stuttgart church, much work is evidenced, as well as much interest. The four members of this congregation went out canvassing many of the local army housing areas. . . This resulted immediately in a young man visiting the services. There are a number of people that they are studying with as opportunity provides itself.

**Herschel E. Patton, 7637 Fleming Hills Dr. S.W., Huntsville, AL 35802:**

At the invitation of brethren at Jordan Park in Huntsville, AL, where I formerly preached for five years, I decided to terminate my work at Vinemont the first of November to assume the responsibilities and work of a full-time elder at Jordan Park. I have now been appointed an elder at Jordan Park, along with brother Jimmy Hooper, one of the most talented, dedicated, humble, and loving men I have ever known. Brother Ken Green is the preacher at Jordan Park, whose ability, Bible knowledge, and devotion is a great asset to the elders and the whole congregation.

The brethren at Vinemont have been fortunate, I think, to secure the services of brother Dick Poplin of Shelbyville, TN, to move there and work with them on a full-time basis. After retiring from the Postal Service, brother Poplin desired to preach regularly for a church that would not be able otherwise to support a man full time. He has preached for years by appointment and for several years has served the Eastside church in Shelbyville, TN, as one of its elders. I believe Dick and Sybil will do a wonderful work at Vinemont and be a great asset to the Lord's cause throughout Cullman County.

I have some meetings scheduled and plan to continue preaching in a limited number of meetings, but my duties as an elder at Jordan Park forbids my being away very much.

**Darrell Hymel, 15 Princeton Circle, Longmont, CO 80501:**

The work here has been rewarding for me and I hope for the kingdom's sake. Time has passed swiftly, we have been here now for 2½ years. The work has grown from six members including my wife and I when we moved to begin the work, to an attendance of 50. We have not grown as rapidly in the past few months as before and are doing some deep questioning to see if we have let up some where. We are starting some new mass mailing today.

**Paul K. Williams, 56 Maud Street, Florida, 1710 South Africa:**

My debate with Ahmed Deedat of the Muslim Propagation Centre was held in an outdoor stadium the night of Dec. 2, 1983. On a night threatening with rain between 1200 and 2000 people of all races attended. I affirmed in my 30-minute opening speech that "Jesus Christ was raised from the dead." The church had printed booklets including charts of my major arguments, and these helped the people follow the points I made.

Mr. Deedat, who is about 70 years old and who has had 6 previous debates on this subject, followed his old well-worn path. He completely ignored my arguments and my questions to him. He tried to show that the true understanding of the Gospels is that Jesus was taken down from the cross alive, revived, appeared to His apostles, and then disappeared. His main proof appeared to be the sign of Jonah. Since Jonah was alive in the whale, Jesus must have been alive in the tomb.

Ray Votaw, who was my moderator, and I preached a gospel meeting in our building the week following. Two who attended the debate attended the meeting, they not having previously attended a church of Christ.

Helen and I intend making a 3-month trip to the U.S. beginning in March. I can be contacted through Tim Williams, 625 Campbell Circle, Gardendale, AL 35071. Tapes of the debate are also available through him.

**Robert W. Nichols, Central Post Office Box 949, Osaka, 530-91, Japan:**

"The parable of the Sower" (Luke 8), applies to nations in general, but also to individuals. In November, two young ladies in their thirties, came to our Osaka congregation with their baptizing clothing in hand. We spent over a year teaching these two the "plan of salvation". Their interest increased with time, rather than decreased. With the urgency of baptism, once having the understanding: within the same day--as with the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8), and "in the same hour of the night"--with the Philippian Jailor (Acts 16), I thought they should be baptized. Speaking with Brother Koike San recently, he mentioned that once a Japanese becomes a Christian, the family has a problem of how to treat them after they are dead, (Ancestry

Worship), and even before their death with their duties to be performed for those relatives that have past on. Often times, even when one believes whole heartily, the social pressures prevent them. As they say here, "the nail that stands out, shall be hammer down." They are not married yet, which also concerns them. So we suggested they speak with other Japanese Christians about these problems. After a three hour discussion, with Brother Ankyu giving a prepared lesson for them on faith in God, they decided to postpone their baptism and continue to study with us, which we have been doing regularly. I hope and pray that we might win them over soon. For the price of failure is much, much more, than the price of success!

**Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville, Cape 7530, Republic of South Africa:**

The South African government recently banned "parking-lot distribution" throughout the country and thereby forced us to seek alternative methods of distributing our tracts, bulletins, etc. Although the various race groups are not allowed to live together in this country (as Indians, coloureds and blacks are here given separate reservations or "locations") they are however, permitted to shop and work together. Hence, "parking-lot distribution" was not only a great time-saver but also allowed us to cover "all walks of life" and all four major South African race groups (whites, blacks, Indians and coloureds) at one time. But as mentioned previously, this seemingly severe "stumbling-block" was merely turned by us into a "Stepping-stone" to greater things! By standing on a streetcorner, during busy Saturday morning shopping hours, we were able to distribute more tracts in less time than ever before (about 2,000 in 2-3 hours).

But another idea also came to mind. One which I have been contemplating and investigating for many months now; and that is a "tract display table" offering a wide variety of printed materials in various languages. I originally "picked-up" this idea from brother Steve Kearney, a long-time friend and faithful gospel preacher in Dublin, Ireland. Obviously, this type of teaching effort would only involve "low-volume distribution" (since every tract is taken, not given) but hopefully quality could in some way replace the "quantity advantage" of other methods. Also more time would be made available for lengthy Bible discussions with the public, using a "tract display table".

So, armed with table, chairs, signs, Bibles and a good supply of 19 different tracts (in English, Afrikaans & Zulu), brother Hendrik Joubert and I set out on our first Saturday morning attempt at "tract-table street preaching". Using this method, over a period of about 3 hours, the brethren in Ireland were usually able to distribute 20-30 tracts and engage in numerous open Bible discussions. But our first day got off to a very slow start with NO one venturing over to the table within the first ½-hour. I even remarked to Hendrik at the time that we may have to completely "write off" the first day out as an "introductory period" and let the people first get used to seeing us set up there. However, nothing could have been further from the truth! And at the "end of the day" (the 3-hour peak shopping period) 49 people had visited the table and a total of 133 tracts were taken! Truly on days like this, I just love it when I'm wrong. . . Brethren, we continually solicit your prayers!

# CLASSIFIEDS

## TOURS

Join Ferrell Jenkins this year. Tours of distinction since 1967. Bible-Lands Tour, May 14-26; South-Pacific Adventure, June 18-July 7. Write for colorful brochures. Ferrell Jenkins, 9211 Hollyridge Place, Temple Terrace, FL 33617. Phone (813) 988-8485.

## PREACHER WANTED

The Dair Avenue church of Christ in Harrison, Ohio (20 miles west of Cincinnati), is looking for a faithful gospel preacher to work with our small group. We can provide partial support, but will assist in locating possible outside sources. contact Jim Farris at 102 Circle Drive, Harrison, Ohio 45030. Phone (513) 367-6153.

## RECORDINGS

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## BOOKS

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DAUGHTERS OF EVE, by Lottie Beth Hobbs, is an all-time best seller, on a current and much-discussed issue: God's will for women. Based on the lives of twenty-five Bible women, it is practical, easy-to-read. Review with each chapter makes it ideal for class use, as well as individual study. Gift binding (white, gold-stamped): \$5.95; flexible binding \$3.95. Send \$1.00 for postage and handling. Harvest Publications, P.O. Box 8456, Ft. Worth, TX 76112.

NOW THAT YOU ARE IN CHRIST by Mason Harris. The Christian is viewed in new relationships and new responsibilities. Paperback at \$2.75 (plus 63¢ postage). Send to: J.R.B. Publications, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

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BASIC BIBLE DICTIONARY by Velda Matthews, for children 8-11, defines words, people, and places appearing in the Bible. \$7.95 (plus 86¢ postage). Order from: The Book Shelf, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

March 1984

Number 3

## WHAT DO YOU EXPECT IN MARRIAGE?

by Mason Harris

**I**t was a strange situation for each of them as they sat across from me and spoke of problems they were facing in their marriage. They had put off seeking help for a long time simply because they did not want anyone else to know they did not have a perfect marriage. They had tried talking things out between themselves, but had failed. Now she sat nervously folding, unfolding, and pressing the dampened kleenex she frequently used to absorb her tears as she told her story. When she paused, he cleared his throat and started to tell his side of it, which seemed to me more of a defense than a statement of differences and difficulties. The conversation which was slow enough in starting now began to pick up speed. No longer did one wait for the other to pause before offering new thoughts or making a defense. Sentences were interrupted, voices increased in intensity, and finally the shout was heard, "Well, what did you expect?"

I am not sure now what the complaint was, nor do I remember who the couple was. There have been many. But the question lingers in my mind: "Well, what did you expect?" Obviously what he, or she, expected in marriage had not turned out that way. And I suspect that this might bring us to the very heart of the problems in most marriages. Expecting too much and offering too little.

Realistically, too many marriages begin with a man and a woman who have been reared in different backgrounds and with little experience in assuming adult responsibilities. And, too often, they have not been taught what they must bring to the relationship. What they expect in marriage usually is based on what their own selfish desires have prepared them to expect, with little or no thought of what they are to offer in return.

From this background of selfishness, the man may come into the marriage relationship thinking only that he has someone who can provide him with three cooked meals a day, a clean house, and sex when he wants it. Now if the wife happens to be equally selfish, he probably will feel that he has been hit by a triple whammy when he comes home to a cold bologna sandwich, a dirty house, and a wife with a headache. On the other hand, the selfish woman may enter into marriage thinking only that she has someone who will meet her emotional, social, and physical needs. If it happens that her husband is selfish too, she will be surprised, disillusioned, and frustrated. But does a wife not have the right to expect the husband to meet her needs? Certainly, she has the right to expect it, just as the man has the right to expect his needs to be met. But neither has the right to enter into marriage thinking only of what is to be

received. There needs to be some understanding of what is to be **given** by each to make the relationship function smoothly.

### SOME HUSBAND/WIFE NEEDS

Among the needs which most persons attempt to satisfy in marriage are companionship, recognition, praise, love, and sexual expression. We sometimes hear of a person being self-sufficient, but I doubt that there is such a person. Granted, one may live, by choice or by necessity, a celibate life and even remove self from society by becoming a recluse. But because of the nature of man this would simply mean that some of his needs are not being fulfilled. Self-sufficiency means that every emotional need and every physical need is being met within the limits of one's own resources. But remember, God saw that it was not good for man to be alone! So he made woman who would be an answer to his needs, and at the same time he made woman with needs where she is dependent upon man for fulfillment. Men and women marry because of these needs.

But what happens when people enter into marriage for the fulfillment it offers and then fail to find it? If one fails to find fulfillment within marriage, it is because one or both failed to bring into the relationship what is needed. I do not believe there is such a thing as a marriage failure. But I do believe there

is **people** failure. Marriage is an institution of God designed for the happiness of two people and for the procreation of the human race. Henry Guntrip says that the fundamental human problems do not lie in the region of the intellect, but lie in the area of our personal needs and emotional relationships, and concern our basic satisfactions, fulfillments, and frustrations (**Psychotherapy and Religion**, p.20). I believe this will apply to marriage. Where there are problems within a marriage, there are people problems. Two people have not learned to give and to receive from each other those things that derive from and satisfy the emotions, and no amount of material gifts can make up for the unfulfilled emotional needs. Husbands, do not think a diamond ring, mink coat, or new car will take the place of telling your wife you love her, or make up for the lonely hours she spends while you are away! **Things** do not always satisfy emotional needs.

#### RIGHTS AND EXPECTATIONS

We often hear people demanding their rights. The wife who feels she is missing something in marriage demands, "I want my rights!" And the husband who feels mistreated shouts, "I want my rights!" It seems that everybody is wanting their rights, but it seems nobody is interested in their duties. Paul wrote, "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. . . Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church. . .*" (Eph. 5:22,25). Paul spoke of duties, not rights. Of course, it ought to be understood that each has a right to **expect** of the other what he/she is required to **do**.

*"Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; while they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling*

*him lord: whose daughters ye are, as long as ye do well, and are not afraid with any amazement. Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered"* (1 Peter 3:1-7).

Both Paul and Peter speak of what we may call "reciprocal responsibilities." The wife has duties toward the husband; the husband has duties toward the wife. If a marriage is to be successful it must be based on reciprocal obligations. One in which all privileges are on one side and all obligations on the other is a one-sided affair with every chance of failure. There is something wrong when a man, consciously or unconsciously, thinks of his wife simply as one who cooks his meals, cleans his house, washes his clothes, meets his sexual needs, and rears his children. And there is something wrong when a wife, consciously or unconsciously, thinks only of her husband as one who provides her with shelter, food, clothing, and protection.

The wife is to be in submission to her husband, dress modestly, and conduct herself properly. Her submission is not out of fear such as she would have for a merciless tyrant, but she is to be in submission because of love, a deep respect for his position of headship, and fear that she might fall short of God's requirement of her. The wife is to be careful about her physical appearance, not to present herself in a gaudy display of jewelry, clothing, and elaborate hair-do. But rather, she is to show a meek and quiet spirit, "*which is in the sight of God of great price.*" Are these things required of a wife? Then a husband has the right to expect them of her!

Though Peter's message to the husband is brief, it says more perhaps than most men understand. The husband is to dwell with his wife "*according to knowledge.*" Vincent, in his **Word Studies in the New Testament**, says, "**with an intelligent recognition of the nature of the marriage relation.**" Barnes says, "**In accordance with an intelligent view of the nature of the relation; or, as becomes those who have been instructed in the duties of this relation according to the gospel.**" In order for a husband to dwell with his wife according to knowledge, he must know at least two things: 1) What

the Scriptures teach regarding the relationship, and 2) the needs of his wife. If he knows what the Bible teaches, if he knows what her needs are, AND if he is an unselfish man, the wife will have every reason to be happy. But how many of us husband even try to understand the needs of our wives?

The husband is to be chivalrous toward his wife and to make provision for her. Regarding the phrase, "*giving her honor,*" McKnight says: "**giving her the necessities and conveniences of life suitable to your station.**" Does the Bible require the husband to love (seek the welfare) his wife, to be understanding of her needs, and to provide for her? Then the wife has the right to expect these things of him!

Before leaving the matter of rights and expectations in marriage, let us consider one more passage. Speaking concerning the reciprocal responsibilities involved in sexual conduct in marriage Paul said, "*Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not the power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not the power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer: and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"* (1 Cor. 7:3-5). The surrendering of self to each other is so complete that the wife is said to not have power over her own body, and the husband does not have the power over his body. But each has the power over the other. While this may seem hard, let us keep in mind that the power which each has over the other is mitigated and controlled by love. Paul said that men ought "*to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church"* (Eph. 5:28-29). While each has a right to expect that which is required of the other, love will keep this rule from being abused.

May you find within your marriage that which the Lord intended for you to find. And be sure that your partner finds the same!



# EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

## A CHRIST-CENTERED LIFE

What a different world this would be if only we were willing to speak and act in such a way that those about us could see Christ in us! Maybe we need to pause and look again at the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount--*"Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven"* (Matt. 5:16).

I have always enjoyed sharing the short story about a little crippled boy who tried to earn some money by selling fresh fruit and candy at the passenger gate of the railway station. One day he was hurrying as fast as his crutches would permit and the passengers were rushing through the gate. A business man accidentally hit the basket, sending oranges, apples, and candy in all directions. He stopped only long enough to scold the boy for being in the way.

Another man who was passing by saw the boy's distress and began picking up the fruit. As he put it into the basket, he placed a dollar bill in the hand of the boy, smiled, and said, "Better luck next time." With that kind gesture, he went his way.

"Hey, mister," called out the boy, "are you Jesus?"

"No," answered his new friend, "I'm just one of His followers."

I can't help but wonder at times, "How many people have watched my life, know of my faith, and feel they have seen Christ?" When we leave a crowded room, what is our main concern? Was I dressed properly? Did they like my jokes? Do they think I have a pleasing personality? Or did I wonder, "Did they see Christ in me?"

The apostle Paul's letter to the Colossians might well be titled, "Living a Christ-centered life." It's a short epistle (only four chapters), but Paul gets right to the issue of how that Christ is the very heart and core of the Christian's life. In another epistle, he had said we were

baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3). Here in Colossians he says if we are *"in Christ"* and Christ in us, we have access to every spiritual blessing which God intends for His people today. Or, as Paul expresses it in Col. 2:10, *"Ye are complete in Him."*

You show me a man or woman who professes to be a Christian and I'll show you a person that should be at peace and full of joy, love, and contentment. Wherever you find one who is unhappy, or who feels incomplete, or who lacks any assurance, or who is unfruitful in righteousness, you can mark it down that he or she is **not** living a Christ-centered life.

### THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

Too many Christians I know look too much to the church and expect the church to fulfill their every spiritual need. Many preachers and/or elders have encouraged this type of thinking. Many congregations plan enough activities to keep a family at the meeting house every night of the week. They feel this will keep the member strong and spiritually alive. Yes, the church is the body of Christ, but it is not the **source** of spiritual life and power: it is but the reflection or extension of that power. The real source of spiritual life and power is Christ! The reason many congregations are filled with good Bible students, members that are hospitable and friendly is because the members are living Christ-centered lives.

There are others who lean on their own wisdom and knowledge for spiritual life. Now don't misunderstand me; I'm not saying that wisdom and knowledge are wrong, per se. I'm just saying that human wisdom is vain and deceptive and spiritually bankrupt. And it is possible to have great Bible knowledge and still be unsatisfied. Some of the most miserable people one can meet are those who have a knowledge of the Bible but whose heart and life are not yet committed to Jesus Christ. *"In Christ,"* Paul says, *"are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"* (Col. 2:3). Several years ago I engaged in a radio debate with Madalyn Murray O'Hair, the well-known atheist. She has memorized more passages of Scripture than many Christians I know. She knows a lot about Christ (the story of His birth, His teaching, His trial, His death, His resurrection, etc.). She knows all of the **facts**, but knowing about Christ and knowing Him are two different things! I have also met some in the church whose minds are filled with Biblical knowledge and facts, but their hearts are cold and empty because Christ is not the center and motivating force of their daily lives. To paraphrase what Jesus told some of the Jews in John 5:39-40, "You need to study some more. You think you know the scriptures, but they are testifying of me and you don't even know me."

And then, there are still others who think that they can find spiritual life in religious activities and a multitude of good works. I'll make the same observation here that I did

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

with wisdom--I'm not saying that good works are wrong. It is just that this route can prove very vain and illusive. One can "go through all the motions" and still not feel happy and complete. One might attend every service of the church, perform countless good deeds, and be the largest financial contributor in the congregation--but, without Christ, all is empty and vain. With Christ, however, every religious act is meaningful and edifying and fulfilling.

In view of these things, we need to stop and very seriously ask, "What does it mean to live a Christ-centered life? Can the world see Jesus in me?"

### THE THEME OF OUR PREACHING

The great story of the beginning of the Lord's church is given in Acts 2. In that first gospel sermon on the day of Pentecost, the Spirit-empowered apostles preached Christ. They showed from the Scriptures how that He had fulfilled prophecy. He was the Messiah the prophets had foretold. The apostles proclaimed His death, burial, and triumphant resurrection. They preached His ascension and exaltation at God's right hand, reigning on David's spiritual throne as King of kings and Lord of lords. As a result of that powerful message, around three thousand souls were "pricked in their heart" and cried out, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). Peter told them to "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (verse 38).

Throughout the book of Acts, we note that Jesus was always the theme of the preacher's message. In chapter 4, we find Peter and John preaching boldly in the name of Christ. "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (verse 10). "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (verse 12). Then in Acts 8:5 we read: "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them." Verse 8 says, "And there was great joy in that city." The joy wasn't brought about because the circus was in town, because there was to be a large pie supper, or because the preacher was going to do a magic show at some fellowship hall. The joy was brought because Christ was being preached! In Acts 8:35, we find Philip preaching Jesus to a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority. As soon as this man heard the message of Jesus, he wanted to be baptized immediately. They stopped the chariot in which they were riding, got out, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him into Christ. Verse 39 then says the eunuch, "went on his way rejoicing" Why was he rejoicing? It wasn't because he was converted to the preacher; he was converted to Christ.

### A NEW LIFE

And yet, we must not only be baptized into Christ, but we must also come forth from that watery grave to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). Paul told those brethren at Colosse to "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col. 3:2). When a person is buried with Christ in baptism, dies to the old life, and is raised up a new creature in Christ, his entire value system and outlook on life is changed. That's why Jesus called in being "born again" (John 3:3-5). No longer does he live for earthly or material things. His affections are now transferred to Christ and heavenly things. He will present his

body as a living sacrifice, "holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. 12:1). He knows that this world is passing away, and that earthly treasures offer no real or lasting security. The life which we now live here, even if we should live to be 200 years old (which we know that we won't), is but a moment in comparison with eternity. The Christian's goal and hope, therefore, are to be found faithful in Christ at His coming, and to be able to spend eternity with Him in the heavenly home.

Living a Christ-centered life, then, is to live with that eternal goal continually in mind. This earth is not our home, we are just passing through. Read again Colossians 3:2.

The inspired writer of Hebrews 12:1-2 likens the Christian's life to the running of a foot race. In order to run this race successfully to the finish, we must do two things: First, we must lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us; and, second, we must look continually to Jesus as our help and sustainer, for He is the author and finisher of our faith.

Anything which might hinder, hold us back, or slow us down, must be cast aside. For some, this might be close friends or family that do not desire to live as Christ would have them live. For others, it might be involvement in a worldly amusement or sporting event. For others, it might be a habit (drinking, smoking, crude jokes, immodest clothing, etc.) which cripples their influence as a Christian and spiritual growth. Whatever it is--if it is a "weight" which holds you back and keeps you from running the best race possible--it must be sacrificed and laid aside if it would keep you from attaining the crown of life.

### CONCLUSION

The invitation to accept Jesus is an invitation to wholehearted commitment. He doesn't want half of you; He doesn't even want 99% of you. He wants all of you! There is no real Christian commitment unless it is wholehearted; for anything less is not true commitment.

Can the world see Christ in you?

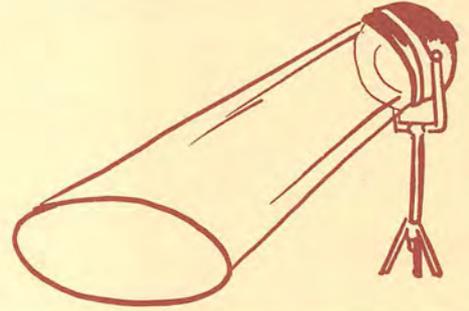


### EDITOR'S MEETING SCHEDULE

Lord willing, I will be working with the following churches in gospel meetings during this year. It would be most encouraging to meet any and all of our readers in any of these areas:

- April 1-6 Wallace Street Church in Newark, Ohio
- April 15-20 Westside Church in Owensboro, Kentucky
- May 6-11 Greenwood Church in Greenwood, Indiana
- June 3-8 Oldham Woods Church in LaGrange, Kentucky
- June 11-17 Washington Ave. Church in Russellville, Alabama
- July 15-20 Oak Grove Church in Jennings, Florida
- July 30-August 3 West York Church in West York, Illinois
- August 5-10 Westside Church in Casey, Illinois
- September 23-28 New Cumberland Heights Church in New Cumberland, West Virginia
- October 1-7 Spice Valley Church in Williams, Indiana

# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## LESLIE DIESTELKAMP



**Why is your name so closely associated with sermons on "The Great Commission"?**

I just simply believe that the commission has great applicability because Jesus said, "Go. . .teach all nations, baptizing them. . .teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matthew

28:19). For that reason, I have applied it to myself. My life's work has been in new fields except for just a very few years. All of the years I have been preaching full-time, with the exception of about 5 or 6 years, have been in destitute fields, brand-new areas, or places having some trouble or very few members. So, most of my life I've been supported by churches other than the

one for which I was preaching. I've gone into an area to start a church, or gone to a church that was in trouble and settled the trouble where we could grow and then I'd move on to a smaller church, or else I'd move to a place that had 10 or 15 members and work until it grew and then move on again to a smaller one. That has just been my life's work.

That may be why some people think of me as a missionary. But I don't use that term. I've never used the term "missionary" to describe myself or other gospel preachers. I'm not sure that's a good description of us.

Work in new fields has just been my life's work. That's where I've been satisfied and felt the most needed. I did preach in Aurora, where I live now, for four years in the early sixties. I told those people publicly, from time to time, that I was unnecessary there. My conscience hurt me some then. I have now gone back there because I am now retired and I'm not on salary anywhere. I've gone back there to live out my sunset years where I lived right across the street from the church building.

Other than that work in Aurora for those few years, I've always lived in new, destitute, or troubled fields all of my life.

**Some people have jokingly referred to your close family as a "clan." Tell us a little bit about your family.**

I have three sons and two daughters. The three sons preach full-time--Karl is in Kenosha, Wisconsin; Al is in Bettendorf, Iowa; and Roy is in



Ontario, Canada. One son-in-law, Robert Speer, preaches full-time in Plano, Illinois, and another, James Hodges, teaches in the Bible department at Florida College. One grandson, David Diestelkamp, preaches in Rochelle, Illinois, and two other grandsons, Andy Diestelkamp and Robbie Speer, preach on occasions. I have a total of 19 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

**When your children were small was there anything special that you did or said that has aided in the boys becoming preachers?**

I never suggested to any of them that they become a preacher. We always had our daily devotions at home, they heard me preach, and I always urged every Christian to be prepared to do anything that you are called upon to do for the cause of Christ, anywhere. If you go somewhere and learn they have no preacher, be willing to preach, teach, lead singing, or lead the public prayers. I simply urged them to be willing to do what they could. As far as preaching, they took that upon themselves. Maybe they were motivated by the emphasis they saw in their Daddy, but especially in their Mother.

**How long have you been preaching?**

I preached my first sermon in

August 1934, that will be 50 years ago this summer. After that, I preached only occasionally for a while. Some of my first preaching was preaching lots of funerals. Back in those days lots of babies died and I would be asked to preach these funerals or I would preach for a family that had no church affiliation.

I would do a lot of preaching by appointments and gradually increase this more and more. My first full-time work was one that I had to make. This was in Waynesville, Missouri, in connection with Fort Leonard Wood. I went out and started from scratch and I've been doing that in most of my years since. It was after that work in Waynesville that I moved north.

**In what areas of the country have you lived and worked as a "full-time" preacher?**

Well, I'll just have to name them. Starting with Waynesville, MO, it was then Greenbay, WI; Stevens Point, WI; Milwaukee, WI; Minneapolis, MN; Brookfield, IL; Berwyn, IL; Aurora, IL; Rochelle, IL; St. Paul, MN; and Palatine, IL. I think maybe that was all of them here in the states and then, of course, there was the overseas work.

**What foreign work have you done?**

I lived in Nigeria for 3½ years. I

lived in Australia for fifteen months. I preached in the Philippines for ten weeks. I've preached in Europe only a few times as I was passing through. If you count the Philippines as Asiatic, I have preached in five continents.

**Having been born in Missouri, how did your interest go from there to all of the areas it has taken you?**

I obeyed the gospel when I was thirteen. I began preaching when I was about twenty-two. Having gotten my feet wet in Waynesville, I saw the need, believed I could do and chose to go into Wisconsin. At that time there were only five churches of Christ in four states that did not use the instruments of music. And there was only one preacher for these four states.

I went there in spite of the fact that I hated cold weather--and I still do!

**Which do you think is the hardest work, to go to a city where there is no congregation and try to establish one or to go to a seemingly "dead" congregation?**

Well, the hardest work in the world for me has been in areas where you have no nucleus. In fact, I almost discourage a person from going into an area where you have no working nucleus unless two people go together. I never practiced the two going together, but I was never alone because I had my family. For a while I made a joke out of it and said that the churches in the north would like to have Leslie Diestelkamp preach for them because that would guarantee a congregation.

If it's just a man and his wife and one or two children, I would encourage him to go with another preacher. Two preachers need to go together if there is no nucleus. It's just too hard and too slow to go where there is none at all.

Some people wouldn't be suited for this, but it has almost been an obsession with me to go to a place that was deeply troubled--maybe the church had split or maybe they were even meeting in two separate groups and had animosity with each other. I'd work to bring them together again and that was some of the most fruitful works of my life.

So, in answer to this question, I'd say the brand new fields are the hardest works.

**What do you feel are the immediate needs that we must emphasize on the Great Commission today?**

The field must be the first thing. To me, our greatest challenge in America is in the northeast. For instance, there are 150 churches of Christ in what we call greater-Chicago (now that includes the liberal ones, too). In contrast to that, think of the tremendous population in Pennsylvania, New York, and New England, and the scarcity of churches. There are probably more faithful Christians in just a few churches in almost any community that there are in all of those states. That's the greatest field in America. It's right next door to us and the opportunity is great.

If you consider the world field, except for Nigeria, the Philippines, and India, it is all of it.

**Where do you think the most fruitful field in the world is today?**

I would have to say at this time that it is Nigeria. Those of you who have been to the Philippines would say that is the most fruitful, but I am the only conservative preacher that has been to both places. I love the Filipinos. They are some of the greatest people on earth and certainly among the most hospitable. I lived right with them in their bamboo huts and ate at their tables. But I would have to say that the

magnitude of the Nigerian work so far outclasses the work in the Philippines that there is little comparison. You just can't comprehend the magnitude of the Nigerian work unless you go there.

There are more than 100,000 Christians in Nigeria. It is such a tremendous work and there are hundreds of faithful, native preachers in that country. Maybe as far as we are concerned for evangelizing, it is not a needy field for us today. They need our encouragement and due to the culture and economy they need our support--financially, morally, and spiritually. We need to encourage them to press on and be faithful. We can be helpful for edification, but we are not actually needed for evangelization. In fact, many of their preachers could come here and teach us many things. I've said for many years, they may have to come here to America to preach to our grandchildren.

**Do you feel American money is destroying the work in foreign countries?**

No, I don't agree with that. I'll admit it is a problem if they become dependant upon America and the brethren fail to pick up the support like they should. However, I've hardly heard that criticism from people who have lived there. It has generally come from one or two who have just visited there briefly and do not understand the culture and, especially, the poverty.

There is no way an American can understand the depth of the poverty in 95% of the Nigerian people unless he goes there to live among it.

I know that many brethren feel we should not have supported some of these foreign preachers. They argue we should have forced the churches to support their own. They feel fifty years from now the churches would be stronger and healthier internally if we had made them do it. Well, I might be willing to concede that, but there is another feature. Do we know the world will be standing in fifty more years? Do we know that there will be Americans who are Christians that are interested in doing it in fifty more years? Or do we know the Nigerian people will be as interested in fifty more years? I believe the gospel needs to be preached **now** to as many people as we can reach **now**. I believe one successful way has been to help these preachers in Nigeria or the Philippines to do the work they are capable of doing and reach the multitudes that they do reach.

For instance, before any American went to Nigeria to live and preach, the native preachers who had learned the Truth by correspondence courses and had baptized 10,000 people in four years and established eighty congregations. They can do the evangelizing if we can just get them taught, but they cannot do full-time gospel work and live in accord to their economy. They would have to devote their whole day, seven days a week, to barely make a meager living for their family. But if we can provide that, it provides them the opportunity to reach out to those that are "*hungering and thirsting after righteousness*" and fill them with the word of God. So now, we have multitudes of thousands of faithful Christians that we might not have if we hadn't done it. Their area might be like some of the other areas where we haven't done that. I just believe heaven's population is going to be significantly fuller because we have supported these preachers.

Yes, there are problems in it and I recognize that. I lament it and when I'm there I beg, plead, teach, and urge the churches to do more and that the preachers require the churches to do more. But in the mean time, I still plead that we do not force those native preachers to devote all their time to eek out the meagerest of living for their families and deprive that hungering multitude of the gospel.



### Where do you feel American churches have failed the greatest?

I believe the reason many Americans have not entered into the fields of the world more significantly is because too few American preachers have put the emphasis there. They have talked about important things like faith, repentance, and baptism, or about instrumental music, but we should have done these things without leaving off other important things,

too. We should have shown the people the fields of the world, the needs in these fields, and the many opportunities in these fields.

I have hardly seen an exception where a faithful church failed to respond to a need that was carefully presented to them.

I believe preachers who are content to live and work in this sheltered environment in this country need to be awakened and aroused to the fact that if they can't go, they can help the

churches to enable others to go. I fear that preachers that feel they should not or can not go hesitate to emphasize this very much because it would look like a reflection on them. It ought not to be this way. I don't think every preacher has to go into the destitute areas of the world, but **somebody** has to go.

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# THE JERUSALEM CHURCH

by Kenneth Bray

**S**INCE Acts two describes the beginning of the Lord's church, it is therefore advisable for us to study this chapter with the purpose of better understanding true New Testament Christianity. Verse 46 states: "*And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.*" In this text we have discussed matters related to the time, the place, and the nature of New Testament Christianity.

### THE TIME

According to Acts 2:46 the spiritual affairs of the Jerusalem Christians were conducted on a "daily" basis. It was not an annual business, neither was it a haphazard matter. Rather, on a daily (every day) basis God's people were involved in God's service. And so must it be today. The church today must be involved in daily service (Rom. 12:1,2), daily prayer (I Thess. 5:17), daily cross bearing (Luke 9:23), daily teaching (Acts 5:42), and daily study (2 Tim. 2:15). When this occurs we will begin to see daily results.

### THE PLACE

The spiritual affairs of the Jerusalem church were conducted in private as well as in public. There is a time for Christians to assemble as a group for worship and study (a private situation). Hebrews 10:25 implies an assembly of Christians designed to strengthen the people in attendance.

This kind of service is necessary and important. Yet there is also a need to remember the importance of serving God in the public school, the social market place, the school, the social periods of life. Acts 5:42 says: "*And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*" If our religion is limited to a church building, then we have missed the point about the place of service.

### THE NATURE

This verse also describes the nature (character) of the people who composed the church of Christ in Jerusalem.

The Jerusalem Christians were **united**. That is, they served with "*one accord*". They were united because they had obeyed the same gospel, and entered the same body, and served the same Lord. Because of this unity, they were able to exert a tremendous influence on their community.

The Jerusalem Christians were **fraternal**. The text indicates a close, personal, and brotherly relationship among the saints. They worked together in the temple and enjoyed their food together at home. When God's people begin to associate more with one another in service and in sharing their blessings, we will develop a greater sense of warmth and brotherhood among ourselves.

The Jerusalem Christians were **radiant**. There was a gladness that filled their hearts. This came from an

understanding of the fact that they were saved from sin (Acts 2:41), that they had now entered God's church (Acts 2:47), and that they had the prospect of eternal life. Real joy comes only from a sense of peace with God. Joy that is based on any other situation will be shallow and incomplete. Therefore, Paul said: "*Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice.*" (Phil. 4:4).

The Jerusalem Christians had **purpose**. With "*singleness of heart*" they served God. This not only involves the quality of unity, but it also involves the idea of having a common purpose. They knew who they were - Christians! They knew the mission of the church--salvation of souls! They were not diverted from their single purpose. They were determined to do exactly what God instructed them to do.

### SUMMARY

The New Testament church exists today. It will be successful in its mission as it follows the example of the model church. We must serve God daily, both publicly and privately. Also we must possess those great qualities of unity, brotherhood, joy, and purpose. This age-old formula will produce a dynamic and scriptural church in the present age.



# In Pursuit Of Happiness

by Morris D. Norman

**M**an wants to be happy, this is universal. We aim to be happy if at all possible. We make our choices in life that happiness can be attained. We avoid circumstances which make us unhappy. We marry because we think in some way this person can make us happy by spending enough time together. We select jobs that we may be able to have things that make us happy. We desire to live where we can be happy. Our lives are spent in the pursuit of happiness.

It is the popular concept today that people are happy merely because they have fallen into fortunate circumstances. All of their physical and emotional needs can be met if they can find themselves in the proper situation. If these circumstances are not there they will be unhappy because they will be deprived of some physical or emotional need. As far as they are concerned there are but two classes of people in the world; those who have good fortune and therefore are happy, and those who have had ill-fortune and therefore are unhappy. Their philosophy is that happiness is determined by outside circumstance. Our modern humanistic philosophy has fostered this concept.

"If I could just marry Janie Sue (or Tommy Jack) I could be so happy," one will say. They mean that happiness comes by being with the right people. This is a romantic fantasy that comes from the fairy tale: "And they lived happily ever after." It has been proven that being married to Janie Sue or to Tommy Jack does not insure happiness. Janie Sue puts on weight and becomes less attractive; or the family has started and her attention has been diverted to the children. Tommy Jack wasn't the prince charming that he appeared to be when he was the football star or the handsome "man about town." The amorous feeling of the honeymoon is over and the happiness diminishes.

"If I could just live in Middletown Heights, I could be so happy. I have to get out of this place," another will say. They mean that happiness is living in the right place; in a swinging town or a

tropical climate. Dorothy thought that happiness surely could be found "somewhere over the rainbow." She eventually found she could be happy right where she was. Some think that happiness can be found in the big city and leave their rural setting to find it. Before long they blame their problems on urban living and move back to the farm.

"If I could just have a great fortune, then I could buy all the things I want, go where I want and do what I want. Then I will be happy," still another says. To these, happiness lies in fame and fortune, in possessing things and having acclaim. How many of those with fame and fortune are happy. How many go from marriage to marriage, or have drug problems, or are spending their fortune on psychiatrists never finding real inner peace. The majority of them, if we are to believe the reports.

Fortune, good or bad, has little to do with real happiness. Real happiness comes from the quality of the person, not the circumstance. There can be two people in an identical situation, one will be happy and the other unhappy. There is the story of two sisters, one of whom insisted that her sister was the prettiest. The fact was that they were identical twins and equally pretty. Rich people and poor people, well people and ill people, urban people and rural people are all happy - or unhappy, as the case may be.

The Bible describes the truly happy man, but it uses the word "blessed." Actually, the word happy is from the root hap, meaning chance, favored by happenstance, luck or fortune, and has reference to what does happen to us, hence to circumstance. The Greek word that is translated happy (six times) and blessed (49 times) describes this man. He is the one who puts his trust in God and His ways, and not the things of this world. Jesus uses the word in the sermon on the mount and John uses it in the Revelation. Originally, it was used of gods as opposed to mortals. Mortals could not be happy, being earth and body bound. Later it was used of those who had died and thus liberated from this world. The

Holy Spirit chose this word to describe the one who is unaffected by the world and its philosophies. This man can be blessed because he has risen above the world and does not need what this world offers to be happy. Aristotle used the word referring to Cyprus, calling it "the blessed one," because its people did not have to go outside the island to have their needs met.

Christ gives a joy and peace that the world cannot give, nor can it take away. Read John 16:20-24,33. Christians are the truly blessed because of what they have become in turning to Christ. This blessedness comes from the character that develops by having a righteousness, not of our own, but that which is through faith in Christ, hence the ability to "rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 3:1,9)

This joy does not depend on the world, our wealth, where we live, what we have, whom we may be with, or the state of our health. It comes to the person who has learned to love God. "We know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose. . .to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:28,29). It comes to the person to whom God gives sustaining strength. Paul could say, in want and in prison, "I rejoice. . .I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therein to be content. . .I can do all things through him that strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:10-13). With a thorn in the flesh he had learned that God's grace was sufficient (2 Cor. 12:7-9).

Blessedness (true happiness) comes, not out of where we are or the circumstance that surrounds us, but who we are in Christ. Until we learn this we will not have real joy and peace, no matter where we are, whom we are with, or what we have. When we do learn what Paul learned we can be content in whatever circumstance we find ourselves because of who we are, true children of God. Do you know any unhappy "Christians?" Are you one? Read Romans 8:35-39 with this understanding.

## The Kind of Person We Must Be

# God Looks On The Heart First

by Ron Mosby

*"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully"* (Psalms 24:3-4). God looks first at what our hands have done, what our lips have spoken, and what our heart has imagined before He looks at the sacrifice we may offer, no matter how perfect and excellent it may be! We must endeavor to keep our hearts with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life (Proverbs 4:23).

People can play charades with one another to hide their real motives and intentions in life. People can play games with one another and fool one another and even mock one another, but may we lay it to heart that no one of us can fool God. We only fool ourselves if we try. *"Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"* (Galatians 6:7). We make an irrevocable mistake when we presume that God cannot see behind our guise. We do terribly err when we treat God like an ordinary man and proceed with our conduct that is not pleasing to Him. Because the Lord does not stop us as soon as we sin, we deceive ourselves into thinking we must be getting away with it (Ecc. 8:11). However, God will not always remain silent but one day will break His silence and set in order all things that are amiss (Psalms 50:16-23).

### **GOD LOOKS WITHIN - MAN LOOKS WITHOUT**

When Samuel of old went to Bethlehem to anoint one of the sons of Jesse to rule as king over Israel in the place of the God-rejected King Saul, he was impressed with Eliab's appearance and thought for sure that he was God's anointed. However, God said no. Six other sons passed by Samuel and God singularly rejected them all (1 Samuel 16:6-13). We all know now in retrospect that it was the youngest, the ruddiest, and the one least likely to be a

candidate for anything except maybe chief herder of the sheep, that God had selected. While Samuel could see only the outward appearance, it was God who knew the heart of David, a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22). Indeed, the Lord seeth not as man seeth. No amount of good looks or tall, dark, and handsomeness can fool God, because He alone looks upon the heart and knows what is in man.

### **BEING VERSUS DOING**

To many religious people today, a relationship with the Living God is based upon doing something and not upon being from within the kind of person one must be to be pleasing unto Him. God sees right through even every good thing we do and knows our very motive and attitude of heart as we perform our many acts before Him. The rich young ruler fell into the common trap of measuring religion by what he had done and what yet he must do rather than being 100% committed unto Him before whom he knelt. He came running to Jesus enthusiastically and respectfully knelt before the Master Teacher. The shallowness of his religion was reflected in the question that he asked (Mark 10:17). Jesus loved him for his forthright goodness (v 21) but told him he was still empty because he had not learned to be fully committed to Him. The countenance of the young ruler immediately changed from an excited inquirer to a crestfallen and disappointed individual. Jesus watched him as he walked away dejected. Even the young man himself knew there was something he lacked besides just doing! But, when Jesus told him, he simply could not handle it.

The scribe in Mark 12 posed the same question in effect to Jesus (12:28). He commended the Lord's answer and stated further its importance even over all the sacrifices that had ever been offered on Hebrew altars! Jesus commended his discreetness and told him he was getting closer to the real thing! Later, in Luke's account when

the same scribe tried to justify himself by asking Jesus, *"...and who is my neighbor?"* Jesus never told the scribe who his neighbor was. He did, however, tell him how to become a neighbor and that his responsibilities in being a neighbor had no earthly bounds. Again, in this regard, God knows our hearts and is not mocked.

### **WHAT ABOUT WORSHIP?**

God throughout His word, has rejected both worship and them who offered it if they were not the kind of people they ought to be. In the days of Amos, because the people were so wicked and unjust to one another, their songs in worship were like noise to the Lord and He ordered it to be taken away (Amos 5:19-21). In Micah's day, God rejected all the outward offerings of the wicked until he cleaned up his act and his life from inside. The people were unjust, unmerciful and proud and needed to do a reverse (Micah 6:6-8). Isaiah asked why the people even bothered coming to worship and that God would cover His eyes when they prayed because their hands were full of blood. He said a dumb ass and ox had more consideration toward their earthly masters than God's own people made in His own image had for Him (Isaiah 1:3-4, 10-15). Jesus said not to bother even offering your perfect sacrifice until your heart was right with your brother (Matthew 5:23-24). He called justice, mercy, and faith weightier matters of the law of God in contrast to the myriads of little things we do to try and impress Him. We are not to leave the little things undone but we are not to make the doing of them even of equal value with the kind of person we must be from within (Matthew 23:23).

### **CONCLUSION**

Let us always be alert to the fact that God looks at our hearts first before he looks at our sacrifice. Let us know and always remember that our God - He is Alive and knows our thoughts even while they are afar off as well as our down sitting and our uprising (Psalms 139:2). Let us make it a priority in life to be the kind of person inside that God knows and wants us to be and then all the things we do will be meaningful and will count in the sweet by and by.



# The Family Affair

How many times have you either said or heard someone else say, "Times have really changed"? It is difficult, it seems, to get all the family together at the same time. Dad has to go to work at one hour, Mom at another (this should be only when necessary; for the place of a mother is at home.) At night, Junior has to be at basketball practice, Susie has to go to a 4-H meeting, or Dad has a business meeting. It seems difficult any more to even sit together and eat all of our meals together, much less to have the time to talk, study, and pray together. What can be done about it? Maybe we are living in a society that has changed too much. Maybe we are moving at too fast a pace.

All of this rush-rush has a tendency to cause our families to drift apart. Too many families are **existing** together, but not **living** together. They don't really know each other. Married couples never have any private time together; parents and children seldom talk about their life--joys and sorrows.

We need to make our family something special. We need to do, say, or think those special things that keep us in each other's mind. That's what this column is all about.

**\*GETTING OUT OF THE RUT.** It takes planned forethought to get out of a rut. One morning this week, force yourself to get up half an hour earlier than usual. Plan to spend that extra time around the breakfast table with your family. Bounce into the kitchen with a sparkle in your eye and cheer in your voice. Talk to your family before going off to work or school.

**\*POSITIVE PRAISE.** I just read of a teacher who makes it her regular practice to hunt up the most unattractive child and whisper in her ear, "You're getting prettier every day." She says it always works--almost at once the child begins to blossom into something close to beauty. This will work at home, too. What do you say to

your family members. Are you constantly telling them they are lazy, fat, trouble makers, stupid, ugly, etc.? Why not start today praising your family members? Find something good to say about them each day.

**\*A CONSTANT REMINDER.** Carry a small object in your pocket this week (a large button, a medallion, a paperclip, a rubber band, etc.) that would be unusual for you to have in your pocket. Each time you reach into your pocket let this be a reminder of your child or your spouse. Attach a specific thought to it for each time you touch it, like praying for them, supporting them in a particular challenge or need, or simply remembering how much you love them.

**\*A SECRET PAL.** Write the name of each family member on a separate slip of paper. Then each person draws a name out of a cup or hat. Enter into a pact together that during the next seven days, you will secretly do a favor for that person. At the end of the week, each person attempts to guess who had his or her name and the favors that were done. The winners get to select their favorite menu for one of the next week's meals.

**\*LET'S TRADE.** On your next dinner date with your husband or wife, try this conversation question: "If you had to change places with any other woman/man, who would you choose and why?" Then try the question around the breakfast table with the kids.

**\*PICTURE MEMORIES.** Plan one night this week when all family members will be together for a meal. Right after cleaning the table, haul out the family photo albums or slide projector for an hour of reminiscing. It's lots of fun, great for reinforcing family unity and recognizing growth. Follow it up with a short planning session for your next vacation--when-ever that will be. Add a little popcorn

and you've got an enjoyable evening. You can then top it all off by making a few new photographs for the album. (By the way, is your youngest child getting short-changed in the photo department? It happens in so many families, so keep working at it!)

**\*SATURDAY MORNING ADVENTURES.** Remember that side street or back road you always wondered about? What about that quaint little shop you've never checked out? Have you wondered about that new bakery? Practically every family member has such a place. So, set some limits (such as mileage, time, expense, etc.) and let each family member choose where and what they want to take the family "exploring." Go each Saturday morning till everyone has had a turn to lead their own adventure.

**\*IT'S TIME TO SHAVE.** Hey, Dad, have you ever thought of all that wasted time while you are shaving? Why not use that time for a different child each day of the week? Think of all the facts and concepts you know which your kids would profit from learning. Hang a calendar on the bathroom door and assign mornings to each child when they can attend "morning college." Share a new idea or principle with each one. For starters, try explaining inflation, have a spelling contest, or define "street" expressions the kids hear but don't understand. Get new ideas by leafing through a dictionary, encyclopedia, almanac, or **Today**.

**\*EXPLORING FAMILY VALUES.** One night this week, ask each person to go to their room for five minutes to think about this question: "If a flood, tornado, or fire were going to destroy our home and all of our possessions, what would you grab to take out with you?" When you reassemble, tell what you picked and why. Cap the time by discussing the things you realize the family could do without, whether the items judged valuable were of high or low replacement cost and what this statement means: "There are people who know the cost of everything and the value of nothing."

**\*PROPER PRIORITIES.** When your child comes home from participating in a sports event, what's the first question you ask? Too often it's "Did you win?" A far better opening question would be "Did you have fun?" or "Did the team play well together?" This keeps the priorities in order. There's more to playing the

game than just winning!

**\*I'VE FELT LIKE THAT.** Cut faces from a magazine that clearly show an emotion. Show these to your children and have them imitate the face. Ask them how they think the person in the picture feels--happy, sad, angry, or afraid, for example. Then ask them to remember when they felt that way and what caused that feeling. This exercise will make it easier for them to learn how to identify others' feelings as well as their own, and to give names to their emotions.

**\*FORGIVING MEANS FORGETTING.** Read together these verses: Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 1:18; and Hebrews 10:17. Discuss how long God remembers our sins once we've confessed them. Then agree together that once a conflict between family members has been forgiven, it is also to be forgotten. If it's brought up again, the response is to be, "I've decided to forget what you're talking about. Can we talk about something else?"

**\*WALKING IN THE LIGHT.** This evening before bedtime, turn out all the lights, draw the drapes, and make the house as dark as possible. Then individually walk from one end of the house to the other trying not to bump into things along the way. When you've all arrived to the dining room table, sit down and read together John 8:12; 12:35; and 1 John 1:5-7; 2:8-11. After reading these, talk about the implications of walking in the darkness versus walking in the light.

**\*A GOOD LESSON IN MATH.** Have you had problems with the children arguing over who gets which "half" of the candy bar because it seems that one is larger than the other? My Dad always had one of us boys to divide and the other to choose which "half" he wanted. It did wonders for helping us find the very middle of the candybar.

**\*A RETURN TRIP.** After dinner tonight, suggest that your family go again on a favorite vacation or outing--only this time it is by memory. With everybody contributing, try to recall all the steps and events that happened, beginning with packing suitcases, what time you left the house, incidents en route and the chronology of each day's events until you returned. Get out your photos taken on the trip. You'll discover this "walking through" will trigger lots of warm memories and this time the trip won't cost a cent.



## Life and Laughter

### You Better Hush

Seven year-old Kathy tried to quiet her younger brother during the church service. "Hush, hush," she warned him. "You're not supposed to talk out loud in church."

"Why?" he asked. "Who's going to stop me?"

Kathy pointed to the rear of the auditorium. "You see those men standing back there? Well, they're the hushers!"

### P.S. Lord

Tom Butler tells the story of a gospel meeting in Beaumont, Texas. During the first night's service, he requested the prayers of those in attendance that the Lord might be with him in the preaching of every lesson.

The next morning a little girl, age 7, was requested to give thanks at the breakfast table. She bowed her head and said, "Our Father, we thank Thee for our home and for this food. We also thank Thee to be with brother Butler in the presentation of the lesson tonight. Amen."

She lifted her head and bowed again and said, "P.S. And Lord, keep us from being bored!"

### Get 'Em, Preacher

Those of you that have heard J.T. Smith of Lake Jackson, Texas, preach know that he can crank up his volume into several different gears. He just looks like he enjoys what he's doing. He tells this little story about how that almost backfired on him once:

Several years ago, I was preaching in a series of meetings in Beattyville, Kentucky. It was the decision of the brethren there to always have the meeting the week of July 4th, and you can imagine the heat problem. They were meeting in an old one-room school building that only had windows on one side.

One of the men kept up a continuous "amen" from the time I arrived and began the first lesson. It was encouraged indeed. However, one

night while I was preaching (very enthusiastically, being encouraged by the "amens"), it began to rain. With the windows open, the damp, cool air coming in the windows began to "cool me off" at once. The next night when we returned, I could hardly speak above a whisper. That night, when I really needed the "amens" to get me going, not one sound was uttered from the audience.

At the closing of the lesson, I went immediately to the old gentlemen and inquired of him if I had preached something that wasn't true, thus stopping the "amens." His reply was in the negative. I then became a little upset thinking that someone had "scolded" him for saying "amen." To this question he replied "no" again. I just couldn't stand it any longer. "Why did you quit saying 'amen' then," I asked.

"Why," he said, "saying 'amen' to you is just like saying 'sickum' to a bulldog, and you're so hoarse now, you can hardly talk above a whisper!"

### We Might As Well Go Ahead And Laugh

Don Givens, faithful preacher in Bellevue, Washington, tells of an event while he was preaching in California. He says he has forgotten the name of the preacher, but he can certainly vouch for the truthfulness of the story:

A certain gospel preacher was busy expounding from the pulpit. Near the aisle sat a dear lady who wore false teeth. Something made her sneeze quite healthily and to her (and everyone else's) surprise, she sneezed out her false teeth. They flew right out of her mouth, hit the aisle with a clank, and went skip, skip, skipping a ways down the aisle. She calmly got up from her seat, picked up her teeth, and silently inserted them back into her mouth. As everyone was almost bursting inside, the preacher took care of the embarrassing situation by announcing, "Well, brethren, there is a time to laugh...and this is it!"



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “BABEL, BABYLON”

**Hebrew Word:** babel

**Meaning:** Gate of God, (or Confusion)

This city is first mentioned in Gen. 10:10 where it is said to be a part of the “beginning of the kingdom” of Nimrod, the mighty hunter. We are most accustomed to seeing its name rendered Babylon from its Greek spelling, rather than Babel from Hebrew or Bab-ili from Akkadian, the language of ancient Babylonia.

From Gen. 11:9 through Rev. 14:8 the Bible presents this city as a historical and symbolic representation of rebellion against God and sinfulness of every kind. It was of this cruel city the people of God spoke as they cried for relief in the chilling verses of Psalm 137. In the New Testament the name of this city became a code-name for Rome, the world-ruling city that became drunken with the blood of martyred Christians (Rev. 17:5-6).

In Gen. 11:1-9 this word is used in connection with the great tower built by men in their proud declaration of independence from God. No doubt this tower resembled the remains of the ziggurats (temple towers) that are in the Mesopotamian Valley to this day. And there is a lesson in this text for all men.

The word Babel was understood by those who later lived in the city of this name to mean “Gate of God.” But in Gen. 11:9 it is made clear that this word was produced from the confusion of tongues that took place at the tower. According to Keil and Delitzsch it was “contracted from Balebel from the verb balal, to confuse” (Commentary on the Old Testament, The Pentateuch).

And that is what is meant by the play on words in Gen. 11:9 which tells us, “That is why it was called Babel--because there the Lord confused (Heb. balal) the language of the whole world” (New International Version). That which was honored as the “Gate of God” by men was known by God to be mere “confusion.” We will do well to learn from the word Babel the

lessons Jesus taught the Pharisees: “. . . That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Lk. 16:15).

## “ISSUES”

**Hebrew Word:** tosa’ah, pl. tosa’oth

**Meaning:** exits, starting point, limits, end, escape

The wise man tells his son, “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life” (Prov. 4:23). We won’t pause long here for a definition of the word heart. No doubt it needs an article of its own. Suffice it for our purposes to describe the heart in this passage as “the inner being of man. . . and the seat of desire, inclination, will, knowledge, wisdom, conscience and moral character” (Unger and White, Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament). But our interest here is the word issues. And it is a very interesting one.

This noun is a derivative of the verb yasa which means “to go out, come out, go forth.” It is used twenty-three times in the Hebrew Old Testament, always in the plural, and with a variety of meanings, as you can see above. but all these meanings are traceable to the basic idea of “going out.”

For instance, Ezekiel 48:30 we are told about “the goings out” of the city. And that accounts for our word “exits” above. In 1 Chronicles 5:16 we are told of the “borders” of the territory of the tribe of Gad, i.e., the farthest distance one could go out and still be in the territory of Gad. And that accounts for the words “limits” and “end” above. In Psalm 68:20 (68:21, Heb.) the psalmist praises Jehovah God as the one to whom belongs the “issues” from death, or the “escapes” from death, as above. But what about the expression “starting point” in our definitions above?

The phrase “starting point” is one lexicographer’s effort to overcome the difficulty of translating our word literally in Proverbs 4:23. Others use the word “sources.” And these are

surely good words to use to convey the message of the verse. But it is interesting simply to translate the word literally and build a word picture that sticks in the mind: “Keep thy heart with all diligence for from it (are) the exits of (i.e. into) life.”

Several years ago I stood in the center-stage of an old Roman amphitheatre on the site of Beth-Shan, the city to whose walls the bodies of King Saul and his sons were fastened by the Philistines (1 Sam. 31:10-12). As I stood looking from the stage outward I saw exits at regular intervals in the tiers of seats before me. I could see the sunlight through them. I remember them well because our guide called them vomitoria (When a performance was concluded the theatre “vomited” out the spectators through these openings).

As I look back now I think of that theatre and its exits with the interesting name; and it occurs to me that nothing could go out of the theatre through those vomitoria that had not come in the same way. And that seems to be what the wise man is telling us in Proverbs 4:23. “Be very careful about guarding your heart--whatever you let into it will come out again--the entrances are also exits.”

Changing to another word picture let me suggest that every Christian needs to memorize this verse and learn to think of his heart as a sort of citadel or fortress. Within the fortress preparation is made to send soldiers out to deal with an evil enemy in an evil environment (1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 5:16). If poor materials and provisions are brought in through the doors of the fortress, ill-equipped soldiers will go out of them.

What kinds of movies do you watch? What kinds of books do you read? What kinds of friends are your closest? I remember making a talk on this proverb and the word tosa’ah one night at prayer-meeting. One of the brethren whose work involves the use of computers said, afterward, “I get the point. We have the same thing at the office: ‘Garbage in; garbage out.’”

I said, "What do you mean? I know nothing about computers."

He said, "Simple; a computer functions on what you feed it---feed it garbled data and you get garbled output---'Garbage in; garbage out.'"

Christian, guard your heart with ferocity. You are becoming what you let into your heart--and in due time it will all come out the exits of your heart into your daily life and the lives of those you love (Matt. 12:34-35).

#### "DEPART"

**Greek word: analuein**

**Meaning: loose, untie, return, depart**

This word may appear to be a bit of a jumble, because of the seemingly unrelated meanings given above. But it will help us to see that these varied definitions are easily drawn from the same verb if we look at its fundamental meaning. Arnt and Gingrich say that the basic idea of this verb and its cognate noun, *analusis*, is "loosing" in the same sense of the "breaking up" or "dissolution" of a thing (*Lexicon*, p. 57).

The verb is used two, possibly three, times in the Greek New Testament. In Acts 16:26 in a variant reading it is used transitively to describe how "everyone's bands were loosed" when a great earthquake freed Paul and Silas and their fellow prisoners in the jail in Philippi. In Luke 12:36 it is used intransitively to describe the "return" of a bridegroom from his wedding and the obligation of his servants to be ready to receive him.

In its third usage this word gets next to all of us in a hurry because it talks about death and dying. All of us know it is coming, even more surely than taxes, and we need to hold a scriptural view of death. Such a view will fortify us for the challenges to our faith and faithfulness that confront us each day. This third usage is found in Philippians 1:23 in which Paul said he had "a desire to depart and be with Christ." And the cognate noun, *analusis*, is used to describe precisely the same concept in Paul's beautiful valedictory speech in 2 Timothy 4:6: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."

Perhaps many of those who read these lines will be familiar with the treatment of these two passages that William Barclay has given us in his *Daily Study Bible*. What follows is really a summary of his analysis of

*analuein* and *analusis* in his comments on Philippians 1:23 and 2 Timothy 4:6.

Barclay dips into his seemingly bottomless well of classical Greek learning to help us get the flavor of *analuein* so we can taste the goodness of the word as Paul used it and *analusis* in these two passages. He says this word group was used in ancient times to describe: 1) The loosening of mooring ropes, the pulling of anchors and setting sail of a ship. Anyone who has watched a great ship stand out to sea knows what a mixture of emotions the sight generates. Those on shore and those on the ship are separated, yet there is the thrill of new things happening, new relationships, and, for those on board, escape from the cares of life ashore.

2) It was used to describe the loosening of tent pins, striking tents and breaking camp of armies. How many soldiers in this world's dreadful history of war and killing have longed to hear the command, "Break camp; we're going home!" 3) It was the word for the unyoking of an animal from the shafts of a cart of plough. We seldom see animals in harness for a full day of ploughing anymore, or to draw milk wagons, or drag monstrous logs out of forests. But each of us knows that it is to feel that we are beasts of burden, with the weight of the world on our shoulders. Paul knew that feeling (2 Cor. 11:28). Soon the harness would be lifted from his weary body.

4) *Analuein* and *analusis* were used for the loosening of bonds or fetters. Out of 100 million people in the first century Roman world, 60 million were slaves--property, to be sold, beaten, abused or worked to death as their masters saw fit. To have one's shackles broken off and to receive one's freedom was a great blessing in those days. Paul looked at his death and dying like that. He was about to be delivered into real and final freedom.

5) Finally this word family was used for the idea of problem solving. They have come down to us and into our own language almost unchanged in spelling: "analyze" and "analysis." Paul did not look on his departure, his death, as an unsolvable problem. On the contrary! He looked at his death as the solving of a problem (2 Cor. 5:1-2). He was ready, and he welcomed his **departure**.

## The Cost Of Faithful Preaching

by Tom Moody

Paul, as a preacher of the gospel, was not ashamed of the gospel and was determined to declare "all the counsel of God" Acts 20:27.

In the touching farewell address from Paul to the elders from Ephesus in Acts 20, Paul reminds them of his work among them, and that he "shrank not" (ASV, verse 20). Paul did not lose his courage when the pressure was on.

Paul knew very well that such strength and courage had a price! He was willing to pay that price. Read Acts 20:19 and consider the cost for Paul in being a faithful preacher.

### HUMILITY OF MIND

Paul had to give up all pride in order to serve the Lord. His initial obedience required humility as he was struck down by the one he had been persecuting, Acts 22:1-16. Being a Christian meant renouncing the worldly prominence of his former life, Galatians 1:13-14. Who of us have had to give up and renounce more than did Paul?

### TEARS

1. **Tears for the lost** - Paul understood the urgent need for the gospel. He had compassion for the lost (Cf. Psalm 126:5-6).

2. **Tears because of false teaching** - To see the matchless good news of Christ which he loved so deeply be perverted must have brought many tears to Paul's eyes, Acts 13:9-10; Acts 15:1-2.

3. **Tears because of the folly and weakness of brethren** - Despite all his efforts, some would be enticed by the world or by false doctrine, Gal. 1:6-7; 4:9-11; Gal. 3:1; 5:7.

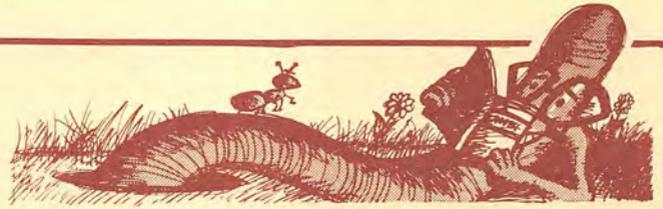
### TEMPTATIONS

Discouragement and fear must have tempted Paul at times not to preach (though he did anyway) Acts 18:9-10; 1 Corinthians 2:1-3.

Paul, like you and me, was tempted to sin, 1 Corinthians 9:27.

Paul was willing to suffer, yet endure, that he might have heaven. What about you?

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**THE DRAMA OF CHRISTIANITY**  
by S.L. Morris (Baker: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1982, paperback, 150 pages, \$4.95.

This book was first published by the Presbyterian Committee of Publication in 1928 and was just recently brought back into print. While I can't agree with the author's view of the "Interpretation of the Book of Revelation," it was a unique approach to the book.

The author argues that the visions recorded by John do not occur in chronological succession. He believes that each represents the same series of events, placed in entirely new settings and viewed from different perspectives. The seven visions are seven cycles, each detailing with the past, present, and future of the Christian dispensation.

I found myself agreeing with part of what he said on the seven churches, but then we started drifting further apart when we moved into the seven seals, trumpets, beasts, etc. My library probably contains more books on the Revelation than any other book of the Bible. Although I can't agree with him, I found it to be a very interesting approach to the book.

**YOUR MANNERS ARE SHOWING**  
by Eugene Baker (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1980, paperback, 111 pages, \$5.95.

This volume is one of six in the "Living the Good Life Series." These books are mainly designed for ages 6 to 12. The simple text and illustrations help explain feelings and needs as children relate to neighbors, friends, and family.

This particular book teaches that good manners are an important way of

showing kindness and respect for others. It is a short handbook about etiquette, covering everything from a refusal to be grumpy with others when you get up in the morning to keeping the elbows off the table. This would be a great book for parents and children to read together.

**ELLEN G. WHITE & INSPIRATION**  
by Maurice Barnett (Gospel Anchor: Louisville, Kentucky), 1983, paperback, 70 pages, \$2.50.

Do you feel inadequate to talk to members of the Seventh Day Adventist? Then you need to read the seven chapters of this little booklet. It is written to inform the non-Adventist and to challenge the thinking of the members of this cult about what they have accepted as their authority.

This book has one of the most complete bibliographies that can be found in most books. Barnett gives dates, places, names of books or magazines, page numbers, etc. He gets right to the main issue of whether or not Ellen G. White is a prophetess from God. White taught, and Adventists believe, that there is no difference between Mrs. White's inspiration and that of the Bible. The book takes the quotes from the Adventists and shows the absurdity of them.

The final chapter in the book shows some promises that White made to her followers that were never fulfilled.

If you can arrange a study with a member of the Adventist cult, this would be an excellent little book to try to get them to read.

**THE WISE WOMAN KNOWS** by Bessie Patterson (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1982, paperback, 135 pages, \$4.80.

The author encourages you to actually study the Bible, not just books about the Bible. She states it is simple as possible: "To be wise, there are certain things you must know." This volume covers such important issues as learning that contentment is not

dependent on circumstances, peace requires effort, the road to happiness may lead through a vale of tears, and knowledge must be sought and used for the right purpose.

The various chapters shows what the wise woman must know in order to be considered wise. Included is a knowledge of her heavenly father, herself, her opportunities, her freedom, and her destination.

This would make a handy gift or suitable for use in a private or public Bible class for ladies.

**WITHIN THE HALLS OF PILATE**  
by David T. Lusk (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 132 pages, \$4.50.

If you have any kind of imagination at all, you can read this small paperback and imagine that you were standing with Jesus before the Roman governor. Lusk examines the character of Pilate closely. He searches into history to the days of the trial and crucifixion of our Lord. The nine chapters are then outlined at the end of the book, making it an excellent devotional study or a springboard from which nine sermons could be preached. This book should help you appreciate the Lord's agony, mockery of a trial, His sacrifice, and the role Pilate played in it all.

**THE INDWELLING OF DEITY** by Maurice W. Lusk, III (Guild of Scribes: Atlanta, Georgia), 1980, paperback, 106 pages, \$4.95.

This book may be small, but it is sure packed with thought-provoking material. The question of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit has been a subject of many debates, articles, and books. Many brethren have concluded that the question is unanswerable. Lusk, Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor of New Testament Language at Southeastern Biblical Institute in Atlanta, argues that "No man has the right to expect his position to be accepted or respected if he cannot produce adequate evidence to sustanti-

ate it. If one holds a position he thinks valid and sound, then he must present the evidence or logical argumentation warranting the conclusion he has drawn." He continues the foreword to the book by saying, "If one cannot substantiate his position by logical argumentation nor remove the difficulties raised in a refutation of his position, he has no right to lay claims to rationality while continuing to affirm that position. . . . One comes to the conclusions he does because the evidence logically leads him there. . . ."

The author examines the six Greek locatives stating that the Spirit of God is in the believer. He then points out the sixteen Greek locatives stating the fact that Christ is in some way in the believer and eight Greek locatives in the New Testament affirming the fact that God is in us. He then demands that we be consistent. He asks, "Why should our reasoning be any different with reference to those New Testament teachings concerning the indwelling of God's Spirit in us than of those affirming the indwelling of the Father and the Son in us?"

This is one of the finest books I have read on this subject. The author examines the Old and New Testament passages that bear on the question. He defines terms, looks at concepts, and argues of consistency. You will enjoy studying it.

**MARRIAGE, DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS AND PAUL** by Maurice W. Lusk, III (Guild of Scribes: Atlanta, Georgia), 1982, paperback, 183 pages, \$7.95.

The depth of study in this book is possibly reflected in the five-page bibliography at the end. This volume is a collection of exegetical essays by Lusk, with an appendix on "What Constitutes Marriage?" with essays by Jerry Gross, Gary Headrick, and Lusk.

The author feels that there are "some issues so complicated as to warrant the expertise of a specialist (i.e., one having paid the academic price to speak with authority within his discipline). It just may be the case that a great deal of the problem with reference to the controversy over the New Testament teaching on divorce and remarriage is that the issue is more complex than many have assumed."

The book starts with an explanation of the art of interpretation and then

moves into an exegetical analysis of Matthew 19:1-12. This volume deals with such controversial subjects as to whether or not all men are amenable to the authority of Christ, "not under bondage" of I Cor. 7, the Warren-Fuqua debate, Greek terms for marriage and divorce, "unequally yoked" of 2 Cor. 6:14, "one flesh" of Gen. 2:24, social customs, and much, much more. This is a very thorough study on a very complicated and controversial subject.

**ROMANS FOR EVERY MAN**, edited by Melvin D. Curry (Florida College: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1983, hardback, 198 pages, \$11.95.

Mr. Curry and the Bible faculty at Florida College tried to put together a lectureship to show that Romans, often viewed as such a complicated book that only mature preachers know enough about to even ask questions, is really a book for every man. No themes are more basic or important than those that involve the nature of God, the nature of man, and the nature of God's plan of redemption.

This book was not designed to be a full commentary on every verse of Romans. It is sort of a cross between a mini-commentary and a book of sermons. It is a valuable tool for any library on some vital and pertinent topics.

**MINISTERING OBEDIENCE TO CHRIST: STUDIES IN SECOND CORINTHIANS**, edited by Melvin D. Curry (Florida College: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1984, hardback, 195 pages, \$12.95.

Many people have studied First Corinthians, but for some reason Second Corinthians has been a neglected book. The sixteen contributors to this book have helped us gain a better insight to the life and labors of Paul. These studies go right to the heart and aid us in learning what our "ministry" is. The emotional exhortations go straight to the root of what a Christian's life is all about, giving practical advice to both Christians and congregations about matters that range from "Spiritual Comfort," "Sorrow and Joy," to "Divine Jealousy" and "Merchandising the Church."

The "ministry" discussed in this book is not just for a few preachers, but it shows how it applies to every Christian's life of service for the Lord.

I'm sure you will enjoy studying this book.

**EERDMANS' HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE**, edited by David and Pat Alexander (Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, hardback, 680 pages, \$24.95.

During the past ten years, well over a million copies of this book have been put in print in a score of languages around the world. The text of this new revised edition remains essentially the same, corrected and updated where necessary. It takes account of the new English translations of the Bible which have come into wide use since the publication of the first edition in 1973. Many of the illustrations, maps, and charts have been revised.

The mammoth volume includes a complete index section on people, places, events, and themes; 28 charts, giving historical and background information in visual form; 68 maps, giving locations at the points where they are needed; 60 articles on the setting and use of the Bible and on subjects of more specialized interest; 437 pictures, 363 in full color, vividly portraying the world of the Bible.

This would be a wonderful addition to any church's library to encourage teachers to bring in a visual effect to their Bible lessons. The lovely pictures really make the Bible passage "Come alive."

**HONESTY** by Jane Belk Moncure (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1980, hardback, 31 pages, \$5.95.

This volume is one of the eight books available in the "What Does the Bible Say?" series. Each book presents one Scripture verse. The simple text and full-color illustrations show children how they can live as they should. This book explains that honesty isn't always easy, but it's always best, and that is what pleases God. The book encourages children to think and learn how to apply Bible teachings to their daily lives.

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## GENESIS

by Bob Buchanan

**T**he title given to the first book of the Bible is *Genesis*. This name is taken from the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament. In the Hebrew Bible, where books are named for their first words, it is called *Bereshith*, "in the beginning." As this is the book of beginnings, the title is quite appropriate. In the German Bible, however, Genesis is known as *The First Book of Moses*, with other books of the Pentateuch successively numbered.

Several beginnings are recorded in Genesis. We find the account of the beginnings of the world and man, of the home and the civil society, of liberty and law, of sin and death, of the redemptive promise, of the elements of true religion (altar, sacrifice, and priesthood), of the origin of diverse languages and nations, of the origin of the Hebrew nation as a specially chosen people through whom the Messiah would come into the world. As C.C. Crawford said: "In view of these sublime themes, especially in their relation to the fundamental problems of the origin, nature and destiny of man, what a lacuna there would be in man's knowledge, and especially in his moral and spiritual understanding, had the Book of Genesis never been written!" (*Genesis The Book of Beginnings*, College Press, page 43).

Genesis covers the historical period from creation to the descent of the Hebrew people into Egypt in the days of Joseph. It progresses from the general to the specific, from world history to Israelite history. Charles Pfeiffer observed: "The first eleven chapters deal with mankind: his creation, fall, the flood which destroyed the race--except for Noah and his family--and the diversion of the world subsequent to the flood. These chapters are the introduction to the main theme of the book, the call of Abraham and God's dealings with him

and his 'seed' or descendants. . . . The history contained in Scripture is never a bare recital of facts. It always has a purpose. Many facts are omitted, particularly those which do not have a bearing on the purpose of the writer. Because the purposes of God centered in the nation of Israel, the early history of mankind is outlined with a view to its bearing on the call of Abraham. The great nations of antiquity are mentioned as their histories and destinies are related to Israel. We can learn much about the Sumerians, the Babylonians, the Egyptians and the Hittites from extra-Biblical sources. The Bible, however, is a history of God's purposes concerning Abraham's 'seed.' Ultimately blessing comes through that seed to 'all the family of the earth.' but that part of the promise to Abraham is in the distant future as we study Genesis." (*The Book of Genesis*, Baker, pages 5-6).

### AUTHOR

Although most Jewish and Christian sources attribute Genesis, along with the other books of the Pentateuch, to Moses, the name of Moses does not appear in the first book of the Bible. He is the central figure of the Pentateuch and is represented as writing certain parts of it (Ex. 17:14; 24:4-8; Num. 33:1-2; Deut. 31:9, 22, 24).

The New Testament regards Moses as the author of the Pentateuch. "For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me" (John 5:46). "Did not Moses give you the law?" (John 7:19). "If they hear not Moses and the prophets. . ." (Luke 16:31).

Certainly God is the ultimate author of Genesis and all the other books of the Bible, but He breathed into the mind of Moses the thoughts and words that he should write. Thus Moses knew information that no man could have known without revelation, such as the details of creation. Moses

was also able to write about the things with which he was familiar without error (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21).

The recognition of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch does not deny the possibility, or even the probability of later editorial revision. We know the account of his death had to be added by a later writer (Deut. 34). Some scholars believe that Joshua, the successor of Moses, may have written the last chapter of Deuteronomy. And it is highly possible that Ezra edited and/or updated certain historical facts in the preservation of the Scripture after the return from Babylon.

### DIVISIONS

Genesis divides itself into ten parts. Each of these divisions begins with some such words as "These are generations (or history) of. . ." Genesis 1:1 to 2:3 serves as an introduction and account of the creation. The rest of the book is divided into these ten accounts:

1. The generations of heaven and earth; 2:4-4:26.
2. The generations of Adam; 5:1-6:8.
3. The generations of Noah; 6:9-9:29.
4. The generations of the sons of Noah; 10:1-11:9.
5. The generations of Shem; 11:10-26.
6. The generations of Terah; 11:27-25:11.
7. The generations of Ishmael; 25:12-18.
8. The generations of Isaac; 25:19-35:39.
9. The generations of Esau: ch. 36.
10. The generations of Jacob; chs. 37-50.

### MAJOR THEMES

1. **The Creation Account** - A strong emphasis must always be put on the opening phrase in the Bible: "In the beginning God. . ." It is the power behind the entire concept of creation. The first seven words of the Old Testament assert vividly what Herbert Spencer discovered and taught in the latter part of the 19th century--that

everything in existence is based on five fundamentals: time ("in the beginning"), force ("God), action ("created"), space ("the heavens), and matter ("and the earth").

Liberal scholars have labeled the first eleven chapters of Genesis as "Hebrew myth." Attempts to harmonize Genesis and the theory of evolution are useless. Either we accept God and His word or we reject it.

Elsewhere in Scripture, these chapters are always treated as historical (see Ex. 20:11; Rom. 5:12-14). Jesus Christ referred to the creation account and endorsed it as historical (Matt. 19:4-6). If Genesis 1-11 is not historical, then one would have to conclude that Jesus is not the Son of God.

**2. The Account of the Flood of Noah's Time** - Several liberal scholars have tried to make light of the Biblical account of universal flood by arguing that various accounts of a great flood have been found in almost every part of the world. There were stories of a great flood repeated among Babylonians, Greeks, North American Indians, and even some African tribes. But what does that prove (or disprove)? Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Moses preserved a rather detailed and historical account of the flood. It should not come as a surprise to find traces of something the magnitude of the flood in other traditions. Our confidence of the Bible should cause us to accept the account given through Moses as the correct one and to view the others as corruptions and traditions.

**3. The Promise Made To Abraham** - The promise recorded in Genesis 12:1-9 had three elements: (1) A great nation would arise from his descendants, (2) His descendants would possess the land of Canaan, and (3) All nations of the world would be blessed through his seed.

All features of the promise have been completely fulfilled. The nation promise was fulfilled in Israel (Gen. 32:27-28; Ex. 19-20). The land promise was fulfilled when it was possessed under Joshua (Josh. 21:43-45). The seed promise was fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah (Gal. 3:16).

All the promises ever made to the Hebrew nation were either fulfilled or negated due to their apostasy (see Deut. 28:1,15; Josh. 24:20). The events in the Middle East today are not the

unfolding of a land promise of prophecy. No special promises remain to the Jews as a racial or national entity (Rom. 2:28-29).

#### A SURVEY OF THE TEXT

Chapter 1 deals with the creation of the universe and setting everything in order. The oft repeated "And God spake. . .and it was so" tells us that everything came into being at God's Word.

Although many want to argue with me, I am convinced that the seven days of creation were consecutive periods of twenty-four hours. It is true that the word day sometimes means a long period of time (Heb. 3:15; John 8:56), but it appears to simply mean just twenty-four hours in the creation account. Notice that the days are divided into evenings and mornings, according to the Hebrew custom. How could a long period of time (covering thousands of millions of years) be said to have an evening and morning? Notice, too, that the plants were made on the third day. The sun did not appear until the fourth day. How could plants have lived through a "day" millions of years long without sunlight? Adam was created on the sixth day. He lived through the sixth and seventh days in the garden of Eden. Some time after the seventh day he was expelled from the garden. His wife bore Cain and Abel. They grew up, and Cain killed Abel. At the birth of another son, Seth, Adam was only 130 years old (Gen. 5:3). So the sixth and seventh days cannot refer to periods of time thousands of years in duration. And one final thought on this point is that the Sabbath day of the Jews was a twenty-four hour period, and was observed as a memorial of the seventh day of creation (Ex. 20:11).

Chapter 2 shows the creation of man, that he is not a self-existent being. Man was not made until the whole of the earth was properly formed. Man was the climactic glory of God's creation, made in God's image, and everything else was prepared for him before he was brought into existence. Woman, taken from his side, was presented to man to be his companion and helper. Each is the perfect complement of the other; neither is to degrade or belittle the other. The first home, the unit of society, was established and every detail needful for the happiness of man

was provided.

Chapter 3 has to do with the temptation and the fall. In spite of the criticisms that have been offered, this shows that the free moral agency of man is consistent with all of God's laws and justice in dealing with His creatures. Man was not made a robot and "forced" to obey God. God specifically forbade Adam and Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had placed certain limitations. Temptation is that desire to go beyond those limitations. Man wants to throw off the restraints and be his own god. He is inclined to be a rebel. This leads to sin! When Adam and Eve succumbed to the temptation of the serpent, God fulfilled his warnings of punishment and inflicted the death penalty.

Beginning with chapter 4 we see the growth of sin through Cain until the covenant with Noah after the flood. We see how God's plan begins to unfold gradually. Due to his being a murderer, the genealogy of Cain is dropped, and Seth is taken up. Next, Ishmael is mentioned and dropped, being followed by Isaac to the close of the book. The chapter also gives the genealogy of Noah and the increasing of wickedness of man. It seems that sin continued to beget sin. As people increased on the earth, so also did sin. A truth began to unfold; the longer man lived, the more he learned of evil, and soon his thoughts were almost completely engulfed in various types of evil. There was nothing man would not do (6:11-13).

Chapter 5 lists the generations of Adam, showing the length of their lives on earth. It is interesting to note that Methuselah was the oldest man, living 969 years. He was born 243 years before Adam died, lived all of these years, and died in the year of the flood. We can only speculate as to whether he died months or weeks before the flood or was he among the evil destroyed in the flood waters. Doesn't it seem strange that a man could live 969 years and yet have nothing to his credit worthy of mention in God's book of posterity?

In Chapter 6, God commanded Noah to construct the ark according to definite specifications. Noah obeyed. Henry Halley said: "It was a gigantic task to build the Ark, gather the animals and store the necessary food. Noah and his three sons could not have

done it alone. Being grandsons of Methuselah, and great-grandson of Enoch, he may, as the Babylonian tradition says, have been a City-King; and may have employed thousands of men in the work. And he may have been the best part of 120 years in doing it (6:3), and was undoubtedly the subject of unceasing ridicule, but undaunted in his faith. . .” (Halley’s Bible Handbook, Zondervan, page 73).

Only eight souls were saved on that ark. God made a covenant with Noah after the ark had come to rest on Mt. Ararat. He placed a rainbow in the sky as a memorial to His promise that He would never again destroy the earth with a flood (9:8-17). It would seem that man would have learned that the wages of sin is death. But such was not the case. It was only a short time before even Noah became drunk and his sons were lewd. Satan doesn’t give up easily.

We look at the beginning of the nations through the three sons of Noah in Chapter 10. In the course of time people again became numerous. Their ambitious desires once more led to sin. Chapter 11 describes their desire to “make us a name” (v. 4) and built a tower into heaven. The Lord confused their tongues and scattered them. “Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter

them abroad upon the face of all the earth” (v. 9). From this confusion of the nations, we see the Messianic tribe emerge in Shem to bring Abraham forth to fit into God’s plan.

Chapters 12 thru 25 give a more detailed plan and more definite promises of God’s blessings for fallen men. From chapter 13 through 20, we find Abraham and Lot separating, God’s covenant with Abraham, then the destruction of the cities of the plain, Sodom and Gomorrah. Chapter 21 gives the birth of Isaac, the child of promise. Abraham sees his mistake in trying to aid God by having a child by Hagar, his wife’s maid. He is shown that Isaac is to be the one through whom the promises would be fulfilled. Hagar and her child, Ishael, are then cast out. The supreme test of Abraham’s faith is seen in chapter 22, when he is commanded to offer Isaac. His faith holds firm. Chapters 23 thru 25:18 record the death of Sarah, the marriage of Isaac, and the death of Abraham and Ishmael.

Genesis 25:19 thru chapter 26 deal with Isaac, the father of Esau and Jacob. The older son sold his birthright to the younger (25:29-34). Isaac moved to Gerar and repeated the same sort of deception against Abimelech II that his father had committed earlier (26:1-16). The marriages of Esau are also recorded (26:34-35).

We then turn our attention to the life of Jacob, who later was to give

God’s people their name Israel. After a series of unfortunate events in which Jacob obtained his brother’s birthright by deceit, Jacob left home as an exile and had an encounter with the Lord in which the Abrahamic covenant was renewed in him (28:1-22). His life with Laban in Syria is related (29:1-33:15). He finally returned to his home and made peace with Esau (33:16-35:20). The posterity of both men is recorded (35:21-36:43). The nation of Israel emerged from Jacob’s descendants.

Chapter 37 begins a new period with the jealousy of Jacob’s sons over Joseph. This jealousy leads to the selling of Joseph into slavery and he is carried into Egypt. Providential events exalted him under Pharaoh (39:1-41:57).

Chapters 42 thru 45 bring Joseph and his brethren together again as a result of the great famine at that time. Joseph called his father to Egypt and was reunited with his family (45:27-50:14).

The book closes with the deaths of Jacob and Joseph, but with the Israelites prospering in Egypt. Joseph shows, by commanding his bones to be carried out, that they are not to remain in Egypt always. His body was taken from Egypt at the time of the exodus (Ex. 13:19) and buried in Shechem (Josh. 24:32).

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## THE JUDGMENT DAY



by Roger Hillis

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this judgment.” (Heb. 9:27). As certain as death itself, all men will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. The Bible reveals the following points about that last great day:

1) CHRIST WILL BE THE JUDGE. “Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained. . .” (Acts 17:31). “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the son.” (John 5:22).

2) THE JUDGMENT WILL BE UNIVERSAL. “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body. . .” (2 Cor. 5:10). “So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.” (Rom. 14:12).

3) BIBLE IS THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT. “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” (Rev. 20:12).

4) ONLY GOD KNOWS WHEN THE JUDGMENT WILL BE. “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.” (Mk. 13:32). “But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night. . .” (2 Pet. 3:10).

Are you prepared for that day? Have you obeyed the gospel? “. . .work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Phil. 2:12).

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# Learning From A Decade Of Mormon Growth

by Dudley Ross Spears

**T**he growth figures for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints have just been released. The figures show a fantastic success story of growth and expansion. Mr. Spencer W. Kimball is president of the LDS Church and was "ordained" exactly ten years before the figures were released. He is given the lion's share of credit for this outstanding growth. Here is a brief summary of their figures, published in the December, 1983 issue of *Ensign*, an official LDS periodical:

- \* **Membership grew from 3,321,556 members in 1973 to 5,450,000 in 1983, a 64 percent growth rate.**
- \* **An increase from 17,400 full time "missionaries" in 1973 to 27,400 in 1983, a thousand each year, reflecting an increase of 175 "missions" in this period.**
- \* **The number of "stakes" (their word for districts, DRS) grew from 630 in 1973 to 1,465 in 1983, an estimated 133 percent growth.**
- \* **They "dedicated" 26 new temples and are planning for 16 more new ones.**

Kimball is the key figure in this great expansion. Gordon B. Hinckley, Second Counselor in the First Presidency of the LDS Church remarked, "This decade of President Kimball has been remarkable in terms of Church growth, increased activity, and of a spirit of unity among the members of the Church across the world." He continued, "The great emphasis given to missionary work by President Kimball has born rich fruit. He has enunciated in clear and certain terms the tremendous responsibility of the Church to carry the restored gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. His views have been prophetic in this regard. The tremendous enlargement of opportunity without regard for race or color has been noteworthy, as all will recognize." (*Ensign*, Dec. 1983, pp. 10-11.)

In the same issue of *Ensign*, Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve, adds another insight into Kimball's great success, saying,

**"President Kimball has not only sharpened our focus on the mission of the Church--to proclaim the gospel, perfect the Saints, redeem the dead (their practice of baptizing live people for dead ones, DRS)--he leads the way to its accomplishments."**

Surely there are some things we can learn from this. While no sort of endorsement is placed on what they teach, a look at how they get to people should be worth looking at. Jesus endorsed the methods of a man guilty of fraud, saying that an unjust steward "had done wisely, for the sons of this world are for their own generation wiser than the sons of light." (Luke 8:16). The skill and prudence of the man are to be admired, and evidently Jesus intended that "sons of light" should copy them. Our imitation of the LDS Church could only extend to the application of some legitimate means to accomplish an equally legitimate end. We would do well to think of the following things they do.

1. They have a zeal to spread the word from door to door to those they consider lost or mixed up about religion.
2. They stress sending new "missionaries" into foreign and domestic fields.
3. They encourage personal sacrifice on the part of the members. (They have no paid preachers or missionaries.)
4. They encourage a spirit of unity among the members of their cult.
5. They have developed a better "racial" attitude--disregarding the evident force they felt in making that change.

How often do we observe, "If they can do all this with error, why can't we do some of it with the truth?" We offer the lame excuses, "well, you know people will take a fraud before they will the genuine thing." That might be true in some things, but does that excuse our inactivity? We say, "I don't think going from door to door will work," having never tried it. Christians should realize that the Mormons make it work and their figures are hard to argue with. Our real problem is that we do not have the

same burning zeal for the spread of truth that they seem to have for the spread of error.

They encourage unity among their members, and it is a unity based on taking their message to others. What has been the force of our thrust in our generation? Has it been the expansion of God's kingdom on earth by a dedicated spread of the gospel, or has it been an internal house cleaning and purge that has degenerated into ugly bickering, useless nitpicking and senseless divisions? One can almost hear the vocal chorale rising to a crescendo, alarmingly declaring, "We must save the church, though." True, dear friend, but perhaps a good way to save it is to save it from internal decay and self-destruction by getting to work in evangelizing the world, starting with our own neighborhoods.

The LDS Church is widely known for their emphasis on family unity. We could learn a lesson here. The family that spends time together and concentrates on remaining together will stay together. In our mad rush to scoop up all the worldly goods we can,, we often leave a family either shaking or broken in the wake. When was the last time you and your family spent an entire evening together?

There is no question about it--the LDS Church succeeds in reaching people with their message. We don't seem to be able to. Can it be that being wedded to an alleged "latter day revelation" makes one more zealous than another who just takes the Bible to be the true and only word of God? Can it be that it is easier to get people to accept the machinations of Joseph Smith, Jr. that it is to get them to accept what Christ, Paul, Peter, James, John and other inspired men taught in the New Testament? Who really believes that? The early church succeeded with the same truth we profess to believe in 1984. We could succeed with it also, if in our own generation we learn a few things from the children of this world.



# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**"What must I do to be popular at school?"**

**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13



It is impossible to please everyone. If we are faithful to God, then we are sure to be unpopular with people who are not faithful. We should try to please God rather than man. But the Bible is a good place to go to see how to be a friend and make friends:

Do good to all. Love one another. Be fair and just. Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. Have a good ear and a controlled tongue.

Remember, if you want to **have** a friend, **be** a friend!

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 16



To be popular at school I think you must be nice to everyone no matter their race, color or religion. You should try and be involved in clubs or sports. If you're just there people are less likely to notice you--so get involved. But most of all don't make being popular the most important thing in your life.

You also must have self-confidence. It's real hard to like someone who doesn't like himself.

You must always be yourself and don't be fake, that would turn people off to you. Don't gossip or lie. People want friends which they can trust and believe in.

**Gretchen Manco**  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 14



This question could be answered in 3 words: **Be Your Self!** Being yourself means being able to do what you need to and not worrying about what the "In Crowd" will say. It means being able to stand up for your convictions without being wavered by your peers.

This may even mean not being able to go to dances, (such as Homecomings, Jr. and Sr. Proms), wild parties, concerts in which there is a lot of satanic worship, etc. I hope that being able to "be popular" is just being able to be yourself and not having to be "molded" by peers, so you will be liked more. I believe that if someone cannot like you for what you are, then you haven't really lost anything, because a **true friend** will like you even though you may have different convictions.

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



To be popular in school you must have a friendly and positive attitude. To have friends you must be a friend. Participate in things

such as sports and other activities that help you get to know others. A positive attitude will help you get along with people better than most things. Always smiling and being in a good mood will make people want to be around you.

Being popular is good, but we shouldn't let it control our lives. In being popular we set an example and, hopefully, it will be a good example.

If people look up to us as Christians, they'll want to do what's right. If being popular means we have to do things like drink or other things we don't want to do, we should find other friends who'll appreciate us for what we are. Be trustworthy because people don't want to associate with gossipers or "big mouths." We should try to be well-liked, but we can't forget our main purpose in life--To live right and teach others and practice what we believe. We must strive to go to heaven and live christian lives not only while in church but out in the world, too.

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



First of all, lets define popular. It means "held in favor by many people." To have favor by many people, you have to have likeable characteristics. You need them at school, at work or wherever you go. Here are some characteristics of a popular person:

He is a Christian with a Christian attitude. This is one of the most important things because you need to show your friends and other people your likeness of Christ. They need to see your good example. He builds up others and is nice, kind, and friendly towards them. A popular person is an honest person. He is one that can be trusted and is trustworthy. You can trust him with anything. If he says he will be somewhere at a certain time, he'll show up on time.

He shows respect towards others. He lets other people speak and listens quietly.

He shows respect to his parents and to his elders.

If you are not born a popular person, you make yourself one with these characteristics. But in being a popular person, don't become like the world. Always stay like Christ.



**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 16

Everyone would like to be popular among their peers. Just how far one is willing to go to gain this popularity is a question all must ask themselves. As Christians, one must remember who they are and who they are following. God is all seeing and knows of all that we do.

I think that to be sincerely nice to all, making good friends with those one meets, is the correct course of action. However, when one begins to lie and commit other sins for popularity, they must realize that they are selling their soul. Is popularity worth the loss of a hope of heaven?

### **"What Can I Do To Help?"**

I have been encouraged by letters and phone calls from several of our readers asking what they can do to help in the work of publishing *TODAY*. I might offer the following suggestions:

Is there an upcoming birthday, graduation, or anniversary? Why not consider a gift subscription as a gift?

Would you be willing to pay for a subscription for your public or school library?

And above all, show your copy to all of your friends. The best advertisement we can have is the word-of-mouth of a satisfied subscriber.

# TAKE THIS TO HEART

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

*"A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth. It is better to go to a house of mourning than to go to a house of feasting, for death is the destiny of every man; the living should take this to heart"* (Eccl. 7:1-2 NIV)

The preacher in this cited passage is using a proven effective method of teaching; that of contrasting for the purpose of encouraging the proper course in life. The word "better" is a comparative of "good." It is used to reveal something or someone of greater excellence, advantage, usefulness, etc. Therefore, we must not understand the Holy Spirit to be condemning without limitation the appreciation and enjoyment of life and its many attendant blessings. Surely not, for prior to this the preacher had written, *"Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God. He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart"* (Eccl. 5:19-20 NIV).

It is good and right for the Christian to be happy in Christ. Paul said, *"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say Rejoice"* (Phil. 4:4). He told those at Thessalonica to, *"Rejoice evermore"* (I Thess. 5:16). Furthermore, we have instruction regarding the merit of sharing in the vicissitudes of this life. *"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep"* (Rom. 12:15).

Why, then, is the day of death "better" than the day of birth and going to a house of mourning "better" than going to a house of feasting? The answer may be found by considering the text further. This life is not all there is. Death is the destiny of every man. We, the living, should take this to heart. All of us must meet our destiny or appointment (Heb. 9:27). Knowledge of this inevitability should not destroy our ability for contentment, joy and a productive utilization of the blessings of this present life. However, we should be cognizant continually of the end of all flesh. Such reflection will be good for us, if we are instructed with God's truth. Remember that Paul told

Titus, *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"* (Titus 2:11-14).

In view of the certainty of death and the reliableness of instruction and the efficacy of the redemptive offering, then, *"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you"* (Eph. 4:29-32 NIV). Surely, as we take to heart the common plight of all we will be impressed with the need to serve God truly by helping our fellow creatures, the living, to prepare for the "day of death." This will not be our accomplishment if we feel as do many whose only hope is "under the sun," that we may gain the heights by stepping on the backs of others for whom Christ died.

The brevity of life is a subject of emphasis in Bible teaching. Let us not waste our lives with self-pity and provoked egos, not with fault-finding obsessions. Do not oppress. Do not tear down that which is right and good in another. It will not strengthen you to magnify the weakness of others. God's way is to upbuild and be upbuilt, to edify and be edified, to help and be helped. You are going to die. I am going to die also. Let us take this to heart and gain a "good name" that it may be "better."

## Important Individuals, Powerful Examples

# Influential Women Of the New Testament

by Don Givens

In the New, as well as the Old Testament, God views women as important individuals, and responsible creatures.

Several major characters of the New Testament are ladies - such as;

### 1. Mary - mother of Jesus

Chosen by God. (Lk. 1:26-31)

*"Highly favored. . ."*

Of a humble and lowly background. She was astounded that God would choose her.

She magnified the Lord! (Lk. 1:46-55) God treated her with kindness, reassurance, and kept her from embarrassment and disgrace.

### 2. Elizabeth -

A relative of Mary; the mother of John the Immerser.

A righteous woman (Lk. 1:6). In her old age (v. 7) God removed her humiliation by blessing her with a child. (John)

Her joy was full to overflowing. What an honor to bear the forerunner of the world's Savior. (Lk. 1:39-45)

### 3. Anna - Luke 2:36-38

An elderly woman ("Prophetess") who served faithfully in the temple and looked for Christ's coming!

What joy she felt to see the Savior with her own eyes!

She gave thanks and proclaimed redemption!

### 4. Samaritan Woman at Jacob's well - John 4:5-42

Immoral. Prejudiced. A *"Despised Samaritan"*. But Jesus treated her as valuable! Jesus had great compassion for sinful women.

(Men could lead women astray: See II Tim. 3:6,7)

Jesus spoke to her; told her of *"Water of Life"*. He sought to meet her needs. (vs. 10, 14)

Jesus considered her *"worth saving"*!

Jesus did not behave as the "normal" Jewish male (v. 27). He was

reaching out to a lonely troubled woman, with love and consideration.

He revealed to her that He was the Messiah!

### 5. The "Sinful woman of the city" - Luke 7:36-50

Unsavory, unchaste reputation, (vs. 37, 39). But humble and probably ashamed of her *"many sins"*. (v. 47)

She had heard about Jesus' compassion. She knew He treated women with love and respect and courtesy. Unlike the other men she knew!

She washed Jesus' feet with her tears; her hair; and ceased not to kiss them (v. 45). The male of the house was **shocked**, inhospitable, and discourteous! (vs. 39, 44-46)

But this woman deserved high praise. Jesus ministered to her deepest spiritual needs. He freed her to turn, and live right.

### 6. The Adulterous woman of John 8:1-11

These self-righteous men were using her to entrap Jesus. They cared nothing for the woman.

She must have felt great shame, being made a public spectacle.

But Jesus cared about her as an individual soul. She was of value. He spoke directly to her; did not condemn her; and made her aware of forgiveness. (v. 11)

The men used her as a despised piece of property. . . .but Jesus gave her back her dignity, and motivated her to live a better life.

### 7. Mary and Martha -

Very dear friends of Jesus (John 11:5)

Jesus was frequently welcomed in their home.

One time Jesus rebuked Martha for having her priorities mixed up.

Martha was *"anxious and troubled"*. (Lk. 10:41)

Jesus asserted Mary's right to listen and learn about spiritual

matters!

Jesus was saying that women were intelligent individuals, valuable persons, and had just as much right to study and learn as the man. Lk. 10:42

8. Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Susanna, and "many other women." - Luke 8:1-3

These female associates of Jesus and His apostles supported Jesus' ministry financially!

They helped Him in His work, and followed Him faithfully even up to the cross (Mk. 15:40, 41). And took spices to His tomb. Lk. 23:55, 56.

And Jesus chose a woman (Mary Magdalene) to be the first witness of His resurrection from the dead!!! (John 20:11-18)



### SUMMARY:

In the New Testament women are treated and considered:

1. As worthy valuable persons deserving God's love and concern.
2. As intelligent thinking individuals capable of faith and obedience.
3. As persons with emotional and spiritual needs which Jesus sought to fulfil.
4. As individuals equal to men in worth.
5. As persons deserving of praise, and sometimes of rebuke, but never to be ignored.

### LADIES:

You are special; God made you different, unique, beautiful.

You have intelligence, deeply-felt emotions, creativity and talent.

You have a spirit made in God's image; and a physical body that is wonderfully made.

Don't abuse, misuse, or mistreat yourself.

You can laugh, you can cry  
You can dream, you can sigh  
But only God could care so much  
That for YOU also His Son should die.

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## JOHN MULKEY

From the midst of a long line of preachers John Mulkey emerged as a one of the early advocates in the restoration of New Testament Christianity in Kentucky. He was responsible for converting an entire Baptist congregation near Tompkinsville, Kentucky.

John Mulkey's great-grandfather, Philip Mulkey, was a Baptist preacher in Virginia prior to the American Revolution. In 1780 John's father, Jonathan, moved to east Tennessee along with other settlers from Carolina and Virginia and organized a Baptist church on Boone's Creek. John was born on January 14, 1773.

In 1798 John and his brother Philip moved to Kentucky and settled on Mill Creek, about two miles south-east of Tompkinsville. It had been about 30 years since Daniel Boone first passed this way through the Cumberland Gap.

A year after he was assigned to preach in the Mero District Baptist Association, he became the first minister in Barren County to be

granted a license to perform marriages for the United Baptist Church. Through much hard work he organized the Mill Creek Baptist Church. Records at the meetinghouse show that in 1800 the congregation had 43 members. By 1803 the number had grown to 125. In 1804 a small meeting house was built.

Five years later, in 1809, a division took place at Mill Creek, W.C. Rogers described the events of that year.

**"While John Mulkey was preaching on the 10th chapter of John in William Sim's house, on Cumberland River, and making one of his strongest efforts to establish Calvinism, his own argument convinced himself that the doctrine was false. This roused up the powers of his great mind, and caused him to express a change in his sentiments on unconditional election and some other subjects." This caused great confusion at Mill Creek Church, and also through Stockton's Valley Association. They immediately**



**charged him with heresy, and cited him to appear at the August meeting for 1809, to answer the charge. But not finding him guilty at the August meeting, they agreed to call on five other churches for 'help' in the next trial at the October meeting, as requested, and after investigating the charge, the proposition was made for**



This photo is of the cemetery beside the meeting house. Daniel Boone's sister, Hannah, and many Revolutionary War heroes are buried here.



The log building near Tompkinsville, Kentucky, was shaped in the form of a cross, as was the custom of many turn-of-the-century church buildings.

'all that justify Bro. Mulkey to raise their right hands.' But as the majority were in favor, no more could be done then than to continue the suit till the second Saturday in November. In the November trial, John Mulkey proposed to 'drop all disputes and bear with one another,' but they replied, 'Never, till you come back to the very ground from which you started.' He then proposed a dissolution of the church, to which all agreed; and as many as wished to continue on their old platform, enrolled their names as 'The Church.' But John Mulkey, and

all that went with him in the division, met together on the third Saturday in November, 1809, and after prayer organized a church on 'the Bible alone' - the Bible without human creed, confession or faith, or book of discipline" (Recollections of Men of Faith, W.C. Rogers).

Very little has been written about John Mulkey's life after his decision to go back to "the Bible alone". In 1826, in the first issue of Barton W. Stone's paper, *The Christian Messenger*, there is a note stating that John and his brother Philip had attended a meeting

in "Murfreesborough", Tennessee. In the January, 1832 issue of the *Millennial Harbinger*, Alexander Campbell noted that Mulkey was "Preaching the old gospel in McMinn county. . .with much success."

According to W.C. Rogers, Mulkey had preached over ten thousand sermons and baptized as many converts during his 53 years of preaching.

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## FAULTY MEASURES OF SERMONS

by James W. Boyd

"It could have been preached in any denominational building in the city," is a comment sometimes heard regarding some particular sermon that somebody heard that was preached by one of our brethren. The comment is meant to convey a weakness regarding the sermon, the lack of distinctiveness, something that even those in error would approve. But is that really a very exact and competent measure of a given sermon?

There are many denominational people, even though in gross error regarding the church, the plan of salvation, the manner of worship, and many other matters, who are strong when it comes to moral matters. Should not our brethren be preaching the moral standards of Christ? When we do we should not be too surprised that moral-minded people who differ with us on other essential matters would approve of the lesson. Over the years I have been aggressively active in opposing the advance of the sale of alcoholic beverages and have been very outspoken about it. I have received as much or more support in such efforts from denominational people than I received from even elders of the church where I was preaching at the time. I am equally sure that there are some places among brethren who would cringe if their preacher preached as stout a sermon on moral matters as I have heard denominational clergymen

deliver publicly over radio and television.

A preacher cannot preach on the basic fundamentals that make us distinctive from denominations every sermon he preaches, except possibly with a phrase or two because the subject matter just is not that different from what others might also believe. But that does not make the sermon weak or compromising. If a preacher can be heard time and time and time again and his messages seldom, if ever, make the distinctive plea of New Testament Christianity apart from denominationalism, then there is reason to conclude the preaching is weak and compromising. But on the one given lesson it is neither fair nor competent to dismiss it as being something less than it ought to be simply because it could have been preached in some denominational building and approved.

In my sermons I try to never omit the plan of salvation even if it is only briefly stated or summarized. There is no way to give the plan of salvation without it being distinctive from what denominations will teach. But I am confident I have tried to preach many sermons the subject and content of which, except for the plan of salvation, would be as quickly accepted by some denominationalists as they would my brethren, maybe, sometimes quicker because some of my brethren get

squeamish when certain truths that they dislike are preached.

Let us not be too hasty in judging the value or the soundness of sermons. All sermons must be according to "thus saith the Lord." If they are, and if one preaches the whole counsel of God, both positively and negatively, he will be very distinctive over the long haul. But there just might be certain sermons that are needed with which other people may agree, and they are as sound and Biblical as any other.

Some measure the soundness of a sermon by the number of Scriptures used. Sermons should include the Word of God, and passages pertaining to the given subject should be cited. But some subjects, though solidly based on Scripture, need not have a long array of passages. Many good sermons have been preached from just one verse. It is a mistake to measure a sermon by the mere number of Scriptures quoted or cited. The soundness of a sermon should be measured by whether the Scripture has been handled aright or rightly divided, properly taught and applied.

These two false measures of sermons could lead us to negate some of the best lessons we could ever hear if we fall victim to using them. The real test is: Is it the truth? Is it what God's Word teaches?

In view of these observations, how foolish it is to measure a preacher on one sermon. Brethren make mistakes in hiring preachers on the basis of a "try-out" sermon almost exclusively. It takes more than one delivery to know about a preacher and the message he preaches.

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# The Poet's Page

## I WISH. . .

I wish I could have been there  
When my Lord Jesus was baptized,  
And I wish I could have brushed His face  
When the Bible says He cried.

Oh, that I could have heard His voice  
When from the mountainside He taught,  
Or knelt beside Him lovingly  
When His Father He besought.

And when my Lord & Savior stood,  
On trial before the priest,  
I wish I could have seen Him stand,  
With courage that would not cease.

And when upon the tree He hung,  
With a crowd to gawk and stare,  
I wish I could have told my Lord  
Just how much I really care.

Well, even though I could not see, and  
hear, and touch,  
He knows that I believe in Him and  
love Him very much.

--Greg Litmer  
Indianapolis, IN

## STRENGTH

I need a strength to keep me true  
And straight in every thing I do:  
I need a power to keep me strong  
When I am tempted to do wrong:  
I need a grace to keep me pure  
When passion tries its deadly lure:  
I need a love to keep me sweet  
When hardness and mistrust I meet:  
I need an arm to be my stay  
When dark with trouble grows my way  
And nough on Earth can these afford  
But all is found in Christ my Lord

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## FAILURE

Success and failure walk life's road  
As partners, side by side.  
The only man who hasn't failed  
Is one who hasn't tried.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## PRETEND

Did we worship God this morning  
When we gathered with our friends?  
Did we really worship God?  
Or did we just PRETEND?

Did we worship as we should?  
Did we do the best we could?  
Did we worship as a trend?  
Did we worship, or just PRETEND?

Did we come to church this morning  
That we might be seen of men?  
Did we come and worship God?  
Or did we just PRETEND?

When the prayer was led this morning  
Did we ask forgiveness of our sins?  
Did we really talk to God?  
Or did we just PRETEND?

When the lesson was presented  
Did it really sink within?  
Did we do our best to listen?  
Or did we just PRETEND?

When the blessing had been asked  
And the bread and wine were passed,  
Did we remember Jesus as he met the  
bitter end?  
Did we really worship or did we just  
PRETEND?

When the collection plate was passed  
Did we put a-plenty in?  
Did we truly please the Lord,  
Or did we just PRETEND?

On the Resurrection morning  
Will the Master let us in?  
Or will he say, "Depart from me;  
All you did was just PRETEND?"

When we reach that sad occasion,  
It will be too late our knees to bend.  
Too late to be sorry that  
All we did was just PRETEND.

--Roy McDonald  
Bowling Green, KY

## GOD'S BOOK

A little boy, the Bible found  
Upon a shelf, unread.  
"Whose book is this?" he quietly asked  
"'Tis God's", his mother said.

The lad thumbed through the unread book  
Then said, "Well, Mother, dear,  
Let's give it back to Him today. . .  
Nobody reads it here!"

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## LIFE'S PATHWAY

I have walked down life's pathway  
When the sun shined bright and clear;  
With no clouds to portend trouble,  
And there was not a thing to fear.

Yet I have stumbled on life's pathway  
When there seemed to be no way  
I could cross the gaping chasms  
Nor find rest at the close of day.

Tragedy has been to see me;  
Grief has knocked upon my door.  
I have known both pain and suffering  
A hundred times or more.

I have learned from life's experience  
To accept both good and bad,  
And in everything that happens  
To count my blessings and be glad.

When I look upon my sojourn  
In this mundane sphere below  
I can see that pain and sorrow  
Serve to chasten and make me grow.

If I put things in perspective,  
Casting upon the Lord my care,  
He will give me grace sufficient  
And my burdens gladly share.

I must follow life's uncertain pathway  
Whether rough or smooth or both;  
The Lord will never fail me,  
He can't deny His oath.

When I look at the total picture  
Of my life upon this earth,  
I must confess without reluctance,  
The sad is conquered by the mirth.

--James P. Needham  
Brandon, FL



# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## INFORMATION SOUGHT

Ross Spears plans on studying at Penn State University and would like to worship with brethren who stand against church-supported institutions and the social gospel. If you know of any brethren living in or near State College, Pennsylvania, please contact Ross at Rt. 1 - Box 121A, Alvaton, KY 42122. You may call him at (502) 781-4847.

## A PUBLIC CONFESSION

Under orders from a federal judge, a man stood up in church February 12 and confessed that he had helped sell a stolen truck and then asked the congregation to "forgive me. . .and pray for me." Jesse Smallwood said he didn't approve of the sentence ordered by U.S. District Judge L. Clure Morton. "I think that judge is nuts," Smallwood said, but he agreed it was better than spending a year in prison.

"I'm sorry I have to come to church like this," the 36-year-old Smallwood said softly as he stood in the pulpit of First Baptist Church. Carl F. Yarnell, pastor of the church, stood with his arm around Smallwood's shoulder as Mr. Smallwood stared at the floor and made a 35-second statement. "I would like very much for you to forgive me. . .and pray for me and help me through this thing," he said.

Then Mr. Yarnell prayed: "Help him move on to be a better man and to avoid this kind of thing again."

Smallwood pleaded guilty January 6 to aiding and abetting the sale of a stolen 1981 Ford Bronco. Authorities said Smallwood acted as a middleman in the sale of the Bronco and a stolen 1978 pickup truck. Smallwood claims he didn't know the vehicles were stolen until after he had helped arrange the sale.

Judge Morton first ordered Smallwood to serve a year in prison,

but he reduced the penalty to three years' probation on the condition that he confess publicly in church.

Smallwood also must spend five weekends in jail, beginning this month; pay a \$1,000 fine; and not buy or sell used cars for three years.

On December 30, Judge Morton sentenced another man in the case to post a sign in his front yard for 30 days proclaiming his guilt.

The sign in the yard of Henry Lee McDonald along a state highway near Nashville was black with four-inch white letters that read: "Henry Lee McDonald bought a stolen car. He is a thief."

Smallwood said that he hadn't attended church in years but that he chose First Baptist for his apology because he had gone there as a boy and because Don Cruce, owner of a charcoal factory where Smallwood had worked, is a deacon at the church.

"I think he meant it. I wouldn't have wanted him to do it unless he meant it," Mr. Yarnell said afterward. "I think it has changed his life. I think he will be a different person." The preacher argued that more judges should issue more such sentences. "This is tougher than going to prison," he said. "It means losing a lot of face."

## SPECIAL REPORT ON SOUL SAVING AVAILABLE

A survey of 1,328 congregations about their home Bible study programs was made a few months ago by Gospel Services, Inc. These churches reported over 30,000 baptisms in 12 months!

Some eye-opening details of the survey, together with other pertinent material, were printed in a 4-page tabloid and distributed free by Gospel Services. The tabloid is still available and is yours **free** for the asking. Send your requests to P.O. Box 262302, Houston, TX 77207.

## DAVID, THE "BUBBLE BOY", LIVED A FULL LIFE

The life of the 12-year-old boy who dwelled in a plastic bubble was "a triumph of science and of the heart," a priest said February 25 at a simple funeral for the child known to the public only as David. In the funeral service at the Sacred Heart Roman Catholic Church, the priest said, "For those who put value on the dignity of person, who put value on love, David's life was one of the fullest I have ever witnessed."

David, whose last name was never disclosed at the request of his parents, was buried in a grove at the Conroe Memorial Cemetery. David, born without immunity to disease, died of complications from an experimental bone marrow transplant.

"Anyone can live in a bubble, but he was alive in the bubble," said the priest. He said the boy "took life by the horns...and lived with both guns blazing."

David's parents and sister, whose bone marrow was used in the experimental transplant, sat a few feet from the casket. About 300 mourners crowded into the sanctuary at the small east Texas church building. Hundreds of calls of sympathy were received from around the country to Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, and 42 checks totaling \$1,052 were sent to a David fund at the Baylor University College of Medicine. The hospital also received five bundles of cards and letters, many from children.

## THEY CALLED HER A BIBLE-QUOTING GRANNY

Folks in and around Braden, Tennessee, remained nervous for several days due to dangerous prison escapees being on the loose. The nervous residents bolted their doors and stayed inside. "When the dog barks outside, you can't help but

wonder who's out there," said Elizabeth Swope, a resident of the little farming community 40 miles northeast of Memphis.

Authorities, acting on a hunch, beefed up their search on February 21 for one of the five "extremely dangerous" prison escapees.

Earlier that same day, one of the escapees--convicted murderer Riley Arzeneaux--was talked into surrendering by a Bible-quoting grandmother. At about 8:15 a.m., Arzeneaux, carrying a shotgun, walked up to the home of 73-year-old Louise Degrafinried.

"I was talking to a friend of mine on the phone," said Degrafinried. "I said to her, 'Call the police.' He had the gun across his breast. I said, 'Young man, I am a Christian lady--and no violence. Put your gun down, and you sit down.' And he did just that."

She served him breakfast and "a whole half a gallon of milk." Then I said, "Say something." He didn't say anything. I said, "Say, Jesus wept." He said, "Jesus wept." After a prayer at the breakfast table, she said, she talked Arzeneaux into surrendering.

### DOCUMENTARY ON PBS SPOTLIGHTS SWAGGART MINISTRY

Television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart, whose background, methods and style rarely have been detailed in the media, was given a searching look by a new documentary aired on February 13 and 14. Swaggart refused to talk about it with several reporters, but has now mailed out a special 4-page letter appealing for more money to help him fight this "powerful force." At his multi-million-dollar headquarters at Baton Rouge, La., a spokesman said the only word from him for reporters was "no comment."

Asked for just simple facts about Swaggart's operations, the spokesman, David Van Gorder, declined to provide any information, even such innocuous bits as Swaggart's age. He is 48, and, according to the new documentary, a high school dropout with no formal theological training, but who has become "one of the most popular and powerful" TV preachers in the world.

Several TV stations, in Boston and Atlanta, have dropped his show, refusing to sell him time, and charging him with distortions at Roman

Catholicism and Judaism. But he's still seen and heard on about 500 outlets nationwide.

The **Frontline** documentary, "Give Me That Big-Time Religion," was presented by Public Broadcasting Service. It says Swaggart has the biggest audience of any electronic evangelist, with more than 2 million watching him weekly according to the independent rating service, Arbitron. Counting audiences in 32 other countries, his staff says his annual audience totals 500 million.

Swaggart was described as being a "preacher, entertainer, businessman." The documentary samples his preaching, explores his huge World Ministry Center outside Baton Rouge and interviews him and admiring supporters.

"We live modestly," he says, adding that he "could be a billionaire" if he sought it, but "everything goes into the ministry. The family is not enriching itself." The organization's cited annual budget is more than \$75 million. The salary of him and his wife, who serves as treasurer of his enterprise, is put at "more than \$100,000."

As with other television evangelists, much of the money goes for buying TV time. Swaggart is shown on the documentary repeatedly pleading for contributions. "We desperately need help," he says. "Many can write a check for \$1,000 or more. We need it. We need a miracle. Make out your check and then double it."

Swaggart is now claiming that for the month of February, 1984, he took a \$2 million loss, and most of that loss was incurred by a tremendous drop in revenue after the media report and the PBS special.

Unlike evangelist Billy Graham and some other TV evangelists, Swaggart's organization does not belong to the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability, which requires various standards, such as regular, audited financial reports, the documentary says.

Swaggart dedicated the first \$5 million to the building of his planned \$22 million computerized headquarters complex on a 100-acre site, including a production center, marketing warehouse and planned worship auditorium last spring. About 400 employees work there, handling the 10,000 pieces of mail weekly, counting the incoming contributions, putting

out a monthly magazine, **The Evangelist**, with 800,000 circulation, filling orders for books and albums of gospel music recorded by Swaggart himself. "I've sold more long-playing albums than anybody on earth," he says.

Swaggart, a cousin of rock-country singers Jerry Lee Lewis and Mickey Gilley, is a minister of the Assemblies of God, a Pentecostal denomination.

### SEVEN PRIESTS ACCUSED OF SEDUCING WOMAN

The Roman Catholic Church will wait for the "true facts" before deciding whether to take any action against seven priests accused by a woman of seducing her, a diocesan spokesman says.

Rita Milla, 22, filed a \$21 million suit February 8 with her mother, naming the priests and the archdiocese as defendants. The suit also claims one of the priests is the father of her daughter. She told a news conference she had been vulnerable to seduction at age 16 because "It was mostly like I understood their authority and I felt they would know...what is a sin."

The spokesman for the archdiocese, Joseph Battaglia, said he couldn't comment "because the matter is under litigation and it would not be fair to comment one way or the other."

He said the archdiocese had put no restrictions on the priests and was not investigating the allegations. The church "will let this take its course in a court of law...(and) will wait until the court makes a decision of the true facts" before taking any action, he said. He described the priests as "hard working, good men." None of the priests named in the suit could be reached by EP news service for comment.

Milla, who has a 16-month-old daughter, claims the sexual advances began in 1978 when she wanted to become a nun. She said she was told sex was natural and that priests "got lonely, too." The suit alleges that one priest suggest she get an abortion. The suit says she told two bishops what was happening but they did nothing, causing her to lose faith.

### PREACHERS CAN BE TOUGH

Two ministers leading a service at a storefront church house jumped a gunman when he tried to rob congregation members on February 7, the

police reported. The pastors wrestled the suspect, James McNeal, 29, to the floor and held him with the help of some of the members until the police arrived, Sgt. Dan Miller said.

The two ministers, C. Jefferson, 62 year old from Compton, and J. Sims, 57 year old from Carson, were leading a ministers' revival service for pastors at the Institutional Baptist Church in south Los Angeles when the gunman entered and began robbing the 15 persons present, Sgt. Miller said. As the gunman began taking money, Jefferson jumped on the back of McNeal, who fired two shots. No one was wounded.

### A NEW CONGREGATION ESTABLISHED

There are now two groups of Christians working in Clarksville, Tennessee, to enlarge the borders of the Lord's church. Due to the willingness of the elders at the Oak Avenue Church in Dickson to assume the support of a gospel preacher, facilities have been obtained to begin meeting in an area close to Austin Peay State University.

This new congregation will be known as the University Church of Christ. They will be meeting at 241 Georgia Avenue. The building is located approximately one block off 2nd Avenue (US 41A). This is across from the Clarksville Academy.

The brethren will begin meeting at the Georgia Avenue location as soon as they receive possession of the building. They are hoping this will be no later than the first of April.

If you know of people who will be visiting Clarksville, of servicemen being transferred to Fort Campbell, of students attending APSU, or of other families who will be moving into the area to establish residence, these brethren would like to hear from you.

You may write to them at P.O. Box 451, Clarksville, TN 37040.

### SURVEY ON THE FAMILY BEING QUESTIONED

A survey by 13 churches and civic groups says that despite high divorce rates, the American family is basically strong and healthy. The survey of 8,000 adolescents and 10,000 parents, was compiled by the Search Institute of Minneapolis, made up of 13 church and citizen organizations, including the

American Lutheran Church, the Baptist General Conference, and the 4-H Extension.

"We find that the needs, despairs and longings of youth and parents tend to be more subtle, less catastrophic and perhaps more benign than we have been led to believe," the study's authors said. "When we take a single snapshot of this fast-moving period, we see the vast majority doing constructive things such as building friendship skills, growing in empathy, valuing parents and family, struggling with issues of freedom and independence, opposing racial discrimination, caring about the hungry and the poor, and contemplating the future," the study said.

The study's authors cautioned, however, that the relatively rosy findings are largely due to a survey sample that over-represented church-going families, families from north-central states, and parents with four or more years of college. The study also said that "The percentages of black and Spanish-origin youth are under represented."

Youngsters, who ranged from fifth to ninth grade, were asked 319 questions. Researchers said the top three adolescent worries--each expressed by about half of those surveyed--were about "school performance, my looks, and how well the other kids like me." According to the survey, 11 percent of those responding said they worry "that I might kill myself," and 12 percent said they feared physical abuse by a parent.

Among other findings: Eighty-six percent of the adolescents favored more government help for the poor and hungry, compared with 50 percent of their parents.

Use of alcohol is common by the ninth grade, with 53 percent of ninth-graders and 42 percent of eighth-graders saying they'd had a drink in the last year. Twenty percent of ninth-graders said they had used marijuana once or more in the past 12 months.

Nearly one out of four youngsters said they spent three hours or more a week playing video games. Sixty-one percent of ninth-grade girls said they were opposed to premarital intercourse, while 36 percent of the boys held that attitude. By ninth grade, 20 percent of the adolescents said they had engaged in sexual intercourse.

### A BUDDHIST STATUE AT THE CASINO

Caesars Palace, one of the largest gambling casinos and hotels in Las Vegas, has erected a Buddhist deity at its entrance. The casino installed the statue as a marketing gimmick. Gambling is prohibited by devout Buddhists.



#### LOREN N. RAINES

Loren Raines was born July 1, 1895, on a farm near Sullivan, Indiana. Having obeyed the gospel in early life, Bro. Raines developed an intense interest in studying the Bible. He took an extended absence from his work in a grocery store in his hometown to attend a 12-week Bible Reading conducted by Daniel Sommer and later attended a 10-week study under A.M. Morris at Kinsley, Kansas. Bro. Raines preached the first sermon of his life in Pratt, Kansas, during the latter reading. Upon the completion of the Kinsley study, he entered Indiana State Teacher's College at Terre Haute for a 12-week teacher training course and began teaching in a rural school that year.

On April 3, 1921, Loren married Opal Stivers of Sumner, Illinois, the daughter of a gospel preacher who labored many years in southern Illinois and Indiana. To this union were born two children. Max, the elder of the sons, is a prominent educator at Michigan State University. The other son died in infancy.

Brother Raines did his first work as a "located" preacher at the Lincoln Street Church in Bloomington, Indiana. From 1932 to 1951 the Raineses lived in Bedford, Indiana, where he preached each Lord's day. During this entire 19 years he was also involved in education. In 1951 he retired from teaching and moved to Salem, Indiana, to work with the church there. In 1957 he moved to Indianapolis where he labored for eight years with the Emerson Avenue congregation. From this congregation grew the High School Road Church, a peaceful swarm in Speedway, with which the Raineses worked for the next five years. Following this lengthy period in the Indianapolis area, he moved to Robinson, Illinois, where he worked for three years. His last move was back to Bedford to work with the Oolitic church. Bro. Raines taught classes and was active in the affairs of the church up until about 6 months before his death.

After preaching the gospel for 65 years, Bro. Raines died on February 7, 1984. Funeral services were conducted on the 10th by Dwayne Laws and Raymond Harris. Graveside comments and prayer were made by Delmar Winninger. Burial was in the Green Hill Cemetery in Bedford.

--Raymond Harris  
Bedford, Indiana

# FIELD REPORTS

## **Gianni Berdini, Via dei Moreri 7, 34135 Trieste, Italy:**

The gospel meeting I held was well attended. Even with the cold, we had 20 visitors during the two nights. Unfortunately nobody was willing to study the Bible. This happens very often in Italy. People hear the Word of God, many times they agree that Catholicism is wrong, but then keep on in their life without thinking to God. This time a young man thanked me very much and told me that he had never heard the Gospel so well explained. He promised me to come again, but I am still waiting for him. This is the work in Italy! This is the result of centuries of Catholic superficiality and obscurantism that puts to sleep the conscience of people. But we know our duty is to preach the Truth, to sow the good seed, and sooner or later it'll meet the honest and pure heart.

I am trying my best to build up the knowledge of the brethren in Trieste studying both publicly and privately. This is our teaching program: Sunday morning after the worship period I am teaching the book of Revelation, while we have three different classes for children and youngs; Wednesday we have a ladies Bible class, where we study Old Testament stories; Wednesday, in our assembly, we are studying the book of Acts; and Thursday I have a class with the youngs, studying the problems about family and marriage.

I am also teaching privately some of the brethren and four non-Christians. One is a young boy whom I am studying the inspiration of the Bible with. One is the husband of one of the sisters who shows now very much interest in religious problems. . . I am also having some talks with a lady that has some troubles. She attended Jehovah's Witnesses for many years, but now after having studied the Truth she understood very well their wrongs. She attends now all the services of the church and I pray she may solve as soon as possible her situation and become a Christian.

## **Glenn Jones, Eckener Platz 8, D-2300 Kiel 17, West Germany**

Our reading program, involving a brief investigation of Luke and Acts, still seems to be the best way to introduce the gospel to those quite ignorant and skeptical of the Bible and fearful of being "taken-in" by some radical sect. It allows the reader to discover the basic points and background of the gospel for himself and gives us about four months to become acquainted with the contact and to establish a good rapport with him, an important factor in teaching people here. The program requires each party to face the facts. The reader must come to grips with the facts of the gospel and its rewards and consequences, usually a totally new set of facts for him. We in turn must ultimately face the fact of each reader's decision, either for or against the gospel. Facing the facts is not always easy for either party.

As this is written, Bro. Jerry Earnhart, who labored twenty years with the brethren in Switzerland before moving to Canby, Oregon,

will hold a gospel meeting for us February 9-12, 1984. We have rented a room at the University of Kiel for this effort and hope to solidify old contacts and to make new ones. We are looking forward to a spiritual feast.

## **Don Martin, 105 Smith Street, Clute, TX 77531**

I have now moved back to Texas to work with the church meeting at 343 South Main in Clute. Clute is on the Texas Gulf Coast about 40 miles south of Houston. Clute (and the Brazosport Area) is mostly known for having the world's largest refinery, Dow Chemical. In the approximate four and one-half months I have worked with the church here we have experienced 13 responses to the gospel (5 baptisms and 8 acknowledgements of public sin). I believe these responses are indicative of the kind of people with whom we are presently working--sincere, open-minded people! The church is overseen by three good elders and is served by four conscientious deacons. There is good potential in the church and in the surrounding area which is very populous. We have an unusually large percentage of young couples, most of whom are interested in spiritual matters and advanced studies. We are about halfway through a series of studies on New Testament Greek and have averaged about 25 in attendance. When you are in the Brazosport Area (of which Clute is a part), be sure to worship with us.

## **William L. Krantz, Rt. 4 - Box 20, Kettle, KY 42752**

We had a young woman to be restored a couple of months ago. Her husband obeyed the Lord a couple of weeks ago. They are both very interested in doing what is right. They suggested we have a Bible study one night a week. We have managed to have one class thus far. I am going to try and encourage these to continue.

All the news is not good news. We have made some progress at Semanary, but have also had some set backs. Since I have started work with the congregation we have had two who have fallen away. We are working with these now. There have also been some others who had fallen away before I began working with the brethren. So far all efforts to restore these have failed. So many times it seems we take one step forward and two steps backward. As long as we keep working and doing what is right, I do not despair.

## **Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville, Cape 7530, Republic of South Africa**

On February 5, at the home of Siyabulela Xamlashe (the first black convert in this area and a member of the native Xhosa tribe), we began the first sound black church in the Cape Town area. It is located in the township of Langa (about 15 miles south of Bellville) and the actual address is: 27 Jungle Walk (seriously!).

When my family and I first moved to Bellville, there was not a single sound congregation within

a 450-mile radius of here (though the liberals have about 20 churches scattered throughout this area). Now, about 3 years later, there are 3 sound churches here (1 black, 1 white and 1 coloured) and hopefully many more to come in the future! We continually solicit your prayers.

## **Gary Fisher, 112 E. 35th Street, Jasper, IN 47546**

As of Feb. 4, I moved from Galena, IN, to Jasper, IN, to work with the Duff church of Christ. The 3½ years I spent at Galena were most encouraging and enjoyable. My association with the brethren at Galena was a great source of spiritual encouragement to me.

During the time I was at Galena we did several things in our teaching efforts that others might want to try. First, we had a 300-word article in a local weekly newspaper. The paper is the best smalltown weekly I have ever seen and is well read in the community. For about \$30 per week we were given the space in the upper right-hand corner next to the TV schedule--a section we figured would be consulted repeatedly by many. I answered one question in each column on a wide range of subjects. The columns were non-pretentious--the only heading was the question and at the end, my name and address were given and people were asked to write me if they had any questions to be answered in the column, wanted to study the Bible together, or desired a correspondence course. The church's name was not mentioned in the column and I believe that is important. While few of the readers knew me personally, they at least felt like an individual was writing the column and not some bureaucratic denominational organization. I was amazed at the response we got. Nearly every week I received either a letter or a call and was able to correspond or talk with many. The columns have been used in both Christian and Baptist church Sunday school classes. They also were the chief cause of an invitation for me to speak at an institutional church. Also, at least two baptisms were results of the column. We feel like the column was easier, cheaper and more effective than mailing out a bulletin.

Another thing we did with surprising success was to put small ads in the classified section of local papers asking people to contact me if they'd like to learn more about the Bible. I have had several home studies as a result of ads of this sort.

Also, we called people out of the phone book and asked them to take a correspondence course. We used a script for a guideline as to what to say. I was surprised that we got about 10% to agree to take the course and about 10% of those who begin complete it. I consider those percentages to be quite good, but have had a hard time getting those who complete to agree to home studies. Nevertheless, it is an approach some might like to consider and is a good way of getting several in the congregation involved. I'd be happy to send anybody wanting it a copy of our script and other relevant information.

. . . I anticipate a fruitful work with the Duff church. It is small (40 on Sunday morning), but has several members who are eager to learn, grow and teach others. Duff is the only church in a 20-mile radius that I know of. The area is heavily German Catholic. If any readers know of anyone in the area (Jasper, Huntingburg, Washington, Boonville, Princeton, Tell City, etc.) who you think it would be good for me to contact and try to encourage spiritually and/or study with, please write me.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## RECORDINGS

**THE SPOKEN WORD** offers a wide range of sermons, lectures, and debates on cassette tapes. Send \$1.00 for catalog, refundable with first order. P.O. Box 277, Greenville, IN 47124.

**K.J.V. New Testament** on 12 cassette tapes, boxed in attractive plastic album. Read by Alexander Scourby. \$20.00 (plus \$1.50 for shipping). The Book Shelf, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

## TOURS

Join Ferrell Jenkins this year. Tours of distinction since 1967. Bible-Lands Tour, May 14-26; South-Pacific Adventure, June 18-July 7. Write for colorful brochures. Ferrell Jenkins, 9211 Hollyridge Place, Temple Terrace, FL 33617. Phone (813) 988-8485.

**"BIBLE-LANDS" AND EUROPE.** Join Grover Stevens, Weldon Warnock, and Hoyt Houchens on this trip of a lifetime. The 8th tour for each of these men. Date--June 12-28 or June 12-July 4. Brief itinerary: New York; Istanbul, Turkey (ancient Constantinople), Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Athens & Corinth, Greece; The "Holy Lands"--Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Jericho, Galilee, Megiddo, Masada, Nazareth, etc.; Cairo & Luxor, Egypt; Valley of the Kings, temples & tombs, including King Tut; Rome, Italy. Those taking the shorter tour will return home from Rome. The others will take a bus and drive through northern Italy, Florence & Milano, over the Alps via beautiful St. Gothard Pass into Switzerland to Lucern, then thru Southern France to Paris, then to Brussels, Belgium, and on to Amsterdam, Holland; and then fly back to New York. \$50 discount for early registration. Write or call for a colorful brochure and further detail. Grover Stevens, P.O. Box 2915, Lubbock, TX 79408. Phone (806) 795-1861 or 795-7573 at night.

## PREACHER WANTED

The Dair Avenue church of Christ in Harrison, Ohio (20 miles west of Cincinnati), is looking for a faithful gospel preacher to work with our small group. We can provide partial support, but will assist in locating possible outside sources. Contact Jim Farris at 102 Circle Drive, Harrison, Ohio 45030. Phone (513) 367-6153.

## PERIODICALS

**For Sale:** Truth Magazine, volumes 13-21, loose, but complete volumes. \$75 for all volumes. Bob Buchanon, P.O. Box 237, Bowling Green, KY 42102-0237.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

April 1984

Number 4

## MAN AND IMMORTALITY

by Gene Frost

**M**an is not an accident on this earth, a mere chance product of an evolutionary process. Man is a created being, made in the image of his Creator. Neither is he a purposeless creature destined to wander aimlessly through life with no greater motivation than a temporal interest. He has a divine destiny as he fulfills his created purpose.

*"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created"* (Revelation 4:11).

Solomon devoted himself to discover what is the meaning and purpose of life. He said, *"And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be exercised therewith. I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit"* (Eccl. 1:13-14). Solomon gave himself to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. He gave himself to pleasure, to the accumulation of riches, to power, and every pursuit of life. From a materialistic view, life is vanity and vexation of spirit. A treasury of wealth is of no benefit in the grave. Of what enduring satisfaction is there in having ruled kingdoms and nations for a season, when authority is forever divested in death? The best of

man's works are temporary, appearing today as edifices of strength only to crumble away in ages to come. What is there of man's efforts that endures? Materially, nothing. If life means nothing more than here and now, it is vanity and vexation of spirit. There must be some worthwhile purpose for man on the earth and some enduring work that he might do.

The answer is found in a fulfillment of God's purpose in us. *"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man"* (Eccl. 12:13). Life has a meaning and enduring significance when viewed toward eternity and includes God! On the other hand, what is man profited if he should gain the whole world and fail in his true purpose? (Matt. 16:26).

All is not lost in death for those who fear God and obey Him. Death is the door that separates the material realm from the spiritual (1 Cor. 15:46-55). A true knowledge of death and the nature of man removes the dread fear of death for those who trust in God (1 Thess. 4:13-18).

### DEATH

Man is a being of a two-fold nature. He is a spirit (or soul) housed in a body formed of the earth (2 Cor. 5:1). The body of man is corruptible (liable to corruption or decay) (1 Cor. 15:35, 42). The spirit of man is incorruptible (1 Pet. 3:4). And so, *"though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is removed day by*

*day"* (2 Cor. 4:16). At death the spirit of man returns to God, and the body returns to dust from whence it came (Eccl. 12:7).

Death means primarily separation: **"prop. the death of the body (whether natural or violent) of the soul from the body by which life on earth is ended"** (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, page 282; **thanatos**). *"For the body apart from the spirit is dead. . ."* (James 2:26, ARV).

The idea of annihilation is foreign to both the definition of death (**thanatos**) and its usage in the Scriptures.

### THE THEORY OF ANNIHILATION REFUTED

Jesus forever answered the theory of annihilation, the idea that when one dies he ceases to be anything more than a memory, when he confronted it in the doctrine of the Sadducees. He quoted the Scriptures: *"I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living"* (Matt. 22:32). God is not the God of the **"destitute of life,"** but of those **"possessed of vitality"** (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon, pages 423, 273: **nekon** and **zonion**). Though Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died upon the earth and their spirits returned to God, they (in spirit) were not out of existence, but possessed vitality (See Luke 16:22-31).

The falsity of the theory of **"annihilation"** is further seen when we

consider the death of Jesus. Was He annihilated ("utterly destroyed")? Religious advocates of annihilationism affirm that as it was necessary for Him to die, it was "just as necessary that the man Christ Jesus should never live again, should remain dead, should remain our ransom price to all eternity" (Charles T. Russell, *Studies In The Scriptures*, vol. 5, page 454). The theory denies a bodily resurrection. It denies that Jesus was raised from the dead bodily, even though Jesus said, "*Behold, my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have*" (Luke 24:39).

The truth of the matter is, in the resurrection our bodies will be raised and changed to put on incorruption (1

Cor. 15:51-52). The natural will become spiritual. The very word (resurrection) means to raise up, from **ana**, up, and **histemi**, to cause to stand (Greek **anastasis**). Annihilation denies resurrection inasmuch as when there is nothing then nothing can be raised up. The theory of annihilation is rank materialism.

#### IMMORTALITY

Since the body of man is corruptible, man is subject to death (Heb. 9:27). And so man is mortal: "**liable to death**" (Thayer's *Greek-English Lexicon*, page 291; **thnetos**). Immortal means deathless (Greek: **a**, negative, **thanatos**, death).

In the resurrection, the corruptible body will be made incorruptible (1 Cor. 15:42). Then the incorruptible body will be united with the

incorruptible spirit. Since neither nature of man will then be corruptible (subject to decay), man will no longer be subject to death. Hence, man will be immortal (1 Cor. 15:54).

#### HOME WITH GOD

Life has meaning, then, only in view of eternity with God. Christ died in order that man might have life, i.e. put on immortality and have eternal rest with God (John 14:6, Heb. 4:8-11). Jesus has now gone to prepare a place for the faithful (John 14:1-4). Each of us must ask, have I this hope in Christ? Have I submitted to Him in faith and obedience unto a forgiveness of sins? (Gal. 3:27, Acts 2:38). Is there meaning to my life on earth?

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## DOES GOD CALL MEN TO PREACH?

by Ron Daly

This subject actually involves the question of "How Does God Communicate with men—all men today?" Does God communicate in or through (1) dreams, (2) visions, (3) signs, (4) whispering voices? Friends, when we determine from the scriptures, how God "calls" or "communicates" with one person, we will then know how He calls all men, for He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11!)

Fact One: There once was a time when God commissioned men miraculously and directly to do His service in promulgating His word. (Cf. Ex. 3:4; 1 Sam. 3; 1 Ki. 19:9-14; Jere. 1-2; Ezek. 1; Dan. 2:19-30; Acts 9:3-7).

Fact Two: In the last days of the Jewish state as an organized polity, God spoke through His son, and the Son commissioned men by means of His words. (Cf. Heb. 1:1-2; Rom. 10:8, 14-18).

Fact Three: This lesson does not question God's power, i.e. what God could or can do, but we intend to discuss what God's will is. "God is able, but WILL he do it?" (Matt. 3:9; Heb. 13:8).

A basic axiom is, in whatever way God "draws" men unto himself, he also, in the exact same way, "calls" men! Draw (**helko**) means "to impel, lead, attract" (Jno. 6:44; 12:32-33). Call (**kaleo**) means "with a personal

object, to call anyone, invite, summon one to participate in it, enjoy it. . . in the New Testament epistles only those spoken of as called by God who have listened to his voice addressed to them in the gospel, hence those who have enlisted in the service of Christ. . . ." (Vine's Dictionary and Thayer's Lexicon) (1 Thess. 2:12).

God's "calling" of men is set forth in clear terms in Jno. 6:44-45. There must be teaching. "*They shall be taught of God*" (Jno. 6:45). "*He shall teach us his ways*" (Isa. 2:3). Taught what? "*Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Jehovah from Jerusalem.*" Taught when? When the apostles would seek to "disciple" all the nations (Mat. 28:19). From Pentecost until the end of time, or put another way, as long as the apostles' doctrine would be authoritative (Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 2:2).

There must also be the hearing of what is taught. "*Every one that hath heard from the Father.*" "Heard" is from (**akouo**) and means "to percieve the sense of what is said, to give ear to one, hearken" (Cf. Rom. 10:17; Acts 15:7).

Involved in God's "calling" is the learning of what is taught and heard "*. . . heard from the Father and hath learned. . .*" The underlying Greek term (**manthano**) means "to learn by

use and practice, or through personal exertion, to learn intellectually from others." This is the actual result of teaching and hearing. (Mat. 9:13; Rom. 16:17).

Finally, one comes unto Christ. "*. . . hath learned, cometh unto me. . .*" **Erchomai** is the key word and "denotes the act of coming, to come from one place into another" (Jno. 6:53-58, 63, 65; 1 Tim. 2:4).

It is imperative to understand that (Jno. 6:45) explains the means of the drawing--calling. The procedure involves, teaching, hearing, learning, and coming. In each case the emphasis is on the word of God, i.e. it is the instrument or means of God's drawing or calling. (Cf. 1 Thess. 2:12-13; 2 Thess. 2:13-15).

The view that God now miraculously-directly calls men to preach minimizes the importance of the word of God, lends credence to depraved ignorance and superstition by emphasizing the "no need for Bible study position" (which is diametrically opposed to what the Bible commands. 2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11!)

Let us continue engaging ourselves in the work of "*committing the same (word) to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also*" (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 4:11-16).

Divine revelation is absolute and complete (Jas. 1:25; 2 Pet. 1:3), and by it God calls men, perfects, equips, and will save men from sin.

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## A GENUINE, SAVING FAITH

The Bible teaches a man is saved by faith. Paul said, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1) and "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). Most of us know, though, that we are not saved by faith but by Jesus. It is not faith in faith that saves us, but faith in Jesus that is necessary.

Faith is the instrument by which we receive justification. Yet in straightforward, bold language, James says, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (Jas. 2:24).

Are James and Paul in disagreement? Do these passages contradict each other? Martin Luther missed the whole thrust of the passage in James (and so do most of the faith-only people today). I don't know for sure but what Luther thought James was a heretic. I doubt that he really accepted James as part of the Word of God. His great concern was in trying to prove that James and Paul were contradicting each other. It is foolish to take passages out of their context which say we are saved by faith and others which say we are saved by works and try to make them appear to be in a disagreement with each other.

The **Pulpit Commentary** explained it this way: "James's argument is, that the very faith which saves us is a faith which brings forth after-fruits, or it is not true faith at all. So, then, the 'works' to which the one refers are works done with a view to salvation, that God's favour may be won by them; the works to which the other refers are works springing out of salvation, because God's favour has been so freely and graciously bestowed" (Volume 21, James by E.C.S. Gibson, pages 40-41).

Paul was looking at the **root** of salvation, where it came from--grace through faith. James was looking at the **fruit** of salvation after man had been justified by obedience in

the first place. Paul met with many people who made works everything, to the neglect of faith; James met with others who made faith everything, to the neglect of works. A genuine, saving faith was going to have a combination of the two.

Throughout the New Testament, beginning with the Lord and continuing through the final victory of Jesus in Revelation, the emphasis is on how utterly ridiculous it is to be called a child of God and be inactive. This article is based upon James 2:14-26, James is really saying, "If you believe that you believe like you should, why do you behave like you should not?" After reading this chapter, I must either slam the book shut and say "I've heard all I want to hear" or I must become very excited and interested in what the book says. If we're honest, this passage should goad us into action. Genuine faith is designed to produce genuine works. If our faith is not putting us into action, I question as to whether or not we've got a genuine faith.

### FAMILY TALK

Many of us have used this passage to condemn our denominational friends who believe in salvation by faith alone. Many religious groups teaching this deny the importance of baptism and the relationship it has to salvation. It is not uncommon to hear them quote the apostle Paul when he said, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26). But, friends, he then explains in the next verse a specific element in that faith: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27). The two great words WORK and FAITH are joined together.

But James 2 was not written that we might condemn our denominational friends (although it does do that), but it was written to children of God. This is what I like to call "family talk." It was written to show us what God expects in the way of fruit.

Do you remember the little children's song that goes: "If you're saved and you know it, say Amen!" The verses continue by saying, "If you're saved and you know it, clap your hands." The third verse is, "If you're saved and you know it, stomp your feet." But the one I love is the final verse: "If you're saved and you know it, then your life will surely show it. If you're saved and you know it, say Amen!" That's exactly what James 2 is all about--if you're saved and you know it, then your life will surely show it.

What good would it do me to carry a driver's license, if I couldn't drive? What good would it do me to have a little card in my wallet that said I was a Senior Life Guard, if I couldn't swim? What good would it do me to buy a college degree from some mail-order business for \$50, if I couldn't produce? And the same application is true in religion, too. What good would it do me to claim to be a Christian, if I was not going to show it by my works or by what I produce?



# Today

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."  
— Proverbs 27:1

## TWO QUESTIONS

William Barclay said: "The one thing that James cannot stand is profession without practice, words without deeds" (The Letters of James and Peter, page 88). Two questions are raised in verse 14: (1) What doth it profit to talk-talk-talk and not work? (2) Can that kind of faith save him? "Profit" is from a word that denotes advantage, blessing, good, etc. What good is it to be derived by the man who has a faith that is nothing but talk and no works? Can that faith save him? It should be carefully noted that James does not minimize the importance of faith. But a genuine, saving faith is the type which expresses itself in obedience to the commandments of the Lord.

A man says, "I have faith, but not works." James asks, "Can that faith save him?" The statement is rhetorical; it is put in question for emphasis. Guy N. Woods said the Greek sentence is so constructed that a negative answer is expected. "The meaning is, *That faith cannot save him!* Note that James does not deny the efficacy of faith. Under consideration is a special kind of faith. What kind is it? That which is *without works*. James picks out this particular kind of faith and says that it cannot save. Note the use of the demonstrative *that*. *That what? That faith!* What kind of faith is *that*? The kind of faith that is without works. What is affirmed of it? It cannot save. What cannot save? Faith without works. What works? The commandments of the Lord! This is decisive of the matter in issue. It makes clear the fact that faith, apart from, and without works, is profitless, barren, vain and dead, all of which James later affirms" (A Commentary on the Epistle of James, page 132).

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A SAVING FAITH

Verses fifteen through twenty give us four characteristics of a genuine, saving faith:

1. **It is not indifferent, but is involved (vs. 15-16).** I like the way these verses are worded in one of the modern translations. "If a fellow man or woman has no clothes to wear and nothing to eat, and one of you say, 'Good luck to you, I hope you'll keep warm and find enough to eat,' and yet give them nothing to meet their physical needs, what on earth is the good of that?" (Modern English Translation by J.B. Phillips).

This is family talk! Someone is in need and it comes to your attention. What are you going to do about it? Now he's not talking about providing what the greedy may want, he's talking about needs. It is the bitterest mockery for a man who is himself living in ease and comfort to say to his shivering brother, when he sends him away empty-handed, "Depart in peace: don't give way to despondency; God has said He will never forsake His people; you'll live through this some how; and I'll be praying for you." Such false, sentimental professions of sympathy which have no outcome of practical help do not "profit" either person.

This is far wider than benevolence. We may not have needs of food, clothing, or shelter—but there's probably not a reader but what has not had some kind of needs. We've had our hurts and our times when we needed a brother or sister. Maybe we just needed someone to listen as we talked. Maybe we needed a shoulder to cry on. Maybe we needed help with some spiritual problem.

A genuine, saving faith expresses itself in love. Our love and our faith causes us to send that get-well card, take that food to a family with sickness, visit that funeral home

(even though we hate to be around funerals), make that phone call to a weak member, or conduct that Bible class. John asks, "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" (I John 3:17). He continues by saying, ". . . let us not love in word, neither in tongue: but in deed and in truth" (vs. 18).

2. **It is not independent (vs. 17).** I remember hearing the late Paul Andrews say, "Friends, if you know the legs out from under a table you're on the floor and don't have a table anymore. And the same is true with faith and works; they are coupled together." James said, "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead" (vs. 17, NIV).

3. **It is not hidden (vs. 18).** A genuine, saving faith is displayed. He says in effect, "A believer is to 'let his light shine.' Well, I point to the new life which I am living as the manifestation of my faith; but, since you neglect good works, it is for you to indicate how you can manifest your faith otherwise." A faith which produces no works is unable to show itself; therefore it is not true faith at all.

Suppose the University of Kentucky football team received a letter from the coach at the University of Alabama just a few weeks before a big game which read: "We really have a strong team this year, but we don't display it. We're real quiet on the field, but we want to assure you that we're tough." Now, if the U.K. team showed their strength and sent the Alabama team back home with a score of about 160 to 0, the Alabama fans might conclude they don't have much of a team. They want the strength to be shown. And James says that our faith is to be shown by our works.

4. **It is not merely lip service or intellectual (vs. 19-20).** Many in James's time, and many today, want to defend their faith in one God but deny the need to obey any of God's commandments. You believe. That is good, but remember that the demons believe and tremble. They have more real faith than many today, because they are at least frightened in the presence of God (vs. 19).

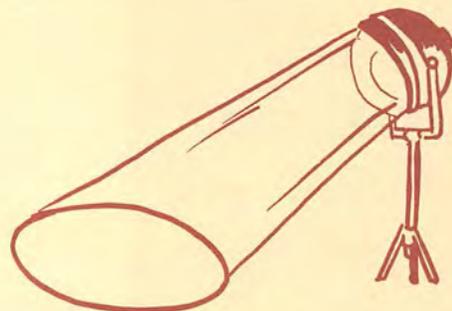
The demons believed, but they remained demons. The unclean spirits whom Jesus exorcised had plenty of head-knowledge about both God and Christ, but their faith was merely a kind that made them "shudder" with terror. Having mere intellectual knowledge can not cleanse the soul. We cannot play games with God. He does not want mere lip service or a knowledge of a few Bible verses; He wants real service and commitment. The Devil even attends more worship services than many so-called church members. He even comes on Wednesday night, but he does not accept Christ as Lord.

### CONCLUSION

We are saved by faith. We are saved by works. There is not a contradiction between the two. It is a living, active faith that is genuine and saving. If your religion does not change your life, then you had better change your religion.

Learn, in conclusion, that "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness" (Rom. 10:10). A genuine, saving faith not only asks, with Paul, "Who art thou, Lord?" (Acts 9:5) but with him also passes from that question to this other, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6).

# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## PENNY HAUER



### How did you get started in adopting children?

We had been foster parents for twelve years and it became a very emotional trauma every time a child left and went back into a situation that was sometimes worse than when they came out of their homes.

Chuck and I decided to stop fostering because of a ten-year old bi-racial girl we had. Her name was Billie. She was placed with us from a background where her mother was a white prostitute. Her clientele was elderly, black men. We knew when Billie went back home she was not going back to school. When we got her

the first time, she had only gone to school five weeks out of the school year. She never missed a day when she lived with us. In fact, we started her in the second grade at age ten and within a month or two she was able to move to the fourth grade. She was doing beautifully. When she left us to go back home, Chuck and I sat down to do a lot of praying. We asked ourselves, "Where do we want to go from here?" We had already adopted April and were talking about adopting Craig, but we decided that we wanted a commitment that was permanent for all of these children. If we're going to take these children to church and build a life

for them, it's got to be more than a day at a time. Oh, yes, we take each day as it comes, one day at a time, but if we're going to build for a future and want children that will be Christians, we wanted to start with them early and build. You know in foster care that once they leave your home they'll probably never go back there again. There is always that hope that some child somewhere is going to say, "I really like that church and I'm going to go back." But you know that realistically it very seldom ever happens because they've got nothing to draw on at home. So we decided, after all these years of fostering, that it was no longer what we wanted to do. We wanted to make a permanent commitment so that there would be some consistency for these children the rest of their lives.

### Whose decision was it to adopt, yours or Chuck's?

This had to be a family thing. It's not something that one of us could want without the other one and make it work. Chuck and I tell people that we found we had something that worked pretty good and we had something to offer. We looked at what we had to give the children. We didn't really have any special needs since we had two boys and two girls already. It was just a desire to do something for someone else in the way we thought we could do it best.

We took only hard-to-place children. There was a great need, especially with bi-racial children.

### Can you give us a little biography on each of the adopted children?

**April** - We started by adopting April. That was in 1978. We had had her as a foster child three years prior to that. Her father had beaten the children so severely and the mother



had taken the children away. She finally relinquished custody. The father, in the mean time, had been rehabilitated and eventually became a denominational preacher. Our social worker told him we took the kids to church and that we do have a strong belief that the Lord works for good. Emphasis was placed on what good could be done for the kids.

You almost want these parents to appear to the court as awful people with green horns. But here was this handsome gentleman, well dressed, and had a wonderful new wife. They came over and introduced themselves to us at the courthouse and said they would like to pray with us. We had no idea what was going to happen. We went into the courtroom and he stood up and said he would like to relinquish custody of April over to us. Of course, Chuck and I did a lot of rejoicing that day. There were many tears and it was a wonderful feeling. We felt we really did have a lot to offer her. She was four at the time.

April was a unique case in that when we got her as a foster child at 18 months old, she was stiff as a board. She couldn't move her legs. I couldn't get a diaper on her. I finally worked to double diaper her to get her legs apart. She hadn't been diagnosed at the time. They thought it was just severe neglect. I finally got her to the doctor who diagnosed her as cerebral palsy. They also told us she would probably never talk. But today she wears braces and uses crutches and you can hardly get her to stop talking.

**Craig** - Craig also came as a foster child. He was a severe stutterer. He was four when we got him. When he came to us he had been taking care of his epileptic father, who seized quite often. The man loved his son, but for the fact that he seized so often Craig had no one to care for him. The man would seizure as much as once or twice a day. Craig would have to call the rescue squad and they would take the man to the hospital. Craig literally took care of himself. There was a time when he lived on Ritz crackers and cheese. Even to this day if he gets a Ritz cracker it conjures up some bad memories.

Craig stopped stuttering the day the adoption was final on April 29, 1980. Now every now and then he will stammer and have trouble getting a sentence out, but he just stopped stuttering.

They had also told us he would never do very good in school, but he's getting all A's and B's. It was his self-image. He had absolutely no self-confidence. No one had ever told him he could do good things. Today he is just a delightful son.

**Chaun** - Chaun also came to us when he was four. His mother was retarded and his father was a slow learner. The father had walked out on the family because of the mother's inability to do anything. She couldn't take care of the house or even fix the meals.

Chaun had taken care of the family. He had two brothers that were severely retarded. Chaun had just been

the caretaker. Since he was brighter than his mom, he had the responsibility of overseeing the boys and his mother. It was really a sad situation.

When we got Chaun they told us he was retarded and they didn't expect him to ever do well in anything. He was quite hyper-active, but we took him into our family and found out he was a nice, normal kid.

Now I might mention that the very first time I met him I wasn't going to take him. I walked into the house to see him and he threw blocks at me. I thought with the other little ones at home, I certainly didn't need a kid that would throw blocks at me. But I was reminded that he was like some of the others we had had. Chuck is able to remember some of our real bad times and have to remind me of them. I tend to forget all of that, put it out of my memory, and only remember the good times. Well, anyway, we talked about it and prayed about it and I went back to see Chaun one more time. And I'm so glad I did. He's just a delight. He still has to be disciplined a lot, but he really is doing the best he can in everything.

He loves going to church. He wants to be a songleader and he's absolutely tone deaf. I don't know how that's going to work out, but he really has lots of zeal. I wouldn't have traded him for anything in the world. I'm really glad I went back that second time.

**Collin** - Collin also came to us as a foster child when he was six. He had just been in a case where he nearly died. He had some real strange anemic condition. He went to bed fine and woke up around midnight almost on death's bed. He was in critical condition.

He also had a cleft pallet. It was to have been repaired, but they had to postpone that since he got so weak. He had his surgery shortly after he came to us and has been doing great ever since.

Collin is the product of a white mother and a black father. His mother was also a product of the system--she had been raised in various children's homes. His father is a man who has fifty known children.

Collin is a slow learner. He has learning disabilities. We know that he will learn more from example than from traditional methods. He doesn't have the ability to memorize the Scripture verses like some of the other kids at church, but he sees it in everyday life. He has learned to share with his

brothers and sisters and we emphasize that God loves that.

**Cale** - Cale had a white mother who was a prostitute. She was caught prostituting going through the state of Ohio. She was from another state. We fostered Cale from the age of twenty months until he was four. At that time, he went back home with his mother.

When we picked him up at the children's home, we thought he was so beautiful. The house mother told us he was bad. They seemed to be glad to get rid of him. He bit, he pinched, and he scratched. Here was this gorgeous little 20-month-old child with lovely hair and big beautiful eyes, but he was an awful child. I believe he was the most awful child we have ever survived.

Until he was four years old he did some of the most bizarre things. He would urinate anywhere and anytime, even on the other kids. He was mean to animals. He's still totally out of control on certain things. He gets up in the middle of the night and eats food. He'll take a box of crackers or cookies and eat them all. If Chuck buys donuts and they're not put under lock and key, he'll eat every one of them. Whatever it is inside the body that tells you to stop and that you're full is missing with him.

When he left us at four, he spent three months with his mother who ran with a Black Panther group in Cleveland, Ohio. He saw a man shot. He saw his mother go into stores and steal what she wanted. She was trying to teach him to steal. He saw his mother's arm broken by a man in front of him. He saw bizarre things.

Cale came back to us in 1980. We have identified that he is a genius. He has an exceptionally high I.Q. Chuck and I have had to learn different skills with each child. We have had to set Cale up on a strict time schedule. He has 15 minutes at the breakfast table, certain time to dress, make his bed, etc. There is something so redeeming about him. He's so proud of getting that Bible lesson. It makes us feel so good.

He's probably the biggest challenge we've got. He may grow up and be a criminal. The counselors and doctors say he's got all the tendencies. But we don't ever go to bed at night without praying that something good happens for his day.

**Catie** - Catie is our little Down Syndrome child. I found her in New Orleans, Louisiana. She was bi-racial.

We got her when she was five-months old, but she weighed 23 pounds. I didn't think she would amount to doing much of anything, but today she seems to be a normal two-year old.

I guess if we compared her to any other two-year old, she would be delayed in many areas. But we don't compare anybody to anybody else. We look for what each child is worth in their own little niche.

We took another Down Syndrome child into our home in the beginning of 1982. He was a very, very sickly child. He was only five-months old. Every breath he took during that time was filled with pain. We had him for two weeks and he died. It was quite a trauma for all of us. He died on a Sunday morning in the hospital. He choked to death on Tylenol. The doctors said he would have died soon anyway.

**Malik** - We called about Malik in 1981. They tried for over a year to find a black family for him. They put him on television. The whole state of New York saw him and they finally put him on national television. His personality was just fabulous. He ought to be able to win anybody over. He even sang a song on TV. But nobody called--not one single call for him. Several called that were interested in adopting, but not him.

We waited for a year and did a lot of praying about him. They called us right after Chuck's job at General Tire was terminated because the plant closed. We had to weigh a lot of things. At that time we had no money, but we knew the Lord would supply our every needs. I flew to New York and brought Malik home and we've never grown hungry yet.

Malik weighed only one pound at birth. He was on a respirator for three months and no one at the hospital thought he would live. He is legally blind and has cerebral palsy. He lived his whole five years in the hospital until we got him. He had been cared for by nurses. He had no family.

**Chase** - Chase was seven months old when I went to New York to pick him up. He was also one of the little black children in a listing book. He had been listed before and no one wanted him. They were delighted when I called.

Chase has not been completely diagnosed yet. He may be a floppy cerebral palsy, rather than a spastic.

The floppy is harder to work with because he just falls over rather than the spastic where they are as stiff as a board. With the spastic, I do the moving and the exercises with the other children. With Chase, you can't do that because there is no muscle tone.

Chase's mother was retarded and an epileptic. He was born addicted to Dilantin, which is a drug they give epileptics. The doctor in Columbus thinks he may have inherited part of her retardation.

Chuck and I think he will be an extremely slow child. He won't make the milestones within a year or two maybe of what he should, but we'll give him the love, support, and encouragement to at least do something. If it means he'll only eat well, or roll on the floor well, or respond to other children well, we want him to do something well. It'll be something that was worth us sharing his life with.

**Sammy** - Sammy came to live with us on February 1, 1984. We had applied to get him before we did Chase. We worked through a Lutheran social services, but they informed us we were the wrong color. They thought we were just what Sammy needed except for the color. The black social worker said he was absolutely going to have a black family. We just told them to keep us in mind, because we didn't have a problem with color. We were sorry they did.

They put out an all-out search and found a black family and thought it was going to be an adoption. In the meanwhile, Chase became available so I flew to New York to get him. The following day after I got home with Chase, they called and said they would like for us to take Sammy. The black family was not interested. They thought he was a little too dark and with his small head size it might mean some brain damage. Since they couldn't find a black family, I guess they thought second best would be okay.

Sammy was fourteen months old when we picked him up. He wasn't walking when we got him. The doctor's report makes him sound like he'll be a complete invalid. They said he'll be very clumsy and possibly seizure or possibly be mentally retarded.

I look into his innocent little eyes and don't see a thing wrong with him. I don't think he'll be mentally slow. He

has a vocabulary of about ten words today. He's learning to fold his hands for prayer and will say some little da-da-da at mealtime. It's obvious that he has cerebral palsy, but I don't think he'll be retarded. He is very stiff in the back, but he's already walking. They didn't think he'd do that for several months to come. I think he's just a nice little fellow.

**Katie** - Katie is right now our foster child. She was sixteen when we got her. Katie was normal at birth, but had an accident when she was nine. She's unable to walk by herself now.

Her father was an alcoholic and walked out on the family. The step-mother didn't want the responsibility so she sent her to school improperly clothed. She went in her wheelchair, often barefooted and with no coat, even in the cold of winter.

Katie was in an institution for severely retarded children, but she did not belong there. We don't want her to go anywhere else.

When we first got her she talked terrible gutter talk. We explained that the rules in our house were different and we didn't allow that. When she went to church with us for the first time, she really liked it. Everybody liked her and she really liked going.

#### **Do you do anything special in your Bible studies at home?**

We have to. Some of these kids will never be able to memorize the apostles, judges, or the books of the Bible. But we have devised other ways of teaching them about the Word of God.

In the mornings, we have this thing where we sit in a circle. We start by asking, "What is one thing we all like about each other?" But then we sometimes go the other way and ask, "What are some things we don't like about each other?" We then discuss ways to help each other become better.

Our favorite one is to ask, "What is something the Lord has done for you today?" and then "What are you doing for the Lord?"

#### **Do you have any private time with any of the children and do you and Chuck ever get a special time alone?**

Yes, birthdays are special days around here. When they turn ten, Chuck and I take them out to eat. The child gets to pick where they want to go and we all dress up. I wear my nicest dress. That's their special time.

And Chuck and I are able to take the time and money to go out alone on our birthdays.

#### **With this large of a family, do you ever get to eat out or have any entertainment?**

We ate at Burger Queen one time when their hamburgers were on special for 39¢ each. Oh, yes, we'd love to do more than we do--but I don't think you'll ever hear these children complain. Chuck is on a very limited income. We do get a little subsidies on a few of the children, but we use that toward our food and medical bills--which are both astronomical.

Craig is going through what I call his "preacher period." He wants a suit and tie. He wants dress shoes for Sunday and new tennis shoes. We don't have all of that. He has a good pair of pants for worship, but not the full suit. He would really like that and we would like to give it to him, but we can't right now. Maybe he can get it for his birthday.

Chuck and I would love to take them all to King's Island or some amusement park, but you know what that costs.

I don't know that these kids are deprived. They can just enjoy being outside. Cale sits for hours and goes through rock after rock looking for fossils. He can find ten to my one.

We try to make up with love what is lacking with physical things. I think all of the kids can sense that. They know they are wanted children.

#### **Do you think you're going to stop with these ten?**

I don't know what the future holds

and what the Lord will want us to do. It all hinges on whether or not we have anything to offer. I think we have a lot. Chuck and I believe love and Christianity are the greatest offers you can give anyone.

Craig, Chaun, and Collin all came to us in 1980. That was also the year we had Billie. That was the year we made up our mind to seek out those kids that basically no one else wanted. No one seemed to want a sick kid, an anemic, a cerebral palsy, retarded, or bi-racial child. Everyone else seemed to be wanting a nice, normal, white child.

We started an adoption group just to tell people that there are children out there, but they're not the healthy, good-looking, white infant. We also had to combat the problem that some of the black society says a white couple can not raise a black child. The thing that makes us different is that we tell people our God doesn't look on the color of the skin. He looks on the heart. Love is neither black nor white. But I don't know that we can ever get that message across unless we can convert everyone to Christianity.

You can look at some of these children and understand many of them have been unwanted. Somebody has to care for them, so why not us?

I don't want to go to heaven without trying to take someone else with me. That doesn't mean that all of these kids will make it, but we're sure going to try.

**Readers may write to Penny Hauer at 5470 Pleasant Chapel Road, Newark, OH 43055.**



# Are You Communicating? Or, Are You Just Talking?

by Mason Harris

A travelling circus set up on the outskirts of a village. Just before the performance began, a fire broke out in the circus tent. A clown, already dressed in his costume for his performance, ran to the village to get help. He spoke loudly and distinctly as he told the people what was happening. From one part of the village to the other he ran, telling everyone what was happening. But no one became alarmed. No one took him seriously. After all, clowns are jokers and full of tricks!

A man once wired a government bureau to ask whether hydrochloric acid could be used to clean the tubes in his steam boiler. The bureau's reply read, "The uncertainty of reactive processes makes the use of hydrochloric acid undesirable where alkalinity is involved." The man wired back, "Thanks for the information. I'll start using it next week." He received this urgent reply: "Regrettable decision involves certain uncertainties. Hydrochloric acid will produce sublimate invalidating reactions." He replied: "Thanks again. Glad to know it is safe to use." But before he cleaned the tubes in his steam boiler, he received another message from the bureau: "Don't use hydrochloric acid. It will eat up your tubes!"

A wife, tired of the darkness in her living room, asked her husband, "Can I have some money to buy a chandelier for the living room?" "No way," replied her husband, "Neither one of us can play one, and besides, we're not about to waste money on some foolish thing like that until we buy a light for that room!"

Jesus once said to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep." But his disciples answered, "Lord, if he sleep, he shall do it well." Jesus was speaking about Lazarus being dead, but his disciples thought he was talking about him resting in sleep. So Jesus said unto them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

Several people assembled together to plan a great project. They had a single purpose. They wanted to make a name for themselves. Having made

their plans, others were called upon to help in the massive project of building a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven. Now at that time they all spoke the same language. It seems that for awhile the work went well. Then a strange thing happened to them. They could no longer understand each other. The work had to stop (Genesis 11). The Lord had used perhaps the most effective tool available for disrupting this great work--breaking down communication. And we might add that the breaking down of communication also will disrupt the unity of the church and will destroy a home.

## A COMMON PROBLEM

In all these situations there was a common problem. There was a lack of communication. Communication is an exchange of information. A broader definition is given by Webster, but this is sufficient for our own purpose here. It is a two-way process where even a third element is involved. There is the sender (speaker or writer), the receiver (listener or reader), and the vehicle for transmission of the information (the message--spoken or written). Motioning with some part of the body is also a form of communication, but the three elements are still involved. For example, John (the sender) may motion by crooking his finger (vehicle for transmission of thought) that he wants his wife (the receiver) to come to him.

But just speaking, writing, or motioning to his wife does not mean that he has transmitted his thought. For it to be communication, the message must be received and understood. If his wife Mary is from the same part of Arkansas where I grew up, she might misunderstand his crooking of the finger and be troubled by it. For the gesture may also mean, "Shame on you." When Jesus said Lazarus was sleeping, his disciples thought Lazarus was resting. But Jesus meant Lazarus was dead. And Jesus did not communicate his information to them until he said plainly, "Lazarus is dead." If we want to communicate, let us be careful to use words that will not convey the wrong idea. I'm sure Jesus had a good reason for choosing

the words he did, but let us work toward effective communication by choosing the best words for our thoughts.

But even speaking in plain words may not guarantee effective communication. The clown who shouted to the villagers that the circus tent was on fire used plain language, but he failed to communicate to them his information. They judged his words on the basis of his costume. So the speaker is dealing with the condition of mind on the part of the hearer. This involves his knowledge of the subject under consideration, along with his prejudices and emotions.

Really, when you think about all the variables (words and gestures with more than one meaning, emotional condition of the listener, etc.) effective communication is almost a miracle. And the frightening part of it is that the family is a vast network of communications. There must be communication between husband and wife, parents and children, male and female, children and children. It occurs in verbal and non-verbal forms. The very heart of the home is communication--not just talking and listening, but all the other ways of sharing and understanding that are available to us. It may be a touch of the hand, a caring look, or a quiet walk together. Unless there is some understanding of the network of these communications, and a deliberate effort to be effective, the family network can get all jammed up. We may find ourselves communicating the very opposite of what we feel and what we want to transmit.

We all want assurance that someone close to us understands us, knows us at least a little, and cares for us. In past articles I have talked about the importance of husbands and wives seeking to meet each others needs. But how can those needs be met if we do not understand each other well enough to know what those needs are? And how can we know what these needs are if we are not communicating with each other? And how can this be if you do not tell me?--and if I do not listen? I believe most of us are trying to "get into significant touch" with those we

love. Yet it seems that our efforts are often frustrated. While communication media continues to increase (pick up the phone and talk with people in all parts of the world—even with people in space), there seems to be more difficulty for husbands and wives to communicate across the room with each other. As for the children, I do not believe there is a generation gap. I believe it is a communication gap.

And it is no wonder the communication gap exists between many parents and children when we think of what often happens. When the little boy in tears comes running to his father for comfort, the father often says, "Grow up and be a man. Men don't cry!" The lad will not have to hear this many times until he learns there is no reason to come to his father for help. When the teen-age daughter comes to her mother in a moment of quietness and wants to talk about sex, and the mother changes the subject because of her own embarrassment and fears, the daughter will not likely bring up the subject again to her mother.

Marriage is a lifelong commitment to each other, and a binding commitment to the children who are born into this relationship. Faithfulness to one's partner is more than just keeping self from adultery. In the broadest sense, faithfulness to one's spouse is a commitment to help him/her to become everything he/she has the potential to be. It is developing a relationship that continually grows deeper and more fulfilling through communication. I suspect that most cases of adultery result from unfaithfulness that started years earlier, for I believe neglect and failure to work toward effective communication amount to unfaithfulness. One may not go so far as to become involved with another person, but the important thing is, if one has stopped communicating, he has stopped being involved with his own marriage partner.

The "justification" often used for sexual fulfillment outside of marriage is, "My husband/wife does not understand me." It is a statement that is well worn with use, but unfortunately

it is too often true. But why is this true? Has a sincere effort been made to communicate feelings? And has a sincere effort been made to understand these feelings?

A news bulletin flashes across the TV screen that a tornado has ripped through a certain city. Terror seizes our heart, for we have a member of our family living there. Immediately we try to call to see if they are alright. But the telephone lines are down. Communication with the city has been broken. But we do not give up. We must get through! We keep on until communication is established and our hearts are assured that all is well with them. . . . What a tragedy that we do not show the same persistence when communication breaks down in our family relations. We ought to do everything within our power to get the lines up again and be able to talk from heart to heart.

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## "THY WILL BE DONE"

by Homer Hailey

Probably no saying of the Bible is more misused than that of Jesus, as in the garden of Gethsemane He fell on His face and cried, "*My Father, if this cannot pass away, except I drink it, they will be done*" (Matt. 26:39-42). This was not a cry of despair; it was not a fatalistic resignation to the principle of "Come what may." It was and is an expression of cheer, of faith, of glory. It is the prayer of one whose disposition is to have God's will done in and through himself. Jesus taught the disciples to pray, "*Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth*" (Matt. 6:10). When, from the heart, one seeks that the will of God be done, he is not resigning himself to a cold, hard fate, but is praying that in himself the will of an infinitely good Father shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Tragedy strikes and death invades the family circle. In a frantic effort to find consolation and to discover some

explanation for the cause, the bereaved one cries, "It was the Lord's will." Or, "This is punishment for some sin I have committed." Or a well-intentioned and well-meaning, but badly misinformed friend says, "You loved it too much, God took it away from you." Or perchance, "It was too precious. God wanted it with Himself." What ignorance! What profound stupidity in so charging God. Suffering is not sent by God; how wicked to blame Him with that for which He is not responsible.

Occasionally one is called into a home where the mother sits by the lifeless form of her beloved child, only recently snatched from her loving presence by the insatiable sickle of death. Heart-broken, between the grief stricken sobs that rise and fall like the billows of the unrestrainable sea, she strives in the plaintive cry, "The will of the Lord be done," to find an

explanation for what has happened. Without being fully conscious of it, what has she done? She has blamed the Lord with the disease that so recently smote the darling of her heart, or with the accident in which a drunken wretch crashed into the frail body of her beloved, robbing it of life's precious breath. Is God to blame? Is one being fair to Him who gave life, and who sustains its every waking moment, when fatalistically he resigns himself to the unholy doctrine that God sent either of these, or one of the thousand other messengers of death that leaves hapless mothers to nourish a broken heart by such tragedies? Again, NO! Emphatically, No. This is not the God of the Bible.

"Thy will be done" is a prayer that in our lives God's will shall be carried out as it was in Jesus, His Son. It is not an inspired expression by which to blame God with our woes and ills, too often the result of ignorance and sin, and always the consequence of law violated somewhere, by some one, at some time - the consequences of which I am heir.

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## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanan

### AMAZING GRACE

When most people today sing "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me," they don't really feel like they have been a wretch at all. But the author of the hymn, London-born John Newton, did. And if ever there had been a man that had lowered himself into the mire of sin and deserved to be considered a wretch, it would be Newton.

The only child of a respectable sea-captain father, Newton was given early religious training by a devout mother. By the time he was four, he could recite passages from the Westminster Catechism and the children's hymns of Isaac Watts. He was left motherless at six and at eleven he was sailing the Mediterranean with his father. He soon became a teenage rebel and at seventeen he laid aside every religious principle and abandoned himself to the service of the devil. He served a time with the British navy. He had deserted, was caught, put in irons, and whipped in public. So severe was his punishment that he plotted suicide. Only his love for Mary Catlett, with whom he fell in love in 1742 but did not marry until 1750, being the restraining influence that preserved his life.

Defiant, the young Newton embarked on a career of such wickedness that his friends questioned his sanity. He signed on the lowest of all sea-going crafts—a slave ship. He came close to starvation while living in extreme poverty in Sierra Leone. He was mistreated by his Portuguese master's black wife. He described himself during those days as "so poor a figure that when a ship's boat came to the island, shame often constrained me to hide myself in the woods from the sight of strangers." (Living Stories of Famous Hymns by Ernest Emurian, page 20). He said he would slip out in the dead of night to wash his one shirt upon the rocks and then put it on wet that it might dry on his back while he slept.

Young Newton suffered further humiliation and sufferings. Boarding a

vessel for England in March 1748, he spent several quiet days at sea reading a book called **Imitation of Christ**, written three centuries earlier by Thomas A. Kempis. When a violent storm arose, twenty-three year old Newton regarded himself as the Jonah who was the cause and blamed his wicked life for the raging winds and mountainous seas that threatened to send the ship to the bottom of the Atlantic. When the storm calmed, Newton began thinking about the Christ of whom the monk had written in his thought-provoking book. With awakened conscience, he regarded that day, March 10, 1748, as his "spiritual birthday."

Newton's life had many twists and turns. After two narrow escapes from death, and several years of hard study and training, he was appointed a minister of the Church of England on December 16, 1758. He persuaded the young William Wilberforce to stay in politics, and joined him in the fight to abolish the slave-trade. He later went to Olney, where he ordained a deacon and a priest. His fellowship with William Cowper resulted in the publication of their **Olney Hymns**. Number forty-one, of Book I, contained Newton's life-story in this form:

**Amazing grace! how sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.**

**'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved;  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed!**

**Through many dangers, toils, and snares  
I have already come;  
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home.**

### RESCUE THE PERISHING

When Fanny Jane Crosby was six weeks old, in May, 1820, she caught a cold, and a country doctor in New York had unwittingly prescribed a hot

mustard poultice for her inflamed eyes. The result was total blindness for life. Soon afterward her father died. When she was five years old, sympathetic neighbors contributed money to send her to New York's famous Dr. Valentine Mott. But after a careful examination, Fanny Crosby heard the specialist say with a heavy heart, "Poor little blind girl." And that sympathetic expression by a great surgeon remained with Fanny Crosby the rest of her life.

At the early age of eight, she wrote:

**Oh, what a happy child I am,  
Although I cannot see!  
I am resolved that in this world  
Contented I will be.**

Fanny Crosby turned her handicap into an asset. She has even said that her blindness was a blessing, for not being disturbed by things about her, she could more easily write her poems. Several of her verses were set to music and sold into tens of thousands of copies in sheet music.

Though devoutly religious, Fanny Crosby wrote popular verse and secular songs until she was forty-four years old. In 1864, William Bradbury suggested to Crosby that she devote her talent to the cause of Christian worship in song. From that date forward, Fanny Crosby never wrote another secular song. Instead, she devoted the following half century of her long life to creating hymn-poems, writing more than anybody else who has ever lived—almost nine thousand! She became known to evangelists on both sides of the Atlantic as "Aunt Fanny." She attended revivals and missions to study the effect of her hymns and to gather material and ideas for new ones.

Few places in the world are more depressing than New York City's Bowery and Chicago's Skid Row. While few poets would visit either one, seeking inspiration, the Bowery served as a background against which Crosby wrote one of her finest hymns. After being given the opportunity to speak and work with some of New York's lower derelicts, "Aunt Fanny" rode

home that night forming the lines of verse in her mind and then dictating them to a friend. Before she reached her home the lines for "Rescue the Perishing" were formed and early the next morning they were sent to her friend, composer William Howard Doane, a wealthy business man in Cincinnati.

Several writers have observed that if you look at it from strictly a literary point of view, finer poetry has certainly been written. But few songs have been more widely sung than this favorite which was born in the mind of a blind woman after visiting a mission in the Bowery.

**Rescue the perishing,**

**Care for the dying,  
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;  
Weep o'er the erring one,  
Lift up the fallen,  
Tell them of Jesus the mighty to save.  
Rescue the perishing,  
Care for the dying;  
Jesus is merciful,  
Jesus will save.**

## TV AND THE FAMILY

by Guy Warner

According to U.S. News and World Report (February 13, 1984) a recent survey completed for NBC television revealed that **"the majority of viewers believe television is a negative influence."** That doesn't surprise you, does it? It shouldn't because I believe most of us feel the same way even though it does not deter us from turning on the tube daily. Neil Postman, in an article in the *Phil Delta Kappan* magazine (January, 1981), said, **"the effects of modern media--especially television--continue to be disastrous especially for our youth."** From the Christian's perspective, television is a companion guilty of *"corrupting good morals"* (1 Corinthians 15:33).

All of us place ourselves at the mercy of history's most pervasive and intrusive medium. In fact, believe it or not, millions do it on the average of 7+ hours each day! That means by age 65 some of us have sat through--surely in a stupor--3,000 complete days of our lives. Each weeknight fully one fourth of us, 60 million to be exact, stare hungrily at the flickering box. We even allow our innocent pre-schoolers to be taught 33-54 hours each week by the ever-willing and ever-available electronic babysitter. Is there any wonder, then, that in a two-year study of 4-6 year olds in which they were asked, "Which do you like better, TV or daddy?", 44% answered "TV". Whose fault is it?

Most discouraging of all, though, is the fact that Christians are spending excessive amounts of time on TV also. Precious time that should be devoted to religious and moral instruction is being stolen from our children. By us! As a result, both the family and the nation are suffering.

Time displacement, however, as it is called, might be one of the more

"innocent" adverse effects TV has on us. Even more insidious is the materialism TV pipes into our living rooms and our lives. Although it is difficult to measure, materialism is there all the same. We know, for instance, that our impressionable children are subjected to from 5,000 to 20,000 TV commercials each year. That is just part of the picture, though. We probably should be concerned about the types of toys they are enticed to buy and the amount of sugar in their cereals, but, what of the amount of material objects they are led to believe should crowd their lives? An article in *Parents* magazine (June 1981) said that **"a number of researchers have begun to worry that children now receive their outlook on life...and their values from what is portrayed on TV rather than from their families."** And, worry they should. Just think how many TV shows quite incidentally teach our children about the value of material things. Even some of the "family" shows such as *"Different Strokes"* feature affluent settings. What effects, then, must *"Dallas"*, *"Dynasty"*, etc. have on both us and our children, either consciously or subconsciously?

A more direct and measureable effect of TV, however, can be heard in our language patterns. Have you heard your children mouthing curse words or profanity lately? If so, it is very possible they did not learn them from the neighborhood ruffians but right there in your own living room. A recent study of network television showed a 140% increase in profanity from 1982 to 1983. Words that never would have been tolerated a few years ago are now commonplace. Shows such as *"Simon and Simon"*, *"Magnum P.I."*, and *"Dallas"* had dramatic increases in profanity. Worst of all, studies demonstrate

that our children watch more adult programming than children's programming.

In truth, television has had a degrading effect on our morals in general. It has, for example, "helped" homosexuals "come out of the closet". Network shows such as *"Love Sidney"*, the story of an aging homosexual, have attempted to legitimize that lifestyle. Viewers are expected to become more tolerant of sexual deviancy if not accept it altogether, this despite God's condemnation of (1 Corinthians 6:9; Romans 1:26-27). Viewers are also expected to condone fornication and adultery, all of which are portrayed in the name of love. You can find bedroom scenes nearly any hour of the afternoon evening with millions of us right there as voyeurs of illicit sex. We sit at bedside gaping at sinful sex being made palatable. Millions of children are learning there, too. Again, is there any wonder that, according to a recent survey, parents believe their children learn nearly as much about sex from TV as from them.

Steve Allen, author and actor, believes **"our nation, our society, our culture is in some state of moral and ethical collapse"** and he blames it, in part, on the **"amoral force of TV."** He is right.

Perhaps each of us, in some fashion, should join the citizens of Farmington, Connecticut, who in January of this year joined in the Great Turnoff. Their TV sets fell silent for an entire month. Great moral and spiritual benefits could be reaped if all of us, to some degree, imitated their actions.





# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “MAN”

**Hebrew Word:** 'ish

**Meaning:** man, in correspondence to woman

This word is used about 2,183 times in the Hebrew Old Testament and evinces several different nuances in the many contexts in which it is found. But it is this word's basic meaning with which this article will deal. **“Basically, this word signifies ‘man’ in correspondence with woman; a ‘man’ is a person who is distinguished by maleness”** (Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament, in loc.).

It is this general flavor of “maleness” that, among other things, distinguishes this word from the other major word for man in the Old Testament, the word 'adam, used in Gen. 1:26, 2:7. This word generally connotes mankind as such, both male and female, and is related to the noun 'adamah, earth, and to the verb 'adom, to be red. But our word is more specific in most of its uses in the Old Testament and tells us something very important about the male and female of the human race.

In Gen. 2:23 we are told that when the woman had been formed and brought to the man that the man said: *“This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man.”* It is obvious that this text is intended to convey a word-play to us based on the similarity of the words “Man” and “Woman.” But what exactly is the nature of this pun? The words sound similar in both English and Hebrew: Eng. man, woman; Heb. 'ish, 'ishshah. There are two choices available to us: 1) We can understand that Moses is using the similarity of the meanings of the two words to construct his pun; or, 2) we can understand that he is using the similarity of sound to develop the pun. (Incidentally it is well to notice that the idea of a pun or play-on-words here is not being suggested to indicate that the scriptures are characterized by flippancy. On the contrary,

the prophets in particular use puns often in the most tragic of contexts. Their purpose, and that of Moses, is to state their point in such a way that it sticks in the memory.)

I am going to suggest that it is the second alternative, similarity in sound, that Moses is using here, not similarity in meaning. In English the similarity is one of meaning and sound. “Woman” comes from the Anglo-Saxon wifmann, ie., wife-man. So the English language conceives of woman as a sort of female man. Compare the words steward and stewardess, patron and patroness, etc. Now it is true that the words 'ish and 'ishshah appear to be operating in the same way that steward and stewardess do. The ah ending on the word for woman appears to be nothing more than a feminine ending on the word for man as it is in so many Hebrew words, with a double final consonant, shsh, to accommodate it. The English equivalent would look something like “man” and “manness,” ie., “male-man” and “female-man.” And thus, in Gen. 2:23, it would appear that Adam was saying: “Here is a female-man and she shall be called that very thing, because she was taken out of male-man.” But that is not what Adam was saying. The pun is not on meaning but sound. And here is why I say so.

The words 'ish and 'ishshah though they look very similar and sound very similar do not have similar meanings. Rather, they are as different in meaning as night and day. The word 'ish, man, means, as we have seen, essentially “male.” But more than that, it comes from a root which means “be strong” (Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.*, p. 35). Its “emphasis is on sexual distinction,” not similarity (Ibid.). So our word for man here emphasizes masculine strength.

But what about ishshah, woman? This word comes from a different root than 'ish, man, a root that means “delicate” (Ibid., p. 61). And the point to be made is that Adam's pun in Gen.

2:23, *“Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”* does not mean that woman is a female man, a manness. The similarity is simply one of sound. And the meaning is that woman will be denominated by a word that sounds similar to that describing man, showing a relationship between the two, but having an entirely different meaning, showing the immutable difference between the sexes that God intended from the beginning.

The application to be made from these facts is obvious to the careful observer of the social conditions of our times. On every hand for many years in this country and the western world generally we have heard the cry of the unisexists and the womens' libbers: “Let the sexes be one; there is no essential difference between man and woman; physical differences are but incidentals.” But in the very beginning God set in place certain distinctions between man and woman that run far deeper than physical distinctions, which, incidentally, are not incidental. (Pardon the pun.) God made man masculine, “strong,” and He made woman feminine, “delicate.” The effort to confuse and blur these distinctions is an affront to the Creator and an offense against humanity.

## “BUSYBODY”

**Greek Word:** allotriopiskopos

**Meaning:** looking upon or into that which belongs to another

This word, used in I Peter 4:15 only, is a little difficult to deal with. The difficulty lies, as William Barclay says, in that **“there is no other instance of this word in Greek, and Peter may well have invented it”** (D.S.B., in loc.). W.E. Vine thought the word was a legal term used by the Romans (perhaps from some Latin equivalent) for a charge brought against Christians as being hostile to civilized society (Expos. Dict. N.T. Wds.). And it is true that one of the standard charges of the Romans against Christians was that

they were "enemies of mankind," a sort of catch-all charge leveled at them in the absence of more specific information with which to prosecute them.

But it is better simply to look at the word in its context after looking at its roots and make our determination on that basis. *Allotrioepiskopos* (who can pronounce it?) is a combination of the word *allotrios*, "belonging to another person," and *episkopos*, "an overseer, bishop," as in Acts 20:28 where it describes some of the duties of an elder. So Peter is telling Christians in our text that Christians should not be guilty of overseeing other people's business. That is why the A.S.V. gives us the translation, "meddler in other men's matters."

Now the practical application of this is fairly easy on paper, perhaps not in life. Peter says, "If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed" (1 Pet. 4:16). But he indicates that just because a person who is a Christian suffers, the suffering is not necessarily a thing to be proud of. On the contrary: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, a meddler in other men's matters" (1 Pet. 4:15). Every now and then we see a Christian whose nose has been snipped off at the end and he is proud, as well as hurt, because he imagines he has been persecuted for the cause of righteousness. Unfortunately it may very well be the case that he has simply gotten what he had coming to him because he would

not mind his own business.

It is hard to know when to step into someone else's life and when to stand without. One can be guilty of being a "busybody" on the one hand or an indifferent, unfeeling hard-heart on the other. Perhaps one way to know the difference is to ask oneself what the real reasons are for any desire we may feel to inject ourselves into the activities and lives of others. Are we trying to save souls and bind up wounds or are we really just morbidly curious or arrogantly domineering? Sometimes only we and the Lord will know. Yes. Be assured; the Lord will know.

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## THE EARLY CHRISTIANS DID NOT TITHE

by Robert Wayne La Coste

Does the above title surprise you? It shouldn't. One can search the scriptures from Acts onward, when the New Testament church began and never find such a practice within the church. No one wearing the name Christian ever tithed.

### A HISTORY OF THE TITHE

Titheing goes all the way back to Abram. (Gen. 14:20, Heb. 7:2,6) From his day onward, many gave a "tenth" of their possessions toward God's service and praise. The first time it was actually demanded however was under the Levitical system of Moses. (Lev. 27:30-33) Throughout the writings of the book of Deuteronomy, there are countless examples of the tithe, and what should be noted is that the Hebrews gave a "tenth" of ALL they possessed. Most people today practicing titheing simply give ten percent of their monies, or income.

### WHAT GOD DESIRES NOW

The Mosaical system in any respect was not God's will for His Son's spiritual kingdom. The book of Hebrews is surely replete with the contrast between that which once was, as compared to that which now is! Paul wrote to Colosse that the things of that covenant had been "nailed to the cross" (Col. 2:14). So what did the early

Christian do, if they did not tithe as their fathers before them? How was the church to raise its funds if not by a tithe?

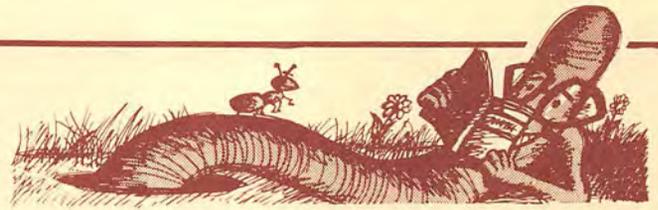
The Apostle Paul wrote more to the Corinthian church about such matters, than any other church. Since there were Christians who needed benevolent assistance in Judea, Paul by inspiration instructed that those of Achaia and Macedonia collect funds in their respective churches to assist these indigent brethren. I Corinthians chapter 16 and 2 Corinthians, chapters 8 and 9 deal more with these matters than other contexts. The instruction of God was plain. Paul instructed, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him. . ." (I Cor. 16:2). In the second letter Paul describes not so much the time and kind of offering, but the condition of one's heart in so rendering such a service to God. He said the giving should be, "willingly" (8: 11-12), "not grudgingly, or of necessity," and this giving must be planned or purposed in one's heart. (9:7-8) The heart as might be expected is the key to one's servitude, not only in this area of being a Christian but in all others also. God, dear reader is interested in quality, not quantity! Remember the widow and

her two mites? (Mk. 12:41) If one were to give great amounts of wealth, and yet be living in disobedience, what would it profit? Furthermore, if one gave generously and hated to do such, God would rather he gave nothing. The amount is only significant as it relates to "as we have prospered," which means we give according to how much we earn. Should we earn more one week than the next, give accordingly. Should we earn less, surely God does not expect as much. However, self discipline and having our priorities straight will be most necessary to be a proper giver. Let no one give less to the Lord, because he created a need beyond his ability to be responsible for. But the key is the heart. If the heart is right, the amount will usually take care of itself. Perhaps what Paul also wrote in 2 Cor. 9:6, and Ga. 6:7-8 will help us in determining the "how much." We are always going to reap in proportion to what we sow.

Are you giving in a scriptural way, understanding God's design and desire in such matters? Search the scriptures, and in doing so you will find these things are so.

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# The Book Worm



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**TOUGH MINDED FAITH FOR TENDERHEARTED PEOPLE** by Robert H. Schuller (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Tennessee), 1983, hardback, 366 pages, \$14.95.

I don't share many of Schuller's doctrinal beliefs, but I do get excited about his excitement. He looks for the best in the worst. He tries to show you that you are worth something and can make something out of your life.

This book is divided into 366 sections, one page for each day of the year (including leap year). Each day's discussion is based on a key verse from Scripture and includes a motivational commentary.

Schuller believes that no matter what the problem--whether it's unemployment, poor health, loneliness, fear, or **anything else** that blocks success--negatives can be turned into positives. His definition of "tough-minded faith" is. . .coming back after defeat. . .standing up for your convictions. . .sensing success in dark times. . .relaxing under pressure. . .hearing what your critics are saying. . .reacting positively to a negative situation.

Are you under a lot of pressure? Are you afraid to venture out into a new job? Are you feeling defeated? If so, you'll probably enjoy reading this book.

**PROVERBS--WISDOM FOR ALL AGES** by Thomas L. Seals (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 144 pages, \$4.95.

This is a fabulous look at the Proverbs, the one book in the Old Testament which gives practical advice on how to live godly lives in the midst of ungodliness. The opening chapter is a study of "Wisdom Literature," designed to aid the reader in under-

standing Hebrew poetry.

After dealing with the title, types of proverbs, object, authorship and date, Seals then gives a brief commentary. It is not designed to cover every verse, but to make applications that will be helpful to all of us. It is very interesting reading.

**NAVE'S TOPICAL BIBLE** by Orville J. Nave and revised by S. Maxwell Coder (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1974, hardback, 1367 pages, \$19.95.

I first started using this work when I was in college. When I first started preaching, I kept this beside my Bible and found myself going to it more than any other extra-Biblical book. The careful revisions and additions of Coder have made it even more valuable. As a source for Biblical references to a wide variety of subjects, it is probably unsurpassed.

This topical Bible cites more than 100,000 passages under more than 20,000 topic headings. Unlike a concordance, most of the scripture passages are given in full for handy reference--a feature which has proven tremendously useful for thousands of readers.

**THE WYCLIFFE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY OF BIBLE LANDS** by Charles F. Pfeiffer and Howard F. Vos (Moody Press: Chicago, Illinois), 1979, hardback, 581 pages, \$19.95.

The authors spent seven years planning and writing this useable book. Both men traveled extensively in the countries about which they have written. Their work reflects a thorough knowledge of the Bible lands, archaeology, and the history of the Near East. They have worked together to bring together historical, geographical, biblical, and archaeological material on all ten areas of the Near Eastern and Mediterranean world. Separate chapters deal with Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine, Phoenicia, Syria, Iran, Cyprus, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy.

This volume is a wonderful reference and study tool. The text of over 250,000 words has 459 illustrations, 45 black and white maps, 16 full-color maps, and is documented with significant bibliographies.

**THE WORLD INTO WHICH JESUS CAME** by Sylvia Root Tester (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1982, hardback, 96 pages, \$12.95.

This encyclopedia is designed for children in grades 4 through 8. In an effort to show what it was like in the world into which Jesus came, it explains Jewish history, laws, daily life, customs, places and events. It has many handsome color illustrations.

In an effort to show Jewish history, the book looks at the customs and activities of daily life through the fictional characters of Michael and his family and friends. The reader sees Michael's house, the food he eats, the games he plays, his clothes, his school, and so on.

Leaving Michael, the book then discusses the regions around Palestine, as well as the Greek, Roman, and Egyptian influences on Palestine itself. The roles of the Pharisee and Sadducees, the Maccabees, and the Roman rulers are all explained.

I would recommend this for any church library and would encourage Bible teacher's to use this often to make the Bible class have an extra visual aid.

**JOHN'S WONDERFUL GOSPEL** by Ivor Powell (Kregel: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1983, hardback, 446 pages, \$12.95.

The author has often been called "The Man from Wales." Powell, an Englishman, possesses a vivid imagination, has mastered the art of pictorial preaching, and consequently, his writings make the Bible "come alive." The publisher says Powell "had a thirty-five year infatuation with John's Gospel and an irresistible attraction to John's intimate descriptions of Christ. From his years of biblical research, the

author offers his readers this distinctively different commentary.”

This volume is more than just a verse-by-verse commentary. Every chapter has been divided into sections and almost every verse has been expounded, but each section has also been followed by one or more homilies designed to make sermon preparation exciting.

Powell follows a conservative approach, but he allows his denominational beliefs to spill over into his writings. For instance, in commenting on John 3:5, he says: “Many strange interpretations have been given of the term ‘born of water.’ It has been taught that this refers to the act of baptism; that baptism is essential to salvation. Within the confines of the New Testament Church, souls were baptized **after** their conversion, and not while they were being saved.” He then talks of the devout Salvation Army officers, the ardent Methodists, and the penitent thief. I cannot agree with his position on this verse and his attempt to “brush away” the need for baptism, but I would still recommend the book as a good aid to studying the fourth gospel.

**OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY** by William Smith, with revisions by Wilbur Fields (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1983, hardback, 755 pages, \$17.50.

This is possibly the most thorough one-volume study of the Old Testament in print. The book was prepared with only one goal in mind—to help the reader learn and understand the history related in the Old Testament.

The core of this book is from William Smith. He is most famous for his **Bible Dictionary**, but this volume will also stand as a classic work. Written more than 100 years ago, this work has been extensively revised. The scholarship of Smith was retained, but Fields brought it up to date in light of recent studies in archaeology, chronology and geography.

The book contains 31 pages of charts and pictures, 44 pages of maps, and 12 pages of special studies. Covering from creation to the return of the Jews from captivity, this volume is divided into nine periods of Old Testament history. A thorough set of review questions follows each section.

This volume certainly needs to be added to the library of anyone interested in detailed studies of the Old Testament.

**THE SECOND GREATEST COMMANDMENT** by William M. Fletcher (NavPress: Colorado Springs, Colorado), 1983, paperback, 156 pages, \$4.95.

On January 8, 1978, Fletcher preached a “state of the church” message to the First Baptist Church in Golden, Colorado. He challenged the people to get involved in the growth of the church. Over one hundred people volunteered that day to help build their fellowship. One of the options offered was to be available to care for others in need.

“Whatever our view of the Great Commission,” writes Fletcher, “we cannot escape the fact that we are commanded to carry the gospel to people. . .”

Fletcher’s search for the key to unlocking the gospel’s power led him and his congregation to the greatest commandments Jesus gave us: “Love the Lord your God” and “Love your neighbor.” Fletcher believes the second greatest commandment has been ignored for far too long. He emphasizes that the congregation must be transformed into a family who would live out God’s love by carrying one another’s burdens.

Drawing from the lessons and insights of experience, the author offers practical suggestions for working with specific groups, such as the lonely, the sick, and the bereaved. Although written in his denominational terms, the appendix at the end of the book is very helpful. It outlines a sample program for a church caring ministry.

**THE PRIVATE LIFE OF THE MINISTER’S WIFE** by Betty J. Coble (Broadman Press: Nashville, Tennessee), 1981, paperback, 138 pages, \$5.95.

When Mrs. Coble began this little book, she was teaching, writing, and speaking as a minister’s wife. By the time she concluded the last draft she no longer wore the label of minister’s wife, but widow. She knows what it means to be a minister’s wife since she supported her husband in his duties for thirty-two years. Since his death she has been able to gain a different perspective on the minister’s wife—that of a member of the congregation. So her insights come from two positions.

The wife of a preacher often feels she is living in a goldfish bowl for the whole world to view. Coble says, “The images of a minister’s wife are as

varied as the individuals who form them. To one I must be outgoing, enthusiastic, well groomed, intelligent, tireless, unruffled, a teacher, musician, hostess, friend, counselor, nurse, and athlete. To another I must be quiet, always in the background, and neat but demure. I should never offer an opinion or be in the forefront and should always be guided by what others need. I should look the part (whatever that means). And on and on the description goes.”

This volume attempts to get the reader to view the preacher’s wife as a person, not some “junior” preacher.

**WHEN A FRIEND IS DYING** by Edward F. Dobiahl, Jr. and Charles William Stewart (Abingdon Press: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 224 pages, \$10.95.

One of the greatest fears of dying persons is that they will die alone. The authors of this book state that increasingly there is another fear being expressed, “that they will die in the strange surroundings of a hospital or nursing home.” This book is a guide to caring for the terminally ill and bereaved. I have argued that for too long we have taken the dignity out of dying. This book brings out the special needs of the terminally ill and their sorrowing families.

In ontechnical language, Drs. Dobiahl and Stewart bring together insights from all the fields concerned with death and bereavement, and interpret them from a Bible-oriented perspective. The authors include illustrative case material, a description of a bereavement group, instructions for conducting seminars on death and dying, a sample of a living will, and an especially helpful bibliography.

Anyone interested in a better understanding and more effective care for the dying and the bereaved will find this book sensitive, practical, timely, and relevant.



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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## EXODUS

by Dudley Ross Spears

**T**he second book of the Pentateuch is called "Exodus." The principle event described is the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage and the formation of them into a nation. It is a book of freedom and emancipation. The book tells of Moses, the mighty leader and of his success at bringing slaves out of Egypt and giving them the first written law from God. In a special way, it is a book of redemption and much in it prefigures the redemption of all of mankind through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

Exodus begins (in the KJV) with the simple word, "now." Other Old Testament books begin this way. It seems as if it is intended to be an ongoing part of the first book rather than a separate book. This indicates that the authors of the Old Testament books have not only written their own history, but also have viewed themselves as part of the greater drama that began in the past and is carried on in the future.

Moses, the great man of God, is introduced to us at the outset of the book. It is autobiographical, for Moses wrote us his own life's story. It has been observed that there are three phases of his life, each of forty years length.

1. The first forty years reveal what Moses thought he was.
2. The second forty years show that he was nothing at all.
3. The last forty years demonstrate how God can make of nothing what he wants (Heb. 11:23-29).

In addition to the exodus from Egypt, there are two other important events recorded in the book. There is the law of God that Moses wrote on stones for the people and there is also the Tabernacle, a place of worship to God. The second half of the book (chapters 19-40) teaches that those who are delivered from bondage are to live according to the will of the deliverer,

with all that they possess. They are to be in His service and place themselves under his lordship. As a standard, the law of God was to be given to the people, by which they were to measure their lives before God. The "Ten Commandments," sometimes called, "The Ten Words," and many more guidelines were designed to help the people do God's will.

The Tabernacle was designed as a place for the visible glory of God on the earth. It was a type of the future church in God's eternal plan. It was transportable and constructed by God's people out of the best they were able to give.

### Egyptian Bondage

The beginning of the book involves three and a half centuries since the time of the scene in Genesis had been discontinued. In this time, nothing is reported. The time period is silent about the patriarchs, who with seventy people, went to the land of the Egypt, and had become a people. The people of the Hebrews had become a problem for the Egyptians. In order to break up the relation to these people, and so as not to allow them to become powerful, Pharaoh had made them slaves. That, for a people who had been free under God, was especially difficult and hard. They remembered the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and clung to them.

The family history of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had not become part of the history of Israel. God saw the needs of His people and prepared them before their exodus toward the promised land.

### The Exodus

With six-hundred-thousand men, not counting women and children, much preparation was necessary for the exodus from Egypt. A number of "strangers" as well as sheep, cattle and oxen also went with them (Exodus 12:37-38). Without doubt, it was a well organized trek across the land.

Pharaoh had repeatedly offered compromises to Moses and the Israelites. His last offer requested that the children be left behind while the adults were allowed to go to freedom (Exodus 5:1; 7:16). The plagues and the negotiations must have taken nearly a year. That gave the children of Israel the opportunity to adequately prepare themselves. God taught them through His treatment of Pharaoh.

Before the construction of any project there must first be a blueprint--a definite plan. God planned our salvation long before the world was created (Ephesians 1:4). The scheme of this plan we may read in Exodus. It is that historical picture of the grace of God in the redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ, who in one person is our great apostle and high priest. What Moses and Aaron combined were to the Israelites, Christ is to us now.

### The Passover

Exodus 12 reports how Israel observed the feast of Passover, the clearest Old Testament picture of our personal salvation through our trust in the blood of Christ. This chapter provides the basis for this picture of Christ, who is our Passover (I Cor. 5:7). He is the Lamb of God, our Passover. (John 1:29; I Peter 1:19).

God had brought ten plagues on Pharaoh in order to make him willing to release the captive Jews. With each plague, however, his heart became harder. Finally, the first born son of the Egyptians had to die. The sons of the Hebrews were saved from death by application of a lamb's blood to the lintel and side posts of their houses (Exodus 12:12, 13, 22). The Passover is the heart of the book.

We must also know something about the arrangement of the Passover meal as it is described in this book.

1. **Selection of a Lamb.** The lamb was one that was without blemish, in its first year and either a sheep or a

goat (Exodus 12:5).

**2. Sprinkling of blood on the door.** Sacrificing a lamb was not enough. The blood of the lamb had to be applied. This reminds us that the shedding of the blood of Christ is not enough to save those who will not apply it by obeying His will by faith.

**3. Eating the Lamb.** After the blood had been shed and applied to the door posts and lintels, the lamb was to be eaten. Possibly here is a type of the fact that as soon as one is saved by the blood of Christ, spiritual nourishment is needed. That comes through His word, fellowship with His saints and walking in His light.

**4. Putting away the leaven.** All leaven was to be removed from the house during the Passover (Exodus 12:19). This reminds us that we must avoid all evil in this world. Leaven is a symbol of evil in the majority of cases in the Bible. Our prayer should be as the Psalmist expressed it (Read Psalm 139:23-24).

**5. The Bitter Herbs.** Christ drank the bitter cup of sin for us on His cross. Christians may be reminded that there are bitter cups to drink in order to receive eternal life and that not all is rosy and easy serving the Lord (Heb. 12:11; John 12:24).

#### **The Giving of the Law**

Chapters 20 through 24 tell us of the law that would be given, broken and renewed. The people, from the outset, were visibly dependent on God. He had heard their cries for deliverance and overcome their enemies. He had sent them a leader, Moses, and promised them nourishment as they wandered in the wilderness. Yet, they still turned away from God.

God remained true to His people. On Sinai He gave the law in written form. This is the law that the Psalmist describes as "*perfect, converting the soul*" (Psalm 19:7). It was a law that only one man could fulfill, viz., Jesus Christ. Not only did Jesus keep the law perfectly, He paid the penalty for breaking the law. He suffered so that we may be redeemed from the curse of that law (Hebrews 9:13-15; Galatians 3:13).

The law that was given could not be perfectly kept by ordinary men. Why then was it given? The New Testament teaches that it was given as a guide to Christ and the gospel (Galatians 3:23-24). It also let men know what sin was and how awful it was (Galatians 3:19;

Romans 7:7). The law did not create sin, nor the desire to sin, nor the conditions for sin--it simply identified it.

#### **The Tabernacle**

Here we encounter one of the richest veins in the Gold mine of the Bible. All of our fantasies and imagination we must stretch if we go into the holy of holies and view the decor of that ancient place of worship. God spoke to Moses and specified His desire for a place of worship and also the details for the construction and furniture. The tabernacle was built by God's pattern (Hebrews 8:5).

The tabernacle was divided into three sections. The outer court, the holy place and the most holy place made up the tabernacle. In the outer court the sacrifices were slain. In the holy place stood the golden candlesticks (Exo. 25:31-40, the table of shewbread) (Exo. 25:23-30 and the altar of incense) (Exo. 30:1-10). One should observe that Jesus is the light of the world, the bread of life and our advocate with God.

The most holy place was separated from the holy place by a curtain. The high priest entered only one time a year in to the most holy place with the blood of atonement. Christ is compared to this high priest, only as one who needed to make only one sacrifice for all time (Hebrews 7:27).

The very existence of the tabernacle was evidence to the children of Israel that God Himself was in their midst (Exo. 25:8). The tabernacle was always the center point of the Jews as they travelled. Some critics have suggested that the tabernacle story cannot be real because they think that men were too primitive at that time to have such a wonderful piece of workmanship. However investigation and research have produced abundant evidence for the beautiful handwork and art long before the period of Exodus. Fine lin was applied in many ways. Fine Gold work has been discovered in many archaeological digs which belonged to the 12th Egyptian dynasty. Moses lived during the 19th Egyptian Dynasty.

Please notice especially, as you read and reread the book of Exodus that this deliverance of the Jews was not merely a supplemental idea or last minute decision by God. The children of Israel had the law of God given to them to make them into a great nation, through whom the Messiah would

come.

The Mountain of Sinai could not substitute for the hill of Calvary and the law of Moses might cover, but not cleanse from sin. However, the blood of the lamb of God is prefigured by the slain lambs of the ancient Jews who kept the Passover festival. The tabernacle stands as a type of God's church today, built by God's own pattern and choice.

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## **SOME SINGING SUGGESTIONS**

**by Roger L. Hillis**

*"Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"* (Eph. 5:19).

We should always try to improve every aspect of our service to God. Perhaps some suggestions will help to improve our singing.

**More Volume** - Too many people sing too softly. The auditorium should ring with spiritual songs as everyone lifts his or her voice to God. Open your mouth.

**Everyone Sing** - Besides those who sing quietly, some do not sing at all. The commandment of Ephesians 5:19 applies to all Christians. Don't worry 'how' you sound; just sing.

**Watch the Words** - Colossians 3:16 shows that our singing should teach and strengthen one another. Our songs are always to praise God. (Heb. 2:12). Always be certain you know what the song is teaching. (I Cor. 14:15).

**Follow the Leader** - No matter how fast or slow the leader is singing, follow his pace. Do not drag the song or try to speed it up. Always cooperate with the song leader.

**More Leaders** - Different leaders lead different songs and make the song service more interesting. There is always room for more leaders. More could, if they just would.

*"...in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee"* (Heb. 2:12).

Route 4  
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# Ernesto: A Searcher for Truth

## Providence In Our Search For Ernesto

by Gardner Hall

**T**he sign said that the neighborhood was called "Loma Hermosa" which means "Beautiful Knoll," but by American standards the "barrio" with its muddy streets, its ditches filled with foul smelling water and its free roaming chickens was anything but beautiful. It looked no different from hundreds of other communities that had popped up around Buenos Aires in the past 15-20 years as millions of provincial farmers and townspeople had flooded the area in search of jobs that were scarce in the interior. As Tom Holley, Greg Nelson and myself hopped off the bus that Tuesday in Loma Hermosa with our bags full of copies of the first lesson of a correspondence course, little did we know that almost a mile from our bus stop on Amianot Street a young man was beginning to pray with his mother and that we would be a part of the answer to his prayers. The teenager was praying that he could find a church that met on Tuesday's for Bible Study because he knew he needed to study the Bible somewhere with others and Tuesday was the only free day he had with his new job. Printed on our correspondence course was an invitation to our Bible study on Tuesdays.

We wandered through the maze of streets turning up one street and down another at random, or so we thought, but gradually we worked our way towards that short section of Amianot Street, where the young man was praying, and turned down it putting correspondence courses under each door. Inside his house, Ernesto saw the course come through the door and went over to pick it up. He told us later that he felt his prayers had been answered because there on the course was the invitation to Bible Study on Tuesday. Our prayers had been answered as well, for in finding this young man we found in "Beautiful Knoll" a kind of Spiritual beauty that belied its unsightliness.

That night as six of us, four Americans and two Argentinans, sat

down for our regular Tuesday Bible class, in the door stepped a shy looking young man with tennis shoes on. It was Ernesto. We had had other visitors in the few months we had been conducting services and classes in San Martin but all had stopped visiting, probably turned off by our few numbers, our terrible singing and our lousy Spanish. Since Ernesto seemed a little shy with us we were afraid that he would not return either but he was there the next Tuesday, and the next, and most every Tuesday afterwards. He began asking good Bible questions and participating in the Bible studies.

### **The Object of Ernesto's Search**

Later, I asked Ernesto why he kept coming back to our class in spite of our few numbers and horrible Spanish. He told us that many of his friends were searching primarily for peace and happiness, others for exciting churches, but he was looking more than anything else for truth and it seemed to him that in our Bible studies we had that same goal. Therefore, in spite of our linguistic and aesthetic unimpressiveness, Ernesto wanted to search for truth with us in the Bible.

After several months of study, Ernesto obeyed the gospel being baptized into Christ for the remission of sins.

### **Ernesto's Strong Desire To Grow**

After becoming a Christian, Ernesto, through a strong love for the Lord, has overcome tremendous obstacles that would have caused anyone with less courage to stumble.

**\*A lack of formal education-** Ernesto has at most the equivalent of a Junior High education but that does not stop him from wanting deep Bible study. I will never forget his efforts to grasp the last half of Romans 5, meditating on it morning, noon and evening, coming up with an idea, then rejecting it and finally almost shouting with happiness at having thought of a good clarifying point. Surely the Lord allows those who seek to find, and

those who knock to have doors opened, regardless of worldly wisdom or formal education (Matthew 7:8).

**\*Military Service-** Shortly after becoming a Christian, Ernesto was drafted into the Argentine army. We were unable to see him during boot camp, but after coming out of it, Ernesto's interest in the truth was undiminished and providentially he was stationed in Buenos Aires close to our meeting place. So, we were able to visit him and he was able to visit services from time to time. He talked about the gospel with his fellow soldiers, who were like him, typical fun loving teenage boys for the most part, who liked to talk about soccer and other pastimes. It goes without saying that the thought of young boys like Ernesto's companions being killed in the Falklands war was depressing. Though Ernesto was recalled to the service during the "Falklands War", he was a non combatant as a cook and also was not sent to Southern Argentina or the Falklands. Most importantly, he did not allow this interruption in his life to diminish his spiritual zeal.

**\*Family Misunderstandings-** Ernesto's family was highly upset at him for being baptized without inviting them. They do not understand, of course, that according to the Bible one must be baptized immediately after one truly believes, and that there is no time for formal invitations. They have also had a difficult time understanding other truths that Ernesto has grasped but he does not become discouraged.

**\*Lonesomeness and hunger for Christian fellowship-** Though Ernesto has seen several friends obey the gospel, the church of which he is a member has only about 10 in attendance and few other brethren in the whole country of Argentina that we know are his age. When we told him of churches of 100-300 members he was sincerely amazed. He would love to be able to have fellowship with large groups of young Christians, but will probably never

have that opportunity. But, he continues to grow because he loves God and wants to serve him.

#### Conclusion

In our preaching and teaching, most of the "contacts" we encounter will fall away and lose interest because they will be looking primarily for "exciting" churches and "spiritual highs". But there are many Ernesto's out there among the masses who are

looking more than anything else for the truth. It should be our consuming desire to find those Ernesto's in our communities and in the world. Sadly, however, we often expend more energy on petty quarrels and strife than in searching for good ground among the lost.

As for Ernesto, may God give him the strength to continue growing and overcome further obstacles along with

Diana, Juan Carlos, Gladys, Alberto and others who are his companions in the work in Argentina. May the Lord forgive us for not looking more diligently for those like him and give us strength to do better in the coming years.

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# TRIUMPH IN CHRIST

*"So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing"* (Acts 19:20, NASB). The book of Acts is an action packed, real life drama of early Christians spreading the flame of Christianity to light the dark, sinful world. These ancient disciples, on fire for God, hit in a head on collision with embittered Judaism, hostile paganism, the mighty Roman Empire, and the Devil and his angels. But the saints flourished and triumphed over the perils of persecution and execution.

#### HOW WAS IT DONE?

What was the secret of their success? It was absolute and complete conversion to the teachings and person of Jesus Christ. *"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who BELIEVES in Me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father"* (John 14:12). This display of power is possible today through the power of positive belief in Christ and His truth. Those who are completely converted to the Lord live in a truth-energizing union with Him. Jesus said, *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears MUCH fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing"* (John 15:5). A detached or diseased branch is barren. But being in living contact with Christ produces fruitful action. Fruit is merely excess life. Meditating on the personality and example of Jesus changes us into His image (John 15:7, 2 Cor. 3:18). We become what we think about most (Prov. 23:7).

When we look unto Jesus (Heb. 12:2), we have an inspiring leader and moving conviction that can overcome the world (1 Jn. 5:4). We are enlightened to the meaning of life (John 1:4,9). Each saint is empowered

by W. F. Walton

to be a light shining in darkness--a divine demonstration of God's will implanted in the human heart (Matt. 5:16). The Spirit of God cannot live in an apathetic person.

#### RESULTS TODAY

If we can remember to resolutely fix our hope on the Lord of glory, we too can "turn the world upside down". Paul was intimately acquainted with and motivated by the awe-inspiring example of Christ. *"For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I KNOW whom I have believed in and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day"* (2 Tim. 1:12). By knowing the Lord, he asserts, *"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me"* (Phil. 4:13).

We can harness this power by our thorough insight into the essence of Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John comprise 41% of the New Testament. This precious portrait of the greatest life ever lived is a blueprint in how to meet and deal with people, how to totally trust in the Father, and how to live a triumphant, spiritual life so the sinful world will take notice and glorify God. His love, compassion, zeal, meekness, humility and courage to carry out God's will is amazing. The incredible example of Jesus dying on the cross--totally innocent, completely forgiving, and absolutely trusting in His Father while mercilessly crucified--prompts the heathen centurion at the foot of the cross to exclaim, *"Truly, this man is the Son of God!"* (Mark 15:39). This is the drawing power of Christianity (John 12:32).

#### JESUS FIRST AND FOREMOST

Jesus Christ is a Man for all times, for all needs, and for all people. Christianity is not just quoting all the right answers, though this is important. But its greater meaning is knowing and becoming like a person--the obedient and triumphant Jesus Christ (John 17:3, 1 Cor. 2:16, 2 Cor. 3:18). Since all things are summed up in Christ (Eph. 1:10), Paul is, and we can be too, exuberant in proclaiming *"the unsearchable riches of Christ"*. Only Jesus is *"the way, and the truth, and the life"* (John 14:6). **Only** by stressing the power and person of the Lord Jesus will we ever come close to the results of the First-century. It's time we quit bickering among ourselves, and start fighting the Devil. Lip-service must be eliminated in the assembly and more leg work needs to be done in the community. We must confidently and joyously tell others what great things Jesus has done for us (cf. Luke 8:39). Let's rid ourselves of EXCUSITIS and harness the power of belief in Christ. *"And whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"* (John 14:13).

Give us more daring saints willing to fight for the Lord and fewer timid diplomats willing to "play church". We can be the people of God who are *"more than conquerors"*. Paul assures us from his own experience. *"But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in everyplace"* (2 Cor. 2:14). Do YOU and I believe it?? Let's do something about it today!

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# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**"I have worked hard all year to be the best on our speech team. I now learn that our next competition will be out of state and we are scheduled to leave town early Sunday morning. This will not allow me to worship at either service on Sunday. What should I do?"**

**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13



The speech team is important to me right now, but pleasing God should be my number one duty at all times. I know that I must seek first the kingdom of God. A sign of growing up is learning to accept some disappointments in this life, knowing that we have a greater reward in heaven.

My mother told me that whenever one door closes to you, God will show you another one. There may be other times to go to a competition. I will feel better about myself if I put God first instead of my own personal goals. I could not feel pleased even if I won the competition knowing that I set the wrong example and sinned in order to win. I will be happy knowing that I have won praise from God.

**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 16



You have to ask yourself what is the most important: God or the debate. God wants us to put Him first in our

lives. So in this case it would be best to skip the debate. If you told the debating advisor, I'm sure he would understand.

This would also allow one of the alternates to take your place, giving them a chance to participate in competition. We need to always remember that salvation is the greatest gift and to obtain it we must put God first in our lives.

**Robin Underwood**  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14



I don't think we should get our priorities mixed up. Our whole purpose on earth is to serve God, and we must put him first (Matt. 6:33). This situation has occurred in my life many times and I am sure it will occur many times more.

I know that it is sometimes hard to give up the pleasures of this life, but we are really giving up very little when you think of an eternity with God.

I can't answer this for you, just as I can't answer for you on judgment day. We have to decide for ourselves what is more important.

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



To answer this question you simply need to determine your priorities. Is the speech contest reason enough to skip services? Will you miss anything of real importance if you don't

compete in the contest?

Not only is it a sin to forsake the assembly but you also lose a valuable opportunity to learn more of God. You also must consider the bad example that you are setting for others. We also are commanded to take the Lord's supper on the first day of the week and if you miss services you won't be able to do so.

When you really consider it, it is easy to decide which is more important. Although there is nothing wrong with speaking ability or competition, our main goal in life is to worship God, not to be a great speaker.

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



Even though it may be a once-in-a-lifetime chance, the only right choice would be to skip going. If you are to ever succeed in life, you have to stand up for what you believe in. People will respect you more that way. Even though you may be criticized and laughed at for your actions, you know that at least one person is pleased for your decision—God. Hold fast to our faith (Heb. 10:23).

Also, we are not to forsake the assembling of the saints, as the manner of some are (Heb. 10:25). No matter how good you may become in any certain thing, no one can become too good to attend services as God commanded. If parents have trained their children so they remember their Creator, they will not depart from him.

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 16



Maybe you could talk to your instructor and see if there was any way you could drive up yourself after

morning services. Don't ever compromise your beliefs though. In **Chariots of Fire**, one man in the Olympics was a Jew. The men with different beliefs about running on Saturday and Sunday traded places. I

think if you follow God, he'll work things out for you.

I am on the ski team at my school. Our practices are on Sundays at 8:45. I talked to the coach to see if I could come up at 1:00 instead. He said that

was fine. I go to worship in the morning and evening and am still on the ski team.

Put God first and things will work out. They did for me.

# THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE

by Ralph Eldridge

This year, 1984, is an Olympic year. And it seems that the Olympics always bring out the best in Americans. We are the best runners, jumpers, swimmers, skaters, basketball players, etc., etc. But there is something about this year, 1984, that is different than other Olympic years that I can recall. I am sure you can feel it too. Our country, for the last few years, seems to have been completely captivated by an all-out, shape-up, slim down, "Let's Get Physical" attitude. Health clubs are "in". Forty or fifty year old women and men are "in" too! (Perhaps when I am 40 or 50 I will not be surprised at this.) And we are bombarded daily with slogans, such as, "go for it", "go for the gold", and "the pursuit of excellence".

While the world continues to search in vain for the fountain of youth, the christian should remember the words of Jesus, ". . .the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are the spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63), and of Paul, "*For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things.*" (1 Tim. 4:8). God is looking for excellence in us (Psa. 16:3), but this excellence is not to be found on a basketball court or in a track meet.

## EXCELLENCE BEGINS WITH GOD

Excellence means to be great or preeminent. Surely we must realize that greatness begins with Jehovah, ". . .for His name alone is excellent; His glory is above the earth and heaven" (Psa. 148:13). We can see His excellence in the things that are made--the never changing seasons, the refreshing snowfall, the inevitable spring. Yes, God's divine nature and power, His greatness, can be clearly seen through all that is around us (Rom. 1:20).

But, more importantly, God has revealed unto us in His word, the Bible, all that is excellent. "*Have not I*

*written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?"* (Prov. 22:20). God has given us these words of excellence through earthen vessels, that we might truly know the excellency of His power (2 Cor. 4:7).

## HOW TO FIND EXCELLENCE

When my brother was in high school, he began lifting weights. One day I attended a workout session with him. I could not believe how hard he worked! He pushed, groaned and pulled until every repetition of every exercise was completed. (If you have ever "pumped iron", you know what I mean.) I commented on how strenuous the workout was. He shared a short lesson his trainer had given him. He simply said, "NO PAIN, NO GAIN".

The road to excellence for the Christian is painful. It begins with absolute dedication, resolve and commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian counts everything as loss and dung in order to find the excellency that comes from knowing Christ as Lord (Phil. 3:8). This is a painful experience. It may mean giving up family, friends, and old habits.

Excellency also involves a painful process of changing the way we think. To many, nothing is pure, because their mind is defiled (Tit. 1:15). The Christian must center his thoughts on things that are excellent, pure, honorable, and right. (Phil. 4:8), because how we think determines how we act. Jesus says, "*A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things*" (Matt. 12:35). Our speech must be excellent (Prov. 17:7), but we speak only from that which fills the heart (Matt. 12:34).

How often have we heard athletes tell us that they failed because their minds were not completely on their performance? We as Christians must learn this lesson. Excellence comes only from severing the entanglements of this life, and concentrating on the greater goal for which we all strive (Heb. 12:2).

Excellency involves the way of love. Paul says, ". . .and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way" (1 Cor. 12:31). Love is a painful process because of who we must love. It is not painful to love family or friends, but we have not achieved excellence if this is the extent of our love. Jesus says, ". . .love your enemies, bless them that curse you. . ." (Matt. 5:44). How much easier it would have been for Jesus to call upon ten thousand angels to deliver Him from the murderous mob. But instead He demonstrated a greater, more excellent, but more painful way; He said, "*Father forgive them; for they know not what they do*" (Lk. 23:34). By enduring the painful cross, He gained glory and dominion. If we will follow His example of love, we will gain the heavenly reward.

## CONCLUSION

The pursuit of excellence begins with God and His word. It can not be achieved without hard work, pain and sacrifice. But, the pain and suffering endured on the way can not compare to the glory that will one day be revealed unto those who pursue the goal of excellence (Rom. 8:18). Think of it! Standing on that winners platform, the banner of Christ waving briskly, the anthem of the Lamb sung proudly, we shall have the crown of victory placed upon our heads; oh, what a glorious day!

# Growth & Development of New Born Babies

by Rodney Miller

**W**hy is it that some people can grow anything and other people can kill crab grass?

Most of it deals with desire. Those that really desire to grow living things have discovered it calls for putting in the time and effort necessary to learn what will nurture the tender plant into a healthy growing shrub or tree. They have learned by trial and error what will work and what will kill the plant. It is much like playing the piano. Everybody wants to play, but not everybody wants to make the sacrifice of putting in the hours required to develop the necessary skills.

So it is with developing others in the Lord's service. It really is a matter of desire to love someone's soul enough to learn, sacrifice, and put forth the effort to develop someone for the Lord. We all know of our failing in converting the lost for Christ. We have not cared enough to reach out for the lost souls in our communities, be they at work, at school, in the neighborhood, or even in families. Yet as poorly as we have done in this respect of reaching the lost, there is probably a greater failure, - but, such failure just is not as visible. Simply because we have converted so few, the visibility of this particular problem is not so great as the failure of **MATURING AND DEVELOPING THOSE WE HAVE BAPTIZED.**

Therein is the only place where we, as a people of God, have failed to an even greater degree than in reaching the lost in the first place. If we do manage to accidentally slip up and convert somebody into Christ, and they are baptized, the job is not complete. Our Lord instructed the disciples in the "great commission" passage: "*Make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, TEACHING THEM TO OBSERVE ALL THINGS I HAVE COMMANDED YOU.*" So, there is a job to be done after the conversion, just the same as before the conversion. Yet,



this job of teaching needs to be closely defined. Sometimes when someone is baptized, the comment is made that we need to have a "new converts" class. Or, when someone has been baptized and then fell away, often the comment is made, "well, why didn't somebody teach them?" Of course, teaching is needed! But what kind of teaching is needed? The type of teaching needed is not the kind that most often is done, - a class with one or two members (ranging from 1 to 5 years in the church). Such a class at best is taught on Sunday morning during the Bible study hour. What, then, do we need to do that will mature these new brethren in Christ?

The concept of development and growth is, as in a plant: constant care! Someone needs to look after these people day in and day out. Someone must care for their every need, both spiritual and physical. Just as on "Queen For A Day", these people must become our **ROYALTY.** No one family can be expected to take on the project of caring more than another family for the new converts. We must serve them in every aspect of their lives: social, spiritual, and physical. New converts must be developed like crops of tender new plants which begin their growth in a hot-house. We do not expect a crop of new house plants to grow by themselves, and we can't

expect a new babe in Christ to develop on his own by himself. In our rush to condemn error, we have spoken long and loudly on the errors of the Crossroads movement. Yes, they have possibly abused the "Prayer partner" concept in its proper influence on the life of a new Christian. Yet, I have failed to read one word from a "sound" author that condemns the failures that we, as sound brethren, are making in relation to baptism and development of new converts. While they have made mistakes, brethren, so have we. We are not reaching the lost and we are not grounding the saved! It seems the best we can do with a new convert is give him six easy lessons on instrumental music, and authority. This is fine, but such converts need the constant care and enlightenment of the saints in every phrase of their lives. It is not until we decide to become servants of the newly converted that we will ever ground anyone who is not a Christian. Our Lord selected 12 men into whose hands He was going to trust the evangelism of the world. He was going to work with them for 3½ years, and then leave them on their own to complete His task.

How did he do it? He **GAVE UP EVERY ASPECT OF HIS OWN LIFE AND LIVED WITH THEM FOR THAT 3½ year period.** He ate with them, He traveled with them, and yes, he taught them; but more important than teaching, He was so involved with them personally that they **SAW IN HIM A COMPLETE DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT HE WANTED THEM TO BECOME.** It is not until we get our house in order enough that we let people move in close enough to see the insides and outsides of our lives that they will begin to model their lives around not what they hear but what they **SEE.**

**THEN WE WILL GROW  
CHRISTIANS.**

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## WALTER SCOTT

Walter Scott was born in Scotland on October 31, 1796. During his forty years as a preacher, he proved to be one of the most successful proclaimers of the ancient gospel in the last century.

Scott had been raised by strict Presbyterian parents. His mother wanted him to enter the ministry, but Scott could make no sense out of the doctrines then taught in the Church of Scotland. He was not willing to act from pure emotion.

In 1818 Scott left his homeland and sailed to New York. He reached his destination on July 7. Although only 22, he had already graduated from the University of Edinburgh, and was ready to begin his career as an instructor in Greek and Latin. The following year Scott moved to Pittsburg to teach at a school operated by George Forrester.

Forrester preached for the "Haldane" church. Robert and James Alexander Haldane had withdrawn from the Church of Scotland in 1799 and determined to establish a church based on the Bible alone. His first Sunday in Pittsburg, Scott walked with Forrester to services. **"What he found there excited him further. The members of the congregation greeted one another with 'a holy kiss'! Had not Paul directed this in Romans 16:16? They washed one another's feet, for had not Jesus commanded it? (John 13:14). Moreover, he had arrived on Communion Sunday only to learn that every Sunday was Communion day. He heard no creeds recited. The service was simple and, wherever possible, in the language of Scripture. Infant baptism was not admitted. This church accepted as members only those who were old enough to decide for themselves that they wanted to be Christians and who, following that decision, were baptized by complete**



**immersion. He discovered that this congregation was an independent unit; it was subject to no presbytery or synod, or to any other authoritative body outside itself" (Voice of the Golden Oracle, by Dwight Stevenson, pg. 24).**

This unusual congregation caused Scott to engage in a detailed study of the Bible, with special emphasis given to the subject of baptism. After the passing of many weeks, Scott had no choice but to let Forrester immerse him.

In 1820 George Forrester drowned in the Allegheny River. Scott was now in charge of the school.

Walter Scott met Alexander Campbell for the first time during the winter of 1821-22. Their mutual respect for the Scriptures caused them to become lifelong friends. Historians have often compared these two great men. Dwight Stevenson said, **"Campbell was given to wide generalizations, to grouping facts under sweeping principles. He**

**delighted in analogies and relations. Scott possessed an analytical mind, dividing a subject into finely balanced parts. His thought was inclined to be somewhat mechanical, and often legalistic."**

In 1823 Sarah Whitsette, daughter of a "once wealthy farmer," married Walter Scott. This same year he started contributing articles for Alexander Campbell's new magazine, **The Christian Baptist.**

At the invitation of Alexander Campbell, Scott attended a meeting of the Mahoning Baptist Association at Canfield, Ohio during August, 1826. This association consisted of sixteen Baptist Churches on the "Western Reserve" in Ohio. They had their own creed, based upon the doctrines of John Calvin. Numerically, these churches had been losing ground. Scott had the opportunity to preach at the Sunday morning service on August 27. He left a good impression on the minds of his hearers, for the next year he was selected to become a "travelling evangelist" for the Association in Ohio.

During his first year on the Reserve, he baptized over 1,000 people for the remission of their sins. When Scott would arrive in a community, he would gather the children together and have them repeat his famous "Five-Finger Exercise." He would say, "Begin with your thumb and repeat what I say to you: Faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, gift of the Holy Ghost." He would then instruct the children to go home and repeat this to their parents, and have them attend the preaching services that night.

During this first year in Ohio, Scott became one of the first men in this country to preach "baptism for the remission of sins." This did not agree with Baptist doctrine. The Mahoning

Association dissolved in 1830, at its annual meeting at Austintown.

In 1831 Scott moved back to Pittsburg, and later on to Cincinnati, then back to Pittsburg where he wrote **A Discourse On The Holy Spirit**.

The first issue of Walter Scott's paper, **The Evangelist**, came out on January 2, 1832. This paper was devoted to a complete restoration of the "ancient gospel."

Bacon College was established in 1836, and Scott served as its president for one year. He also found time that year to write one of his most popular books, **The Gospel Restored**.

**The Evangelist** was discontinued in

1844. Scott then helped Robert Forrester (George Forrester's son) with his new journal, **The Protestant Unionist**.

In 1849 Scott moved to Mays Lick, Kentucky. He left there in 1852, but returned in 1855. During the next few years Stone authored many other books, including **The Messiahship or Great Demonstration**.

When Scott died in 1861, Alexander Campbell wrote, "He, without partiality or enmity in his heart to any human being, manfully and magnanimously proclaimed the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so far as he understood it,

regardless of human applause or of human condemnation. . . I knew him well. I knew him long. I loved him much. We might not, indeed, agree in every opinion nor in every point of expediency. But we never loved each other less, because we did not acquiesce in every opinion, and in every measure. By the eye of faith and the eye of hope, methinks I see him in Abraham's bosom" (**Millennial Harbinger**, 1861, page 297). Walter Scott is buried in the cemetery at May's Lick.

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# IT'S JUST WATER!

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

I heard it again, just the other day. This fellow said, "I have been baptized, but I was saved before I was baptized." He continued, "I believe that Christians should be baptized." When it was pointed out to him that he had changed the Lord's order, since Jesus said, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. . .*", but he was saying, "He that believeth is saved and should be baptized", he was momentarily taken aback. He quickly recovered, however, and exclaimed, "but, it's just water and water can't save!" It was further noted with him that the Bible is "just paper and ink", and the Lord's Supper is "just bread and fruit of the vine." His prejudices were too deeply rooted. He began to cry, and blurted out, "but I just can't believe that my parents and grandparents, who have taught me since I can remember, and the thousands of people who don't believe as you do can all be wrong."

It was very sad. I felt very emotional. Pity and sympathy welled up within me, but, I felt indignation also. This man was the victim of false teaching. The devil's doctrines deceive and seduce. Many are lost not because they are irreligious, but because they have been taught a false religion.

Jesus, because He is divine, knew it would be this way. He expressed a warning in so many ways. He taught that many will go the way of destruction (Matt. 7:13-14). He said that many who thought themselves religious would be told to leave as workers of that which is contrary to His law (Matt. 7:21-23). He said that following the teaching of men would constitute vain worship (Matt. 15:9). Jesus showed that religious institutions not authorized by the Father would be uprooted, and following or leading without proper knowledge leads to catastrophe (Matt. 15:13-14). The Lord also recognized the difficulty of going contrary to family consensus. However, He set forth very vividly the fact that we must put Him and His way before all other considerations. Even father and mother must not be permitted to hinder true allegiance to the Lord (Matt. 10:34-37).

The young man said, "It is such a little thing!", referring to baptism. This is another popular misconception. Man thinks that what he considers insignificant and unimportant is viewed in the same manner by the Lord. Jesus condemned improper distinctions when He scolded the religious leaders in the days when He

walked among men. "*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisses, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone*" (Matt. 23:23). Please notice that Jesus did not say it is permissible to leave undone any of His requirements. Even a jot or a tittle is important to the Lord (Matt. 5:18).

False teachers are abhorred by the Lord. Peter showed the destructive effect of their work (II Pet. 2:1-3). Not only are false teachers condemned, but they cause those who believe them to be lost. The excuses uttered to justify a failure to obey the Lord in order to be saved have been parroted for so long that many believe they are scriptural teaching. It is still a fact, however, that it is by the Word of the Lord and not that of men that we will be judged. Please read John 12:44-50 very carefully. The Lord said that and you can be certain it is true. It just may be the Lord knew false teachers would object to the essentiality of baptism and He made it a requirement in order to separate true believers from lip-server. Of course, it is just water. However, when immersed in it to gain the salvation the Lord provides, it is a soul saving act of obedience. The Lord said that (Mark 16:16). You should believe and do. You see, even faith is a little thing to some people, but you cannot please the Lord without it (Heb. 11:6).

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# "If You Are a Christian, You Are a Clergyman"

by Norman E. Fultz

**W**ell, that statement ought to grab hold of you, real good. So let's hasten to see what this is all about.

The term "clergy" is a frequently used (misused term Emblems on automobiles declare "clergy." Transportation companies used to (I do not know if they still do.) grant "clergy fares." People speak of their "clergy" and their lay members. Well, that kind of clergy I am not a part of. But what does the term mean? Where did it come from? How did it derive? How does one become a part of God's clergy?

Webster says the word is from the Latin "clericus" meaning priest and defines it: "**In the Christian church, the body of men ordained to the service of God; ministry.**" It is a collective noun and is not applied to one person, but one is thus referred to in circles of men's religions as a clergyman or a cleric. These same distinguish between the clergy and what they choose to call laity, the common people. The Bible recognizes no such classifications of those who compose the clergy (heritage) of God. The original word (kleroo) which is translated "heritage" (ASV) or "inheritance" (KJV) in Ephesians 1:11 is the word from which the term "clergy" is derived by theologians. Thayer defines the term and then parenthetically states, "**In ecclesiastical writings it signifies to become a clergyman**" (p. 349). But that use reflects a gross misunderstanding of the term used in the scriptures.

How did this perversion come about? The term in classical Greek meant "to cast lots, determine by lot, to choose by lot, to allot, assign by lot" according to Thayer. But he says that in the New Testament it means "to make a heritage, private possession," and he points out that this is a designation transferred from the Jews in the Old Testament to Christians in the New Testament. Another form of the same word in 1 Peter 5:3 is translated in the ASV as "the charge allotted" to the elders; in the KJV it is "God's heritage." That

"charge allotted" them is the church of the Lord (Acts 20:28). Vincent indicates the ecclesiastics looked upon ministers as the clergy, "**either as being chosen by lot like Matthias, or as being the lot or inheritance of God.**" Modern religionists do not cast lots, but they have their ordinations. Thus they have their ordained and unordained preachers or their clergy and their lay ministers. These modern "clergymen" have simply borrowed a term which, as early as the middle ages, was being used wrongly, for it was applied to a select few, not to the whole of the church. This is an instance in which their practice dictated the meaning of a term instead of the meaning of the term dictating the practice.

Israel of old was God's inheritance. "**But the Lord hath taken you. . . to be unto him a people of inheritance, as ye are this day**" (Deut. 4:20). "**Yet they are thy people and thine inheritance. . .**" (Deut. 9:29). (See also Deut. 32:9; Psa. 16:6). However, in the New Testament, Christians (all of them) are a "heritage, private possession" of God in Christ (Eph. 1:11). And so if the term "clergy" is appropriate at all, it must be applied to all the people of God, to the church, not just to a few professionals. The elders are warned by Peter not to "**lord it over God's heritage,**" "**the flock of God among**" them (1 Pet. 5:2-3). Note that the elders (pastors, bishops) are not the clergy. They are among the clergy (heritage) of God, and they must exercise care in their oversight of that heritage.

Or we might consider it from the standpoint that Webster says it is from the Latin "clericus," meaning priest. All Christians are priests. Peter declared that those who come to the "living stone" are "**lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood. . .**" (1 Pet. 2:4-5). John said that He who washed us from our sins "**hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father**" (Rev. 1:5-6). All such are ordained unto the

service of God (Eph. 2:10). Thus, all are ministers or servants performing our service in our several offices (Rom. 12:4). But for a supposedly ordained and elite class, preachers, to relegate the term clergy to themselves is an evident manifestation of denominational pomposity and is sinful.

How does one become part of God's heritage? The answer is not difficult. The "*in whom*" of Ephesians 1:11 refers to Christ. Spiritual blessings are in Christ (Eph. 1:3); we are chosen "*in him*" (v. 4); adoption as sons is through Christ (v. 5); "*the praise of the glory of his grace (is) freely bestowed in the Beloved (Christ)*" (v. 6); redemption is in Him (v. 7); all things are summed up in Christ (v. 10). Thus, only by being in Christ is one part of God's heritage.

The question then really is, "How does one get into Christ?" Again, the answer is simple if one will accept the Bible. Paul said, "**For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ**" (Gal. 3:26-27). We are "**baptized into one body**" (1 Cor. 12:13). That body is the church (Col. 1:18), the "**flock of God**" (1 Pet. 5:2-3), God's heritage (clergy).

As God's heritage, we have an inheritance (Acts 26:18; 1 Pet. 1:4) which is incorruptible, undefiled and that fades not away. "**It is the portion of heritage which one receives by virtue of birth or by special gift.**" (Vincent). We are born into the family of God (John 3:3-5) and become heirs of God, as His children, and joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17).

Friend, are you a part of God's clergy (heritage), the church which is the body of Christ? His heritage shall receive a beautiful inheritance because of heirship, being joint-heirs with Christ.



# The Poet's Page

## "THEY ALL BEGAN TO MAKE EXCUSE"

Luke 14:16-24

"We'd like to be there Sunday,  
For us and the children's sake;  
But we bought this boat Monday,  
And are headed for the lake."

"I told Mary we should go,  
It's still fresh upon my lips;  
But we've got this new Camp-O,  
And enjoy our week-end trips."

"We both work so hard all week,  
Since we're badly in the 'red';  
On Sunday we have to sleep,  
So we just stay home in bed."

"We'll be there week after next,  
This Sunday we're out of town;  
We're going to see brother Rex,  
Rheumatize has got him down."

"Now it's not like I don't care,  
But the trouble, don't you see;  
They are not too friendly there,  
And they seldom speak to me."

"We do miss not being there,  
And the kids all miss it so;  
But they just don't treat us fair,  
And we're still too mad to go."

"They're hypocrites, don't you see,  
So our going is of no use;  
And if you are asking me,  
I think that's a good excuse."

"Last Sunday we tried real hard,  
You can just ask Sallie Rose;  
As we pulled out of the yard,  
(You can guess the way it goes)."

But on that great Judgment Day,  
When we stand before the King;  
These excuses that we say,  
Simply will not mean a thing.

Why not throw your crutch away,  
And confess you have been wrong;  
Come right on up next Lord's day,  
Bring your spouse and kids along!

--Guthrie Dean  
Ft. Smith, AR

## PICK YOUR TRAIL

I had rather be a pebble  
On the trail that leads to God  
Than of a stone slab on the highway  
That only the worldly trod.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## THE END

When the veil of life closes,  
and the dreadful darkness lingers near

When you depart  
from your earthly tabernacle,  
leaving behind those whom  
you love so dear;

When you cross death's chilly stream  
to enter regions unknown;  
Will you make your journey with the savior  
or must your pilgrimage  
be all alone?

When the Master summons the dead  
to judgement  
and we stand before the throne;  
When the verdict is pronounced,  
which will it be--  
to heaven with the master or  
banishment to hell--all alone?

--Ron Daly  
Pine Bluff, AR

## ONE MORE THING, LORD JESUS

When doubts begin to cloud my mind,  
And the world, alas, draws near,  
To You I turn with open heart;  
Lord Jesus, make things clear!

When problems overwhelm me  
As problems sometimes do,  
There's no one else to turn to  
So, Lord Jesus, I come to you!

It seems I always turn to You,  
When things don't go my way.  
You're always there to help me  
And to brighten up my day!

I've one more request to make,  
And this I hope You'll do,  
Don't ever let me forget to say  
A simple, "I thank You"!

--Greg Litmer  
Indpls., IN

## SMILES THAT CONCEAL

Here is something Mama taught me,  
When I was just a little child:  
Friends that always frown are better  
Than enemies that always smile!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## WHAT DOES HE MEAN TO YOU?

Please tell me what He means to you,  
This Jesus, "the Nazarene."  
The one Who will, if you let Him,  
Make life and death serene.

The one Who walked as we walk,  
Clothed in human flesh;  
Who's life, work and example,  
Was perfect in every respect.

Does He guide your thoughts and your footsteps  
Through the word that the Spirit revealed?  
Is He just an historical character to you,  
Or is He living and real?

If you would be rewarded,  
When life on this is done;  
It will only be because you're washed  
In the blood of God's dear son.

--Ken Thomas  
Bradenton, FL

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST PASTOR ATTEMPTED TO SMUGGLE COCAINE**

Ricky Edwards, former pastor of one of the fastest growing churches in Mississippi, has been sentenced to three years in prison and fined \$10,000 for his part in a drug smuggling attempt.

In November 1982, after his arrest, Edwards resigned as pastor of Pass Road Baptist Church in Gulfport, Miss., on the same Sunday the church had 27 new members in Sunday School and seven people joined the church.

Edwards, 31, was sentenced in Mid-March by the U.S. District Court in Jackson, Miss., after pleading guilty on a gun-related charge, the Mississippi Baptist Record reported.

He was arrested along with another U.S. citizen and two Colombians after a plane Edwards was piloting landed after being chased by U.S. Customs agents.

## **SEE HOW THEY LOVE ONE ANOTHER**

Members of a fundamentalist church in Burke, Texas, have been carrying on for three years in a manner their neighbors consider ungodly--suing each other, squirting glue in the lock on church doors and pouring olive oil in the organ.

Two factions are fighting in court for control of the little building of the Burke Pentecostal Church near Lufkin, and State District Judge David Walker says he's had about all he can take of the bitter battle.

"If I thought I had the authority, I would order this church sold and have it closed down," Judge Walker said in court recently. "And then I'd give the money to another church."

The feud, which started as a dispute over money, has led to so many acts of mischief that Angelina County Sheriff Sammy Leach, Jr. said he had all but

washed his hands of the congregation.

"In the last three years we've been called out there 70 or 80 times," Sheriff Leach said March 2. "It got so bad I finally told them there was nothing I can do. We will not answer a call out there anymore unless somebody's bleeding."

The congregation has dwindled over the last three years from 140 members to less than two dozen.

Incidents like this, whether it is a Baptist Church or one calling itself Church of Christ, explains why the atheistic world seems to know nothing of true love.

## **FEDERAL COURT RULES THAT DEPROGRAMMERS VIOLATED WISCONSIN MAN'S RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

In a precedent-setting decision, a federal district court has ruled that a Wisconsin man was illegally imprisoned by relatives and hired "deprogrammers" who tried to force him to renounce membership in the Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, a small fundamentalist group.

Federal District Court Judge Harry MacLaughlin said the evidence in the five-week trial was "overwhelming" that the rights of William Eilers, age 25, were violated during a deprogramming attempt in 1981. Judge MacLaughlin expressed sympathy for the family members who instigated the incident. But, he said, "This court is sworn to uphold the Constitution of the United States. If the basic constitutional rights of an American citizen are not recognized in federal court by a federal judge, where will they be recognized?"

The judge directed a verdict in favor of Eilers, who was given legal backing by Americans United for Separation of Church and State. The judge ordered a jury to reach a decision on whether the defendants abducted

Eilers out of ill will or other motives. During the ordeal in 1981, Eilers and his pregnant wife Sandy were seized on the street in Winona, Minnesota, and taken to a Roman Catholic religious retreat. There, family members and five paid deprogrammers held the couple for five days and urged them to renounce the fundamentalist religious group they were part of.

Eilers was chained to a bed for two days during the attempted deprogramming and otherwise physically abused. He escaped during an attempt to move the couple to another location. Eilers' wife was convinced to give up her membership in the religious group, however, and she has since divorced her husband.

"We applaud Judge MacLaughlin's decision on behalf of freedom of conscience," said Americans United Executive Director Dr. Robert L. Maddox. "Those who would force their religious views on others should take notice."

## **ATTORNEY SAYS CATHOLIC CHURCH NOT LIABLE FOR REPORTED SEX ACTS BY PRIESTS**

The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles said the church has no legal liability for whatever unauthorized sexual actions seven priests may have committed with a young female parishioner who alleges that they seduced her.

In a response filed late March 15 in Los Angeles Superior Court, John P. McNicholas, attorney for the archdiocese, contended there are no grounds for including the church in Rita Milla's \$21-million damage suit. "The Roman Catholic archbishop of Los Angeles may not be held liable for a priest's acts of a sexual nature, because such conduct is not within the course or scope (of the) priest's duties as a matter of law," a memorandum

accompanying the archdiocese's demurrer said.

To support the contention that the church is not responsible for actions it does not approve, the memorandum cited a 1981 case of a schoolgirl--allegedly raped by a school janitor in his office--who sued the Oakland school district for its role as the janitor's employer. An appeals court concluded that the custodian's sexual acts against the girl were not in the janitor's line of duty and therefore involved no liability on the district's part.

McNicholas filed a motion to strike from the lawsuit the requests for punitive damages against the church totaling \$15 million, saying no basis for such damages has been established. His memorandum also declared that a one-year statute of limitations should bar Milla's legal action. Arguments on the issue will be heard in court March 29.

As reported in **Today** last month, Milla, 22, and her mother, Rita D. Milla, filed their suit against the priests and the archdiocese last month, charging conspiracy, fraud, deceit, undue influence and clergy malpractice. Milla contends one of the priests made sexual advances toward her when she was a 16-year-old choir member at St. Philomena Church in Carson and later persuaded her to have sex with him, as well as with the other priests. When she became pregnant in 1982, she says, the priests sent her to the Philippines to bear her illegitimate child, but they reneged on promises to support her.

The archdiocese has refused to comment on the suit. However, Bishop Juan Arzube, vicar for Latinos, said in an interview on Spanish-language station KMEX last month, that if the seduction charges are proven, "they (the priests) will be punished, not only by the civil authorities and ecclesiastical authorities, but what is most important, by God himself."

### **PORNO KING GIVES ATHEIST HIS KINGDOM**

Atheist leader, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, reported last month that imprisoned **Hustler** magazine publisher, Larry Flynt, has turned over his multi-million dollar business empire to her organization.

"He gave me the power of attorney on February 23 to transfer all the assets of the entire **Hustler** publishing empire, which was valued at

approximately \$300 million, to the American Atheist Center," Mrs. O'Hair told the EP News Service. She said she had not yet filed court documents to ensure the legality of the transfer from pornography publisher Flynt, who professed to be a born-again Christian after he was paralyzed from the waist down by a sniper's bullet in 1978.

Flynt is currently serving a 15-month sentence for contempt of court at a federal prison in Buckner, N.C. His brother, Jimmy, filed a conservatorship petition in Los Angeles Superior Court, claiming the publisher was unable to manage his resources and charging that the atheist group was trying to take over Flynt's empire. The petition claimed Flynt suffered from a mental illness "consistent only with an irrational drive to destroy or lose all his holdings" and that he has "drained the company of millions of dollars in cash for bizarre and imprudent personal expenditures."

O'Hair, 64 years old, said Flynt telephoned her from prison to reiterate his decision to give her control of his business. "He wanted to reaffirm," she explained. "He said, if my family's going to do this, Madalyn, I am standing with you."

O'Hair said she planned to appoint an administrator to run the magazine and had not yet visited the publication's Los Angeles headquarters because of threats against her life. She said she has known Flynt for about six years and believed he asked her to oversee his publishing business because of their common interest in "fighting for freedom of the press and freedom of speech in America."

### **JUDGE SENTENCES WOMAN TO CHURCH ATTENDANCE**

In the category of unusual sentences, Houston District Judge Michael McSpadden wins. He sentenced Theresa Templemire to attend church once a week for three years.

Templemire, 19, who pleaded guilty to writing 33 bad checks at a store in 1983, must attend church as part of the requirements for probation. Templemire's father asked for the unusual order, saying he was having trouble getting his daughter to attend church. "I don't know whether this is legal or not. But I don't think it would hurt anyone to attend church while on probation," the judge said.

### **PREACHER WHO DEFIED HITLER DEAD AT 92**

Martin Niemoeller, who spent eight years in Nazi concentration camps for leading Protestant opposition to Adolf Hitler, died March 6 at his home at the age of 92. He had been president of the World Council of Churches from 1961 to 1968.

The Nazis imprisoned Mr. Niemoeller at Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1937 for criticizing the Third Reich. He was freed from Dachau concentration camp by American troops in 1945.

### **BAPTIST PREACHER MURDERED WHILE PREPARING FOR SERVICE**

Lawrence Sullivan, 68 years old, was stabbed to death in his study March 4 as he prepared for the late morning service. The elderly Baptist minister at a rural community church died of a dozen stab wounds to the face, neck, thigh and back, according to Oconee County Coroner Ted Durham. The county sheriff said the man charged with the murder was apprehended and arrested at the Mount Nebo Baptist Church over which Mr. Sullivan presided.

### **PRAVDA EDITORIAL ADMITS RELIGION PERSISTS IN RUSSIA**

According to a front-page editorial in **Pravda**, religious belief and ritual persist in Moscow despite all efforts to convert the nation's 270 million citizens to the official state doctrine of atheism.

The Communist Party newspaper said the blame for communism's failure to wipe out religion must be borne by incompetent propagandists. It called for more intensive "educational work" through broadcasting and publications.

The editorial seemed to admit that even youthful Soviets are attracted to religion, noting that many young parents have their babies baptized and attend church. Previously, when Soviet communism has officially acknowledged the existence of religion in Russia, religious belief has been characterized as archaic superstition held mostly by the aged. The editorial expressed confidence that communism will eventually overcome all vestiges of religion, however, saying that the decline of religion in Russia is inevitable as socialism develops.

## CUBA LACKS BIBLES BUT NOT FAITH

According to Peter Gonzales, a denominational preacher with Open Doors Ministry, Cuban authorities are still confiscating Bibles from Christian visitors to Cuba, despite government claims to the contrary.

Gonzales says Cuban Christians have few Bibles and face many government-inflicted pressures because of their faith. "We recently made contact with a new group of Christians on the island which now has 68 members," he said. "Out of that group, only the leader had a Bible." Baptisms must be registered with the government, and new believers face the possibility of losing further educational opportunities, or even their jobs.

Gonzales says Cuban preachers often complain that informers regularly attend worship services and make notes of what goes on. Minister's homes have been raided to find out where their books and Bibles come from and with whom they have corresponded. Despite all that, says Gonzales, the people are interested in Christianity. Of a population of 10 million, about 100,000 are known to be church members, and many more than that attend worship services in house churches, he said.

## A FEDERAL JUDGE UPHOLDS THE U.S. ARMY CHAPLAINCY

Two Harvard University law students filed a lawsuit in 1979. Joel Katcoff and Allen Weider had charged that the military chaplaincy violated the establishment clause of the First Amendment.

The plaintiffs argued that civilian chaplains could adequately serve military personnel. They filed an affidavit from Carl Mischke, president of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, to support their argument. By funding its own chaplains, Mischke said, his denomination is able to "adequately provide religious support to our members in peace and war, at home and overseas."

In response, the army argued that a civilian chaplaincy could not reach large numbers of soldiers and military personnel stationed in remote areas.

Federal District Judge Joseph McLaughlin ruled last month that the U.S. Army is within the bounds of the Constitution in paying the salaries of

military chaplains. He did not rule on the effectiveness of a civilian chaplaincy. But he upheld the constitutionality of chaplains paid by the army.

"It is not without significance that the first Congress drafted the First Amendment and, at the same time, authorized a paid chaplain for the army," he wrote. "The army chaplaincy program is a constitutionally permissible means to a constitutionally mandated end."

## CREATION EVIDENCE

When Mount St. Helens exploded May 18, 1980, it caused an avalanche of four billion cubic yards of rock and ice and water waves up to 850 feet high which resulted in deep canyons and silt and debris deposits. It has provided a rare opportunity to study geological processes which produced, within a few months, changes which geologists

might otherwise assume required many thousands of years. Evidences from Mount St. Helens show the reality of the catastrophic processes which creationists maintain have forged the earth.

## TEENS & MARIJUANA

Marijuana use among teenagers has dropped to its lowest level since the government began keeping records in 1975. A study by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research also shows an overall decline in the use of other illegal drugs.

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# In Memory

## "TEELIE" CREWS

My mother passed away on Friday evening, March 2nd, and funeral services for her were conducted at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, March 5th, in Pensacola, Florida, where the tabernacle of my father and two sisters are laid to rest.

Born and reared in the rolling, green hills of south central Tennessee, my Mother was one of eleven children that graced the union of Billy Shaffer and Amy Anthony. Though burdened with the unusual name of Willie R. (she never knew what the "R." stood for, or if it stood for anything) Teelie, she would soon be known, and from then on, as just "Teelie." Her formal education ended after four years in a small rural school in Lawrence County, but her education in righteous living and the word of the Lord would go on for the rest of her life. As a daughter of poor, hard-working farmers, she grew up without the benefit of vacations, travelling, spending money, and "dates," but not without the benefit of the Lord, His Word, and His church.

At the age of 17, she was married to Thornton Crews (he was almost 19), a young school teacher and an aspiring preacher who would never be a successful farmer. When "the knot was tied," they were sitting in a borrowed buggy outside the house of a justice of the peace who was also a brother in Christ. The shy, self-conscious young girl didn't know what she was getting into. She would be thrust into many roles she felt so unqualified for--being the wife of a man who was farmer in two states, a school teacher in two states, and a preacher in six states; bearing and rearing nine children (one died right after birth); making thirty-three moves; and expected to be a role model as her husband worked with sixteen local churches--with all of

the blessings, opportunities, benefits, responsibilities, burdens, and problems that accompany such things.

My mother reared a lot of children, cooked a lot of meals, cleaned a lot of houses, entertained a lot of company (many preachers), prettied a lot of yards, nursed a lot of sick folks, and visited a lot of people with my Father. She put up with many things from a husband and eight children, but they all loved her, and the brethren who knew her respected her. My Mother taught us to be good, to serve the Lord, to work hard, to help others, to treat everyone right, to tell the truth, to be clean, to take care of things, and to love flowers and a pretty yard.

She was the silent, supportive partner that made my Dad's life and work possible. She was the unselfish wife and mother that was content with few and inexpensive clothes and the neck and back of the chicken. Her children all had far better than she did as a child, and all of them received much more formal education than she. Her children's opportunities--and how rich and many have been mine--grew out of her lack of opportunities. I never thought of my Mother as a country woman with a fourth-grade education. Rather, I thought of her as having a big heart, a beautiful character, a lot of common sense, and a great deal of practical wisdom.

When it comes to memories of my Mother, the scene that stands out most in my mind is that of a woman singing softly while she went about her chores--and the songs were always the songs that Christians have come to love. I hope to hear my Mother singing again.

--Bill Crews  
Houston, TX

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

May 1984

Number 5

## COLLINSVILLE CHURCH OF CHRIST ON TRIAL

by Denny Diehl

**T**he four-day trial by jury is now history, and Marian Guinn has won judgment against the Collinsville Church of Christ. She was awarded \$390,000.00 (having sued for \$1.35 million) for intrusion upon her seclusion, invasion of her privacy, and intentionally inflicting emotional distress.

Truman Rucker, attorney for the church, said that he would appeal the Tulsa County jury's decision to the Oklahoma Supreme Court and ultimately to the Supreme Court of the United States. The elders, Ron Witten, Ted Moody and Allen Cash, said that if Marian Guinn was awarded even \$1, that that would be too much because of the principle involved, and that they would appeal the decision.

For those who are unaware of recent events, this trial is believed to be the most heavily publicized event in courthouse history. Judge Tony Graham believed the trial to be the most "legally challenging" trial for him to preside over. It involved "issues not heretofore resolved by appellate courts." Certainly, the precedent is of concern to all members of the body of Christ in that we may be called upon to "*obey God rather than men*" (Acts 5:29).

I received this statement from elder Ron Witten concerning events leading up to the trial:

"In 1974 we were brought aware of sister Marian Guinn, of her need, by one of the deacons. She is a sister to one of our deacons. We moved Marian to Collinsville, Oklahoma, from Bartlesville, Oklahoma, in 1974, her and her four children. At that time we had the opportunity to teach her while she was living with her sister. She lived there for about four months. We taught her and converted her and two of her children. Being on welfare, she needed a lot of help. The church saw the need and came to that need. We furnished her with clothing and food. We furnished her money to be able to go to RN school to eventually be able to obtain her certificate. We had a money tree for her. There were two automobiles that were given to her, where she could be able to drive back and forth to her schooling. We didn't do this because we wanted something in return, we did it because we loved her and there was a need. She was a faithful member of the Collinsville church for about four years.

"About 1979 she became involved with an ex-mayor of Collinsville, and at that time it came to our attention the rumor that she was the cause of divorce between him and his wife. So we contacted her and talked with her and questioned her about it. We advised her that it was best that she did not see

this man because he was not a fit subject for marriage, and we had prayer with her. She said that she had no intention not to see him, that she was going to continue her affair. As time went on we contacted her on several different occasions. Even her friend called me saying he needed some help, that she was bothering him and his girlfriend. And I said 'I thought Marian was your girlfriend.' He said, 'No, she's just a friend.' And I told him at that time that I didn't appreciate the way that he was using and abusing her. At that time he admitted having a sexual relation with her. We quickly met with our sister, Marian; we were greatly concerned. It was a public thing in the community. It was the talk of the town what was going on. We felt that she had brought reproach upon the church and that this was a very serious matter. We met with her on a couple other occasions. She was not willing to keep from seeing him. Our next to last visit with her, she was seemingly sorry for what she had done and was going to come back into fellowship. She did not come back, and she went ahead and continued this relationship with him. We notified her that unless she stopped this relationship, we would have no other alternative except to withdraw from her, and the Scripture that she was in violation of would be

read before the congregation. Right after that she brought a letter to us stating that she didn't want to be a member of the Church of Christ, that she didn't really believe our doctrine, that she was a Baptist and would always be a Baptist. She did this about a week before our withdrawal of fellowship. We told her at that time that we still felt that she was still our responsibility. She had brought reproach upon the church while she professed to be a member of the Lord's body, and that we had no other alternative, unless she came back with a penitent heart, and we would welcome her back with open arms. Upon a statement read before the congregation about a week before the withdrawal that we felt that we had done all we could to try to get our sister to come back, maybe they could say something that could touch her heart. There were many calls by the members that week, and as of September 27th she had not come forward. We are still praying for our sister and would

welcome her back with open arms. That brings us up to the final withdrawal of October 4, 1981. We worked with our sister for about two years and were not able to get her to come back and repent of her sin of fornication."

We, as Christians, are concerned with the outcome of this trial because of state (civil government) intrusion into the church's affairs. The outcome of this trial has said that the church cannot exercise discipline on its members, but the Bible commands it: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep aloof from (withdraw yourselves from, KJV) every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us" (2 Thess. 3:6) and "Remove the wicked man from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:13). Also, Marian Guinn did not want the elders to inform the church of her fornication (she sued because of

invasion by publication of private facts), but Jesus directed that "if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church" (Matt 18:17).

What can we do? We must obey God rather than men. That discipline is apart of our belief and practice is beyond question. Should this be taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, and should Marian Guinn again be awarded judgment, then we will see lawsuits like this all through the land. Just the other day, I noticed in the news that there is a man suing a church in San Jose, California, for basically the same reason as that of Marian Guinn. We can write in protest of this decision to our elected officials. We cannot allow the state to get involved in the Lord's affairs. Please pray and act on this!



1406 Paradise Court  
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# RESISTING THE DEVIL

## (James 4:7)

by Whit Sasser

To resist something is to stand against or oppose it. Therefore we as Christians are to oppose and stand against the devil. Since we cannot bodily see him, for he is a spirit, we do not resist him bodily but rather oppose his influences, temptations and every appearance of evil. Or at least we should! We are going to have to be on our guard for he goes about like a roaring lion (1 Peter 4:8) and is very crafty in the use of devices to deceive (2 Cor. 2:11).

To resist the devil though, one will have to develop a hatred for false ways. To be indifferent or apathetic towards the works of darkness, will not aid at all in ones resistance. To "abhor that which is evil" (Rom. 12:9) is of upmost importance in a warfare against Satan. And I might add, very much needed in the Lord's church today. If I imagine evil and good being separated by a fence, there appears to be many of my

brethren leaning on the fence peering into the field of iniquity. Many jump up and straddle the fence whilst others succumb to the luring of the evil one and leap over altogether. Rather than keeping as far away from sin as possible, many seem to be playing with the fire--and "can a man take fire in his bosom and his clothes not be burned?" (Prov. 6:27).

We deceive ourselves if we think there is neutral ground in this matter. One is either for the Lord or Satan and every accountable person on the face of the earth serves one or the other. There is no third choice. Notice two illustrations. When there is no light in a room, it is dark. But as soon as light is made available, no matter how small, it is no longer dark. Darkness and light cannot be together. Neither then can the works of darkness and that of God have fellowship (1 John 1:5,6). It is impossible to share in both darkness

and light. Another illustration is that of a football player suiting up for the game, going down onto the field of play, and then sitting down the whole game. Who is he aiding? The other team of course. By causing his team to play one man short, he gives an advantage to the opposition. It is true that he is not doing anything for the opposing team, but his neutrality is sufficient. Satan, I feel, is pleased to cause a Christian to just become lazy, lukewarm, or be a "do nothing for the Lord" Christian. He may never cause one to become very immoral but he is accomplishing his ends. Remember what the Lord said to the Laodicea congregation about their lukewarmness. He had rather them be hot or cold but not lukewarm.

Let us all resist the devil and he will flee from us. Put up the necessary fight. Recognize his strength and that his methods can be most alluring. As a fish sees the attractive bait but is oblivious to the hook that is within, so can we often be deceived by the devices that Satan uses. Whether as a wolf in sheeps clothing or error disguised as righteousness let us be careful and "cleave to that which is good" (Rom. 12:9).

P.O. Box 973  
Racine, WI 53405

# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## DON'T SHRINK BACK

Our day has approximately been called "the pill-popping age." Physical exhaustion is at one end and hypertension at the other end. To help us cope, we swallow pills by the handful--tranquilizers, barbiturates, pep and sleeping pills--whatever it takes to get us going in the morning, keep us going during the day, and slow us down at night. Ironically, no generation has ever existed that had a smaller work week, more leisure opportunities, creature comforts, better food, more advanced medical aid, or financial possibilities--yet our faces reflect torment, fear, anger, and a constant crisis. Our tendency is to **shrink**, to escape, to crumble beneath the crushing weight of our times. We have formed habits that can--and must--be stopped. God gives us the answer: **faith**.

Faith will help us rise above the boredom, the depression, the heavy weight of daily cares. We could call this kind of faith a "deep, abiding, unanswering confidence in God rather than in ourselves." If we try to govern our own lives, we are going to make a complete mess of things. Faith has to do with relying upon God to handle "me" in troublesome times--times we do not understand, with ends we cannot see. One of the best Scriptures to use as a handle for us to grasp is found in 2 Corinthians 5:7: "*For we walk by faith, not by sight.*" Paul helps to understand how practical this kind of faith is (Eph. 6:16). It, being a shield, holds off from us those darts of Satan which can pierce and immobilize us.

One of the most dangerous of the erroneous doctrines that have sprung from the roots of Calvinism is the notion that a child of God cannot sin so as to be lost eternally--i.e., the impossibility of apostasy. Those who espouse such a belief create within themselves a false sense of security that the Bible does not promise. They deny that the Devil can throw darts at them and cause them to abandon their faith. This can often cause individuals to close their eyes and

ears to the things they really need to be doing to have and to keep their salvation. They ignore their need to "*walk by faith.*"

There is, however, no such thing as "instant faith." Faith will never grow apart from endurance. Peter said we should "*greatly rejoice*" through our "*manifold temptations*" that "*the trial of (our) faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ*" (1 Pet. 1:6-7). There will be trials and temptations. God never did promise us a rose garden; He promised us a battle ground. Our problems, however, should make us better instead of bitter. We must be ready to stand (Eph. 6:11, 13, 14). The author of the Hebrew epistle did not want to discourage his readers, but to embolden them so that they will emerge victorious from the present growing test of their faith.

The writer warned the Hebrews, "*Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God*" (Heb. 3:12). He knew the danger of their falling or shrinking back.

## TWO GROUPS OF CHRISTIANS

There has been much discussion and disagreement on the author and the date of the book of Hebrews, but many have placed the date around A.D. 64. If this be so, Nero was in power. He was twenty-seven years old when he watched Rome burn (July 18, 64). Rumor had it that Nero himself had torched the city; consequently, there was a conspiracy against his life. Seeking a scapegoat, he turned to the Christians--upon whom he placed the blame. Strong persecution became the order of the day. When we read Hebrews and try to understand the guidelines for living in hard times, we read about reality. In the midst of all of this, there were two groups of Christians: those who stood and others who shrank back.

The structure in chapters six and ten of Hebrews is similar. Warnings concerning apostasy (6:4-8; 10:26-31) are followed by words of encouragement (6:9-12; 10:32-39). The author knew that problems had come and would continue to come. He speaks in soothing terms and assures his readers that he expects only the best of them. His confidence in the sixth chapter is based on their deeds of practical goodness and brotherly love (6:9-12). His appeal in the tenth chapter is that they be worthy of their glorious past: "*But call to remembrance the former days, in which, after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions*" (10:32). Reference to "*the former days*" implies, as is indicated also in 5:12ff., that the people addressed have been Christians for some time. The identification of this earlier test would only be speculation since we are uncertain as to the date or the place where the addressees of this epistle lived. The identifications, however, is made a little easier if we link with the present passage the words of ch. 12:4:

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*"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."* It is reasonable inference from these words that, while the people addressed had undergone persecution, none of them had thus far suffered martyrdom. This could not be said to Roman Christians after A.D. 64.

Tacitus described what happened to the Christians of Rome under Nero. **"Their death,"** says Tacitus, **"was made a matter of sport: they were covered in wild beasts' skins and torn to pieces by dogs; or were fastened to crosses and set on fire in order to serve as torches by night when daylight failed"** (Annals xv. 44).

It was by faith that they had endured their persecutions. The Greek word, *athlesis*, in 10:32 is translated as *"fight"* (KJV), *"contest"* (NIV), and *"challenge"* (NEB). It is defined to **"denote a combat, contest of athletes; hence a struggle, fight, . . .with reference to affliction"** (W.E. Vine, pg. 227).

Their calamities had been such as to make them a public spectacle (vs. 33). In his commentary on Hebrews, Neil Lightfoot said the Greek word here, *theatrizo*, meant to be made a theatrical display or a public show. **"The term is taken from the practice of arraigning and punishing criminals before a crowd assembled in the theater....They were held up to public scorn, taunted and jeered at, and even physically kicked about and abused"** (Jesus Christ Today, pg. 196). Their character was often assailed with scorn, their property was often taken away, and their bodies were often tortured. The writer **"reminds the Hebrews of these courageous endurances, in order to stimulate them still to sustain their Christian valour. They had not allowed their early conflicts to dim their spiritual joy. They had run well hitherto; what should hinder them now from persevering to the end? Why allow all their past toils and trials to count for nothing?"** (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, Hebrews by C. Jerdan, pg. 275).

Not only did they suffer like this, but they became partners with those who were so abused. As the New English Bible puts it, *"For indeed you shared the sufferings of the prisoners, and you cheerfully accepted the seizure of your possessions, knowing that you possessed something better and more lasting"* (10:34). F.F. Bruce said, **"They had met the challenge of these sufferings as good athletes of Christ, and stood firm. Those of them who had not been personally exposed to suffering showed their solidarity with those who were directly attacked, and so shared the public scorn. When some of their number were imprisoned, the others did not shrink from visiting them, although in this way they ran the risk of being imprisoned themselves"** (The Epistle to the Hebrews, pgs. 269-270). Christians imprisoned in ancient times had to be visited and fed. The needs of the prisoners were not met by the authorities. If the provisions were not made by Christians outside then those inside would probably have died by starvation, exposure or disease. This was a never-to-be-forgotten obligation (13:3; Matt. 25:36, 39, 43-44) and that they had in fact done so is clear from this passage. They lost their belongings, either from being confiscated by civil authority or simply from being looted by the mob. But in the midst of these trials they had rejoiced, as Jesus had taught His disciples to do (Matt. 5:12), knowing that they had a better possession in heaven. Others could rob them of their goods, but they could not take away their treasures laid up in heaven (Matt. 6:20).

Verse 35 further encourages them: you showed your courage in those days; do not abandon it now. The King James Version says: *"Cast not away therefore your confidence. . ."* The NIV says: *"So do not throw away. . ."* This is the opposite of *"hold fast"* (3:6, 14; 10:23). *"Confidence"* describes that bold attitude toward God, that firm assurance with which one approaches the throne of grace (4:16).

**"The confidence which is not to be cast away and the endurance which we need are, if not identical, closely related. The confidence is perhaps. . .the root, and patience the fruit, the endurance growing out of the confidence. . .We must not cast this away, as a dismayed soldier casts away his weapons; for we shall need it in the conflicts which yet await us"** (Pulpit Commentary pg. 268).

What they need is patience (vs. 36). God will certainly fulfill His promise; they will enter into the utmost enjoyment of it; but in the meantime they must remain loyal, and not give up doing God's will. All of the spiritual battles are not fought yet. There will be more foes to encounter, more losses and sorrows, more afflictions, more disappointments; hence we *"have need of patience."* **"There are times when the recompense of rewards seems long delayed, and our spiritual advancement towards it seems slow; and we have need of patience to wait and hope, and to work while we wait"** (Pulpit Commentary).

But how long would it be before the promise was realized? This question was not academic. Persecution was real with them. The author responds by saying, *"For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him"* (vs. 37-38). This quotation is taken largely from Habakkuk 2:3-4 and Isaiah 26:20. In effect, the Hebrew writer's answer to the question of how long is: *"Be patient. The time is not long. Isaiah says it will be 'a very little while'; and Habakkuk says that the Coming One will not delay."*

Hebrews ten ends on a clear note of hope and optimism. The author cannot believe that his readers will defect. When the going gets tough, the tough will get going! They had gone too far to give up now. True, the storm had burst on them early as new converts, but they had weathered it bravely. Why should they give up the voyage now, when it was nearly done? Indeed, they should not; and the author is persuaded that they would not. He is confident that they would not shrink back.

#### CONCLUSION

The heat for most of us in modern times may be as intense and consuming as it was for the Christians of the first century, but we still have choices to make when subjected to tests. When our faith is challenged, the test begins. Our faith is later rewarded and the test comes to an end. The in-between period is where patience is needed, where strength must be exercised and maintained.

While you are in the middle of a test, you can't possibly imagine anything good coming out of this. Don't shrink back; don't compromise; don't give in. Stand firm in the faith and you'll be stronger in the end.



# JOSHUA'S CALL TO SERVICE

## Joshua 1: 1-9

by Earl Kimbrough

The death of Moses left Israel at the border of Canaan in need of a new leader. Facing a mighty foe whose cities were "*fortified and large*", the wrong man at the helm could mean disaster for these nomadic shepherds in their attempt to possess the Promised Land. But God who always supplies able leaders for his purpose had Joshua ready and waiting to take command. This faithful Ephramite was so well prepared to succeed Moses that within three days Israel crossed the Jordan to invade Canaan. Even so, Joshua did not enter into this work until God authorized him to do so. In a special call to service, God instructed, encouraged, and admonished him concerning his mission.

**First, the Lord told Joshua what he must do.** He said, "*Now therefore, arise, go over this Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to them*" (v. 2). For forty years Joshua had been Moses' helper, trained under his command, tested and found true. It has been said, "They are fittest to rule who have learned to obey". One who is unprepared for leadership should not be chosen to lead. The cause of Christ suffers wherever unqualified men are appointed to (or assume) positions of leadership in the church.

Joshua stood before Israel at a critical time, not only because of the task ahead, but also because of the man whose place he took. There never arose in Israel another prophet like Moses (Deut. 34:10-12). Surely Joshua, as well as the people, recognized his inferiority to Moses, as he stood in the shadow of that moral and spiritual giant "*whom the Lord knew face to face*". But there was no time for a crisis of confidence, of handwringing, of bemoaning the loss of Moses; the Lord's work must go forward. When an aide to the Duke of Wellington questioned a certain military venture in view of the difficulty it posed, the duke replied, "What are your marching orders?" Good and able men in the church die, but the work continues

because others arise to take their place. Regardless of the difficulties ahead, each generation of Christians should simply ask, "What are our marching orders?"

The Lord's instructions to Joshua were imperative, as all his commandments are. He never issues non-essential orders, nor any that may be delayed for a convenient season. "The king's business requires haste". Joshua may not have been the man Moses was, but he could do something Moses could not do. He could build on Moses' foundation and move the nation onward to its promised possession. Each generation in the Lord's church accomplishes what the preceding one, however great, cannot. It carries on the work of the Lord a best it can, but it must not plow with a backward look. Rather than building monuments to ourselves, we today should be busy preparing others to take our place (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2). It is the work of God, not the men who do it, that is all important.

**Second, the Lord encouraged and strengthened Joshua.** He promised, "*Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you*" (v. 3). This is limited to the land described in verse 4. Joshua had no right to claim additional territory. The Lord further said, "*No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life*" (v. 5). Every enemy who would obstruct Joshua's way would fall, not because of his own strength and power, but because the Lord said: "*I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you*". All servants of God have the same promise. The writer of Hebrews echoes the Lord's words to Joshua in giving assurance to believers today. "*For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you'*" (Heb. 13:5). Those who go where the Lord sends them will have him with them wherever they go.

Joshua was encouraged to "*Be strong and of good courage*" (v. 6). This exhortation is given four times in this chapter, each pertaining to a different challenge: in dividing Canaan

(v. 6), in obeying God (v. 7), in facing enemies (v. 9), and in meeting rebellion in Israel (v. 18). Strength and courage are always needed, but especially in trying times. However, these virtues are not acquired instantly, nor do they come miraculously. They must be developed through spiritual growth: by study, mediation, prayer, faith, and obedience (cf. 2 Pet. 1:5-7). The first secret of true strength and courage in serving God is to know that the power is not of ourselves but him (Eph. 6: 10-20). The Lord's words to Joshua in verse 6, while stated as a command, were designed to encourage him. We need such words both from God and from one another.

**Third, the Lord admonished Joshua.** He warned him saying, "*Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you*" (v. 7). Each child of God, king as well as plebian, is subject to his law. None is free to disregard or to treat lightly any portion of it. God does not operate by a double standard: one set of rules for the "clergy" and another for the "laity", as false religions have it. Joshua could not turn aside from the law "to the right hand or to the left". He would succeed in his mission only through complete submission to God's will. "*For then,*" the Lord said, "*you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success*" (v. 8).

The Book of the Law must never depart from Joshua's mouth. Isaiah said: "*To the law and the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them*" (Isa. 8:20). Christians are taught to "*do all in the name of the Lord*" (Col. 3:17) and to abide "*in the doctrine of Christ*" (2 John 9). Frequent failures among God's people result from going beyond what is written, from making human opinions law, and from ignoring his commandments. Only when we "*observe to do according to all that is written*", will we be successful in his service.

There should be no fear nor dismay in Joshua however dangerous his work. Israel was afraid and dismayed by the threats of Goliath, until a shepherd boy's example gave them courage. The apostles were dismayed at the death of Christ, but they became towers of strength and courage after Pentecost. When the Lord said, "*Have I not commanded you*", he also added,

*"for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"* (v. 9). He never commands without providing assurance of his presence while the command is obeyed.

Joshua succeeded as well in serving God as any man who ever lived. His words near the close of his career summarize the strength of his service and the cause of his success. He said,

*"But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"* (Josh. 24:15). Those who, like Joshua, make God their refuge and his word their rule will make their way prosperous before Him and they will have good success in His service.

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### (Repent or Perish!)

# HAVE YOU EVER DIED?

by Dennis H. Wilson

The following article was at first a sermon, written as a result of the author's strong feeling that generally the subject of repentance had been neglected.

The author realizes the need for sermons on: the nature & necessity of immersion; and faith verses "faith only", etc. However, at the same time he realizes the need to frequently get back to the real "first principles", .ie. A need to establish sin and man's need to turn back to God (repentance).

The purpose of this article shall be to answer the following questions: 1. Where did sin come from and what does man need to do? 2. What does repentance involve? 3. When did it become a part of God's plan? 4. Where does it come in God's plan?

Before we address the above questions, a couple of definitions are in order:

1. SIN - To miss the mark; to transgress God's will.
2. REPENT - To turn from sin and dedicate oneself to correcting one's life. (Webster).

From the information the author found on the original language, REPENTANCE involves a change of mind (primarily intellectual or academic) and a change of soul or heart (attitude) (Acts 2:38; Rom. 2:4; Matt. 27:3; 2 Cor. 7:9&10).

**Where did sin come from and what does man need to do?** When we examine the scriptures on the matter we can see that the first sin was committed by individual choice. In Genesis 3 we find that Eve chose to transgress God's law. Then Adam likewise (or was it like "foolishly")

chose to sin and the result was separation from God. Ezekiel 20:15,16 shows us that Israel as a nation chose to turn away from God and against the result was separation from God. We can also learn from Ezekiel 20:27, when man chooses to sin he has committed blasphemy against God. We commit sin today by not following God's "new law". James shows us that, contrary to the popular belief "the devil made me do it", we today choose to sin by giving in to our own evil desires (James 1:13). The consequence again is separation from God, therefore we need to repent or turn back (Lk. 15:7; Pet. 3:4-9).

**What does repentance involve?** We might think of a man walking through life toward self-centered goals or walking through life in Satan's service. (After all if we are not serving God, we are serving Satan.) In order to serve God he must turn around and start walking in the direction of God and serve Him. We must crudify the "old man" (Rom. 6:6-14). We must strive to walk in the Light. This is at least in intent and purpose (Rom. 7:18-25).

**When did repentance become a part of God's plan?** God has required repentance from the time sin first entered the world and still does require it. There are at least one-hundred-eight references to repentance in the Bible which are fairly evenly distributed between the testaments. A few of which are Joel 2:12-14; Jonah 3:8; I Kings 8:46-50; Ezekiel 14:6, 18:13; Matt. 3:2, 11:20; Mk. 1:15, 6:12; Acts 2:38, 17:30. This makes it clear that it was a requisite under the Old Covenant and still is under the New.

**Where does repentance come in God's plan?** It must, by its nature, necessarily come after faith and we will show, by Scripture, that it must come before baptism. To do this, let us examine Romans 6:1-7. After having opened your Bible and read the passage, it should be clear that Christ is the example we must follow. Let us look at the following chart:

Christ died.....was buried.....then arose

We are to "die...and be buried...then be resurrected

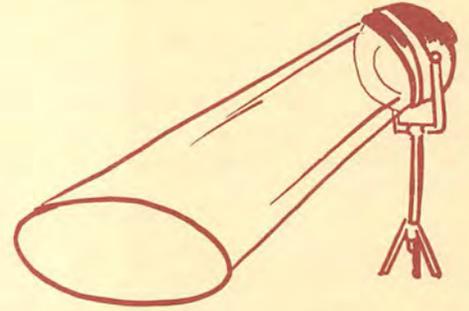
We must be: raised to walk as a new creature; born again; walk in newness of life; etc. If one does not die before his burial, he is buried alive. Therefore he cannot be raised as a new creature! If one dies but is never buried, how can he be resurrected as was Christ? It seems self-evident that neither repentance without baptism nor baptism without true repentance is acceptable to God, and is not He the one we should strive to please?

There are three essential elements involved in repentance. The first is a genuine sorrow toward God on account of sin (2 Cor. 7:9 & 10). The second, an inward repugnance to sin followed by the action of forsaking it (Matt. 3:8; Acts 26:20). Third, humble self-surrender to the will and service of God, as in the conversion of Saul (Acts 9). It clearly involves more than just thinking or saying "I need to get my act together!"

In Romans 3:9 & 23 we find "*all are under sin*" and "*all have sinned*". There is not a single person reading this article that is without sin and has no need for God. The result of sin is separation from God (Rom. 6:23). Have you ever "died"? Were you "buried"? Now that you know where repentance and baptism fall in God's plan we ask, "Where are you in God's plan?"

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# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## DAVID LANPHEAR



**At what point in your life did you become interested in law and decide to become a lawyer?**

I probably began thinking about it at some time in high school. Some of the friends I was in class with had fathers that were lawyers and I was fascinated by law. I became much more excited about it while in college at Western Kentucky University. I was on the debate team and may have had law in the back of my mind, but I probably didn't completely make up my mind to enter law school until the second year of my college work.

**Through law school and then after you started your practice, did you find many conflicts in what you must stand for as a Christian and what you must do as a lawyer?**

That's an interesting question. Possibly the one that I'm asked the most often by fellow Christians is, "How can you defend someone that you know is guilty?" I don't have problems with that. There are several guarantees that we have in this country: (1) When you are charged with a crime, you have the right to a fair trial, (2) you have the right to

competent counsel, (3) you have the right to face your accusers, and (4) if you're to be convicted, you have the right to be proven guilty beyond any reasonable doubt. Those are guarantees that everybody in our country has.

My function as the attorney is not to sit in judgment, but to simply help facilitate those rights on behalf of the client. If the government succeeds in prosecuting an individual that I defend, then my job is still done (provided those rights have been satisfied). If the government does not succeed, then I think the system has still worked because my job as the attorney was not to get the client "off" but to make sure that his rights are enforced.

I don't see a conflict, but that is probably the question I'm asked the most.

**Do you see the courts today getting stricter or more liberal?**

I think that probably depends to a large degree on the judges. Here in Kentucky, for instance, judges are elected. They are elected for eight-year terms and moods probably change with the individuals. I would even say that during their terms their moods change. I have seen judges be very strict with some offenders and at other times they don't mind in giving someone a break. It really depends on who the individual is. That's probably why we've seen a recent outcry for legislators to start forcing judges to penalize somebody and make sure they stay in prison or

jail for a certain period of time. Because we have different judges, their discretion differs.

I think more groups are beginning to speak out and putting pressure on the legislators. The pressure may not be direct on the judges, but the judges do read newspapers and watch the news on television. The same thing can almost be said of prosecutors. People in those positions of responsibility are in some way responsive to the public's demands. That's not because it is a political ploy, but it is because our system is set up in a way that it can respond to society's demands. Let's use as an example the recent interest in drunk driving. When society is showing a greater interest, the court system will apply more pressure. The same is true with child abuse or any other area. Investigators will start concentrating more and more on these offenses and it results in more prosecutions. I think there is a stimulus response that causes some of these reactions.

**Are we going to see more cases of capital punishment in the future?**

I never have tried a capital case, so I don't really have that much exposure to it. I talk with other lawyers frequently and believe there is more sympathy toward imposing a stricter penalty in capital cases. It's hard for me to tell how judges would react to that because I'm only exposed to judges in a given locale. But in given circumstances, I don't think they would hesitate to impose a penalty of death when circumstances demanded it. People need to understand, however, that there are certain limits in the law. It can only be imposed under a certain limited number of circumstances.

**Have you kept up with the lawsuit against the church of Christ in Collinsville, Oklahoma?**

Yes, I have talked with the attorney for the church. As I understand the case, the woman was admittedly carrying on an affair with a divorced ex-mayor of the town. After numerous efforts entreating her to repent, the church's elders finally announced a withdrawal of fellowship. The action arose after a statement was read to the congregation explaining the reasons for the disciplinary action, although she had earlier withdrawn her membership from the church. She filed



suit against the congregation and its elders for \$1.3 million alleging invasion of privacy and intentional infliction of emotional distress, and recovered on each claim.

It is significant, however, that this is not an isolated case. I have heard of similar cases in California, Florida, and Louisiana. As a result, elders and congregations must be aware of and prepare for the legal dangers posed in matters of discipline.

**What do you believe will be the result of this suit?**

The Oklahoma jury awarded her \$390,000 in compensatory and punitive damages. This is being appealed and I hope the verdict will be set aside. I'm hoping, too, that several decisions made by the trial court to permit the plaintiff to pursue the case will be overturned and the whole decision will be reversed.

Based on my impressions from conversations with their lawyer, I think the defenses in the case were well presented. I'm hopeful that once they have the opportunity to argue the case to an appeals court that they'll win it.

**Do you think the church could have done anything to have eliminated this suit?**

Well, that's a difficult question because I'm not familiar with all the

facts. I think there is one thing we ought not lose sight of: they may have done everything they could to have eliminated the suit. It may take an appeals court to say that that in fact occurred.

In looking back, there may have been some things they could have done or there may have been some things that once they were done they couldn't be undone. It would depend, too, on what stage they tried to contact an attorney to get his advice on what preventive measures they could take. They may not have talked with him until after they were served with papers from the courthouse.

**What do you think about the insurance companies that are now offering malpractice insurance to churches--specifically to preachers or elders?**

Insurance companies are businesses. They reap a profit by selling a service or product. Perhaps because many people feel they can get a claim against a preacher or somebody who sits in the chair of a counselor if they don't like the way things turn out, they think they can turn to the court and ask for damages. Because of that threat, several insurance companies are now creating policies to at least take the risk away. Religion is not the only area where this is occurring. I have recently seen advertisements for crime-victim

insurance. If you are the victim of some crime, the insurance would pay off. Or if your child were abducted, the insurance would pay for an investigation. These are things that are not covered under most policies.

I believe these policies are a response to the threat or risk of someone being sued who spends some time in answering questions or counselling.

### **Do you foresee a rise in law suits against preachers and/or churches?**

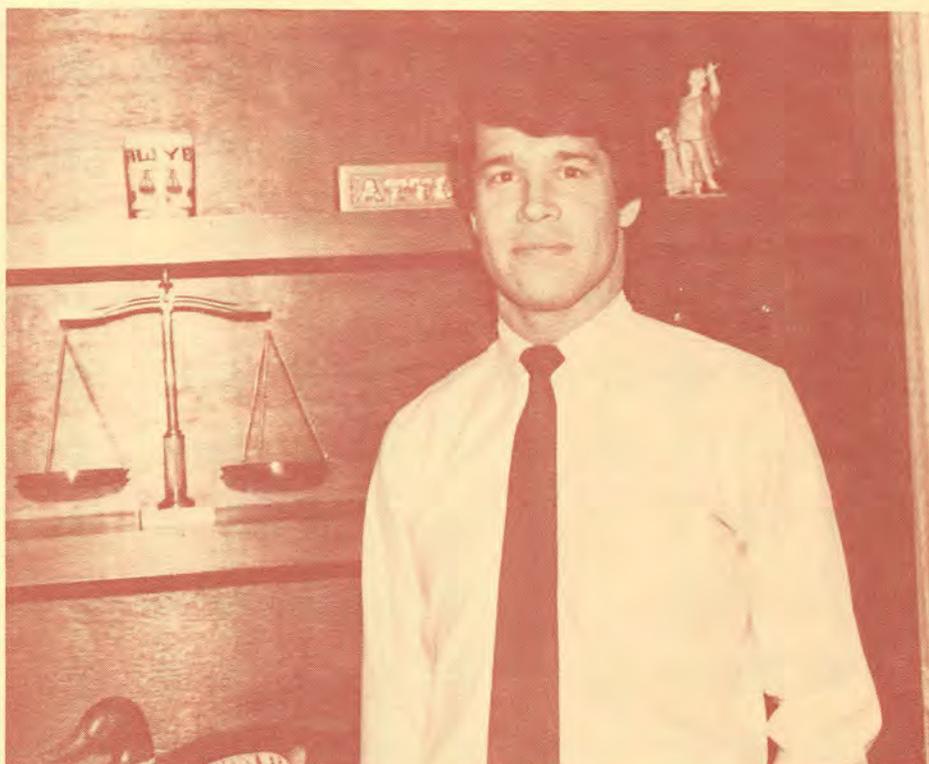
I think there probably will be just because of the publicity it has gotten here lately. I find many law suits to be imaginative. I appreciate that in other lawyers. People sometimes respond harshly to that and think the lawyer is just out for big bucks. Some accuse the lawyers of making bad laws. You have to understand that imaginative lawyers are what have developed many things that we take for granted now--such as product liability cases. If you buy your lawn mower and it explodes and hurts you, you automatically assume that the company you bought it from is responsible. Well, that wasn't the law until early in the century. A lawyer imagined that theory and pursued it in court and developed it into what we now know as the product liability law.

It is in this same way that some lawyers are being imaginative in some of these cases involving churches. I think, though, that we also have to apply some common sense. I hope the appellate courts will carve exceptions so that churches aren't responsible to people when they place themselves in jeopardy of being disciplined. There is a maxim in the law that says an individual will not profit from his own wrong doing. I think this ought to well apply here.

### **What words of advice or recommendations would you give to churches and/or preachers?**

Nothing I would say would be unique and it couldn't be exhaustive. It would amount to nothing more than simple, common sense suggestions.

The first thing ought to be obvious. We have to do what are our obligations to God before we make other considerations. After you're satisfied that you've done that, there are various ways we can approach things to avoid legal ramifications in certain circumstances. But at the same time, it is impossible to guess what people are



going to do. Since we can't look into the future and know what people are going to do, my advice would have to be based upon looking at what some have done in the past.

I don't mean to sound too critical, but people need to be sure to only impose on others what God does. It has to be doctrine and not opinions or judgment. It'll be much easier to defend your actions when you quote directly from the Bible. Discipline must be based on conduct and doctrine that is clearly defined and/or proscribed in the Scriptures. It can not be something that falls into a grey realm of judgment.

We must make sure that discipline is not rooted in personality differences, or the product of ill will or hard feelings. It must not be based on factually established circumstances. Care should be taken if such matters are investigated to avoid a possible claim of defamation of character.

During private conferences with an errant party, emphasis should be given to scriptural duty in these matters, and that the purpose is to bring one back, not drive them away. I recommend that preachers and/or elders keep a record of all conferences. Make a note of the date, the time, where it was held, who was there, the length of the conferences, and a brief note of what was discussed. If you met at their

insistance, make a note of that. The reason I say all of this is because if you are later called upon to remember what was said in your conference, then you have some notes of those conversations. These can be used in court if necessary. If at all possible, these meetings should be held at the church building since it evidences that both parties met voluntarily for the purpose of discussing the problem.

None of these suggestions will prevent someone from filing a lawsuit against a church, its elders, or the preacher, but they may in some degree prevent its successful prosecution. But I just can't help but think that our responsibility to God has to be performed without our fear of lawsuits. That doesn't mean we ought to act irresponsible and disregard other people's rights, but that one thing that is more important than avoiding a law suit is that of obeying God. The apostles were quick to react to situations in which they could have lost their lives, which is much more serious than a law suit. Their attitude seemed to always be, "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

**Readers may write to David Lanphear at 110 Whispering Hills Blvd., Bowling Green, KY 42101.**

# A Letter To My Children

by Mason Harris

It was a new experience for me. It was just a few minutes before midnight when the nurse came to me and announced, "It's a girl. And both baby and mother are fine." What a relief! It had been a long day for me. (Louise had made it fine.) When Louise told me at the breakfast table that this was going to be the day I told her, "You're not fooling me." It was April 1, 1955. I was too smart to be taken in by an April fool's joke like that. But she kept insisting that this was the day for our first baby to be born. My mother, an experienced hand at such matters, sat quietly for a few minutes listening to the exchange between us, but watching Louise out of the corner of her eyes. Shortly she interrupted our conversation by saying, "Mason, she's not joking."

I started getting ready to go to the hospital, but Louise was in no hurry. By noon she was more certain, and I was more nervous,--but she was still in no hurry. I finally told her she could do what she wanted to, but I was going to the hospital! She decided to go with me. Now, some hours later, I was looking through the window of the nursery when an older, more experienced person said to me: "Now you're fixin' to pay for your raisin'." I didn't quite understand what he meant. But now, twenty nine years and four grown children later, I think I know exactly what he meant. But we have enjoyed it and the rewards have been worth every investment of love and care.

At the suggestion of the editor of this paper that I write some articles on the home, I have shared with you in some past issues some thoughts regarding the husband/wife relationship. Now we need to consider the parent/child relationship, which is an extension of the husband/wife arrangement. But I'm not sure I need to be writing this. As I understand it, there are two times when one is an expert on being a parent: 1) Before the children arrive, and 2) after they leave home. Before we had children I felt that I knew how to be a good parent. And from the advice I get now from some of my friends, I suppose I will be an

expert once again when all of our children are gone from home. Right now I am still a little confused. (Where is all the wisdom when we need it so badly?) Instead of writing an article on this subject at this time, I would like to just share with you this letter to our four children.

Dear Children,

How can Louise and I thank you for all the happiness you have brought to us? You are the extension of our life together, and through the years we have rejoiced with you in your accomplishments and have hurt with you in your disappointments. Our goal for each of you, as one by one you joined our circle, was to teach you how to live and how to make a living. We wanted to bring you up "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," believing the Proverb that says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Proverbs 22:6). As I look back, I see that our family devotionals too often got sidetracked by the different times of coming and going, especially as you grew older. Yet, we tried always to incorporate Bible teaching into our handling of different situations such as: dress, recreation, and behavior in general.

We tried to be reasonable in restrictions we placed upon you, though you sometimes did not understand. We could not get around the fact you were "preacher's kids," but perhaps to the disappointment of some brethren, we tried not to add extra burdens upon you because of this. We tried to make it a point that any restriction, or any requirement, was to be observed because we are Christians--not because we are a preacher's family. No double standard is needed--we all live by the same rules.

While you were very young we made decisions for you. But as each of you grew, we gave you more responsibility according to your maturity and ability to handle. We knew the time was coming when you would be away from us and you would have to make your own decisions. So we tried to help you learn to make wise decisions. We did not begin by allowing you to make

adult decisions with a child's mind. And when we did not agree with your decisions, we tried to help you change your mind--or your action. Now that you are older we are pleased that you still ask our advice about some things (though you do not always follow it), but we are more pleased that you are showing the ability to make good decisions on your own. But even now I remind you that every decision has a consequence. So continue to make your decisions based upon what you want the end results to be.

Jean, as our first born and for three years our only child, you received all the attention we could give you. But then one day you learned that you would have to share this attention (and many other things) with a little sister--then later with another little sister, and yet later with a little brother. How you really felt about this I guess we never knew until recently when you and David announced that number three grandchild is on the way. You said you wanted more children because you are "from a big family and we were happy." We are pleased that David is able to provide for you and the children, allowing you to be a full time wife and mother. But we are pleased also that you have prepared yourself professionally to provide, or help to provide, if it ever becomes necessary. But our greatest thrill for you comes from your family's involvement in the activities of the church.

Debra, though many thought you were a disappointment to me because you were not a boy, you were just what we wanted. "What could be sweeter than two girls?" I asked Louise when you were born. (I would find out four years later) You have done well. The happiness you and Matt share with each other is our joy too. And like Jean, you selected a profession and prepared yourself to do well in it. But our greatest joy comes from your spiritual interests. And we look forward to the time when you and Matt will be united in faith to pursue the things that lead to eternal life.

Lisa, if I wondered at the birth of Debra what could be sweeter than two girls, I found out when you came

along. You try to be the tough one, but I know you have a soft heart. But that's alright. Your strength combined with your compassionate heart will help you do well in your profession. We wish you well in your final months of training (In other words, we want you to pass your final examination!) We take pleasure in your involvement also in the activities of the church.

And Charles, I'll not call you our baby, for you are bigger than I am. But I reckon I can call you our last. We are so thankful to have you. I do wish you could have been spared the pain and suffering you have experienced the last few years as a result of the accident. But you are handling it well. And how can we know that better things may come from it? Your ability to communicate with others can serve you well in your choice of a vocation, or equally well in some other area should you change your mind. We rejoice also because of your involvement in the Lord's work.

"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth," and "I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers" (3 John 4,2). May each of you continue to grow spiritually, remembering to seek "first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things (physical needs) shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

When Paul spoke to Timothy of his faith, he said it first "dwell in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice" (2 Timothy 1:5). Regarding the inheritance of faith, you are one grandmother up on Timothy, for you have two grandmothers who have provided you with a strong spiritual heritage. And your mother has not fallen one step behind Eunice in passing the torch of faith from one generation to another. Her husband praises her, for he found "the virtuous woman whose price is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). May her

"children rise up and call her blessed" (Proverbs 31:28). Working by her side and being your father has been a rich and rewarding experience for me.

--from your dad, with love

To the editor and to the readers: Though this is not like the usual article on the parent/child relationship, it says something about what we believe the relationship should be. We make no claim of having done everything right. We have made, and continue to make mistakes. But we have tried to take such basic ingredients as respect for the word of God and love for each other, sifting out such foreign elements as selfishness, and mix well with a lot of togetherness in work, play, and religious activities. And while we have had a good life together, the big prize is yet to be attained.



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## Did Your Baptism Take?

by C. A. Burcham, Sr.

It is alarming! I refer to the number of people who "think" they were baptized in a scriptural manner and for a scriptural cause, but who describe circumstances which, to say the least, are highly suspect. Let me explain. Most religious organizations do not teach the essentiality of the baptism in the Lord's command (Mark 16:16). That is, they believe one is saved before and without baptism, even though they may practice immersion. Therefore, it is not likely the baptizer is performing scriptural baptism if he does not believe and practice it as Peter did for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). Also, it is not likely the one being baptized has been taught properly and understands correctly the Lord's purpose for baptism even though he may have been immersed.

Many religious teachers do not believe in the oneness of the Lord's body, the church (Eph. 1:22, 23; Eph. 4:4). Therefore, they do not teach or

practice the baptism that puts one into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27) where all spiritual blessings are found (Eph. 1:3).

Many religionists have rightly learned that baptism is immersion in water (Acts 8:36-38). However, common sense teaches that all immersion is not scriptural baptism. One may fall under water accidentally. One may dive under or be put under water playfully. What then makes Bible baptism? The purpose intended and the result gained must determine its acceptableness to the Lord.

I must not presume to know the mind and thus the intent of every person who has been immersed at the time they were immersed. However, I suspect that many have learned the truth concerning baptism sometime after they were baptized and have convinced themselves that it was prior knowledge. One reason for such deduction is that many with whom I have talked are spouses of members of

the Lord's church and have attended with their mate where they have heard the Lord's Word taught so long they now think they have always believed it as it is written. Years may affect the memory. It is alarming that some are not willing to make their destiny sure (II Pet. 1:10). Eternity is a long time to mourn obstinacy.

Others have been baptized, yet without understanding, apparently, that such does not provide forgiveness of sins yet to be committed. No, one does not need to be rebaptized everytime he commits sin. When one has been baptized scripturally, he is forgiven of sin and thus becomes a member of the family of God. As a child of God, he is in a relationship which permits him to petition the Father for forgiveness of sins committed as a disobedient child.

The Bible is provided by a loving God for the benefit of His creation, man. It is designed to provide knowledge of His will in plain and simple terms. It only becomes complicated when man teaches something else and "discredits" it to the Bible. A person who has been taught error often must unlearn before his mind is receptive to truth. Be sure that your baptism accomplished God's will for you.

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## LEVITICUS

by Norman Midgette

**W**hen we view the nation of Israel as a civil as well as religious nation the laws given them through Moses will be easier to understand.

Most nations of the world today are regulated by a civil constitution of secular laws. These laws are established by government officials to preserve internal order, protect from external aggression, provide for the collection of taxes for their maintenance and to guarantee other needed functions. However, the regulations and laws relating to churches, worship and service to God arise from within the Bible or within the various religious bodies. Therefore, our lives are directed by two different kinds of laws arising from two different sources, God and civil government.

It was very different for the nation of Israel when the Law of Moses was given. All laws they would need as a civil nation as well as a people devoted to worshipping and serving God are in the first five books of the Bible. God gave the Israelites laws to regulate their society that, in this country, would come from the Department of Defense, Department of Agriculture, Department of Justice and Department of Health and Human services. There were laws regulating military service, quarantine for certain diseases, sanitation regulations, rules concerning property rights and boundary security, respect required for civil rights of citizens and aliens and rights of slaves and servants. There were many others of a social nature.

That same law gave God's will for their worship and religious service at the Tabernacle and Temple. The organization of their religion was specified with exact qualification given for the Priesthood, the place or places of their worship were identified, times for different acts of worship were legislated even to specific times within

a day and all elements, materials and substances of their sacrifices were given.

From our perspective and experience we would say the Law of Moses was a dual law of both civil and religious importance. To the Israelite, the entire law, regardless to how it might be classified, came from one source, God, and their accountability was to Him and to Him alone in all things. The people of Israel were a Theocracy with God controlling their entire lives from birth to death.

### THE LEVITES

The book of Leviticus is a part of this civil and religious law. The tribe of Levi was set apart to transport, erect, and care for the Tabernacle. The family of Aaron from this tribe was chosen to be the priestly family. They offered sacrifices to God for the people. It was, however, the peoples' responsibility to bring the sacrifices for worship for all personal forgiveness. Therefore, over half of the book of Leviticus is addressed to all the people (1-6; 11,12; 15; 23-27) not just to the priests and Levites.

### Chapters 1-7

The book begins with instructions concerning different types of sacrifices required by God. The specific animals or produce was taken to the priests as required by God and the priests followed specific instructions as to how the sacrifices were to be made. Five offerings are mentioned (burnt, meal, peace, sin and trespass). Each had its own purpose and provided a specific benefit to the worshipper. Chapters 1:1-6:7 are addressed to the people and chapters 6:7-7:38 give instructions to the priests.

### Chapters 8-9

These chapters are addressed to Aaron and his sons. It is the detailed account of their consecration to God and beginning of their work. The consecration was overseen and seven

days Aaron and his sons remained in the Tabernacle. On the eighth day Aaron came out and offered sacrifices for himself and all the people. Aaron and Moses together went into the Tent of Meeting, came out again, and blessed the people.

### Chapter 10

Nadab and Abihu lost their lives because they sought to change the worship of God. When these priests offered fire on the altar God had not commanded they were consumed by fire. The extreme seriousness of attempting to change God's will is seen in the fact God did not allow Aaron and the other two sons to show grief or sorrow over their deaths.

Apart from the death of Christ there is not a greater demonstration of the seriousness of sin than this requirement God placed on Aaron and his two remaining sons. God hates sin and he expects us to also.

### Chapters 11-15

Great detail was given by God in identifying what was personally and ceremonially clean and unclean. All animals, fishes, birds and creeping things were divided into clean and unclean. The unclean could not be eaten; the clean could. Nor could the unclean be sacrificed. There were also events or happenings that would make a person unclean before God and that included touching any unclean thing, a dead body or having a bloody issue from the body.

Health laws are important to any people in close contact with one another. To guard against spread of infection, disease and possible epidemic strict laws were to be observed. Two chapters are given to details of diagnosis, isolation or quarantine, inspection and sacrifices for the leper. In concluding legislation on leprosy God said,

*"This is the law for all manner of plague of leprosy, and for a scall, and*

for the leprosy of a garment, and for a house, and for a rising, and for a scab, and for a bright spot, to teach them it is unclean, and when it is clean: this is the law of leprosy" (14:54-57).

Man and woman could be defiled by a bloody issue from the body and they remained that way until they healed and appropriate sacrifices were made.

### Chapter 16

In the seventh month and the tenth day of the month the annual atonement for the priests, the sanctuary, the tent of meeting, the altar and all the people was to be made (vs. 33). For the priests there was to be a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering. For the people there was to be one goat sacrificed and one turned loose in the wilderness. It was a very elaborate ritual.

### Chapters 17-20

This section of Leviticus contains a lengthy listing of many practices that were sins before God. They related to sacrifices made at the wrong place, to astrology, homosexuality and bestiality. Here you would read of the fate of the idolater, the witch, one who would eat blood, cause his daughter to become a prostitute or commit incest. Moral and benevolent responsibilities to society included leaving some crop in the field

for the poor, paying just wages the day of the work, and seeing that a just court system existed. While they were not told to provide parking spaces for the handicapped they were warned against cursing the one deaf or putting a stumbling block before the blind. These are but a few examples from these four chapters.

### Chapters 21-22

This is the last part of the book specifically addressed to the priests. Attention is turned from the sacrificial duties to their domestic and personal conduct and qualifications. God specified who they could not marry; what physical blemishes or handicaps excluded them from offering sacrifices and warnings against profaning God by approaching God in service while unclean.

Some parts of some sacrifices could be eaten by priests as food for their families. Since it was part of the sacrifices God considered it "the holy thing". Not all could eat of this and the priests were guided with care as to who could and could not eat.

Further instructions were also given concerning the quality of the sacrifices and how and when they were to be offered.

### Chapters 23-27

All Israel is told to observe six feast days: (1) Sabbaths, (2) Passover, (3)

Pentecost, (4) Trumpets or New Year's, (5) Atonement and (6) Tabernacles or Booths. More details are given in Numbers 28, 29.

Chapter 24 is an interval giving instructions for the lighting of the candlestick in the Tabernacle and the Shewbread. The chapter concludes with laws dealing with one inflicting suffering and death to man or animal and an example of capital punishment.

The Sabbatical Year and Year of Jubilee are enjoined on Israel in chapter 25 with numerous laws pertaining to houses, lands and servants.

A solemn warning is given by God to the idolater and disobedient of captivity in a foreign land but to the faithful He offers blessings abundant. This section concludes in chapter 26 with the promise: if you abandon God but return He will remember His covenant and save a remnant.

The book concludes with the process of redeeming a person or item vowed to God and the redemption price. A vow was not required by God, but if made it had to be observed.

God gave the contents of Leviticus to Moses at Mount Sinai (Numbers 27:34).

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# LET'S GET SPIRITUAL

by John Clark

Have you heard Olivia Newton-John's hit record, "Let's Get Physical"? You'd nearly have to be on another planet to have missed it. It has been all over TV and radio. It is music people do exercises by. I'd like to suggest something quite different: LET'S GET SPIRITUAL!

The apostle Paul addressed the church at Corinth with these strong words: "Brethren, I could not address you as spiritual but as worldly-mere infants in Christ" (I Cor. 3:1-NIV) Paul's entire letter to the Corinthians contained the sentiment, "Let's get spiritual!" Grow up!

Let's get spiritual about accepting

responsibility! Babies have everything done for them. We don't expect little children to accept very much responsibility, do we? We expect them to act immature, but we do expect them to grow. God, our Father, expects us to grow! Our family, the church, expects us to grow up too and it has the right to expect us to "do our part." **Let's get spiritual!** The Christian who shirks responsibility to avoid making a mistake, is making a bigger mistake. Let our attitude be, "You can depend on me!" Worship services? I'll be there! Gospel meetings? I'll be there! Bible classes? I'll be there! Group meetings? I'll be

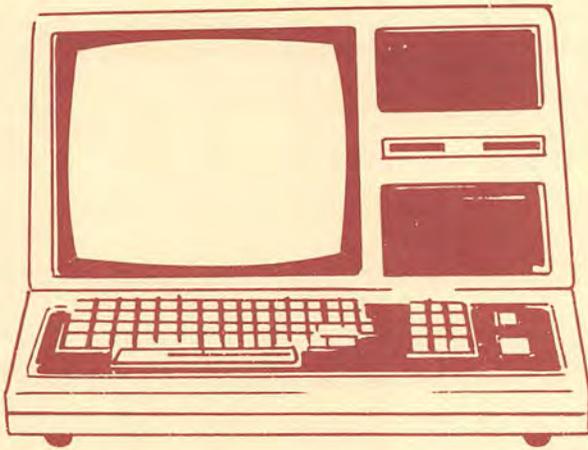
there! People need to be visited? Count on me! Someone needs help? I'm ready! Need people to develop into Bible class teachers? I'm ready! I'm willing to do the study and work that it takes! You say we need people who can take people through a series of Bible studies so they can learn the truth? I'm ready and anxious to learn how to do it! **Let's get Spiritual!**

Its great to be part of a working church, but it is better to be a working part of that church! We can take great joy in a congregation that is working, and growing and standing tall and strong for the truth. But the greatest joy will come when we can pass the test set up by Paul:

"Each man should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself without comparing himself to somebody else, for each man should carry his own load." (Gal. 6:4-5-NIV)

Let's get Spiritual!

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# What Would You Do With A COMPUTER?

by Jeffery Kingry

Brethren sometimes are puzzled as to what a preacher or a church might use a computer for. The fact of the matter is that the answer is about as diverse as the people there are who might use a computer. But, there are some basic things that everyone can use a computer for. They fall into these categories:

Word Processing

Data-base

Educational

Financial

Research

Communications

## WORD PROCESSING

The most common use a church or preacher might have for a computer is to handle words. Every one involved in working in the church has to handle words in one way or another: Class outline notes, hand-out papers, outlines of various types, tracts, bulletins, books, papers, articles for journals, ad infinitum. Those of us who were brought up on an IBM Selectric or Executive know the painstaking hours involved in "getting it right." All the preachers I know have file cabinets bursting with paper. And then, there is the sister who is studying with a Jehovah's Witness and calls you to ask, "Do you have anything on the Kingdom?" All you have is an original in your file cabinet (if you can find it), and you are hesitant to part with it. "Wel-l-l, yes. But, its my only copy. Will you remember to bring it back?" You'll never see it again.

A computer with some good word-processing software enables you to do many marvelous things with words. (As an aside, a "word-processor" is not a different kind of computer. It is merely a computer that has a writing/typing program in its innards.

You feed it in from tape or disk and you are ready to go. There are such things as "dedicated word processors" or computers that only do one thing, but you don't want one). You can edit a manuscript to your heart's content, and never once have to type it over. Imagine preparing a lesson outline book for a lectureship at the church where you worship, and on the bottom of the page, you miss a sentence, and mess up the whole page. If you are on an old-fashioned typewriter, its rip out and start over. What do you do when you spell it "decieve" instead of "deceive"? Out comes the "white-out" and dab-dab, blow-blow, and hope that its dry enough not to gob up your keys. And, if you want more than one copy, its off to the Xerox machine down the street or maybe your ugly thermofax that runs wax-paper copies. What do you do if you are writing, and you think of a thought you would like to insert in the paragraph five paragraphs before? Forget it, too much trouble - and that great thought is lost forever because you didn't want to type your manuscript all over again.

The word processing program can manipulate words in ways impossible otherwise. You can get out whole sections, even pages, and rearrange them to suit your task. You can have the computer scan the document looking for key words or phrases, then substituting, deleting, or changing them either automatically or at your command. You can establish one or any number of standard formats (Margins, spacing, pitch, numbering of pages, etc.) that you can choose from. You can take a standard letter or list and insert as many names and bits of data as you have in your data base (more on data bases later). You can

copy certain parts of a document and combine it with others to make a new document. You can center anything you have typed on the line at the touch of a button. You can get various styles of type by telling the computer to overstrike the letters to give you a bold look. Some W.P. have dictionaries that will check your spelling or punctuation. There are thesaurus programs for the budding author that will look for redundancies and repetitions and make suggestions for a different word. Some programs will make an index, others will make you a table of contents. Word processors make the handling of words a joy.

Usually a word processor used by one with some experience can double or treble output. For the creative writer who composes at the keyboard, the word processor permits a flow of consciousness (and loquaciousness) uninterrupted by carriage returns, paragraph indentations, or small typing errors (just back up and type over it). The computer handles it all. You can be experienced after about a few days of instruction and a week of work on one. With a minimum of instruction you can move from one word-processing package on one computer to another. They all work essentially the same way.

You can keep material you have spent time researching on disk instead of in the file cabinet. You can dedicate a disk to Sects, for instance. As you prepare material on the subject, you file it away on the disk under an appropriate name (MORMON/GDHD; JEWIT/DEITY; CRSROADS/PERWRK; etc.) You label your disk with a name, maybe (if you're efficient) you'll include a list of what's on the disk on the disk dust jacket. By

asking your computer for a directory of the disk, it will give you an alphabetical listing of everything on the floppy. I sometimes include a directory file that I call "README/IST" that has an in depth description of everything on the floppy disk. You can call up these documents, print them, combine them with something else, or edit them. Just this week a brother said, "What do you have on the Flesh and the Spirit?" I pulled out a disk of my sermon outlines, found a few lessons that included some material on what he was looking for, combined just those portions I needed, filed back the originals, made a new file on "FLSHSPRT/JM" and printed it for him. He had a perfectly printed, attractive outline from several sermons with about 1/2 hour's work. A sister asked me for a lesson I had done on the Husband's Responsibility. I ran off another copy, with some additional comments I had added, and gave it to her by the Sunday PM service. My wife was studying with an unbeliever and asked, "What do you have on Evidences?"

"Internal or external?"

"External."

"Literary, from nature, or historical?"

"Literary."

"Old Testament period or New Testament period?"

"C'mon! Jeff! Give me a break. I don't care! Just give me what ya got!"

My wife is kind of a cyberphobe. She'll use it, but she touches it like it was faintly worldly and suspect.

Anything you can keep in a file cabinet, you can keep on a floppy and pull out and manipulate in a way you can't on paper.

#### DATA BASE

Data is any piece of information you wish to keep up with. By putting in all this information and any other information related to it, you have the ability to then select and sort on any of those bits of information.

For example, I keep a running index of periodical articles. Think of the data base as a collection of 3x5 cards in a card file. Each record can have one or several cards associated with it. My records are arranged initially by Topic. Under topic I have the names of the article, the author, the journal the document appeared in with volume, issue, date and page number. Then I have two or three key scriptures

that are used crucially in the article. Since I am not keeping this file for the journals themselves, but for my own use, I do not enter every article, but only articles that are of interest to me, that cover material of some value. With this information from **Searching The Scriptures, Gospel Guardian, Truth Magazine, Sentry, Vanguard,** and the two new journals **Today,** and **Christianity** (along with the church bulletins that I keep copies of) I am able to do something like this:

Give me every article written by Bob Buchanon on Fellowship or Authority written before 1980. Sort those articles by date written, and then by periodical. The computer will give me a listing just the way I ask for it, sorting through all the entries I may have to select just the entries I have asked for.

Give me every article in the file on I Cor. 14 that falls into the category of Spiritual Gifts and sort according to author.

Give me every article that deals with Institutionalism that uses James 1 and has been written after 1965 in the Gospel Guardian. Sort them on date written.

Give me a complete listing of the periodical article file sorted on scripture, and then by Journal.

You can begin to see the possibilities. The same thing can be done for sermon outlines that can be cross-referenced to your word-processing files. You could do the same thing for a directory of churches. You might construct a relational file of the brethren of the church where you worship and include the things they agree to do, biographical information, date of baptism or marriage or birth (How about sending a card or message in the bulletin for those who are having an anniversary or birthday?) Your mailing list can be included for quick reference.

I have a directory of churches that I have been building for awhile. It is coded so that I can choose out congregations that have the capacity to send support to help me in my work in Vermont. Since I depend upon the good favor of brethren in other places I am compelled to raise support from time to time to replace that which is lost for various reasons through the year. It used to take months and months to replace lost support. Some brethren I know have had to stop their work and

make "support raising" trips to the south to talk and persuade brethren to help them. Most preachers I know who must raise support to preach in difficult parts of the country, myself included, grow weary of the constant begging, having to perpetually have our hand out asking for some church, somewhere, to help. The computer is a big help to take some of the time and anxiety out of raising support. A personalized letter, with address information from the church data base, can generally replace the \$100 or \$200 that is lost at any one time in a matter of a month or so with but a day or two of work preparing and mailing the letters.

With the help of the computer I can make a personal appeal rather than be forced to use a form letter to the churches. Out of 100 letters mailed at any one time, I can expect about 30 churches to take the trouble to reply. Out of those 30 churches all will say "No" for one reason or other, but if I am fortunate there will sometimes be one or two who will say, "Yes", and that is all it takes to provide what is needed. (I will not comment here on the need of such an approach, or of the disheartening statistics reflected in such a poor return. The facts speak for themselves).

The computer data base also helps me to keep track of "Who's in" and "Who's out". In the course of a year I may have between nine to fifteen churches sending various amounts of money, at different times during the month, for irregular lengths of time (annually, six months, lump sum for a year, till we get a preacher, till the carpet is installed in the foyer, until brother Bigbody decides whether to move here or not). I try to keep track not only of those who are presently helping me, but also those who have helped in my support in the past, and those who have informed me that they might be able to do something in the future but not right now. I mail out a monthly report of the progress of my work and information on the church's work here in Vermont. Maintaining an accurate account of what I am receiving, what I lack, and what I will lack in the future (there has only been one time that I made "over" what I had anticipated and asked for by \$100 a month. I noted that in my next report and one of the churches cut their support by that amount so that I

wouldn't be making too much). A data base in a computer saves a great deal of paperwork and time.

### EDUCATIONAL DRILL & GAMES

One of the things that facilitates education among children is to make a game out of the drill and practice needed to master facts. A computer is an excellent tool for this. The opportunity to work on the computer is often the only inducement necessary to get a child to do what normally would be boringly repetitive. But, imaginative games can be used to teach Bible principles as well as facts. I have written several Bible drill games for the TRS-80 Model 3/4 and Color Computer. One vocabulary quiz game the church has used in their booth at the annual fair in conjunction with our summer Gospel Meeting for three years. I also have some drill and practice game-style programs (some with graphics) on Bible history and Geography, concept and fact questions on New Testament Books in a kind of Bible Jeopardy game.

One Game I have been working on to present to adults is called "New Testament Church" and is an adult simulation game. I have been a "War Gamer" for years, and have applied some of the math formulas for determining outcome and interaction of event variables on outcome to teaching N.T. values. Each player takes the part of an apostle to a region of the Mediterranean in the year A.D. 55. The object of the game is to establish financially and organizationally self-supporting churches that are sound in the faith in each major city in the region assigned at the beginning of the game. There are as many variables in the course of play as there are in real life: apportionment of time between teaching brethren, unbelieving Jews & Gentiles, study, personal time, work for a living, etc. There are "issues" (from the scriptures associated with the area you are working in. Hope you don't get Achaia!) you must deal with, false teachers to debate and answer, persecutions, false brethren, personal loss of health or faith. Your success is dependent upon decisions you make and advise you give to the brethren. You must find support or work for a living. The brethren don't listen to you half the time. All along the way, your advisory the Devil, constantly looks for ways to hurt you where you are the

weakest. Its a fun game and teaches many valid principles as to the "why" of congregational autonomy, proper and scriptural organization, personal involvement, decentralization of power, etc.

### COMMUNICATIONS

I also use my computer to communicate with other computers. Through an inexpensive phone modem I can call the number of another computer with a modem when the other computer answers the phone, our two computers talk with one another over the phone line at a rate of about 300 bits of information per second. I then can exchange information, files, programs, or whatever I wish with any computer that I have a number for. There are several commercial data base companies available on the market with enormous amounts of information that you can tap into for a price. In a future issue I will write more about this. If there were sufficient interest it would be possible to set up a SIG (Special Interest Group) with one of the companies like Compuserve or The Source where all brethren who have a computer will be able to share information through the phone lines.

A Religious SIG on one of the Commercial Data Bases would mean that you could call a local number wherever you live, tap into the SIG and leave messages or visit with any other subscriber in the U.S. or overseas at a cost of \$5.00 per hour. There would be such information as a complete Directory of Churches that you might want to "download" to your computer (the information would be read by your computer and stored on a floppy disk, or several disks for you to then use at your own leisure at home), programs from other brethren that relate to the work we do for the Lord, special announcements, bulletins, and of course the ability to leave private or public messages for whoever owned a computer and a modem and subscribed to the SIG for about \$5.00 an hour.

### FINANCIAL

Computers can not only keep books better than a C.P.A., they can give a church quick reports and projections with financial planning programs. Sometimes churches wonder if they can meet their home obligations, pay the mortgage off, support the local preacher, and still provide support for evangelism in other places, or start some new evangelistic effort at home.

The church could determine this is by using a spread sheet analysis program with a graph capability. Information from the church's finances could be plotted in a moving annual totals of the church's various accounts and charted versus income to determine whether there is sufficient income to do something new. Financial planning for churches with large budgets is a must. A computer would make it fast, easy, and efficient.

The preacher can always use a home budget management program to track personal expenses and keep up with the check-book. When I put my household expenses on the computer I found out for the first time just what we spent on things like fuel, food, gasoline and auto repair. I had always estimated them before, and was surprised how far off my estimates were from reality.

### RESEARCH

For those preachers who do a lot of library research, the computer is a wonderful tool for selecting and sorting your material and arranging it for you. Library data bases available over phone modem make bibliographic searches quick and painless. There is a new program out called "The Word" that has the entire KJV of the Old and New Testaments on disk. It is possible not only to search through the Bible on key words, but by **relational** key words (every bible passage that uses LORD in relationship to Messiah or Christ, for instance). The same company is coming out with a Greek version that is integrated with Strongs Exhaustive Concordance. There are Greek (koine) language tutorials for the TRS-80, that teaches Greek alphabet and grammar in a drill and practice mode. With the new lap, liquid crystal read-out computers one could take the computer right into the library, take notes, and either send the information home over the phone modem, or just read it into your home computer when you get home.

### CONCLUSION

All the different things that can be done with the computer for the brethren haven't been discovered yet. The potential is still quite wide and open. The future promises a wide range of new and different applications.



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “LUCIFER”

**Hebrew Word:** helel

**Meaning:** “celestial giver of light (star)”

No doubt the average reader of the English language, when he comes across the word Lucifer, thinks of Satan, the Devil. And, true enough, it has come to be used in just this way--with a great deal of help from John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. However, this is not the meaning of the word that occurs in the Hebrew text of Isa. 14:12. Why do I say this?

Let me begin by tracing the origin of the word Lucifer in our English text. The words **helel ben shachar** in Isa. 14:12 mean literally, “**celestial giver of light (star), son of the dawn.**” Our word **helel** comes from a root representing the “**giving off of light by celestial bodies**” (Harris, *Theo. Wd. Bk. of O.T.*).

When the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Greek about 250 B.C. (Septuagint Version) the word **heosphoros**, “**morn-bringing,**” was used to represent the Hebrew word **helel**. In the 4th century A.D. the great translator of the Latin Vulgate Version, Jerome, used the word **lucifer**, “**light-bearing, light-bringing**” in Isa. 14:12 from the root words **lux**, “**light,**” and **fero**, “**bring or bear.**” The translators of the King James Version assuming that a proper noun was intended simply transliterated the Latin **lucifer** into our English Lucifer as they did with many other Hebrew proper nouns. And that explains how the word Lucifer made its way into our English text. But why was the assumption made that the word **helel** should be translated as a proper noun and why has it, ever since, been held by some interpreters to refer to Satan?

Theories relating to the origin of the Devil and the path he followed in order to arrive at his present degraded state are many. And beginning as early as the great Alexandrian scholar, Origen (ca. A.D. 182-251), exegetes have been tempted to draw on Isa.

14:12 for support of these theories (Origen, *De Principiis* V, 5). And like Origen and others among the early interpreters of scripture there are not lacking those today who take Isa. 14:12 (sometimes coupled with Lk. 10:18) to describe a pre-historic fall of Satan from the favor of God. It is clear that the context of Isa. 14:12, i.e., Isa. 14:4ff, predicts a near-distant-future fall of the king of Babylon, but it is not clear at all that this text also records the far-distant-past fall of Satan. Origen was the champion of an allegorical or figurative interpretation of scripture that often made less of a text than was in it--and more often made more of a text than was in it. And his tribe is not extinct. This remarkable attribution of Isa. 14:12 to the Devil, it seems to me, is without sufficient evidence to make it likely, certainly not conclusive.

Nevertheless it is important to take note of the fact that the phrase **helel ben shachar** may be a reference to a mythological character with whom the King of Babylon is being compared. There was among the Canaanites a legend concerning one of their gods who aspired to be as great as Baal, chief of the gods. He was Athar, son of Athirat. He was defeated and cast down from the high mountain from which Baal reigned. It is thought that this myth was perhaps a Phoenician (Canaanite) version of the Greek Phaeton myth in which Phaeton, trying to scale the heights of heaven, was cast down and condemned forever to descend into the abyss daily as the dawn or morning star. And some interpreters see in the words of Isa. 14:12 a reference to this combination of myths. In this case we would understand the passage to be saying to the king of Babylon, “**You are just like that impudent pretender to deity who fell from power, and you are going to fall too!**”

If this is so we are prepared to summarize in this way: 1) The word **helel** occurs only one time in the Hebrew Bible (Isa. 14:12) though its

root is to be found in five or six other passages; 2) It means “**celestial light-giver (star);**” 3) In its biblical context it certainly refers to the king of Babylon who is to be brought down to defeat because of his pride and arrogance before God; 4) The king of Babylon is probably compared in Isa. 14:12 to a mythical false-god who also sought to supplant the supreme power and was cast down in shame and disgrace; 5) There is little if any evidence in this text to suggest that the phrase **helel ben shachar** was intended by the Holy Spirit to refer to Satan.

## “MODERATION”

**Greek Word:** epieikes

**Meaning:** gentle, kind, yielding

This word is used five times in the New Testament (1 Tim. 3:3; Tit. 3:2; Jas. 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:18; Phil. 4:5). It is the use in Phil. 4:5 with which we are concerned here. Our King James Bible says we ought to be characterized by moderation (forebearance, A.S.V.). In the given context it would appear Paul was bringing to a conclusion an admonition to two women, Euodias and Syntyche, to resolve some differences they may have had. Hence it is not difficult to see why Matthew Arnold translated this word “**sweet reasonableness.**” The disposition to insist on ones own way, to remain irreconcilable with ones brethren when a little “**sweet reasonableness**” would cost no one an ounce of vital principle is tragic in its consequences. It alienates members of the body of Christ from each other and turns public opinion sour on the Savior.

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**Is there a particular word you would like to see discussed in this column? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.**

# What Power Does God Offer Us?

by David Pratte

**M**ost people would like to consider themselves successful in life, whether in business, family relations, athletics, politics, schoolwork, etc. God told Joshua he could be successful in the most important activity in life--serving God (Josh. 1:7,8).

People today also need reassurance that we can succeed in being right with God. People who are not Christians often consider the sacrifices involved, work required, and habits to be changed. They become so discouraged by the greatness of the task that they never even begin to try. Members of Jesus' body also get discouraged as they try to live the life and find that they have failed in some area and been overcome by sin. Some may give up the attempt entirely. Others continue a pretense of serving God while they actually are living in sin, but they excuse themselves by saying it is impossible to be what God expects.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that God has provided all the blessings we need to serve Him successfully and receive eternal life. These blessings are available to all people. It is true that there are conditions we must meet to receive the blessings, and at times this requires great effort and sacrifice on our part. But still all can meet these conditions if they are willing to put forth the effort. You can have the power of God working in your own life! Specifically, what power does God offer?

## THE POWER TO KNOW AND BELIEVE THE TRUTH

Sometimes people get so confused by different teachings that they say, "I don't see how I could ever understand the Bible. One person says one thing and another person says the opposite. I just don't know what to believe." But God can meet this need.

**2 Tim. 3:15-17**--The scriptures are inspired of God, and are **able** to make us wise to salvation. They are profitable in providing us to every good work.

**1 Cor. 2:4,5**--Paul's preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and

**power** so our faith can stand in the **power of God**. The gospel is the **power of God** unto salvation to all who believe it (Rom. 1:16), and this faith is produced by hearing the word (Rom. 10:17). The gospel has the power to produce faith in the heart of any person who is willing to honestly consider the evidence.

**Mark 7:14**--Jesus addressed the multitudes of average, everyday people, and expected every one of them to hear and understand what He taught. It is true that, by human power alone, we could never learn and understand how to receive eternal life. But God has answered this need through His power, so we can know and believe the truth if we study diligently with an open, honest heart.

## THE POWER TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD

**John 1:12**--To all those who believed in Him, Jesus gave the "*power to become children of God.*" Notice that faith alone, without obedience, does not make us children of God. It simply gives us the power or the right to become sons of God. To exercise the right, there must be obedience, as we will see.

**1 Pet. 1:22,23**--The power to make us children of God is in the seed, which is God's word. To be purified in our souls and be born again, we must obey the truth revealed in the word. This obedience includes repenting of sin, confessing Christ, and being baptized (immersed in water for the purpose of being forgiven by Jesus' blood (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 17:30; Mk. 16:16; Rom. 10:9,10).

**Heb. 7:25**--When we are obedient to the truth, the blood of Jesus is **able** to save us to the uttermost. Again it is true that, by our own human power alone, we could never achieve forgiveness of sins and become children of God. But God makes this blessing available to us through the blood of Jesus.

## THE POWER TO RESIST TEMPTATION

Often people try to excuse their sins on the grounds that obedience is just

too hard. "God will just have to understand. I just can't do it." We may even blame God for being too demanding.

**1 Cor. 10:13**--God will not allow us to receive a temptation which is beyond our ability. With every temptation we face, God makes sure there is a way of escape so we are **able** to bear it. This is true of every temptation. And we can be sure God will keep this promise because it is based on His faithfulness.

**Eph. 6:10-18**--The Lord provides **strength and power** sufficient that we are **able** to stand against the power of Satan. With this strength, we are able to quench **all** the fiery darts (temptations) of the evil one. But again, this is not possible simply by our own human power. Satan is more powerful than we are, and he can defeat us. But the power available to us is the power of God which works through the armor God provides.

**James 4:7**--If we resist the devil, he will flee from us. Do you believe these passages? These verses are teaching that a Christian has the power to live a sinless life! There is no need and no excuse for us ever committing one single sin. We have the ability to defeat every temptation. The fact is, however, that all of us at times fail to use the weapons God provides, so we all become guilty of sin (1 John 1:8,10). But this is unnecessary. If we think we "can't live without sinning," it is because we are looking at human power instead of at God's power.

## THE POWER TO ENDURE SUFFERING AND HARDSHIP

Often people are tempted to give up serving God because they face troubles, grief, sickness, persecution, etc. We think, "What's the use?"

**2 Cor. 1:3-10**--Paul suffered beyond power, so much that he despaired even of his life. Some may say, "See, I told you there are temptations which are beyond our power." And we have already agreed that there are temptations beyond **our** power. But not beyond **God's** power which can work in us. And that is the source of comfort and strength Paul here says we

must put our trust in.

**Rom. 8:31-39**--There is no suffering or hardship of any kind that is able to separate us from God's love. In all these things, we are more than conquerors--we can defeat every single one of them! But only when we are on God's side and are receiving the blessings He provides.

Please notice that none of these passages guarantees that God will remove the problems from our lives. The promise is that, in spite of the problems, we can have the strength to endure, remain faithful, and eventually receive eternal life. (Phil. 4:11-13; Heb. 11:34)

#### THE POWER TO SERVE OTHERS

Often people become discouraged when they try to help others but they see no positive results. They decide to quit trying because "I just can't do it."

**2 Cor. 9:8-10**--God is able to supply our need so we can abound in every good work and increase the fruits of our righteousness. Jesus is like the vine

that supplies the needs of the branches (John 15:4-8). It is true that, apart from Him--acting just by our own power--we can do nothing. But in Him we are able to bear much fruit.

**2 Thess. 1:11,12**--In us, God can fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith and power. There is no need for Christians to live barren, unfulfilling lives. There is no need for us to be spiritual failures. We can accomplish much good if we will go to God for Him to supply us with power.

**2 Tim. 2:2**--Faithful men shall be able to teach others. God's promise that we can abound in every good work includes the good work of teaching others. We shall be able to teach others. God's promise that we can abound in every good work includes the good work of teaching others. We shall be able to admonish one another (Rom. 15:14). It is true that in this, as in other areas, degrees of ability do vary. But all can develop the ability to

accomplish good in God's service, and God expects us to do so (2 Tim. 1:7,8; 2 Cor. 1:4).

#### THE POWER TO DO ALL GOD REQUIRES & RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE

**Eph. 3:20,21**--God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think according to His power that works in us. We can "do all things through Christ who strengthens" us (Phil. 4:13).

**1 Peter 1:3-5**--By God's power, we are guarded to an eternal and incorruptible inheritance in heaven. His power provides us to do all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3).

The Bible nowhere teaches that it is impossible for a child of God to fall from grace, but it certainly does teach that a child of God need not fall from grace.

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## THE MORMON CONCEPT OF GOD AS OPPOSED TO THE BIBLE

by Jeff Smelser

The Mormon concept of God is actually a concept of gods. And yet the Bible clearly teaches that there is one God. Even the passage in I Corinthians 8 to which Joseph Smith alluded is an affirmation of this fact. Note the context of this passage: Paul is talking about eating things sacrificed to idols. Evidently, the Corinthians had arrogantly insisted on their right, or liberty, to eat such things, because they had knowledge - they knew that "no idol is anything" and that "there is no God but one" (vs. 4). Paul is affirming the truth of their contention for one God, but suggests that there still might be reason to abstain from eating those sacrificed to idols, that reason being if "eating causeth my brother to stumble." It is in this context that Paul mentions "gods many and lords many" (vs. 5). But these gods are not truly gods; they are only "called gods" (vs. 4). They are the idols to which meat has been sacrificed. Despite the many false gods that the pagans worshipped, "to us there is one God."

In the Old Testament also, Moses

said, "Jehovah he is God; there is none else besides him" (Dt. 4:35) and "he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath; there is nothing else" (Dt. 4:39).

The Bible clearly teaches us that God does not have a body of flesh and bones. Jesus told the Samaritan woman, "God is spirit" (Jn. 4:24), and in Luke 24:39, we find that Jesus said, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones."

The idea that men were spiritual children begotten by God long before the creation of the world is contrary to the Biblical teaching that men were created. According to Genesis 1, "God created man in his own image" on the sixth day of creation, after the earth had been created "In his own image" does not mean in the likeness of his physical body as Mormons contend. First of all, as we have already seen, God is spirit and does not have a body of flesh and bones. Furthermore, in Colossians 3:9-10, Paul described the saints at Colossae as having put off the old man and put on the new man "that is being renewed unto knowledge after

the image of him that created him." The new man that is renewed after the image of God is spiritual. When an individual is baptized into Christ to walk in newness of life, it is not the physical body, nor the physical life that is renewed. It is the spiritual life that is restored to the state in which man was created - that is, in God's image, spiritually. Man was not only physically, but also spiritually created, after the creation of the earth.

In light of the clear teaching of the word of God, one is amazed that a polytheistic doctrine resembling pagan mythology can be accepted by anyone who claims to believe the Bible. It is obvious that these misconceptions result from following something rather than the word of God. In the next issue, we will examine the writing which teaches these doctrines, and which Mormons actually esteem more highly than the Bible.

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# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**“In order to receive a Beta Club award, I lied on my application. Now that I have received the award, it is bothering me. I think one of my best friends would have won if I had not lied. What should I do?”**



**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 16

The best action to take in this incident would be to admit that you had lied and relinquish the reward. This is the only way your conscience can truly be appeased. God desires all men to refrain from all evil. He also wants repentance from us of those sins we do commit. When one sins he must repent to achieve forgiveness and remain in the right sight of God.

If, in this example, you were to truly repent, as God would have you, then you must admit your lie and thereby give up the award. This is what God wants. This is what we must strive for.



**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15

There is only one right thing to do, and that is to go back and tell the people what you have done. It will be difficult to do, but it's the only way to make things right. People will respect

you more if you own up to it yourself rather than others finding out about it first. If you know that what you have done is wrong, and if you know you should tell the truth about the matter but don't--that is sinning, too (James 4:17). Telling the truth every time pleases God (Col. 3:9) and that is where it really counts. Besides, it will keep you out of trouble.



**Michelle McClelland Sparks, NV**  
Age: 16

I would tell my best friend what happened first. Then I'd ask a person who was involved in giving me the award and tell them I had lied. Then whatever they needed me to do, I'd be most cooperative. Before everything, though, I'd pray to God for forgiveness of my sin. I'd also say sorry to my best friend and the other participants. If necessary I would make a public apology. Also, I would concentrate real hard on not wanting things so badly that I'd be willing to lie about them. I'd realize that if you can't win something on the truth then there is no point in winning it with a lie. I wouldn't keep the award either.



**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14

Before you talk to anyone about it you should get your life right with

God. Ask for forgiveness for lying on the application and for setting a bad example.

You should go to the president of the club and explain. You should tell him you lied and you don't feel you deserve it. You should give him the award and explain that you thought your friend deserved it. Then you should apologize to the members of the Beta Club.

You should go and talk with your friend about it. You should tell him that you think he should have won and tell him that you returned the award so it could be presented to him. Then apologize and ask him if he will forgive you.



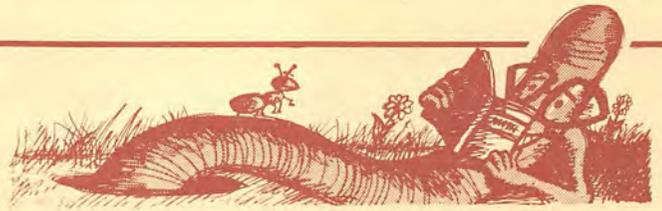
**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13

In the first place, you should get into the habit of always telling the truth and never lying about yourself or others. At our Beta Club, we sing our song, and one of the verses says, "I will be honest and loyal to others." This is a good motto to live by.

This is what someone wrote in the back of my math book: "Lying leads me to unforeseen complications." I know this is true. I would take the award back and tell the officials that I had lied. Then I would ask my friend to forgive me and pray to God for forgiveness. Yes, I know that it will be hard, but the reward for living truthfully is much greater than that hardship.

**Is there a particular question or subject you would like to have our teen panel discuss? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.**

# The Book Worm



**PUBLISHERS:** Send all books for review to:

**The Book Worm**  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

**THE MINISTER WHO STAYED** by Elmer Morgan (Military Parkway Church: Dallas, Texas), 1984, paperback, 73 pages, \$3.95.

Just about the time the preacher gets to know the congregation and the congregation gets to know the preacher, someone (whether the preacher, the elders, or some of the members) gets the idea that it is time to "make a change." The average work span for a preacher to give to one congregation seems to be two or three years. Thousands of dollars which could be used effectively for evangelism or benevolence are spent annually to keep the moving man moving. The author of this little book doesn't like that constant change.

Morgan began preaching for the Urbandale congregation in Dallas, which later became the Military Parkway congregation, in July of 1965. He has remained with that same congregation since that time. In 1983 he was appointed an elder for the church and plans to give the rest of his life to working with this same congregation. He is well qualified to write a book about the minister who stayed.

The twelve chapters cover such subjects as the minister in the pulpit, the minister's personality, the minister as a counselor, the minister and goals, and the minister and discouragement. The book is designed to give more principles and applications than it is to study various scriptures relative to the role of the preacher. Morgan discusses such things as the preacher that's always wanting a ministerial discount, keeping of appointments, the cars they drive, and how that "the way he mows his yard, washes his car, and disciplines his children all reveal his personality."

This was an enjoyable little book to read. I might complain that it was a bit over priced for such a small book, especially to be sold by a church, but I would recommend it.

**FROM FISH TO GISH** by Marvin L. Lubenow (Master Books: San Diego, California), 1983, paperback, 294 pages, \$8.95.

Among the most important events to occur in the past decade have been the debates that have taken place between creation scientists and evolution scientists, primarily on the campuses of secular universities. Two of the leading creation scientists are Duane Gish and Henry Morris. They are widely recognized by both creationists and evolutionists as persuasive debaters, demonstrating the scientific validity of special creation and the scientific fallacies of evolution. Although these two gentlemen had neither training nor experience in debating, and did not themselves choose the debate format, their many debates have proven to be an excellent means of reaching large numbers of students and others with the evidence supporting creation.

Lubenow has provided a fascinating account of many of their key debates, starting with Colorado State in 1977. The author gives the best arguments of the evolutionists in contrast with the strong scientific case for creation. The book dramatically points out why it has become so difficult to find an evolution scientist who is willing to debate.

If you are having any success in getting pro-creation books placed in the public and/or school library, be sure to add this one.

**THE GOODALL FILING SYSTEM FOR THE PREACHER** by Charles G. Goodall (Florida College: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1979, paperback, 80 pages, \$4.75.

Have you ever wanted to borrow a book or article from a preacher, only to be told that he can't find it? Many

young preachers go through the frustration of saying, "I know I've got something here somewhere, but I just can't put my hands on it right now." This book is designed to eliminate that problem.

The Goodall system actually involves two indexing features--an alphabetical index and a heading index. This book explains how that a number will always be associated with a particular subject. For instance, the first entry in the alphabetical index is "abortion." It is given the number 1738. This number will always be used whether one is looking for a book, a bulletin article, a personal sermon or an overhead transparency.

Goodall explains what materials will be needed, how to start collecting, the filing procedure, and then gives the two indexes. Why not use this book to get your material organized? Who knows, I might want to borrow something from you and I want you to be able to find it?

**RAINBOW LESSONS** by Jane Britnell (Beacon Publications: Huntsville, Alabama), 1975, paperback, 58 pages, \$3.75 each.

The authoress is the mother of three children and an experienced Bible-class teacher. She developed these lessons to aid in instructing children in the basic Bible stories. The lessons are not designed to cover thoroughly all facts of Bible history, nor do they strive to teach detailed doctrinal material. The object is to give a brief chronological overview of historical events that occurred in the Old Testament era (which is the study for the four-year-olds) and in the New Testament era (which is the study for five-year-olds).

The stories are brief, geared to the attention span and capabilities of preschool children. The art work with each lesson uses little stick figures. It encourages the children to use their imagination and not become convinced of exactly what a certain character looks like. Each lesson has a memory

verse for the child to learn.

Teaching instructions for both classroom and home adaptations are included in each lesson book. They can be used effectively on children young or older, depending on their rates of maturity. I have aided my wife in using both of these books with our children in our home devotions. I wholeheartedly recommend both volumes.

**FOR HUSBANDS ONLY, AND HUSBANDS-TO-BE** by Dick Blackford (*Life Line Lessons: Owensboro, Kentucky, 1983, paperback, 89 pages, \$2.35.*)

For far too long, churches have planned classes for women on how to be better wives and mothers and all classes for men have been on how to lead the singing, serve the Lord's supper, word a prayer, or deliver a sermon. What is wrong with men having a class on how to be better husbands and fathers? This book meets the void in good class literature for such a class. In a revolutionary approach, this little book is designed to encourage men to be MEN!

Blackford hits the problem of couples not knowing each other well before marriage. He says, "Just because two people can holler for the same ball team and drink a Coke out of the same straw is not proof that they have a good foundation on which to build a marriage. Just because she has shiny teeth and a beautiful smile is no guarantee of marital success."

This little book contains 13 lessons with questions at the end of each. The author discusses everything from the need for such a study, preparation of marriage, that ugly thing called divorce, true love, communication, the mid-life years, to providing for one's own household.

If I were an elder in a congregation, this would be a required course for every husband and/or those young men contemplating problems. I would rather eliminate the problems before they happen than have to deal with them after they have happened. This is an excellent little study.

**ABORTION AND THE CONSCIENCE OF THE NATION** by Ronald Reagan (*Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Tennessee, 1984, hardback, 96 pages, \$7.95.*)

During the decade immediately following the Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court decision in 1973, more than 15

million unborn children were legally aborted--a figure that surpasses by more than ten times the combined total of all American lives lost in all of the nation's wars. Few public officials have spoken against such crime. In an unprecedented effort to make the public aware of the importance of the situation, President Ronald Reagan forthrightly addresses the highly controversial subject of abortion.

This material first appeared in *Human Life Review* in the spring of 1983. When it was first published, *Time* magazine noted that "An essay by a recent sitting President is rare"--indeed it is, and so is the fact that a president should choose to write on the most controversial moral issue of our time. Too many politicians would be afraid to let you know where they stand on such a heated issue. Ronald Reagan seems pleased to let you know where he stands. He does not write as one wanting to "courts both sides" of the issue, but as one bound by conscience to state what he believes to be the truth.

"Regrettably," says the President, "we live at a time when some persons do not value all human life. They want to pick and choose which individuals have value. . . In other words, 'quality control' . . ."

Reagan examines the philosophy underlying the pro-abortion arguments and brings to light a "quality of life" ethic in opposition to a "sanctity of life" ethic. He states that the real question is "not when human life begins, but **What is the value of human life?**"

The author's conservative stand makes me ready to run to his campaign office and sign up another volunteer. Who knows, this book reviewer might be invited to the author's office to discuss the seriousness of the book? I anxiously await that invitation!

**THE CHALLENGE OF BEING A WIFE** by Ruth Hazelwood (*Hazelwood Books: Toney, Alabama, 1977, hardback, 118 pages, \$4.95.*)

This may be a small book, but it is packed with some big thoughts! The author believes that marriage has the capacity to satisfy many emotional needs of both men and women. She deals with such important psychological needs as identity, security, and new experiences.

In a day when women are being

rebuked for being "just a housewife", the author shows that a woman could never be given a greater challenge than being a godly wife. Appointing her the head of the nation's largest corporation could not offer her any more challenges than what she has with her duties in the home.

The main theory behind this volume is that good marriages don't just happen--it takes continuous effort. This volume should be required reading for those young couples contemplating marriage, but also required reading for those already married. Mrs. Hazelwood shows the need to open the door of communication and to learn to be more than lovers--but true friends.

I have used this book as a bridal shower gift and would recommend it without reservation.

**BIG THOUGHTS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE** by Kenneth N. Taylor (*Tyndale House: Wheaton, Illinois, 1983, hardback, 52 pages, \$5.95.*)

This little book contains ABC's to help a child grow. It is designed to teach children how to be good, learning right from wrong (as well as simple courtesy and good manners). Starting with "A is for Asking. We ask when we pray. God's happy to answer and help us each day. B's for behave; it means doing what's right. Be happy and helpful; don't argue or fight," and continuing all the way through to "Y is for Yelling--it's all right outdoors; but please be more quiet in houses and stores. Z is for Zebra or Zebu or Zoo. God made all the creatures, and he made you, too," the book uses wonderful artwork that has hidden ladybugs in each illustration. You'll also have fun finding all the objects on each page which begin with the theme letter. There are also three questions to answer with each lesson and a Bible verse to learn.

I'm sure the children will enjoy this book and parents and grandparents can really use it to reinforce some of the great themes of the Bible.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:  
The Book Shelf  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## CHRISTIANITY - B.C.

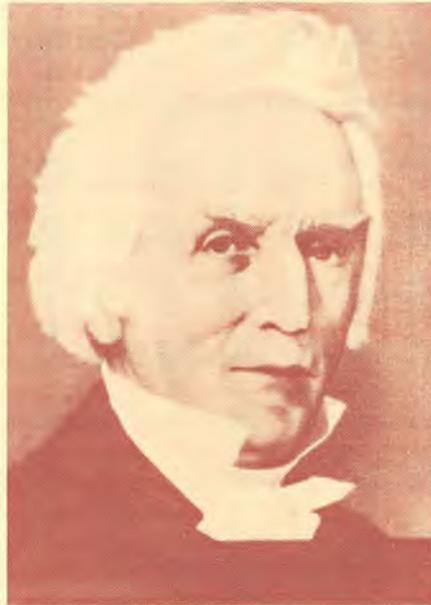
(Before Campbell)

In 1818 a church in New York sent a letter to "the Churches of Christ, scattered over the earth," asking them for a statement of their views and practices. These letters were later printed in the fifth volume of Alexander Campbell's paper, *The Christian Baptist* (1827-'28). Since denominational preachers have a tendency to name Campbell as the founder of the "church of Christ," I thought it would be interesting to examine these letters. Some of these congregations were established before Campbell was born!

Before printing the circular from New York, Campbell explained the importance of the correspondence between these churches. "The faults and blemishes of those who have attempted a better order of things, are not without benefit to us who inquire after the ancient order of things. Many of these societies have progressed well, all things considered; and their attempts and efforts, however they may be disapproved, are of more real importance to be known than the doings of Luther and Calvin, and other reformers from ancient popery."

### THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK

In the letter sent out by the congregation in New York, it was stated that they would bind only those things "which can be clearly adduced from the New Testament." Following the pattern of the early christians they met together every Lord's Day. The services started with public prayer, after which the congregation sang a hymn, led by one of the elders. Then they would have a scripture reading, the Lord's supper and the contribution. One of the elders or brethren would then give "exhortation from the word of God." After a period of praise, a



Alexander Campbell (1788 - 1866)

prayer would be offered and the services would be dismissed.

In accordance with the law of Christ they required "that all whom we receive into fellowship should believe in their heart, and confess with their mouth, that Jesus is the Christ; that he died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and that upon such confession, and such alone, they should be baptized."

The letter was signed on March 1, 1818 by two elders and three deacons.

### GLASGOW, SCOTLAND

"The Church of Christ meeting in Morrisons Court, Glasgow" was established somewhere between 1772 and 1782. They had 180 members when they replied to the congregation in New York.

This church also worshipped each

Lord's day. As to the order of services, they followed the pattern of Acts two, "they continued in the Apostle's doctrine, and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Realizing the importance of doctrinal purity, they explained "it is necessary to guard both against too much and too little forbearance; and especially in respect to the external order of the society."

### EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

"The Church of Christ assembling in Leith Walk, Edinburgh" was planted around 1798. In 1818 they numbered 250, including three elders and four deacons.

At one time they only observed the Lord's supper once a month. After careful examination of the New Testament, they returned to the "apostolic tradition" of a weekly observance. During the services on Sunday morning "the names of those who have applied for fellowship are also read, and the result of the conversation which the elders and two or more of the brethren have had with them, is stated. If the church be satisfied, they are baptized in the course of a week, and received next Lord's day."

They also met each Wednesday and Friday evening for prayer and teaching.

Modern churches could learn a valuable lesson from this congregation. "From comparing the various passages on this subject, we learn that in partaking of the Lord's supper, we are not to satisfy our hunger, and that the place for doing so is our own houses, where we may exercise hospitality to our brethren, but that the church ought not to come together to eat and drink."

### TUBERMORE, SCOTLAND

"The Church of Christ at Tubermore" first met in May, 1807. Their 250 members met together every Lord's day to worship.

Concerning fellowship and tolerance they said, "we do not plead for forbearance as a useful scheme left to our own discretion, or justify it, as some have done, from that pleasing variety found among the works of God. Such language we hold in utter abhorrence. Variety in the works of creation is a beauty; but God is the author of that variety. Difference of sentiment upon every thing revealed by God is an evil, because it is the sinful ignorance of men. Can God command all his people to know his will, and shall it be a perfection to be variously ignorant of this?"

### MANCHESTER, ENGLAND

This small congregation was established in 1810 with only three members. Elders and deacons were appointed in 1817. The following year they numbered thirty-three.

Aside from three meetings each Lord's day, they also met twice during the week for prayer, scripture reading and teaching. They attended to the Lord's supper every Sunday afternoon.

### DUBLIN, IRELAND

The Stephen Street congregation in Dublin was established in 1810 and consisted of 100 members in 1818. Their order of services was nearly the same as the church in New York. They had not yet appointed elders because they could not agree on the necessary qualifications.

While explaining why they were more tolerant of differing opinions on Bible themes, they said "that all blindness, as to apostolic precepts, is chargeable on the folly and slowness of our hearts. The same folly and slowness of heart prevented the apostles from receiving many truths at the mouth of Jesus; but as their folly and slowness of heart was not indicative of a rejection of Christ, so neither in these days do we apprehend that in folly and slowness of professors to receive many truths in the apostolic records, is in all cases indicative of a rejection of their authority; and as the Lord bore with the apostles, we see not but his example was recorded for our imitation."

### CONCLUSION

While these congregations were still lacking in many areas, the progress they made towards New Testament christianity is important.

One more item worthy of note is the tombstone of William Rogers (1784 - 1862) at the Cane Ridge meetinghouse near Paris, Kentucky. It states that Rogers "united with the church of Christ at Cane Ridge in 1807." At that time Alexander Campbell was still in Ireland.



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Evansville, IN 47714

## REACH UP TO GOD

by Leslie Diestelkamp

The snow was about ten inches deep outside our condominium and as we looked out the window we observed a young mother and her small son, perhaps 1½ or 2 years old. She was walking before him, usually with outstretched hand to help, but he was determined to struggle through the snow alone, even while he pulled a small sled. Down he would go, almost burying himself in the new, clean snow, but up he would come to try and try again. Finally, though, he seemed to realize he just couldn't make it, and at that moment he reached up and took his mother's hand. Then he was able to complete his effort to reach the house without difficulty. I immediately turned to the Bible to read as follows:

"I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people" (Isa. 65:2). "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord. . . though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord

upholdeth him by his hand" (Ps. 37:23,24). "Thou hast held me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps. 73:23,24).

The lesson I want to emphasize is this: First, we must **trust** in God, the one trustworthy One. That is, we must **believe** his promises and **obey** his directiveness (Mt. 11:28-30; Mt. 7:24-29). And then we must **abide** in his ways—be faithful (Mt. 10:22).

The incentive for such trust, obedience and fidelity is this: God will reach down to help us, for he knows our needs and he is able to answer our prayers. He has the power to work his will. Peter said, "Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you" (1 Pet. 5: 6, 7). The Psalmist said, "Thou hast a mighty arm: strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand" (Ps. 89:13).

Sometimes we sing, "Hold To God's Unchanging Hand" or "Our God Is Able To Deliver Thee". With David we need to make this commitment: "Into thy hand I commit my spirit. . . My times are in thy hand" (Ps. 31:5, 15).

Of course no reader will suppose that we mean that a literal fleshly hand reaches down to us, but all of us need to be assured that a hand more mighty than flesh, more steady than the physical and more trustworthy than human hands is indeed ready to help us. God, in his Word, directs us; God, in his providence, sustains us; God, in his grace, saves us; God, in his home in heaven, will receive us. Sing it with me, "There are days so dark that I seek in vain, for the face of my friend Divine, but though darkness hide, he is there to guide, by the touch of his hand on mine. Oh, the touch of his hand on mine; Oh, the touch of his hand on mine; there is grace and power, in the trying hour, by the touch of his hand on mine."

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Aurora, IL 60506



# The Family Affair

## \*I NEED A NEW EDUCATION.

Surprise your son or daughter tonight by asking them to tell you about something they're currently studying in school--some new mathematical or chemical formula, a new psychological or sociological study, a current trend in English literature or journalism, etc. Select a topic you know little about and really get into it. Show your children that you are never too old to learn something new.

**\*BALLOON BUST.** For a wild time with the children after dinner tonight, take turns trying to throw a balloon from a certain point into a clothes basket or cardboard box. Handicap the older family members by making them stand farther away. Afterwards discuss the positive and negative effects of competition on each person. Discuss their school sports and ask if they have seen the "win-at-all-cost" attitude.

**\*LET'S GET PACKED.** Tonight after dinner, read the story of Abraham's call from God in Genesis 12:1-9 together as a family. Then pretend that God has spoken to you just as He did to Abraham. You must be ready to move in one hour! Give each family member a paper bag and five minutes to choose things to bring along in it. Take what's important, but only what will fit in the bag--everything else must be left behind. When the time is up, each one tells what he or she chose and why, and what was especially hard to leave behind. Then thank God in prayer that He goes with your family wherever you go, and will provide all you need.

**\*A SPECIAL TAPE RECORDING.** Tape the conversations of your family around the dinner table tonight. Send the tape to older children away at school or in the service, or to grandparents. End the tape with a few comments especially to the listener, a prayer for them, and a song.

**\*A SPECIAL ANNIVERSARY GIFT.** You can encourage quality in a friend's marriage by volunteering to babysit their children one night a month for the next three months, allowing them three special "dates" in a row. Try it on a special friend with their next anniversary. Print out a special coupon for three nights and insert it in their anniversary card. Who knows, the favor may be returned!

**\*MORE ANNIVERSARY TALK.** Psychologists tell us that the more deep conversations a couple has the healthier their marriage should be. Over a quiet dinner one evening this month, tackle these two questions about your expectations in marriage: (1) Ten years ago, how would you have described the ideal marriage? (2) How would you characterize the ideal marriage for you now? Explore the changes in your individual perceptions and the differences between your present ideals. How can you each better accommodate the other's dreams and ideas?

**\*IMPROMPTU SPEAKING.** New areas of communication can be opened with your family, using this simple game. Ask your children to write down three topics they would like to hear you speak on, each for one minute. In similar fashion, Mom and Dad present them with three topics you wish them to speak on. Then give your speeches standing in front of the family in the living room. This is good practice at speaking in front of an audience. Don't be surprised when the talks spawn some interesting discussions.

**\*USING MORE ADJECTIVES.** One English teacher has suggested that we encourage our readers to use more adjectives in our family conversations. Instead of just saying "trees," state what kind of trees they are. The same with flowers, wrenches, books or whatever. Learning the distinctions early will heighten the child's understanding and appreciation of the world

around them.

**\*TEACHING BY DOING.** At what age should you begin respecting your children's individuality and privacy by knocking before entering their bedroom, not reading their mail or diary without permission, and avoiding listening in on their phone conversations?

**\*A SPECIAL CENTERPIECE.** Mother's Day is May 13. Create a centerpiece for your dining table by having each family member contribute some item that symbolizes his or her appreciation for Mom's special role in the family. It could be a thermometer (symbolic of the many times she has cared for you when you were sick) or car keys (as a reminder of the many times she has had to drive you places) or a wooden spoon (as thanks for the wonderful meals she has provided) or a calculator (symbolic of the many hours spent in helping with school work), or whatever. You might just want to add a snapshot or flowers from her spring garden. Arrange them as a "still life" piece of art, and add a homemade card that expresses your love. **Purpose:** To let Mom know how irreplaceable she is!

**\*WRITE YOUR OWN BOOK.** After dinner one evening this week, get the family together and write your own book. Pick a theme like "Happiness is..." or "Love is..." or "Courage is...", etc. With younger children, make a simple statement and let them cut pictures from magazines to illustrate it. Older children can complete the thought with more words which illustrate the idea. When you're done, share the book with friends and then donate it to the resource center of your church or give it to someone in the nursing home.

**\*A NIGHT TO REMEMBER.** Set aside a family night to honor each of your children. Name it after them, such as "David's Night" or "Deborah's Night". Serve their favorite food or go to the restaurant they choose. After the meal, share together a "flower" you have made for the one being honored. Draw a flower on construction paper. Then cut out the center and each of the petals. Write the child's name on the centerpiece and give each family member one of the petals. Have each person write on his petal what he appreciates about the person being honored and give it to him. Then ask the one being honored to paste his flower, piece by piece, on a sheet of

construction paper and keep it as a reminder of his family's love for him.

**\*BE KIND TO ANIMALS.** Most children love animals. The first week of May has been designated as Be-Kind-To-Animals week. If you have a family pet, celebrate by honoring your pet one evening this week. Present them with a simple gift (a rawhide chewie, catnip, a new toy, etc.) or their favorite food. If you don't own a pet, make a trip into the yard and see how many animals you can see or hear. Maybe you can make a simple bird feeder from a milk carton or put out peanuts for the squirrels.

**\*BIRTHDAY TABLECLOTHS.** I recently read of a wonderful idea in **Dads Only**. It suggested giving guests colored, indelible pens with which to autograph the tablecloth at a birthday party. It is then used again each year for that person's birthday celebration, adding new names and repeating the old. Extra touches of friendly savings and the date should be added each year. Benefits: Your child gains a sense of growth and personal history.

**\*BIRTHDAY BOOK.** As a special birthday gift for your child, consider creating for him or her a short book summarizing the past year of his or her life. Talk about personal growth qualities, hobbies, pets, friends and highlights of the year. Include snapshots, momentos or sketches to punctuate the story. Make it scrapbook style or have the pages bound together at a local print shop or bindery. You'll create a treasure for years, even generations to come.

**\*ROUND ROBIN LETTERS.** Do you know someone who could use a little sunshine? Is there a special friend or relative that you have been meaning to send a letter to for months? "Round Robin" letters are a good way to encourage this. Decide together who would most appreciate hearing from your family, then let one family member start a letter. Pass it on to the next person to add more news and thoughts, and so on until everyone's contributed. Younger children can draw pictures or dictate their message to older ones.

**\*CRAZY STORIES.** Clip headlines from newspapers, magazine titles, articles and ads, then on a rainy day join your child in arranging them to create a story. Words can be eliminated but not added. The results are sure to provide some rainy-day laughter.



## Life and Laughter

### Almost Too Serious To Be Too Funny

James P. Needham tells the story of two small boys who frequently played "church" together. They would generally alternate as to which one would be the preacher and which one the song leader. One day their father came home and found them playing in the front yard. One was riding his tricycle down the sidewalk. Suddenly he stopped, got off, walked to a certain point in the yard and acted as though he was opening a door. He "went in," stayed a minute and came out, mounted his tricycle and went his way. His father inquired as to the nature of this strange tricycle incident in "playing church." The son replied that he was the song leader, and just like brother so-and-so (except the boy used the name of the real song leader), I was stopping at the store to buy some cigarettes.

### Preacher, You're In Big Trouble

A young reporter interviewed the preacher after his public address at the high-school commencement services. The preacher said, "When you do your write-up, I would appreciate it if you wouldn't mention the several anecdotes I related. I may want to use them in other speeches I will be called on to give."

The newsman obliged by inserting this line in the news story: "The minister told several stories which cannot be repeated here."

### That's A Big "Ten-Four"

Several years ago at the Ohio Valley College Lectureship, the late brother Fred Dennis was doing the speaking when someone's voice came over the speakers as feedback from a CB radio.

Well, not to be outdone, brother Dennis said, "In all my years of preaching, I've done a lot of talking **into** these things (microphones), but this is the first time I ever had one to **talk back** to me."

### In The Belly Of A Whale

Connie W. Adams, editor of **Searching the Scriptures**, relates the story of a Bible class of small children in which the teacher was telling the account of Jonah and the whale. To impress the story, she described how dark and unpleasant the inside of a whale must be. She asked one little boy how he would like to spend three days and nights in the inside of a whale. The little boy's eyes bulged out big and he stammered, "My, my, my, my mama wouldn't let me."

### A Good Teacher

One day a small boy was taking a walk with his father. When they passed an unusual looking truck, he said, "What's that Daddy?"

"I don't know," his father replied.

Then they came to a large, old-fashioned warehouse. "What's in there Daddy?" the little boy asked.

"I don't know," his father said.

Then they saw a man with a pneumatic drill breaking up the pavement. "What's the name of that tool, Daddy?" the boy asked.

"I don't know," his father said.

After they had walked on a short way in silence, the little boy turned to his father and said, "Daddy, do you mind me asking you so many questions?"

"Of course not," said his father. "How else are you going to learn anything?"

### I've Changed My Mind

Gene Frost recorded a cute story in his paper, **Gospel Anchor**, about a pre-school grandson of one of his friends. The little lad told his grandmother that he was going to pray for her that night. A loving and sweet expression for which the grandmother expressed her thanks. However, in the course of the day he became miffed at grandma. He commented, "On second thought, Grandmother, you just pray for yourself and I will pray for myself."

# The Poet's Page

## MY FATHER'S CALL

Childhood doubts were dissipated  
When I heard my father's call.  
Fear and anguish were abated  
When I saw him walking tall.  
Murky corners quickly brightened;  
Pains were eased and loads were lightened;  
Pathways straightened; goals were  
heightened  
When I heard my father's call.

Even when I left the mooring  
Of my own paternal hall,  
There was something strong, assuring  
In my father's frequent call.  
His hand was ever there and ready;  
His silent strength could always steady  
The bark of life; roadblocks seemed petty  
When I heard my father's call.

As life's shadow's now are lengthened  
And night's darkening curtains fall;  
Waning powers still are strengthened  
By my Father's loving call.  
Though my body's stooped and leaning,  
Wearied by long days of gleaning;  
Life takes on a deeper meaning  
As I await my Father's call!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## PUT JESUS IN YOUR LIFE FIRST

My dishes went unwashed today,  
I didn't make my bed.  
I took God's Word  
And went to Bible class instead.

Oh, yes, we went adventuring,  
The young people and I,  
Explaining the Bible  
The Truth none can deny.

That my house was neglected--  
I didn't even sweep the stairs.  
But in twenty years, no one on earth  
Will know or even care.

But that I've helped a girl or boy  
In Christian witness grow,  
In twenty years, the whole world  
May know and see and know.

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## MY FRIENDS ARE DYING

I see my friends are dying  
Along life's rugged way;  
I hear the bells a' tolling,  
I know just what they say.

They say I'm getting older;  
I'm moving toward the end.  
There's no promise of tomorrow,  
Is the message that they send.

When I think of all the loved ones  
Who have gone to their reward;  
The word of each departure  
Strikes an ever-tender chord.

The plucking of each flower  
For the Master's great bouquet  
Makes heaven ever sweeter  
In my struggle every day.

I can see the end is nearing;  
The clock of time is running down.  
And I know that life is moving  
To the place where God is found.

I know that soon I'll answer  
The bell that tolls for me,  
And I shall set my sails  
To cross death's trackless sea.

I soon shall see my Maker  
Who sits upon the throne;  
I hope He bids me welcome  
To my eternal home.

If I hear His blessed welcome  
To the land that needs no light;  
I shall live throughout the ages  
With saints who triumphed in the fight.

--James P. Needham  
Brandon, FL

## SIGHT

I saw myself as empty,  
A helpless living thing  
Merely walking onward  
Seeing what each day would bring.  
But this sight was overcome  
When I stumbled down life's hall  
Where I saw a man so full of joy  
Who couldn't walk at all.

--Donna Downs  
Fairmount, IN

## O, THOSE TWO HOURS!

Jesus said through Him I'm free  
And I must say I do agree,  
On Sunday morning at church I'll be  
But the rest of the week you won't see me.

Jesus understands I know what's best  
On Sunday evening I need my rest.  
Wednesday night's a bad time, too.  
The week's half over and I've so much to do.

I sure am glad He died for me  
And from my sins He set me free.  
So two hours a week I'll gladly give  
That's payment enough for the things He did.

--Greg Litmer  
Indianapolis, IN

## WHAT CHRISTIANS THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN

As my children were growing up  
I was "busy here and there";  
We had no time for their little souls,  
For Bible-reading or prayer.

They were not taught regard for God or man,  
But to be cruel and hard and cold;  
And now they're grown and have left home,  
And I am growing old.

We never had time for church or God,  
Or kindness or for concern;  
Now I see my sad mistake,  
But they're too old to turn.

They're headed straight for the pit,  
Their souls are sold in sin;  
I forsook them as they were growing up,  
What Christians they might have been!

--Guthrie Dean  
Ft. Smith, AR

## GOD'S BOOK

A little boy, the Bible found  
Upon a shelf, unread.  
"Whose book is this?" he quietly asked  
"Tis God's", his mother said.

The lad thumbed through the unread book  
Then said, "Well, Mother, dear,  
Let's give it back to Him today. . .  
Nobody reads it here!"

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **PTL TRIES TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT ON \$1,000-A-NIGHT ROOM**

The PTL organization has clarified reports of talk-show host Jim Bakker's stay at a Buena Vista, Florida, hotel.

**Christianity Today** reported last October that Bakker spent four nights in a \$1,000-a-night suite at the Palace Hotel. Richard Dortch, corporate executive director of PTL ministries, says Bakker's chief of security chose the expensive suite for security reasons. (The suite has eight rooms, but just one entrance). Bakker had been receiving death threats, presumably because of the television personality's aggressive anti-abortion campaign.

Dortch, a PTL board member who joined PTL's staff last November, says it was his idea to get Bakker away from the organization's offices while security measures at PTL headquarters were re-evaluated. Buena Vista, Florida, was chosen because it was a center for hotel construction. Dortch says Bakker and several members of his staff used the time in Buena Vista to tour construction sites to pick up ideas for a hotel now being built at PTL's Heritage USA facility.

He says 14 people shared the costly hotel suite. Dortch says the bill was paid not from funds donated to PTL, but by Heritage USA, which operates as a business, not as a ministry.

## **MORMONS OPT FOR WOMAN, YOUNGER LEADERS AT CONFERENCE**

Thousands of Mormons flocked to their church's capital city expecting a routine annual conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. But they left the two-day meeting April 8 talking about some of the most dramatic changes in years for the USA's largest home-grown religion.

Women were allowed to speak from the pulpit--for the first time in six

decades. And two men from outside the church hierarchy were appointed to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, a kind of a spiritual board of directors. The changes could position the 5.4 million-member church more toward the religious mainstream.

Mormons believe the leadership changes involve direct inspiration from God. But liberal church observers note the appointment of younger, moderate leaders serves earthly purposes as well.

"It breaks the stereotype and puts the church more in the mainstream of the world," said University of Utah graduate dean James Clayton, a Mormon historian.

For thousands in the Tabernacle--and hundreds of thousands more watching via satellite TV links in 700 Mormon Churches across the USA and Canada--there was an added bonus: A glimpse of their president Spencer Kimball, 89, whose ill health has kept him out of active church administration for 2½ years. He was last seen in public in January.

Outside the 15-foot high walls of 10-acre Temple Square, scattered pickets protested the Mormon's anti-ERA stance and conservatism. But the presence of women at the Tabernacle pulpit heartened some observers who fear the church's conservative stance alienates outsiders.

During the conference, officials also announced plans for five more temples, four in the USA and Canada--Portland, Ore., San Diego, Las Vegas and Toronto-- and the fifth in Bogota, Colombia. The spired structures number 46 in operation or planning, 22 of them in the USA.

## **RLDS LEADER HAS "REVELATION" FOR ORDINATION OF WOMEN**

Wallace B. Smith, president and prophet of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,

called April 3 for women to be ordained as priests in the 230,000-member church.

The announcement was part of a written revelation or "inspired document" presented to delegates attending the church's 1984 World Conference here. The document will be discussed by conference delegates and voted on later this week, church officials said. If approved, it would become a part of The Doctrine and Covenants--a compilation of statements that the church accepts to be the "mind and will of God."

The document is probably the most far-reaching revelation presented to the church during the last decade, church officials said. Recent documents generally only have included announcements of top administrative changes in the church hierarchy. Women, if ordained, would administer church sacraments such as baptism, marriage and communion. The approximately 18,000 priesthood members also generally hold the top leadership positions in the local churches, officials say.

Church officials said today that ordination of women would "culminate a process of establishing equality among the sexes" which began in 1868 when women were given voting rights at the church's conferences.

"I have heard the prayers of many, including my servant the Prophet, as they have sought to know my will in regard to the question of who shall be called to share the burdens and responsibilities of priesthood in my church," the document, presented as the voice of God, said. Therefore, do not wonder that some women of the church are being called to priesthood responsibilities. This is in harmony with my will...in the ordaining of women to the priesthood, let this be done with all deliberateness."

Church conservatives have argued

in the past that there is no biblical basis for the ordination of women.

The revelation also called for an "accelerated" effort to construct an Independence temple dedicated to peace. Followers of the **The Book of Mormon**, including the Utah Mormons, have wanted to construct a temple in Independence for 150 years. In 1831 Joseph Smith Jr., the original church prophet, called for a temple to be built somewhere on a 63-acre tract that presently includes the RLDA Auditorium.

### SERMON OUTLINE SERVICE BEGINS

**Preacher to Preacher** begins this month with a monthly mailing which will include a minimum of four previously unpublished two-page sermons from various contributors and a religious variety page. A three-month trial subscription is available for \$3, or you can send \$10 and two of your sermons (\$12 with no sermons) for a one-year subscription. All payments and/or inquiries should be sent to Art Adams, 2805 Russell Street, Portage, IN 46378.

### TEXAS BOARD CLEARS WAY FOR EVOLUTIONARY TEACHING

The Texas Board of Education repealed a decade-old rule on April 14 that required textbooks used in the state's public schools to describe evolution as "only one of several explanations" of the origin of human beings and to present it as "theory rather than fact."

The move, taken reluctantly, came a month after the state's attorney general, Jim Mattox, declared the requirement an unconstitutional intrusion of religion into state matters. He indicated then that he would not defend the board against an expected lawsuit challenging the rule. Members of the board said they had no choice but to repeal it.

Moreover, the board has been under heavy pressure from many Texas political and business leaders, who are uneasy over criticism of Texas schools.

Critics had charged that textbook publishers had to water down their treatment of evolution in books sold all over the country if they wanted to sell textbooks in Texas. Texas spends about \$65 million a year on texts, making the state the fourth-largest market in the country.

The repeal came on a voice vote of the 27-member board with only one audible dissent. The panel then unanimously approved a new provision stating, without mentioning evolution, that "theories should be clearly distinguished from fact."

Michael Hudson, the Texas coordinator for People for the American Way, a national anti-censorship group that had petitioned for the change and threatened to sue if it was not made, said, "This is going to free publishers to write about science accurately, unhampered by religious dogma."

It is a sad commentary on the Texas Board of Education when they can't see the religious dogma involved in believing in evolution.

### MEMBER SUES CHURCH FOR TELLING HIS "SINS"

A former member of a fundamentalist church has filed a \$5 million lawsuit claiming the marital and sexual problems he confided to a marriage counselor were told to the entire congregation during a Sunday service. John R. Kelly of San Jose said March 27 he was excommunicated from the church and has been forced to split with virtually "my entire circle of friends."

Mr. Kelly, a 34-year-old insurance broker, said he is now embroiled in a "nasty" breakup with his wife, who with their children remain members in San Jose. They have been married 12 years. In addition to the church, the suit names the Rev. Ernest Gentile, church-affiliated marriage counselor Donald Phillips and the church's board of elders.

"We are not giving out any comment at this time," Jaclyn Foust, a secretary at the church, said on Mr. Gentile's behalf. A secretary at the counseling service said Mr. Phillips had left word that he would have no comment. "My marriage was crumbling," Mr. Kelly explained. "I went to a counselor in my church to get some help and confided in him some details of my marriage and sexual life.

"That material that I gave to him in confidence, six weeks later, was publicly read before 600 members of the church."

Mr. Kelly said his meetings with Mr. Phillips occurred over several months as he admitted that he had sought extra-marital companionship. Mr. Kelly said Mr. Phillips

"mentioned to me at the very last minute that because of what I had told him, he would have to turn this information over to the church and I would be excommunicated. At the time, I was in total shock, I didn't know how to respond to it."

Mr. Kelly said neither he nor his wife was in church when the statement of his "sins" was read on April 24, 1983.

Meanwhile, the Board of Behavioral Science Examiners of the state Consumer Affairs Department said it has investigated the case in connection with Mr. Phillips' counseling license and turned the matter over to the state attorney general's office.

### PRO-LIFE CONVENTION

The National Right to Life Committee, Inc. the largest pro-life organization in the nation, will hold its annual convention in Kansas City, MO, June 7-9. Over 2,000 pro-life leaders and activists and 70 related exhibiting organizations will attend. The convention will consist of three days of workshops, general sessions and special events. The purpose of the convention is to further train and educate pro-life activists; to raise public awareness and understanding of abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, etc., and is a public forum for life and death issues confronting Americans today.

### MARINE GIVES AWAY MEDAL OF HONOR

A marine who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for combat in Vietnam gave the medal to a collector because it bears the likeness of the Roman goddess Minerva. John McGinty III, a 43-year-old veteran decided to discard the nation's highest military honor because he feels it violates the biblical commandment against graven images.

### SALVATION ARMY DEFIES MAYOR'S RULE ON HOMOSEXUALS; LOSES \$4.4 MILLION

The Salvation Army will lose \$4.4 million in 10 social services contracts with New York City because it refuses to comply with the mayor's executive order for non-discrimination against homosexuals in employment practices. The Salvation Army, citing religious principles, is the only religious agency that refused to sign the revised city contracts.

# FIELD REPORTS

**Carlos A. Capelli, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz, Buenos Aires, Argentina**

We had an extraordinary week with preachers of the church in Argentina, Colombia, Chile, and the U.S. gathering together for five days for a Bible lectureship. This meeting took place in a local in Presidente Derqui, Bs As. The preachers taught their classes from 9:00 to 12:00, a break for lunch, and then 1:00 to 3:00.

Then each congregation in the Bs As area—Derqui, Jose C. Paz, San Martin, Boulogne, and San Miguel had gospel meetings SIMULTANEOUSLY, with several preachers. The immediate results were four baptisms in Jose C. Paz, three baptisms and two restorations in Derqui, and one brother leaving the liberals in Boulogne.

**Charles M. Miller, 1035 South Hopkins, Titusville, FL 32780**

August 1982 saw barely 34 in attendance when we arrived; 24 of these being members. We are now approximately 68 in number with 50 of these being members. While we have been there, there have been five deaths (all older members) and two individuals decided to move on.

I work with Jere Frost on a one-hour live radio program down at Cocoa (15 miles south of us). This really gets your mind in high gear. We've only been doing this since last August. We are still building up a listening audience. We have gotten a debate out of it with a 7th Day Church of God man. This will be conducted over the radio.

Titusville supports 50,000 people with projections showing we should be in the mid 70,000 or higher before the end of the decade. There is certainly plenty to do. We have only scratched the surface. I am hoping to eventually pull in a younger man to work with us, allowing him to set how long a period he wishes to stay. He would have to bring his own financial support.

I see a good bit of spiritual growth and maturity within the church here. Several are now teaching that have never taught before. We now draw on our own abilities to fill the pulpit (50% of the time) when I'm not here. We are nearly ready to start the 2nd quarter of year 2 of our two-year survey of the Bible. It has gone over well. All classes are involved.

**Apolos Rodriguez C., Apdo. 2456, Monterrey, N.L., Mexico**

I am working in a big city, about 2 million inhabitants. I am really not in the center of the city, but in a colony (or settlement) called Santa Catarina. The work of preaching in Mexico is hard. But it is good in one sense—the problems of the United States are not known here. Not many brethren know about "liberals." I don't know many brethren bothered with the grace-unity movement, foundations, or other internal problems. This is good for us, of course.

Where I am working, all the brethren are not old in the gospel. They are new converts and I work very well with them.

**Charles E. Davis, 2146 Oak Post, Memphis, TN 38116**

Since January of 1981, I've been laboring with the brethren here at Trigg Avenue in Memphis. During this time, we have made a great deal of accomplishments, both spiritually and physically. When my family and I arrived here, there were no qualified men to teach or preach the gospel. Now there are several men who are able to teach and preach on a regular basis. The brethren here also are well indoctrinated against the cancer of institutionalism and I have no fear of them backsliding. I believe the brethren here are grounded in faith and are more than capable of continuing the work after my departure. Therefore, my task at Trigg Ave. is completed.

If Jehovah grants me life, I plan to relocate in August of this year to Bowling Green, Kentucky, to work with the congregation located on Third and Park. Their attendance is in the mid 30's, but their potential is great. The nucleus of the congregation is made up of young married couples between the ages of 28-35 who are intelligent and hungry for the truth.

Brethren, there are so many congregations like this and so few black evangelists who are able to relocate and help establish these congregations in the faith (Acts 16:5). Therefore, I take some of the responsibility in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20). Will you do your part? I must raise my monthly support plus moving expenses. I also need to secure payments for my health insurance. If you can help, please write me today.

**Wilson Adams, 6330 Auburn Ave. Riverdale, MD 20737**

The 1984 Wildercroft Lectures was a great success. To observe so many people spiritually excited was a most encouraging and uplifting experience. The number of people present each evening was, by itself, enough to generate enthusiasm. Visitors came from places like Ohio, New Jersey, southern Virginia, and the eastern shore of Maryland. Fellow saints from the area attended and lent their support. And best of all, people who were **not** Christians were invited by the members here—and several came! And some gave an indication that they would like to come back! Who ever said meetings of this sort won't accomplish good?

The singing was excellent and was one of the richest rewards of the week. Who would dare suggest that we ruin such a beautiful blend of living voices with something cold and mechanical?

And finally, the preaching. It was special. Connie Adams did an outstanding job of providing us with a verbal commentary on Colossians. Harry Pickup, Jr. spoke with great motivation out of 1 & 2 Peter. Virtually every sentence spoken by these two godly men was full of thought-provoking and rich material as they challenged us nightly to STRIVE AS SAINTS!

It was a great week. And the thing that made the week so great was the simple fact that it accomplished what it was planned to do. It was a week set aside to render glory to God. And it did!

**Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville Cape 7530, Republic of South Africa**

Since there are currently over 70 churches scattered throughout South Africa and yet only 9 full-time evangelists working here (5 American and 4 South African), we are understandably "spread very thinly" in this part of the world. And although the local gasoline price fluctuates between an astronomical \$2-\$2.50 per gallon we still have lots of traveling to do in order to fulfill our roles here as evangelists. Also, working here in the Cape Town area places us about 900 miles away from most of the brethren in this country. Consequently, we usually trade in our "run down" automobile for a newer model about every 3 to 4 years. However, since we are a growing family of 5 (with 3 daughters, aged 10, 8, & 6) this time we opted for an Isuzu van instead of another Toyota 4-door sedan. Not only does this give us much more room and storage space for traveling, but it has also suited my work well with the native blacks and coloureds in this area.

Brother Siyabulela Xamlashe (the first black convert in Langa) is currently working in Bellville at Food & Nutritional Products (associated with the Nestle Corporation) and during his lunch-break often strikes up open Bible discussions with his fellow-workers. Eventually, since these discussions were becoming deeper and more frequent, Siya asked me to come and join in on these studies and to run a question-answer period for the benefit of these new contacts; most of whom are "pentecostal" and members of the "Old Apostolic Church." So now, on Tuesdays and Thursdays (chosen as the most convenient days for all the workers), I meet them at the factory and study with them during their lunch-break. The van (which seats up to 16 people) provides us with a superbly private and suitable place to study. I have never preached to people sitting in a van before, but I am enjoying this new teaching effort immensely! Please continue your prayers for our efforts here!

**W.C. Sawyer, 132 E. Mason, Danville, KY 40422**

Many have already heard that I have resigned the work with the Sycamore Church in Gravel Switch effective October 1st of this year. If God permits me to live until this date, I will have served the Sycamore congregation for nine years. I must say that this has been one of the most enjoyable times of my work. Never has there been any problems between the elders and myself. We have three good elders and I love them dearly. It is difficult to make such a decision but I believe that someone else may be able to do a better job than I. The fact that I have resigned from Sycamore does not mean that I am retiring. I never expect to retire as long as God gives me health and strength to continue. At present, I do not know where my next work will be. I do not plan to move from Danville but will serve where I am needed in this area. I hope and pray I have made the right decision.

**Jay K. Guyer, 324 N. 725 W., West Lafayette, IN 47906**

Spiritually, the work here is going well. The number of members involved in personal evangelism is increasing (we have classes and assignments every other week). We greatly rejoiced last month when five more of our young people were baptized into Christ and two others confessed public sins.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

June 1984

Number 6

## THE ROCK OF ISRAEL!

by Stanley W. Paher

Among the glorious symbolic names for God is the Rock. This figure of speech acknowledges the Solitary Sovereign as the eternal, immutable One who is the same today, yesterday and forever (Heb. 13:8). The Rock casts no shadow that is displayed by turning (Jas. 1:17). In contrast, the plural "rocks" describes mythological pantheon or pagan gods.

The Rock naturally symbolizes strength and durability. Stone houses which rest upon rock foundations stand firm during a violent windstorm. The famous Cliffs of Dover and the mountains of Europe appear in the earliest recorded history, standing just as the ancients have described them, giving every evidence of remaining the same in the coming generations. The Psalmists and the prophets say that our God is like that--He changeth not.

Toward the end of his life, Moses sang of the glories of his Solitary Sovereign: "Ascribe ye greatness to our God. He is the Rock. His work is perfect, for all His ways are justice. . . (Deut. 32:3-4). To Moses this glorious God was "the Rock of his salvation" (v. 15). Daniel declared His omnipotence which accomplishes His sovereign will: "In the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, none can stay His hand" (4:35). The devils' rock was not as the Rock of Israel (Deut. 32:31).

Yet, when Israel sinned against the Lord by forsaking Him for pagan

deities, they learned that the Rock would deliver them up into tribulation, at the hands of those to whose "rocks" they turned. Moses thus remarked about Israel: "Oh, that they were wise and understood this, that they would consider their latter end. How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?" (Deut. 32:30).

Evidently, man does not really learn from history. Ever conscience of Jehovah's mighty works on behalf of His chosen, the Jews knew of the blessings which followed obedience to His commands and faith in His promises. When they failed to "consider the latter end", the resulting apostasy brought punishment and captivity when the Rock "shut them up" in foreign lands, in captivity. Moses accused the people of God of turning their hearts away from their Father by declaring that "You are unmindful of the Rock who begat you; you have forgotten the God who gave you birth." (Deut. 32:18).

In that verse, the words "unmindful" and "forgotten", like "begat you" and "gave you birth" as well as "the Rock" and "the God" are all synonymous through parallelism. In Hebrew poetry, ideas and synonyms rhyme rather than sounds and accents as in modern verse. It was the Rock who begat Israel by divine decree at the time of the Egyptian exodus, being

born as a son, according to His will. Similarly, of God's own will He begat us with the Word of Truth (Jas. 1:18).

The Rock of Israel appears in many prophetic passages, at times referred to as the Stone. In Daniel 2:35, He is the Rock of Wrath: "The Stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the entire earth." In Psalm 2, Christ is the Smiting Stone which will dash the reprobate into pieces like a potter's vessel (v. 8). The Stone presides as a Righteous Judge over all the earth, adequately fulfilling the OT prophecies as the One who would receive dominion, glory and power over all temporal and spiritual things (Isa. 9:6-7, Dan. 7:13-14).

In other passages, The Rock is plainly spoken of as the one Lord who subsists in the unified Godhead as three distinct Persons, the Trinity. Listen to Israel's sweet Psalmist, David:

*"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me.  
His Word was in my tongue. . .  
The God of Israel said. . .  
The Rock of Israel Spake. . ."  
(2 Sam. 23:2-3)*

God of Spirit, God the Son (the Word) and God the Father (the God of Israel) are identified as the One Lord. Thus David could shout: "Who is God, except the Lord? Who is the Rock, except our God?" (2 Sam. 22:32). In Him, David frequently tood refuge (v. 3).

Isaiah 26:4 figuratively describes Jehovah as the Rock of Ages. "Trust

ye in the Lord forever; for the Lord God is the Rock of Ages." The ASV has it an "everlasting" Rock. Thus Christ is our Cleft, who makes us pure and spares the saints from His wrath. "Let me hide myself in Thee," wrote Augustus Toplady in his famous hymn of the eternal One.

At times, the Hebrew word for Rock is translated "strength." "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy Sight, O Lord, my Rock (strength) and my Redeemer" (Ps. 19:14). Jehovah was David's strength (Ps. 18:1) "Jehovah is my Rock and my fortress and my deliverer; my God, my Rock, in whom I will take refuge. . ." (v. 2).

Since God the Son is the Redeemer of His people, He is also the Lord (Jehovah), the Rock and strength of the saints. In Jesus' parable of the householder (Matt. 21:42ff), Jehovah is the Stone which the leaders of Israel turned their backs upon. "Did ye ever read in the Scriptures: The Stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the Head of the corner. . . Therefore the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you (the nation Israel) and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits of it (the N.T. Church). And whosoever shall fall upon this Stone (Christ, the King) shall be broken, but on whomsoever (the Stone) shall fall, it will grind him to powder" (Ps. 118, Mt. 21:42-44).

The "builders," chief priests and Pharisees, perceived that Jesus aimed His statements directly at them (vv. 45-46), knowing full well that He claimed possession to the title, the Rock, who is the Chief Corner Stone of the Household of God (cf. Eph. 2:20).

The apostle Peter carries the idea further in his writings. Perhaps reflecting on important prophecies of Isaiah such as 8:13-14, 28:16 and the entire chapter 53, Peter identifies Jesus Christ as the Stone of Stumbling and the Rock of Offense: "It is contained in Scripture, Behold I lay in Zion a Chief Corner Stone. . . he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. . . but unto him who are disobedient, The Stone which the builders disallowed, the Same is made the Head of the corner; and a Stone of Stumbling and a Rock of Offense to those who stumble at the Word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed" (1 Pet. 2:5-8). Though carnal Israel in the prophetic era found offense in Jehovah, the Rock, spiritual

Israel, the church, comes to Christ as the Living Stone to be builded into a "spiritual household" (vv. 3-5).

Paul identifies Christ the Rock with Jehovah, the One who provided water from the rock for unbelieving Israel during the wilderness wanderings. "They did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of the Spiritual Rock who followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4). In that same epistle, Paul also told the saints at Corinth that "Other Foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (3:11).

It is odd, then, that any religious people should dare teach that anything or anyone else is this foundation rock. Expressly contradicting the OT teaching is the Roman Catholic Church, which insists that the church's foundation is Peter, now buried in Rome. However, Peter himself considered himself to be merely "an apostle" of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:1); it is Christ who is "the apostle" (Heb. 3:1). Peter recognized that Christians are "built up as a spiritual house" on Christ, the Living Stone, the Rock of Life. (2:4ff).

Undoubtedly, the teaching of his Lord at Caesarea Philippi was ever fresh in his memory when writing his epistles. On that occasion, Jesus queried, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am?" After receiving various answers, such as Elijah and other prophets, the Lord pressed the question "Who do ye say that I am?" (Mt. 16:15).

Peter gave the unequivocal response in behalf of the apostolic band: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. . . And I say unto thee: Thou art Peter (petros) and upon this (the/ Rock /te petra) I will build My church" (Mt. 16:16-18). The sturdy apostle was only "a small stone", one of many stones which are built upon Christ, the "foundation rock."

In the latter term, the Lord carefully avoids the diminutive form, **petros** by which he identified Peter and used the words **to petra**, the rock of "massive proportions" when referring to Himself, upon whom the church is built. Jesus thus plainly teaches that He, the Rock, or Jehovah incarnate, is the Foundation of His assembly, the church. This fact not only agrees with the Greek grammar but harmonizes with the overall teaching of Scripture.

The Latter-day Saints, or Mormon church, believe that the Rock of Matthew 16:16 is the "rock of revelation" which was present in the

first century restored in 1830 in the preaching of Joseph Smith. Noting the fallacy of the Catholic interpretation that the church was built upon Peter, Mormon "apostle" Bruce McConkie, in his N.T. Commentary, attempts to establish the doctrine that upon this rock--"that is, upon revelation, a rock of secure foundation--I will continue to build up my church. . ." (P. 383).

McConkie says that we must view this passage with the whole body of revealed truth. In other writings, he amplifies what he thinks the Lord said to Peter: "Blessed are thou, Peter, for thy unwavering devotion to my cause and for the testimony which thou hast borne of my divine sonship; and this testimony was not revealed to thee by mortal man but it came by revelation. . . It is upon this very rock of revelation that I have built up my church in all ages past, and upon which I will build and perfect it in this your day. . ."

The Mormons say that where there is continued revelation, there is the true church on earth, since deity only operates upon that principle. This notion, like the Catholic interpretation, contradicts what both the Old and New testaments teach about the true Rock--the eternal God. The expression "this rock" (Mt. 16:16), therefore, is the grand truth that "Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God: and on it God's people stand" (See Moses Lard's Quarterly, January 1865, p. 115).

In conclusion, the Rock of Israel is Jesus Christ, or Immanuel, "God with us." He is the eternal Son of God who in the beginning and in conjunction with the Father and the Spirit created all things out of nothingness. He is the Good Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, our Redeemer. . . our Rock. He is the Rock who journeyed with Israel in the wilderness, and who indwells the N.T. CHURCH AS WE TODAY JOURNEY THROUGH a sin-filled world as pilgrims headed for heaven. He is the Smiting stone who rules the nations with a rod of iron (Ps. 2, Rev. 1:5).

As the Rock of Wrath, He will sit on the throne of glory, judging resurrected mankind. Those who have continued steadfastly with the Rock will gain the heavenly home. Therefore, upon this rock we shall stand, all other ground, such as the apostle Peter or "continuous revelation" is blasphemous and heretical sinking sand.

# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## FAITH CHANGES PEOPLE

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews stands in Scripture as the great faith chapter. It has often been called "The Hall of Fame of Faith." It could easily be called "the *Reader's Digest* of the Old Testament." In no more than five minutes, the reader of these forty verses can survey the Old Testament and see a caption beneath the names of the most significant people.

The Hebrew writer might well have proceeded from 10:39 right into the exhortation of 12:1, but first he encourages his readers further by reminding them of examples of faith in earlier days. As each name is read, it's obvious that the writer intends to show us that faith is possible in anyone's life; God is no respecter of persons. Ordinary, plain, unassuming people can live extraordinary, super lives by faith. F.F. Bruce observed, "In Old Testament times, he points out, there were many men and women who had nothing but the promises of God to rest upon, without any visible evidences that these promises would ever be fulfilled; yet so much did these promises mean to them that they regulated the whole course of their lives in their light. . . . Their faith consisted simply in taking God at His word and directing their lives accordingly; things yet future so far as their experience went were thus present to faith, and things outwardly unseen were visible to the inward eye." (The Epistle to the Hebrews, pg. 277).

In the close of chapter ten, the writer has spoken of faith as the principle of spiritual life, and the spring of patient endurance. We go through tests and come out stronger at the end of them. In 10:32, the original readers were encouraged to look back to their former days when suffering was deep and painful; yet, they did not shrink back from trusting God. Depending upon Him, they had experienced a victory that God pulled off for them. Faith had become their way of life.

### A DESCRIPTION OF FAITH

The key verse of the eleventh chapter is verse 6: "But

*without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*" But what is this faith? It is viewed, not so much as an act, but as a state of mind. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (11:1). Faith is the eye of the soul, the organ by which we "see" even the invisible. The apostle Paul said, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Faith is believing in things that you have not even seen. There can be no other evidence, for things not seen are beyond the knowledge of our senses. But the things that are seen also have to be dealt with. We want to know the connection of the seen and the unseen, and the origin of both. "The seen things, at least as to the surface of them and certain manifestations of them, lie before us. Especially there are before us those seen things which have life in them. We see them spring into being, have their time of growth, maturity, decay; and then they pass out of any life that we can see.... Yesterday they had not appeared; today they appear; tomorrow they will disappear. And yet in disappearing they leave behind them that out of which will come a succession of phenomena like themselves. Thus generation is mysteriously linked to generation, and the world goes on. (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, Hebrews by C. Jerdan, pg. 343).

### THE ROLL CALL

About to relate in historical sequence the actions of faith-filled men and women, the author pauses and begins at the beginning of things. "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (11:3). It is because of faith and by means of faith that a true understanding of the created order is gained. Behind everything there is an unseen force that is not subject to the investigations of faith. Thus the conclusion, that, "things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," comes only through faith (cf. Rom. 1:20).

The writer, having gone to the first page of the Bible for the foundation-doctrine of faith, has only to turn the leaf to find his first historical illustrations. The roll call of men of old now begins.

**Abel's sacrifice** (11:4). The text reads, literally, "Abel offered a more sacrifice"--more excellent, more adequate, more acceptable, and so forth--or "a greater sacrifice" (NEB). There has been much disagreement as to whether the superiority of Abel's sacrifice over Cain's consisted in what was offered or the manner in which it was offered. The writer does state, however, that Abel's sacrifice was made in faith and Paul has said that faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17). An apparent conscientious trust in God's word led him to do exactly that which was commanded by God. With faith Abel was pronounced a righteous man;

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."  
— Proverbs 27:1

without faith (as presumably in the case of Cain) no acceptance would have been granted him.

But Abel's death was not the end. Verse 2 continues to say, "*and by it he being dead yet speaketh.*" Abel died as the first of all martyrs. His sacrificial offering made through faith inspires and encourages and still speaks to men.

**Enoch's translation** (11:5-6). Since by nature every man has an appointment with death (Rom. 5:12; Heb. 9:27), only a miracle could make Enoch an exception. The Old Testament record is quite brief. Genesis 5:24 simply says, "*And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.*" He did not die like other men but was "*translated*" (a word meaning, according to W.E. Vine, "*to transfer to another place*"--Vol. IV, pg. 150). Enoch's special favor in this regard is explained in this way: "*for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.*"

**Noah's ark** (11:7). Noah was a righteous man, like Abel; he walked with God, as did Enoch (Gen. 6:9), what is emphasized here is that when God announced that He would do something unprecedented in the experiences of anyone alive, Noah took Him at His word. God told Noah that a deluge would sweep over the earth. Such a catastrophe had never been known before, but Noah's faith took the form of "a conviction of things not seen." Neil Lightfoot wrote, "Being divinely warned of a flood that no one could anticipate, he took God at His word. He began the preparation of an ark on dry land, long before the threat of clouds and high water appeared; and this he did because he was moved with godly fear." (**Jesus Christ Today**, pg. 208).

**From Abraham to Joseph** (11:8-21). Though Abraham's father was an idolater (Joshua 24:2), Abraham's reliance on God was firm enough to change the world's history (Gal. 3:29). He tore himself loose from his own country, his family and his friends, venturing out on the call of God. Sarah thought it impossible to conceive a child at her old age. At first she responded with laughter and unbelief, but she later adjusted to the news and her faith won out over her earlier unbelief. Both Sarah and Abraham, then, were united in believing that God would work the impossible.

Genesis 27:1-40 relates Isaac's blessing of his two sons in his old age. Thinking Jacob to be Esau, Isaac pronounced the blessing upon Jacob. Later, however, after learning of his mistake, he persistently refused to change the blessing, apparently recognizing the action of God's overruling providence. Isaac was tricked into granting the blessing to the younger son; but Jacob, when blessing the sons of Joseph, purposefully chose to bless the younger son Ephraim (Gen. 48:14-20). This he did in faith; and in blessing his grandsons, two generations removed from him, he demonstrated that he, too, had faith concerning future things.

At the close of his life, Joseph's mind was set on the future fulfillment of God's promises. He was convinced that the Israelites **would** be going into the Promised Land and he instructed that his bones be carried there. Joseph had spent the whole of his long life, apart from the first seventeen years, in Egypt; but Egypt was not his home. Even when the rest of his family came down to Egypt at his invitation, he knew that their residence there would be but

temporary. He looked forward to going back to Canaan.

**Moses' choice** (11:23-29). Moses considered all of his power, position, and wealth, but was willing to give it all up to be on God's side. His life shows that he believed what had been told him by Amram and Jochebed, and he ordered his life accordingly. He, too, changed the history of the world.

**The walls of Jericho** (11:30). Joshua was certain that God intended to give Israel the city of Jericho. It was that certainty that led him into assembling the people for a march around the city, to encircle the city once each day for six days and seven times on the seventh day, to require the blowing of the rams' horns and the loud shouts of the people--these were unusual procedures for the capture of a city. But Joshua and the Israelites carefully followed the divine instructions--a characteristic mark of faith--and the walls of the city came crashing down (Josh. 6:1-21).

**Rahab's deliverance** (11:31). It may be thought strange that a woman of loose conduct, designated a harlot, would be appealed to as an example; but James also goes back to Rahab to confirm the principle that faith is dead without works (Jas. 2:25-26). She became convinced that the God of the Israelites was the true god (Josh. 2:11). She was willing to risk her life to protest two spies (Josh. 2:1-24), and apparently caused her to repent of immorality and so to become a heroine of faith.

**Samson and others** (11:32-40). What apparently was true of Rahab's penitence must also be true of Samson, else the Hebrew writer would not have listed him as a hero of faith.

#### RELATING TO CIRCUMSTANCES

Looking back through the text again, we see the odds were overwhelming. Who would have thought that a flood could occur? What would be the chances of the man of Ur finding a new place to live? Who could imagine a ninety-year old woman conceiving a child? Who could believe that a body of water would open to allow people to walk across on dry land? What would be the odds of the wall of Jericho falling? But in spite of all of these odds, the people of God "*through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens*" (11:33-34).

Are people of faith to be a certain type, with a particular history to their lives? No, any type will do! God didn't limit the exercise of faith to a certain group. Abel was a farmer. Noah was a farmer who went into construction. Abraham was a businessman and Sarah was a homemaker. Joseph was a politician, an Egyptian prime minister who started out as a slave and a prisoner with a record. Moses was a shepherd. Rahab had been a prostitute, Gideon, Barak, Samson, and Jephthah were judges. David was a shepherd, a king, and songwriter. These were people of normal needs and backgrounds, but their lives became characterized by faith--enduring faith.

The men and women in faith's Hall of Fame were not perfect. They had weaknesses with which God had to deal. But these people simply believed that God existed in the given situation that they faced, and finally trusted Him and not themselves.

God is ready to use us. We don't have to be a fictional "Superman"--but we do have to have faith. He can take the ordinary and make us unordinary. The proper use of faith will turn life right side up--be ready!



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “LAY UP TREASURE”

**Greek Word:** thesaurizo

**Meaning:** to lay up, store up

No doubt many who read this have used **Roget's Thesaurus**. It's a treasure-store of words to help a writer or speaker find just the right one for every occasion. Its title comes from our word **thesaurizo** in its nominal form, **thesauros**, “a place of safe-keeping” (*Vine's Exposit. Dict. N.T. Words*).

In its verbal form, **thesaurizo**, it has to do with “**laying-up or storing**” something (*Ibid.*), i.e., putting together a treasure or cache of this or that.

People are always collecting and storing things. Match-books, bottles, comic-books, cars, guns and dollars--all of them seem to cry out to the collector, “Take me, keep me, treasure me.” The New Testament has three very important things to say about this:

First, it talks about the **time** for which one ought to be doing his or her collecting. James writes, rebuking the covetous folk of his day, “*Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days*” (Jas. 5:3). How many times have you heard someone talk about laying up treasure for retirement time, building security for old age, taking care of their future? James says this is the wrong time for which to lay up treasure. Surely a Christian ought to make adequate provision for the needs of the body (1 Tim. 5:8; Eph. 4:28; 1 Thess. 5:11-12). But the emphasis in the N.T. is not on the laying up of great wealth for “*the last days*,” i.e., for this present dispensation, but for the one that is to come.

So Jesus talks about the **place** to lay up treasure. “*Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth...but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven*” Matt. 6:19-20). His point, of course, is that we should seek rather to send good works ahead of us to be recorded in heaven (Rev. 14:13) than to store goods for ourselves here in a realm that will soon be passing away. There are treasures--and then there are treasures.

Jesus also mentions the **purpose** for laying up of treasures. He implies that,

“*He that layeth up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God*” is a fool (Lk. 12:20-21). The key to this business of laying up or storing things is really a question: Are we doing it selfishly or selflessly?

**Hebrew Word:** lamadh

**Meaning:** to learn, to teach, to be taught, trained

The verb **lamadh** “may have originally referred to the striking and goading of beasts by which they were curbed and trained” (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*). And, “it is also likely that the idea of beating or striking readily lent itself to the concept of teaching human beings in semitic societies, the rod being an **Oriental incentive**” (“Hebrew and Chaldee Dict.” *Strong's Exhaust. Concor.*).

In other words, our word started out referring to the striking or beating of animals in the course of their training and “**by a noble evolution the term came to describe the process of disciplining and training men in war, religion and life** (Isa. 2:3; Hos. 10:11; Mic. 4:2)” (*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, op. cit.*), and by progressive usage came to describe the process of learning and teaching.

Among the ancient Israelites the work of teaching the Law of God to others was a very solemn and important one. In Israel the emphasis was not on learning or imparting knowledge for its own sake. In Paul's day the Greeks desired “*to tell, or to hear some new thing*” (Acts 17:21). And this love of knowledge for its own sake, whether of trivial or weighty matters, is characteristic of many modern centers of learning. But this was not so in Israel.

Among God's people teaching and learning were regarded as praiseworthy only insofar as they were in harmony with the word of God. During the period when Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, was approved by the Lord “*because he walked in the first ways of*

*his father David*” he sent princes and priests among the people to teach. “*And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people*” (2 Chr. 17:7-9).

And teaching in Israel was honorable only if its ultimate authority was seen to be in God, Himself. An Israelite was to be saturated with the consciousness of God as the real source and arbiter of all truth and its application: “*O God, thou has taught me from my youth*” (Psa. 71:17). And teaching in Israel was designed and intended to secure spiritual obedience. The young person in Israel who had not willingly translated learning into godly action was regarded as a failure: “. . . *I hated instruction. . . have not obeyed the voice of my teachers*” (Prov. 5:12-13).

In the tragic days preceding the Babylonian Captivity these high ideals were not observed in Israel. And this fact was one of the principle causes for it. The Lord rebuked his people saying, “. . . *this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men*” (Isa. 29:13). For the phrase “*taught by men*” in Isa. 29:13 the N.A.S.V. and N.I.V., et. al., translate, “*learned by rote.*” The teachers had taught; the students had learned. They could recite the right answers from memory, but their observances through quite meticulous (cf. Isa. 1:10-15) were not heartfelt. Teachers and students alike had reverted to the earlier usage of **lamadh**--unscriptural masters (teachers) and trained with the rod unspiritual animals (i.e., men behaving with no more spiritual perception than animals, obedient but without understanding).



# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## NUMBERS

by Dale Pennock

**N**umbers is a book of transitions. In it, the children of Israel continue their journey from the bondage of Egypt to the freedom of the promised land. At the same time, we see that the original participants of the exodus are gradually replaced by a new generation that will finally make the blessed entrance into Canaan.

The names of the book suggest this double theme. Our English "Numbers" is derived from the title "Arithmoi" in the Septuagint translation, which became "Numeri" in the Latin. In the Hebrew Bible, however, the book is called "Be-midbar" (in the wilderness), a reference perhaps to the beginning of the narrative "in the wilderness of Sinai" (1:1).

The book of Exodus described Israel's exit from Egypt and the first part of their travels, ending at Sinai with the erection of the tabernacle "in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month" (Exo. 40:17). Numbers then begin its record precisely one month later (1:1). Although it covers almost 40 years of Israel's history, a longer period than either Leviticus or Deuteronomy, it is not a true historical narrative. Rather, it highlights only the most important events of the period, revealing very little about the 38 years they wandered aimlessly in the wilderness.

We can divide the book into three sections, according to the movements of the people. In the first, the "old generation" (the emigrants from Egypt) leave Sinai and travel northward to Kadesh-barnea in the wilderness of Paran (chapters 1-14). The second portrays a period of transition to the "new generation," as the old one gradually dies off during the wilderness wanderings (chapters 15-20). Finally the people leave the region of Kadesh, make their way with renewed hope to the plains of Moab, and prepare themselves to possess the land of Canaan (chapters 21-36).

In his *Explore the Book*, J. Sidlow Baxter well suggests that we can find the central message of Numbers in the words of Romans 11:22: "Behold then the goodness and severity of god." He writes,

**"In Numbers we see the severity of God, in the old generation which fell in the wilderness and never entered Canaan. We see the goodness of God, in the new generation which was protected, preserved, and provided for, until Canaan was possessed. In the one case we see the awful inflexibility of the Divine justice. In the other case we see the unflinching faithfulness of God to His promise, His purpose, His people" (Vol. I, p. 162).**

### THE NUMBERINGS

Jehovah twice instructs Moses to "number" the young men, 20 years of age and older, who would be able to go forth to war. His first such command is given at Sinai (1:2-3), where Moses is told to count them by families, according to the polls that had been taken about nine months earlier. (Exo. 38:26) A total of 603,550 are tallied (Num. 1:45-46)

Thirty-eight years later, Moses again counts the fighting men, this time on the plains of Moab. (chapter 26) The sum of all the families counted totals 601,730, almost as many as the number taken at Sinai. Tragically, however, this time, ". . .there was not a man of them that were numbered by Moses and Aaron the priest, who numbered the children of Israel in the wilderness of Sinai" (26:64). Not one of them would inherit the land of promise. The reason? The sin of the spies.

### The Sending of the Spies

After the people arrived in the wilderness of Paran from Sinai, Moses selected one man from each tribe and sent the 12 of them northward to spy out the land of Canaan (13:1-3). They were away 40 days, going as far as the

city of Rehob. Upon their return, all 12 reported that the land brought forth plentifully, but 10 thought the inhabitants of the land unconquerable (vv. 27-29). Only Joshua and Caleb declared that Jehovah could surely give Israel the victory (13:30; 14:6-9). The people, however, sided so completely with the 10 that they threatened to kill Joshua and Caleb. Jehovah then appeared, pronouncing His punishment upon His faithless people: every man of 20 years or more, except for Joshua and Caleb, would die before the sojourn was over (14:20-35). The very next day, the people were turned "into the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea" (v. 25). Had it not been for their lack of trust in Jehovah, they might well have entered Canaan just two years after leaving Egypt! As it was, it would take another 38. This ghastly event then becomes the pivotal point of the whole book.

Shortly after leaving Kadesh, at the end of wanderings, Aaron died in Mt. Hor near the border of Edom (20:22-29; 33:38-39). His priestly mantle was passed to his son Eleazar, and thus the new generation was now firmly in place.

### Other Events

Let us briefly mention a few other noteworthy events in our survey:

1. **MOSES TWICE CHALLENGED.** Throughout Israel's journeys in Numbers, Moses stands out as Jehovah's appointed and faithful leader. As the people are going toward Paran, while camping in Hazeroth, Aaron and Miriam, Moses' own brother and sister, challenge his marriage to a Cushite woman, saying, "Hath Jehovah indeed spoken only with Moses? Hath he not also spoken with us?" (2:2). Jehovah immediately responded by calling all three to a conference in the tent of meeting. He there declared that Moses was "faithful in all my house," and that He speaks with him "mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark

speeches; and the form of Jehovah shall be behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?" (12:7-8). Miriam suffered with leprosy for seven days as a result of this sin.

During the time of the wanderings, Korah, with Dathan and Abiram, led a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, charging that they two had taken more authority upon themselves than Jehovah had given them, ". . . seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and Jehovah is among them" (16:1-3, 13). Moses asked Jehovah to vindicate him, so that all the people might know that he had done none of his works by his own mind (v. 28). Thus, Jehovah caused the ground to open up and swallow them all, with their households and all their sympathizers, a total of 250 men (vv. 31-35). Remarkably, the next day, all the people murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye have killed the people of Jehovah!" (v. 41). Once more, Jehovah vindicated his chosen men by sending a plague among the people, killing 14,700 of them, and by causing Aaron's rod to bear ripe almonds, as a testimony against their murmurings (16:49; 17:8-11).

2. MORE MURMURINGS. During their trek from Egypt to Canaan, Israel is literally a nation without a country. Still, Jehovah's timely provisions for His people are always apparent. But, the sad truth is, the people often murmured against Jehovah and His provisions. Soon after they left Sinai, they murmured against Jehovah's manna and longed for the fleshpots of Egypt (chapter 11). Jehovah appointed 70 elders to help Moses "bear the burden of the people" (vv. 16-17, 24-25). Then He gave them the flesh they asked for, in the form of quails, in such abundance that they would eat it for a whole month, until it came out their nostrils (vv. 18-23, 31-35). As they were eating their collected bounty, Jehovah smote them with a great plague, and that place became known as "the graves of lust."

Apparently failing to learn from their first experience, the people again complained about their food and water, as they compassed the land of Edom on their way to Moab (21:4-9). This time, Jehovah sent fiery serpents among them to bite them, and many died. When they repented of their sin, Jehovah told Moses to make a fiery

serpent and to set it upon a standard. Every one who had been bitten, and looked upon the serpent, then recovered from the bite. Hundreds of years later, Jesus would cite Moses' serpent of brass as a figure of his own dying body upon the cross, and the eternal life God would provide to those who would gaze upon him and believe in him (John 3:14-15).

3. MOSES' COSTLY SIN. While at Kadesh, the people suffered from a lack of water. Jehovah told Moses to assemble them before a certain rock, so they might observe that He would provide the needed water from out of the rock, when Moses spoke to it. Once before, as they were going toward Sinai, Jehovah brought the people water in the same way (Exo. 17:1-7). On this occasion, however, Moses and Aaron presume to provide the water themselves, and Moses strikes the rock to bring it forth. Consequently, Jehovah pronounces His punishment upon them both. They would not be allowed to bring His people into the promised land "because ye believed not in me, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel" (20:2-13).

Aaron died very soon, upon Mt. Hor, but Moses lived until he could view the land of Canaan from Mt. Nebo, across from Jericho. How faithful Moses had been for so long! Surely his last days must have been wistful ones, when he reflected upon his sin (20:12; 27:12-14; see Deut. 32:48-52).

4. PREPARING TO ENTER CANAAN. The latter part of Numbers serves as an introduction to Israel's conquest of Canaan, as recorded in the book of Joshua. While yet east of the Jordan, Israel defeated Sihon and Og and possessed the land of the Amorites and Bashan (21:21-35). These were Israel's first permanent conquests and, before they crossed westward into Canaan, Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh asked that this eastern region be allotted to them (chapter 32).

Israel's victories brought great concern to Balak, the king of Moab. He persuaded the prophet Balaam to come down from Pethor, that he might curse them, so Balak could drive them out of the land. But Balaam spoke the word of Jehovah and blessed Israel four times, declaring that the lands of Moab, Edom, Amalek and that of the Kenites would all be taken from them (chapters 22-24). Of their persistent

military success, Balaam declared, "Now shall it be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought!" (23:23).

Knowing the immensity of his death, Moses petitioned Jehovah to name his successor. Jehovah picked Joshua (27:15-23). Certainly, no better choice could have been made. By now, he was one of the oldest in the whole nation of Israel. More significantly, however, he had been a worthy assistant to Moses virtually from the beginning. He had accompanied Moses part way up Mt. Sinai when Moses received the 10 commandments, and aided him when he punished the people for their sin with the golden calf (Exo. 24:13; 33:11). In addition, he was one of just two spies who expressed steadfast confidence in Jehovah's ability to give them the promised land.

In a ceremony before all the congregation of Israel, Moses laid his hands upon Joshua and charged him with the responsibility of leading Israel into Canaan. It would not be long before he would march the people across the Jordan, where Jericho awaited.

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# HOW DOES GOD PROVIDE US WITH POWER?

by David Pratte

God is willing and able to provide us with all the power that we need to serve Him faithfully, overcome temptation, and receive eternal life. But all this power does us no good unless we know how to obtain it. As we learn how, please notice that the avenues which God uses to make power available, all require effort on our part. God is the source of the power, but there are conditions we must meet in order to use the power in our lives.

God made Joshua successful, but Joshua had to meditate and obey the word (Josh. 1:7,8). We can withstand the devil, but we must be vigilant and trust God (1 Pet. 5:8,9). God's power is provided us in the form of spiritual armor (Eph. 6:10-18). But armor is worthless unless you put it on and use it. (1 Cor. 10:12f; 16:13; Jas. 1:21-25)

Consider the following blessings God provides to make us strong:

## THE BLESSINGS OF THE BIBLE

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). The word of the cross is the power of God (1 Cor. 1:18). Every part of the armor of God is related directly or indirectly to the word: loins girt with truth, feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, the sword which is the word, etc. (Eph. 6:13-17).

Further, the scriptures are involved in every area in which we need power: they teach us God's will and provide evidence on which we base our faith; they instruct us how to become children of God; they strengthen and motivate us to overcome temptation (Matt. 4:4,7,10); they comfort us in time of trouble (Rom. 15:4).

But the availability of the scriptures helps us not at all unless we meditate on them as Joshua was commanded to do (Josh. 1:7,8). You can provide a soldier with the best armor in existence, but if he is untrained in the use of that armor, he can be beaten by an enemy who is skilled in using

inferior weapons. This is exactly why Satan often defeats us. (Jas. 1:21; Acts 18:27,28; 20:32; Rom. 15:14; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12f).

## THE BLESSING OF JESUS' BLOOD

**1 Cor. 1:18, 23, 24**--The power of God is the word of the cross--Christ crucified.

**Heb. 7:25; 9:14**--Jesus was the sacrifice which is able to save to the uttermost.

Indeed, "there is power in the blood." But this power is also conditional. To receive it, we must repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). If we sin afterwards, we must repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9).

## THE BLESSING OF GOD'S LOVE

**Eph. 3:16, 17**--We may be strengthened in the inner man, being rooted and grounded in love (cf. vv 19-21). All of us need to know that we are loved and cared for. People in sin often mention the sense of loneliness and guilt they feel. One who knows he is wrong and is alienated from those who wish to love him, often does not care if he does more wrong--he thinks he is already alienated so what will it hurt? But when one knows he has been right and he feels the sense of being loved, he does not want to do anything that will break that bond.

**1 John 4:9, 19; 5:3**--We know that God loves us so much that Jesus died for us. This knowledge compels us to love God and obey Him. Love is a powerful motivating force. God's love is the most powerful love there is. It leads us to success in His service. But again there are conditions--our love must be shown by our obedience (cf. John 14:15).

## THE BLESSING OF PRAYER

**Eph. 6:18**--The power of God is in the armor He provides, but we are to take it on with prayer. We should let God know our needs in His service, so He can supply those needs.

**1 Peter 5:7,8**--In our battles with

Satan, we must cast our cares on God. There is no need to bear our burdens and troubles alone. We can give them to God. But again there are conditions. We must make use of this privilege of prayer.

**Psa. 138:3**--In the day when I called, you encouraged me with strength. God will give strength in answer to our prayers. Prayer avails much (Jas. 5:16). But we must call. Many people are like a man who has a powerful automobile, but he pushes it around instead of getting in and starting the engine. The power is there, but instead of using it, he is doing all the work himself--and getting nowhere (Col. 1:9-11; 2 Thess. 1:11).

## THE BLESSING OF ASSOCIATION WITH OTHER CHRISTIANS

**Gal. 6:2**--Christians are to bear one another's burdens. We should comfort one another in times of affliction (2 Cor. 1:4). We are to teach and admonish one another (Col. 3:16; Rom. 15:14). There are times we need help in dealing with our problems--they are too big to handle alone, but other Christians can help carry the load. As we do this for others, they also do it for us.

**Heb. 10:24,25**--We must consider one another to provoke to love and good works. One excellent time and place to do this is when the Christians assemble for worship. The world tempts us and hinders our service to God. Gathering with other Christians strengthens us and helps us succeed in God's service. This is one reason why Christians should not neglect these gatherings (Cf. Heb. 3:12-14; Eph. 4:16).

It is strange but true that many members of the body neglect and outright refuse to ask or even accept help from brethren at the very time when they need it most. When we are facing our greatest spiritual dangers is the very time we are unwilling to attend the assemblies or to discuss our

problems with other Christians. How do we expect to be strong in God's service, when we reject the very things He provides to make us strong?

### THE BLESSING OF THE HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE

**2 Pet. 1:8-11**--The desire to enter the everlasting kingdom, motivates us to make our calling and election sure by developing the needed qualities in our lives. We must not be near-sighted spiritually, but look to our goal. Goals motivate people to work hard and sustain hardships. This is easily illustrated by athletes (I Cor. 9:25). Without a goal, it is easy to give up for there is no reason to suffer. With a valuable goal, we have strong motivation to persevere.

**Matt. 6:24,33**--Again there are conditions. We must keep our eye on our true goal, and not lose sight of it. Too often, our minds become clouded by other goals--pleasure, possessions, fame, personal desires. One cannot serve two masters. We must keep our priorities straight if we are to succeed spiritually (Cf. I Pet. 1:3-5; Acts 20:32; Jude 24).

### CONCLUSION

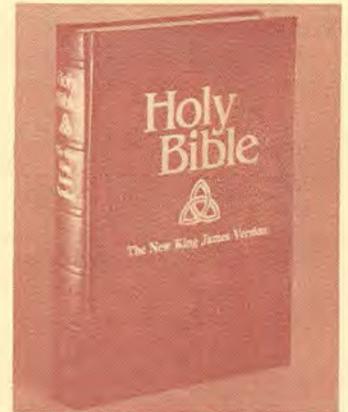
The Bible clearly teaches that **anyone and everyone** can serve God successfully, for God's word assures us that all the power we have described, and all the blessings which provide that power, are available to everyone. God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation those who fear Him and work righteousness are accepted by Him (Acts 10:34,35). He does not want any to perish but all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9). He wants all to be saved (I Tim. 2:4,6), so His grace has come to all men (Tit. 2:11-14).

But although these blessings and power are available to all, it is clear that they are not found in the lives of all. The reason is that not all have met the conditions. Many of us have furnaces in our homes that are perfectly capable of heating our homes. But the existence of the power by itself does no good unless we close the doors and windows and turn the furnace on. So God's power can be in your life, but you must make use of it. What about your life--do you find it filled with weakness or with the power of God?

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# A Review of The New King James Version

by Roger Hillis



In 1982, a new translation of the Bible was released by Thomas Nelson Publishers. It is called the New King James Version.

For those who recognize the need for a modern language translation, but have not felt comfortable with the American Standard or New American Standard (both are excellent), the New King James presents the best alternative.

The King James Version has an interesting history. It was first released in 1611. Numerous revisions of words and phrases took place from 1611 to 1616. There have been four major revisions since that time, in 1629, 1638, 1724, and 1769. The King James Version that is in current usage is the 1769 edition.

The American Standard Version (1901) is actually a revision of the King James Version--the first one to be given a new name. (It was released in 1885 in England as the English Revised Version). If it had been released as another revision of the KJV, it would have been much more widely accepted.

The New King James Version has updated the outdated language of the King James Version, based on the original KJV manuscripts. The New Testament was released in 1979; the entire Bible in 1982.

There are several qualities of the New King James Version which make it extremely useful.

Numerous words from the 1769 King James Version are no longer in common usage and have been changed in the New King James. An incomplete list follows: Concupiscence, travail, quicken, privily, twain, victuals, listed, durst, strawed, wont, wot, anon, haply, wist, importunity, fain, trow, firkins, privy, dissimulation, emulations, shambles, to wit, variance, seditions.

Other changes have also made the

New King James Version practical for use today.

Names are consistently translated from the Old Testament to the New Testament. Gone are the KJV names of Elias, Jeremy, Esaias, Eliseus. They are replaced with Elijah, Jeremiah, Isaiah and Elisha.

The unfortunate translation of Easter (Acts 12:4-KJV) has been corrected in the New King James to read "Passover."

Hades has been more correctly translated, as have several other words, including demons, Holy Spirit, and conduct (conversation in KJV).

A large number of words and phrases have completely changed meaning since 1769. Here are some examples.

In I Thessalonians 4:15, the King James Version uses the word "prevent." The modern language is "precede"--as in the New King James.

In 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7, the King James Version uses the word "let." Today, that word means to permit. Then (1769), it meant to restrain. The NKJV properly reads "restrain."

In Acts 28:13, the King James Version uses the phrase "fetched a compass." To us, this would imply going after a nautical instrument. In 1769, it referred to driving in a circle. The New King James Version translates it as "circled around," which much more accurately conveys the current meaning.

One of the biggest advantages of the New King James is its similarity to the KJV. The 1769 King James remains the most popular translation. The New King James merely updates the archaic words and phrases to make the King James Version even better.

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# Coming To Jesus

by Keith Storment

**T**he most important invitation ever put before man was that of Jesus when He said, "*Come unto Me. . .*" (Mt. 11:28). We can see the importance of coming to Jesus in two ways:

First of all, our status without Jesus shows that it is imperative to come to Him. Without Jesus we are spiritually dead (Ep. 2:1); without God and hope (Ep. 2:15); in danger of being condemned to eternal separation from God (2 Th. 1:7-9).

Secondly, we can see the importance of coming to Jesus in what He has to offer. In Him we can find the purpose for life and living (Jn. 14:6); salvation and eternal glory (2 Tm. 2:10); indeed, ALL spiritual blessings (Ep. 1:3).

All this, then, should impress us with our urgent need for Jesus. But we learn from Lk. 9:57-62 that not all of our approaches are acceptable to the Lord. In this text we are presented with three individuals who sought to follow Jesus. But in each instance, the Lord found something wrong in their coming. I believe that if we can see what was wrong with their approaches it will help us learn the proper way to come to Jesus.

## We Must Not Come

### to the Lord IMPETUOUSLY

We are first presented, in vss. 57 and 58, with a rash volunteer. "*I'll follow you wherever you go, Lord*" was his claim. We have no way of knowing for sure where the man thought Jesus was going; but the Lord points out that this would-be follower had not thought long enough on the road ahead.

Jesus tells the man: "*The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.*" In other words: If you are expecting a flower-strewn path of ease--forget it! I don't have that and neither will you.

And Jesus would counsel today, "*Count the cost*" (Cf. Lk. 14:25-33). The Christian's life has many blessings (Ep. 1:3; 2 Pt. 1:3) but also: a yoke to wear (Mt. 11:28-30 and a cross to bear (Mt. 16:24). There will be persecution (2 Tm. 3:12) and a constant battle with Satan and sin (Hb. 12:1; 1 Cr. 9:27).

Yes, we should follow Jesus but not on impulse. Some today will obey just because their emotions have been

stirred. Or perhaps family (parents, husband or wife) is "putting on the pressure." Or it may be that everyone in "our group" is "obeying the gospel," so they follow the crowd. Such "obedience" produces a shallow christianity that will soon be lost in the pressures of an ungodly world (Lk. 8:13).

We should follow Jesus with a deep commitment that realizes both the joy of being a christian AND the price we must pay for such joy (Mk. 10:28-30).

## We Must Not Come

### to Jesus HESITANTLY

In vss. 59 and 60 we have another type of "follower" presented. We immediately see the difference: The first volunteered; Jesus had to ask this man, "*Follow me.*" And at once the man began back-tracking: "*Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father.*" He was hesitant. He wanted to wait, to put off the commitment. Perhaps he had heard what Jesus told the first man and, really wanting no part of such a life, sought a graceful way out.

Truly this man had, if any do, a "good excuse." Honoring father and mother is one of the oldest and most constant commandments of scripture (Ex. 20:12; Ep. 6:1-3). But Jesus told the man, in essence, "My cause is greater; My duty is more urgent; than any earthly responsibility you can name" (vs. 60; Lk. 14:26).

We must not make the mistake of obeying rashly but neither should we hesitate and try to excuse ourselves from serving the Lord. We encounter many today who offer excuse after excuse for failing to follow Jesus.

Some would say, "Well, I would be a christian BUT. . .". And the excuses start: "I'm too young" or "I'm too old". "I don't know enough" or "I don't think I could hold out" and on and on the list could go.

And many christians when asked about their worldly practices or their failure to be diligent in the work of the Lord are just as handy with excuses: "Everybody is doing it" for the one; "I'm too tired" for the other. Or perhaps the old favorite: "I'm too busy and, after all, isn't that the preacher's job?"

We need to realize: The Lord's cause must come first (Mt. 6:33). And it needs to come first **today** because

tomorrow may be too late (Jm. 4:13-15).

## We Must Not Come to Jesus CONDITIONALLY

In vss. 61 and 62, we meet yet another man whose "coming" the Lord rebuked. This man was willing BUT --he had a condition he wanted to impose.

Now our coming to Jesus IS conditionally on His part. The Lord has every right to set conditions on the salvation He offers and has done so (Hb. 5:8, 9; Mk. 16:16 and many other scriptures). So, while our coming is conditional on the Lord's part; it cannot be on ours. That was the third man's mistake--He wanted to follow Jesus but on his own terms.

This would-be follower's problem was not unlike the position of some today. Some of his heart was with Jesus, but part was still with family and home. Look at various people who have the same problem today:

How about the scores of religious groups that claim Jesus as Lord; yet zealously cling to their creeds and unscriptural practices.

Or consider our apostate brethren still claiming to "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent"; yet still undivorcably wed to their "social programs," "projects," and institutions.

AND--let's not forget the "sound" brothers and sisters who loudly call for Bible authority but are totally unwilling to give up their smoking, drinking, and dancing ways to really live as Jesus lived and taught (Ac. 1:1; 1 Pt. 2:21). And scores of others who are unwilling to take time out from "working for a living" to work for the Lord (Tt. 2:14; 1 Cr. 15:58).

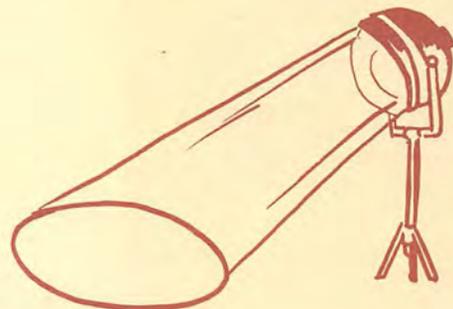
We need to learn the lessons Jesus gave this man (vs. 62). A divided loyalty will not work (Mt. 6:24). If we are trying to follow the Lord on our terms we are not "*fit for the kingdom.*" We will either go to Heaven on the Lord's terms; or we won't go (Mt. 7:21-23).

## Conclusion

Friends, let us determine to follow Jesus, not hastily, but with all the seriousness such a decision warrants. Having made such a decision let us not hesitate or try to impose any terms of our own. Rather let us immediately give our hearts, our souls, our very lives, to the task of following Jesus.

## WILL YOU FOLLOW JESUS?

# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## HARRY PERSAUD

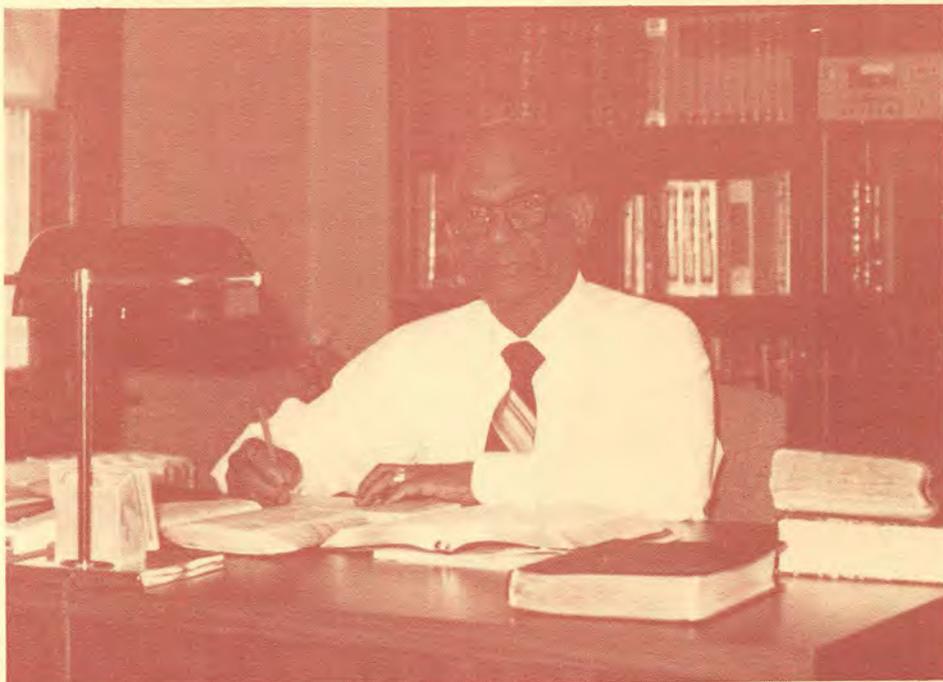
**What is your nationality?**

My ancestors were from India. They were brought from India to South America by the British people to work on a sugar plantation. The East Indians, as we are sometimes called, were humble, simple faithful and obedient workers for the British people. The Hindus really built the British, Guiana, and themselves into a good economical condition.

I was born in Georgetown, British Guiana. This area is now known as Guyana and received much publicity a few years ago when Jim Jones led his cult into the mass suicides.

My boyhood was a rough and hard life. I lived in a mud hut and plowed the earth with two oxen. We lived in under adverse conditions, but Hindus were successful in agriculture. Because of my family's poverty and other circumstances, I only had secondary schooling. I received no college education.

In 1961, Guiana gained her independence and became a republic. The British government withdrew and pulled out from the country. At that time, the Prime Minister and his cabinet were all Hindus. They had not only political power, but economical power as well. Hindus were sixty percent in population. The Hindu doctors and lawyers had a land-slide victory making up the government at the general election. They created much opposition from the Portugese and Negro (or people brought to Guiana from Africa as slaves). The Negro people rebelled against the government and began to hate the



Hindus. Out of envy and jealousy, they began to rape, loot, burn, and murder. The Hindu's life and poverty was in great danger. They lacked the ability to match this brutal force. There was a great civil riot. The Hindu government was torn down and the Negro people took over. Since then, Communism, dictatorship, and racism has become the order of the day. Might became right. As a result, the Hindu became scared and ran into every part of the world to seek a livelihood. Many went to Canada, Europe, England, or to the United States.

**Did you have a family at the time all of this was taking place?**

Yes, I was married in 1944, at the age of 20. Her parents were also from India. We owned a beautiful home in Guyana and had three sons and one daughter.

**When did you come to the United States?**

It was in 1970 that I came to New York with my family. I was trying to escape murder and from having my wife and daughter raped. I had to sell my home and flee into a country where I had no knowledge of and knew no one. My inner man was sore and bitter against the African Negro people. I said in my heart that if God had given me the will and the means to destroy those people in Guyana I would have done so.



I was only able to come to the U.S. on a holiday visa, valid only for six months. I wanted to seek a livelihood for my family, but was not permitted to work. I was in search for my daily bread. I kept wondering what I would do after the six months expired. What would I do? I would rather die than go back to Guyana.

#### **What did you do to provide for your family?**

I knew that if a foreigner were caught working on a holiday visa they would be deported, but I had to provide for them. Based upon what I know now, I wasn't a Christian at that time--but I had the belief that only God could save me from going back to Guyana. I did much praying.

On Sunday morning, my son was reading the *New York Times* and noticed an ad from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan. They were looking for a security guard and those with police or security background would be given a preference. My eldest son suggested that it would be a good job, but I was afraid of the risk in getting caught. But, anyway, I got well dressed on Monday morning and did not tell my wife and children where I was going. I made inquiries and found my way to the museum and into the personnel office. I was interviewed for about 45 minutes and had to tell him all about my experiences and my background in Guyana. He told me I was his best candidate for the day and I was hired immediately. I was finger printed, given a uniform and an

identification card.

When I went home and reported to my wife and children, they were at first happy but then worried about the immigration. The museum vouched for me and helped me receive my residency for myself and my family. I finally became a U.S. citizen in 1979.

This was the greatest job I ever had in all my life. I had a large wage, insurance and sick benefits, pension plan, three suits and three shirts, shoes, ties, eye glasses, and more.

#### **What was your religious background?**

I was born in, married in, and practiced Hinduism. I later was able to learn that this was idolatry. In my desire to become a Christian, I joined the Catholic Church and studied the catechism. Myself and family were sprinkled by the priest. Just before departing from Guyana to come to New York, I was given a recommendation as an exemplary Christian by the Catholic priest. Upon my arrival in the U.S., I took up residency in an apartment building in the Bronx, near the Yankee Stadium. My family and self were welcomed when we went to the Catholic Church and presented the priest's recommendation. My children entered the Catholic school since we were members of the parish church.

#### **What caused you to leave the Catholic Church?**

While working in the museum, I met a Baptist preacher from North Carolina. He was associated with Billy

Graham. After a brief discussion with him on the streets after work, he told me I was only a Catholic and not yet a Christian. He said he could make me a Christian if I desired to be one. He opened his Bible and had me read Revelation 3:20. He explained to me that Jesus was at the door of my heart knocking. He said if I would just believe that Jesus is the Son of God, He would open the door and come into my heart and I would become a Christian. I told him I did believe Jesus was the Son of God.

When I read his Bible, this was the first time I had ever read a Bible. During five years with the Catholics, I had never held a Bible or read one. After I read this verse, he threw his hands around my neck and prayed for me. After this, he told me that Jesus was now in my heart and I was a Christian.

During the evening hours after I finished working, he would come with his car and pick me up. He had several cartons of John's gospel and the two of us would distribute them to the people on the streets of New York. I told my wife and children what I was doing and they were very unhappy. They did not agree, but this did not hinder me from attending the Catholic mass on Sunday morning. I would go to the 6:00 A.M. mass with my wife and children and then go with Tom at 9:00 and worship with him. We would then go back to the streets and distribute more literature.

At this time, I truly felt in my heart that I was a Christian. I had no objection to serving the Catholic Church as a member of the parish counsel and going to mass with my wife and children. The one great advantage to this was that my children were kept in the Catholic school, which had a higher standard of discipline than the public schools.

A little later in 1972, I met a Spanish man and his wife who were in the neighborhood in the Bronx. They were Jehovah's Witnesses and he was a preacher for them. He told me the Baptists were wrong and the Jehovah's Witnesses were right. He came to my apartment on my off-duty days to teach me the Bible. He gave me much of their literature and a Bible. I later attended my new friend's church on a Sunday morning. I had problems getting him off my back after that. I did not like the Jehovah's Witnesses

and continued to go to mass and then work with Tom in Greenwich Village. He would teach me parts of the Bible. Of course, I now know that he never taught me anything about baptism.

It was in the fall of 1973, that I found a tract in the museum. I read it and it offered a free Bible correspondence course. I placed the tract in my pocket and took it home. I read it again and then wrote for the correspondence course. It was the Jule Miller Bible course. After completing the course in about two weeks, I had learned many things about the Bible. One of the most interesting things I learned was that there was no baby baptism, that I should not address the Catholic priest as Father and there is no reason for me to confess to him. The Baptist preacher did not know what I was doing at this time. Neither did the Catholic priest. My family knew what I was doing, but they thought I was sick. Here I was, I left Hinduism, spend five years with the Catholics, about one year with the Baptists, a few months with the Jehovah's Witnesses, and have just come in contact with a tract to start me on a new road.

I did the correspondence course and mailed it out. It was mailed back to me with different grades. One day I received a telephone call from Gene Mabry of Washington, New Jersey. He told me he was the one mailing me the correspondence course and asked if he could come to my home to speak with me. I invited him to come on Monday, my off-duty day. Gene, Skip Sebree, and their wives came to my apartment in the Bronx about 10:00 A.M. They studied the Scriptures with me and made me see the Catholics, Baptists, and Jehovah's Witnesses were all teaching human doctrines. My wife and eldest son became very, very upset, but for some reason I sat humbly and quietly and listened to these two preachers. By 8:00 P.M., I had learned the Truth and was ready to render obedience to the Lord and be baptized for the remission of my sins. We filled the bathtub with water and I was baptized in my apartment.

#### **Where did you decide to worship?**

Since there was no faithful congregation in New York at that time, I became a member of the Fairlawn Church of Christ in New Jersey. James Finney was the preacher. This would

be a thirty-minute trip and I would have to take two trains and a bus to get from the Bronx to Fairlawn.

I was a member of this congregation from 1973 to 1976. Bro. Finney taught me much in the Scriptures and I was taught further in my home by Glenn Jones, the son of one of the elders, who now preaches in Germany.

While I was a member of the Fairlawn congregation, I was also privileged to hear some great preachers in their gospel meeting work: Homer Hailey, Bob Owens, Melvin Curry, and several others.

#### **How did your conversion affect your family?**

I went to the Catholic Church on Monday morning and told the priest I would no longer be a Catholic. He thought I was sick or something was wrong with me. I explained to him that I had simply found Truth and had rendered obedience to Jesus Christ. I had the new Bible Glenn Jones had given to me. I handed it to the priest and asked him to show me where it said I should address him as Father. I told him I had no desire to injure his pride or say anything that would insult him. I told him I loved him, but I was quitting the Catholic faith. He pleaded with me and said he was grieved for me. I asked him to allow my children to continue for a little while in parish school and I would then remove them.

I had problems getting rid of the Baptist preacher. He would come from time to time to meet me at the museum. I would discuss with him about baptism. He got so annoyed that he said he was going to rebuke me. He told me I was a curse to quit the Baptists and go to the church of Christ. He began to ridicule the church of Christ and call it a cult.

The Jehovah's Witness man came to my house to continue studies with me. After I told him I was a new member of the church of Christ, he called me a donkey in the presence of my family.

My eldest son heard all of this and suggested that I was in deep religious problems and needed to see a psychiatrist. I could understand how my family felt. Look how many changes I had already made--Hindu, Catholic, Baptist, Jehovah's Witness. My son told me that there was a different church on every street of Brooklyn and if I continued like this I

would be in great trouble. He thought I was getting sick and these people were getting my money. I was wrestling with much in my life. I was trying to simply be a Christian and be what God would have me be. I wanted to follow Christ and seek Truth.

#### **How did it affect other areas of your life?**

The management of the museum saw a great change in my attitude. For instance, many evenings there would be parties and after the parties the staff would get together and drink beer and whiskey. While I was a Catholic, I participated with them in drinking and dancing. It was no different than what I was doing with the priest. After mass, myself and the priest would go and have a few drinks of whiskey and smoke our cigars. I quit all of this after becoming a Christian. There were about 500 workers in the museum, but none of them had knowledge about the church of Christ. I began distributing tracts and tried to teach many.

#### **How has your family accepted your conversion?**

My wife and children are all now Christians. My sons are active in leading singing and teaching classes. My daughter also teaches classes.

When my father died in Guyana in 1974, I went home to attend the funeral. They were all practicing the ritualism and ceremonialism of Hinduism. They requested me to indulge and I refused by explaining to them that I was a Christian. They looked on me with scorn. Today I love the things I once hated and now hate the things I once loved.

#### **When did you do your first preaching of the gospel?**

Bro. Finney asked me to preach one Sunday evening. I told him I had never stood before a congregation in my life. The only public speaking I had done was while doing police work in Guyana. I went to court and stood before the magistrate to testify and prosecute. I knew preaching the gospel was a different situation all together.

I had watched all of the preacher's since I had become a Christian. I watched Homer Hailey, Bob Owens, Melvin Curry, and others read from their Bibles or looked at an outline. I finally agreed to preach my first sermon. It was only about twenty

minutes long and I called it "Food For The Soul." I compared the food for the body and the food for the soul. God made both of these for man since man was a dual being.

The church had some literature printed with invitations to attend the services. I took some of the material and distributed them among the management and fellow-workers at the museum. We emphasized that the parking was free and encouraged them to come hear my first attempt to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Most of the museum workers were very perplexed and wondered what was wrong with me.

#### **When did you decide to devote yourself to preaching?**

During early 1976, Ellis Webb held a gospel meeting in Fairlawn. When he learned I was about to leave for a two-week vacation, he invited me to spend some time with him at his home in southern Indiana. I accepted his invitation and stayed with him for a week. During that time, he had me preach for four congregations. I explained to all the new friends I made that my goal was to be a strong Christian and raise my family as God would have me to.

E.C. Gilbert was then preaching for the Silver Street in New Albany, Indiana. He told me to let him know when I was ready and he would bring me to Indiana. I went back to New Jersey and told the brethren I was considering leaving my job at the museum and move to New Albany to

live and work, with hopes of doing some preaching. I was advised against leaving my job at my age since I had benefits, insurance, security, and a lucrative pay. When I talked to them at the museum about my possibility of quitting my job, they thought I was definitely going out of my head. They couldn't understand why I would leave my job and my neighborhood to go to an area where I knew no one.

The brethren at Silver Street spent \$2,000 to get me to New Albany. I lived and worked with E.C. for six months. It was during this time that Ed Rhodes was preaching for the West End Church in Louisville, Kentucky. He asked me to go and preach for the brethren. I first told him I didn't want to work with the black man or Negroes because of my experience from Guyana. My heart was still filled with memories of the raping, murdering the Hindus, and the looting. But as I studied more into the scriptures, I came to realize that as a child of God I could not build a barrier where Christ had broken it down. I was finally able to truly accept them as brothers and sisters in Christ. On the advice of Bro. Connie Adams, I went and started full-time work with the West End Church. I worked there from 1976 to 1981 and then moved to my present location. I moved here to establish a new congregation in Vauxhall, an area where there was no church of Christ. This was just next door to New York, New Jersey, where the crime rate, violence, and poverty is very high.

#### **Have you been overseas since you became a Christian?**

I went to India in 1978 with John Humphries. I worked there for a month. In 1979, myself and Ron Chaffin went to Guyana in an effort to preach the Truth and establish a faithful congregation. They were not receptive to the Truth. In fact, it was a strange thing to them for they were only accustomed to denominationalism and Catholicism. In 1980, Connie Adams and Sewell Hall returned from a trip to London. I loved to do personal work and they asked me if I would like to go to England to work for awhile. I took the opportunity to go there and work with a mixed congregation of blacks and whites for several weeks.

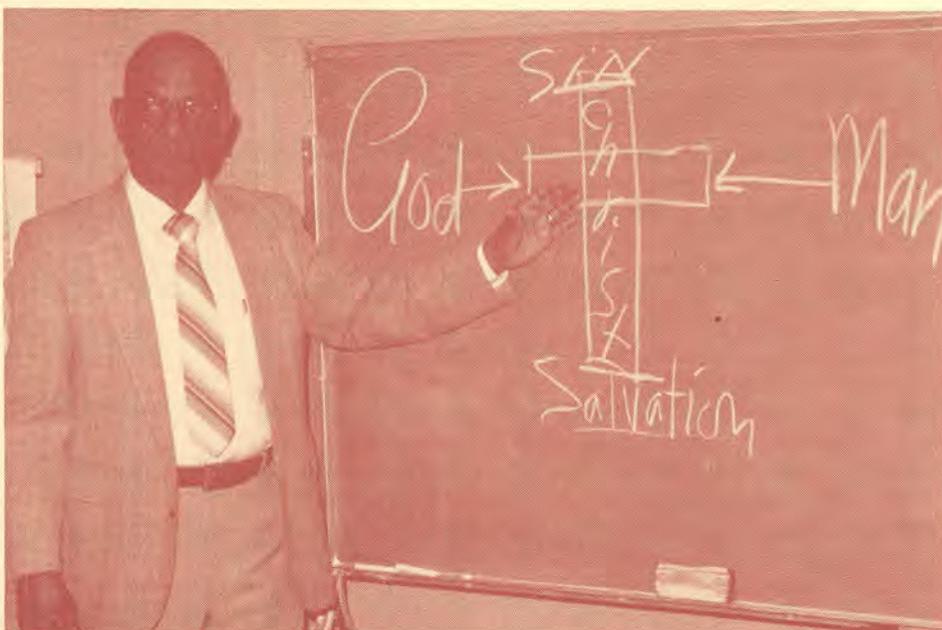
#### **Do you think you would have become a Christian had you not found that tract in the museum?**

No! If I had not found that tract, I may never have had another opportunity to hear Truth and learn the gospel of Jesus Christ. It was that tract that led me to the search for Truth. I was content at that time with my religion and thought I was already a Christian.

It is very important for one to distribute tracts and leave them in public places. You never know whose hands may come in contact with those tracts. I use tracts freely. I have no eloquence and regard myself as a nobody in God's kingdom. But one thing I do know: it is by God's grace that I am what I am today--a Christian.

I am unlearned and untrained, but this does not hinder me from defending or preaching the Truth. I am prepared to contend for the Faith with my life. I keep my eyes fixed on my Lord and Saviour and hope my calling will not be in vain. I'm going to preach the gospel to anyone I meet, whether it be the President or Billy Graham or the Pope.

One tract changed the entire course of my life. I am a debtor to preach the gospel to all people. I go from house to house. If I can't find these people at home to try to set up a Bible class, I leave some literature for them to read. We must distribute more tracts and make more contacts on a one-to-one basis.



**Readers may write to Harry Persaud at P.O. Box 376, South Orange, NJ 07079.**



## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanan

### BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS

John Fawcett had been left an orphan when he was twelve years old. He had worked fourteen hours a day in a sweat shop. He had learned to read by candlelight, and he had studied hard. He was ordained when he was twenty-five and started preaching for the Baptist Church in Wainsgate, England. The congregation numbered one hundred. His salary was one hundred dollars a year, paid partly in potatoes and wool. After seven years of preaching for this congregation, in the summer of 1772, he wrote these words in his diary: "During these years our family has increased faster than our income."

Just a few weeks after Fawcett had written these words in his diary, he received an invitation from the famous Carter's Lane Baptist Church in London to move there and work with them. It seemed like an answer to prayer for the thirty-two year old preacher. He sent a letter of acceptance as soon as he could draft a favorable reply. The following Sunday he told the little congregation about his invitation to move to the capital city and the answer in which his entire family had concurred.

The next few days were unusually busy ones; everyone worked hard packing books and dishes, discarding odds and ends, and crating furniture for the long journey to the largest city in the world. Members of the church joined it, although it was done with little enthusiasm. None of them wanted to give him up and/or lose him as their preacher. A deep feeling of loyalty and mutual devotion between preacher and member had developed during the recent years, and most of the congregation were frightened at the prospect of tearing asunder such precious ties. But they willingly did what they could to make his leaving easier. On the appointed day the wagons arrived early. The church members began moving the boxes and bundles from the house onto the wagons.

The last article was loaded on the

cart. The preacher began his round of good-byes. There were the young he had married, the children he had held upon his knee, the old whose sorrows he had shared. They were simple people. Few could read or write. But their sincerity and devotion were genuine. The preacher entered the house and saw his wife standing in the empty room, deep in thought.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

She hesitated a moment. "John," she answered slowly, "do you think we are doing the right thing in leaving Wainsgate for London?"

"Why do you ask?"

She stepped forward and took his hand. "John, dear, will we ever find a congregation to love us and help with us in the Lord's work like this group here?"

He asked, "Do you mean to say that you think we've been too hasty in all this?"

"Yes," she said. "I think we should stay right here and serve these people and give up all thought of going to London."

After an awkward silence, he added, "And I think so, too. I was so overjoyed when the 'call' came that I never really prayed about it like a minister should. I just thought of a better home for the family, the larger salary and the advantages of living in a big city."

They walked out on the porch and explained their change of mind. In a short while the wagons were unloaded and everything was safely and securely back in place.

John Fawcett never took the big church. He never left Wainsgate. He became one of the empire's greatest scholars and preachers. He published an entire volume of hymns. He wrote books and established a school for young preachers. His "Essay on Anger" so impressed King George III that the monarch offered him "any benefit a king can confer." As for this offer, Fawcett called on the king only once, and that time to plead for the life of a member's son under sentence to be

hanged. King George granted the request. As for himself, the humble preacher said that he "needed nothing a king could supply" so long as he was permitted to live among the people he loved--the simple people of Wainsgate. They had inspired him to write this hymn:

**Blest be the tie that binds**

**Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.**

Fawcett died there on July 25, 1817, forty-five years after he had unloaded those wagons and decided to stay.

### A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

A young German peasant named Martin Luther was working his way through school when he came near being killed by a bolt of lightning. Pondering his close call with death, he changed his course of study from law to that of theology. At twenty-four he was ordained a priest. Five years later he was awarded the degree of Doctor of Theology.

Luther soon found himself differing with many of the policies of the Roman Catholic Church. He challenged the supremacy of the Pope. He spoke out against indulgence taxes. He argued that everyone, not just the priests, should read the Bible. And he said that all should be allowed to sing in worship services. He outlined his contentions in ninety-five points and on October 31, 1517, nailed his theses to the door of the Wittenburg Castle Church for all to see. The Pope issued an edict for Luther's excommunication. Luther defiantly burned the Pope's order in public, just as the Pope was to order Luther's books burned later on.

Luther had the foresight to gather about him powerful political leaders. But the Roman Church felt something had to be done with this heretic. He was brought to trial at Worms. Luther was commanded by Emperor Charles V to retract his statements. Refusing, he is said to have replied, "I cannot and will

not recant. Here I take my stand. So help me God. Amen."

The court sentenced Luther. One elector, Frederick, was charged with keeping the prisoner in custody. Frederick turned his back while Luther translated the New Testament. Luther spent thirteen years of his life translating the Bible into his native German language. He also wrote thirty-seven hymns.

But the year 1529 was a sad, heart-breaking time for Luther and the movement he had set in motion twelve years earlier. Sickness as well as disappointment laid hold upon him to sap his strength and crush his enthusiasm. He sank into deep depression. In an

attempt to snap himself out of his mental and spiritual doldrums, he even took some of his own advice. "Eve got into trouble when she walked in the garden alone. I have my worst temptations when I am by myself," he had written. So he purposely shunned solitude and sought much companionship. But his favorite medicine was music. "The devil hates music," he said, "because he cannot endure gaiety. Satan can smirk but he cannot laugh; he can sneer but he cannot sing." But sing is exactly what Luther felt he had to do. He would sing with his family, with his friends, and even when alone.

Martin Luther and his followers were ever being hauled into court. In

the late summer of 1529, Psalm forty-six was a great comfort to him. He repeated the first verse over and over again. To give his followers courage on the eve of a bitter court battle, Luther wrote his famous hymn. As translated by Frederick Hedge in 1853, the hymn contains these lines:

**A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.**

## “. . .NOT FORSAKING OUR OWN ASSEMBLING TOGETHER”

by Bob Sarrett

The passage in which this phrase is found has often been the subject of discussion. Not a few disagreements have arisen among brethren over what is meant here. There are disagreements as to what day is being referred in this verse. There are disagreements as to what assembly is being referred. There are even disagreements as to whether this has the force of a command. I do not expect with this article to answer all of the questions that have ever been raised, nor is it my purpose to even attempt to do so. My purpose in writing this is to encourage each of us to stop and think about **all** that is found in the passage.

Let us notice what the writer has said: "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near" (Hebrews 10:23-25).

As the writer is calling upon Christians to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering," three things are suggested by which this can be accomplished, two positive and one negative. Unfortunately, I believe that many have placed all of the emphasis on the negative: "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some." Now I am not saying

that some emphasis should not be placed on this aspect. Evidently there were some who had the habit of forsaking their own assembling together. The negative way in which this is presented (i.e., "not forsaking") indicates that such a habit is one that we are not to have if we are to be considered as **holding fast**. But why is "our own assembling together" so important? Why is it essential that we be in the habit of assembling with the saints? Why would it be wrong for us to willfully forsake such assembling? This is an area in which not enough emphasis has been placed. I believe that the answer to these questions is found in our text, in the two positive aspects of this command.

One thing that the writer tells us that we need to do in **holding fast** is to "consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds." The Greek word that is translated "stimulate" (or "provoke" as it is found in the King James Version) is the noun-form of the verb **paroxuno**, which means "to make sharp, to sharpen; to stimulate, spur on, urge" (Thayer). In order for us to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering," it is essential for each of us to **stimulate** and **urge** one another to "love and good deeds." This is an **individual** responsibility of **each and every child of God!**

Another thing that the writer informs us that we need to do in

holding fast is to "Encourage one another." The Greek word that is here translated "encourage" (or "exhorting" as it is found in the King James Version) is **parakaleo**, which means "to address, speak to, (call to, call on), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.; it combines the ideas of exhorting and comforting and encouraging" (Thayer). We must, therefore, **exhort** and **comfort** and **encourage** one another if we are to hold fast. Again, this is an **individual** responsibility of **each and every child of God!**

Herein lies the importance of our assembling with the saints: **HOW ELSE CAN WE CARRY OUT THESE COMMANDS?** I have yet to understand why those who call themselves Christians think that they can "stimulate one another to love and good deeds," and "encourage one another," when they forsake the assembling of the saints! How can anyone who is **unfaithful** in their attendance (or anything else for that matter) say anything that would encourage and stimulate someone else to be doing what they ought to be doing, without being hypocritical? It just cannot be done! I am appealing to all who have this habit of forsaking the assembling of the saints to instead forsake the habit! Only by doing so can you begin to obey the commands that we have been given to "stimulate one another to love and good deeds," and "encourage one another."

# Recommending A COMPUTER

by Jeffery Kingry

The first place to start in considering a computer is to ask, "What kind of computer should I get?" If you think all computers are alike, think again. Computers are similar to internal combustion machines. There are all kinds: trucks, vans, busses, passenger cars. O.K., you want a passenger car. What kind? Large, expensive, luxurious? Mid-sized, moderate price sedan? Economy size small car? If all you are going to do is drive it back and forth to the office or to get the groceries then you don't need a Cadillac or a Lincoln Continental. If you are on the road all the time, making long jaunts to far off cities, then you aren't going to be happy with a GM Chevette. Computers are the same way. If you are planning to keep a mailing list of 30,000 names, don't go out and buy a Texas Instrument 99/4A or Timex/Sinclair ZX81. If you are getting a computer just to keep your home finances and tax records on, you don't need an IBM PC or a Tandy Model 2000. All computers will "compute". But, you need to have some idea what **you** are going to use it for, and what it would be useful to you for. I am going to tell you what I use it for-but that by no means infers that you will find the computer useful to you in the same areas.

Different manufacturers design their computers to meet different goals, and not all computers designed to meet the same goals achieve them in the same way. The variations of how a computer's parts might be put together and what is included is almost endless. There is a very diverse and competitive personal computer market. Some manufacturers are designing and selling computers designed for exposing very young children to computers. Their machines are essentially toys. This is not necessarily bad. It is wise to buy a simple, limited, inexpensive computer for a small child if one has a mind to do so. But, that same computer should not be purchased with the idea in mind that it is a serious tool for adult applications.

Some computers are essentially toy-

game-playing machines to which there is an option of adding devices that make them useful for computing as well. Computers like Atari's System 400, Commodore's Vic 20, Mattell's Aquarius and Adam systems might fall into this category. There is a small amount of home-use programming available for these machines, but they were never intended to be used as anything more than a "dabble-computer" (something to dabble around with.).

Above this category, and below the larger and more expensive business oriented computers is the range that would interest most brethren for church or personal use. The major manufacturers who have placed effective and useful equipment in this range are Apple, Commodore, Radio Shack, IBM, the British Acorn, Epson, Heath, and Hewlett-Packard. The price-competitive, software supported companies this writer recommends are limited to Apple, Commodore, Radio Shack, and IBM. This is not to say that the other manufacturers do not offer adequate or preferable systems, it is just that the greatest share of the market is divided among these companies. The other companies do not command a large share of the personal computer market in America.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

The ideal thing to do when looking for a computer is not to look for a computer at all! Strange as it may sound, the method that most people use to select a computer is incorrect. One should start first with **software**. Software is the jargon for the "program" or series of electronic instructions that make your computer work. Think of computer software and hardware by this analogy. A phonograph would be hardware roughly equivalent to the computer. Speakers, amplifiers, line filters, tuners, etc. would be "peripherals" or the equipment needed to get the good out of your stereo phonograph. The records would be "software". Without a record to play on your snazzy new phonograph, it would be a piece of useless junk.



Now, the software that runs on one computer is not necessarily compatible with any other computer. Some computer companies want you to buy your software only from them, so they design their computers to work only with their own programs. Other manufacturers feel that compatibility with other software vendors than themselves is an incentive to the consumer to buy their equipment. Fortunately, the latter philosophy seems to be winning out. But, at the moment it is entirely possible to buy a fine computer and find that the programs available to run on it are limited, of doubtful quality, and unusable for your needs.

So, the first thing to do when you are shopping is to shop for software. Go to the computer stores and ask for all their literature. Ask for demonstrations of their software. Ask for their software catalogs. Ask whether their software is compatible with any other machine, and if they have operating systems available for their machines that will run other kinds of software (If it has a CP/M or MSDOS operating system available for it, then it will run the majority of the software you will need). Ask for the name of the magazine that serves the user of their computer. Look through the independent ads for software and look for diversity and utility. Write off for literature on independent software companies. Do this for the computer companies you are considering. Then, start comparing the

comparative qualities of the hardware.

The things to look for in a computer system are: (1) Cost, (2) RAM (the size of the memory the computer has to do its work.), (3) Mass-storage devices (tape, hard or floppy disk), (4) Peripheral capability, (5) Utilities, (6) Ease of use.

### COST

It is silly to say that cost doesn't matter. If we had our choice of anything and cost was not a factor we would probably get the "best money could buy." The mundane facts of life though put price constraints upon us. What will this computer cost us? I have my prejudiced opinions as to the "cost-effectiveness" of the different computers. I own a TRS-80. But, there are brethren who have bought Commodore 64's and will stand by them loyally on the grounds of "cost-effective". So will the brethren who bought IBM PC's. If I had a choice, I probably would choose an Apple McIntosh, but who has the \$3,000-\$4,000 needed to buy that luscious computer? If you do, then you might call it "cost-effective", but I can't afford one.

### RAM

RAM stands for "Random Access Memory." It is not the same as ROM (Read-Only Memory). The RAM of a computer is the space the computer has to sort names and numbers, hold a page of word-processing, play a game or whatever. The smaller your RAM, the fewer number of things you can do, and what you do will take longer. RAM is usually measured in thousands (represented by the letter "K") of Bytes. A byte is roughly the same as a letter or number. A "16K RAM" machine can hold and manipulate 16,000 letters or numbers. A word being about five letters long, a 16K RAM computer could hold about 3,000 words. Of course, some of that memory will not be "addressable", or usable. That is because the RAM must hold not only the numbers or letters you are crunching, but the program to make it work as well. For instance, if you have a program that takes up 16K Bytes, you can run the program, but it will not hold any additional information. A rule of thumb is the bigger the RAM the better.

### MASS-STORAGE DEVICES

While the internal memory of the computer can be used to store a limited amount of information, they are not

really practical for storing the hundreds or thousands of bytes of program data that most operators have in their software libraries. Magnetic storage devices, like cassette tapes, floppy and hard disks are far more practical for storing large amounts of information.

The low end in cost and utility is cassette tape. Unfortunately, all cassette based memory systems are incompatible with all others. Beside the annoyance of incompatibility, cassettes are **slow**. And, if more than one program is stored on a tape, one must fast forward or reverse to find it. All information is stored "serially". That means if you have five programs on a cassette, your computer has to read over four programs till it finds the one it wants. And if you forget to write down what you called it and the name you stored it under, there is no easy way to look at a directory of what you have on that cassette. The advantage of the cassette is that it is cheap. The tape deck generally costs \$50 to \$100, and high quality cassettes can be gotten for \$2.50 or so.

The best compromise in cost and utility in my judgement is the floppy disk. Serious computer users move up from cassettes to floppy disks as soon as they can afford to. Switching to disk storage gives the benefits of much faster operation, more convenient storage, and easier use. Programs stored on a disk can be randomly (as opposed to serially) accessed, which means that the disk drive's read/write head (just like on a regular tape recorder, only the disk drive head is on a moving gear driven arm) can get to any program on the disk without having to pass through data stored on earlier tracks.

Speed is the greatest advantage of a disk drive. For instance, if you wanted to read into your computer a 25K byte program, it would take over fifteen minutes on a cassette. With a floppy disk, those 25K bytes could be read into the computer in three seconds or less. Transfer rate of information is 100 times faster on a disk than a cassette system.

There are two major types of disk-based mass-storage systems in use with personal computers - hard disk and floppy. The advantage of hard disk is more storage per dollar (.20 cents per 1K byte for hard disk, and \$5.00 per 1K byte for floppy). The only problem

is that minimum investment in a hard disk would be about \$1,500 to \$2,000. You can buy a floppy disk for \$500 - \$750. Hard disks are ten times faster than floppies, easier to use, and offer advantages of size for filing that a floppy doesn't (No exchanging disks to get all of a file sorted with a hard disk, for example). For the church or preacher with less than 1,000 names in a mailing list, or data base a double density floppy is all they will need. If the needs of the user ever increases beyond the capacity of one or two megabytes (million bytes) of information, then the computer can be upgraded at any time to a hard-disk 10 meg or 20 meg (or more) at a cost of about \$1000 per 10 megabytes.

Floppy disk systems are rated by their density. Density is the amount of information that can be stored in one spot on the disk. Single density means roughly one piece of information per space allocated on a disk. Double density will hold twice as much. Quad-density is four times the amount. The higher the density the more information that can be stored on a disk. Rule of thumb is to get as high a density for the dollar you can afford.

### PERIPHERALS

Sooner or later you will want to get a printer to go with your computer. It is nice to be able to have a computer, but eventually the church or preacher is going to want to have some kind of "hard-copy" of what they view on the screen. There are three basic types of printers to consider, and each is determined by what you plan to use it for.

Dot-matrix printers are the cheapest and quickest operating printer. The disadvantage of the dot-matrix printer is that it produces a ragged "computer-look" print style. Anything printed on a dot-matrix printer obviously is computer generated. If you want a printer that will set type for your new book, or bulletin, if you are looking for a correspondence quality printer for personalized letters then the dot-matrix printer is not for you. The most sophisticated of them still present an obvious and characteristic ragged edge letter style. But, if you are desirous of a printer that is fast and legible for producing material that will be used primarily by the brethren in classes, for your own use in your files and notes, for lists, reports, and such like where

the quality if the type style is not crucial, then it would be a waste of money and time to buy a letter quality daisy-wheel printer.

Ink-jet printers are similar to dot matrix, only faster and with fewer moving parts. The style of printing while marginally better than dot-matrix is still recognizable as computer generated. Ink-jet printers are generally more expensive as well, the technology still being relatively new.

Daisy Wheel or the NEC Spinwriter thimble printers are "letter quality" printers. A good daisy wheel has the capability to produce type in 10, 12, or proportional spacing pitch. The advantage of a good proportional spaced, bookface type style printer is that it can produce right-hand justified copy that, when reduced 10% for reproduction, looks like professionally-typeset print. This print quality means that a preacher or church could turn out professional looking tracts, booklets, bulletins, Bible study materials quickly, easily, and cheaply. I wonder how much money the journals spend each year in typesetting costs? For \$3,000 - \$4,000 they could turn out their own typeset-copy (and have the computer automatically proofread it for spelling and punctuation errors) at a one-time cost. Their only continuing cost would be for the typist's wages.

The disadvantage of the daisy wheel is price and speed. As a rule, dot-matrix printers are cheaper than daisy wheel printers. Dot matrix printers run in cost from \$300 to \$2,000. Daisy wheel printers start in the neighborhood of \$1,500. Lower speed daisy wheel printers are currently coming on the market at a cost of \$1,000 and less, which makes them competitive to the higher quality dot matrix printers. The speed of dot matrix printers varies considerably, from 40 characters per second (CPS) to more than 400 CPS (some high-speed printers rip along at 1,200 CPS). Formed-character printers are generally much slower running from 15 CPS to 80 CPS. With all printers, the higher the speed, the higher the cost.

If you are in the market for a printer look for bidirectional printers. The time it takes the printer to return to the left hand carriage position slows the printer by a third. Why not print the next line as you go back? A bidirectional printer prints coming and

going. Most printers should have bidirectional capability. Make sure that you also buy a tractor feed mechanism with your printer if it does not come equipped with one. Without a tractor feed mechanism to pull continuous feed paper into your printer you will be forced to feed each sheet of paper in by hand - a laborious process when you would like to walk off and have lunch while your computer/printer types out your twenty page manuscript, or 300 labels, or 200 merged letters.

#### UTILITIES

While the choice of utilities is not all-important, it is something you need to be aware of and consider. A utility is the series of programs that come with your computer that make it do useful work. The more sophisticated computer will have an adequate library of utility programs. For instance, can you copy a program from one disk to another? If you have a one-disk program, can you back-up your entire disk? (Back-up copies of any disk is essential. Imagine this. You have your entire mailing list on a disk. Then someone spills coffee on the disk, or your kids get into your office and use it as a frisbee, or, God forbid, lightning strikes while you are using your mailing list, and the disk is "zapped" by a voltage surge. Any number of things can damage a disk: dust, fingerprints, static electricity, dirty disk-drive heads, condensation, smoke, etc. Sometimes computers arbitrarily put "garbage" in a key place on a disk, and you lose your data. If you don't have a back-up you have lost not only your information, but all the work of keying it in). Can you rename a program or renumber it? Can you set the time on your computer or the date? Can you give a series of instructions to your computer that it will automatically execute for you at the punch of a button or the giving of an order? It is always good to review the utilities that come with a computer.

#### EASE OF USE

All computers are not created equal. Some are un-necessarily complex. For instance, on all TRS-80 computers there is a "Reset Key" that will break you out of whatever you are doing without damaging the programs, close all files, and return you to the operating system without having to "reboot" (start over from scratch). Many computers do not have this ability. If your computer "locks up"

because of a program glitch, you have to turn the computer off and start all over again - with the possibility of damaging your program and losing files forever.

Some computers have a bewildering array of keys that duplicate one another's function and confuse the user. The DEC Rainbow computer has the most garbled and redundant keyboard I have ever seen. There is a "DO" key when you want to "do" something, but there is also an "EXEC" execute key for executing a command, and a "RETURN" button (which is in reality an "ENTER" key) that must be pressed before the computer will "DO" or "EXEC" anything. The function keys (a key that when pressed will accomplish some kind of function - like clear the screen, stop a scrolling screen, give prompts or helps, etc.) are not programmable (you can't tell them what to do. The company defines what they will do before you get the computer). If you buy a computer get one that has a keyboard, and software that is easy for you to learn and use.

#### CONCLUSION

I cannot recommend any specific kind of computer without being charged with bias (I do have my biases. Among computer users there are more emotional biases than among diehard Chevy and Ford drivers). But, this information should go a long way towards helping you decide on what computer would be best for your needs.

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#### OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT COMPUTERS?

**Editor's note: The personal computer has taken the world by storm. It has invaded not only the business and the school, but the home as well. It is now beginning to move into many preacher's and/or elder's offices. A few years back, the craze was for overhead projectors, and before that it was for an off-set printing press or an electronic stencil maker for a mimeograph machine. But now, it is computers. We think everybody else is getting them, so we want one, too!**

The computer has not been so quick to move into churches for several good reasons. The computer is still

relatively new, the language used with computers is confusing and intimidating to those of us not familiar with it, and there is very little programming available that makes buying a computer attractive to a church. Then, of course, there is the cost. Once an individual begins looking into what it will cost to get a machine and software to be of any use to a church, the excitement quickly cools as moths fly out of our wallets.

This is the second article on computers by Jeffery Kingry. These are designed to take part of the "scare" out of the use of computers. Jeff has been involved in electronics and computers since 1965 when only multi-national corporations, banks, and the government could afford a workable computer. Those were the days of wire-core memories, punch cards, hard-wire programming and other techniques that soon became obsolete. While in the Air Force, Jeff played with the government's million-dollar computers and said he dreamed of the day when the cost of computers would be in the reach of every man.

In 1981, Jeff worked for a short while as the Director of Computer Services for a college in Burlington, Vermont. During this time, he had full access to their micro-computer and, in his own words, "I became addicted to it." He did some work for the Radio Shack Computer Center and had access to their entire educational software library and became proficient in its use. Jeff now devotes his full energies to the work of an evangelist, but sees many advantages and opportunities for a preacher and/or an elder to use a computer.

Jeff and I both attended a special morning class on "Religious Use of Computers" at the '84 Florida College lectures. Jeff determined then to write a couple of articles and offer a question and answer service. Jeff would like to set up a network of preachers or other Christians that are interested in computers. If you have developed any software, plan on publishing a program, or have special ideas for a computer, write Jeff at the address above. A self-addressed stamped envelope will be all that is required to get a personal answer from Jeff about computers in religious work. If there is enough interest, Jeff has agreed to write a question-answer column on computers for *Today*.

## A Pig...Or A Chicken?

by Mason Harris

I believe I have discovered a serious problem with many church members. It is illustrated in an old story about a chicken and a pig. The two were going down an old dirt road together when they noticed a sign telling of a banquet to be given for a charitable organization. Both the chicken and the pig wanted to help, but they could not think of a way. Suddenly the chicken said, "I know! I'll donate a dozen eggs, and you can donate the ham." "Hold on," said the pig. "For you, that is just a contribution, but for me it is a total commitment."

Too many of us are like the chicken. We are willing to give a little (with some it is mighty little) time each week to the services and even a little (again, with some it is mighty little) of our money to keep things moving (but not too fast!). Too few are totally committed to Christ.

In studying the lives of great achievers, we usually find the key to their success lies in their "total commitment" to the area in which they have achieved greatness. In olympic competition, for example, the young men and young women who qualify for entrance into the competition do so because they have put training above so many things the rest of us are not willing to give up.

I have listened to men and women who are successful in business talk about the importance of single mindedness--to sleep, eat, and live whatever it is one seeks to do. This is well and good, IF one has his priorities in proper order. Personally I do not measure the success of a person solely by how big a business, factory, or house he may build. What if total commitment to building the business, or achieving wealth, causes one to lose his family through neglect? Or, what if it causes him to lose his soul? "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

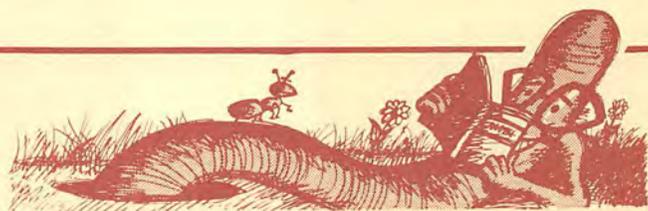
But on the other hand, if one is totally committed to Christ, if he is "seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," there is time for family, legitimate business interests, spiritual involvement, and even time for wholesome recreation. Because, you see, it is not a matter of "clocking

in" and "clocking out", like eight hours of work, eight hours of sleep, two hours with the family, two hours of being a Christian, etc.. If one puts Christ first in his life, he is a Christian while working, playing, and spending time with his family. Christianity is the one thing in which one can be totally committed without it robbing time from another important area of his life. Think about it: Paul said, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (1 Timothy 5:8).

The Christian is called upon to give his body, "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1). We are not called upon to give our bodies to be burned upon some sacrificial altar, but we have been asked to give them as living sacrifices, replete with life and energy to do God's will in all the areas of our life. And Paul did not ask us to do something which he was not willing to do. He said of himself, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Galatians 2:20).

These days if one hears about one who is totally committed to Christ, someone is ready to call him a religious fanatic, or he is a member of some cult. But I do not remember hearing the apostles ridicule the people in Jerusalem because they "sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need"; or Barnabas, who "having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet"; or the Hebrews because they "took joyfully the spoiling of (their) goods, knowing in (themselves) that (they) have in heaven a better and an enduring substance"; or the Macedonians who gave "beyond their ability" to help meet the need of others. Members of a cult? Fanatics? I have been under the impression they were members of the Lord's church, Christians--just humble, totally committed Christians who were laying up their treasures in heaven. Have I missed what it is all about?

# The Book Worm



**PUBLISHERS:** Send all books for review to:

The Book Worm  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

**THE KINGDOM OF THE CULTS** by Walter R. Martin (Bethany House: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1982, hardback, 443 pages, \$11.95.

This book is almost an encyclopedia on the cults and isms that are penetrating most of the world today. The author presents a historical analysis of the rise of the cult system, a brief evaluation of the major teachings of the cult, and then points out the various conflicts between their teachings and the word of God.

When this book was first published in 1965, *Christianity Today* named it as one of the choice books of the year. It is now in its thirty-third printing, showing its wide acceptance as an outstanding work.

The author deals with such better-known cults as the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christian Science, and Mormonism, and such lesser-known groups like the Church of the New Jerusalem, the Bahai Faith, the Black Muslim, and the Unity School of Christianity.

The six-page bibliography is a valuable tool for any student wanting to do further research.

**WHO REALLY WROTE THE BOOK OF MORMON?** by Wayne L. Cowdrey, Howard A. Davis and Donald R. Scales (Regal Books: Ventura, California), 1980, paperback, 257 pages, \$6.95.

Controversy has surrounded the origins of the Book of Mormon ever since it was first published in 1830. For better than twenty-five years, Dr. Walter Martin, the author of *The Kingdom of Cults*, was convinced that Solomon Spalding was the real author of the 522-page document known as the Book of Mormon. In late 1974, Davis read Martin's research and

immediately began his own investigation. In early 1975, Wayne Cowdrey, a descendant of one of the witnesses to the Book of Mormon, contacted Davis with information he had begun to compile. Comparing notes, their enthusiasm and determination grew. Later that same year, Donald Scales joined the team, contributing his knowledge and dedication to researching the truth about the Book of Mormon. This book is the result of their combined efforts.

After hundreds of hours of painstaking research, this team of authors have come to a firm and studied conviction that the Book of Mormon is not a genuine revelation from God at all, but was derived from a novel written by Spalding, originally titled **The Manuscript Found**.

This book is complete with testimonies, handwriting analyses, and statements from Smith and Spalding themselves. This startling new discovery is a real blow to the members of this false cult. It should be recommended reading for those anxious to learn more truth about this large cult.

**TRAINING UP A CHILD** by Gwendolyn M. Webb (Old Landmarks Foundation: Denver, Colorado), 1981, hardback, 360 pages, \$12.95.

Mrs. Webb is disturbed that our society "demands at least sixteen years of education to teach in public schools. A doctor must study approximately twenty years in order to be a medical practitioner. Carpenters, plumbers, clerks, and soldiers all undergo months and even years of instruction. For parenthood, society requires no teaching. It is the most difficult and important job in the world; yet it is performed almost entirely by amateurs." It is for the purpose of educating parents that this material was written.

If a community is having an increase in juvenile delinquency, Mrs. Webb believes it is no effective solution to build bigger and better jails, increase

the police forces, and spend millions of dollars on institutional care. She believes we should go right to the source of the problem--go to the parents and teach them more effective and better ways of parenting.

The author relied upon the Bible as her number one source of information. She is convinced that the children should be reared "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4). Secondly, she accumulated priceless wisdom from older "winning" parents who had had their parenting tried and proven. Thirdly, she delved into every available book that contained facts supporting an autocratic (parents-are-the-boss) philosophy of child rearing.

This book is filled with Scriptures, charts, pictures, questions, applications, and many credits from other writings.

I recommend this book highly. My family gives this book as a baby-shower gift. I'm convinced that every parent should read this book.

**SPOTLIGHT ON STRESS** by Gary R. Collins (Regal Books: Ventura, California), 1982, paperback, 217 pages, \$5.95.

More and more people of the eighties are feeling the pressure of stress--family members, employees, students, even churchgoers. A recent American Medical Association report stated that fifty percent of all visits by patients to physicians involve stress. As a health problem, that makes stress more common than the common cold.

With a unique style that is both highly readable and solidly authoritative, the author provides clear answers for such difficult areas as stress at work, at home, in sexual relationships, and in a crisis. Scores of real-life problems are explored and answered.

The main thing that impressed me throughout the book, was the author's conclusion that the stress can only be handled through Christ. He closed by quoting Philippians 4:13: "I can do everything God asks me to with the

*help of Christ, who gives me the strength and power"* (TLB). The last statement in the last chapter of the book shows the author's faith: "God still gives that help, strength, and power today, and He is the ultimate solution to the problem of stress." This book was enjoyable reading.

**TEN DATES FOR MATES** by Dave & Claudia Arp (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Tennessee), 1983, paperback, 176 pages, \$6.95.

This book is unlike any other marriage manual on the market. The authors have been married for twenty years and have three sons. They are convinced that any marriage can be helped by opening up the doors of communication. This book suggests ten "dates" for husbands and wives--fun dates that encourage communication in the areas of potential conflict in a marriage.

The activities of each date are clearly outlined--listing the purposes, time commitment, and preparation. The book includes questions that need to be asked and answered. I have really fallen in love with this book and feel it could improve all marriages. The authors deal with subjects ranging from priorities, goals, feelings, and lovemaking.

Each chapter is short, concise, practical, relevant, well-organized, and fun. The dates do not require hours of study and preparation.

I'm going to start recommending this book to all couples.

**MANIPULATING LIFE: WHERE DOES IT STOP?** by Duane Gish and Clifford Wilson (Master Books: San Diego, California), 1981, hardback, 221 pages, \$9.95.

Hitler has often been condemned for his desire to experiment with eugenics (selective breeding to improve a race), but our modern generation seems excited about the many possibilities of having a super race. But who would make the decisions as to the right or wrong types?

The authors of this book are top scientists and educators and are willing to discuss the ethical and moral aspects of biographical engineering, cloning, test-tube babies, surrogate motherhood, abortion, and genetic manipulation. This book deals with the real issue behind all of this: "Can he create supermen--or superclones. . .or

will he ultimately create monsters?"

The four chapters on abortion alone make this book worth its price. It covers such things as deformed babies, rape, mental illness, sterilization, medical risks, the handicapped, and miscarriages.

**THE KINGDOM OF PROMISE AND PROPHECY** by Robertson L. Whiteside (Inys Whiteside: Denton, Texas), 1956, hardback, 199 pages, \$5.95.

The little book has been an old reliable for many years for those wanting to study more about premillennialism. This book deals with the many errors regarding God's promises to, and the prophecies concerning the Jewish nation. Many errors have grown out of a misconception of God's use of that nation in fulfilling his purpose to bring redemption to mankind.

Part of this material has originally appeared in such religious journals as **Gospel Advocate**, **Gospel Guardian**, and **Firm Foundation** and some was from Whiteside's original manuscripts. This book deals with subjects ranging from the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, ends of the ages, the four beasts, the Jews return to Jerusalem, Abraham's land promise, to future kingdom doctrines.

A Scripture index is given at the end of the book. It is an easy-to-read book and enjoyable.

**MY LIFE WITHOUT GOD** by William J. Murray (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1982, paperback, 252 pages, \$5.95.

This book tells more about the outspoken atheist, Madalyn Murray O'Hair, than any other book in print. The author of this book was an illegitimate child of the famous atheist. This eye-opening biography describes his growing years as a seedbed of violence, vindictiveness, and illusions of grandeur.

The first chapter of this book describes a bizarre element in Madalyn's birth--an unusual, dark membrane covered her whole body as if it were a black shroud. Murray points out that in his mother's high school yearbook, she listed her goal as serving God for the betterment of man. Today, however, she claims to have been an atheist from about age six. In 1941, when Madalyn was twenty-two, she married J. Roths. As a member of

Eisenhower's staff in Rome, she had an affair with William J. Murray, Jr. and the author of this book was conceived in 1946. Madalyn hoped Murray would obtain a divorce from his New York wife. Not only did he not seek a divorce, but he refused to admit he was the father of the child. Madalyn attempted to establish his paternity in court. She named the child William Joseph Murray, III, and sometime after that began to call herself Madalyn Murray, even though the man never consented to marry her.

The author explains how, in early 1946, his mother went outside during a violent lightning storm, shook her hand toward the heavens and, at the top of her voice, unleashed blasphemies intended to provoke violent wrath from God. She used that to prove that there was no God or He would have struck her dead with a bolt of lightning.

This book describes how the author, as a 14-year-old plaintiff, was used by his mother in the 1963 Supreme Court decision which banned prayer from public schools. It describes his mother's political involvement with the Socialist Workers Party, the Socialist Labor Party, and the Communist Party in the United States. He details her unsuccessful attempt to defect to the Soviet Union.

Emotional instability caused by his mother constantly calling him stupid or an idiot, drugs, smuggling, leftwing causes, and anti-religion lawsuits marked Murray's life while with his mother. He rejected all connections with the American Atheist Association in 1977 and is the founder and director of Murray Faith Ministries.

The book is filled with many, many deletions where cursing was used. I could not recommend it to everyone. It is, however, a thorough treatise on life with an atheist. God has been much more patient with a woman like this than I could have been. I would probably have given her that lightning bolt she was asking for!

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:

The Book Shelf  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

# COUNTERFEIT RELIGION

by Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.

On August 1, 1983, the ABC network news program **Nightline** examined the subject of faith healers. The main focus of the program was upon a fundamentalist faith healing sect in Indiana known as the Faith Assembly. This sect, led by Hobart Freeman, teaches its followers that they must not seek help from doctors or modern medicine to aid with sickness, childbirth, etc. They believe that they will be cursed by seeking medical help from man, because of their perversion of Jeremiah 17:5. As a result of the teachings of the sect, many of its members died when the deaths could have been prevented by proper medical care. Indiana state health officials found out that women in the sect were eight times more likely to die at childbirth and babies in the sect were three times more likely to die. The members of the sect somehow reason that if one seeks medical assistance, he shows lack of faith.

There were several interesting things brought out in the program that ought to cause people to think. One ex-member of this sect pointed out that a sect like the Faith Assembly was just as dangerous or more so than the Moonies, Jim Jones, etc. The reason that she gave for it being so dangerous is that it gives the appearance of true Christianity and backs up its claims with the Bible and therefore is tolerated by most other, "Christian" denominations. Of course, the reason she and others were so alarmed and intolerate of this sect was because of the danger it presented to the physical lives of its members.

But the thing I want us to consider and think about is the fact that there are many, yea hundreds, of religious groups that at least on the surface seem to be devoted to Christ and claim Bible authority that in reality do not follow God's word. Yet, we as Christians many times are not upset that so many are following after the false

teachings of these groups and we sometimes make little effort to convert our neighbors out of them. They pose a even greater danger to those caught up in them than loss of physical life. They pose the danger of loss of soul.

Another danger of counterfeit religion is that the closer it is to the true church the more likely it is to lead people astray. It is just like counterfeit money. The closer it is to the real stuff, the more likely it will fool others and be accepted by them. There are many churches today which wear the name of Christ and come close imitating the New Testament church, but have numerous flaws in them. Just as there are some people who will accept anything that looks like a twenty dollar bill, there are those who want to accept any congregation that wears the name of Christ. We must only accept the real thing (cf. Gal. 1:6-9).

Another ex-member of the Faith Assembly, David Gilmore, was interviewed on the program. He was a minister who left the group after his child died because of lack of medical help. He was asked what drew him to the group to begin with. He answered that he was attracted because he felt "they had something more to offer than your standard let's go sit in the pew on Sunday morning and fall asleep." He claimed also that he was drawn because it was exciting, alive, exuberant and because they called for more than just a mediocre commitment - they called for an all-out commitment. Sound familiar? There are many in the church now and have been many in times past who do not feel that the Lord's church is exciting enough or emotional enough. Pat Boone made such charges in his book, *A New Song*. Such feelings led him off into pentecostalism. It has caused others to resort to hyped up emotions in their services by employing such things as dimmed lights, candle light, hand holding, spontaneous prayer,

spontaneous singing, etc. Some think that unless you are emotionally hyped up all the time, you cannot be sure that you are really saved. They think that the only true measure of spirituality is one's feelings. Sure, Christians are to rejoice (Phil. 4:4; I Thess. 5:16). But the true test of one's love for God and one's spirituality is compliance with the word of God, not feelings or emotions (I John 2:3, 5).

Some in the church are also drawn by the idea of an all-out commitment. There is nothing wrong with total commitment, depending on what one is committed to. We should be totally committed to the Lord (II Cor. 8:5; Luke 9:57-62; Matt. 10:37). There are some, however, who seek total commitment to a group of people or an institution regardless of what that group of people might teach or do. Anyone who questions the teachings or actions of the group is then chided for not being totally committed. Great peer pressure is applied in order to keep doubters in the group. If one, however, is truly committed to the Lord, he will examine the teachings and actions of any group with which he is associated and only accepts the things that comply with God's word. This is what is encouraged in the New Testament (Acts 17:11).

Let us not be fooled by counterfeit religion. And let us not become dissatisfied with faithfully serving God. Just because we are not on an emotional high all the time doesn't mean we are any less spiritual. We will rejoice if we are pleasing to Him. But just because we rejoice doesn't mean we are well-pleasing. There are many who emotionally cry out, "Lord, Lord", but do not do the things that God commands (Matt. 7:21; Luke 6:46).

# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**"I come from a poor family. I want to have friends, but I am ashamed of the little house we live in. I have been to the homes of most of my friends and know that they live in nice houses. How can I handle this?"**

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



problem and be glad for what you have. The LORD said He would take care of you, did He not? Yes, He did--but remember: the LORD is not interested in how big of a house you live in, but rather He is interested in your soul. How can you handle embarrassment, you ask? TRUST IN THE LORD!!!

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



hard to get what you have. Invite your friends over, you'll be surprised at how they act. They won't look down on you for not being wealthy if they are true friends. If you bring your friends to your house don't keep putting it down, act self confident about it. Never think you're not as good as other people just because you don't have as many material goods. You were special enough for God to create you so you had better think good of yourself. "God created man in his own image." If that's not good enough for your friends they aren't true friends.

**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 17



There shouldn't be any need to be ashamed. If that is all you have, be proud of it. If that is all you can afford, don't worry. You will be provided for. If we obey and follow Christ, He will provide the necessities of life (Matt. 6:33). If you have people over, don't show them your embarrassment. Don't apologize for what you don't have.

Never be ashamed of what you have. You might want to have the motto: "I may be poor, but I'm proud."

Have your friends over and don't act embarrassed. Chances are they won't say anything or even notice. They came over to see you not your house. If they look down on you because you don't have as they do, don't feel bad because you lost friends because they weren't true friends in the first place.

We shouldn't worry about our treasures of the world because God will provide what we need. Being poor has it advantages too. Matthew 19:24 tells us it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. Many rich people become so obsessed with earthly wealth they don't have time for God. Being poor makes it easier to center your life around serving God.

There is no reason to be ashamed of such a financial condition. Don't be afraid to let your friends discover that you don't have as much as they do. I think they'll understand. It's not what you have that they like, it's what you are. If they disassociate themselves with you because you aren't as rich as they are they probably aren't real friends.

As Christians, we need not be concerned with earthly blessings. We have the assurance that God will fulfill his promise by giving us that home in heaven and our salvation. We can't let the amount of blessings we have on earth trouble us. By trusting in God we can overcome the problems in this life, looking to the reward in heaven.

**Gretchen Manco**  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 14



Just don't be ashamed. There is no reason to feel ashamed or inferior. If these people are really your friends then they won't say anything to make you feel embarrassed. In fact, they might even like your house better than theirs - **maybe because it has a spiritual atmosphere.** It doesn't matter how big or small a house is, it's how the people inside it live. Do you live as you should? If so, you should have no

**Michelle McClelland Sparks,**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 16



You should feel proud of whatever you have. Your parents have worked

**Robin Underwood**  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14



Just because you don't have as many conveniences as someone else, doesn't make you any less of a person. If your friends are real friends, they will realize this.

You shouldn't worry about what man thinks, but rather worry about what God thinks. (Luke 20:4, 1 Thess. 2:4, Matt. 10:16-17). For God is the one we are going to have to answer to—not man. It doesn't make any difference what man thinks.

God certainly does not turn his ear away from the poor. James 2:5 says God chose the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom.

I think we are all going to have to learn to be content with what we have. (1 Tim. 6:6, Heb. 13:5). We should thank God that he saw fit to give us this beautiful world, the Bible and on, and on, and on.



**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13

Jesus is the Son of God and the King of Kings, but He came to earth without a place to lay His head. He, for example, was never concerned about what others thought of His earthly home. Material things should never stand in the way with your friendship. Just because your friends have nice houses doesn't mean they won't like you if you don't have a nice house. Like the ol' saying goes, "Don't judge a book by the cover." You should be more concerned about your soul than your surroundings.

Jesus said the same thing when He told the Pharisees that they were clean on the outside, but full of dead men's bones! If your friends won't take you as you are, I would say that they aren't real friends!

Is there a particular question or subject you would like to have our teen panel discuss? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.

# HAUGHTY EYES

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

*"There are six things the Lord hates, yes, even seven which are an abomination to Him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers"* (Prov. 6:16-19 NASB).

*"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling. It is better to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud"* (Prov. 16:18-19 NASB).

One need not know much about the teaching in God's book in order to know that haughtiness is condemned and humility is praised. (cf. Matt. 23:12) Yet, paradoxically, one is not permitted to claim humility. To boast of one's humility is to manifest arrogance. Humility is an attitude of mind. Paul wrote, *"Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering;"* (Col. 3:12). It is an attitude which promotes faithful service. (cf. Micah 6:8) Many who think themselves to be humble are not.

Haughty eyes is a very appropriate description of the inordinately proud individual. The raised eyebrow has long been an indication of arrogant amazement, disdain and rejection of the person or claims of others. Haughtiness generally views all others' opinions, goals, and abilities as inferior to those of self. Pride and arrogance are the tools of those who think themselves to be somewhat superior.

Many people, who do not appraise their own capabilities properly, become intolerable when given a position or title of authority. Sometimes a worker, who is made a supervisor, becomes a dictatorial, overbearing tyrant. Some men, when they are appointed as an elder in the Lords' church reveal a smallness of character that was before undetected. They may begin to think of themselves as "the boss". They approach decision making and order giving with an arrogance which conveys unbecoming self-exaltation. Infallibility is not a gift available to elders or preachers today. Some preachers, when they are complimented get "big-headed" and assume a haughty demeanor which will permit no contradiction or opposition. (Preachers you should know that many times compliments are more polite than accurate.) Church members sometimes develop a haughty attitude with regard to the supposed superiority and reputation of the local congregation.

The point of these remarks is to emphasize that Christians must learn to be *"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God"* (Eph. 5:20-21). Elders are specifically admonished that they **must not be lords** over God's heritage, but **must be examples** to the flock or church. (1 Pet. 5:3) Jesus is the Lord. We must thank God in His name. All of us are continually dependent on God and one another.

Let us learn to be humble. We must remember that God's eyes are all seeing, also just as merciful. *"Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up"* (Jas. 4:10). Let us never build our self-image by tearing down the character and service of someone else. God's ways and thoughts are higher than ours; no matter how high we may push our ways and thoughts.

# The Poet's Page

## DETERMINATION

To face the darkness in the night,  
To break the darkness with the light,  
When I myself am all alone,  
My eyes directed toward the foe.

To stand forthrightly for the truth  
Amid the cries of jeering youth,  
Or teachers' scoffs from left and right,  
Temptations all travail with might.

To set the course for all who seek  
A path to follow much discrete.  
Lord help my life that way to be  
To walk like you in thought and deed.

--Robert I. Beck  
Birmingham, AL

## LET ME BE A STRANGER

One day I met a stranger  
quite fortuitously,  
A man filled with compassion  
who changed my destiny.  
He told me of a Saviour  
slain at Calvary  
And of the twelve apostles  
who shared his ministry.  
His words were theirs, theirs were his,  
unchanged through history,  
Hear, believe, repent, confess,  
then to the baptistry.  
Other saints, their lives he told,  
like Mark and Timothy,  
Tryphena, Phebe, Dorous too,  
and their posterity.  
Tears rolled down his cheeks and mine  
when he, on bended knee,  
Prayed to God to keep my soul  
throughout eternity.  
He's come -- gone, and I remain,  
now kindly hear my plea,  
"Let me be a stranger as  
this 'stranger' was to me."

--Duane D. Huntley  
Athens, AL

## CONFUSION

"Plan ahead for your tomorrow."  
That is what the wise men say.  
Yet, most folks who plan tomorrow  
Haven't figured out today!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## GROWING SEASON

There is no way to rush the growing  
Of a plant. Each living thing  
Must go through its growing season  
Before buds mature and bring  
Forth the fruit that's hidden in them.

No one hopes for newborn wheat  
To bring forth its golden harvest  
'Til its growing is complete.

Lion cubs seek the protection  
Of their mothers 'til they grow  
And develop hunting talents  
That no newborn cub can know.  
And, the eaglet has the instinct  
To observe old eagle sail  
Through the heavens, ere he ventures  
Forth to brave that roaring gale.

Only man, of all creation,  
Seems to often fail to see  
That a boy lacks skills of manhood,  
And a lass needs help 'til she  
Develops all those latent talents  
That are hers. For it is true  
Man, God's most productive creature,  
Needs his growing season too!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## MY MOTHER

They say the most of mothers  
Are something pretty fine,  
But nobody else's mother  
Can be quite so dear as mine.

She never fails or falters  
When things go hard or wrong;  
No matter what my troubles,  
She'll help me right along.

Her thought for me is endless--  
A million times a day  
She gives me love and comfort,  
For which I cannot pay.

I can't begin to tell her  
My love in just a line  
But no one else's mother  
Is quite so dear as mine.

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## GAIN OR LOSS

When a Christian earns big money  
Anywhere throughout this land,  
God has either gained his fortune  
Or has quickly lost a man!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## INVITATION

I'm grieved to know that my children grope with eyes that do not see,  
With ears they hear, but do not heed, they fail to rev'ence me.  
They lie and steal, and worship not, they do just as they please,  
They scorn my love, forsake my name, then pray for sympathy.

The world I've given to their charge, to populate and rule,  
But they wage war, pollute and spoil, and think of me, a fool.  
I'll bide my time until that day, when judgment doth prevail,  
Then will I garner honest hearts, and sinners I'll assail.

I'll turn deaf ear to everyone who lived in infamy,  
And spurn the ones who slew my son, despite his, "Follow me."  
A place prepared will chain their souls, throughout eternity,  
And there they'll gnarl and wail and sear by fire they cannot flee.

None will escape unless they seek the pathway, straight and true,  
The invitation goes to all, especially to you!  
Your days on earth go swiftly by, you've no time for delay,  
Repent, confess, and be baptized, there is no other way.

--Duane D. Huntley  
Athens, AL

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **MOON LOSES APPEAL, GETS 18 MONTH PRISON TERM**

The Supreme Court May 14 cleared the way for the imprisonment of the "Rev." Sun Myung Moon and ordered him to begin serving his 18-month prison term for tax evasion on June 18. The justices, without comment, rejected an appeal by the founder and leader of the Unification Church. He had contended he was denied a fair trial and portrayed himself as a victim of religious persecution.

Federal prosecutors now are free to seek the immediate imprisonment of Moon and an associate, Takeru Kamiyama, who was sentenced to a six-month term for conspiring to file false tax returns. The government frequently allows those convicted in such cases up to two months before they must report to a prison. Both men have been free on bail pending appeal.

Moon was sentenced to prison and fined \$25,000 in 1982 after a federal jury in New York City found him guilty of evading \$162,000 in taxes on income from both a bank account and an importing business. He also was convicted of conspiring to file false tax returns.

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld his conviction last September, rejecting his argument that he should have been tried before a judge rather than a jury. "Ordinarily, insisting that a defendant undergo a jury trial against his will does not run afoul of a defendant's right to due process and a fair trial," the appeals court said.

Laurence Tribe, a Harvard law professor, and other attorneys representing Moon contended that he held church funds in his name as a religious trust and was prosecuted because of widespread public hostility toward the Unification Church. Tribe said his client was prevented from arguing effectively to the jury that he

was managing millions of dollars in church funds rather than maintaining personal bank accounts that should be taxed as individual assets.

"Caught between a government bent on portraying his religion as sinister...and a jury predisposed to view Rev. Moon as a 'charlatan' running a 'cult' for his own profit, Rev. Moon was hardly free to present to the jury a full and accurate picture of his religious relationship to those who gave him the assets," Tribe said. The 2nd Circuit Court, however, said, "Moon's spiritual identity as leader of the Unification Church movement and his legal identity as a taxpayer are not the same...It is in the latter capacity that he, or the Pope, could have taxable income."

## **MOONIES STAY CALM IN WAKE OF RULING**

The "Rev." Sun Myung Moon remained mum--and his followers stayed calm--in reaction to the latest setback to hit the controversial church. "Rev. Moon believes out of difficulties, suffering and persecution, goodness can emerge," said Joy Garratt, spokeswoman for Moon's Unification Church.

As the Supreme Court refused to hear his appeal of tax evasion charges, Moon, she said, spent the day "in the church parish where he resides" in Irvington, N.Y., 10 miles north of New York City. "I think people felt everything from disappointment to outrage, but this is our church and people really feel that Rev. Moon's conviction is not a conviction of him but an expression of what we have to change in this country," Garratt said.

Moon, 64, who was born in North Korea, says Jesus Christ appeared before him on a mountaintop on Easter in 1936 to tell him he'd been chosen to complete His mission. As a result, Moon began writing what

became the **Divine Principle**, which contains the tenets of his church.

After going to Japan in 1938 to study electrical engineering, he returned to Korea. Adversity followed him. In Korea, he quickly drew the ire of the communist government with his preachings. After a series of arrests, Moon was sentenced in 1948 to five years in a North Korean concentration camp.

Moon and his disciples went to South Korea after being liberated by United Nations forces in 1950; there, he formally organized the church. His preachings reached the USA in the early 1970a.

Church leaders say membership in the USA has grown as high as 45,000. Critics say there were never more than 5,000 members and that many of the young followers were brainwashed.

Moon has amassed a huge fortune. He owns fishing and seafood operations in Massachusetts, a shipbuilding firm in Louisiana, a printing company, and several newspapers, including two dailies: **The New York Tribune** in New York City and **The Washington Times** in Washington, D.C.

## **STATUE PORTRAYS CHRIST AS WOMAN**

A statue depicting the crucified Jesus Christ as a woman has received an "overwhelmingly positive" response at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, says the church's dean--although some, including his boss, find it scandalous. Christ has always been portrayed in a form comfortable for worshipers--black Christs in Africa and Oriental Christs in China, for example, the "Rev." James Park Morton said April 28.

The statue, in the form of a crucifix but without a cross behind it was sculpted by Edwina Sandys, a granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill. In

the 4-foot bronze statue, Christ is presented in the traditional crucified posture but with a woman's figure.

### HERE'S LATEST ROUND IN GOD'S GENDER BATTLE

God is not necessarily male, says a women's group of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. In fact, the characteristics attributed to God in the Bible resemble "everything that is best in the female way of being human," says a report written by a panel of seven women and four men.

The report, presented April 24 at the annual meeting of the Women's Guild of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, does not represent the church's official views. The panel was divided on whether "the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" could be addressed as "God our Mother."

### RECORD ATTENDANCE

The First Baptist Church of Dallas went down in the record books for achieving the highest attendance in Sunday School ever in the Southern Baptist denomination. An unprecedented 12,058 people were in attendance Easter Sunday.

### CHURCHES QUESTION MORALITY OF TOBACCO TRADE

Two preachers, Rufus Stark and Collins Kilburn, did not intend to cast themselves as prophets, but that is how they are regarded by some people in the low tobacco lands of North Carolina--prophets in the Old Testament sense like Amos and Jeremiah.

A local citizen reminds a visitor that Amos was driven out of town and Jeremiah was stoned to death. Mr. Stark and Mr. Kilburn, like the old prophets, are saying things that people don't like to hear, things that cut deeply and stir the soul. They are talking about tobacco and morality.

Mr. Kilburn is executive director of the North Carolina Council of Churches, a Raleigh-based organization that represents most of the major denominations in North Carolina. Mr. Stark heads the council's committee on tobacco. Last fall the committee, compelled by scientific evidence that cigarette smoking is harmful, undertook a study that addressed the question: "If tobacco harms people, is it Christian to raise and sell it?" The committee's tentative answer--that the state's farmers, on

moral grounds, should consider switching from tobacco to other crops--poses an exquisite dilemma for the state's churches, as well as their congregations.

There are more than 10,000 churches in North Carolina, and religion is a powerful force in the state. But tobacco pays the bills. Last year tobacco brought more than \$1 billion to the state's economy, and the crop accounted for nearly one-third of the state's agricultural income. An estimated 150,000 North Carolinians earn their livelihoods directly from tobacco.

Partly because of the stabilizing federal price-support system, tobacco is a lucrative cash crop, one of the few that still can support a small, one-family farm. Many farmers who tend other crops keep a patch of tobacco on the side to finance their children's education.

"They (members of the church council) are not stopping to think," said Bonnie Allen, 26, who farms tobacco and runs a farm-supply store in Crisp, N.C., with her father. "The money that goes into the collection plates at our church comes from tobacco."

Religion, for the most part, has co-existed with tobacco in North Carolina in a sort of covenant of expediency. Some preachers condemn tobacco use, but in the matter of production, churches usually have followed the head of North Carolina politicians and tobacco manufacturers who promote tobacco.

Then last year, a group at the state's annual Methodist convention took up the issue of world hunger. One question that was posed: With people starving, should farmers dedicate their fields and efforts to tobacco, a crop that can't be eaten? That led to the creation of the Council of Churches' tobacco committee, which concluded that world hunger was more a distribution problem than a production problem. But the essence of the question remained: Should Carolina farmers, as Christians, continue to produce a crop that is hurting people?

In a report issued in 1982, U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop said that "cigarette smoking...is the chief, single, avoidable cause of death in our society and the most important public health issue of our time." Mr. Koop attributed 85 percent of all lung

cancers to smoking and said smoking also was linked to heart disease and other ailments.

Sometimes caught in the crossfire between the council's good intentions and the farmers' wrath are the local preachers in the heart of tobacco country, ministers who know that their members and their churches depend on tobacco money. Not all of them, by any means, will follow the council's lead.

"We're stuck in North Carolina," said Rick Ponder of the United Methodist Church in Greatland Neck. "Tobacco is the big cash crop. I have a few large farmers in my church who don't even touch tobacco. They make money with cotton, soybeans and peanuts...However, for small farmers, farming 25 or 30 acres, in order to make a go of what they've got they have got to use tobacco. We're kind of stuck. If we speak out against tobacco we're basically telling small farmers to go into crops that are not as lucrative...(But) the church has traditionally made people consider what they're doing. I think the church does put pressure on. The church does bring a healthy tension into life."

### HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG HAS MARRIAGE DISSOLVED

A judge May 11 dissolved the 7-year-old marriage of Herbert W. Armstrong, the 91-year-old pastor general of the Worldwide Church of God, and his one-time secretary. Judge William N. Sherrill of Pima County Superior Court approved the settlement in the two-year divorce battle after a five-minute hearing during which Mr. Armstrong testified that he had read the settlement agreement and did not feel it was unfair.

Terms of the settlement were not disclosed, but **The Tucson Citizen** reported that Mr. Armstrong's estranged wife, Ramona, would receive \$300,000, including \$150,000 for attorneys' fees. She would also receive two cars, personal belongings and the couple's Tucson home, although she would be responsible for a monthly \$785 mortgage payment, the newspaper reported.

On May 15, another Superior Court judge, Richard Hannah, was to hear a motion to drop criminal charges against Mrs. Armstrong, 45, who is accused of stealing gold flatware from the church. Church officials had

agreed not to prosecute her, but the Pima County attorney's office refused to drop the charges.

During pre-trial proceedings in the divorce case May 10, Judge Sherill agreed to limit testimony on Mr. Armstrong's sexual conduct but to allow evidence on the finances of the church, which is based in Pasadena, Calif. Mrs. Armstrong's attorneys said testimony about sexual affairs was crucial because the church leader alleged that Mrs. Armstrong had breached an agreement of love and fidelity.

The judge denied a bid to limit evidence on the finances of Mr. Armstrong and his church, but said he would bar questions touching on the church's "internal workings" and would not let Mr. Decker "put the church on trial."

### **NOT ONE OF YOUR ALL-TIME GREAT MIRACLES AFTER ALL**

It wasn't much of a miracle, as things turned out, when a Roman Catholic doctor astonished nuns and others at the Vatican by climbing out of a wheelchair after being blessed by Pope John Paul II.

Dr. Jan Lavric, an able-bodied general practitioner from Yorkshire, England, said he went to Rome with a group of disabled people last month. After he sat in the wheelchair, the only seat left in the Vatican's audience chamber, a Swiss Guard unexpectedly began wheeling him forward. "I tried to stop him, but he told me, 'Don't exert yourself.' What would you do? I couldn't jump up and run away, that would have made things worse," he said.

After he kissed the pope's hand and was wheeled away by the guard, he stood up, folded the chair and carried it off. "I must say they were all very surprised," he said. "I heard someone say, 'It must be a miracle', but it wasn't--only an embarrassment."

### **PHYSICIANS SUPPORT REAGAN ON FETUSES FEELING PAIN**

A group of 26 prominent physicians supports President Reagan's contention that fetuses "often feel pain" during abortions. Reagan made the statement in a speech to the National Religious Broadcasters convention.

Reagan's claim was contested by Ervin E. Nichols, president of the

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, who claimed to speak for the group's 24,000 members. Nichols later admitted, however, he lacked expertise in fetology.

In their letter to President Reagan, the physicians with expertise in the field cited 18 years of studies showing the "remarkable responsiveness of the human fetus to pain, touch, and sound." They said, "Observations of the fetal electrocardiogram and the increase in fetal movements in saline abortions indicate that the fetus experiences discomfort as it dies." The findings particularly apply to the fetus "by the close of the first trimester."

### **A DRUG-FREE LIFE**

Kenneth Bray, preacher for the Center Point Church of Christ in Birmingham, recently had this report in his bulletin: "In Alabama high schools, a new club is being promoted known as ADATE (Alabama Drug Alcohol Traffic Education). It is designed to use the good influence of a drug-free life to counteract the serious drug-abuse problems found in many high schools."

Each person entering this club makes this pledge: "Having been made aware of the adverse effects on the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual aspects of life caused by the use of illicit drugs, alcohol and tobacco, I pledge to abstain from the use of such chemical substances. I also pledge to assist others to enjoy a drug-free life style and safe driving habits."

It sounds like several Alabama high-school students are willing to have a higher standard of conduct than many so-called adult Christians. And I often hear people "putting down" our young people.

### **SURVEY SHOWS RELIGIOUS COUPLES DIVORCE LESS BUT ARE NO MORE HAPPY IN MARRIAGE**

Two researchers at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville have released a report concluding that husbands and wives who consider themselves "very religious" are 42 percent less likely to divorce than those who never attend worship services.

Sociologist Steven Nock and graduate student Jack Jernigan released their findings at a meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of

Religion. The study was based on more than 1,468 responses to a nationwide survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center.

Jernigan and Nook pointed out that marital success does not necessarily reflect marital bliss. On the whole, the respondents who reported a strong attachment to religion and said they had never been divorced were no more or less happy in their marriages than those with no attachment to religion.

Protestants who have strong religious convictions, however, tend to have happier marriages than devout Catholics, the researchers said. They offered the explanation that Catholics with unhappy marriages tend to turn more strongly to religion instead of seeking divorce, because divorce is forbidden by the church.

### **TV SHOW IN LONDON QUESTIONS AUTHENTICITY OF GOSPELS**

A television series that questions the authenticity of the Gospels has angered some Britons and sparked a lively debate among Britains clerics, scholars and theologians. One politician asked that the show be canceled. A Church of England spokesman is advising viewers to "grit your teeth and see it through."

The first one-hour segment of the three-part series, entitled "Jesus: The Evidence," was telecast April 8. It suggested that the writers of the Gospels invented incidents in the life of Jesus because they knew nothing about Him, and that the virgin birth and Resurrection are myths borrowed from earlier religions.

Another proposition was that the Gospels were "ghost-written" after the apostles died. The program cast doubt on the miracles attributed to Christ and said He might not have walked on water but instead on a sandbank.

The entire three-hour series, produced by London Weekend Television for the commercial Channel 4 network, was screened for selected groups before it was broadcast.

A 41-member group of the Anglican state Church of England's Evangelical Alliance denounced the program as "mischievous, misleading and imbalanced." However, a Church of England spokesman advised laymen to "grit your teeth and see it through." Anyone unsettled by the program should talk to their vicar."

## A REAL CIRCUS IN KENTUCKY AS ATHEISTS HOLD ANNUAL CONVENTION

You could order an X-rated Bible for five dollars. Bumper stickers declaring "Religion Can Be Hazardous To Your Mental Health" and "Souls Fit Shoes--Not People" cost a dollar. The pen and ink poster of God engaging in the sex act with Uncle Sam wasn't available--it had already sold out.

All these items were available in the backroom of the 14th annual National American Atheist Convention held in Lexington, Ky., Easter weekend. Over 300 atheists across the nation and as far away as England gathered for the three-day event. Of these, an estimated 100 were Kentuckians.

Herman Harris, a professional engineer and director of the Lexington chapter of American Atheists, was pleased with the turnout. According to Harris, a dozen families in the Bluegrass area are members of his four-year-old chapter and receive his monthly newsletter. Bob Harrington, the renowned chaplain of Bourbon Street, was among the program personalities for the controversial meeting. He and his wife, Zonnia, led a seminar on their concept of "balanced living."

Gerald Tholen, vice-president of the Board of American Atheists, clarified Harrington's relationship with the group in a private interview with the Western Recorder, newsjournal of the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Bob Harrington claims belief in a deity though doesn't say what," Tholen said. "I assume he believes in life after death, but he's predominately interested in life here and now."

When questioned about the debates between Harrington and Madalyn Murray-O'Hair, Tholen replied Harrington used to debate O'Hair five or six years ago when "he was more of an evangelical minister."... "He's really changed his philosophy since then and is now more concerned with each person getting the most out of life," Tholen continued. "He has become a humanist and is quite a humorous and entertaining speaker."

Bill Murray, O'Hair's son who now claims to be a Christian, also was in Lexington during the convention in an effort to counter some of his mother's support. He spoke in several churches in the area, including Lexington's Broadway Baptist Church. Murray was to have led a group of protestors out-

side the hotel, but driving rains and strong winds halted the effort. Instead, volunteers wearing baseball caps advertising Bill Murray's ministry stationed themselves at every entrance to the convention area and distributed gospel tracts.

Murray also took out quarter page ads in the Lexington **Herald-Leader** offering a hotline number for people to call to ask questions about faith in Christ. Since becoming a preacher, Murray has had little contact with his mother, who calls herself "the most hated woman in America."

In an address, O'Hair spoke of her son's claim to being a Christian: "The atheists of the nation have sat back and watched the spectacle of the abuse of the first family of atheism. One of my sons has cracked under the assault and in a classic psychological, almost textbook, reaction, joined his oppressors, with whom he now openly and willingly identifies."

O'Hair's other son, Jon, the director of the American Atheist center, presented several awards during the convention. The American Atheist of the Year Award was given to a Georgia atheist who won a court battle to prevent a statue of Jesus from being erected on public property.

Keynote address was delivered by O'Hair, the founder and current matriarch of the American Atheist Center in Dallas. In it she blasted the Reagan administration for its involvement with the "Falwellians."

"Theirs is not just religious rhetoric," she warned convention goers. "Reagan and the Falwellians are going to seize the nation for Christ in 1984. Reagan declared 1983 the Year of the Bible. And 1984 is the year he's going to 'put the Bible's great truths in action.'"

Referring to the recent Senate vote on the school prayer issue she claimed, "The religious community cannot muster the support they say they can muster." She cited the fact that 10,000 Christians were expected to attend a prayer vigil during the debate on the prayer issue and only "one to three thousand showed up to pressure the U.S. Senate to support the issue."

## FUNERAL SERVICES HELD FOR ONE OF NATION'S MOST INFLUENTIAL THINKERS

Funeral services for Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer were held May 20 at

Rochester's John Marshall High School Auditorium, attended by more than 1,000 people.

Dr. Schaeffer, widely recognized as one of the most influential religious thinkers of our age, wrote 23 books which have been translated into 25 languages, with more than three million copies in print.

With his wife Edith, Dr. Schaeffer founded L'Abri Fellowship, an international study center and religious community with branches in Switzerland, England, the Netherlands, Sweden, France, and the United States. Firm in his conviction that Christianity had nothing to fear from hard questioning and intelligent thought, he lectured frequently at leading universities in the United States and abroad. His common theme was the uncompromising truth of historic, biblical Christianity and its relevance for all of life.

The last episode of the film series "Whatever Happened to the Human Race?" was shown because "it was the clearest expression of the Gospel--the foundation of all of Schaeffer's work" and because cancer was suspected during the shooting of this film and diagnosed two days after the episode was completed.

"He is risen," stated Dr. Schaeffer at the end of the film. Then he turned and walked off along the lake into the distance.



### LES OWENS

George Leslie Owens passed from this life March 25, 1984, leaving behind his faithful wife, Louella, and three faithful daughters, Mrs. Verla Miller, Mrs. Edward Shepherd, and Mrs. Herschel Wooldridge. He also left 4 faithful grandchildren, 7 great-grandchildren (one of these already a Christian), and 2 great-great grandchildren. This is quite a heritage to leave behind.

Les and Louella were some of the first members of the old Park Boulevard Church of Christ which later became Gardiner Lane Church of Christ. Les was very faithful in his attendance, having only missed 8 times in 19 years, a record he set that we should all strive for. He will be greatly missed by the church of Gardiner Lane.

--Elmo Wilson  
Louisville, KY

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# Today

“Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

July 1984

Number 7

## THE TRUE BASIS OF BLESSINGS

by William C. Sexton

*“And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, “Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!” But He said, “More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!””*  
Lk. 11:28-29 NKJV)

In our text, Jesus had been speaking of several “things”: 1. The Model prayer, (Lk. 11:1-4); 2. A friend comes at midnight, (Lk. 11:5-8); 3. Keep on asking and seeking, (Lk. 11:9-13); 4. The Divided House shall be unable to stand, (Lk. 11:14-23); 5. The return of the unclean Spirit, (Lk. 11:24-26). As a woman observed and listened, she made the comment--**blessed** was the woman who had given birth to and raised this man, Jesus. She had been impressed with Him; His teachings had rung “true” to her.

This is in harmony with what the angel had said (Lk. 1:28, 42) and Elizabeth had said, too. However, the real message is not grasped at this point nor expressed by the observer.

### Delayed Acceptance of Greatness

Often people fail to get the salient point in an address. . . until long after the address is made. One could look at historical addresses, such as Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, which at the time delivered did not make the impression immediately as it did in TIME!

This is true, it seems to me, relative to the address that Jesus made and to which the woman pointed--it was not fully grasped nor appreciated, yet it was impressive; she honestly spoke favorable of it.

Jesus leaves something worth thinking about in His response to the woman, however. His response and its implications is that to which we direct our attention in this paper.

### Today’s Lack Of Perception-- In Religious Circles

Many people when they read and/or hear the scriptures, due to the prevalent concepts they have accepted, often miss the real, Divine, basic, practical lessons dealt with therein. If we can’t look back and find an incident in our past when we so acted, perhaps, we are of a rare specimen. This was the case, I believe in the woman’s case. As we honestly express our **surface view**, let us listen to the echo of our voice as it returns from the background of

Jesus’ eternal word. Like the woman, we may need the connective response voiced back to us by Him.

It’s easy to mis-place the emphasis!

### WAYS OF MEN--

### Immediate and Ordinary!

The immediate impression is often surface and something other than real when we are dealing with **spirituality!** “You are great,” may come forth from our lips, because we were **pleased** by what we saw or heard.

In this case, the woman gave glory to His mother. She was considered to be “blessed” to have a son who said such wonderful **things**. There is a sense in which a parent is pleased, share in some of the glory, to have a son or daughter who attracts the attention of the public, etc. . . Parents are usually **proud** to speak of their son or daughter who has “hit the big time.” If there is some “glory” to be shared, most are glad and willing to be the recipient.

If the son or daughter has gained some recognition in school, the business world, the political arena, the entertainment fields. . . parents and family members are often ready and eager to identify with such, regardless of the REAL quality of the glory.

If that son or daughter gets involved in something that is **controversial**, though and shame

comes, or they are "looked down upon" by the public, even if what they are doing is RIGHT and takes courage, etc., the parents are not too eager to be identified with them.

The ordinary man wants to be associated with a winner in politics; he wants to be a part of a team where there is a material gain, prestige, glory and honor coming from men or the world.

When it comes to real blessing, **Glory and Honor** (Rom. 2:7ff) recognized and given by the God of Heaven, such qualities are not weighed very heavily in the minds of many. How sad. How destructive!

#### **WORD OF GOD--Redirection!**

Jesus, at least, wanted this woman to see that she wasn't seeing reality as deeply and as clearly as she needed to. His response seems to say, "Yes, what you say is true, but there is much more," "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it" (KJV). "More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (NKJV). "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it." (NASB)

The Greek seems to be a bit more emphatic than these translations come across. Both words for "hear" and "keep" are present active participles, meaning that the action is presently being performed as one is blessed! The word "menoun" is defined as, "rather, on the contrary; indeed much more." (Newman, page 113). Harper says, "a combination of particles serving to take up what has just preceded, with either addition or abatement. . . ." (page 263).

A lesson to see the true value of religion--is what it brings to the participating persons, performing, doing! It's not something that comes to a person because he/she is associated with another--sharing in his/her glory. Rather, it is the grand effect that it has on the person in his or her behavior, consequently the destiny, too.

There is a great change which needs to be wrought, worked, affected in the mind of man--his thinking and evaluating. True blessings are not something given, but something achieved. But who achieves?

1. He/She who hears the word--not a one time, past event: rather the person is involved in listening, responding to the word of God. That is

where one learns the will of God, in and through His word.

2. However, the hearing is an active, participating behavior, and a **carrying** through with the instructions found therein, **DOING!**

Possibly herein is the greatest failure in many lives who **profess** to be saved by Christ: They seem to think that He reaches down and saves them without any action on their part. Such is contrary to this passage and many others which address the subject.

Putting away things that hinder the reception is **urged** (Jas. 1:21-25). Constant effort is to be made lest one be deceived by himself. The blessings are predicated upon **looking into** and **doing the work** (Jas. 1:25). Such indicates that such is: 1. Understandable; 2. Practical--or **doable!** It is not something that can't be perceived or done!

God claims NOT to be a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34-35). In every nation He requires the same. God's grace has provided and man's responsibility is involved.

The true blessings are not based on physical or fleshy association (2 Cor. 5:16-17). That is often sought after and valued too highly, however.

Let us see how much greater the blessings are, however, due to this fact.

a. **Fleshy limitation:** Only persons who could reach Him physically would be helped. How many people were: 1. In his family? 2. How many people actually saw Him with their eyes and or heard the sound of his voice?

b. Available to many more, the world over and for all time, by this being true.

1) Not limited by geography (Jn. 3:16; Rev. 22:17)

2) Not limited to time (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 26:28-29)

3) Not limited to those with money (Matt. 11:28-30; Jn. 6:37; Jas. 2:5)

4) Not limited by prestige (1 Cor. 1-18-25)

#### **GRASPING THE PRINCIPLE:**

Not "If I had. . ."

We hear statements made often that reflects the fact that this principle is often missed. When it is missed, we are deprived of a great deal, I believe. Let us see the kernal in the following statements, and crack the hull and see that the fruit is NOTHING!

"If I had lived when Jesus did, that would have been so much better than

having to listen to teachings today and sort out the truth."

"If I had lived among the apostles and seen the miracles, I sure could have had a strong faith then. But living as I do, this far from the apostles, I just can't be too strong."

"If I had lived in another time, when it wasn't so hard to be a Christian."

Beloved, all these and other similar suggest that one can't NOW do things which are as great or have as much value **AS IF** one was with Jesus. The woman's view is coming through, evidently.

#### **Let us understand and resolve:**

1. His will is available to us all NOW (Jn. 16:7-13; Matt. 24:35).

2. I can DO the WILL, and I need to do it, therefore, **I will do it before all other things!** Placing first things first (Matt. 6:33; 22:37-40).

3. Only by **doing** this does other things really have meaning! True blessings are experienced, achieved in this way.

4. His blessings are available to ALL on the same terms (Acts 10:34-35).

5. We may be discriminated against in many human-affairs but never will it be so in the affairs of God.

6. Let us **come** and invite others to come and take of the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17)

Yes, the BASIS to TRUE blessing is **DOING THE WILL OF GOD**, as expressed in the New Testament Scriptures. That means that such is within the reach of all. If one is deprived of them, it will be his/her own doing!

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

## RUNNING THE RACE

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews gave attention to numerous Old Testament people who trusted God for specific things during their lifetimes. Their reliance pleased Him, and their willingness to endure by faith led to their being included in the divine record--God's "Hall of Fame and Faith." This chapter of the heroes and heroines of faith is not, as is sometimes thought, a detached masterpiece; it does not stand in isolation. Combining the religious fervor and the spiritual insight, it is a brilliant exhortation positioned in the middle of two grand sections of appeal (10:19:39 and ch. 12) for the Christian to endure.

Now we turn attention to ourselves. Just as men and women of the past pleased God in living by faith, we can too. The twelfth chapter of Hebrews begins with, or rather continues, a challenge to its readers that they persevere in their faith to the end. *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us"* (Heb. 12:1).

### THE RACE

The figures of the passage is that of a race which the believer is required to run, the reference being doubtless to the foot-race in the Grecian games. The athletic contest is a frequent device in the writings of Paul (I Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 1:30; I Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:7). The Greek word, **agon**, refers to any kind of contest or struggle in which the competition is intense. The same word is translated *"conflict"* in Phil. 1:30 and Col. 2:1 to mean *"the inward conflict of the soul. . .implying a contest against spiritual foes, as well as human adversaries"* (Vines Expository Dictionary, page 226). The reference in 12:1 is clearly to a race. *"The Christian race, as the context shows, is a marathon race, not a short sprint. Others have been on the track ahead of the present competitors--all those whose*

*daring faith the author has eulogized. They have finished their part of the race and in relay fashion have passed on the baton to their successors"* (Jesus Christ Today by Neil Lightfoot, page 227).

Glance here at the truths intended to be taught by this figure of speech. The life of faith is: **1. An arduous struggle.** God never promised us a rose garden; He promised us a long, hot, and hard trail. This is not just a stroll or a casual saunter, but a difficult race. It entails strenuous effort. **2. A struggle which involves a fixed goal.** It is "set before us." There is a goal to be kept in view, and a prize to be won; and there is, accordingly, a prescribed path of faith and duty. **3. A struggle which involves perseverance.** The believer must *"run with patience."* He must not allow his excitement or ardour to decline. Too many are real excited about running the race in the beginning, but before you know it they have slipped into apathy. *"So run,"* Paul said to the Corinthians, *"that ye may obtain"* (I Cor. 9:24). He must not slow down or desist until he finishes his course. **4. A struggle which will soon be over.** In the midst of a conflict, we think it will never end. *"Yet a very little while,"* and the Christian shall have reached the goal, and won the crown.

### GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES

The first word of chapter 12 serves as an important clue: *"Wherefore."* It calls attention again to chapters 10 and 11 and those who exercised enduring faith. What has been written was essentially designed to encourage us today to be like those of the past and to see that we also can walk by faith and not by sight. Observe the interesting fact introduced regarding *"so great a cloud of witnesses."*

*"The writer of the book of Hebrews pictures them as spectators in a stadium, having finished their races successfully, who are now looking down on more recent racers, watching intently and encouragingly, with the spirit of 'we did it; you can too!' They have become a 'cloud of witnesses' giving valuable testimony."* (Studies in Hebrews by Dub McClish, page 212).

On earth they were men and women--with needs like ours--who trusted God, and they lived and died with that on their record. Use your imagination for just a moment and try to visualize a large mass of spectators trying to cram into the over-crowded stadium. They circle and crowd around us, tier upon tier, on both sides of the race course. On the one side is the gallery of the saints before the flood (Is that Abel over there?), and then there are the heroes of the exodus (Does anyone see Moses?), and then the judges (Is that attractive lady in the second row Deborah?), and finally the prophets (I'm anxious to talk with Jeremiah!). And if we use enough imagination we might even be able to see into the other side into the gallery of the apostles, that of the first martyrs for the faith, the early missionaries of the church, or even our own departed

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friends who have gone to glory.

The saints, having already died and gone before us, constitute a great celestial stadium of spiritual fans reassuring us during the race. They provide us with their testimonies, saying, "Stay with it. . .it's worth it. . .you can do it. . .God will pull it off. . .look up!"

#### LAY ASIDE THE WEIGHT

Since faith is not a human trait, we are untrained for trusting God. Our society ingrains us with humanistic ideals rather than those of faith. The Hebrew writer offers us counsel and running tips introduced by the words "Let us."

**"The athlete must discipline himself; he must divest himself of all superfluous weight, not only of heavy objects carried about the body but of excess bodily weight. There are many things which may be perfectly all right in their own way, but which hinder a competitor in the race of faith; they are 'weights' which must be laid aside."** (The Epistle to the Hebrews by F.F. Bruce, page 349). The writer is not referring so much to some specific sin "*which doth so easily beset us*", but to sin itself, as something which will inevitably encumber the runner's feet and trip him up before he has taken more than a step or two. The Revised Standard Version renders this, "*sin which clings so closely.*"

Participants in the Greek games would practice and warm up months in advance. Think in terms of our men and women training for the U.S. Olympic team. They eat only the most nourishing foods, work out from morning until evening, and give up many social events in life. In training, the runners would wear weights around their wrists, ankles, and sometimes their waists. But when it came time for the race, the weights and unnecessary clothing came off. All hindrances to swift performance were removed; they wanted nothing to slow them down during their run.

The Hebrew coach then gives a special instruction to all runners: "*Run with patience.*" The idea of endurance is to abide under the pressure, problem, or pain with patience. This involves facing each morning as a new one and keeping in mind that there will be things coming along in the day to test and check patience. We ask God for patience, but we often don't like the indirect response to our request. He often puts us through a process (often painful), touching the nerves that are most sensitive. He then bears down until we finally get to the place where we endure the race with patience.

#### FOCUS WHILE RUNNING

While gratefully conscious of the presence of the men of faith, we are to gaze fixedly only upon Jesus, "*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the same, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*" (12:2). Apart from a goal, a perspective, running is futile and meaningless. "**The writer refers to the Saviour here in his human nature, as the Pattern Man, and as our supreme Exemplar. His portrait is the grandest in the whole exhibition of the heroes of faith; indeed, none of those in chapter 11 can for a moment compare with it. This noblest picture is arranged in two divisions; we see Christ on the one side in his humiliation, and on the other in his exaltation. And the inscription set over it reads thus: 'Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of faith.' He is the Author, i.e. Captain, Prince, Head, or Leader, or all the**

**men of faith. He exhibited, during his own earthly life, an absolutely perfect example of trust in God. By faith he waited at Nazareth, with his high destiny stirring in his heart, during thirty years. By faith he assumed the burden of the world's sin. By faith he conquered Satan in the wilderness. By faith he performed the labours of his three years' active ministry. By faith he endured the agonies of Gethsemane. . .and the soul-darkness of Golgotha. Jesus did not 'shrink back unto perdition,' notwithstanding his unparalleled temptations. . . .No other man will ever appear in our world equal to him as a specimen of faith. Therefore he is our great Model!"** (Pulpit Commentary, Vol. 21, Hebrews by C. Jerdan, pg. 365).

The successful runner is not easily distracted; he must look neither at the crowds nor at his competition. He must keep his eyes on his goal. The Christian runner must have his eyes set on Jesus--with no eyes for anyone or anything except Jesus.

As the Christian has before him the appointed race, Jesus had before Him the appointed joy. What was this joy? It was not the joy of dying on the cross, but the joy of exaltation. Death by crucifixion was a death for slaves and criminals, an experience unfit for civilized men. Of it Cicero had said, "**Let the very mention of the cross be far removed not only from a Roman citizen's body, but from his mind, his eyes, his ears**" (Pro Rabirio 5). But Jesus it. He suffered as few men have been called upon to suffer. Indeed, crucifixion was torture. As Lightfoot said, "**With hands and feet nailed to the cross, the victim was unable to move or protect himself from heat or cold or insects. Yet uppermost in the author's mind at this point is the indignity and degradation of it all; Jesus, he says, despised its bitter shame. What a contemptible sort of death it was--the victim, stripped of his clothing, unable to take care of his bodily needs. But Jesus did not shrink back from doing what He knew to be the will of God**" (Jesus Christ Today, page 230). In his commentary on Hebrews, Moffatt said, "**It is one thing to be sensitive to disgrace and disparagement, another thing to let these hinder us from doing our duty. Jesus was sensitive to such emotions; he felt disgrace keenly. But instead of allowing these feelings to cling to his mind, he rose above them**" (pg. 197).

#### OUR ATTITUDE WHEN RUNNING

We need not run the race with panic and despair. Encouraging his runners, the Hebrew writer said, "*For consider him that endured. . .lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds*" (12:3). We consider something when we "think it over, mentally weigh all of its facets." In weighing our circumstances, we are to weigh Him into them as well.

No one has ever needed to suffer alone. No one has to give his all to the race without support. He is encouraged and refreshed by the One who "*endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.*"

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# LOOKING AT THE WAVES

by David T. Thomley

The apostle Peter arrests our attention unlike almost any other Bible character. One reason for this may be that we have a great deal of sympathy for Peter, the kind of sympathy that touches the deepest recesses of the heart.

Many of us have more in common with Peter than we would like to admit. In our Bible classes we boldly point the accusing finger at Peter's impetuous nature. When we discuss the use of the tongue, Peter is the prime illustration of a Bible character who spoke too quickly, without thinking. Preachers warn of the danger of zeal without knowledge, and Peter's name enters the discussion once again. Yet, in the privacy of our own thoughts, our hearts ache with sympathy on Peter's behalf. How well we know - we are indeed like him in so many ways!

On one occasion, Peter and the disciples were traveling in a boat across the Sea of Galilee when a storm was raging (Matthew 14:22-33). The ferocious wind and high seas rendered the small vessel helpless. In the fourth watch of the night, Jesus approached the vessel, walking upon the sea. The disciples saw him coming and were terrified, thinking they beheld a ghost! After Jesus announced himself, however, it was Peter who quickly answered. Peter wanted to walk on the water to meet Jesus.

Our hearts immediately swell with pride for Peter! When all the other disciples were lurking back with fear, Peter courageously stepped onto the sea and began walking to Jesus. We cannot help but applaud such a manifestation of faith.

Then it happened! Peter's eyes gazed away from Jesus, shifting to the left and right, and he beheld the raging storm. The winds were blowing furiously, and the high waves were as mountains of water all about him. No doubt, his heart pounded. His muscles tensed. He was afraid, and began to sink. In the terror of the moment he shrieked, "Lord, save me!"

Peter started so well this time, yet ended so badly once again. Full of faith he stepped onto the water and walked. Void of faith, he began to sink

and screamed for Jesus to help him. What happened to Peter? The moment he took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the waves, his faith waned and he began to sink.

Many of us, like Peter, produce our own doubts. Of his own accord, Peter chose to look at the waves. Jesus did not shout, "Peter, be careful! Those waves are awfully high!". The other disciples did not dissuade him. Peter produced his own doubts all by himself. How often is this story repeated? Young people lead themselves beyond their present depths to studies in certain types of literature or philosophy, only to lose their faith! Faithful Christians wander into arguments about certain sciences, about which they know very little, and then find they cannot handle the discussion! Preachers pursue the "intellectual" past their own capabilities and "study" themselves right out of their faith! No one told Peter to look at the waves. He produced his own doubt.

As Christians strengthen their faith, doubts must be overcome. It might be briefly noted at this point that "doubts" are not necessarily incompatible with any faith at all. Peter still had faith in Jesus' power to rescue him from the water. But, sometimes doubt rather than faith controls and overwhelms an individual, rendering external evidence of a "weak faith". Such was the case of Peter.

The obvious antidote for the weak faith is greater faith. Such faith will come only as one nourishes his soul upon the spiritual feast of God's Word (Romans 10:17). A failure to grow in this regard will result in Christians who are chronologically old being immature like babes (Hebrews 5:12-14). The problem with many of us today is fundamental: We are just not studying like we should! Once the study is given and faith is established, Christians ought to be careful with "after-thoughts". Peter should have never looked at the waves! Why? He settled that question before he ever took the first step. The storm with the winds and waves did not constitute a new factor for Peter's consideration during

his walk on the sea. Peter had already settled that question at least once. The storm was already raging when Jesus appeared, and Peter chose to step out anyway.

Too often, we allow after-thoughts to clutter our minds and hinder our faith. So often, the hindrances are unnecessary! Questions and problems with which we wrestled before our conversion need not be pulled out for our consideration time and time again. "Ye did run well. Who did hinder you. . .?" (Galatians 5:7). So often, when we look back and try to deal with all those questions and problems we have accumulated (and have already answered at least once), we stumble and fall.

Finally, Christians in the midst of a storm need to keep their eyes focused clearly on Christ (Hebrews 12:2). When Peter took his eyes off Jesus, he lost sight of the objective. His entire consideration was then focused on the negative rather than the positive. It is no wonder he became afraid! How easily Christians fall into the same trap. Satan would have us believe our primary concern in this life is the wind and the waves. As we give in to our myopic tendencies, we focus on our hurts, problems, conflicts, and troubles. Our full attention is then devoted to all the negative considerations, and we lose sight of our objective in life. It is indeed easy to be afraid when we set our eyes on the waves; yet, it is difficult to doubt when we look to Jesus.

As surely as we launch out onto the sea of life, we will encounter storms from time to time. Like Peter, many Christians begin very well, but end so badly. Mature Christians spend a lifetime battling the storms with their eyes focused clearly on Christ. Immature Christians spend a lifetime looking at the waves and trembling with fear. Faith is the difference between the mature and the immature. Like Peter, most of us could use a little more, especially during the storms!

# THE LAW OF MOSES IS NOT BINDING

by Aude McKee

We suggest to our readers that probably there is not a Bible subject today less understood and more misunderstood than this one. And there is not a subject that, when properly understood, does more to unite a divided religious world. In this article we plan to make a number of assertions, back them up with scriptures, and trust that our readers will take the time to study these matters. If this article raises questions in your mind that are not answered by the scriptures, contact the editor or this writer and we will be happy to study with you further.

First, are some Old Testament laws binding and some not binding today? Observe that the phrases "law of the Lord," "law of Moses," "the Law," "law of God," all refer to the same law. Some try to make a distinction and argue that the law of Moses has been "nailed to the cross" but that the law of the Lord (other parts of the Old Testament) are still binding on us today. We ask you to read Luke 2: 21-24 and notice that "the law of Moses" in v-22 is used interchangeably with "the law of the Lord" in vv-23 and 24. So it is clear that "the law of Moses" did not refer to ceremonial matters and "the law of the Lord" to matters of a moral nature. "The law of Moses" and "the law of the Lord" refer to the same law and both to ceremonial and moral things (if such a distinction is justifiable). Also, you may want to examine Nehemiah 8 in this connection, and look closely at verses 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 14, and 18.

Second, was the Old Testament profitable or did God make a colossal blunder? We want it understood that the Old Testament law was profitable and accomplished what God intended. In Gal. 3:19, we are told that "the law . . . was added. . ." Added to what? Look in verse 16 and observe that God made a promise to Abraham to bless the world through his descendent--Jesus Christ. To that promise the law was

added 430 years later "because of transgressions" and it was to remain in force until the promise to Abraham was fulfilled. In v-21 of this chapter in Galatians, Paul asked the question, "Is the law against the promises of God?" In other words, is there any kind of a conflict between the giving of the law and the coming of Christ so that the world could be saved by grace through faith? The answer, why of course not! The law was not designed by God to bring righteousness. In v-24, Paul affirms that the law was a "schoolmaster to bring us (Jews) to Christ." Did it do that? Absolutely! Then in Romans 7, the Spirit teaches that because of the commandment (the law), "sin became exceeding sinful." Did the law fulfill this purpose of exposing sin? Again, we have to answer in the affirmative. So, we need to add that simply because there were things the law could not do (Romans 8:3), does not mean that it was defective. A car, for example, is designed to travel on land. If you buy a Ford and then discover that it will not fly, you do not accuse the manufacturer of putting a defective product on the market. God's Old Testament Law did exactly what God designed it to do, and then when it had accomplished its purpose, God removed it. You will note that in Galatians 3, the writer said after the law brought the Jews to Christ, then "we are no longer under the schoolmaster" (v-25).

Third, does the Bible teach clearly what law we are under today? In Galatians 3 again, verse 19 says that the law was given TILL the seed should come. We noticed a moment ago that "the seed is Christ" (v-16), and so the coming of Christ had something to do with the passing of the law. If I loan you my car TILL noon tomorrow, when noon comes, you need to have my car back. That is what we agreed on. God's agreement was that the law would continue TILL Christ should

come. Why should people today claim the law is still binding 1900 years following the Lord's coming? In Colossians 2:14, Jesus, we are told, "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross." Now note that as a result of this "blotting out" and "nailing it to the cross:" "let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come. . . ." (vv-16, 17). The meat, drink, etc., mentioned are all things required of the Jews under the law of Moses. Since that law was "nailed to the cross," a person cannot be condemned today for failing to observe them. Now look at Hebrews 9:15-17: "And for this cause He is the mediator of the New Testament. . . . For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth." Don't miss the force of the statement that Jesus "is the mediator of the NEW TESTAMENT." not the old but the new! Add to this the fact that Jesus "has all authority in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18), and that whatever we do in word or in deed has to be done "in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. 3:17), and it can be seen that the authority under which we live religiously is the New Testament. If Jesus had been "the mediator of the Old Testament," then we would be living under the Old Testament today, but such is not true.

Fourth, just exactly when did the change come? We have already read two passages that answer this question precisely. Col. 2:14, the law was "nailed to the cross." Go back of the cross and the people living then were under the Old Testament. Come this side of the cross and we are under the New Testament. Then remember Heb.

9:17? "A testament is of force after men are dead." Jesus is the mediator of the New Testament, so it is clear that His New Testament became binding when He died. Five minutes or 1900 years before He died--the Old Testament was binding. Five minutes or 1900 years after He died, the New Testament is binding. We need to remember this fact when someone argues that they will be saved like the thief--without being baptized. No one can prove that the thief was not baptized by John the Baptist or by Jesus' disciples (Mark 1:5; John 4:1-2). But granted that he had not been baptized, it must be recognized that when the thief received his blessing from our Lord, He (Jesus) was not yet dead and therefore the New Testament had not yet become binding.

Fifth, just what is our attitude

toward the Old Testament? Do we discard it as some say we do? Do we believe that the Old Testament is the Word of God just as the New Testament is? No, we do not discard the Old Testament, and yes, we do believe the Old Testament is the Word of God. But these questions raise the problem of determining just what was "nailed to the cross"? We ask that you read Col. 2:14 carefully and note that it was the "ordinances" that were nailed there. Then in Ephesians 2:15 "the law of commandments contained in ordinances" was "abolished." No, we are not now under the laws (ordinances) of the Old Testament, but think of all the great things contained there that could not be classified as "laws." Information galore such as how the world began, the origin of sin, the flood, etc., etc. Think of the great

examples of faith that inspire us to a higher and nobler life. Meditate on the hundreds of prophecies that have been fulfilled to the letter and thus further establish our conviction that the Bible is indeed God's Word. These and a host of other things, cause us to thank God for the Old Testament.

Good reader, study the Old Testament and reap great benefits, but when it comes to finding out how to become a Christian, how to live to please God and how to go to heaven when you die, study the New Testament. Never fail to recognize that God's Word must be "rightly divided" (2 Tim. 2:15), and never be guilty of mixing up Old and New Testament laws.

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# Jesus Sought The Lost

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Jesus said the above of Himself. It was His grand purpose when He came in flesh. The world was lost, separated from God and without hope. Sin is the great divider. Satan is the destroyer that leads men and women away from God when he encourages disobedience to God. Jesus was born for the purpose of saving (Matt. 1:21). He died to accomplish that end (Matt. 26:28). He offered Himself that we might be set apart from sin and for God's holy purpose (Heb. 10:10). But, everyone knows all that. Right? Wrong! Well, surely, all those who read and believe the Bible know!? Wrong again! Apparently, many have lost sight of the fact that Jesus' mission to this world was for a spiritual purpose. It was to seek and save the lost.

Jesus did not come to furnish for man political or social prestige. He did not come to lead great social or moral reform movements. He was not sent to entertain, raise money or make a great show with ostentatious buildings and programs. He ministered to some who

were poor and needy and some who were beset with physical maladies; however, even this was not his purpose for coming to the earth in human form. He did such things because of His personal goodness and compassion.

He commissioned His chosen ones, the apostles, to go after His departure for the purpose of preaching the gospel (Mark 16:15-16). When one learns that the gospel is God's power to save, (Rom. 1:16) he learns why gospel preaching is so important. The gospel is that word which saves souls (James 1:21).

Jesus made certain the apostles would have it just right. He sent the Holy Spirit to assure accuracy (John 14:26). The word of truth is the gospel of salvation (Eph. 1:13). Jesus wants the same word of truth preached today. It is the truth that frees (John 8:31-32).

Jesus Christ promised to build His church (Matt. 16:18). His church is His body over which He is head (Eph. 1:22-23). The body is directed by the head. Paul instructed those at Colossae to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you

richly in all wisdom;. . .and whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. . . ." (Col. 3:16-17). The church in Thessalonica was praised by Paul as a worthy example: "For from you sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to God-ward is spread abroad; so that we need not to speak any thing" (I Thess. 1:8).

The church of Christ is a spiritual institution with a spiritual work. The world has little appreciation for the soul's need of salvation and the extent of God's love that provided the means to obtain that salvation. Many churches are no more than people pleasing benevolent, recreational, social societies. Some who profess to be members of the body of Christ would rather please men than the Lord. They leave the God given charge for that which has greater appeal to the flesh of man. They are like the priests of Ezekiel's age who put no difference between the holy and profane (Ezek. 22:26) and thus they profane.

Remember it was Jesus who came to seek and to save the lost. He expects His people to continue that work. There is no greater obligation. Do not substitute the wants for the needs of man. A Bible obeying person will lead a reformed and morally upright life. His life will glorify God, because He obeys God.

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# The Family Affair

After a couple of months in the first grade of school, our son, David, stepped off the bus one afternoon and wanted to know if we were going to get a divorce. Shocked with such a question, we asked him why he would ask that. He explained that his class had discussed the American family that day and he learned that he was only one of three students in the class that still had one set of parents. Divorce had become a way of life for many. We had a long talk that day about the evils of divorce and the importance of traditional values in the home.

That conversation reminded me of a book by Charlie Shedd that I had read months earlier, **The Best Dad is a Good Lover**. I agree 100% with its thrust. Shedd's point is that there is nothing a father can do to help his child's emotional stability any more than loving that child's mother. The opposite of that is also true, I'm afraid. Can you remember when you were a child and your parents showed affection for each other openly? That was sort of a good feeling, wasn't it? But what about when they argued? Not so good, was it? The conclusion of the whole matter is that a child who feels secure about his parents' love and commitment to each other doesn't waste his/her time and energy in worrying. I believe that's the best sex education our children can get.

And maybe that's where many of us have failed. Maybe we don't express ourselves openly enough around our children. We men are regular "klutzes" when it comes to lifting up our women with praise and appreciation. We think we've really been the perfect husband if we can remember the wife's birthday, our anniversary, and bring home some flowers or candy on Valentine's Day.

I love my wife! I can't imagine what my life would have been like had I not found Delores, wooed her and won her. She has loved, encouraged,

and supported me through 15 years of marriage as of this month. She is my sweetheart, not only on Valentine's Day, but all year, every year. I am extremely grateful for her patience, constructive criticism, hard work, and forgiveness of my many mistakes. From the day I first saw her operating the cash register in the book store in the student center at college, she has fascinated me. I felt honored when she accepted my stuttered, nervously given invitation for a first date. After all, I didn't even have a car and we were going to have to walk to the movie. And wouldn't you know it, it rained that night! But it was a wonderful night and we continued dating through four years of college. I have felt honored ever since to have her beside me. She is, without any doubt at all, my primary source of confidence as she helps me know God's usefulness of me. Her steadfastness through every transition (moving into a new location to work with a church, losing a much-wanted child, buying a house, or starting a new paper called **Today**) has been tremendous. We have a little statue of an embracing couple in our bedroom that says: "I love you not only for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you!"

Now, why in the world would I welcome you into my private relationship with Delores? Those of you who know Dee know she's going to be embarrassed when she reads this, but there are several reasons that I decided to write such an article like this. First, it's our anniversary and this will be one of my ways to say, "Thanks, I love you!" Everything I have said in this article is true and there's no shame or embarrassment for me to tell you about our love. We want our marriage to be a glory to God. There may be no greater testimony to His goodness and power in lives than in a good marriage. But, I must admit, I do want to encourage myself and all

other men that will read this to show even more affection in the days ahead.

It may surprise you how much better that marriage can be once you "open up" to each other. You'll have your own suggestions when you're committed to God and your mate. Why not share them with others? Take the time today to sit down and write us about some of the little things you and your mate do together. I'm sure others can profit from reading your suggestions. And, remember, a good marriage is not the end. It is only a God-given means to help us help many others (including our own kids) to know God.

## \*LOTS OF ANNIVERSARIES.

Why should men limit our opportunities of remembering our wife just to wedding anniversaries? Why not take a few minutes tonight and write on three-by-five cards several other important anniversaries: your first date with your wife, the date she graduated from college or completed some other achievement, her spiritual birthday, the date she received some reward or special acknowledgement, and, of course, her birthday. But why not also thank her on the birthdate of each of your children?

## \*A SPECIAL PHONE CALL.

Stop what you're doing at 10:30 a.m. one morning this week to call your wife and say in these words, or one more natural to you, "I was just thinking of you and wanted to say that I'm immensely pleased that you are my wife. . .you're wonderful!"

\***WHILE I'M AWAY.** Before you leave on that next business trip, go shopping for your wife. Pick up a small gift for each night you will be away--trivial things, such as chewing gum, or something more significant--anything that would be special to her. Write a silly poem for each which gives clues as to where the gift is hidden. Coordinate with one of the children to leave a poem out each day where your wife will find it. Make it all a surprise to her.

\***SURPRISE.** Why not surprise your wife by calling her this afternoon and ask her for a date for dinner two weeks from today? Be prepared to share with her at that time your vacation plans for the next year. . .the thing you like best about her. . .a dream you haven't ever shared with her before.

# From out of the Past

The Bible Banner  
October, 1941

## Leadership-- Human and Divine

by Homer Hailey

**A** casual study of the history of Christianity after the days of the apostles reveals that the two things from which the Lord's religion has suffered more than any other, are human philosophies and human leadership. Human leadership inevitably leads men into human errors. The prophet Jeremiah had no doubt seen enough of human leadership to have said what he did, even if he hadn't been inspired, when he said, "*O Jehovah, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*" (Jer. 10:23).

Sometimes we begin to reason: "What the church needs today is a great leader, one raised up to lead us out of the present confusion, and direct us in an aggressive campaign against our external foes." But on second thought this is the very last thing we need, for no religious movement built around human leadership has been successful in accomplishing the divine purpose. History is replete with illustrations. The great movements of the reformation, the Mormon church built around the leadership of Smith and Young, and even some modern movements within our own brotherhood.

It isn't "leadership" so much as "follow-ship" that the church needs. Jesus claimed to be **the** leader, when He declared Himself "the good shepherd," "the way," "the light of the world" to be followed; and announced to His disciples, "if any man would come after **me**, let him deny himself. . . and follow **me**." It is not a "leader," therefore that we need, for we have one, a divine one; but the need is for

the disposition to follow where He leads.

A tendency is sometimes found today to glorify "boy preachers." Having just recently graduated from the class of "boy preachers" myself, it would be most unbecoming on my part to say anything disparagingly of them. The attitude of most of them is better than that of many of the older preachers. But when one of them is over-exalted he looks upon himself as "the leader," a modern Moses to lead the church out of Egypt and through the wilderness. In this he loses sight of his real mission, which is to point people to the Christ, the real leader. Trouble inevitably follows.

Other young preachers, and some older ones, feel that the first thing to be done when they go into a place is to "appoint elders" over the congregation. The argument is, "the church needs leaders." No, the need is not for leaders, it is for "elders." If a man is not qualified for the work of an elder, he is not what God wants in as an elder, regardless of how good a "leader" he may be. In fact, his ability to lead without the qualifications of an elder is the very point of danger. One function of an elder is to be an "ensample to the flock." He is an ensample worthy of being followed only as he follows Christ, and in his following leads others to follow Him. One who allows himself to be "appointed" without the necessary qualifications further disqualifies himself by that very thing. For in failing to respect the New Testament in the point of elder qualifications, he shows himself a poor ensample to be followed at all. It is "followers" not "leaders" that are

most needed today.

Suppose we consider the challenge of sectarianism. Some of us think it would be fine if we had a good leader to guide us in the fight against these foes of truth. The fact is, we have such a leader. Jesus met the devil in debate soon after his baptism, which was not a spectacular affair before a large audience of people, but except for the possibility of heavenly on-lookers it was strictly private. Immediately afterward He began meeting the devil's children, the Pharisees, who were the sectaries of that day. He has opened the way and is leading. Christians need, simply to follow the leader in carrying the attack to all sectarianism, in private discussions or with them in groups as opportunity affords. He is all the leader needed, we need to follow the example. God never left the word of "defending the faith once for all delivered unto the saints" solely for preachers and "leaders," but for all of His children.

Then there is the challenge of work, the work left to be done by the church. The cry made so often is, "We have no leaders to direct us, to tell us what to do." Why yes we have, there is the example of Christ, of whom Peter said, "Because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow in his steps"; "who went about doing good." Every needy person whom He met, either in need of physical help or of spiritual help, was an opportunity. Every opportunity to serve was an opportunity in which to glorify His father by that service. What greater leader could one ask for than the Saviour?

It is not even a "leader" that we need to lead the church out of any difficulties and differences that arise within its own ranks, but rather the need is for a disposition on the part of all who follow the Christ, whose way is bound to lead all aright. Difficulties and differences are bound to eventually iron themselves out when the right disposition is manifested by all. Often Jesus looked upon lost humanity as "sheep having no shepherd;" a world suffering from human leadership. But this need not be true of us, for Christ is the Shepherd, and for one today to be the victim of human leadership is inexcusable.

Instead of talking "leadership" and "leaders" so much, as is being done in preacher's meetings and other

similar places, let's put the emphasis on "following" for a while. No truly godly man wants to be "the leader of the church," nor does he want to "rule" it; he realizes that true greatness according to Christ's standard is to be realized in being a "servant of all." The truly great and godly is content to follow Christ, and simply

insist on others following Him. It seems to me that the work of elders and preachers is not so much that of being "leaders," but it is that of instructing and guiding others to be followers of the Lord, as they themselves follow Him.

Just as surely as men learn that the need is for followers and not leaders,

just that surely will the church be led in triumph from victory unto victory. Not only the church, but humanity will be led out of any chaos into which human leadership has brought it, either political, doctrinal, or moral.

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## Scriptural Discipline In The Home

by Jim Venturino

Recently I was asked by a social worker, involved in child abuse, to explain what the Bible actually says about discipline. It seems that many parents misuse the scriptures in order to justify all kinds of violent child abuse. Hopefully a brief review of the Bible discipline will help all parents understand their responsibilities.

The Bible states, "*For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom he receives*" (Heb. 12:6). Love is the keystone of all scriptural discipline whether by God or man. This principle is also laid out in Prov. 13:24 "*He who spares his rod hates his own son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently.*" Such loving discipline may include punishment that is intended for the welfare of the child. In fact a child without discipline is compared to an illegitimate child (Heb. 12:7-12). But discipline **never** involves pain inflicted merely out of anger or malice.

### PRACTICAL APPROACHES TO APPLYING GODLY DISCIPLINE

As we begin our study two very important and relevant passages can be found in the New Testament: Col. 3:21, "*Fathers, do not exasperate your children, that they may not lose heart,*" and Eph. 6:4, "*And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*" The clear import of these verses is that parents are to **mold** the wills of their children, not **break** them.

There are two ways in which we can violate God's will in disciplining our children. The first of these is by practicing **under-discipline**. This takes many forms such as: a lack of clearly defined rules or penalties, too many

rules resulting in lax enforcement, inconsistency, and ineffective penalties. These result in uncertainty on the part of the child as to what may or may not be acceptable behavior. The child is forced to play "Russian Roulette" since he never knows when, or how hard, he is going to get "zapped". When children are faced with unclear, constantly changing or conflicting guidelines the natural reaction is exasperation and a conviction of the uselessness of further effort. This then increases the confrontations and anger between parent and child.

This anger is often channeled into rebellion by the child and **over-discipline** by the parent evidenced by unfair or extreme punishments. God's word has never authorized parents to execute unduly harsh punishment. One of the favorite scriptures of the child abuser is Prov. 19:18 where in the King James Version parents are told to discipline their children and, "*. . . let not thy soul spare for his crying.*" Unfortunately this is not a clear rendering of the original Hebrew. The first key word is "soul" (NEPESH) which means "**the breath, soul, mind (as the seat of the senses, affections and various emotions).**" Next the word is "spare" (NASA) which literally means to "**lift up the soul to anything (i.e. to wish for or desire something).**" The last significant word is "crying" (MUTH) which means "**to die, or to put to death.**" With these definitions in mind we can clearly see that this verse really says a parent is to "*Discipline your son while there is hope, and do not desire his death*" (NASB). The NIV, ASV, NKJV and NAB (Catholic) all agree with this translation. I believe it's clear

then that God does not approve of child abuse tactics. In fact Prov. 23:13-14 tells us that scripturally applied discipline will not lead to death or for that matter permanent injury. Other causes of over-discipline are parents who flaunt their authority by "lording it over" their children (an attitude which is even forbidden on the part of elders, 1 Pet. 5:3), and a lack of understanding of what must be enforced as a rule and what should be learned by experience.

Finally, and most importantly, discipline **must be combined** with instruction. Such instruction takes two forms, corrective and preventive. Corrective instruction is where the parent explains why some disciplinary action was taken, whereas preventative instruction is an attempt at preventing the need for punishment. The preventative type is the most important in that it attempts to teach self-discipline and willing compliance. This is exactly how God treats us. He first tries to teach us His will and instill in us willing obedience, but He also disciplines us when necessary. The loving discipline of God and Christian parents are both ultimately aimed at the same goal, eternal life.

Please remember that God requires parents to provide His kind of instruction and discipline (Eph. 6:4; Heb. 12:6-12). He has clearly laid out the rules for parents and also the penalties for disobedience (Heb. 10:26-31). Let us then go forth prayerfully and carefully administering the disciplines of the Lord in our homes.

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# “Have You Ever Seen Dead Bodies?”

by Gardner Hall

“Have you ever seen dead bodies?” thirteen year old Julio asked me in Spanish as we rode home from services.

I wasn't sure how to respond to that question but answered, “yes, in funerals.”

“No, I mean bodies all shot up lying in the road and on the sidewalks,” he said.

“No”, I said.

Then Julio's older brother, Rodolfo, said, “they just lie there with their arms sprawled out, and sometimes they're still quivering.” As he said that, he threw out his arms and quivered to illustrate his point.

“That must shake you up quite a bit to see something like that,” I said being a little shook up myself from the conversation.

“At first it did,” said Rodolfo, “but then you see so many dead bodies it doesn't bother you so much.”

Rodolfo and Julio Molina are young Christians from El Salvador coming from that country with their family about two years ago. They are members of the little Hispanic church in Newark, New Jersey, in an area where thousands of refugees like themselves have settled. Occasionally in the middle of conversations they begin to reminisce matter of factly about horrible experiences they have gone through. For example:

\*Rodolfo told me, “Once we were all in bed just about asleep and we heard a car approach at high speed and then stop suddenly in front of our house. Then we heard a man screaming and crying, ‘No! No! forgive me in God's name.’ Then all was quiet. The next morning, there was the body in front of our house.”

“Who would that have been?” I asked, “the communists or the death squads?”

“Could have been either one,” he said.

“I bet you didn't sleep any that night,” I said.

“Sure we did,” he responded, “we heard shots in the night all the time and you get used to it.”

\*Once Julio and Rodolfo's father

was riding in his car with their brother, Rommel, who is about nine years old (then he must have been about 6 or 7). The communist guerrillas stopped the car at a roadblock and put the pistol to brother Molina's head asking if he had any arms in the car. Then they put the pistol up to little Rommel's head (6 or 7 years old!) and asked him the same question. Then they went off and began talking among themselves. As they did so, brother Molina ducked, jammed the accelerator to the floor and got away before the guerrillas could fire a shot. Rodolfo said that many people were killed that night on that stretch of road. After that experience, brother Molina decided to do whatever possible to get his family to the states.

\*Rodolfo laughs about the Army recruiting commercials. Laughing he said, “here they beg you to join the army. In El Salvador they make boys join the army and if they refuse, they shoot them.”

“Really?” I said, “Who shoots those who refuse to serve, the communists or the government?”

“Both,” he replied. “That's one of the reasons we're here. They would have already gotten Julio and me into the army if we stayed. If you can squeeze a trigger, you can be in the army.”

He added, “I've got a friend in High School here who they carried away into the army. He said that he killed some people and that it really bothered him at first but now they give drugs to the boys so that it doesn't bother them so much.”

## THOUGHTS

As I hear such stories from these children of war, several thoughts go through my mind:

\***Our worries and complaints** - We often worry and complain about little trivialities and even allow them to make us feel miserable, although they amount to nothing especially when compared with the problems of others. We worry and fret about insurance

bills, auto repairs, income tax, new clothes and having good credit while others would not even comprehend those worries because they are concerned simply with survival.

Sometimes we feel underprivileged because someone else may make more money than we do, or have a nicer place to live or a more luxurious car. When we feel that way, we need to remember what these children have been through and realize that we are blessed to live in a country where people enjoy more ease and riches than any other group of people that has ever lived. Instead of feeling slighted by life, we should constantly give thanks to God for the riches and peace that we enjoy, asking him to help us not to become spoiled by such. We should give generously of our riches so that the gospel may be taken to those less privileged.

\***What life is about** - We Christians in the United States live lives of such ease that we need to hear such stories to shake us up so that we can see the world as it really is. As we are carried to and fro by the hustle and bustle of our work, our schools and our pastimes it is sometimes hard for us to stop long enough to think of heaven. Our diverted minds have difficulty in longing for heaven.

But worldly diversions aren't such a problem in places like El Salvador where heaven must seem more attractive.

\***The need for the gospel in Latin America** - In Central and South America many countries seem headed down the same road as El Salvador. The authorities and subversives fight battles of words in some countries and battles of bullets in others but the gospel offers an attractive alternative. Thousands of denominational missionaries have filled Latin America with denominational traditions. But Christians are needed who will go and preach the pure gospel there. Most countries, unlike El Salvador, are now safe. (Many are “safer” than the U.S.A.) Pray that Christians will accept the challenge and go. Don't

discourage people from going (as some have unbelievably done with thoughtless remarks and attitudes) but do all you can to back them up.

**\*The need to pray for Christians in El Salvador and difficult areas** - There are Christians just like you in El

Salvador and other difficult areas who love their families just as much as you love yours and yet who must face dangers and horrors in protecting them that are difficult for us to comprehend. Before we lie down to sleep in our comfortable homes this evening, let us

pray for those Christians who must lie down to sleep in nights sometimes punctuated with shots, cries and screams.

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# Does God Want Babies Baptized?

by Robert Wayne La Coste

One who is familiar with the Bible, knows quiet well that God is very plain on what he desires to please. One need not guess what the will of God is on any matter. For his precious will ". . . gives unto us all things that relate to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3).

One can search the scriptures from cover to cover and never find where God expected unaccountable people to comply with His commands. After all, in the first place how could those who have not yet grown enough to maturity, understand the will of God on baptism or other related matters? Truly, it is with the "*heart that man believeth unto righteousness. . .*" (Rom. 10:10)

I think most people understand these basic premises. The main reason people baptize babies, as well as do other things, which are foreign to the scriptures, is because they are trying to be consistent with some false doctrine already being practiced, which too is not authorized or desired by God, OR they simply think a certain practice will be appealing to the people and "look nice." Infant baptism is no doubt practiced for both reasons, with the emphasis being placed on the first "reason."

## THE HISTORY OF INFANT BAPTISM

Baptizing babies is a relative new practice when compared with scriptural baptism as was practiced in the New Testament in century number one. The early reformers of the Roman Catholic church agreed with the Catholic doctrine of "original sin," and saw therefore no real reason to do anything else but to baptize babies. John

Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church in the seventeen hundreds preached, "**Infants need to be washed from original sin; therefore they are proper subjects for baptism**" (Works, Misc. Vol. 2, p. 16). John Calvin, another reformer said, "**We reprobate all fanatics who will not allow their children to be baptized**" (Calvin Tracts, Vol. 2 p. 154). See what I mean? Because they thought that "original sin" was a teaching of the scriptures, they decided to practice infant baptism to deal with the problem.

If it can be shown therefore that the doctrine of "original sin" is a product of men and not the scriptures, we can also show that infant baptism has no credibility as far as God's Word is concerned. One was produced as a result of the other being produced. The doctrine of original sin as instituted by the Roman Catholic church states simply; "**That guilt and stain of sin which we inherit from Adam, who was the origin and head of all mankind**" (The Catholic Instructor, p. 23 of Encyclopedia Appendix) The Bible, NOWHERE teaches that we inherit the sin of Adam, or anyone else for that matter. The Bible teaches, "*The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him and the unrighteousness of the unrighteous shall be upon him*" (Ezekiel 18:20). Ezekiel began that passage by stating an ever existant truth: "*The soul that sinneth, it shall surely die.*" What is sin? Sin is the "*transgression of the law*" (I Jn. 3:4). The facts are obvious.

Sin is more possible with infants than obedience is, for the same reason, namely the inability to understand right from wrong. And since sin is disobedience, the question must need be asked, "**WHAT ACT OF DISOBEDIENCE DO INFANTS COMMIT THAT WARRANT OBEDIENCE, including baptism?**" Sin is a matter committed, not inherited! And obedience is a matter committed not done by proxy. One is not born a sinner, no more than one is born obedient. One becomes a sinner or obedient by one's own will!

## THE SUBJECT FOR BAPTISM

Pentient believers are the only individuals who are the proper subject for baptism. Peter, on Pentecost told accountable and reasonable people, "*Repent and be baptized*" (Acts 2:38). The only thing a baby knows, is when he is wet, hungry or something of such nature. When a child gets to the age of being able to discern right from wrong, he is going to commit wrong. However, until that time the child is sinless and not expected to "*give account*" (Rom. 14:12) unto God. When an individual does commit wrong, then they are accounted as sinners and need to obey the gospel of Christ.

It will be on safe ground to say in closing, that anyone who reads this and understands this who has not obeyed the truth, is a fit subject for baptism and needs to obey the Lord. Do not tarry but dear reader, "*arise and be baptized*" (Acts 22:16).

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מבשרו של אלהים  
 וזוהו קו לשופר



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

“I”

**Greek Word:** ego

**Meaning:** “I”

It has been suggested that we look at the word “I” in Gal. 2:20. The passage reads, in the K.J.V., “*I (ego) am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*”

You will notice that where we see the word “I” five times in our English Bibles, in this verse, it appears, as such, only once in the Greek text, in the first clause. In all of the other occurrences of “I” the word is not spelled out in the Greek text but is understood to be a part of the first person singular verbs employed. This was the common way of saying things in Greek, Latin and Hebrew in ancient times.

The first, second, or third person pronouns were seldom used separately. That is to say that “I, thou, she, we, ye, they” were indicated by the endings of Greek verbs and did not need to be written separately, unless the writer wanted to **emphasize the identity of the subject** of the verb. Then the personal pronouns, such as **ego** (I), would be employed. And that is what we see in Gal. 2:20 (and also 2:19).

In the context of our verse Paul is trying to show that dependence on self for salvation through the perfect keeping of the Law of Moses would be folly (cf. Gal. 2:19; 3:11-12). It would be vain, proud self-exultation. And so Paul emphasizes his total dependence on the sacrifice of Christ by using the emphatic pronoun. With it he gives expression to his total renunciation of self as a potential substitute saviour. In so doing he emphasized to Peter who had just been guilty of taking a step backward into Judaism (Gal. 2:11-12) that not even an apostle of Christ was without the need for the gracious work of Christ. In so doing he gave expression to his personal humility in

the face of Christ. In so doing he affirmed the passing of an old man, unworthy of salvation, however zealous he might have been, and the birth of a new creature, created by God through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:10), with nothing to boast of but the cross of Christ (Gal. 6:14).

“KILL”

**Hebrew Word:** ratsach

**Meaning:** “to kill, murder, slay”

This word is an important one in the study of the Old Testament but it must be compared with several others in order for its general flavor to become apparent.

For instance there is the word **shachat**, “to slaughter, kill,” which is used 80 times in the Hebrew Bible. It is used first in Gen. 22:10: “*And Abraham. . . took the knife to slay his son.*” Though it is used with reference to the slaying of animals for food (1 Sam. 14:32,34; Isa. 22:13) and the killing of people (Jud. 12:6; 1 Kings 18:40; 2 Kings 10:7,14), its general usage involves slaying for sacrifice. It is used with reference to sacrificial slaying 51 times, 30 times in Leviticus alone.

Another word somewhat more closely related to **ratsach** in meaning is **harag**, “to kill, slay, destroy.” It is a very common word for the taking of life in the Old Testament, whether animal or human. Of the 170 times it is used in the Old Testament the first is in Gen. 4:8 where we are told that, “*Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him.*” And it is used often of “wholesale slaughter, both in battle and after battle (Num. 31:7-8; Josh. 8:24; 2 Sam. 10:18)” (**Expos. Dict. of O.T. Wds.**, “To kill,” Unger and White). This word is rarely used for the idea of **premeditated** killing or murder; rather for random ruthless personal violence of man against man and against animals.

Our word, **ratsach**, is the one used in Ex. 20:13; Dt. 5:17, for the commandment not to kill. “**And since it implies premeditated killing, the**

**commandment is better translated: ‘Do not murder,’ as most modern versions have it” (Ibid.).** It is used some 40 times in the Old Testament with a concentration in the Pentateuch, particularly in legal texts. It is not often found in rabbinic Hebrew but is used widely in modern Hebrew for the exclusive meaning, to murder.

There is no question that our word, **ratsach**, is a word conveying, for the most part, the concept of unlawful killing. But it is vital that students of the Bible, when arguing from this word on the general topic of capital punishment, be warned that their argument can backfire--if they insist that the word **ratsach** means only and always, to murder, ie. to take life unlawfully.

In Num. 35:17, 18, 19 our word is used to denote the deliberate murder of another person. The person perpetrating the deed is called a **roseach**, a murderer (participial form of **ratsach**). But in Num. 35:11,25 the same word is used to describe what we would call a manslayer, one who kills without premeditation or intent. The King James text calls this man a slayer but the Hebrew text uses the same word (**roseach**, from **ratsach**) that was used in vv. 17, 18, 19 for murderer. So it becomes clear that while **ratsach** may imply unlawful premeditated killing, it does not necessarily do so.

In Num. 25:27 the revenger of blood is given liberty to kill (**ratsach**) the slayer (**roseach**) if he finds the slayer outside a city of refuge. This is plainly not unlawful killing. And in Num. 25:30 we are told that, “*Whoso killeth any person, the murderer shall be put to death by the mouth of witnesses.*” The phrase “*shall be put to death*” employs the verb **ratsach**, and this is **lawful** execution of the murderer (**roseach**) of the same verse.

So it becomes apparent that though the **general flavor** of the word **ratsach** connotes unlawful premeditated killing that it is not **always** so used. And one must beware taking the position that it does.

# JEPHTHAH

by Keith Ward

Jephthah has been one of the most maligned characters in the Bible. Infidels have abused him to discredit the morality of the Bible. And, even brother Whiteside said that **"Jephthah made as rash and foolish a vow as a man could well make,"** and, **"It seems to me that his vow was criminal."** He opines that the vow was **"foolishly made under great stress,"** but says, **"we must make some allowances for Jephthah because of the times in which he lived."** (Reflections, p.22). Of men living or dead, only the writings of J.W. McGarvey have influenced me so much as brother Whiteside's. Their love of scripture and careful reasoning teach one to think, in addition to inculcating doctrine. I am cautious about disagreeing with either man, but in this case, think I must. I certainly mean no disrespect to brother Whiteside's memory or scholarship, but intend a salute to his clarity in even this matter in which I disagree.

First, what allowance does Jephthah deserve that Gideon, Barak, and Samuel do not? They all lived in the same times, under the same law.

Next, brother Whiteside also said, **"The only light we have on the matter is what is said in Judges 11."** I hope to establish that the context of the passage is much broader. In fact, the purpose of this article is not to settle the dispute, "Did Jephthah kill his daughter?" but to show that context involves more than the surrounding verses.

## Jephthah's Character

Jephthah was not an outlaw, as some claim, but a soldier of fortune. He lived much the same as David did during the time Saul was chasing him. David lived by raiding and **"saved neither man nor woman alive"** (1 Sam. 27). Further, a period of outlawry would hardly qualify one to lead the armies of Gilead, as Jephthah was asked to do (Jdg. 11:9).

## He Looked to the Lord

Far from being a man debased by an evil manner of life, Jephthah loved the Lord. He was the son of a harlot, whose half-brothers drove him away from covetous fear that he would inherit with them (Jdg. 11:2). During this period of exile, rather than becoming bitter at life's injustices, he

raised a godly daughter. Further, we see that the period of exile, loneliness, and raiding wrought within him the same dependence on God that the same kind of life later wrought on David. He questioned the elders of Gilead who entreated him to lead their armies, **"If ye bring me home again to fight with the children of Ammon, and JEHOVAH DELIVER THEM BEFORE ME, shall I be your head?"** (Jdg. 11:9). Jephthah depended upon God for the victory, not upon strategy or numbers. Also, we notice that after he assumed leadership of the army, **"Jephthah spake all his words before Jehovah"** (Jdg. 11:11). And, even as he entered upon the field of battle, the scripture records that **"the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Jephthah"** (Jdg. 11:29). Both before and after the battle, he attributed the victory to Jehovah (Jdg. 11:36, 12:3). Jephthah consistently gave God the glory.

## A Peacemaker

Some have charged that Jephthah's vow was impetuous. If so, it was the only hasty action recorded in scripture about him. As a matter of record, Jephthah acted with deliberation and restraint. He twice sent an embassy to the king of Ammon to seek a peaceful solution to the matter. Jesus blessed the peacemakers and, as much as in him lay, Jephthah was a peacemaker (Mt. 5:9, Rom. 12:18). The war continued because the king of Ammon refused peace.

## Knowledgeable of Scripture

Jephthah's message to the king of Ammon showed that he knew sacred history. He recounted the history of Israel's conquest of the disputed territories, reminding him that Israel took them from Sihon and not from Ammon (Jdg. 11:15-23). He attributed Israel's conquest to Jehovah and, with debater's acumen, used the argument ad hominum--Jehovah gave us this land; be content with what **"Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess"** (Jdg. 11:24). He did not argue the validity of Ammon's religion, but used it in pursuit of peace. Next, Jephthah pleads that the king of Ammon was 300 years too late (Jdg. 11:26). The

days of Joshua would have been the proper time to dispute Israel's title, and Balak the man to do so. Again, Jephthah called on Jehovah, this time as the proper judge in the case between Israel and Ammon.

The character of Jephthah is too high and holy to sink so low as to offer his daughter in human sacrifice.

## The Rash Vow

Some have thought to excuse Jephthah by stating that he made the vow in the heat of battle. Such simply is not so. Jdg. 11:29 recounts Jephthah's movements with the army of Israel up to the moment he joined the battle with Ammon. In verses 30-31, Jephthah makes his vow, but then verse 32 shows that he made the vow before he passed over to begin the battle. Thus, the vow was made on the eve of battle, not under the stress of a moment.

The translators have tried to ease Jephthah's predicament by making his vow read **"WHATSOEVER comes forth. . . I will offer up for a burnt offering."** The margin of the American Standard agrees with the comments of the scholars that it should be translated **"WHOSOEVER,"** and that Jephthah intended to vow a person. Whiteside succinctly assesses, **"Jephthah did not expect that a sheep or an ox would come out of his house to meet him!"**

Though we can be certain Jephthah intended to vow a "who," we have no light upon whom he expected, other than he never considered it might be his daughter. It is interesting to speculate that he hoped to be rid of a nagging wife, or that his daughter joyfully ran to greet him in place of the servant who normally would have seen to his needs (unsaddle ass, et al.) before he met any family. However, we do not know.

## Offering Persons

**"Everything that openeth the womb, of all flesh which they offer unto Jehovah, BOTH OF MAN and beast, shall be thine (Priest's portion kw). . . thou shalt sprinkle their blood upon the altar, and shalt burn their fat for an offering made by fire for a sweet savor unto Jehovah"** (Num. 18:15-17). Under the law of Moses, the firstborn of man was to be a burnt offering. However, **"The firstborn of man shalt**

*thou surely redeem.*" If we had no other facts than these, we could infer that in like manner, a vowed person was to be redeemed.

#### Vowing Persons

We need not depend upon inference, however strong, for the law of Moses specifically provided for the vowing of persons (Lev. 27:1-8). A vowed person was to be redeemed at a set price. The law recognized that a person could be vowed, but the vowed person was to be redeemed, not burned. The difference in price does/does not (choose one) mean that men are more valuable than women. Perhaps it only means that they are more useful as laborers.

A moment's reflection should tell us that the abbreviated account in Leviticus does not tell all that was required. Else, what would be the difference between vowing 50 shekels and vowing a man? Fortunately, we have hints that tell of the other aspects of vowing a person.

Hannah vowed a child to the Lord (I Sam. 1:11). Though the narrative of I Samuel does not record it, we know that she paid the 5 shekel estimation for a male child from 1 month to five years (Lev. 27:6). But Samuel did serve the Lord in the tabernacle all his life. Seemingly, the vow of a person also required life-long service at the sanctuary in addition to the redemption price. To support this, we find a specially designated group known as *"the women that did service at the door of the tent of meeting"* (I Sam. 2:22). Also, Eli's sons, in lying with them, sinned against Jehovah himself! From this we may safely conclude that these women had been vowed to God. For in fornication, the one sinned against was usually the Father (in the case of a virgin) or the husband (in the case of a wife).

#### Jephthah's Daughter

She was of an age to understand and *"bemoan"* her virginity, but yet unmarried. When Jephthah saw her coming forth, he was *"brought low,"* depressed. And she encouraged him to fulfill his vow (Jdg. 11:36). In her short speech, she used the name of God twice: first in recognizing the solemnity of a vow made to God, and again in giving God the glory for her father's victory. Jephthah had brought her up properly.

She asked of her father a leave of two months to bemoan her virginity. Had she contemplated being sacrificed

as a bloody offering by her father, surely other thoughts than her virginity would have troubled her. Keil and Delitzsch comment, *"To mourn one's virginity does not mean to mourn because one has to die a virgin, but because one has to live and remain a virgin."* In fact, had she any love for God at all, she would have never come home to be an accountable part of such a grievous sin as human sacrifice.

Her wisdom to withdraw from society for such grieving showed a concern for modesty and shamefastness that modern girls would do well to emulate. They bemoan virginity, get rid of it as soon as possible, or pretend so, lest they be ridiculed by the society of their wicked friends. How startling a contrast between the upbringing Jephthah gave her under the trying circumstances of being a soldier of fortune, and that modern christian parents manage with more convenient circumstances.

*"Her father did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: AND she knew not man"* (Jdg. 11:39). As we have already been amply informed that she was a virgin, the comment, *"and she knew not man"* seems out of place, uselessly redundant. This is not so if we understand that the phrase is consequent upon Jephthah's having fulfilled the vow, in effect, was part of the vow. She was dedicated to life-long virginity by the vow, which is exactly what she bewailed. That a vowed woman must remain celibate, but a vowed man, Samuel, married and had sons, is seen as necessary when we realize a woman must be subject to her husband. A vowed man as head of his house could determine and follow the devotion to God the vow required. A vowed woman might have the determination, but be torn between the vow and submission to her husband, if he had not the same respect for the vow. By requiring celibacy, God mercifully eliminated this trial to women.

#### The Memorial

*"And the daughters of Israel went yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah"* (Jdg. 11:40). Though the KJV translates *"lament"* instead of *"praise"* or *"celebrate"*, the commentaries uphold the latter (Pulpit, Judges, p. 126; and Keil and Delitzsch, Judges, p. 388). The only other time the word appears in the Old Testament is in the song of Deborah,

*"There shall they REHEARSE the righteous acts of Jehovah"* (Jdg. 5:11). Here it is of a memorial of praise without doubt. Could one believe that Jephthah were so depraved as to kill his daughter, and she so foolish as to sinfully submit, he must also believe that the daughters of Israel commemorated such a vile act! And, that they were allowed to do so. This memorial argues that the vow was fulfilled according to the law of Moses, and not by sinful human sacrifice.

#### Who Would Offer?

Those who assert that Jephthah killed his daughter ignore the difficulties, no! IMPOSSIBILITIES, raised by this question. First, the *"Who"* was vowed to Jehovah (Jg. 11:31). Next, *"He did with her according to his vow"* (Jdg. 11:39). Thus, he offered her to Jehovah. If this is taken as actual bloody sacrifice, what Levite or Priest would officiate at such an abomination? God strictly forbade human sacrifice (Deut. 12:31). Israel reached its greatest depravity in the times of Jeremiah, and even then none offered human sacrifice to Jehovah but only (?) to Moloch and Baal (Jer. 7:31, 19:5). Should we think that Jephthah offered her himself when he could find no priest to do so, we create a greater difficulty. The vow was to offer her to God. Only a priest could make offerings to God. Thus, if Jephthah made the offering, it could not have fulfilled his vow. The probability that a man called by God to judge Israel would be so depraved as to murder his daughter is small. The odds against him also finding a rogue priest depraved enough to offer a child to God is infinitesimal. Jephthah offered her as the law commanded, by paying the redemption price and dedicating her to perpetual virginity.

#### Judged Six More Years

Though Israel had sinned to come under the oppression of the Ammonites, they had repented (Jdg. 10:16). How likely is it that they would jeopardize their deliverance by continuing to follow as wicked a man as some suppose Jephthah to be? They followed him in battle against the arrogant Ephraimites, and as Judge, for six years. In fact, the very law they had re-dedicated themselves to demand that they stone one who offered human sacrifice. The penalty for failing to punish such a one was that God would set his face against those who knew of

it and did nothing, as well as the sinner (Lev. 20:2-5). Judges records no such divine disfavor of Jephthah or of Israel.

One might discount the testimony of Heb. 11:32 for it also lists Gideon and David without any endorsement of their sins. On the other hand, the inspired author of Judges condemned the much less evil of Gideon (Jdg. 8:27), but spoke no evil about Jephthah. **ALL THE BAD THINGS SAID OF JEPHTAH COME FROM UNINSPIRED PENS.**

#### Conclusion

A loving father who had nurtured

his child in the chastening and admonition of the Lord, an inspired man who depended on God, a peacemaker, a man knowledgeable of sacred history, a man honest enough to pay the costliest vow: Is this the picture of a child-murderer?? And, can we ignore the impossibility of such an offering being made and commemorated in Israel at that time? The evidence favors to the point of certainty that Jephthah offered his daughter to perpetual virginity in the service of God, as commanded in the Law of Moses.

This relatively minor question of interpretation has been magnified because enemies of the Bible use this incident to attack the validity of the Bible, and to portray God as allowing, and accepting, human sacrifice. I hope this article has given ammunition to combat such calumnies. Also, I hope that it has shown the extent of "context," the distance a student may have to research to properly interpret a verse "in context."

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# THE NATURE OF GOD

by Ronald G. Rhodes

A child of three once asked his mother: "If I had gone upstairs, could God make it that I hadn't?" (Gordon Allport, **The Individual and His Religion**, p. 100). Already this young child was asking what we all want to know, viz., what is God like? How do we describe Him?

There are two places one can go to find God. The heavens truly declare the glory of God; we can see the 'footprints' of God in nature (see Psalms 19:1ff.). However, one can no more find the biblical God at the end of a telescope than he can find Him at the end of a syllogism. Therefore, we need to look into the second book--the Bible--to understand what God is really like.

There are many statements in the Bible concerning God's nature, but we want to consider the three affirmations found in the writings of John, namely, "*God is Spirit*" (John 4:24), "*God is light*" (I John 1:5), and "*God is love*" (I John 4:8).

**I. GOD IS SPIRIT.** Jesus states in Luke 24:39 that a spirit does not have flesh and bones, as they saw Him having. God is Spirit; He does not have a human body. He is both transcendent (in heaven, over all) and immanent (with us in our daily struggles). Rev. 4:2; Acts 17:27-28.

Spinoza taught that God's body is

the universe; this is called pantheism. However, although God is here with us, He is not the universe--He is Spirit. What about the statements in the Old Testament that seem to present God as having a body? (E. g., see Exodus 33:23). These are evidently anthropomorphic statements, i.e., attributing to God the attributes of man, as if He were a man.

Since God is Spirit, we are to engage in a spiritual worship (I Cor. 14:15). Also, we need to realize that God is with us all of the time (Matt. 28:18-20). Therefore, we can say that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Phil. 4:13).

**II. GOD IS LIGHT.** The words "light" and "darkness" in the Scriptures are symbols of goodness and sin (John 1:5; 3:19). What are some lessons we learn from the statement that God is light?

(1) God is without sin, and therefore whatever He does is right (cf. Heb. 6:18). He was right in turning Lot's wife to a pillar of salt, and in raining fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrah. God is right today in permitting the righteous to suffer because of sickness, calamities of nature, etc. When we stand before God's judgment (II Cor. 5:10), God will judge us according to truth. His judgment will be correct.

(2) The metaphor John uses also points to the fact that God will be victorious over the powers of Darkness.

(3) Finally, since we are God's children, we (in order to be like our Father) must walk in the light, as He is in the light (see I John 1:7).

**III. GOD IS LOVE.** What is the meaning of love? John 3:16 says that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son. II Cor. 8:9 notes that though Jesus was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor. Love therefore is good will toward others, **demonstrated in action!**

Jonathan Edwards, in his **Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God**, made the following statement: "**The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider, or some loathsome insect, over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked. . . and yet, it is nothing but his hand that holds you from falling into the fire every moment. . . .**" **The Works of Jonathan Edwards**, by Henry Rogers, p. 10. Is this the biblical God? We say no!

What does the Bible say to this? God is first and foremost a God of love, but He is also a consuming fire (Heb. 12:29). II Peter 3:9 says that God is longsuffering, not wishing that any would perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The Christian--in being like his Father--is to be full of love. We are to love God with all our heart. John 14:15 asserts that if we love Jesus, we will keep His commandments. We are to love others as we love ourselves (Matt. 22:39).

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# The Book Worm



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**THE CHURCH IN THE BIBLE** by Don DeWelt (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1980, hardback, 431 pages, \$13.80.

This book contains 27 lessons on the church as the author sees it revealed in the Scriptures. This is one of the most complete studies of this subject in print. It deals with lessons on when Christ built His church, where it was built, the church's foundation, the head of the church, the temporary officers, the evangelist, the elders, the deacons, the work of the women, and much, much more. Although I disagree with several of the author's conclusions (such as tithing for today's church), I would recommend this book due to excellent material in other chapters. It deals with other such topics as the creed of the church, the names, and even the discipline of the church.

**REFLECTIONS** by Robertson L. Whiteside (Inys Whiteside: Denton, Texas), 1965, hardback, 514 pages, \$6.45.

For more than a decade, R.L. Whiteside was the editor of the Question and Answer page for the *Gospel Advocate*. This book is a systematic arrangement of copy from those years. Sister Whiteside, the author's daughter, has carefully arranged the material in seven sections--Scripture Explanations, Jesus, The Holy Spirit, Faith, Baptism, The Church, and Miscellaneous.

For the convenience of the reader, a 14-page Scripture index has been placed at the back of the book.

The material was well written and has been well organized to make it easy to find the subject of special interest.

**COMMENTARY ON REVELATION** by E.W. Bullinger (Kregel: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, hardback, 741 pages, \$16.95.

If you are trying to build your library on various positions taken on the Revelation, you will have to buy this book. This one is different from most you have read. Bullinger does not merely "warm over" other men's views, but challenges most traditional views.

The author holds to the view that the churches of chapters 2 and 3 are seven, literal, Jewish churches yet to come. It is easy to conclude that Bullinger very definitely believes in the pre-tribulation, premillennial rapture.

This reviewer cannot agree with the author's positions, but one must be impressed with Bullinger's grasp of history. Though you may not agree with his interpretations, this is one book you will not soon forget.

**A WORTHY WOMAN** by Darlene Craig (Valor Press: Salem, Oregon), 1984, hardback, 217 pages, \$8.95.

This book was first released in January 1983. A second printing was needed in only six months. This book filled a large void. Now in its third printing, the book continues to be one of the greatest studies in print of the worthy woman of Proverbs 31.

In a day when modern women are questioning who they are and why, the authoress shows that being appointed the president of the nation's largest corporation would not be as challenging as being a wife and mother. Drawing from her experiences as a mother, homemaker, grandmother, preacher's wife, but especially as a Christian, she gives insight into the *real* woman in God's sight. She opens up her home and her heart in this book. She seems to say, "Come in, sit for a spell, and let's talk."

This book doesn't just give a bunch of facts and no applications. She gets right to the point, sometimes in a humorous way, but always with dignity

and seriousness as her objective. This book is needed for the women of the eighties. With questions on how to raise the children, how to stretch the food or clothing budget, or how to keep the husband happy--the author makes common-sense out of an uncommon world. She tackles modern-day problems and shows how a Christian can maintain his/her sanity in the home.

This book would make a great study book for a class at church, a wonderful gift for a newly wed, an excellent anniversary gift, or even a great devotional book for the husband and wife to read together at night. It should be required reading for all men and women that know how truly valuable a worthy woman is--"for her price is far above rubies."

**UNDERSTANDING THE MALE EGO** by Peter and Evelyn Blitchington (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 256 pages, \$10.95.

Grandpa always knew he had to chop the wood, plow the fields, and milk the cows. Grandma knew she was supposed to cook the meals, clean the house, and wash the clothes. They each knew their roles and made a distinction between a "man's world" and a "woman's world." That's not true in today's fast-paced society. The rapidly changing roles of men and women have created an ever-widening gap in understanding and communication between the sexes. Both men and women are confused about the very real differences between them, causing them much unhappiness and turmoil in relationships in the home and in the marketplace.

This book is divided into two sections. The first section, "For Women Who Want to Understand Their Men," explains why a man may need a woman more than a woman needs a man, and why a man's ego is more fragile. This section deals with self-esteem; discusses the physical,

mental, moral, and occupational diversities among men; shows how men and women perceive and experience sex; and explains the power women hold over men. One important section is an explanation of why a career is so important to a man and how a woman can recognize that need without hurting him or herself.

In the second section, "For Men Who Want More Secure Egos," the authors discuss five traditional definitions of masculinity. They explain why the big "macho" image is a trap for both men and women and show how to change the image of self-worth and self-esteem. The author defines the "ego stages," the stages of life men go through, so they can gain a better understanding of themselves and get more out of family life, love relationships, and work.

This volume is practical advice and addresses communication problems.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF A CARING HOME** by H. Norman Wright & Rex Johnson (Regal Books: Ventura, California), 1978, paperback, 137 pages, \$3.95.

This little book is a look at Romans 5:1-6. The authors feel that a family is where relationships are patterned after the way God interacts with His people. The authors tell how to develop relationships that can turn any home into a caring home. They are convinced that the members of the home should accept one another even when they disagree, respect one another, listen to one another, express their affection for one another, provide mutual support in times of stress, and share their joy and pain with one another.

Although I do not share the authors' conclusions on the Holy Spirit in the home, I still enjoyed reading this book. I especially enjoyed the chapters on peace in the home, tribulation in the home, and love in the home.

**TODAY'S DICTIONARY OF THE BIBLE** by T.A. Bryant (Bethany House Publishers: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1982, hardback, 694 pages, \$15.95.

This Bible dictionary is unlike most on the market. It is not written for just a preacher's book or for some Greek scholar. This volume has been written with the "average" student--Sunday school teacher, parent, teenager, etc.--in mind. The context is solid and

accurate, yet without unnecessary use of highly complex and technical terms.

This volume is also different in that it has numerous topical entries that are not specifically found in the Bible by name, but which are there by implications (such as abortion, education, temperance, etc.).

Clear readable style, along with almost 300 illustrations and information on the latest archaeological findings, make this a useful tool.

**ISRAEL BECOMES A GREAT NATION** by Earl Kimbrough (Britnell-Kimbrough Publishing Company: Little Rock, Arkansas), 1984, paperback, 112 pages, \$2.00.

This is the first in a series of workbooks by the author. Kimbrough has a way of making Bible passages "come alive" and seem meaningful for our generation. This book guides the student from creation to when Israel became that great nation. As was stated in the introduction: "Along the way, there will be moments of sadness and disappointment, as well as events which will thrill the heart and bring tears to the eye. There were triumphs and tragedies as events unfold from the beginning of man to the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham to make his descendants a 'great nation.'"

The book is divided into 26 lessons. Each lesson has at least 15 questions following each lesson. It is excellent material for a classroom study, a personal study, and for use as a mini-commentary. I look forward to teaching this material and look forward to the rest of the workbooks in this series.

**TEENAGERS AND PEER PRESSURE** by Stephen Douglas Williford (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1984, paperback, 64 pages, \$2.50.

The author of this little book has worked as a youth minister for six years. He continues to speak at retreats, conferences, classes and camps for teenagers on the subject of self-image, peer pressure, and related issues. This book brings many Biblical stories to life for today's teenagers.

Williford takes such stories as Moses, Noah, Daniel and the lions' den, Joseph, Job, the woman caught in adultery, or the rich young ruler and seeks to find applications and exercises that deal with everyday teenage concerns. The young person's

relationship and responsibilities to God are presented as such subjects as dating, drugs, self-image, friends, parent-teen relations, and more are discussed.

The book has 13 lessons and teacher instructions are included. It is divided into four main headings: Looking Inward, Looking Outward, Looking Upward, and Looking for Others.

**A GARDNER LOOKS AT THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT** by W. Phillip Keller (Word Books: Waco, Texas), 1984, paperback, 187 pages, \$5.95.

The author's approach to the nine fruits enumerated both in Galatians 5:22-23 and I Corinthians 13:1-7 is one of being practical and dealing more directly with the **how** and **why** of fruit production in our lives than it is in being predominately doctrinal.

Keller was born in Kenya and has always loved wildlife and the out-of-doors. He spent many years in agricultural research, land management, and ranch development in British Columbia. His career has really been a combination of conversation, wildlife photography, and journalism. Research and assignments for photographic and journalistic projects have led him into more than twenty countries around the world. His unique perspective as a naturalist and lover of God's great creation has been the background from which came his famous writings such as *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23*, *A Shepherd Looks at the Good Shepherd and His Sheep*, *As a Tree Grows*, and so on. All of his earlier books, plus this latest one, are always written on a day-by-day practical basis.

The first section of this book deals with the four types of soil. The final section deals with the nine facets of God's love--love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, humility, and self-control. It deals with specific causes which will produce certain effects for anyone willing to reproduce these fruits of God's Spirit in their life.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:

The Book Shelf  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

# THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

by Dudley Ross Spears

Much is said and written about the birth of Christ, His life and work, the death, burial and resurrection of the Saviour, but not so much about His ascension. Had the Lord not been carried into Heaven to be at the right hand of God, all of the facts about His earthly life would be inconsequential. He would have been nothing more than a man who died and came back to life. He would not have been unique in this. True, it is rare that men come back to live again after they die, but there are several instances of it in the scriptures. Lazarus is perhaps the most notable one in the Lord's life (John 11) but there was also the daughter of Jairus (Mark 6). Then several came back to life when Christ was crucified and walked the streets of Jerusalem (Matt. 27:52). The unique thing about Christ is the ascension into Heaven to begin His work for God and man.

During His personal life on this earth, He made numerous allusions to the great event. It seems that the return to His father was constantly on his mind. Just a few citations will suffice. He was previously informed of his fate in Jerusalem (Luke 9:31). Yet He was intent on going to meet what would befall Him there (vs. 51). John's gospel has perhaps the richest source of information at this point. In 6:62, Jesus tells people that they should expect to see Him "*ascending where he was before.*" In 7:33 He affirmed ". . . *I go unto him that sent me.*" He promised to "*draw all men to Himself,*" when "*I be lifted up*" (12:32). Then there was His comforting word, "*I go to prepare a place for you. . .*" (14:3). In the same chapter, (vs. 12) He plainly said, "*I go unto the father.*" To see this continue to develop, please note and read John 16:5,10,17,28; 20:17. It is obvious that Jesus knew He would ascend back to Heaven and His father.

One very interesting fact about the Lord's ascension is the use of the word "*coming.*" Jesus used the expression, "*coming with the clouds*" in the very important discourse He had with His disciples just prior to His betrayal and crucifixion. Especially important is Matthew 24:30. Jesus said, "*and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes*

*of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.*" This is taken by various sorts of millennial groups to mean when Jesus returns to join in the visionary and imaginary battle with Armageddon. However, the "*coming*" really does not suggest which direction Christ will be coming. It is certainly in keeping with scriptural truth to affirm that the sign is given when Christ came to God at His ascension, to sit at the right hand of power and begin His reign in His kingdom. This is the obvious intent He had, for He told Caiaphas, "*Henceforth ye shall see the Son of man at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven*" (Matt. 26:64).

Another interesting fact about His ascension is revealed by the way it is presented in the Bible. All of the gospel records, except John, refer to His ascension. There are many who affirm that Mark's gospel ends with chapter 16, verse 8. If so, it stops short of reporting His ascension, which one finds in 16:19. But, in reality, the ascension of Christ belongs properly at the start of Acts of the Apostles. The well-respected scholar, A.B. Bruce said, "**The ascension did not like within the proper scope of the Gospels. . . it's true place was at the head of the Acts of the Apostles.**" (quoted from "The Ascended Christ," by the International Standard Bible Encyclopedia.)

There are a number of ways the great event is described. Luke uses the expression "*carried up into heaven*" (Luke 24:51). Also, in Acts, he speaks of Christ being "*taken up*" (Acts 1:22). Later Luke says that Christ must "*remain*" in Heaven until His return (Acts 3:21). John's gospel records statements from Him in which He uses the term "*ascend*" to describe His return trip (John 3:13). Sometimes it is simply, "*I go unto the Father*" (John 14:12).

There are many fascinating facts about the ascension, but the significance of it is overwhelming.

Why do we say that the ascension is of such great moment and consequence? Simply because when He ascended, all of those things that He is intended to accomplish in God's scheme of redemption began. Paul makes this crystal clear. He wrote the Ephesian church, "*Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of this earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things*" (Eph. 4:9-10). It appears from this expression by Paul, that Christ is qualified fully because He has covered all that man is, where man has gone, and where man can go. Whatever is possible for mankind, Christ has experienced it and wherever man can go, Christ has been there before him. From the depths of the Hadean world is the elegance and glory of Heaven, Christ has covered it all.

But look at the expression that says Christ "*ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things*" (vs. 10). His ascension was designed to bring everything into one focal point, the eternal fulfillment of God's great plan. Let me share some beautiful words by B.F. Westcott: "**That He might by His presence bring all things to their completeness, give reality to all that the universe of created things presented in sign and promise. Christ first 'fulfills' all things and then receives them to Himself when brought to their true end.**" (Commentary p. 61-62). Also, on the meaning of the expression, "all things," Westcott adds, "*Ta Panta, signifying all things in their unity, the sum of all things, seen and unseen, in the heavens and upon the earth, whatever their sphere of being, their mode of existence, or their relation of dependence upon God, may be contrasted with Panta, which denotes all things regarded severally.*" (Ibid. p. 187). Fritz Reinecker makes an enlightening remark. He says, "**The reformers were correct when they translated the sentence, 'Christ filled the entire world.' And Luther said, 'He traversed all, upon which he captured all things. He will and must be in every place.'**" (Der Brief des Paulus an die Epheser, p. 144). And so, the ascension became

the climax of all the great work Christ did in filling all things. This is expressed so often in the New Testament. He subdued all things unto Himself--brought all things under His power--led captivity captive--the

mighty working whereby He is able--and many other such expressions all emphasize what Christ accomplished as He ascended back to the Father's right hand.

In the next installment, we will

consider together the purpose and result of His ascension. Please look for it.

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# SPIRITUAL COWARDS

by L. Scott Mann

Even in our "civilized" day the word "coward" is likely to provoke blows if only applied to someone in jest. No one likes to be thought of as a coward. Spiritual cowards are no more admirable than physical ones; they are listed among those who will burn in Hell. *"But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death"* (Rev. 21:8). Our sheltered lifestyle prevents us from seeing many physical cowards but the spiritual cowards among God's people are many. Consider some of them.

Those who are afraid to admit wrong are spiritual cowards. Too many are fearful of admitting their own sin. While it is entirely possible that James 5:16 has been abused by some it is rare that one finds "faithful" Christians abusing it. *"Confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed."* Too many Christians who sin against their brother never confess their wrongs. Some acquit themselves with the excuse, "they sinned also." Strangely, the man who so palliates his sin risks eternal damnation **with** the one from whom he is estranged! God demands that we humble ourselves, confessing our faults. Such self-deceiving exoneration is exactly what Jesus described in Mt. 7:3-5; the log in my eye and the speck in yours. Physician, heal thyself!

Others are afraid to stand for

God's Word. In face of error they compromise. When men fail to teach the Truth they are silent. Perhaps this is one of the most detestable forms of cowardice because it demonstrates a lack of love and conviction for the Lord who bought us. God charged Joshua *"Only be strong and very courageous; be careful to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you"* (Joshua 1:7). Joshua stood courageously for the Lord even when his brethren waived. Without heed to the unpleasant consequences he demanded of Israel that they *"choose for yourselves today whom you will serve."* Too many spiritual cowards in our time would have told Joshua that he should be silent for fear of angering others or dividing brethren. Courage demands first allegiance to God; second to others; last to self.

Cowardice keeps men from setting high spiritual goals for themselves. The one talent man who had done nothing with what the Lord had given him replied, *"And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground; see, you have what is yours."* Some never attempt to teach their neighbor or friend for fear of failure. Churches do not set high goals in support of other preachers, plans to save the lost, or building up of one another for fear of failure. Christians must realize that not only do our bodies belong to God but also our **potential** belongs to God. Sometimes churches fail to appoint men to the eldership because of fear of mistakes

that those men might make. Fear is the tool of Satan - not of God! It is the fear of being "different" that prods Christians to compromise with the world in dress and conduct.

Perhaps the meanest form of spiritual cowardice is found in the "Christian" who harbors a private fault against his brother but will not bring it to that brother's attention. Ignoring Jesus' command in Matthew 18:15-17 a man or woman may allow a fault to grow in their resentment and imagination until it becomes a demon which haunts their thoughts night and day. Because of his cowardice, he will talk to others **about** the brother rather than confront him with his sin. In this manner, he can amass popular support and be assured that he will "win" before he brings it to the brother's attention. Love for the brother and correction of an erring soul is lost in the drive to punish and destroy the "sinner" involved. It is not at all unusual for the "sin" to be an insignificant matter of taste or judgment rather than sin (transgression of the law--2 Jno. 9). When a brother has sinned against us it requires courage to confront him with his sin. The fearful will tell others instead. Love is necessary also, to keep ourselves from falling into sin. We must desire to help a brother live right before God and to see problems eliminated.

We all despise cowardice but it may be that there is a trace of **spiritual** cowardice in all of us. We must fight it! Be strong in the Lord! Spiritual cowardice will move us to be lukewarm: doing nothing for fear of doing the wrong thing. It is Satan's device to foment problems and to prevent a man from seeing himself as he truly is and bettering himself. *"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world"* (Jno. 16:33). We can overcome fear and cowardice through Jesus Christ & His word.

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# IS THE CHURCH THE "PILLOW" OF TRUTH?

by Ben Shropshire

Several years ago I preached a lesson entitled, "The Church, The Pillar and Ground of the Truth," using 1 Timothy 3:15 as my text. During the following week, while I was cleaning up the meeting place for the next service (that goes along with the preacher's job in some places), I happened to find some notes on my sermon which had been made by a young man who had heard it. His notes were a fairly good outline of my lesson, except whenever I had used the word "pillar" he had written "pillow." I do not know whether he did not know what a pillar was, or whether he thought I really meant "pillow" and was trying to be kind in his notes by correcting my colloquial mispronunciation of the word he thought I was using.

Since that time it has occurred to me that maybe he did think the church is the "pillow" of truth, because it seems that many others are also of that impression. A pillow, of course, is a soft cushion used to support a person's head while resting. When we act, or fail to act, in such a way that we allow the truth to be at rest instead of using it to wage aggressive warfare against the "spiritual hosts of wickedness" we have allowed the church to become a "pillow" for the truth.

In Ephesians 6:10-20 the apostle Paul urges us to wrestle against the principalities, powers and world rulers of darkness, and in doing so, to take up the whole armor of God, having girded our loins with truth, putting on the breastplate of righteousness, shodding our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, and taking up the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. This passage suggests a spiritual war between two antagonistic armies - the Devil and his forces on the one hand with their weapons of false doctrine, lies, lust

and evil, and, on the other hand, Christ and His forces with truth and righteousness as their weapons. Christians are urged to enter the fray and do battle with the enemy. When we refuse to do this, we are allowing the truth to be at rest. The church is whatever those who compose it are, and it cannot be something which they are not. If we, individually, are allowing the truth to rest, then the church has become the "pillow" of the truth; it cannot be the "pillar of the truth" when the Christians who compose it are "pillowing" the truth.

When a preacher, representing a good proportion of the teaching efforts of a congregation, refuses to preach the truth on issues that need to be dealt with he is contributing to the "pillowing" of the truth by that church. When members of a congregation are doing very little to share the truth by which they have been saved with their relatives, friends and neighbors, they are making the church a "pillow" for the truth. The church also has become a "pillow" of the truth when appeals are made to the members for cooperation in evangelistic programs, attendance at gospel meeting, and for help with getting home Bible classes started, and the appeals go largely unanswered. When a congregation has the means to support the preaching of the gospel, sometimes even in difficult and remote areas, but declines to do so, it is running the risk of being a "pillow" for the truth.

The church is not to be the "pillow of truth," but the "pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15). This passage simply means that the relationship of the church to the truth is the same as the relationship of the ground and the pillars to a building; that is, the church is the very foundation and support of the truth. It is the church's responsibility to uphold

and defend the truth. If the church does not proclaim the truth to the world, who will? If the church is "pillowing" the truth, how can the world come to know the truth which will make it free (John 8:32)?

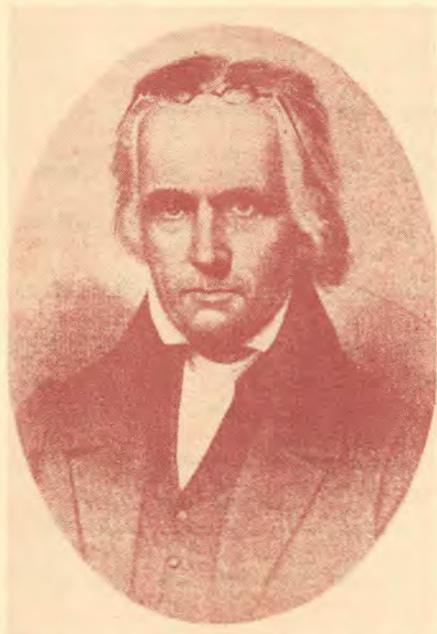
If the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) teaches anything at all, it suggests that ability plus opportunity equals responsibility. The one talent man had the ability to use at least one talent (Matt. 5:15). As long as he had no talents to work with he had no responsibilities corresponding to his ability. However, when he received the one talent from his master he then had a responsibility to use his ability in putting that talent to work. Instead, he "pillowed" his talent by burying it in the ground. In every congregation there are many varied abilities among the members which can and ought to be used for the propagation of the truth. The opportunities for using this wealth of ability are handed to us in the form of classes, personal work programs, resources, friends, relatives and acquaintances, and all of these impose responsibilities upon us. A failure to meet these responsibilities is to "pillow" the truth, and it is to invite the awful consequence of having the words, "*Cast ye out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth*" pronounced concerning us on the day of judgment.

Instead of "pillowing the truth," we need to be "*the pillar and ground of the truth,*" much as was the church at Thessalonica about which the apostle Paul wrote: "*For from you hath sounded forth the word of the Lord. . . in every place your faith to God-ward is gone forth*" (1 Thess. 1:8). Let's quit being a "pillow" of the truth, and start being the "pillar" of the truth.

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## THOMAS CAMPBELL



Thomas Campbell was born on February 11, 1763, in Northern Ireland. His father, a former Catholic, was a member of the Church of England. Thomas joined the Church of the Secession whose members had rebelled against the Church of England. The Secession Church is now known as the Presbyterian Church.

After graduating from the University of Glasgow he entered the Divinity School at Whitburn. This came as a great disappointment to his father, who wanted him to enter the ministry in the Church of England.

When he finished his theological training at Divinity School, Campbell devoted himself to the preaching of the Word. He married Jane Corneige in June, 1787. His first son, Alexander, was born in September, 1788.

In 1805, when Alexander was 17, the two Campbells opened a school near Rich Hill, 35 miles northeast of Belfast. In a few years, ill health forced Thomas to seek a change in climate.

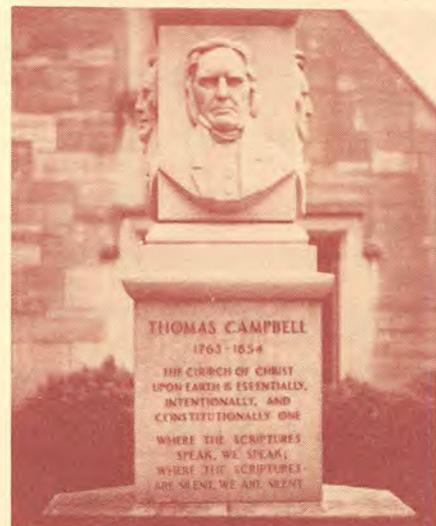
He left Alexander in charge of the school and set sail for America. He left Ireland on April 1, 1807 and arrived in Philadelphia 35 days later. He found the Synod (Seceder) of North America was in session. He was greeted by the Synod and asked to preach in Washington, County, Pennsylvania, for the Chartiers Presbytery.

Campbell found the various sects of the Presbyterian church were not in fellowship with each other. During one missionary tour north of Pittsburg, Campbell found several members of other Presbyterian bodies. After delivering a sermon on the sins of division, he offered the Lord's Supper to all those present. This was a violation of Seceder custom.

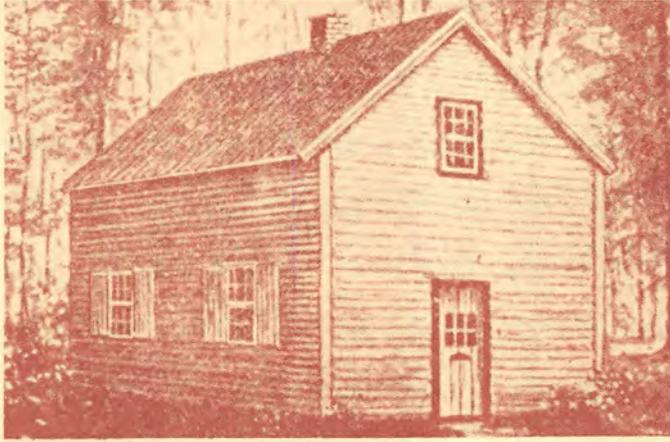
At a trial of the Synod, he was censured for his actions. Though he felt the censure was unjust, he continued to work with his brethren until he saw he was no longer welcome. On September 13, 1808, Campbell formally made his separation from the Seceders. Now working as an independent preacher, people flocked to hear him. "He soon found many intelligent and pious people who were dissatisfied with religious parties and the intolerance of sectarianism which prevailed at that time. He called a special meeting at the house of Abraham Altars, and at this meeting he declared his conviction that the word of God as revealed in the Bible was all-sufficient as a basis of union and cooperation for Christians. This condemned all creeds. He then stoutly urged all to abandon everything in religion for which there could not be produced the word of the Lord. He announced the famous statement: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." This became the slogan for all who gave up creeds and

took the Bible alone as their rule of faith and worship in the service of God" (H. Leo Boles, *Biographical Sketches of Gospel Preachers*, pg. 16).

In 1809, Alexander Campbell and the rest of the Campbell family arrived in America. Alexander was in total agreement with his father. "The Christian Association of Washington" was formed on August 17, 1809. Three weeks later Thomas Campbell published his monumental "Declaration And Address." This scholarly document set forth the principles of restoration and a plea for the unity of God's people. J.J. Haley stated, "As Thomas Campbell was the Moses of our Restoration, the "Declaration and Address" was the Deuteronomy of our Prophetic reformation. As certainly as the fifth book of Moses contains the basic principles and whole body of teaching and ideals of the prophets that inspired and entered into the structure of the Deuteronomic reformation in Israel, this matchless document. . .embraces



Monument in front of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society in Nashville.



*Brush Run Meeting House*



*Meetinghouse at Bethany where Thomas Campbell preached his last sermon.*

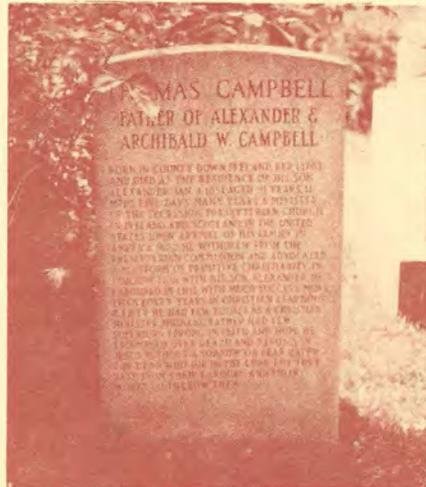
every truth we have taught, every principle we have advocated, every ideal we have striven to realize. . ." (Makers and Molders of the Restoration Movement, pg. 14).

In 1811 "The Christian Association of Washington" became the Brush Run Church, a congregation of immersed believers. They soon united with the Redstone Baptist Association, though they did not accept all Baptist doctrine.

During the next few years, Thomas preached in Cambridge, Ohio; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; and then moved to Newport, Kentucky. In 1819, he moved to Bethany, Virginia, to help Alexander with Buffalo Seminary. Throughout 1828 he assisted Walter Scott in preaching on the Western Reserve in Ohio.

Campbell preached his last sermon at the age of 89 at Bethany. Due to the blindness which hindered him the last five years of his life, he had to recite all

scripture from memory. As he ended this sermon, he said, "In conclusion, my dear brethren, I can say no more to you, as the last words of a public ministry, protracted, under the merciful care of our heavenly Father,



*Gravemarker for Thomas Campbell in the family cemetery at Bethany.*

for more than three score years, in this my farewell exhortation to you on earth - I can say no more than what I have already urged upon you, love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy mind, and all thy strength, and thy neighbor as thyself, for in so doing, the powers of hell shall not prevail against you."

Thomas Campbell died on January 4, 1854, just one month short of his 91st birthday. Robert Richardson wrote in Campbell's obituary, "Never was there an individual who manifested greater reverence for the Word of God, or a truer desire to see it faithfully obeyed. . .and never was there one who more fully exemplified the doctrine which he taught. . ." (Millennial Harbinger, 1854, pg. 117).

Campbell is buried in the family cemetery at Bethany, next to his wife.

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# NEXT!

by Leo. B. Plyer

The "Funeral Homes" aren't going out of business. Demand for their services will continue. One thing certain is that life here is uncertain.

Who will be next? You? Me? I don't know but death is so certain that undertakers can wait with confidence. NEXT???

Listen! We can't afford to sow wild oats. We can't sin now without paying later. We can't afford to say, "I'll go ahead and sin now and repent later". We may not live till then to repent. NEXT! I can't afford to lie, curse, kill or any other sinful deed. I do not know how close to death I may be - neither do you! NEXT!!

Who will be next? The rich man of Lk. 12 didn't plan for death within 24 hours but it came. "This night is thy soul required of thee." NEXT?

Who will the undertaker be called to pick up next? Do remember, death is appointed unto all men (Heb. 9:27). NEXT?

Can you afford to be ungodly? Can you afford to beat a wife? Can you afford to treat anyone ugly? Can you afford to be heartless? Can you afford to continue doing as you are now? Just after death----what then? NEXT??

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## DEUTERONOMY

by Charles "Skip" Sebree

I hate to admit it, but it's true. I used to skip over the book of Deuteronomy! I would go from chapter 21 of Exodus and move quickly to the book of Joshua. Reading all that law was tedious, and besides wasn't Deuteronomy just a repeat of the Law? I'm thankful I learned how wrong I was. Not only is the Law interesting to study, the fifth book is especially edifying.

Spiritually-minded people know the thrill of listening to a man who loves God, lives His word, and loves his fellowmen. His lessons are rich, thought-provoking, and motivating. Moses is just that kind of man. He was unsurpassed as a prophet in Israel (Deut. 34:10). In Deuteronomy we are privileged to sit at his feet as he delivers some powerful sermons to the children of Israel as they make final preparations to enter the promised land.

Deuteronomy is interesting, however, not only because of the speaker, but also because of the audience. Moses speaks to the former "little ones" (Deut. 1:39). Forty years earlier the parents of these "little ones" (with the exception of Joshua and Caleb) were convinced that if they obeyed God and entered Canaan their children would be a "prey" for the Canaanites. For punishment God allowed all these faithless parents to die in the wilderness. Their "little ones", the "prey", are now ready to enter Canaan as the conquerors!

The Hebrew name of the book of Deuteronomy is taken from the first words in 1:1, "These are the words." The Jews also referred to the book as "Repetition of the law" from the words in 17:18. "The book of admonitions" is yet another title. The LXX rendered 17:18 "this second law" from which came the present title. Actually, the LXX rendering and the subsequent title leave an unfortunate impression. The book is not a second giving of the law, neither is it just a copy of the law. True, much of the

previously-given law is found in Deuteronomy, but there is some law in Deuteronomy that one sees for the first time. What law is given is incorporated into Moses' sermons.

The book is easily divided into Moses' three sermons, his parting words and song, and the record of his death. In the first sermon (1:1-4:40) Moses reviews the nation's history from the time they left Horeb to their arrival at Moab. They are reminded of God's power and His ability to guide them. He concludes these thoughts with a strong exhortation in chapter 4. The sum of what he says in this sermon is found in 4:39-40 which says, "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the LORD he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt keep therefore his statutes, and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the earth, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for ever."

The second sermon, which contains much of the law, is the longest (5:1-26:19). Moses begins with the Decalogue which sums up their duty to God and man. This is followed by exhortations for them to love God, teach His word, and obey it. In quoting the law Moses reminds the people of the need for a pure worship and a pure life. Rules and regulations are given concerning idolatry, the various feast days, the Sabbath, food, witchcraft, false prophecy, cities of refuge, fraud and perjury, battle and siege, care of the deceased, marriage, care of the body, economic and social justice, stewardship, offerings and tithes.

In the third sermon (27:1-31:30) the people are instructed that upon crossing the Jordan they are to build an altar and inscribe the law upon the lime covered stones. Following that, the

conditions for God's blessings or curses are clearly set forth (27-28). Again the people are exhorted to obey God. Moses tells them that should the time come that the land looks like the overthrown "Sodom and Gomorrah" and the nations ask "Why?" the answer will be, "Because they have forsaken the covenant of the LORD God of their fathers, which he made with them when he brought them forth out of the land of Egypt: for they went and served other gods. . ." (29:25-26). In chapter 30 Moses sets before the people the clear choice they have, "See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil."

Moses' parting words, including his song, and the record of his death are recorded in chapters 31:1-34:12. In his parting words he commissions Joshua as his successor. The Lord commands that Moses' song be recorded and that he "teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song be a witness for me against the children of Israel" (31:19). The song (32) presents a contrast between the Lord's faithfulness and the people's faithlessness. Much is said about the history of the nation in 32:15, "But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked". That is, Israel, the beloved one (Jeshurun), was abundantly blessed by God, but he rebelled against Him. In chapter 33 Moses pronounces a final blessing upon each tribe, one by one. The record of Moses' death and burial by God (34) brings this great book to a close.

There are three words or phrases that appear numerous times throughout the book that clearly show the theme. The people are told to REMEMBER, TAKE HEED, and BE DILIGENT. They were to remember God's power to deliver them (7:18). They were to remember God's ability to guide and provide (8:2). They were to remember their former condition as slaves (15:15). They were to remember how God will punish sin (9:7). Their

remembering God in these ways would lead them to be more faithful to Him and in remembering their former condition they would be more kind to those less fortunate, the widows, or orphans, and the poor.

They were to **take heed** to themselves in the midst of a wicked and idolatrous people (11:16). They were to **be careful** to be obedient to all God commanded (8:2). They were to **take heed** in their worship (12:13); and in their care of the Levite (12:19).

They were to **be diligent** in listening to the voice of God (28:1); **diligent** in

their obedience to God (6:17); and **diligent** in teaching their children (6:7).

What makes a study of this book so interesting is the number of passages that are quoted or alluded to in the New Testament. Jesus tells us that the greatest command in the law and one of the two upon which hangs all the law is in 6:5. Jesus quotes from 24:1 as He teaches on marriage and divorce (Matt. 5:31-32; 19:1-10). Peter quotes from 18:15, 19 as he proclaims that the prophet God would raise up has come (Acts 3:19-26). Paul makes great use of Deuteronomy as he refers

to it in Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Galatians, 2 Thessalonians, and 1 Timothy. Deuteronomy is also quoted in Hebrews, James, and Revelation.

Anyone who studies the book will surely be impressed with the emphasis placed upon the need to be obedient to the will of God and the fact that blessings from God are conditioned upon that obedience. For this reason a study of the book of Deuteronomy will be time well spent.

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# Avoiding Trouble

by Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.

In Joshua 22:10-34, we have recorded an incident that threatened peace among the children of Israel. After the land of promise had been settled, the tribes on the east side of Jordan built an altar as a witness of their devotion to God. But the tribes on the west side of the Jordan misinterpreted the purpose of the altar. They thought that the altar had been built in order to offer burnt offerings on it. That would have been a violation of God's commandment, since they would be offering burnt offerings in a place other than the place God had appointed. (See Deut. 12:13, 14). The tribes on the west side were now ready to go and fight against the tribes on the east side because of their alleged rebellion. However, when given a chance to explain, the tribes on the east assured the others that it was not their intention to violate God's commands by offering burnt offerings on the altar that they had built, but the purpose of the altar was only to serve as a monument and a witness between them and the Lord. Upon hearing the explanation, the tribes on the west were satisfied and a crisis was avoided.

I think that there are lessons that can be learned from this reading. We need to become concerned when it appears that our brethren are engaging in improper activities or practices. The children of Israel became concerned when it appeared that their brethren

were violating God's commandment. It appeared that an altar for burnt offerings was being erected "besides the altar of the Lord" (Josh. 22:29). We must not sit idly by and say nothing when our brethren want to substitute for what God has commanded. We should become concerned when brethren want to introduce forms of worship besides the worship authorized by God. We should become concerned when brethren introduce work for the church to do that is not authorized by God. We should become concerned when brethren introduce methods for raising funds for our work that are not authorized by God. We should become concerned when our brethren try in any way to substitute their own desires for what God has commanded. Yet many prefer to say nothing rather than to stand up for the truth. After all, we don't want to cause trouble, do we?

Another thing we notice here is that the people on the east side did not become angry when questioned about their project. They did not exhibit the attitude of "Who are you to question our motives?" or "Who are you to suggest that what we are doing might be wrong?" Instead, they seemed to appreciate and recognize the concerns of their brethren. They recognized how their brethren came to the conclusion that they did and were ready and willing to explain their actions. It should never bother us when we are

questioned about our practices as Christians. Instead, we should always be ready and willing to give an answer to anyone who asks. (1 Pet. 3:15-17).

In the crisis that arose in Joshua, the peoples on both sides of the Jordan did the proper and right thing. The people on the west side were right in questioning the actions of their brethren. What if they had said, "Well I know that it looks like they are disobeying God, but you know, we really can't tell that for sure; So let's leave them alone." They would have run the risk of bringing God's judgement upon the whole nation. Error could not be tolerated. What if, on the other hand, the people on the east side had said, "Who are they to question what we do? We haven't done anything wrong; We don't owe them an explanation." Civil war would have erupted for sure.

If we imitated the attitudes of the children of Israel during this crisis, we could avoid much trouble in the Lord's church today. We cannot sit idly by when it appears that God's word is being violated. Many heresies enter the church because its members do not have the backbone to say, "Where is the authority?" The church becomes corrupted and in danger of God's judgement. (Rev. 2:5). We cannot allow that to happen. On the other hand, many churches are thrown into turmoil because some members demand their "rights", and refuse to give scriptural basis for their actions or proposed actions. How often could crisis within the church be avoided if we would just follow the example of those gone before. (Rom. 15:4). Let us exhibit their attitudes.

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# The Poet's Page

## TEACHER, TEACHER

Teacher, Teacher, I hear the little ones  
say,  
That's alright, they'll learn my name  
some day.

I think the Lord must have been pleased  
As the little ones sat upon his knees  
And He too heard this sweet refrain,  
Teacher, teacher, instead of His name.

Suffer the little ones, I hear Him say  
Oh, what a blessing to show them the  
way -

The way of God's goodness and wonder-  
ful plan;

Is shown to them as we hold their hand -  
And lead them ever so carefully -  
It's so important for them to see  
That our Lord and Saviour lives in me.

I count it a privilege to teach a child so  
small,  
To lead them gently to the One who is  
our ALL.

To mold their lives in such a way -  
That one day we may hear Him say  
Well done, You've taught them well  
So both of you may with me Eternally  
dwell.

--Thelma Sherrill  
Old Hickory, TN

## PLEASE DO SOMETHING

Do something for someone somewhere  
While jogging along life's road.  
Help someone to carry his burden,  
And lighter will grow your load.

Do something for someone gladly,  
'Twill sweeten your every care.  
In sharing the sorrows of others  
Your own are less hard to bear.

Do something for someone striving  
Help where the way seems long  
For the sorrowful hearts that languish  
Cheer up with a little song.

Do something for someone always,  
Whatever may be your creed  
There's nothing on earth can help you  
So much as a kindly deed.

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## THE PREACHER

My job is not to aggravate,  
Cause some trouble, or agitate.  
Nor do I try to people-please,  
Pat the back, or sin appease.  
I'm here to preach, as best I can,  
God's good news to sinful man.  
So if I seem to step on toes,  
As the old-time saying goes,  
It's 'cause God's plan I dare not change,  
Toy with, alter or re-arrange  
I've got to leave it as it is,  
It's not my message--it's His!

--Al Diestelkamp  
Bettendorf, IA

## WE'RE JUST SHOPPING AROUND - THANK YOU!

Announcements are boring and dry,  
The leader's songs are low or high,  
The prayers are memorized and long,  
The preacher's sermon is far too strong;  
The church is formal and so cold,  
The building's out of date and old,  
The hymn books are dog-eared and worn,  
The cushions on the pews are torn;  
The ushers didn't seat me right,  
From here the pulpit's out of sight,  
I can't sleep for babies crying,  
I'm so bored I feel like dying;  
What shabby clothes some people wear,  
And I don't like that lady's hair,  
The folks aren't friendly here to me,  
And they're not "spiritual," I can see.

I'll find a church with circus clowns,  
With bands and tux and tails and gowns,  
Where fashion's high and diamonds shine,  
Where they play ball and swim and dine;  
I'm looking for a church, you see,  
Which does a lot of things for me,  
A good-time church is what I'll find,  
And not the Bible-thumping kind,  
This world's church is my main goal,  
With less of God, heaven and soul;  
I'll shop around until I find,  
A "spiritual," fun-loving kind.

--Guthrie Dean  
Ft. Smith, AR

## THE WIVES OF GOSPEL PREACHERS

The wives of all gospel preachers  
must bear the tears and pain,  
Of their husbands life-long toil  
in the sunshine and the rain.  
But God will guide us over the mountains  
of woe, agony, and grief,  
Till that grand resurrection morning,  
when in heaven we find relief.

--Ron Daly  
Pine Bluff, AR

## IT'S HARD TO PREACH WITH A BROKEN HEART

It's hard to preach with a broken heart,  
Or even try to make a start;  
To make it appear that all is fine  
When I'm crushed by troubles:  
others and mine.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
To stand up tall and play the part  
Of one whose life is calm and serene  
When pain is present, real and keen.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
When I'm pricked by satan's dart;  
Hurled by those I try to teach  
But whose lives I cannot reach.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
To be cheerful like the meadow lark  
When troubles come like a sweeping storm  
And religion appears as an empty form.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
To be a tried and true bulwark;  
When I know that I'm as weak  
As those to whom I've come to speak.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
To point my finger; to yell and bark  
At those who see my vigor and vim  
But who could help me more than I  
can them.

It's hard to preach with a broken heart;  
When the realization is fresh and stark  
That I cannot make, I cannot mold,  
But only declare what God has told.

--James P. Needham  
Brandon, FL



# HAPPENINGS

## News and Notes From Around The World

### BIBLE LECTURES PLANNED

The Royal Heights Church of Christ in Franklin, Tennessee, will conduct its first annual lecture program July 22-26, 1984. The general theme for this year's lectures will be "Christ In You, The Hope of Glory."

The church has invited Colly Caldwell, Ed Harrell, and Ward Hogland to speak on various aspects of this theme. Other outstanding gospel preachers will be used for classes throughout the day.

The Monday thru Thursday studies will be at 9:30 A.M. Evening sessions will begin with congregational singing at 6:30 and sermons at 7:00 and 7:45.

Christians in the area are willing to provide housing for out-of-town guests. Each person will be responsible for their own meals throughout the week.

Franklin is just 20 miles south of Nashville. Why not plan on attending this special lectureship? For further information, write to Royal Heights Church of Christ, Highway 96 at the I-65 Exit, Franklin, TN 37064.

### COURT DECLINES TO SETTLE CHURCH DISPUTE

The U.S. Supreme Court has announced it has no jurisdiction to settle an internal church dispute involving a congregation in Miami.

A pair of elders who had held office throughout the 30-year history of Liberty City Church of Christ took their preacher to court after they fired him and he refused to leave. The elders contended they were not subject to the will of the congregation's majority, which voted to retain the minister, Freeman T. Wyche, and, oust the elders. Throughout the church's history, the elders argued in a legal brief filed with the high court, they had been empowered to "dictate" to the congregation on matters ranging from hiring and firing of ministers to controlling church funds.

But last year a trial court sided with Wyche, ruling the elders were subject to the congregation's majority in the decision to retain the minister. The court also held that all church property, including the parsonage occupied by Wyche, likewise came under congregational control.

### CATHOLICS ADD MEMBERS BUT PRIESTS REMAIN SCARCE

The number of Roman Catholics is growing--but the number of men studying for priesthood is shrinking--according to **The 1984 Official Catholic Directory**, published May 23. Church membership grew by 304,190 last year to 52,392,934. But the number of priests increased by only 21 to 57,891.

And the USA's largest religion faces a severe shortage of priests in the 1990's, with many of them near retirement. While "mainline" churches have been losing members to evangelical Christian bodies, "basically the Catholic Church has held its own," said Tom Walsh, editor of the 1,610-page volume of statistics.

But 983 of the 19,118 local parishes don't have resident priests. There are 11,262 men studying to be priests--792 fewer than a year ago. The number of seminarians has been declining steadily--due partly to the church's ban on married clergy.

### NFD SAYS MORE STORES GETTING PORN OFF THE SHELF

The National Federation for Decency says efforts aimed at getting stores to stop selling pornographic magazines are paying off. Donald E. Wildmon, who heads the organization, says that several national chains and local outlets have pulled magazines such as Playboy, Penthouse, Hustler, etc. Wildmon said organizations such as Religious Roundtable, local chapters of Citizens for Decency Through Law, and other local groups have been

responsible for many stores pulling the magazines.

"The tide is changing. People are beginning to speak out, get involved and boycott stores selling porn," Wildmon said. "Also, the magazines have become so filthy that even those owners with any morals at all don't want to be associated with the filth." He also said that the publishers are having a harder time getting companies to advertise in the magazines.

The United Methodist minister said that 7-Eleven, the largest retailer of anti-Christian magazines in America has refused to pull them saying that the magazines bring in too much money. Wildmon says he met with 7-Eleven officials three times asking them to remove the magazines, but was rebuffed each time. He said the NFD is planning to picket 7-Eleven stores on August 6 and already have targeted stores in more than 100 cities to be picketed.

### BOY SEEKS TO LEAVE GAY FATHER, LIVE WITH PENTECOSTAL MOTHER

A 12-year-old boy who doesn't want to live with his homosexual father came out of hiding April 24 and appeared before a judge who must decide a bitter custody fight between the father and the boy's fundamentalist mother.

The appearance of Brian Batey at the Denver City and County Building meant that his mother, Betty Lou Batey, could be freed from jail, where she had spent 12 days for refusing to reveal his whereabouts. "I want to live with my mother," Brian told reporters who surrounded him as soon as he appeared in a hallway outside the courtroom where his mother waited before a criminal court judge.

After a hearing, Denver Domestic Relations Judge Harold Reed reversed an earlier decision and refused to return Brian immediately to his father,

Frank Batey, who won custody of the boy in 1982 after a protracted fight in Southern California. Judge Reed ordered Brian held in the Denver Crisis Center for up to two weeks while Colorado authorities research the case.

Judge Reed also granted Brian's request to attend services at the Lovingway United Pentecostal Church in Aurora, east of Denver, the congregation of which has filled various courtrooms in support of Mrs. Batey since she turned herself over to the FBI on April 4.

Denver District Judge Robert Fullerton said Mrs. Batey was wanted on a California warrant charging her with violation of custody. He jailed her April 12, saying she would not be freed until Brian came out of hiding. On Tuesday he reduced her bond from \$25,000 to \$5,000 and she posted bail. Mrs. Batey has said she contacted the FBI early this month because she was tired of being a fugitive.

Frank Batey of Palm Springs, Calif., told reporters a few weeks ago that he feared Brian had been "brain-washed" by the Rev. Maurice Gordon, pastor at Lovingway United Pentecostal. Brian, who was 13 on May 15, was asked if he had been brain-washed. "Yeah. By my father," he shot back.

### ACLU SUES FATHER, DAUGHTER FOR DISTRIBUTING BIBLES IN SCHOOL

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed suit in U.S. District Court to stop Gideons International from distributing free New Testaments to elementary school students in Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota.

The suit names as plaintiffs Magdalena Ripplinger, a fifth-grader from Jerome, Idaho, and her father, Joseph. ACLU lawyers say the practice of distributing New Testaments in public schools violates the constitutional prohibition against state establishment of religion.

### WILL ANITA BRYANT MAKE AN ENTERTAINMENT COMEBACK?

An Oklahoma newspaper recently published an interview With Anita Bryant. In response to her announcement that "her prayers tell her she's ready to resurrect her entertainment career", the Canadian

evangelist who directed and hosted her "pro-family" rallies across Canada in 1978-80, has characterized "her performance during these past 4 years" as having "provided the Devil's crowd with enough entertainment to last 1,000 lifetimes."

"It's not her 'entertainment career' but 'her spiritual life' that needs resurrecting," says Ken Campbell, the Founder-President of Renaissance International. He said she needs to practice the Gospel she hypocritically preached to homosexuals in years past.

Bryant complained that what hurt her the most about the reaction to her divorce from Bob Green in 1980 was "criticism from people who expected me to be perfect." Campbell observed that "none of us 'fumbling followers of Christ' expected perfection from Anita--just the basic integrity which is willing to follow Christ rather than self in life's ultimate choices."

### GROUP CALLS FOR BOYCOTT OF UNITED WAY

The American Life Lobby has called for a boycott of the United Way. An article in the February issue of the lobby's official magazine, **A.L.L. About Issues**, claims the whole structure of the United Way "has been corrupted by anti-life and anti-family influences and is no longer deserving of our support."

The lobby is concerned with pro-abortion activities of groups such as Planned Parenthood that are funded by the United Way. In addition, it charges that other United Way recipient organizations indirectly support Planned Parenthood and other pro-abortion groups through referrals of questions on abortion.

The lobby suggests that citizens evaluate the merits of local United Way agencies and the groups they support. It advocates redirecting this support to pro-life agencies and withdrawing affiliation with the United Way of America. If this is not successful, the lobby suggests that people send support directly to charities they approve or create and support separate charitable organizations that do not give funds to pro-abortion organizations.

### MINISTER INVESTS GIFT IN MIXED MARKET OF GIVERS

The Rev. John Dodson might consider moonlighting as an

investment adviser. In just six weeks the minister at the United Methodist Church of Los Altos has parlayed \$1,000 into almost \$7,000, without once calling his broker or scouring **The Wall Street Journal**.

His only financial counseling came from a New Testament parable that advises: "To everyone who has, more will be given. . . from him who has not, even that will be taken away." The parable, he said, describes a landowner who goes away and leaves three of his workers in control of his fortune. Two of the men increased what they are given, "but the third guy thought he'd be safe and bury his." When the landowner returned, according to the story, he rewarded the two who increased their money and punished the one who didn't.

Mr. Dodson took \$1,000 that had been donated to the church, converted it into 200 \$5 bills and gave one to each congregation member, challenging old and young to multiply it. The returns were to become a stipend for Jim Forderer, a single parent who has adopted eight handicapped children and teaches in the 4-H organization's handicapped riding program at the Westwing Barn in Los Altos Hills.

Dozens of cookies, pieces of pottery and clean windows later, Mr. Dodson can now pay Mr. Forderer a stipend of \$3,500 for two years. "But the real value was not in the money, it was in the excitement of people doing what they set out to do," the minister said. "It would work anywhere, depending on the spirit of the congregation."

Some members balked, however. "They got real angry and said they were too busy or their life was too structured," Mr. Dodson said. These members were often surprised by what they could do, he said.

One woman, whose husband has brain cancer and accepted one of the \$5 envelopes without understanding the instructions, said she just couldn't take on another responsibility. But she changed her mind and enlisted the help of some youthful co-workers. Although her letter to Mr. Dodson didn't explain how she had multiplied her \$5, it came attached to a \$160 check.

Children were some of the most resourceful multipliers. A bunch of third-grade pupils used the \$5 to organize a garage sale and lemonade

stand--net profit, \$100.85. Others used the money to copy a flier that advertised their services. They then hired themselves out--for baby sitting, gardening, odd jobs.

But some decided their own needs came first. Mr. Dodson had simply said to "see how far the money could go," and had not demanded that it come back to him as a gift for Mr. Forderer. So those who spent it on themselves wrote Mr. Dodson thank-you notes.

### **HARD TIMES FOR ORAL ROBERTS; ORU, HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES LAID OFF**

Less than three years after it opened under what he called divine directive, evangelist Oral Roberts' City of Faith Hospital is scrambling for earthly help.

The \$150 million hospital--familiar to millions who follow Roberts' religious broadcasts on TV--lacks patients, lost \$10 million last year and cut 244 jobs. In addition, employees at Oral Roberts University are on a four-day, 32 hour work week for two months, according to the Associated Press.

"I'm not sure we've done a good enough job of marketing the City of Faith," said hospital president James E. Winslow. He blames the institution's problems on a nationwide reduction in hospital patients that's forcing hospital cutbacks across the USA.

Ninety more jobs were cut at Roberts' Evangelistic Association, which raises money for the City of Faith. Its director says meeting the June 15 payroll is doubtful. The layoffs surprised Tulsa residents who have watched Roberts' empire--propelled by his broadcasts on 190 TV stations and 150 radio stations worldwide--grow into one of the city's top 20 employers with 2,300 staffers.

"There are three opinions here about him: people who think he's helping people, people who think he's just ripping people off, and people who haven't made up their minds and don't really care," salesman and cab driver Thomas Lott, 35, says.

The Roberts complex includes the \$250 million, 4,500-student Oral Roberts University. It drew 201,000 visitors last year, making it Oklahoma's No. 1 tourist attraction.

ORU is dwarfed by the 294-bed City of Faith's towers -- 20, 30 and 60

stories tall. In the mid-1970's, Roberts planned the City of Faith -- even before he had raised money for it -- when a figure of Christ appeared to him in a vision. In 1980, he said another 900-foot vision told him to continue the project. The message: Patients should be treated with prayer as well as medicine.

Winslow predicts growth for the hospital, saying its losses have been cut from \$26 million three years ago. The hospital had to fight to get started. The Tulsa Hospital Council sued Roberts in 1978, saying City of Faith would cause a glut of local hospital beds. Roberts won in the Oklahoma high court.

### **CATHOLIC HIERARCHY INVESTIGATES CRYING STATUE OF VIRGIN MARY**

A statue of the Virgin Mary that worshippers claim sheds tears has prompted an investigation by the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago, as hundreds of the devout and the curious flock to the church.

The investigation to determine whether there is a natural cause for the reported phenomenon at St. John of God Catholic Church began June 1 at the request of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, the archdiocese announced. "The process here is to determine (whether) this phenomenon of water is something natural, or if it's supernatural," said Auxiliary Bishop Alfred L. Abramowicz, who is undertaking the investigation.

The Rev. Ron Lewinski, head of the archdiocesan office of divine worship, said the Catholic church is "extremely cautious" in trying to determine the cause of such events and that it is "extremely rare" for them to be declared miracles. "The church isn't saying it's impossible. But before you present anything or anyone as an object of devotion, you better make sure it's worthy," he said. Only the Vatican has the power to pronounce an event a miracle, he said.

The Rev. Raymond J. Jasinski, pastor of the church, first reported on May 29 that he and several others at the church had seen what appeared to be tears flowing down the statue's cheeks. "It was just like normal tears coming down on both sides (of the face) for about an hour," Father Jasinski said. "We were taking the tears off with cloths and we kept them.

The eyes were moist even when the tears stopped running."

The statue was delivered to the church May 12 after having been carved in Italy. It depicts the Virgin Mary adorned with three carved roses. Thousands of people visited the church last week to see the figure.

### **HOUSE ACTION INDICATES CONTINUED STABILITY OF POSTAL RATES FOR NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

Actions by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate Appropriations Committee indicate that there is a strong probability of a minimal increase on nonprofit postal rates for next year.

In passing its fiscal 1985 Treasury Postal Service Appropriations bill on June 27 the House allocated \$793 million for the "revenue foregone" subsidy which provides reduced mail rates for a wide range of non-profit and other mailers, including churches. The next day the senate Appropriations Committee approved \$801 million for the subsidy which is the amount needed by the Postal Service to maintain current rates through 1985.

The revenue foregone subsidy reimburses the Postal Service the difference between rates charged nonprofit and regular commercial mail rates. Nonprofit groups covered under the preferred rates include religious organizations.

Nonprofit rates are currently at step 14 of a 16-year phasing process Congress began in 1970 to gradually move these rates toward covering the full costs directly attributable to handling these classes of mail.

### **15,000 FOLLOWERS OF GURU CROWD OREGON FOR ANNUAL CELEBRATION AND MEDITATION**

A crowd of 15,000 followers of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh met in Rajneeshpuram to meditate with the Indian leader of a Hindu sect at his third annual World Celebration. The hour-long meditations were held in the sect's 2.2 acre temple under the watchful eyes of guards with automatic weapons. Last year when the event was held in Portland a hotel room was bombed.

A spokesman for the group explained that the security was necessary because "peaceful, loving people" are sometimes killed in violent ways.

# FIELD REPORTS

**Gianni Berdini, Via dei Moreri 7,  
34135 Trieste**

. . . I held a gospel meeting in the church at Aprilia, where my father, Rodolfo, preaches. The meeting was well prepared and was well attended by brethren and by visitors. Ten non-Christians attended it in the three nights and two of them were baptized the week after. They are two young girls, Anna (17 years old) and Gisella (19 years old). Of course, they were already attending the church in Aprilia and studying with my father, but it is always a great encouragement to me because every soul that is snatched from spiritual death by the Word of God is the most important and joyful thing that may happen in our life.

Every night after my preaching, some questions were asked and each time the discussion was interesting and profitable. A man with a beard that always came loved in a special way to argue. This gave me the opportunity to better explain many things. Unfortunately he loved only to discuss and did not come anymore after the meeting.

**R.T. Mitchel, P.O. Box 61029,  
Fairbanks, AK 99706-1029**

It looks like summer here. The trees and grass are green and the wildflowers are blooming. We have about 21 hours of daylight now. Characteristically, this time of year brings a decrease in home Bible studies and an increase in the number of visitors.

Brother James Needham was with us from May 20 through May 24. He delivered an informative series of lessons on the topic of "Humanism." We had an average attendance of 31 at each service. We also averaged 2 visitors at each service.

**Harold T. Blain, 2405 Oakview Circle,  
Tupelo, MS 38801**

We are happy to announce that after many long hours of diligent effort by many of the brethren here, we finally have a lovely and spacious new meeting place. We were formerly known as the Elvis Presley Drive Church of Christ. We are now known as the Northeast Church of Christ. Our new address is 1118 Hamm Street, Tupelo, MS 38801, which is one block west of our old location. Worship with us when you can.

**Roland J. McDowell, P.O. Box 136, Bundaberg,  
Queensland, Australia 4670**

We are presently using a film seminar on marriage & the family one night a week. So far we have used only 2 films and have had 8 visitors. As well as the very solidly Bible-based lessons presented (which are of great benefit to us all in our marriages & families), we are handing out a package of tracts and other printed materials (correspondence courses, etc.) teaching New Testament Christianity. This "seminar" will last 4 weeks and we hope will establish some solidly study contacts.

Phil & Pat Morr, who worked in Australia preaching the gospel for 5 years back in the 60's,

travelled among the churches here recently. They are presently laboring with a congregation in Michigan--Palmer Road. Phil has also labored in London, England. We had him come to lead us in lessons on personal evangelism and some of the ways this can be done. We are now having materials prepared to letter-box in the community, using methods learned from Phil.

**Carlos Capelli, Casilla #83, 1665 Jose C. Paz,  
Buenos Aires, Argentina**

On May 2-5, I had the opportunity to do a trip of the west of my country, San Luis City, to 800 Km from Jose C. Paz. The purpose of this trip was to visit a young man who is a good student of our correspondence course "Maranatha." He is Jorge Emma (28). This man was a Baptist, then was a Mormon, now he wants to be a Christian. He is very interested in obeying the Truth. Please pray for him. In this city there are other persons studying the Bible by our correspondence course.

**Ronald B. Roark, 26 Raker Road,  
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603**

We have had several good things to happen as a result of our lectures (one each month). These have been well advertised along with information about the regular assemblies and classes and the radio program. When we complete our advertising mail-outs, we will have reached all of the residences in Poughkeepsie and Wappingers Falls (on which our meeting place borders). We have had visitors each time. Our last lecture on "Protestantism" brought four visitors, one of whom was a Presbyterian elder. The last lecture was in June on Seventh-day Adventism.

**Robert P. Nichols, Central Post Office Box 949,  
Osaka, 530-91 Japan**

In addition to Sunday sermons and Bible classes, I teach and write Bible lessons during the week in the Japanese language. In writing, some of the 3,000 Chinese characters in current use plus 94 Japanese phonetic symbols must be utilized. As troublesome as this language may seem I don't feel that there is a language barrier to preaching the gospel, but there is a cultural barrier.

. . . Since I started this letter Randy Reese, who works about two hours away by car, called as he finished a Bible study, to share his progress and frustrations with me. A little later Randy's wife, Linda, called to discuss a question that had arisen in a ladies' Bible class she was teaching, and then my son, Robert W., called to ask how to properly express a Bible concept in Japanese. All three of them are teaching weekday Bible classes at different locations. Yesterday I was able to teach classes in my home, in the home of a young business man, and in a public hall. The average attendance was four souls. In Japan we are forced to remember that Christ did not say, "Go and address the great multitudes" but "go and preach the Gospel to every creature." And that, with God's help and yours, we are doing.

Pray that we might be faithful and fruitful in His work.

**Raymond E. Harris, 827 W. 2nd Street,  
Bloomington, IN 47401**

The Harris' moved from Bedford, Indiana, to begin working with the West Second Street Church of Christ in Bloomington, Indiana.

Phyllis and I were charter members of the Midtown Church of Christ in Bedford which started the first of January 1980. I taught the mid-week Bible class from that time until I left. Brother Loren Raines preached for the Midtown Church January-May 1980. I began full-time work with Midtown June 1, 1980, after completing one year work with the church at Oolitic, Indiana.

The four and one-half years work with the Midtown church was a most pleasant, satisfying, and rewarding work. The Midtown church started with 16 charter members. Since that time 39 placed membership and 15 were baptized. We are sad that 4 of the members died and 4 had to be withdrawn from for failure to attend the services. Eight moved away or started attending elsewhere.

The Midtown Church has secured the services of Carl Lungstrum to serve as their next preacher. Carl is a young man. However, at age 27 he comes with a good background and considerable experience. Carl will begin with the Midtown Church September 1, 1984.

**Steve Goff, P.O. Box 1622,  
Sandy, UT 84091:**

When I moved to Utah, in July 1978, I preached for the church in Kaysville, at that time the only conservative work in Utah. During my 3 years there, the church grew spiritually and numerically, and we built a nice building which has contributed to the performance of the church in that community. With Joe Price as their local evangelist, Kaysville is doing well, having an attendance of 35 to 45 on Sundays. Due to the influence and preaching of Mason French, the church in Ogden turned from unscriptural practices and beliefs to oppose church-supported institutions and church sponsored recreation. They have an attendance of 50 or so. And the congregation I am with in south Salt Lake City has doubled in size since we moved here in March 1983. We have an attendance of around 30. From 1978, much progress has been made in Utah, and all 3 conservative congregations are growing stronger in faith and unity. A great love exists between brethren in all 3 churches.

**David V. Hurst, 2712 Bryron Drive N.W.,  
Roanoke, VA 24019**

This first year has had disappointments and hard times, but, by enlarge, it has been one of great encouragement to me. The members here are an absolute joy and if we have one overwhelming weakness, it is in the area of being active in personally working together to the saving of souls. This is the area we are striving to work on. During the year, we have seen four baptisms, but only two remain with us. One moved and the other went back into the world. We have had special classes on teaching, personal work, discipline, happiness, some of which were Thursday night classes. We are presently studying prayer and I Corinthians. We have some members actively involved in personal work and as a result, I have had many more people to teach.

Four of our members started a work in Lynchburg as they were driving fifty plus miles to worship with us in Roanoke. They are presently meeting in a motel.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

August 1984

Number 8

## THE DIVINE FORMULA FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

by Rodney M. Miller

**T**he desire to do the Lord's work should always be with us. Our ability to do that work is under the constant evaluation of the all-seeing eye of the Lord. In Revelations 2 through 3, we find the evaluation of the seven churches of Asia in their doing of His mission. Our success or failure is either the **joy** or the **sorrow** of our Lord. How He must look down on many congregations of His "supposed people" with great shame and displeasure, contemplating the removal of the candlestick. None of us openly would want our candlestick removed, so we strive for success in His cause. Yet **so much of what we see today is not success**, but is abject failure.

In the business world many work with organizations where the performance of the Unit is under constant scrutiny. How does it make us feel if our congregation is the poorest, most inefficient, and unproductive of all the peer organizations in the company? How must our Lord feel about our failures in His organization, the church? Therefore, it behooves us to study what the Bible teaches is necessary for the Lord's Church to be a **SUCCESSFUL** operation in today's

perverse world.

### THE FIRST ITEM NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IN THE KINGDOM IS PROPER LEADERSHIP

In Haggai 1, God gives the mission to Haggai to rebuild the temple. Following the 70 years of captivity the Jews had returned home to rebuild their lives. First, God instructed them to rebuild the temple and then the objects of their pleasure could come later. But after laying the foundation for the temple, it lay dormant for some 16 years without any work at all being done. Doubtless, the weeds grew up around the foundation and it was an eyesore to those who passed by. Now Haggai has a special mission, and that is to stir the people of God. Notice in verse 1 of chapter 1 where Haggai begins **with the leader**. He does not go to the people, to workers in the field, or the merchants in the shops, but to ZERUBBABEL, the Governor, and to JOSHUA, the High Priest. Haggai began with the leaders of the people. Another example of where God expects success and where He places the blame for failure is found in Ezekiel 34, where the **shepherds** of Israel are blamed for their failure to teach and instruct the people as God would have them. The

shepherds are the leaders of a nation in a spiritual sense, and they are the ones held responsible for the condition of the people.

Thus, today if we are going to have success in the Kingdom of God, we must begin with the Leaders of God's people. Too often reform starts in the pew with the christian and this is well and good, but unless the Leadership is active and militant in the Lord's work, there is little hope of success. The **eldership** is the **beginning** or the **end** of the **success** of most local congregations. While we hear of a preacher shortage, this cannot begin to touch the great and overwhelming need for **godly elders** to undertake the Leadership of God's people. Most local congregations fail because the Elders fail so miserably to lead in the right direction.

The Eldership must be aggressive and militant in its work for the cause of Christ and not simply tolerate a little "progress" so that token will hold down trouble. So often what success there is in a local congregation is **in spite** of the Leadership and not because of it. This kind of success will not last and is programmed for an early grave. Too often Preachers are doing the work of Elders, the Elders, if they are

doing anything, are doing the work of Deacons, and the Deacons and members are doing **absolutely nothing**. The only activity is the action of the Lord as He is ready to spew them out of His mouth. Therefore, reform in the local congregation must begin with the Eldership and filter its way down to the individual member.

### THE SECOND ITEM NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IS CONGREGATIONAL COOPERATION

Paul, in the Roman Letter, began the discussion of cooperation within the congregation. We have heard a great deal about congregational cooperation in the last few years and maybe we need to hear even more today. The only difference is that what we are used to hearing is cooperation between congregations, but what we need to hear as well is cooperation within congregations. In Romans 12 Paul speaks of the church as the body and each member of the body has a different talent or ability. Notice we find the abilities ran from "prophecy, to service, to teaching, to exhorting, to giving and to leading." All of these are to be done with mercy, love and cheerfulness. Not all can do the same thing in the Lord's work, just as no part of the body is exactly like the other. It is only when each of these parts is doing what it can do best will the natural body or the spiritual body function as it should.

Yet, as simple as this ought to be, we find that it doesn't always work as it should. Sometimes one part of the body gets angry and upset because it is not doing what some other part is doing. I Cor. 12:14-25 discusses this part of cooperation in relation to the subject of spiritual gifts. The speaking in tongues was a big thing in the church in Corinth, and they all wanted to speak in tongues. Thus, the spirit of cooperation had broken down and there was division in the body.

Have we ever known a case where someone got their feelings hurt because they were not getting to do what someone else was doing? Such a one would sit and pout just like a child, simply because they were not doing what someone else was doing. Paul said the foot cannot say I am not part of the body because I am not the hand, nor the ear say I am not part of the body because I am not the eye. But how many times have people said if I can't do - - - then I'll not do anything!

As we consider our talents and abilities in relation to the talents and abilities of others, we find there are three ways to approach the result. (1) We can work to develop our talents and abilities, but we can't sit on the sidelines as do-nothings and whine about those who have them. (2) We can accept our limitation with dignity. (3) We can uphold the hand of those who are able to do the things we wish we could do instead of slandering them out of jealousy.

Finally, a New Testament example in regard to cooperation within a congregation is very important. In Acts 4 we find a problem because the baptized believers in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost were having to stay in Jerusalem for a long period of time to learn about the establishment of the church, but their finances had run out and they were in need of substance to live on until they could return to their homes. So, the Jerusalem Christians sold all of their possessions and brought the money to the Apostles for distribution. Now notice the high level of cooperation: "*they had all things in common.*" As we consider this situation relative to our needs today, we note the total pooling of material resources as much as we do the pooling of spiritual resources. We need every member to come and bring his ability and talent to the Lord to be used in the proclamation of the gospel. Now in this example we find three points which are imperative for us to have in the area of cooperation: (1) **direction, or oversight**--"Apostles' feet". They were the Directors or the Overseers of this effort. If we are going to cooperate, we must have planning and supervision. (2) We find **organization**--"made destruction". Someone had to do the leg work and organize the effort. (3) There was **individual sacrifice**--"all who had possessions, gave." This was the giving of the money to do the job that needed to be done.

Finally, in regard to this New Testament example, we find one last important piece of information. Now if anything was a success, this effort by the Jerusalem church was a complete success, but something happened that always happens with the Lord's work when it is really moving. Trouble. Trouble in the form of Ananias and Sapphira because they lied about their activity in this great work. **What then did the Jerusalem church do? Did they**

**give up on the effort because someone had a problem with what they were doing? NO!** If that very thing had happened in most local congregations across our land, the reaction would be to give up on the program because someone got upset about it. How many scriptures and good works have been set aside by modern day Ananias and Sapphiras? In the New Testament those that were objecting to the activity were the ones "shelved" and not the plan of the God-directed work!

### THE THIRD ITEM NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IS COMMUNICATION

How much church trouble has happened simply because there was not adequate communication? In Acts 11:4 the first thing Paul and Barnabus did when they returned from preaching to the Gentiles was to "*rehearse*" all that God had done. The New American Standard says they "*talked in an orderly sequence*". Why? Because this was an area of great potential for problems in the church and they knew it, so they communicated to the best of their ability concerning the issues. Then again in Acts 14:27 they did the same thing again. Of the four times the English word "*rehearse*" is used, two (one-half) are in the Book of Acts. Then in Acts 15, when this issue finally exploded, communication is the key to solving the problem. In verse 7 Peter communicates what happened in regard to Cornelius and then in verse 12 Paul communicates what happened with his experiences preaching to the Gentiles. All of this resulted in laying the problem to rest.

There must be adequate communication among brethren! First, Elders need to communicate among themselves. The more activity going on in a congregation, the more they need to spend time making decisions and communicating their conclusions. Secondly, they need to communicate with the Deacons. The Deacons are probably the most unused force in the Lord's cause today. Why? Many times because no one tells them what they are supposed to do. Thirdly, with the Preacher. The Elders must be in constant contact with the Preacher, because they are working together as a unit, each with their individual responsibilities, and if they don't communicate neither can function adequately. Finally, the Elders need to be in contact with the members. The

membership will go in the correct direction if they know what direction to go in. Many congregations have no idea what the goal and objectives of the Elders are for the coming months. They don't know how the money is spent, why they are giving, or what the needs are.

There are two things necessary for good communications, showing that there is a responsibility on both ends. First, there is a responsibility on the one who has **KNOWLEDGE** which needs to be communicated. Too often one who knows something important to the over-all effort will make others wander in the dark simply because he enjoys being the only one who knows about a certain situation. Then, when it finally comes out, he swells up and declares that he knew it all along. Secondly, there is a responsibility on the part of the one that knows **NOTHING**. He must make the effort to find out if there is something he needs to know. Usually the person who does not attend business meetings or does not read the minutes when they are posted by the Elders, who are always out of pocket, is the very one to complain because he didn't know what was going on. Why didn't he know? Simply because he made **no effort to**

**find out!**

#### **THE FOURTH ITEM NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS IS PLANNING**

In Proverbs 29:18, the ancient writer said "*where there is no vision the people perish.*" Could you make a living for your family by accidently finding money? When is the last time you found a five dollar bill? Now, when is the last time you got paid for the job you did? The difference between what you find and what you earn is planning. What you find is strictly by accident, but what you earn is a product of your planning. First, there is the education and the skill developed, and then there is the will and determination to apply that skill, and finally, the meeting of opportunity with that ability.

In a congregation where no plans are laid, where no goals are established and where no objectives are determined, there can be no evaluation of success or failure. If we don't know where we are going, how are we going to know whether or not we have been there? If there is no goal or objectives for our Bible class program, how are we going to know if our edification efforts are successful? If the High School kids don't bodily throw the teacher out of the room could be about

the only evaluation we could make.

Yet, there is another side of this coin as well. Some feel that all we have to do is plan, but all the plans in the world are no good unless we have the determination to work and to carry them out. There are some brethren that plan, plan and plan. When they are through planning, they have spent all of their time and all of their energy, and as a result, those that really care feel like fools.

In conclusion, these are some of the things that are necessary for success to become a reality. These are the necessary things for any organization to be successful, be it physical or Divine. As a matter of fact, when this lesson was prepared for an adult training class, a transparency was made including these very points. Then a question was asked, "What are the necessary items for the success of any organization?" The first four answers from the class were the very points that you have just considered in this lesson. So, that demonstrates the universal need and the New Testament answer to the problem of failure in the church today.

15 West Par Street  
Orlando, FL 32804

## **"Hereby Perceive We The Love of God. . ."**

*(I John 3)*

**by William C. Sexton**

*"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."* (V. 16)

So much is said about the love of God, and it seems that it is often misused and misunderstood, it seems important for us to look carefully at HOW we can **perceive** or **know** that LOVE.

1. A demonstration is more powerful than anything. So, we are pointed to one: He laid down His life for us. Are we going to argue that we have that love? Let us show then that we love our brethren! How? In what regard?

*"But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"* (V. 17)

It should be evident to all with understanding that we don't have the

Love of God if we could and would act in the above manner relative to a brother. What about if we see our brother being taken **away** from the truth by some one skilled in the use of language, smooth speech etc., (Rom. 16:17-18) and we stand by and say or do nothing? If we understand that the soul is the most important part of man and that the **TRUTH MAKES FREE**, we will act in his/her behalf, as Christ did ours.

*"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and truth."* (V. 18)

There is a danger, I'm afraid, that we'll speak loud and long about love, the revelation of God, etc., but when it comes to practice--we fall short. When others view our action they **SEE** the lack of consistency, they often turn away in disgust. Many people have been turned away from the truth, because they judged that professors of

the truth did not practice it. Yet even more important what state are we in if in fact we so do? Do we give proper consideration to our belief and/or conduct?

*"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."* (Vs. 19-21)

Man's conscience (part of the mental and emotional makeup God has given man) condemns or approves based on harmony or the lack of it between what one accepts as being **RIGHT** and behavior--what he does. One's conscience **MAY NOT** condemn even though God does, because he knows not the truth. However, he can't please God while his conscience condemns him. Have we responded to God's love? Manifested the same? What does the future hold?

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



Bob Buchanon/Editor

## PRAYER

One of the outstanding duties, privileges, and joys of the Christian's life is prayer. As I grow spiritually, I've come to believe that it is the single most important part of the Christian's life. If a man or woman, boy or girl, has a dynamic prayer life--good prayer habits--that individual is going to live a powerful life. If one has poor prayer habits, he'll wither up and blow away, spiritually.

Prayer is a most valuable spiritual tool in making us strong and building us up to God's glory (2 Thess. 1:11-12). It is the key to wisdom (Jas. 1:5-7). How else can real peace of mind be found (Phil. 4:6-7)? The child of God is assured forgiveness in faithful prayer (Matt. 6:12; Jas. 5:16). In behalf of kings and authorities, it can promote social order and tranquility (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

It is the Father's desire and will that His children pray. In I Thess. 5:17, Paul instructs "Pray without ceasing." He continued in the next verse by saying, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (5:18). The early Christians obviously spent much time in doing this, for immediately after the church began, the Bible says "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Look at the encouragements that Paul wrote: to the Saints at Rome--"continuing instant in prayer" (Rom. 2:12); the church at Corinth--"give yourselves to fasting and prayer" (1 Cor. 7:5); the church at Ephesus--"praying always with all prayer and supplication" (Eph. 6:18); the church at Phillippi--"be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6).

The amazing thing is that, even though prayer is probably the most important part of the Christian's life, it is also the easiest to neglect. If we neglect the assembly, sooner or later somebody's going to miss us and call or

visit to see what's wrong. Private Bible study is also easy to neglect, but if you attend the regular assemblies on Sundays and mid-week, you're going to pick up at least some exposure to the Scriptures. But nobody can keep tabs on you prayer life. It's such a private, personal thing that only you can detect if your prayer life is in trouble, and only you can do something about it.

## TEACH US TO PRAY

T.R. Applebury once wrote: "While it is natural for man to pray under certain circumstances, the fact remains that we must be taught to pray if we are to do so intelligently and in accord with the Scriptures. The Old Testament, particularly the Psalms, gives us many examples of prayer and shows us how to pray. Jesus' instruction and examples of prayer show us that prayer is the privilege that God gives to His children to talk to Him about anything at any time anywhere." (Studies in Luke, page 215).

Luke 11:1 says, "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples." The New Testament: An Expanded Translation by Kenneth Wuest renders this verse to read: ". . . one of His pupils said to Him, Lord, teach us to be praying even as also John taught his pupils." Robertson translates it "teach us the habit of prayer." There has been controversy as to whether they were asking the Lord to teach them how to pray or to teach them the need to pray. I am convinced that we need to be taught both today.

## WHAT PRAYER IS NOT

Jesus taught His disciples that men ought always to pray and faint not (Luke 18:1). As His children, we need to understand some things about prayer. We can only learn the Truth from His Word. As we see much abuse of prayer in the religious world today, we may be led to have some wrong conceptions. Before we look at what prayer is, maybe we ought to consider what it is not:

1. Some seem to think that prayer is an emergency device. The only time they even think about praying is when there is sickness, an impending danger, or a special emergency. I am reminded of a little story about the man painting the barn roof. As his foot began to slip, he feared that he would go off the side and break his neck. He immediately prayed out, "Lord, please help me!" About that time a roofing nail caught the seat of his pants and he stopped. He looked back into the sky and said, "Forget it, Lord, I don't need you now." Too many people think they can make it on their own until an emergency arises and then it's "Lord, please help me!" The need for prayer always exists (I Thess. 5:17; Phil. 4:6) and we shouldn't wait for emergencies.

2. Some seem to think that prayer is a kind of ultimatum to God. Do this, Lord, or else I'll do that.

# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."  
— Proverbs 27:1

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During World War II our government gave an ultimatum to Japan--"Surrender or suffer the consequences of the atomic bomb." We were in a position to make such an ultimatum, but no one is in a position to demand anything of God. Moses tried this and the Lord explained that man doesn't make ultimatums to God (Ex. 32:32-33). The sinner must come to God, not God to the sinner (Matt. 11:28; 2 Peter 3:9).

3. Some seem to think that prayer is to inform God of something He doesn't know. The perfect example of this is the Pharisee of Luke 18:11-12--"*God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.*" God already knows if I am good and He knows if others are bad. It's not my place to tell Him.

4. Some seem to think that public prayer is a method of preaching. I have heard brethren use their prayers to scorn man, condemn denominationalism and/or institutionalism, and quote Mark 16:16 or Acts 2:38 in explaining the need to be baptized. They sometimes think the preacher will not get around to it, so I'll do it in my prayer. The Lord doesn't need to be reminded of His plan of salvation. He knows exactly what His Word teaches.

5. Some religious groups think that prayer is a substitute for obedience and if they pray they do not have to act on what the Lord has commanded. Prayer is no substitute for the plan of salvation. Not everyone that prays pleases the Lord (Matt. 7:21-23). The mourner's bench system of religion seeks to cancel God's plan. It seeks to rule out the need of repentance and baptism.

#### WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is the expression to God of the desires of the heart. Paul said, "*Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved*" (Rom. 10:1). In commenting on this verse, Bryan Vinson, Sr. said: "**The desire expressed by Paul is his heart's desire, and therefore is one that is deeply implanted and moving in its influence on him. This fervent desire leads him to give utterance to it by prayer to God. This desire, involving the salvation of the Israelites, necessarily needs to be made known to the one who is able to grant the thing desired.**" (Paul's Letter To The Saints At Rome, page 197). One is certainly not going to pray about something that is not his heart's desire.

Paul instructed Timothy that "*supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men*" (I Tim. 2:1). There are four words for prayer used here. Albert Barnes said they "**refer only to the different parts of prayer, or to distinct classes of thought and desire**" (Notes on the New Testament, Vol. 24, page 129). It is not always easy to mark the difference in these words, but the slight variations make for a better understanding of what prayer is. Let us look at them:

1. **Supplications** - "**a seeking, asking, entreating, entreaty**" (Thayer, page 126). Observe that the word carries the thought of a need that is felt and is then expressed. It starts with the sense of our own inadequacy and the realization that we cannot deal with this need on our own. So the need is expressed to God.

2. **Prayers**--"**prayer addressed to God**" (Thayer, page 545). Of this word, William Barclay said, "**There are certain needs which only God can satisfy. There are certain**

**needs which can only be brought to Him. There is a strength which He alone can give; a forgiveness which He alone can grant; a certainty which He alone can bestow.**" (The Daily Study Bible--The Letters to Timothy, page 66). Some make a large distinction in the words by saying that supplications and intercessions are asking, thanksgivings are simply giving of thanks, and this word is simply a desire to talk with or commune with God. Whether the Greek word implies that or not, I am convinced that we need to go to Him with more regularity just to talk with Him.

3. **Intercessions**--"**a petition, supplication.**" This word later came to mean "**to enter a king's presence and to submit a petition to him**" (Forrest Moyer, My Notebook on 1 Timothy, page 23). And so, God is willing for us to come into His presence that we might ask a petition of Him. Some commentators have argued that the large difference between supplications and intercessions was the first was a request for self and the latter was a request or petition on behalf of others.

4. **Givings of thanks**--"**thanksgivings.**" We too often fail to go to God just to say, "Thank you." We must never fail to give Him thanks for all He has wrought for us (Heb. 13:15). William Barclay reminds us, "**Prayer does not mean only asking God for things; prayer also means thanking God for things. For too many of us prayer is an exercise in complaint, when it should be an exercise in thanksgiving...We have the right to bring our needs and our desires and our requests to God; but we have also the duty of bringing our thanksgivings continually to Him.**" (Ibid, page 67).

#### INCENTIVES TO PRAYER

God's power is sufficient to grant anything which we need. I remember hearing the late James P. Miller praying that God would give us only what we need because we only know the things we want. God is willing to grant us the things beneficial to us (Matt. 7:7-8). Those of us that are parents can watch our own children's desires and know that not all our wants are best for us. If some of our children had their way they would eat Hershey bars and ice cream for breakfast every day. We often know what is best for them.

Why not lay hold of the power of prayer? Develop your prayer life. Let God work His power in your life by answering your prayers. With so much to gain if we pray and so much to lose if we don't, let us "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17).

Seven days  
without prayer  
makes  
one  
weak



# THE PURPOSE AND RESULT OF THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

by Dudley Ross Spears

The grand fact of the ascension of Christ is almost beyond the power of a human mind to comprehend. Christ continually made His disciples aware that He did not really belong to this world and that He intended to return to His real home. His ascension made Him unique. He accomplished all of those things planned for Him by the Father of Lights, when He was taken up in the clouds to the right hand of God. His ascension was designed to "fill all things" (Eph. 4:10). He brought everything into proper focus and perspective when He reunited with that heavenly clime. He regained those riches He had forsaken. (2 Cor. 8:9).

Let us now note some of the purposes and results of His ascension. It is not my purpose to give a long study to any of the particulars, but there are some specific purposes and results that the Bible gives for His ascension. They mean so much to each of us.

## 1. He ascended to finalize revelation.

This is expressed in Hebrews 1:1-3: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in diverse manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." The sitting on the right hand of Majesty is consequent to the ascension. The tense "spoken" looks at an accomplished fact--certainly not a progressive action. Christ finished the revelation by commissioning His apostles and inspired men to reveal the mind of God. Paul says they did it. (I Cor. 2:9-13). There can be no more revelation after Christ "spoke" it all. Anything presuming to be a revelation from Christ would alter the text to read, "is still speaking." That presumption is not only false, it puts the assumer in condemnation. (Gal. 1:8-9).

## 2. Christ ascended to receive His

**power and Kingdom.** Daniel wrote, "I saw in the night-visions and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him" (Dan. 7:13). Daniel saw through prophetic power the scene described in Acts I. The next verse describes what took place. "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed" (vs. 14). Not only do we learn from this that "coming" does not mean coming back to earth, we also learn that when Christ ascended, He received an everlasting and indestructible kingdom. To think that Christ will not be king until He comes back to this earth is rank error. It denies plain biblical fact. To think that Christ may have received a kingdom which would need reestablishment back on earth is likewise antibiblical. Some millennialists affirm that He receive the kingdom and rule **de jure**, meaning only by legal right and not **de facto**, or in reality. Read once more the vision of Daniel. Now look at a statement in Hebrews. The Hebrew writer says that the almighty God in heaven said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of thy kingdom" (1:8). A scepter is a symbol of ruling power, regal executive right and Christ has it in reality and fact, not by some mere hopeful right.

**3. The ascension of Christ marked the beginning of His priesthood.** Again, from Hebrews, we read: "But he, when he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God, henceforth expecting till his enemies be made the footstool of his feet" (Heb. 10:12-13) He sat down at the right hand of God as our great high priest. Earlier the author of Hebrews had said, "Having then a great high priest, who hath passed

through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. . ." (4:14). As our high priest, he offers to God the one sufficient sacrifice for our sins. He then is our advocate, our intercessor and mediator with God. (Heb. 7:25; I Tim. 2:5; Rom. 8:34). Unlike other priests, Christ offers Himself as the sacrifice, the propitiatory offer to God. (I John 2:1).

**4. The ascension of Christ brought Him His full glory.** Jesus once said to a crowd of people in Jerusalem, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water." John explains this to mean, "He spake of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not glorified" (John 7:39). His full glory came, according to the apostle Paul, when He was received up into glory. In the great inspired hymn of the mystery of godliness, Paul included the stanza, "He was received up in glory" (I Tim. 3:16). The glory Christ received on earth was climaxed by His regal ascent to the heaven of God.

**5. The ascension of Christ made Him our forerunner.** Speaking of the courts of heaven, the Hebrew author once more said, "whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek" (Heb. 6:19). A forerunner is one who runs ahead to mark out the way, to insure a safe passage, and to encourage followers to continue the run. Christ brings us into the very presence of God. Think of the passages that tumble forth to the mind. "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). Christ is our hope. Our encouragement to remain true to Him cannot be put in more persuasive terms. Christ leads and lends his hand to those who become weary along the way. The sureness of our hope is proportionate to the strength of our faith--for Christ is more than our hope; He is our anchor to which we attach our faith. No matter what dangers threaten, if our faith is strong, our anchor will hold. The way has been

opened to us by the fountain flowing with Imanuel's blood.

**6. Christ ascended to become head of His church.** When Paul prayed for his Ephesian brethren, he prayed that they might really understand and appreciate the greatness of God's power. He put it this way, "*and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places. . .and put all things under his feet and gave him to be head over all things to the church*" (Eph. 1:19-22). At the time Christ was made king over his kingdom, he was made head over His church. While there may be some slight and insignificant difference between the kingdom of Christ and the church of Christ, both expressions refer to the same people over whom Christ rules. The church exists as an entity, a body and the kingdom is made up of the same people. The resurrection serves to give a foundation for the church, but at the ascension, Christ became its head.

The ascension of Christ is more than just a very meaningful and lovely topic for study. It is, to the entire world, the confirmation of God's covenant with mankind. Be saved, for

Christ is at the right hand of God. Live fearlessly and faithfully, for Christ is at God's throne to assist us through His word. Pray confidently, in His name, for He is there to intercede in our behalf. Serve loyally, because Christ is now king of kings. Study diligently, for Christ has fulfilled all that God intends to reveal to mankind. Looking to the heavens, let us then heed the inspired injunction, "*If ye then were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God*" (Col. 3:1). Also, we may never forget where our citizenship is. Paul says, "*Our citizenship is in heaven, whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*" (Phil. 3:20). But, my friend, you do not have to wait until Christ comes back for His saints to also enjoy an exalted position. You can be now exalted in Christ by being added to His church. Paul reminded the Ephesians of their former sinful state and then said, "*even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved), and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus*" (Eph. 2:5-6). To be in Christ is to be in a "*heavenly place,*" and the only way one can be thus exalted is to be forgiven of those trespasses that

resulted in spiritual death. One comes into Christ through faith that leads to obedience. Thus Paul wrote to those who were justified "*by faith*" (Rom. 5:1-2) and reminded them that they had been "*buried with Christ through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the father, so we also might walk in newness of life*" (Rom. 6:4). A penitent believer, obeys a form of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, then is exalted by being added to the church over which Christ is head.

A long time ago, on the Mount of Olives, a small group of men witnessed the startling sight of Christ being lifted from the earth, taken by clouds beyond their vision and heard the words burning in their hearts, "*This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going in to heaven*" (Acts 1:11). Our faith in that grand fact should cause those very words to echo daily in our minds, for just as surely as He ascended, He will come again. Will you, dear reading friend, be ready and waiting?



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## False Teachers Do Not Claim It!

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

If a man is a false teacher, he is not going to say, "Hey look at me, I am teaching you a lie." He will not loudly cry, "Listen to me; I am leading you into error." No, no, of course not! Conversely, he will strive for an appearance of sincerity, piety and kindness. He will generally seek to convey an image of real concern for your welfare. He will impress you with his "superior knowledge" of the scriptures and his "utter dependence" on the sovereignty of God. He is "so sorry" for those of less enlightenment and little faith. His words, although "honey-soaked" are often permeated with the husks of self-exaltation as he informs of the many he has counseled to an anxiety free life.

Appreciation and humility are not

to be confused with gullibility. Jesus warned, "*Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves*" (Matt. 7:15). Paul told the Ephesians overseers, "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, . . . For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, Therefore watch, and remember, . . .*" (Acts 20:28-31) Many scriptural injunctions against deception could be cited. Be aware of the danger.

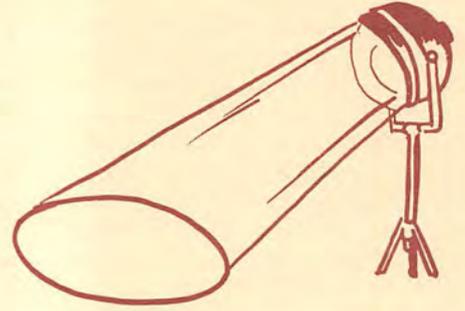
How may we recognize the espouser of erroneous doctrine, in view of his exterior demeanor, his claims of

divine dedication, and, especially, in view of the fact, he also may be numbered with the self deceived? The only possible way is to have such an intimate acquaintance with and in the Word that proper discernment is readily at hand. John admonishes us to "*...try the spirits...*" (I John 4:1). Paul told Timothy to study and rightly divide the Word of truth. (II Tim. 2:15). The Hebrew writer said, exercise your senses to discern both good and evil. (Heb. 5:12).

The false teacher must not be permitted to destroy the knowledge of truth which saves. He may not be aware his teaching is the result of un-inspired influence. Man may be and often is wrong. God is in all things right. Almost all men give lip-service to this premise. It is not man's claim that determines scriptural right and wrong.

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# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## KENNETH GREEN

**When did you first start doing the live, call-in radio and television programs?**

My first work with this type of broadcast was in 1969 while working with the South End Church in Louisville, Kentucky. We began a call-in program on WFIA that was thirty minutes a day Monday thru Friday. I worked with this church for about five years after we started the program.

From there I moved to Owensboro and we had a one-hour program one day a week. We had that for several years on Tuesday evenings. I next moved to Huntsville, where I am now. The church already had a Sunday morning broadcast which was straight preaching. We still have that program, but I guess I went to practically all of the radio stations in Huntsville looking for a slot for a call-in program sometime during the day or evening. They weren't interested in that type of format so I finally checked with the cable television facilities.

**Were you one of the pioneers in this type of broadcasts or did you know of others already doing this?**

As far as I know, the first couple of programs like this were on the West coast. I read an article by Lowell Williams in *The Gospel Guardian* in December of '68. He explained how three of them in Kirkland, Washington, began a program thirty minutes a day three times per week. Within a few weeks the station wanted them to expand it to five days a week and even offered to tape the program and replay it at midnight at no additional cost.



The management got so excited, since he owned two more stations in California, and wanted to make arrangements with some brethren in that area for a similar program. The Kirkland program resulted in a public debate with someone from the Reorganized Latter Day Saints Church and a radio debate with a Baptist preacher. They also told of numerous baptisms and several restorations. Arnold Schnabel, Bill Fain, and Jim Rury later began a call-in program in

Portland, Oregon.

Peter Wilson, of whom I have been closely acquainted for several years, was with us in a gospel meeting at South End in Louisville and I had opportunity to talk with him about these programs out west. He later sent me a tape of one of these programs and was highly complimentary of it. The elders at South End listened to the tape and decided to try a similar program.

So, as far as I know, those two programs were the first in the West and

our program was the first in the Midwest.

**Which do you prefer, the live radio or television?**

I think I prefer the TV now. I was sort of scared of it at first since I had never done TV work. I believe you have a larger potential audience with the TV. I know that many people still listen to radios, but I believe we live in a TV-oriented society. We're told that we have three-quarters of the homes in Huntsville now hooked up to cable TV. That is out of a population of 200,000 and gives us a large potential.

**Several formats have been used on the call-in programs. Do you prefer to be on the program by yourself or to have a panel?**

I prefer having one other person. I'm convinced that is the better set-up. More than two is just too many and one person doesn't have the listener appeal that two people exchanging thoughts and carrying on dialogue will have. It's like someone said, "Two heads are always better than one."

**Is there any way you can study for such a program?**

No, not really. You don't know what the questions are going to be. You just have to study in preparation of things that you think will be brought up. The best preparation is just a general study and general knowledge of God's Word. Whether one is on the radio, television, or in every-day life, we have to be ready to answer any question asked us.

**Having done these call-in programs for fifteen years, what do you think is the most asked question?**

That's a little difficult to say for sure, but the old questions that some people say the public is not concerned with are the ones that I guess I'm asked the most. They still want to know about the thief on the cross, apostasy, baptism for salvation, instrumental music, or the Lord's Supper. And you'll have times when the Pentecostals get all fired up and call in to talk about healings, miracles, and tongue speaking. That will usually last for two or maybe three weeks and then it ends. Their preachers start telling them that God is not pleased with them listening to such a program and the calls die down for a few weeks and they



will then start up again.

There are new questions that come in all the time, questions that I have never heard of or thought of. But it is the old questions that are asked the most.

**Do you think a call-in program like this would be successful in smaller cities or rural areas or is it limited to the large metro-areas?**

I haven't had the experience from living and working in the rural areas, but I have helped with a few of these while preaching in gospel meetings around. The response that I have seen has not been as great as what I've seen in the large cities. I suppose it would depend on a lot of situations. If the small town had one of those "Swap & Shop" programs where people are accustomed to calling in anyway, it would probably work pretty good. It takes quite a while to build up a good audience and takes even longer to get some people to call in after listening.

**What information do you feel you have gained from your years of experience that you would pass on to others just starting such a program?**

I think the most frequent mistake that is made on a program of this type is the preacher staying too long on one question. It is not necessary to tell the audience everything you know on one subject at one time. When I began my first call-in program in Louisville I used a three-minute egg timer in front of me and tried to always get my answer finished within that time period. Of course, I realize there is much more that could be said on practically every question but I tried to keep in mind that other callers would call in more questions on that same subject at later times. I think the great appeal that most of these call-in programs has is the constant change of

pace. If a fellow preaches a sermon every time a question is called in, he will only be able to answer one or two questions for each program. I feel he looses his audience faster this way. We usually got 7 or 8 calls in on a thirty-minute program and the audience seemed to like this better.

I think the second mistake made by many preachers is a fear of some question being phoned in that they might not know the answer to. One should never be ashamed to say that they don't know. I really think this enhances a program like this instead of detracting from it. Most people appreciate intellectual honesty.

**In the programs you have personally been involved with, have you seen any visible results as far as conversions?**

Over the five-year period that I was in Louisville, someone had counted up over 60 people that had obeyed the gospel as a result of the broadcast there. Many of these were at South End, but many were baptized and identified with other churches in the city. In visiting back in that area, I have constantly met other people who either obeyed the gospel or came out of institutionalism as a result of studying through the broadcast. Just last year I met a person who had come out of a liberal church and made a stand for Truth as a result of those broadcasts. This is another one that I had no knowledge of before. So, I have no way of knowing how many results there have been.

We were on the air for almost two years in Louisville before we had our first baptism. In Huntsville the response has not been so great yet, because we have not been on long enough. We have already baptized a couple of people and given several the momentum to leave liberalism but we look forward to even more positive results in the future.

One beautiful story as a side-line is that the first converts from the program in Louisville, Junior and Sue Bronger, are today some of the strongest Christians around. Junior has been preaching the gospel now for several years.



Readers may write to Ken Green at 2212 Jordan Lane S.W., Huntsville, AL 35805.

## Studies in the Old Testament

# The Creation of the Universe — God or Chance?

by Ron Daly

Friends, as you gaze into the heavens during a cloudless night beholding glittering stars or as you contemplate the changing seasons of the years as they swiftly pass, to whom (or what) do you accredit for their existence and order of operation? Some scientists and laboratory observers affirm that the actualities which do exist simply came into being. They deny the ONLY creditable (believable, reliable, rational) explanation for the presence of matter and other substances (known and unknown to man). And do you respond by asking, "What is the ONLY plausible explanation for the existence of the universe?" Why of course, the answer is, the God of the Bible!

Is it not astounding to you that the very first verse of the first chapter of the very first book of the Bible would assert the creative activity of the God in the following words "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Does the text state the truth? Did God create the "heavens and earth" or not? If God did not, then who did? Also, if the Bible is correct in its affirmation that God CREATED the "heavens and earth" no other "suggestion" is acceptable relative to how matter came into being!

Close investigation of Genesis 1:1 will cause certain vital truths to become apparent. Let us note several in this article which are pertinent to our theme.

(1) The Fact that there was a definite beginning or a specified time when the occurrences of Moses' record in Gen. 1:1 began. The significant term in the Hebrew text relating to the fact of the commencement of time is **Bereshith** which is defined by the Hebrew and Chaldee lexicons to mean, "beginning, starting-point." (See the following lexicons of the O.T. for a study of **bereshith**: **GESENIUS' HEBREW-CHALDEE LEXICON TO**

**THE OLD TESTAMENT**, page 752, **A CONCISE HEBREW AND ARAMAIC LEXICON TO THE OLD TESTAMENT**, page 330, **BROWN-DRIVER-BRIGGS HEBREW ARAMAIC, ENGLISH LEXICON**, page 912.

The implication also exists in the phrase "in the beginning" (*bereshith*) that matter was not extant from eternity! It is absolutely inconceivable to think of eternal matter (what all material things are made of) when one remembers that the Bible says, "Heaven and earth will pass away" (Mat. 24:35; II Pet. 3:10).

(2) The passage also acknowledges the existence of **supreme** might, splendor and intelligence, for it says, "in the beginning God..." The great one who inhabits the heavens and under whose superintendence all creatures flourish and have their being. The great whales of the ocean, roaming wolves of the desolate places, bats of the dark loathsome caves, and birds whose melodious songs gently welcome each new day, owe their very subsistence, innate senses and abilities to GOD.

The Hebrew word which is translated God is **Elohim**, the general Hebrew name for God. It occurs altogether in the Hebrew text 2555 times. In at least 2310 of its occurrences it is used without doubt to the living and true God. The original word "Elohim" is the plural form of "El or Eloah", and without doubt tends to imply a plurality of persons in the Divine nature So, Divine revelation begins with an assertion of the fact of the Godhead.

The root meaning of **Elohim** is **strength, power** (**Brown-Driver-Briggs Lexicon**, page 43). In a **DICTIONARY OF OLD TESTAMENT WORDS** by Pick it is stated that **Elohim** denotes "superior, mighty, supreme" (page 178).

Friends, God reveals Himself. He makes Himself known by His works. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His

*handiwork.*" "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." May we forever walk in reverence and dreadful fear before the "MIGHTY ONE" who, by the word of His mouth called worlds into existence, and declared Himself the All-wise, the everlasting, and Almighty God. The very God who on Horeb, the mountain of God, called unto Moses out of the burning bush and said, "Moses, Moses!...I AM WHO I AM." Thus declaring His eternal nature and self-existence! (Ex. 3)

(3) Attributed to God in the beginning is the activity of creation. The record says, "In the beginning (*bereshith*) God (*Elohim*) created..." Created is the translation of the Hebrew verb **bara**. **Bara** is used exclusively of God! It means basically "to create, to produce, to fashion, shape, to make to bring into being." **NELSON'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT**, page 84, states "This verb is of profound theological significance, since it has only God as its subject. Only God can 'create' in the sense implied by *bara*. The verb expresses creation out of nothing, an idea seen clearly in passages having to do with creation on a cosmic scale..."

Thus, according to the teaching of inspiration, the visible universe did not exist from eternity, nor was fashioned out of pre-existing materials! A particular text which sustains this statement is found in Hebrews 11:3. The Holy Spirit impelled the writer to record, "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible."

A multiplicity of Scriptures in the Old Testament affirm that the universe is the product of miraculous creation. Isaiah 42:5 says "Thus says God the Lord, Who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and its offspring, Who gives

*breath to the people on it, And spirit to those who walk in it.*" In chapter forty-five of Isaiah and verse eighteen we read, "For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens, (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, But formed it to be inhabited)..."

The New Testament affirms the creative activity of God in such places as Hebrews 1:3, "(GOD) in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the world." Paul's great speech on Mars Hill contains a declaration of God's might in creation as recorded in Acts 17:24, "The God who made the world and all things in it since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands."

God (Elohim) is the benevolent benefactor, justifier, and sustainer. He holds within His hands the destiny of things temporal and eternal!

(4) We ascertain, too, what God created. The record says, "In the beginning (bereshith) God (Elohim) created (bara) the heavens and the earth." It is

eminently important that we emphasize that the word "heavens" (shamayim) is plural in the Hebrew text. The Hebrew word for "earth" is (erets). Keil and Delitzsch's Old Testament Commentary, Vol. 1, page 47, makes the point that the expression "heaven and earth" is "frequently employed to denote the world, or universe, for which there was no single word in the Hebrew language." Adam Clarke wrote, "As the word *shamayim* is plural, we may rest assured that it means more than the atmosphere... The word heavens must comprehend the whole solar system" (Commentary on the Bible, Vol. 1, page 30).

Regarding the Hebrew word ('erets) "earth" NELSON'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF THE O.T. observes, "The Hebrew word 'erets also occurs frequently in the phrase 'heaven and earth' or 'earth and heaven.' In other words, the Scriptures teach that our terrestrial planet is a part of an all-embracing cosmological framework which we call the universe. Not the result of accident or innate forces, the unfathomed reaches of space and its uncounted components owe their

origin to the Lord 'who made heaven and earth' (Ps. 121:2; 124:8; 134:3)."

The testimony of the most learned (?) skeptics and scientists, along with some professed theologians cannot invalidate the plain testimony of Genesis chapter one and verse one! The inspired penman, Moses, wrote as he was impelled or moved by the Holy Spirit (II Pet. 1:20-21). Therefore, what he wrote is "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16-17), and hence, is true (Jno. 17:17).

The universe is the product of intelligence; supreme intellect. It is the work of power which is more awesome in magnitude than mere mortals will ever develop in a laboratory flask!

Our great universe is no more the result of chance (accident) than is a perfectly designed and built bridge! And, that is why "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have done abominable deeds" (Ps. 14:1).



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## Teenagers and Fornication

by Morris Norman

I hope that teenagers read this column. It comes out of a request by a teenager to write on the subject, having been involved in it. It was observed that many teenagers are involved in fornication because of peer pressure and the times in which we live. Young and old alike need to be aware of this great sin.

Fornication in the New Testament comes from a Greek word that means "every kind of unlawful intercourse." It can refer specifically to the act committed by an unmarried person, or generally to all illicit sex, including adultery. Sexual intercourse can only be fulfilled in marriage. Otherwise it is sin. "Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: But fornicators and adulterers God will judge" (Heb. 13:5). Let no one deceive you, there is no way that one can engage in the sex act outside of a marriage that is recognized by God, and be sinless.

The humanist of Paul's day rationalized fornication: "Meats for the belly, and belly for the meats," But Paul says, "God shall destroy both it and them" (I Cor. 6:13). Your bodies are members with Christ, to join your body to one who is not your mate, is to be joined to a harlot (v. 15). The body was not made for fornication but for the Lord (v. 13). He that commits fornication sins against his own body (v. 18). "FLEE FORNICATION." "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Cor. 7:1).

The New Testament is replete with warnings against fornication, it can be found in most every book. The reason is because sexual desire is so strong, especially in the young who have not developed their self control as they should. And the young are so impressionable, can be led astray so easily. It usually comes out of

emotional experiences where defenses are low and passions are running high. Then it is hard to say, "NO!"

The humanists of our day rationalize about it. It is alright, they say, if it comes out of a meaningful relationship. After all, they say, it is an act of love and what can be wrong if you love each other. We intend to marry, they say, so it will be alright. Everyone is doing it, they say. You are out of step with the times, they say.

Young people, guard your chastity, keep your purity for the marriage bed and the one that will be your companion for life. We could offer all the worldly reasons why you should not commit fornication, such as venereal disease, shame, guilt, pregnancy; but our society has had effort to eradicate all of these. But if they had not, the real reason remains the same, IT IS SIN. Do not listen to the immoralists who will try to tell you differently.

Make up your mind once and for all that you will not be a fornicator. Do it now, and then when the temptation comes, you will have little problem saying, "NO!"

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## Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

# THE HAPPY LIFE

**Introduction to our study of the Psalms:** For over five years on Sundays, previous to my move to Huntsville, I taught a Bible class from the Psalms. Never have I engaged in a richer, more rewarding study. The notes I have compiled were drawn from many sources. Commentaries that have proved most helpful are Charles Spurgeon's *Treasury of David* and Matthew Henry's. Many books and writings have provided valuable insights to particular psalms.

I believe that a series of written lessons on the Psalms in this Journal can be productive of good. The Psalms are a portion of scripture that is largely neglected in our Bible classes. Sermons that are based upon the Psalms are usually centered on one particular statement without emphasis to the immediate or larger context.

Besides, I just want to do some writing on the Psalms. So with those thoughts, we begin this series. The Psalms are appropriate for all people of all ages. They reflect the happiness and security as well as the turmoil and disturbances of those saints of old.

Why not open your Bibles and read the first psalm before we continue. It serves well as a preface to the entire volume of this ancient hymnal.

**The happy person** (v. 1-3): "*Blessed is the man. . .*" This word, "blessed" refers to true happiness. It is a peace which is untouched by outward circumstances. A precious commodity, that! You and I don't know too many folks who fall into that category.

In order to possess this true happiness, we must refrain from certain things. First, we must "*walk not in the counsel of the ungodly.*" A person's walk is his way of life. The ungodly is any man or woman who

does not fear and love God. The counsel of such people confronts us at every turn. The ungodly tell us to "grab all the gusto you can get for you only go around once" and "me first" and "if it feels good do it." The so-called new morality, relativism, evolution, free love, etc. all fall into the class under consideration.

The truly happy will not be found "*standing in the way of sinners.*" We are in the world with sinners, but we must not stand where they stand. Our stand upon various matters will be far different from theirs.

Neither will the truly happy "*sit in the seat of the scornful.*" There is a progression here that should be noted. One who lives (walks) according to the counsel of the ungodly, and occupies (stands in) the same territory as sinners will soon find himself sitting in the seat of the scornful. He becomes the ungodly counsellor. He will scorn or mock God's people, His revelation, His Son, and all else that is holy and good.

Now look at what he does: "*His delight is in God's law.*" He has developed an insatiable appetite for God's word and anticipates enthusiastically the hour in which he feeds his soul thereon. Then he meditates upon what he has read both day and night. It becomes a part of him (James 1:8). He thinks about it at various times and applies it to his heart and life. He does not look to the world for peace of mind, but to the law and the prophets.

To what is such a person likened? He is like "a tree." Our earthly lives are compared to grass (James 1:10, 11). But one who builds upon this foundation is likened to a tree. It is "a tree planted." It didn't accidentally shoot up. This tree was there on purpose. It is a tree planted by the

"rivers of waters." Every need is supplied. This tree is nourished by the grace, love, hope, promises, and communion of God. It is a fruitful tree. The Christian's main purpose is to bear fruit in season (John 15:1-9; Gal. 5:22,23). This is the bearing season. Let us bear much fruit. It is a tree of beauty. The leaf does not wither. Life and strength are abundantly in evidence. The foliage is that part of the tree which is seen. Remember, however, that the roots provide the strength, and stability and nourishment.

His is true prosperity. "Whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." He may not prosper materially, but he prospers where it really counts. He uses his life in keeping with his Maker's will. And he's happy!

The ungodly are not like that. (v. 4). To everything that is said of the blessed man, read "not so" of the ungodly. He is not as a tree, but rather as "chaff that the wind bloweth away." He has no root, no life, no fruit, no attractiveness, no usefulness, and no value.

Such is God's judgment of that life which makes no room for God. Such a one may have it all together in a worldly sense, but no real purpose is being accomplished in his life.

Result (v. 5, 6)? "*The ungodly shall not stand in the judgment nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.*" When God's redeemed people are gathered, these will not be there. Why? Because God knows the way of the righteous. Their way is His way. He guides and oversees them. "*But the way of the wicked shall perish.*" Sin may seem pleasurable now, but that way shall one day perish forever.

Friend, let this psalm be your meditation for awhile. Let us learn the secret of real happiness.

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# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “FOOL”

**Hebrew Word; nabhal**

**Meaning: “fool”**

In I Sam. 25 there is an interesting account of David's encounter with a man called Nabal. You will recall that David was on the run from King Saul. When David requested hospitality from Nabal, the man refused to give it. David thought to destroy him. But Abigail, Nabal's wife, pleaded for her husband's life. She offered a remarkable explanation for Nabal's ungracious behavior. She said, speaking to David, *“Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him. . .”* (I Sam. 25:25).

This passage gives us a vivid picture of our word, **nabhal**. In the only case in the Bible in which this word is used as a proper name, Abigail tells David he must not expect Nabal to act properly because the man lives up to his name. Nabal means fool! If a Bible student will keep Nabal in mind he will scarcely ever have any trouble knowing how to define the word fool in the Old Testament (or the New Testament, generally).

In its various forms as a verb, noun, or adjective, the root **NBL** (in reference to our particular area of consideration) is used in the Old Testament about 32 times. And though the definitions given it by the lexicons permit the fundamental idea of stupidity, this root is nearly always used to convey a secondary but far worse concept; moral and spiritual rebelliousness.

For instance, when Amnon, the son of David, tries to seduce his sister, Tamar, she says that to do so such a thing will make him *“as one of the fools in Israel”* (2 Sam. 13:13). Sexual depravity is not necessarily a sign of stupidity, rather, ungodliness.

When the Lord rebuked *“Job's comforters,”* Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, He charged them with *“folly”* (**nebhalah**) concerning their

presumptuous explanations of God's dealings with man (Job 42:8). The long, complex speeches they made in the book of Job were not indicative of stupidity, i.e., low I.Q., but presumption. They acted far too big for their breeches. Job told his wife that she was speaking *“as one of the foolish women”* (Job 2:10). He meant that she was talking without thinking properly about God.

Moses told the children of Israel, before they entered Canaan, that if they were not obedient to the Lord they would be provoked by a *“foolish nation”* (Dt. 32:21). And, sure enough, the evils of the Israelites became so pronounced in the 7th--6th centuries, B.C., that God allowed the Babylons to destroy Jerusalem and carry them away to captivity. In the period of the Captivity the Psalmist mourned the fact that a *“foolish people”* (the Babylonians) were now blaspheming God's name (Psa. 74:18). God kept His promise that they would be provoked by a *“foolish”* nation. The Babylonians were not stupid. Nebuchadnezzar, their king, was a very able general and administrator. But he was a heathen idolator, hence, *“foolish”*.

Illustrations of the use of the root **NBL** (**nabhal**, **nebhalah**) to convey the idea of culpable rebellion against God and truth could be multiplied here. But I think the point is made. The *“fool”* (**nabhal**) who says in his heart, *“There is no God,”* is not necessarily a stupid man. He may be very intelligent. But if, in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary (cf. Rom. 1:18-21), he refuses to exercise his will and his intelligence to believe in Jehovah, he is a *“fool,”* a moral and spiritual rebel (Psa. 14:1; 53:1).

## “DOUBLEMINDED”

**Greek Word: dipsuchos**

**Meaning: doubleminded, two souled**

W.E. Vine says that this word means, literally, *“Two-souled”* (**dis**, twice, **psuche**, souled), (**Expos. Dict.**

**of N.T. Words**). It is used only two times in the New Testament, and the general opinion seems to be that the writer of the Epistle of James coined it (See Jas. 1:8; 4:8). It and a synonym or two occur in several passages of the Early Fathers, and all of these usages seem traceable to the concept first introduced in James.

I suppose that it is generally believed that modern psychology pioneered the description and denomination of schizophrenia, i.e., split-personality. But that disposition of the spirit which unhinges the mind from reality and catapults it into the realm of shadow and apparition was known by our Creator before He made us. He created us capable of making choices consistent with His purposes for us or against them. The individual who stands in the no-man's-land between good and evil is of two minds. doubleminded.

James suggests that those of us who have not learned to pray in genuine faith need not expect the wisdom promised by the Lord. The unbelieving believer is *“unstable in all his ways,”* and cannot pray with effectiveness. He is crippled by his doublemindedness (Jas. 1:5-8). The sinner in whose life the strain of the unnatural marriage of the name of Christ to sinfulness compromises his very identity is the victim of his own doublemindedness.

Moulton and Milligan suggest that this word is a virtually synonymous concept with the verb **diakrino** found in Rom. 4:20 and Jas. 1:6 (**Vocab. of the New Testament**). In the first passage it may be seen that Abraham did **not** *“stagger”* at God's promise that Sarah would bear a son though both he and she were quite old. He was not of *“separate judgments”* (cf. Thayer on **dia**, C. 4), i.e., not of two irreconcilable opinions on the same subject. He was not doubleminded.

In Jas. 1:6 the word **diakrino** is translated *“waver”* and is used in the analogy of the ever vacillating wave of the sea and the unstable heart of the faithless man. Those of us who have

sat by, on, or in the edge of a rolling surf and seen the waves fight for a purchase on the land only to be drawn back by gravity and the tide underlying them have been prompted to think of the recurring agonized crisis of the doubleminded man.

Doublemindedness is a tragic inner contradiction. It is impossible for one to ride the same horse in two different directions at the same time, and that is what the doubleminded man is trying to do whether or not he realizes it. There are but three avenues of escape from this painful spiritual impasse:

1)The doubleminded man may decide for the Devil and find relief from constant self-accusation, having hardened his conscience (1 Tim. 4:2). But he must choose hell over heaven to find relief by this means; 2)He may refuse to decide for the Lord or the Devil and continue his effort to live two lives. In this case he will finally lose his mind. In the psychotic twilight of the unreal the tension of the real will dissipate. But though congenital insanity renders its victim non-culpable, here and hereafter, who is able to say as much for one whose negligence is

tantamount to self-inducement of the condition? 3) He may choose for the Lord, and commit himself without reservation to a "faithful creator" (1 Pet. 4:19). The difficulty in this way of escape is the unselfish discipline, physical and spiritual, required to pursue it. But it is the only hope of temporal sanity and eternal salvation available to the doubleminded man.



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# GOOD BUT LOST

by Daniel H. King

All of us have neighbors and friends who are good people, genuinely moral and honest. They are gentle and kind and are a tribute to their upbringing. Some even sustain some relation to one form of religion or another. But does this guarantee that they are in a saved state? Would it imply that, were the world to end right now, they would enjoy heaven as their eternal abode?

Were we to answer this question directly, a few of you might resent the answer and read no further. So, perhaps it is best not to give a direct reply just here, but to offer instead an example from Scripture.

In fact, just such a man as we have described is referred to in the Bible, and his spiritual condition denoted. His name is Cornelius and we meet up with him in Acts 10:1ff. There he is described thus:

1. **He was a devout man.** This word says of him that he was "devoted to religion or to religious duties." Unlike many folks who make no pretension to religion, Cornelius was devoted to that which he thought was true and worthwhile in matters of the spirit. Again, he not only lent verbal assent to what he thought right, but he expressed his inward feelings toward divinity by outward manifestations of devotion.

2. **He feared God with all his house.** The writer of Proverbs said that the fear of the Lord was the beginning of knowledge (1:7). Cornelius seemed to have learned this lesson well personally. But he did something else which was also commendable. The Bible says that he shared this respect for the God of heaven with those of his family, "with all his house." This house was dedicated to God because it was headed by one who had given his heart in devotion to the Lord. The home of Cornelius would stand out in bold relief against so many homes today wherein the fear of the Lord is absent, often on account of a father whose concerns are elsewhere.

3. **He gave much alms to the people.** Being in the position which he was, a centurion, and apparently well-paid, Cornelius evidenced his love for God by his love for, and generosity towards, his fellow men. Nothing in his Roman background urged him to do as he was doing. The influence of true religion had made of him a man of openheartedness and openhandedness. Evidently he had gained a reputation for it, since the text reads: "much alms to the people." His spirit of generosity was not the decision of a moment, but a habit of life.

4. **He prayed to God always.** Three

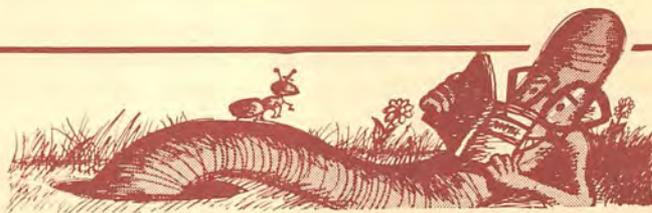
things are told us here. First, he prayed. He did not feel independent and self-sustaining, as do some, but he had a sense of his own weakness and frailty and the need for aid from one greater than himself. Second, he prayed to God. He had found the proper Source for spiritual strength and the sustaining power of the inward man—it was found in God. Moreover, the God to whom he prayed was the right one, not a pretender to divinity, not one among a host, but the creator and sustainer of man's life. Third, he prayed always, that is continually. His prayers were not occasional nor were they seasonal (to fit the religious holidays and feasts). They, like his almsgiving, were a part of his regular course of life.

When one further reads that his prayers and alms had ascended as a memorial before God (Acts 10:4), one would be moved to think of him as a man in a safe condition. But one would need to think again. For, you see, Cornelius had not yet heard, believed and obeyed the gospel of Christ. He needed to hear words whereby he and his household might be saved (Acts 11:14). When he did hear them he did not hesitate either to believe or act upon his conviction that these words were true.

The attitudes of love for and devotion to God which had spurred his prayers and his deeds of charity caused him to submit humbly to baptism upon the command of Peter (Acts 10:48). If those qualities of character are present in you today, you will be no less willing to render obedience to the gospel. You are no better than Cornelius!

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**HOW TO RAISE CONFIDENT CHILDREN** by Richard L. Strauss (Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 155 pages, \$4.95.

This book was originally published by the Tyndale Company in 1975 under the title of **Confident Children and How They Grow**. The author jokes that this book is really just an examination and explanation of another book, the best one ever written on the subject of raising children, **God's Guidebook for Child Rearing**, the Bible.

Everyone knows it isn't easy to raise godly children. Strauss, however, does believe that principles from the Bible will make it a lot easier. The author believes that God, our Heavenly Father, is Himself the perfect role model for effective parenthood.

Strauss is convinced that the process of discipline should include a balance of kindness, respect, teaching, rules, and punishment. Parents are reminded that good parenting springs from loving and obeying the Lord.

The book is positive and constructive. Illustrations are drawn from Scriptures and life experiences with Strauss's own four boys. Readers will find it a practical tool, and enjoy a balanced objectivity throughout the book.

**TEACHING THE ADULT BIBLE CLASS** by Chris Willerton (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1982, paperback, 52 pages, \$2.95.

Some adults become teachers of the adult Bible classes with great fear and a little pestered since they feel they were forcibly recruited; others become teachers with great excitement. The author of this little book would have to

fall into the latter category.

In discussing the new challenges in the class room, Willerton said: "To make his friends feel secure, a leader has to lead. He can't push, he can't ramble away, he can't hang back and grumble. There's a path to be picked out and a million things to be seen. After helping his comrades make it through thickets and onto mountain peaks, he can take the road home with satisfaction. Helping others not only to find their way but to enjoy the trip, is a wonderful thing."

This book is small, but it packs a powerful punch. The author explains how to lead the way and also how to share the lead. He discusses the differences between lecturing, team-teaching, and group discussions. His sections on "Troubleshooting" deals with such subjects as getting the students to read their lessons ahead of time, how to get some students to talk in class, and how to get the loud-mouth to stop talking.

**SERMONS, CHAPEL TALKS AND DEBATES** by Arvy Glenn Freed (Gospel Advocate: Nashville, Tennessee) 1983, paperback, \$6.95.

This book was originally published in 1930 and is now one of the Gospel Advocate Classic Reprints. It contains the chief arguments used by the author in his debates with leading denominational men of his day, including the propositions for his debate with J.N. Hall in 1894. This volume also contains many lessons presented by Freed to thousands of young people during the many years of his teaching experience. The sermon outlines are some of the old classics on the fundamentals of New Testament Christianity.

My favorite section of the book was his compiling of Scriptures and dates dealing with the kingdom. He starts with 30 A.D.--"at hand", moves to 31 A.D.--"Thy kingdom come", 32 A.D.--"I will build", 33 A.D.--"shall come" and "waiting for" before moving into the kingdom coming with

power. He then moves into the closing chapters of the Bible and puts Scriptures and dates together there, too.

Freed launched his teaching-preaching career in 1889, which lasted until his passing in 1931. It is highly unusual for one to be remembered so favorably and with such profound influence after more than fifty years after his death. You will enjoy reading these short chapters.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION** by Ferrell Jenkins (Florida College Bookstore: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1984, paperback, 151 pages, \$4.95.

The book of Revelation is one of the most interesting and profitable studies in which one can engage. Due to the fact that there are many things hard to be understood in the figurative language of the book, some think the book cannot be understood at all and have refused to study it. Jenkins believes that much of the fear of the images in the book will disappear if Christians become aware of the use of Old Testament symbols in the book of Revelation. John was using language and imagery which was thoroughly familiar to his first-century readers today can gain much by investigating the symbols of Revelation in their Old Testament settings.

Jenkins emphasizes that Revelation does not speak the language of Matthew, Luke, Paul, or Peter, but of the Old Testament prophets Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. The book is the most thoroughly Jewish in its language and imagery of any New Testament book. Jenkins shows that all major sections of the Old Testament are included in Revelation, with quotations or allusions from 24 books. He shows nearly 350 quotes or allusions from the Old Testament found in Revelation.

This book avoids harmful speculation and thus provides a reliable and useful aid in the study of the exciting and encouraging book at the

end of the Bible. With any kind of interest at all, this book will make Revelation as easy to understand as any other book in the Bible.

**STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION** by Ferrell Jenkins (Florida College Bookstore: Temple Terrace, Florida), 1983, paperback, 28 pages, \$2.00.

This book contains detailed outlines and notes on the entire book of Revelation. It is a complimentary book to the one above. Jenkins has prepared special material dealing with introductory matters, the kingdom, the Battle of Armageddon, and thoughts on Revelation 20. Lesson four refutes the religious error of premillennialism. A suggested reading list on books helpful in studying the book of Revelation is found at the end of the book. This volume is short and to the point. I'm sure you would find it to be a useful tool.

**THE LORD'S SUPPER** by Dick Blackford (Life Line Lessons: Owensboro, Kentucky), 1983, paperback, 80 pages, \$2.35.

Blackford begins this book by stating, "Probably no religious subject has been surrounded by more areas of controversy both in and out of the church than the Lord's Supper." This study guide consists of 13 lessons with 20-26 questions after each lesson. The author looks at our Lord's death and how Christians should commemorate it. Many Christians take a piece of bread and a drink of juice each Sunday without ever thinking of the Lord and His death.

This little book serves as a reference book and answers numerous questions about this solemn feast. Blackford deals with the Lord instituting this memorial, problems with the proper observance of it at Corinth, the significance of the first day of the week, the frequency of partaking, and much, much more. Not only are problems with denominational views dealt with, but also issues in the church such as the one-container question, Sunday evening communion, and the matter of unity.

Some have wondered how Blackford could deal with the Lord's Supper for 13 lessons, but after reading the book they have been made to wonder how they were able to understand the

significance of the memorial feast before. I'm sure this book will be a great help to all Christians everywhere.

**CHURCH DISCIPLINE FOR CARING CHRISTIANS** by Robert S. Usrey (Resource Publications: Searcy, Arkansas), 1983, paperback, 334 pages, \$7.95.

Discipline is not what you do to a person--it is what you do for a person. Too few churches are willing to practice Scriptural discipline; too few preachers are willing to preach and/or write on the subject; too few elders are willing to demand it. Usrey has waded out into water that few have been willing to go. He points out that no single sin is necessarily more deadly than another. All sins separate us from God and all sins must be dealt with.

The author approaches church discipline from a much wider viewpoint that just the final act of withdrawing ourselves from someone. He also deals with many practical applications that must be made. He shows how to improve church discipline, where to begin and how to do it. Emphasis is placed on our patience, forbearance, and long-suffering and distinctions between strong and weak saints.

The book contains 18 chapters of stimulating, highly informative information on a much-neglected study. It is well researched and well written and I predict will have a warm response from the brotherhood.

**CHURCH DISCIPLINE FOR CARING CHRISTIANS: A STUDY GUIDE** by Robert Usrey (Resource Publications: Searcy, Arkansas), 1983, paperback, 47 pages, \$1.95).

This workbook/study guide is a companion to the above reviewed book. Although simple and plain, this little book calls for serious thought and courageous decisions about a most complex issue. It requires an examination of Scriptures, a definition of terms, and answers to many questions. I recommend it as a study tool with the above source volume.

**THE BOOK OF JOB** by Wayne Jackson (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 147 pages, \$4.95.

Many people have struggled through a sickness, a death or other tragedy and asked "Why?" Far too

many have developed spiritual doubts because of their personal suffering. This little book is designed to help in times of struggle. It is a source of encouragement for both those who suffer and those who counsel them.

Jackson did not attempt a technical commentary on the Book of Job. He chose, instead, to give the common Bible student a working knowledge of the general scheme of Job, and some practical guidelines as to how one can better his own service to the Lord by learning the valuable lessons of this poetic masterpiece.

The author has dealt with God's disciplinary work and the all-sufficiency, omnipotence, and omniscience of our Creator. In addition to the commentary on Job, Jackson deals with four special studies: Origin, Mission & Destiny of Satan; Problem of Human Suffering; Science In the Book of Job; and The Providence of God.

I strongly recommend this little book. It is scholarly, yet written on a level easily understood by the average Bible student.

**MANNERS IN GOD'S HOUSE** by Ethel Uhrich (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1972, paperback, 19 pages, \$3.95.

This book was designed to serve two purposes: it is a picture-storybook and a set of posters. The pictures show two boys, Freddy and Denny, in the church building as they go through various items of worship. Situations depict effects of good and bad manners. The introduction to the book says, "The way we act towards others shows either good manners or bad manners. The way we act in God's house shows how we feel about Him."

The pages are 10" x 13 1/4", very colorful, and can be torn out on the perforation to be used as posters. Students are encouraged to examine the two boys and see which of them is using good manners that would be pleasing to God.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:

The Book Shelf  
P.O. Box 237  
Bowling Green, Ky. 42102-0237

# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## ALEXANDER CAMPBELL



What do you think of when you hear Alexander Campbell's name mentioned? Some think of a preacher, others a writer and editor, others a college president, still others think of a powerful debater. I remember one older preacher who told me he never read much about Campbell because he was called a "Campbellite" by all of his Baptist friends as he was growing up.

Alexander Campbell was born in County Antrim, parish of Broughshane, Ireland, on September 12, 1788. His early education was provided by one of the "most accurate English and classical scholars" of the day - his own father, Thomas Campbell (1763 - 1854). As a young boy he had an abundance of health and vitality, though little ambition for knowledge. J.J. Haley, in his book **Makers and Molders of the Reformation Movement**, tells of the time Alexander fell asleep under a shade tree while reading his French lesson in *"The Adventures of*

*Telemachus.*" A cow came along, snatched the book and ate it. Upon learning of the incident his father administered a sound thrashing, and told him "the cow has more French in her stomach than you do in your head."

In 1808 Thomas Campbell, a Presbyterian minister, moved to Washington, Pennsylvania. Alexander was left behind with the rest of the family. When they tried to join Thomas in America, their boat was shipwrecked on the coast of Scotland. Alexander spent the next year in study at the University of Glasgow. There he was influenced by many great religious reformers.

When young Campbell finally arrived in America, he read his father's famous *"Declaration and Address."* In it he saw the basic principles of restoration, that **"nothing should be required as a matter of faith or duty for which a 'Thus saith the Lord' could not be produced."**

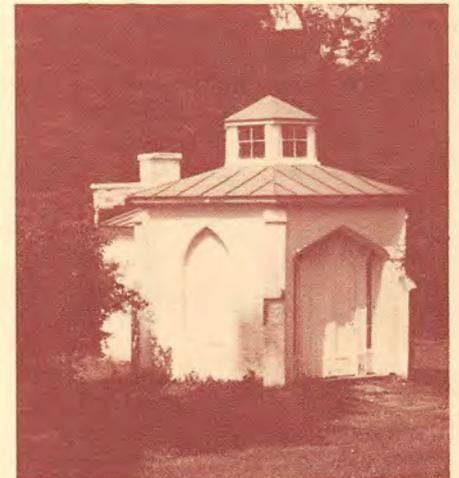
On March 12, 1811, Alexander married Margaret Brown. After the birth of their first child, Campbell spend a great deal of time studying the subject of baptism. Convinced that the scriptures demanded total immersion, the Campbells were baptized by Matthias Luce, a Baptist preacher.

In 1811 the Brush Run Church was organized. It was here that Alexander preached his first sermon. Two years later the church joined the Redstone Baptist Association. Due to the Campbell's opposition to human creeds, several members of the Association were against allowing the Campbell's to join.

At a meeting of the Regular Baptist Association, on Cross Creek, Virginia in 1816, Alexander delivered his famous *"Sermon On The Law."* Thirty years later in his magazine, *The*

*Millenial Harbinger* (Sept., 1846, pages 493-521), he published a transcript of the sermon. He started off with Romans 8:3; *"For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."* He then demonstrated the weakness of the Mosaic law, and pointed out the things it could not accomplish. Then, to the depreciation of many present, he claimed the law had fulfilled its purpose and had been entirely taken away. Up to this time many had tried to make a distinction between the moral and ceremonial parts of the law.

As he drew this sermon to a close he said, **"It is remarkable how strong our attachments are to Moses as a teacher; though Moses taught us to look for a greater prophet than he, and to hearken to him! . . . With all his moral excellence, unfeigned piety, and legislative dignity, he fell short of Canaan. So all who cleave to him will come short of the heavenly rest! His**



*Campbell's six-sided brick study, located next to his home in Bethany, West Virginia.*

mortal remains, and his only, the Almighty buried in secret; and yet we will not suffer his ashes to rest in peace! He came down from heaven to give place to the Messiah, to lay down his commission at his feet; and we will not accept it! Strange infatuation!"

Campbell later said this sermon involved him in a seven year war with some members of the Association.

As a master of oratory, Campbell had a few equals. Another famous restoration preacher, Raccoon John Smith, told about the first time he heard Campbell preach. When Campbell finished the sermon, Smith turned to a brother Vaughn and said, "Is it not a little hard to ride thirty miles to hear a man preach thirty minutes?" Vaughn replied, "Oh, he has been longer than that. Look at your watch." When Smith looked, he saw that Campbell had preached two hours and thirty minutes. Brother Vaughn then asked him, "Did you find out whether he was a Calvinist or an Arminian?" Smith then stated, "No, I know nothing about him, but, be he devil or saint, he has thrown more light on that epistle (Galatians, chap) and the whole Scriptures than I have heard in all the sermons I ever listened to before."

Between 1823 and 1830 Campbell published *The Christian Baptist*. The

paper was unrelenting in its attacks upon human creeds and what Campbell called the "*Kingdom of the Clergy*." In volume two he gave the clergy one of his most biting pieces of satire, called:

The  
**THIRD EPISTLE OF PETER**

To The  
Preachers and Rulers of Congregations.

A Looking Glass For The Clergy

Space will not permit us to copy much of the article, but a few lines are in order. "Be ye not called as men are called; but be ye called Pope, Archbishop, Archdeacon, or Divine, or Reverend, and Right Reverend, or some like holy name; so you may show forth your honor and your calling. . . Let the houses in which you preach be called churches, and let them be built in manner of great ornament without, and adorned with much cost within; with rich pillars and paints, and with fine altars and pedestals, and urns of precious stones, and cloths and velvet of scarlet, and vessels of silver. . . And be ye mindful not to offend people; rebuke ye not their sins; but when ye rebuke sin, rebuke it at a distance; and let no man apply your sayings to his own case; so shall he be not offended."

Campbell later separated from the Baptists, and continued his journey toward a restoration of New Testament



*Alexander Campbell's tombstone at family cemetery in Bethany, West Virginia.*

christianity. In 1830 he began publishing a new paper, *The Millennial Harginger*. In 1835 he authored an often reprinted book, *The Christian System*. This book presented a plan for religious unity in the world, i.e., a complete return to the New Testament pattern for the church.

During his long life Campbell had several debates with well known opponents. In each discussion he brought more and more of God's plan to light. His debate with the skeptic Robert Owen in 1829 placed him in a very favorable light with the rest of the religious world. In a future article we will examine all of Campbells debates and his opponents.

Campbell ended his earthly journey on Sunday, March 4, 1866. In writing Campbell's obituary, W.K. Pendleton spoke of the calmness with which Alexander passed from this life. He said, "When his voice had almost entirely left him, and he was struggling for breath his wife said to him, 'The blessed Saviour will go with you through the valley of the shadow of death.' He looked earnestly into her face for a moment, and then, with a great effort, said emphatically--'That he will! That he will!'"



*Bethany College, founded by Campbell, and chartered on March 2, 1840.*

## From out of the Past

The Gospel Guardian  
October, 1935

# The Need Of A Balanced Diet

by John T. Lewis

We hear a great deal these days about balancing the budget. Whenever a government, city, county, or nation cannot balance its budget it is headed for chaos and disintegration. But I am not writing about balancing the budget in governmental affairs; but the great need of a *Balanced Diet* in the pulpits and in the religious journals of our country.

Paul said to the church at Corinth: *"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. I fed you with milk, not with meat; for ye were not yet able to bear it: Nay, not even now are ye able; for ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and do ye not walk after the manner of men?"* (I Cor. 3:1-4). Again Paul speaking of the priesthood of Christ says: *"of whom we have many things to say, and hard of interpretation, seeing ye are becoming dull of hearing. For when by reason of the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need again that some one teach you the rudiments of the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of solid food. For every one that partaketh of milk is without experience of the word of righteousness; for he is a babe. But solid food is for fullgrown men, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern good and evil"* (Heb. 5:11-14). If Paul were living today he could not describe the present day conditions of the church better than he did in the above quotation from his inspired pen. This unfortunate condition exists today not in one congregation; everywhere the

church is being submerged by a tidal wave of sentimental, stand-for-nothingism.

If a gospel preacher goes to a place and thunders away against the present day evils which are stopping the flow of spirituality and opening the flood gates of sensuality and infidelity, the chances are he will be accused of making personal issues, and be invited to leave town, without pay for his services. Or if an editor should permit a few articles dealing directly with the present day issues he will be swamped with letters telling him how he will have to run the paper or to stop it. These conditions are to a great extent controlling the spiritual food or diet that is going out from our pulpits, and through our religious papers of today. What would you think of firemen on their way to a fire who would stop to listen to every peanut on the way telling them how to fight the fire? Or what would you think of a fire chief that would stop fighting a fire to tell the curious crowd around about the thousands of pretty buildings that were not on fire, and finally draw off his men because they were attracting too much attention to the fire? The chief of a fire department never calls his men away from a fire as long as he thinks there is possibility of a spark rekindling the blaze. That is my idea of fighting sin, and every departure from God's truth. The popular ideas of preaching and religious journalism today would never rekindle the fires of Smithfield; but rather lead the church back to where it was during the "dark ages"--shrouded in Catholicism--with human opinion as the standard of authority in all matters of religion.

If the present attitude toward religious papers, that contend for New Testament teaching and practice, is carried to its logical conclusion it would drive the Bible out of our homes. It is a common thing to hear church members say: "We quit taking the. . . .because it was always fighting." Now let us apply this theory to the New Testament. *"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is become so, ye make him two-fold more a son of hell than yourselves"* (Matt. 23:15). Of course you would not want to hand this to your religious neighbors. It is not the spirit of Christ(?). You know we believe in "preaching the gospel in love." *"Woe unto you, scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but inwardly ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity"* (Matt. 23:27, 28). Who would want to hand this kind of literature to the hypocrites in the church today? Just such teaching would drive them away from the church! *"Ye hypocrites, well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, This people honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrine the precepts of men"* (Matt. 15: 7-9). What right have we to talk about other people's worship? So it would never do to hand the gospel according to Matthew to vain worshippers, hypocrites, and false teachers.

*"The Jews therefore murmured concerning Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. . . Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Jesus said therefore unto the twelve, Would you also go away?"* (Jno. 6:41-67). Preaching that would cause people of the world to murmur, and even drive "many disciples" away from the Lord, would certainly be out of harmony with the spirit of the age. Therefore if Jesus Christ were on earth today, in person, he would find many of the pulpits closed against Him, and if he were publishing a religious paper it would not be allowed to come into many Christian (?) homes. You know the

churches today believe in having "the spirit of Christ," and in "preaching the gospel in love." Any casual observer knows that "the spirit of Christ" today is quite different from what it was in the apostolic age. "But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, fastened his eyes on him, and said, O full of all guile and all villany, thou son of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" (Acts 13:9, 10). It does not make any difference if the Bible does say Paul was "filled with the Holy Spirit," any carnal minded Christian

can tell you that he was not "preaching the gospel in love." So if Paul were on earth today you certainly would not want him to hold your meeting because he would run all the Elymases away, and that would be too bad.

Paul labored eighteen months at Corinth, on his second missionary journey, and he planted the church there. Soon after Paul left Corinth false teachers got into the church, and turned the people against Paul and his teaching. They became guilty of almost every sin that has ever been cataloged. Paul wrote them a letter, mentioned, and condemned their sins in the most

withering terms. Thus he spread the whole disgraceful matter to the world. Brethren, do you think I Corinthians should be deleted from the New Testament? You know we ought not to let the world know anything about the factions, parties, and fornicators that are in the church today, and any religious paper that would publish and condemn such things is not fit to hand to our neighbors, or to go into Christian(?) homes!

A balanced diet therefore is not only to preach God's love to the world; but also his wrath and condemnation against sin and sinners, in the church, and out.



When one attends the services of the Lord's church, he notices several things about these services that are different from the services of denominational churches. Or at least he should notice some differences. One thing that some people notice and sometimes inquire about, is the fact that we do not make use of a choir in our services. By this, I mean we have no special group of singers to perform our "church music" for us. Instead, we all join in and sing together.

Why do we not use choirs in our worship? Is it because we fail to see that using a group of our "best singers" that the song service might sound better and be more pleasing to our ears? No. Is it because we do not see the need for presenting the best service possible to our God? No. What then is it? It is because we want only to follow a form of worship that is authorized by our God through His revelation. Sure, we should want to render the best service possible to our Lord. Sure, we should want our singing to sound as good as possible. But we must always keep in mind that we want most to please God not ourselves. Choirs may please us, but they do not please God.

What kind of song service pleases God? It is a service in which we "teach

# WHY NO CHOIR?

by Edward O. Bragwell, Jr.

and admonish one another" (Col. 3:16). It is one in which we "speak to one another" (Eph. 5:19). Paul said of his service, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Cor. 14:15). The context of each of the passages mentioned above suggest to me that the singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs is a duty that is imposed upon each individual Christian. It is not something that should be delegated to a select group. Just as another cannot give into the Lord's treasury for you, cannot partake of the Lord's supper for you, and cannot fulfill any other individual responsibility toward God for you, another cannot sing for you. The Lord expects each Christian to fulfill his responsibility in teaching and admonishing others in song and in expressing his heartfelt praise to God in song. We must not delegate that responsibility to others.

Some may feel that since they lack any "talent" for singing that it would be best to let others do it for them. What they fail to realize is that it is not the quality of the tone from one's mouth that pleases God, but the quality of the sentiment of one's heart. As long as one is singing with "grace in his heart", he is pleasing to God regardless

of his lack of musical "talent". This does not mean that we should not strive to develop what little musical "talent" we might have, but we need to get away from an over emphasis of this aspect of our singing. There are many, even among my brethren, who work very hard to make the song service more appealing to the ears of the worshippers, but do little to improve attitudes in singing. We need to put more emphasis on singing with the spirit, with the understanding, and from the heart. For us to benefit from our song service we must understand what we are singing and in order for God to be pleased with our singing it must proceed from the heart.

The reason that some "churches" have choirs is that they have lost sight of the purpose of singing in New Testament worship. When one understands its purpose one realizes that each individual has a responsibility of singing. Also, we ought to realize that choirs have as their purpose the entertainment of men and not the pleasing of God. Let each of us sing to God as he would have us to do.

# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## JOSHUA

by Wayne Earnest

**J**oshua is a book of courage and conquest that becomes at once an unforgettable book of the Bible library. William Hendriksen spoke of this book as a connecting link when he said, "**Deuteronomy records Moses' death and immediately introduces Joshua. The book of Joshua opens with a reference to Moses. (Deut. 34: 5, 9; Josh. 1:1).**" The book gets its name from its principal character, Joshua. William Smith, author of **Smith's Bible Dictionary**, believes the date of the book to be 1406-1400 B.C. The book of Joshua was mostly written by himself as we observe the first person references in 5:1, 6. The first person plural indicates an eyewitness who participates in the events himself. We read in 5:6 ". . .that he would give us a land that floweth with milk and honey." In the final chapter, we read in 24:26, "*And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God.*" However, the last five verses of chapter twenty four were written by someone else telling of the death of Joshua.

The unity of Bible doctrine is seen from book to book in God's revelation, and God has given Joshua a role to perform in holding the Bible together book by book. We remember that God had made a promise to Abraham in Gen. 12:1-3,7 and repeated it again in Gen. 15:18, 18:18, 22:18 and 26:4. Abraham had left his own country as God had directed and had journeyed into Canaan (Gen. 12:5-6), where the Lord appeared unto him, saying, "*Unto thy seed will I give this land*" (Gen. 12:7). The "great nation" part of the promise in Gen. 12 was fulfilled down in Egypt according to Deut. 26:5 and the full account given in the book of Exodus. This nation that was born under Egyptian oppression was delivered by Moses out of Egypt. The nation then wanders in the wilderness for forty years. God gives the job to Joshua to lead this new nation across Jordan into the land that God promised Abraham. We read in Joshua

21:43-45, "*And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest round about, according to all that he swore unto their fathers: and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand. There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.*"

A problem arises in the mind of some when they read Heb. 11:13 where it speaks of Abraham and Sarah saying, "*These all died in faith not having received the promises. . .*" However, be it remembered that a "spiritual promise" was also made to Abraham in Gen. 12:3 when the Lord told him, "*And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.*" Thus, this is what Abraham and Sarah did not receive as they died before the time of Christ. Paul makes it clear in Gal. 3:8-29 that to be "*in Christ*" is the fulfillment of this portion of the promises made to Abraham. Joshua affirms in chapter 21 with regards to the "*land promise*" that the children of Israel "*possessed the land*" that God had sworn to give unto their fathers and "*dwelt in it*" and that there failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord has spoken unto the house of Israel.

### COMMISSION OF JOSHUA (1:1-9)

"Hoshea, son of Nun," or Joshua, as he was renamed by Moses, succeeded without opposition to the leadership left vacant by the death of Moses. Elmer W.K. Mould in **Essentials of Bible History** said of Joshua, "**The name Hoshea means deliverance; the new name Joshua means Yahweh is deliverance; a living reminder of the sworn covenant between Yahweh and the nation of which Joshua was official represent-**

**ative.**" Joshua was thus, the first of the Hebrew heroes to bear a name compounded with Yahweh. He was of the tribe of Ephraim (Num. 13:8). George Dehoff mentions in his **Bible Handbook** that "*He had been a personal attendant of Moses through the forty years in the wilderness, was with him in the mount (Exodus 24:13), was one of the twelve spies (Numbers 13:8, 16), and Josephus says he was 85 years of age when he succeeded Moses.*" Thus, Lem O. Rogers lecturing on Joshua in the 1961 **Fort Worth Christian College Lectureship** relates, "**Joshua does not appear on the scene at the crossing of the Jordan ready-made, fully prepared. He had already come on the scene forty years before that.**" When the Lord commissioned Joshua, He said, "*. . .go over this Jordan thou, and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel*" (1:2) and that "*there shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life*" (1:5). "*Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law. . .*"

### CHALLENGE TO THE PEOPLE

(1:10-18)

In 1:10 Joshua "*commanded the officers of the people with their duties and responsibilities.*" The people answered saying, "*All that thou commandest us we will do*" (1:16). In 1:18, the people were warned that any who rebelled against "*thy commandment*" shall be put to death.

### CONDITIONING FOR ENTRANCE

INTO CANAAN (2-4)

The first act of Joshua was to send out spies from Shittim to ascertain what the country was like west of Jordan. Johnny Ramsey in a tract on Joshua summed up the events of this preparation for entrance by saying, "**The interesting drama of the Spies, Rahab and the taking of Jericho illustrates the blend of God's providence, man's obedience and the part faith plays in the success of such**

an arrangement. . . .When men set themselves apart (3:5) God can use them."

### CONQUEST OF CANAAN (5-12)

When the Lord told Joshua in 1:5 "There shall not a man be able to stand before thee," Hendriksen said, "This indicated the contents of chapters 5-12; the enemies are defeated; and the land (a large portion of it) is conquered. In Joshua 7 we learn of the tragedy of sin and its influence. When Ai repelled them, Joshua knew that sin had entered the camp, and he began to pray. God told him to stop praying and purge out the sin from the midst of Israel or victory would elude them. Achan had grievously sinned against God, by stealing some of the treasure from the spoil of Jericho. Israel had been commanded to "devote" the whole spoil of Jericho. We see what the sin of one member of God's people can do to the whole people. During this period of conquest in chapter 10, we read of the sun standing still." Just how did God do that? Explanations are as varied as the colors in the rainbow, but the one thing to remember about the incident is that it demonstrates that God was on Joshua's side in the conquest of the land.

### CANAAN THE HOME OF ISRAEL (13-22)

Joshua's job now is to divide the land between the twelve tribes. This is covered in chapters 13 through 22.

Gleason L. Archer, Jr. in his **A Survey of Old Testament Introduction** broke it down this way: Joshua's instructions concerning the division (13:1-7); Assignment to the eastern tribes (13:8-33); Assignment to the western tribes (14:1-19:51); Appointment of the cities of refuge (20:1-9); Appointment of the Levitical cities (21:1-45); and Eastern tribes dismissed to their homes (22:1-34)." The Levites were the spiritual leaders of the people. They had no land inheritance so they received forty eight cities dispersed throughout the nation. Leon Wood in **A Survey of Israel's History** said, "Levites numbered 23,000 males one month and older at the time of the conquest." The division of the land of Canaan is covered in detail in chapters 13-22.

### THE CHARGE OF THE FAREWELL ADDRESS (23-24)

We began our study in chapter one with Joshua's call to leadership and now end with his farewell address and an account of his death. Joshua reminds the leaders of the people of God's faithfulness and on that basis calls upon them to be faithful. He reminds them that God did this unto all these nations because of you (23:3). He warned that if the people transgressed they would lose God's blessings (23:14-16).

In his second farewell address, He charged them to be faithful to the Lord. He reminded them that their

fathers served other gods on the other side of the flood and in Egypt (24:14) and then charged them to "choose you this day who you will serve" (24:15). The people responded, "We will serve the Lord, for He is our God" (24:18). Joshua had been strong and courageous. He had been a good leader and teacher, for we note the great tribute and honor paid to him in 24:31. "And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and which had known all the works of the Lord, that he had done for Israel."

We near the close of our survey by listing the few instances in which reference is made to the book of Joshua in the New Testament. (1) Rahab and the spies (2:1; 6:22). Heb. 11:31 (2) Judgment upon Israel at Kadesh referred to by Joshua (5:6).--Heb. 3:11 (3) Fall of Jericho (6:20).--Heb. 11:30 (4) Punishment for disloyalty to Jehovah (24:20).--Acts 7:42.

Finally, as Johnny Ramsey so vividly said, "Joshua 24:32 tell us that the bones of Joseph, carried from Egypt to Canaan (Genesis 50:25) were buried in the promised land. What an act of faith by that ancient Patriarch!" The book of Joshua emphasizes to mankind that God is faithful. God is holy, and God provides our salvation or deliverance.

1702 S. Memorial Drive  
Tulsa, OK 74112

# WHERE'S THE BEEF?



by Baxter Graves

This humorous and mildly abrasive commercial about hamburgers calls into question whether each one of us and the work we do really has the "substance" that we outwardly claim.

Giving too small a beef patty makes the purchaser wonder if the burger company really cares. When no one replies to the question, the customer additionally feels deserted and says, "I don't believe there's anyone back there!"

As disciples of Christ, our gracious Lord instructs us to "go the second

mile" and to "do unto others as you would have others to do unto you," (to paraphrase His thoughts).

Where's the proof of our love for the world? If we love and care for our family only we are doing what the Lord said do, and we are keeping our descends from being a burden on society. Yet where is the direct proof of our love for other people?

The Lord Jesus has given to some "speaking gifts" and to others "ministering gifts" (1st Peter 4:10-11). Those everyday, non-miraculous gifts of pro-

claiming (prophecy), serving, teaching, exhorting, giving, leading and demonstrating mercy found in Romans 12:6-9 are to be targeted upon the unbelieving world. Again to paraphrase, "As you are going into all the world, make disciples, baptize them and teach them to do all I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19-20).

The essence of Christianity is not how many prayers we say, chapters we read, songs we sing, or sermons we hear, but rather do we use our talents to help those who need our help - even a small cup of water?

Let someone see the Lord through your actions today, (Matt. 5:16), and use your gift to bring them to know Jesus' help for every problem.

For the Christian, all is well!

2510 Highway 62  
Jeffersonville, IN 47130



## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanon

### OUR GOD, HE IS ALIVE

It is conceivable, that at this very moment, someone is singing the words to the above mentioned title, one of the most popular religious songs ever written by a Christian. In days to come, many may never recall or even know that this great song was written by an individual unique in his generation, who was born to excel in many disciplines. This individual was Aaron Wesley Dicus.

Dicus was a person of unshakeable faith, the beginning of which he may have inherited from a pious father, who, although not a Christian, was a devout believer in God. He was born in Festus, Missouri (near St. Louis) on May 30, 1888, the youngest of several children. His mother died when he was three years old, and his father cared for him until he was of age. When quite young, his family moved to Indiana where he received his education and training.

In the fall of 1908, at the age of twenty, he obeyed the gospel after listening to A.W. Harvey in a gospel meeting.

In 1910, Dicus married Bertha Jane Quick. Her father, David Quick, was a Christian and gave much encouragement to young Dicus to preach. His first sermon was preached at Sweetzer, Indiana, in 1913. Thus began a long, illustrious career as a servant of God--his first love. He held his first meeting in 1915. Most of the preaching was done in those days by men who traveled in circuit to keep appointments with various congregations. He filled regular appointments at Cloverdale, Crawfordsville, Traders Point, Bloomington, Bedford, and Indianapolis, all in Indiana. He held gospel meetings in many places in Indiana and Illinois.

This was in the days of the giants who had survived the digression of the previous century. He associated with and matured under the influence of great men of that day. E.M. Zerr, a self-made, no-nonsense person who

knew the Bible well, was a great influence on Dicus. Samuel Piety, a lawyer turned preacher, also had a strong influence on Dicus. Piety has been described as the Amos of his day--blunt and to the point. J.S. Johns, J.C. Roady, A.W. Harvey, and Daniel Sommer were others that were a source of encouragement to him.

In 1912, Dicus received his B.S. degree from Marion Normal at Marion, Indiana. Later he received the A.B., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from Indiana University at Bloomington. He taught in high schools in Indiana and Illinois. He then was elected to teach science in the University of Bloomington.

In January, 1930, he moved to Cookeville, Tennessee, to become a professor and head of the department of physics at Tennessee Polytechnic Institute. He continued at T.P.I. for twenty years. At one time he was President of the Tennessee Academy of Science, a member of the Southern Association of Physicists, and a member of Sigma Psi, a national honorary society.

During his years at T.P.I., Dicus continued to preach by appointment, holding many meetings in the summers. He commuted to Chattanooga regularly in the 1930's. Although he made his livelihood as a scientist, teacher, and inventor, it was preaching the gospel that he loved the most.

His eldest son--E.A., an elder and preacher with the Loraine Avenue Church in Cleveland, Ohio--reflects back on his Dad's life and says: "He was a distinguished scientist and Physics teacher, for which he received many awards. His well-trained students were always in demand by the graduate schools of major universities. Some went to work for NASA, some became teachers, while yet others entered into manufacturing or other professions. Not a few were influenced by him to preach the Word, which they did with notable success. It has been said he sent more of his students to

work in the Oak Ridge laboratories during World War II, where developmental work was being done on atomic weapons, than any other teacher of his day. A former student once paid him the ultimate compliment as a master teacher when he said, 'If A.W. Dicus can't make you understand something, then no one can.' This was true not only of his secular teaching, but also of his preaching and Bible teaching. He taught to cause people to learn, and not to demonstrate how much he knew."

In January, 1950, Dicus moved to Temple Terrace, Florida, to become the dean of Florida Christian College, serving in this capacity until 1954. He set up an academy program that helped the college to gain admittance to the Southern Association in a relatively short time. The young school was then in its fourth year, and that was the first year of the presidency of James R. Cope. Dicus brought valuable experience and academic qualifications needed in a young struggling college.

After the move to Temple Terrace, Dicus' wife passed away. In 1953, he married Flora Braden.

Dicus invented numerous gadgets over the years. His most successful product was the automobile turn signal. It was patented and first produced in 1920, when the automobile industry was in its infancy. His signals were manufactured at the Dicus-Schelmier plant, of which he was co-owner, in Indianapolis. The plant closed in 1921, and in 1937 his patent (No. 1,359,341) expired. He also invented an electric pencil sharpener, a skill saw, and an automobile speed governor. At his death, the wire services picked up this facet of his life (as well as others) a result of which was that most metropolitan newspapers around the country carried an account of his passing.

Dicus was also an architect and builder. During his life-time he was responsible for the design and construction of many houses and

buildings. He built homes for himself, some apartment houses, and a building at Florida College which served for years as the class room building but is now a dormitory for boys and known as the Dicus Building. He also designed and supervised the construction of the building in which the Temple Terrace Church still meets. He did much of the work with his own hands. A few years later he supervised the construction of the class room building behind the auditorium.

His eldest son, E.A., again passed on some information about his Dad: "While all these accomplishments gave him a sense of fulfillment, yet deep in his heart, his most cherished desire was to be considered a success as a faithful preacher of God's word. It was this which gave him the richest of rewards and the fullest satisfaction of soul. He considered all other endeavors as secondary to this, his most important work of all. He reached his goal in life, for he became a respected Gospel preacher who faithfully proclaimed God's word for more than fifty years. Many talk in paths of righteousness today because of his efforts. The results of his labors can be found in many states of the North, as well as the South. His book of sermon outlines, although now out of print, is still eagerly sought after by those who desire to preach the word of God."

In his old age, somewhat as a hobby, Bro. Dicus took up song writing. The secular world may mostly remember A.W. Dicus as the inventor of the turn signal, but Christians all around the world remember him as the one responsible for both the words and music to "Our God, He Is Alive."

This song was first published in 1966. Tampa Mayor Dick Greco presented Dicus with a plaque "in appreciation for community services" on December 16, 1969. After the presentation, Mayor Greco requested the Florida College Chorus to assemble in the lobby of City Hall and sing Dicus' most popular song. Dr. Dicus then explained the history of this song. He said he first took it to the Temple Terrace Church and because of the way it was received, he then had it printed and the congregation there started using it. "The students got hold of it and they are the ones that began to spread it. Like everything else, you get surprised you know. You just don't know when it's going to happen."

Several stories have circulated

around the brotherhood that Bro. Dicus wrote this song in response to a *Time* magazine article asking "Is God Dead?" E.A. said, "All of the family agree that he had repeatedly said no single event or circumstance motivated him to write this song. If so, he said, 'I am not consciously aware of it.' The driving force behind his desire to write it--and others--was the result of a never-dying faith, and the compulsion to express it to a world where belief in God was surely decaying." When asked about the *Time* magazine article, E.A. said, "I fear this may become one of the myths that frequently surround those who have taken a place in history because of their accomplishments."

It is impossible to know how many people have read the words to this song. E.A. informs us that "Dad told me, quite sometime before his death, that he had personally sent out more than one-million copies, sometime in quantities of four or five-thousand at a time. This was in addition to the number published in many hymnals in use today. Requests still come in for them."

The world may soon forget his other accomplishments, but wherever Christians gather to worship and sing "Our God, He is Alive" the message of one man's faith will ring out through the ages to come.

**There is, beyond the azure blue,  
a God, concealed from human sight,  
He tinted skies with heav'nly hue  
and framed the worlds with His  
great might.**

**There is a God, He is alive,  
in Him we live, and we survive;  
From dust our God created man,  
He is our God, the great I AM.**

#### **LORD, I BELIEVE**

According to his eldest son, E.A., Dr. A.W. Dicus "would work long hours at secular work during the week, travel to a distant place on Saturday, preach three or four sermons, take whatever remuneration the brethren gave him (if any), return home late Sunday night, get up early Monday morning and start the week all over again. Yet all through these trying years, he never faltered. Regardless of the hardships and frustrations he suffered, his faith in God grew stronger, never weaker.

"This was demonstrated later, again and again, as he pursued his secular education. He often stood alone before his class and stoutly defended the Bible

against those who would try to destroy it by their absurd arguments. He considered the athiest and his kindred the worst kind of fools because they said in their hearts, 'There is no God.' His scientific training never eroded his faith. Instead, it only served to strengthen his conviction that the Heavens still declare the glory of God.

"As he neared the sunset of his life, his health began to fail and his eyesight grew dim. Reluctantly, he realized his preaching days were nearing an end, and he would have to give up the work he loved so much. He then turned his creative efforts toward the writing of songs, and in doing so preserved for all posterity his faith in the existence of the GREAT I AM."

A.W. Dicus wrote about thirty or forty songs, but only a dozen or so of them printed. He had songs on prayer, Communion, Jehovah and other topics. "Lord, I Believe" was copyrighted in 1970.

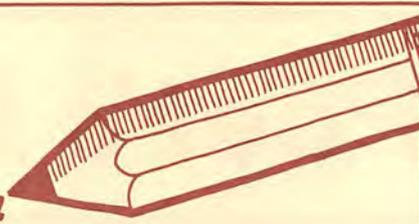
In 1969, Dr. Dicus explained that he "didn't start writing songs until. . . after I couldn't see to preach. I made up my mind to write a song or two. I didn't know any would be recognized. I didn't think I'd become a composer of music, although I've been interested in music all my life." He played several different instruments.

Death came to Bro. Dicus on September 2, 1978, following a gradual decline due to old age. A memorial service was conducted in the Temple Terrace meeting house. J.D. Evans, one of the elders, led the assembly in singing two of Dicus' songs. Irvin Himmell read the description of the new Jerusalem in Revelation 21:1-22:5. L. Griffin Copeland, another elder, made a short talk about Bro. Dicus' many accomplishments in life. Robert Morris, also an elder, led prayer. The worn out mortal body was laid to rest in Tampa, but as Solomon said, "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children. . ." (Prov. 13:22). One such inheritance is the faith expressed in his famous song, "Lord, I Believe."

**When we behold the wonders of creation,  
The flowers that bloom, the rain drops  
as they fall;  
The spacious skies and life's perpetuation,  
We can not doubt that God controlled  
it all.**

**Lord, I believe, yes, I believe,  
I can not doubt or be deceived;  
The eye that sees each sparrow fall,  
His unseen hand is in it all.**

## Short and to the Point



### The Bible Is To Blame

Being interested in what people have to say about the Bible, it came as rather a shock to hear that wars, misery, broken relationships and personal suffering have been caused by the Bible. At least that is the view of some people. Saying the Bible is the cause involves those who believe the Bible as well. They are partners in crime, so to speak.

Although this sentiment has popular appeal, how true it is in fact?

Admittedly, "Christianity" is to blame for some of the world's more shameful deeds. When one thinks of the established church spreading its faith through the conquests of Charlemagne; or those anti-Jewish riots which periodically broke out in Europe, as revenge for Christ's death; or even the Inquisition; it certainly leaves religion reeling under the weight of its own hypocrisy.

But which religion? Not the religion of the Bible, because the Bible tells us how the Good News was to be conveyed. "Go into all the world and PREACH the gospel" (Matt. 28:18, Mk. 16:15-16). To spread the gospel in any other way is not according to the Bible! "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you", the Bible says, Had people lived by the book, persecutions would never have taken place. The Bible is not to blame!

On a personal level, things are no different. Take the story of Elijah and Ahab; Ahab the king had all the vices, a rotter if ever you came across one. He was not happy with the state of the nation and was troubled within himself. One day he met Elijah and greeted him accusingly, "Is this you, you troubler of Israel?" (I Kings 18:17). Elijah responded by pointing out that Ahab was the culprit because he refused to walk by the word of God. It's not the person who refuses to get drunk, tell lies, steal, or be immoral

who causes problems. It's the people who do all of these things who are guilty. You see, the real felon is the one who does not live by God's standard of right and wrong - the Bible.

Funny how many people get it the wrong way around!!

--Steve Kearney  
140 Woodlawn Park Grove  
Baycullen Road  
Firhouse, Dublin 24, Ireland

### How to Overcome Burnout!

Are you out of fuel? Your life is overworked, overinvolved, and overextended? Your energy is zapped and drained? Emotionally you are discouraged, frustrated, exhausted, and irritable? Yes! You have become a victim of burnout!

Elijah was a great prophet of God who suffered a case of burnout. After undergoing a literal mountain top experience, Elijah came down the mountain into a valley of despair.

Strength came from the Lord and Elijah was renewed to his prophetic task after taking several steps (1 Kings 19):

Elijah rested (v. 5)! Often what is needed when one is physically and emotionally exhausted is rest.

Elijah arose and ate the food which the Lord provided (vv. 5-8)! After you have rested, take in physical nourishment. Perhaps your problem is a physical deficiency of some kind and a checkup may be in order.

Elijah talked to God (vv. 9-14)! Let your feelings and frustrations out. Communicate with the Lord in prayer. The Bible says, "Cast all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

Elijah returned to his task (vv. 15-17)! Once a person has rested and eaten, once he has expressed his frustrations to the One who cares, it soon becomes time to return to the task. In other

words, "fulfill your ministry" (2 Timothy 4:5)!

Elijah was told he was not alone (vv. 10, 14, 18)! As God's servant strives to live a godly and faithful life among the ungodly, it is reassuring to know that his is never alone. There is always a remnant to the faithful and the Lord is always near.

--Larry Stalley  
P.O. Box 62  
Troy, IL 62294

### The Rapture

Folks use the word rapture as if it appeared on every page of the Bible! In fact, the word *rapture* is never found in the Bible. I recently saw a bumper sticker that read, "In case of the rapture, this car will be unmanned."

1. **A False Concept.** A lot of people have been taught and believe that just before a period of great tribulation on the earth, the church will be raptured to escape a period of seven years of tribulation. The Jews are supposed to return and rebuild the temple of Jerusalem. Three and one-half years of the final seven years will see Jerusalem trodden under foot. There will be a great battle we are told. Christian martyrs will be raised to reign over the earth while Christ sets up an earthly kingdom in Jerusalem and reign over it for a thousand years. The Bible **does not** teach this kind of doings!

2. **The Bible Concept.** The Bible teaches that there will come a time when Christians will be "caught up" but not as most people describe it. Paul told the Thessalonians, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:16-17). The meeting place will take place in the air, not on the earth! Those caught up will never set foot on this earth, for they shall ever be with the Lord. In fact, there will not be any earth for them to come back to, since the earth will be "burned up" at the second coming of Christ (2 Pet. 3:10).

--Johnie Edwards  
303 W. Temperance  
Ellettsville, IN 47429

# The Poet's Page

## LIFE'S ARITHMETIC

When but a child I learned to count,  
And even long before  
I went to school, I somehow knew  
That two plus two is four.

But now that I have been to school  
And studied math, I find  
The thing most difficult to count  
Are blessings that are mine!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## MEDITATIONS OF A TEACHER

When I bend down to tie a shoe lace,  
Or wipe a tear stained face,  
Oh Lord, I know I have found my place  
In this world below.

This is the place dearest to God's heart,  
And dear to mine as I do my part  
To lead these little ones in the way they  
should go,  
In this world below.

These precious one's who are so dear,  
Remind me that the Saviour's near-  
With the sweetness of a smile  
The penetrating look of bluest eyes  
Tell me of the trust they hold  
For their teacher here below.

Help me also a lesson learn  
From these precious lives discern,  
How to be sweet and loving, honest and  
kind  
Forgiving with all my heart and mind  
As I teach in this world below.

--Thelma Sherrill  
Old Hickory, TN

## PIETY

A pious man is rare these days.  
But then, I guess it's true  
That men of sincere piety  
Have always been quite few.

You see, a truly pious man  
Is one who listens 'til  
God's word not only bends his knee. . .  
It also bends his will!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## THE UNTAUGHT GENERATION

The new generation is a simple one.  
Their key to life is having fun.  
The "older way" is just "tradition."  
Right and wrong are merely "condition."

Their values are changing with every season.  
They try to use their human reason.  
But their God has said your ways aren't  
Mine,  
Still they do what's wrong and call it fine.

The parents have failed in many, many  
ways.  
The rod was spared for too many days.  
They failed to teach when the time was  
right.  
Later they'll call it an oversight.

In this generation the mommy will work,  
And leadership the daddy will shirk.  
Disciplined teaching traded for wealth,  
To the neglect of spiritual health.

So, now all these children are getting older,  
Towards authority a bit bolder.  
They will challenge all the "olden ways."  
They will give up God and cease to praise.

They have now allowed the world to enter.  
'Round worldly things their lives do  
center.

On Sunday morn they apply their salve,  
And vainly give thanks for all they have.

But God, their heavenly Father, knows  
their hearts,  
And when from the truth that they depart.  
Their rationale is to no avail,  
It's against God's law and it shall fail.

They look for license to conform to the  
world.

A flag called "Liberty" there unfurled.  
They raise it high with a dignity,  
Shouting "Law of Perfect Liberty."

And now you have it, the end of all this  
madness.

The conclusion is only sadness.  
In the midst of God's Holy Nation,  
Has been formed an untaught generation.

--Andy Diestelkamp  
Bettendorf, IA

## OPENING MINDS WITH FORCE

The teacher rose, the people stilled;  
A hush fell o'er the hall.  
Without a word the teacher took  
A book, and let it fall  
Upon a red, unopened rose  
Then, picking up debris,  
He held the broken rose aloft  
For everyone to see.

"Your mind", he said, "is like this rose;  
It can't be forced ajar.  
Yet, it will open more each day  
If brute force does not mar  
Its power to learn, so as I teach  
I only ask that you  
Permit those facts to fill your mind  
That have been proven true."

"I'll not abuse your mind by force,  
As I have done this flower.  
I'll simply try to open it  
With thought and reasoning power"  
I had long thoughts as I sat there  
And finished out that course  
Of inept teachers who insist  
On opening minds with force!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

It's hard for me to understand  
Why there's so much turmoil and distress,  
Why there's so much malicious cruelty,  
So much greed, and so much unrest.

Are we such an obtuse people  
That we cannot use The Way  
That He gave by His examples  
For us to follow day by day?

How we need to know our neighbors,  
And help him all we can,  
For that's the secret of it all---  
It's the brotherhood of man.

We need to really love each other,  
That's the thing we should embrace  
Of this the human race.

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

# HAPPENINGS

## News and Notes From Around The World

### WILLIAMSPORT SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY CLASS TO BE APPEALED TO HIGHER COURT

Lawyers for students at the Williamsport Area High School whose right to meet for Bible study was denied by a three-judge panel in the Federal District Court have said they will appeal their case to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit in Philadelphia.

At issue, say legal experts, is the conflict between the students' right to free speech and the public school's duty not to establish religion.

Meanwhile, with the recent passage of equal access legislation by Congress and rulings such as this by the federal courts, local school officials are unsure of what direction to take.

For the past year students at the Williamsport school met twice weekly in the school cafeteria for Bible reading, singing and prayer. It gave the students time to be together and help each other with problems at school. Attendance was voluntary and only 25 out of 2,300 students in the school participated. No faculty or administrators participated in the activity and only provided supervision. Wayne Newton, the school principal, said he was not a bit apprehensive of the student Bible study group at the beginning but that as long as the students handled themselves as they did this past year he saw no problem with it.

Interest in forming a Bible study group at the Williamsport high school first surfaced in 1981 when a few students asked permission to have a religious club. The school board's attorney told the school board that it would be unconstitutional to allow such meetings so permission was denied by the administrators.

As a result, ten students in the group sued the school administrators and won their case when Federal

District Judge William N. Nealon Jr. issued a ruling in May 1981 which stated that their constitutional rights of free speech concerning religion were violated.

In the wake of this ruling the school allowed the students to meet all last year with no apparent problem. However, a former school board member, John C. Youngman Jr., a lawyer who is an elder in the First Presbyterian Church, appealed the case and had the decision reversed by a three-judge panel with a vote of 2-1.

### FALWELL, SCHLAFLY FORUM IN SAN FRANCISCO DRAWS PROTESTS FROM HOMOSEXUALS

A special rally sponsored by the Family Forum, featuring Jerry Falwell, leader of Moral Majority, and noted ERA opponent Phyllis Schlafly, was the target of San Francisco's outspoken homosexual community. About 2,000 demonstrators gathered, six were arrested.

Falwell noted that in many ways the U.S. has come back from the moral "dark ages" of the 1960's but said "when you see the development of homosexuality as an acceptable life-style in many, many communities, we haven't come back."

Mrs. Schlafly described Geraldine Ferraro, the new Democratic candidate for vice president, as "an advocate for the radical feminist movement" who "personifies the abortion issue."

To prevent violence, the police erected barricades as the members of the "Concerned Gay and Lesbian Christians and Jews of the All Family Coalition" passed out leaflets and held up signs.

Democrats weren't happy with the presence of conservatives who used the Democratic convention to present their views to a wider audience. Chris Matthews, a member of House

Speaker Tip O'Neill's staff, called the conservatives "a posse of peeping Toms."

### CHURCH DESIRES TO BUY PULPIT AND TABLE

The Church of Christ in Bridgeview, Illinois, is trying to secure a used pulpit and matching communion table. They would prefer a blonde colored wood, possibly oak. If you have such furniture for sale or exchange, please contact Ray Madrigal at (312) 563-1819 or Lee Bolden at (312) 598-5760.

### EXCAVATIONS REVEAL DISCOVERIES RELATING TO MELCHIZEDEK IN JERUSALEM

Discoveries relating to Melchizedek mentioned in Genesis 14 were made in this year's archaeological excavations in the ancient City of David section of Jerusalem. This research centered on the site of a "middle bronze age" town, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Scholars from the Hebrew University found bone inlays with geometrical patterns, bird figures, carnelian beads and decorated stone seal. Gold leaf decorations from statuettes and vessels were also found. Still a mystery is what the Canaanite building where these treasures were found was used for. It is thought that the building may serve as an indication of an early urban civilization.

At the Israelite level in the City of David, scholars found a large residential building thought to go back to the time of David and Solomon. Finds from a nearby area known as Area G are being prepared for display and publication. It will be preserved as an archaeological garden and includes the ancient water system. So far 12 areas of the old City of David section has been excavated and 25 layers of settlement uncovered.

### BABY DIES AFTER CHRISTIAN SCIENCE PARENTS WITHHOLD MEDICAL HELP

Three Christian Scientists face manslaughter charges because they chose to pray for the recovery of a critically ill baby rather than seek medical help, police said. The 16-month-old boy died.

Eliot D. Glaser and Lise E. Glaser, both 26, of Culver City, Calif., and Virginia L. Scott, 68, of Santa Monica, Calif., are accused of felony, child endangering, and involuntary manslaughter in the March 28 death of Seth Ian Glaser in Ms. Scott's home. Each charge carries a maximum sentence of four years in state prison.

The three were named in a Los Angeles County grand jury indictment unsealed June 22 in Los Angeles County Superior Court. The prosecution is the second in the state's history involving Christian Scientists who were charged with withholding medical treatment from children.

### NIGERIAN PREACHER IN NEED OF OUR PRAYERS & FINANCES

D.D. Isong Uyo, a faithful and fruitful Nigerian preacher, is now fighting for his life in Norton's Hospital in Louisville, Kentucky, and is desperately in need of help. A year ago he had surgery in the throat area for removal of malignant flesh. Then he was given radiation treatment. This was all done in Nigeria. But the radiation was improperly administered and resulted in "Necrosis" (radiation burn). Then this year doctors there (in Nigeria) determined that he must be sent to America to save his life by treatment here. Brethren in Nigeria appealed to Leslie Diestelkamp, one who has lived and worked in their land, to help. He then contacted Dr. Ken Embry (who is also a faithful gospel preacher) in Louisville and he engaged the help of Dr. Michael Flynn (a highly regarded surgeon).

On July 11 our brother arrived in Louisville. The Nigerian brethren paid his travel costs (as well as costs for the medical attendant who had to accompany him in the flight). Since then Bro. Uyo has had surgery several times and there is much reconstruction surgery remaining. Bro. Diestelkamp reports that he has made three trips to Louisville and now feels that there is more hope, though distressingly escalating costs.

Nigerian brethren will help all they can, but because of government restrictions in sending money out of that country, they cannot do very much. Already several American brethren have responded so wonderfully, demonstrating great love for this man whom they do not even know. It is our hope that readers of *Today* can help share this great financial obligation and at the same time enjoy the privilege of helping a truly worthy man.

Aude McKee, faithful preacher in Knoxville, TN, knows Bro. Uyo and recently said, "I know of no man who deserves help more than Bro. Isong Uyo." Others who know him well include Jim Sasser, Robert Speer, Paul Earnhart, and Sewell Hall.

If you are in a position to be able to help, make your checks out to D.D. Isong Uyo and then send it in care of Dr. Ken Embry, 1941 Bishop Lane--Suite 508, Louisville, KY 40218.

### CHRISTIAN PHYSICIAN AND THE GENERATION OF LIVING DANGEROUSLY

His colleagues might say he's living dangerously, but Dr. William Backlund has never had medical malpractice insurance.

"I put my trust in God rather than the insurance," says Backlund, 41, of Seattle. The orthopedic surgeon, who describes himself as a born-again Christian of no particular denomination, has never been sued.

Backlund resumed surgery May 18 at the Kirkland, Wash., hospital that banned him from its operating room.

Evergreen General Hospital denied him access last December when he refused -- on religious grounds -- to comply with its \$1 million malpractice insurance minimum. Last week, a King County Superior Court judge ruled Backlund is exempt from the requirement because of his First Amendment-protected "religious belief that (malpractice insurance) interferes with his doctor-patient relationship."

Backlund tells patients up front that he doesn't carry malpractice insurance, hoping they'll honor an unspoken commitment not to sue later. "They are free to go elsewhere," he says, "but my patients have been very supportive of me. I want to show them I'm concerned about their health, not my wealth."

### COCAINE DEATH RATES DOUBLE IN OREGON

Deaths in Oregon from injections of cocaine have doubled, according to a report from the *Portland Oregonian*. Of the six deaths so far this year, two of them were caused by injection of speedballs—cocaine mixed with heroin. All of the victims but one were under 30 years of age.

In a survey last year of drug users in Oregon, 16 percent of the people listed cocaine as their primary drug, while in 1978 only 2.8 percent said they used cocaine on a regular basis. The report also stated that the National Institute of Drug Abuse showed that 20 million Americans had used cocaine once and that between 2 and 5 million are addicts.

A profile of Oregonians who died from overdoses of cocaine showed that most are in their 20's, have an erratic employment record, and have a history of alcoholism and multiple drug use.

### DRUG USE REPORTED BY NEARLY HALF OF SOUTHERN BAPTIST CHURCH MEMBERS

Approximately half of all Southern Baptists have used alcohol or some form of drugs according to recent surveys.

Warning that many members have a drug problem, Ronald D. Sisk of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission said, "it's high time we recognize the situation we're in." He reported studies show that 45 percent of Southern Baptists drink some kind of alcoholic beverage and 16 percent become alcoholics. Among Southern Baptist youth 25 percent have used alcohol and 9 percent have used some kind of hard drugs.

Sermons on abstinence apparently aren't being taken very seriously Sisk concluded.

### CHURCH, NYC NEGOTIATE ON HOMOSEXUAL PLEDGE

With "many millions of dollars" at stake, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York is negotiating with the city over a mayoral order requiring agencies that receive city money to pledge equality for homosexuals. Negotiators seek "a mutually acceptable understanding" of the order's meaning, the Rev. Peter Finn, an archdiocese spokesman, said June 17. So far, Archbishop John J. O'Connor has refused to sign the

pledge, saying "the archdiocese will never alter its principles in regard to active homosexual behavior, which we regard as improper." The Salvation Army lost \$4.5 million in city contracts after refusing to sign the pledge in March.

### **AUTHORITIES INVESTIGATE POSSIBLE "SATANIC RITUALISTIC" KILLING**

A mutilation-murder which apparently occurred during a satanic ritual is being investigated by a grand jury in Northport New York. Town residents and legal authorities differ on whether a satanic cult is involved or the event was just an accident.

A representative of the victim's family stated that his family had been threatened. Police sources indicated that the families of those in the cult are being kept under surveillance after receiving threats on their lives.

Though some people in the community denied the existence of a satanic cult, William Keahon, assistant district attorney, said he had a list of cult members and that the facts to be presented at the trial will "reflect a ritualistic killing." The victim's body was found in a park where the group had met for three years. Three members were charged with second degree murder. Later one of them was found hanged in his cell—an apparent suicide.

A local police spokesman expressed his view that the killing "was not cult related but a drug deal that went bad." A New York psychologist commented that satanic groups are more likely to be involved in a drug-induced psychosis that with a well developed organization with its own sense of purpose and mission in life.

### **REFUSAL TO ADMIT GUIDE DOG CREATES FUROR FOR HAMMOND CHURCH**

Refusal of the First Baptist Church of Hammond, Indiana, to admit a blind man's guide dog, has created a furor in the Chicago suburb.

Jack Hyles, the pastor, explained his position in a full page ad in a local newspaper. He pointed out that as many as 25 blind people may attend a service there and that it "wouldn't be feasible to have 25 dogs in the auditorium." Other church members lead the blind to their seats and their dogs are cared for elsewhere.

While in attendance at church services there, said Hyles, the blind man's dog "had gone to the bathroom twice, become sick and vomited" and disrupted the services by barking. But the blind man contended it was caused by his dog being separated from him. As a result, the blind man said, he was told to leave his dog at home if he wanted to ride on the First Baptist Church bus.

It appeared that the issue was at rest until the blind man appeared on a local radio show and explained his situation. He wasn't so anxious to go back there himself, he said, but he did want other blind people to be able to attend First Baptist Church if they so desired. At the last word the National Federation of the Blind of Indiana had written to Pastor Hyles and charged his church with violating the U.S. Constitution and the state law of Indiana.

"If you do not capitulate to the law, then we will see that the law is enforced," the letter concluded.

### **SCHOLARS FIND ANCIENT PORT NEAR CAESAREA**

Recent findings by underwater archaeologists have confirmed that the ruins of an ancient harbor in Caesarea dates back to 200 BC: the harbor had been believed to have been built by Herod the Great at the time of Christ. Scraps of pottery found on the nearby beach and in the sea provided the clue for this discovery.

This harbor is believed to be the first man-made, open seaport in the world and took ten years to build. With two giant breakwaters leading out to the open sea, it could accommodate up to 300 ships. Archaeologists also discovered that a special series of cross-channels had been built to let in sand-free water and prevent silting. Scholars found that one of the breakwaters was 200 feet wide and used for loading and unloading cargo and had warehouses on top. This ancient harbor had been submerged because of a landslide about 300 A.D.

### **MOON BEGINS PRISON TERM FOR INCOME TAX EVASION**

Sun Myung Moon, the Korean-born head of the Unification Church, entered a minimum security prison camp last month near Danbury Connecticut, to begin an 18-month

prison term for federal income tax evasion. He began his sentence after appeals to the U.S. Supreme Court were turned down without a hearing.

During 1982 he was convicted on federal charges of failing to pay taxes on \$162,000 of interest earned on nearly \$2 million. He contended that the interest and the \$2 million "were all church contributions." While he was out on bond, Moon's case attracted wide attention from many organizations such as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, the National Council of Churches and the U.S. Council of Catholic Bishops. The National Association of Evangelicals had filed a "friend of the court" brief on his behalf, asking that the Supreme Court consider whether or not he was being tried on the basis of his religious beliefs. The high court did not respond to that issue.

In court and in special appearances at a Senate committee hearing, Moon contended that he was harrassed because of his religious viewpoint. He will not be allowed to hold religious services in prison. He will also be required to work daily, "probably in some sort of food service or janitorial duties," according to a federal prison spokesman.

### **UNIFICATION CHURCH PAYS BACK TAXES TO AVOID AUCTION OF FISHING BOATS**

Attorneys for the Unification Church, headed by the Korean-born Sun Myung Moon, have indicated that the church will pay \$41,855 in back taxes to avoid the forced auction sale of 83 fishing boats seized by authorities in a tax dispute.

The boats, 25 and 29 feet long, had been stored on the Norfolk waterfront for over a year and were taken into custody by the city after the church missed a June 29 deadline to pay \$37,737 in personal property taxes. The church had claimed they were exempt from taxes because the boats were to be used for 'religious and educational' purposes.

Some of our information for this page is taken from church bulletins. If you are publishing a bulletin, please see that our name is added to your mailing list.

# FIELD REPORTS

## **Ferrell Jenkins, 9211 Hollyridge Pl., Temple Terrace, FL 33617.**

After fifteen years of teaching Bible at Florida College, I have resigned to begin full time preaching with the Carrollwood Church of Christ in Tampa. I am already in my third year of work at Carrollwood. The church has an attendance of about 100, a good teaching program, and two fine elders. Opportunities abound due to the tremendous influx of young families into the Tampa work area. The brethren have agreed for me to continue with some meetings each year and to conduct my tours. For 1985 I have planned a Bible Lands tour to include the seven churches of Revelation, an area that I personally visited this year, and a tour of Scandinavia. About fifteen of my publications are available from The Book Shelf. I have discontinued personal distribution of them. Taped sermons are available from The Spoken Word, P.O. Box 127, Greenville, IN 47124. Address me at my residence.

## **Bruce Shearer, Rt. 2 - Box 92A, Depauw, IN 47115**

Bro. Kevin Kay is wanting to relocate after preaching for the Crandall Church for about four years. We are looking for a preacher and can pay about \$224 per week. There are about 35 of us and we started 4½ years ago. We are located 20 miles west of Louisville, north of Corydon. There is a great need for a strong church in this area. We are surrounded by liberal congregations here. Kevin has done a great job for us and has even met these liberal preachers head on. Anyone interested in this work can contact me. My phone number is (812) 347-2557.

## **Leo Rogol, P.O. Box 54, Pine Mountain Valley, GA 31823**

After prayerful and serious deliberation, I have decided to move back to the Northeast as soon as I can make necessary arrangements. I have been preaching for 27 years and nearly 15 of them were spent in Pennsylvania. I plan to move to Washington, Pa., about 30 miles south of Pittsburg. (The population of Washington -- city limits -- is about 35,000). We hope to move by December or January of 1985. We would like to move sooner, but I doubt that all arrangements can be completed that soon.

Knowing the great need in such a destitute area, the difficulty of churches getting preachers to move up there, I feel "restless" because of a sense of urgency and responsibility of the challenges in this destitute area. With our children out of school and gone from home, it will be much easier for my wife and me to work in that area than before.

Pennsylvania is a state with a population of about 11-12 million. Yet, to the best of my knowledge, there are only six conservative churches in the entire state. The average size of a congregation is about 30; the largest one has about 90-100.

I have known this church in Washington for about ten years. I held a meeting there in 1974 and also the following year. They asked me to move there about 1976 but at the time I felt I

couldn't leave where I was preaching (another part of Pa.). There are many people of foreign descent in that area and many of them speak with a foreign accent which for most would be difficult to understand. Now, I was born in Poland, Europe, spoke Polish and German at home. Thus I can relate with those people, understand their heavy accents and communicate with them without awkwardness or difficulty in understanding between us. When I went there several weeks ago, we "hit it off" immediately and they definitely want us to move there.

They can give me \$200 a month. I would need an additional \$2,200 a month (rent is high there) plus moving expenses. Brethren, would you be in a position to help with my support and/or moving expenses? I would indeed be grateful to you for any amount you could give me.

## **Darrell Hymel, 15 Princeton Circle, Longmont, CO 80501**

The work here is still strong. We have lost about 15 in the last 3 months, but attendance has held steady due to conversions and a couple of families that are now with us from apostate congregations. We now have about 60 compared to a start of 10 just three years ago.

## **Eric George, Rt. 3 - Box 455B, Corinth, MS 38834**

June 1 marked the beginning of my work with the Central church of Christ here in Corinth. I spent much of the month of June getting settled in, getting to know the members better, and planning for the potential work that can be done here in addition to preaching and teaching Bible classes.

I continue to believe there is tremendous potential for growth at Central. We have a number of good prospects. One young man, who is dating a young lady here at Central, will, I believe soon obey the gospel. His girlfriend tells me that he is "very close" to it. I have talked with him some and I believe that given a little more time and teaching he will obey the gospel.

A woman here, who is the wife of one of the members, hopefully will be immersed into Christ soon. She was raised in a Baptist background, but from attending at Central and the teaching her husband has done, she has renounced the Baptists beliefs. From talking to her, I found that she knows that she was previously baptized thinking that she was already saved and that now she needs to be baptized for the remission of her sins. However, she has not yet done that. Perhaps she is not fully impressed with the urgency. I hope to be able to study and talk more with her soon.

There is much potential and need for growth here in other areas. For example, until last Fall, there were only two men here who would teach an adult Bible class. However, there has been much progress. Since last Fall, two men, who have never taught an adult Bible class before, have done so on a regular basis, and a third man, who as well has never taught an adult Bible class before, is to begin teaching the Wednesday evening class soon. It seems that people here had

for years never been challenged to develop and use their talents.

## **Denny Diehl, 1406 Paradise Court, Claremore, OK 74017**

After nearly three years with the church at Claremore, Oklahoma, we will be moving September 1 to work with the church in Fontana, California. The church address is: 9132 Sierra Avenue, Fontana, CA 92335. We look forward to the work with optimism. The church is overseen by three elders.

Gospel meetings for the past year where I had an opportunity to preach the Word were located in California, Ohio, Georgia, and New Mexico. I have a meeting scheduled with the church at Logansport, Louisiana, October 7-12. Also, the elders at Fontana asked if I would conduct their meeting once we get settled. I certainly look forward to those opportunities.

Becki continues to be well, and Nathan is growing like a weed. When in southern California, stop by to worship and visit with us. Our phone number is (714) 822-1012.

## **David Spiece, Box 254, Airdrie, Alto, Canada TOM OBO**

Everything is going well here in Airdrie. Our attendance is about the same with 25-30 on Sunday mornings. We have a new family worshipping with us from the little town of Crossfield. There is a woman and four children. Her husband became a Christian years ago but has since fallen away. I have made attempts to go out and visit them but she does not feel that that is wise right now. He is very antagonistic towards Christianity.

The newspaper article as well as question/answer column are continuing even though we have not seen any visible results from them. I guess you never know how much of the Seed is being sown and will possibly reap in the future. Besides, it's a FREE way to proclaim the Gospel and we will take any and all opportunities.

I must say that I am really enjoying my work here in Airdrie and plan on staying for a long while. There is so much work to be done and unfortunately you can't do it all at once.

... on July 21 I was married. The day could not have been more beautiful and everything went as we had planned. We drove out to the Pacific coast and stayed in Victoria, B.C. for our honeymoon.

## **Wayne Greeson, 1498 Clinton Street, Noblesville, IN 46060**

I have just recently signed debate propositions with a liberal preacher, Ted Clarke, on the issues of church benevolence. The date of the debate is set for the first weekend in October, the 11th through the 13th. The debate shall be conducted in four sessions, one session each on Thursday and Friday night and two sessions on Saturday, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Each night of the debate will begin at 7:30 and the Saturday afternoon session shall begin at 1:30. The first two evenings of the debate will be held at the building of the Eastside congregation, 10055 East 25th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46229. The Saturday sessions of the debate will be conducted at the building of the Green Valley congregation, 19005 Cumberland Road, Noblesville, IN 46060. Those interested in further information may call me at (317) 773-8097 or write me at the above address.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

September 1984

Number 9

## WHY STUDY GREEK?

by Ron Daly

Spiros Zodhiates, a native Greek, stated that "approximately forty percent of the words in the English language come from the Greek language." I think he made a very accurate appraisal!

Please note some of the words which we frequently hear and speak that owe their origin to the Greek language! (1) Metamorphosis, which in English means, "a change of form, shape, structure, or substance; transformation."<sup>1</sup> A word very similar to metamorphosis is found in the New Testament in Matthew 17:2 regarding the "transfiguration" of Christ. The term is **metamorphothe** which is from the root word **metamorphoo**, consisting of the terms "meta" implying "change" and **morphe** meaning "form", hence the word means "to change into another form, to transform."<sup>2</sup> On this momentous occasion our Lord underwent an outwardly visible transformation! (2) Pharmaceutical is another English word which is derived from the Greek tongue. It means in English, "having to do with preparing, using, or dispensing medicines." In the New Testament a similar word is used in the book of Galatians 5:20 which is "pharmakia". Its basic denotation was, "the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then poisoning; then sorcery, witchcraft."<sup>3</sup> (3) Another English word which is common to us is arithmetic. It means, "the science or art of computing by positive, real

numbers, specifically by adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing."<sup>4</sup> In the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures made by approximately 70 Jewish scholars from Alexandria, Egypt three centuries before Christ, has for the book of Numbers, the Greek term **arithmoi** which literally means "countings or numberings." In the New Testament in such passages as Matt. 10:30; Lk. 17:7; Rev. 7:9 the word "numbered" is from the term **arithmeo** meaning "to number." The point is, **arithmoi** and **arithmeo** are very similar to our term arithmetic.

The study of Greek will enable one to be a more efficient and cautious student of the Sacred Writings. Undoubtedly, more than half of the inaccuracies which are taught in the realm of religion are the result of the lack of indepth, thorough, and careful Bible study. A sound argument cannot be arrived at, when based upon false premises. False premises are in most cases the product of inadequate research and incorrect reasoning based upon the data. A perfect example of my previous statement is the conclusion drawn by a large number of religionists that the word "baptize" found in the English versions means "to sprinkle, pour, or immerse."<sup>5</sup> This conclusion is based upon a faulty examination and an improper reference source. Webster's Dictionary defines words according to their

current English usage. The New Testament words are to be defined by reputable dictionaries of the language in which the New Testament was written, viz. Greek. By examining the various lexicons (dictionaries) of the **koine** Greek language, one will discover that the word baptize is from the Greek word **baptizo** and is never translated "sprinkle or pour"; it means "to immerse, dip, sink."

### HELPFUL TOOLS

A study of the Greek language should be ensued so that one may be better prepared to use the tools (some basic and some critical) of New Testament exegesis such as lexicons (language dictionaries), word study sets, critical commentaries, and concordances. Several works are highly recommended and valuable in each of these classifications. (1) Recommended lexicons are: **Arndt and Gingrich's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, **Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, **A Manual Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament** by Abbott-Smith, and **Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**. (2) Recommended word study sets are: **Vincent's Word Studies in the New Testament**, **Word Pictures in the New Testament** by A.T. Robertson, **The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology**, and **Kittel's Theological Dictionary of the New Testament**. (3) Recommended critical commentaries are: **Meyer's**

**Commentary on the New Testament, The Expositor's Greek Testament, Lenski's Interpretation of the New Testament, Alford's Greek New Testament, and Ellicott's Commentary on the Greek Text.** (4) Recommended concordances are: **Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, The Englishman's Greek Concordance, and Moulton-Geden's Concordance to the Greek Testament.** These works are not perfect, and in some cases the theology of the author is apparent, but with caution and discernment the student can derive great benefit therefrom (i.e. from the expertise of the authors in scriptural exegesis!)

#### A BETTER UNDERSTANDING

Greek study is also important because in many instances the way a word is used, or phrase is expressed, will upon close scrutiny of the Greek text, remove all doubt as to what the author meant. Relative to some issues, a basic working knowledge of New Testament Greek is an absolute must (e.g., The question of marriage, divorce, and remarriage, particularly the significance of the phrase "*not under bondage*" in I Cor. 7:15. Various lexical, grammatical, and contextual points will establish the fact that the word "*dedoulotai*" which Paul uses does not refer to "**freedom from the marriage relationship and authority to form another such union based upon desertion by one's unbelieving mate**".

To the preacher, Greek study is of utmost importance because one who knows the language is never without a rich mine of information and spiritual resources out of which to present beneficial truths to the listeners. In a book entitled **The Minister And His Greek New Testament**, A.T. Robertson quotes Mr. A.M. Fairbairn, who in relating the preacher's need for word study said, "**The preacher who ridicules word-studies merely exposes his own ignorance. The lexicon may point the way of life. The preacher is of necessity a student of words. He is the interpreter of language and employs language to convey his interpretation of life to the minds of men.**" So, a study of Greek will open crisp, refreshing, delightful, and sparkling insight into the ores of truth which are sometimes obscure and untranslated in some of our English versions.

It is astonishing to me as I consider the number of brethren who consider

ignorance to be a priceless commodity! Recently a young preacher friend told me of a "seasoned" preacher who strictly advised him, "Do not use any Greek in the pulpit." Well, whether or not one should use Greek in the pulpit depends on certain criteria such as: (1) His motive or intent for doing so. No man (young or old) should ever use Greek (or English) as a demonstration of some sort of academic superiority! We have enough educated (?) theologians in and out of the Lord's church. But, if the speaker uses the language of the New Testament to instruct the disciples, then by all means do so. (2) The nature of the lesson (material) for presentation. As we stated previously, some New Testament themes demand that one look into the original text. The deeper one mines, generally speaking, the more abundantly the ore is discovered. (3) The general comprehension scale of the audience. A preacher must exert himself as he tries to determine when an analysis of the Greek text would be advantageous or even (in rare cases) inadvisable to the assembled ones. But, if one elects to explore or expound the Greek Testament in order to clarify a point or exegete a text, remember to create a word picture in the minds of the listeners so they can easily grasp the meaning of the word, phrase, etc. The preacher who tenaciously observes the three preceding recommendations, will under most circumstances make the proper decision.

There are many good grammars available for those who are truly interested in developing a working knowledge of the koine Greek. **A Beginner's Grammar of the Greek New Testament** by W.H. Davis is the best available for the student who will be self-taught. Davis' grammar is basic and easy to understand. The grammars of Machen and Ray Summers are also classics. It is also advisable to obtain a copy of **Thayer's Lexicon, Vine's Expository Dictionary, The Analytical Lexicon, and Nestle's Greek Text.** When these works are in your possession, you will be in a position to begin a laborious and fruitful effort of exploring, learning, and expounding the New Testament as God gave it, i.e. **THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT.**

#### CONCLUSION

This article is not teaching explicitly or implicitly that one cannot go to heaven without knowing Greek. My

intent is to point out the great benefits of having a working knowledge of this tremendous language, or in other words, to stimulate brethren to more comprehensive Bible study.

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#### FOOTNOTES

1. Webster's New World Dictionary, Second College Edition, p. 893
2. Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, p. 405
3. Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, Abbott-Smith, p. 466
4. Webster, p. 74
5. Webster's Twentieth-Century Unabridged, p. 140

## HAZARDOUS TO YOUR HEALTH?

by Wayne Walker

Atheist Anne Gaylor, president of the Freedom from Religion Foundation, recently encouraged the Pennsylvania Bureau of Consumer Protection to place a warning on every Bible: "*Warning! Literal belief in this book may endanger your life and health*" was the label she suggested. She cited, among others, the example of Gregory Giles, 21, of Connellsville, Pa., who severed his hand and gouged out his eye to repent of sins, citing Matt. 18:8-9.

Of course, the atheists are nuts. Their doctrine of no God, evolution, and situation ethics has left our society with an epidemic of immorality, a shocking increase in crime, and a pallor of despair. However, wherever the Bible has gone it has raised man's moral standards, reduced the crime rate, and given mankind peace and hope. Even if there were no God, the Biblical way of life is far superior to the atheistic.

Then too, many "friends" of the Bible have been its own worst enemies, giving the atheists fuel for their claims. Those who would read Matt. 18:8-9 and think it teaches anyone literally to cut off a hand or pluck out an eye are also nuts. The passage says no such thing. If those who claimed to believe the Bible would understand and follow it properly, unbelievers such as Anne Gaylor would have no grounds upon which to blaspheme it.

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## PREACH THE WORD

We are living in tough times! Anyone who doubts that is either completely out of touch or blindly optimistic. Society seems to be becoming more depraved every day. False solutions are deceitfully veiled as truth. Humanism has reached an all-time high. The atheists, agnostics, and/or evolutionists are looking for new ways to convince our youth they are nothing but the final step in a long evolutionary process--a monkey all dressed up with no place to go. Promises are quickly broken and commitments are both small and fickle. In the words of Paul, "perilous times" are upon us. How does the Christian cope? What are the techniques that spur us on and keep us stable? The words of Paul to the young evangelist, Timothy, offer wise advice to any person in any generation.

Look at Paul's description of the perilous or grievous times as described in 2 Timothy 3:1-5; *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away."*

Paul was a true prophet. All of this began to be fulfilled in the day of Timothy. Indeed, such conditions as described in these verses have been fulfilled a great number of times in these last days. The "last days" does not refer to an end-time, as some have supposed, but rather to the entire time from the giving of the New Covenant to the second coming of Christ. We're still in these last days, so let's attempt to define the kind of men Paul was describing: 1. *Lovers of their own selves* - This may well be the root from which all of the other sins grow. This is the man with ego at the center of his life. See Titus 1:7: *"self willed."*

Trench borrows the illustration of the hedgehog which rolls itself up in a ball, keeping the soft, warm wool for itself and presents the sharp spines to those without. 2. *Covetous* - It would only be natural for a lover of self to become a lover of money and/or things. We cannot pamper self without money. The sin and the sadness of money-love was pointed out earlier by Paul in 1 Timothy 6:10. Think, too, of the Pharisees in Luke 16:14. 3. *Boasters* - This word originally referred to the "quack" wandering around the country peddling medicine, boasting about its healing virtue. But in the present passage boasting in general is meant. The loud-mouth braggard is trying to cover up the emptiness of his life.

4. *Proud* - While boasting about themselves and their "wares", accomplishments, or talents, these people are overbearing (cf. Rom. 1:30; then Lk. 1:51; James 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5) in their attitude to others. They are the haughty type, "uppish."

5. *Blasphemers* - These people, needing the favor of both man and God, are the first to use scornful language--insulting God and man (see 1 Tim. 6:4). When they speak, they hurt or injure.

6. *Disobedient to parents* - This is no light matter, for it indicates a deeper lack; a lack of respect or reverence for the person of God as well as the Law of the Lord. These people are lacking in such excellent qualities as submissiveness, thankfulness, holiness, affection for family, and the forgiving attitude.

7. *Unthankful* - When man feels he is sufficient unto himself, he sees no need to thank anyone but himself. He shows no appreciation of the many acts of kindness which his parents have bestowed upon himself, no appreciation toward other people, nor toward God.

8. *Unholy* - When a man has no standard from God--no standard for a right and wrong--then nothing is holy to him.

9. *Without natural affection* - This refers to the love parents have for their children, and children for their parents. It is called "natural" in the sense that even animals possess such an affection. Such wicked perverts are worse than sick dogs in the streets. Romans 1:23-31 is a commentary on this condition.

10. *Trucebreakers* - Such persons will not keep their word or be responsible for any agreement with others.

11. *False accusers* - Slander is always done to the advantage of the one circulating the lies. The purpose is to destroy the reputation of another.

12. *Incontinent* - This means he has no self control. He is unrestrained, uninhibited.

13. *Fierce* - Having never settled down, they are untamed. This is the savage attitude toward all who oppose the selfish; animals hold this same attitude toward all who oppose them.

# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

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14. *Despisers of those that are good* - These people would despise virtue, are unloving toward the good.

15. *Traitors* - If betrayal of others is to their advantage, they do not hesitate to betray them.

16. *Heady* - This means to be headstrong. Such persons plunge ahead regardless of the advice of others, or the apparent consequences. They are like the bull in the arena who rushes to his death.

17. *Highminded* - This is one who is puffed up. It has reference to an exalted opinion of self. Such persons are blinded by the smoke their own conceit produces.

18. *Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God* - These people prefer the friendship of the world to the friendship of God. Those who love themselves worship at the shrine of sensuality. Whatever can tantalize any one of the bodily senses is held up as the object of their love.

19. *Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof* - After looking at the record of the wicked life of such persons, it comes as somewhat of a shock that they would profess any religion at all. These people claim to be members of the church, but it is nothing but an outward appearance. The form of godliness is only maintained because of its advantage to them.

Paul said with people like this roaming the streets, the times are going to be perilous, grievous, or difficult. This word is a vivid term meaning, "harsh, hard to deal with or handle, fierce, painful, savage." How do we talk with God in times like these? How do we rear our families? If alone, how do we maintain our purity? How can we stay balanced and determined to live for God in a world rapidly bound for hell? The apostle helps answer some of these basic questions.

Timothy was instructed to "*continue thou in the things which thou has learned and has been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them*" (2 Tim. 3:14). He was not to continue in everything he had heard from every man he encountered--he was only to continue in what he had been assured of! Timothy had learned the holy scriptures from a child (vs. 15) and these will make one "*wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*" Knowing that "*all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*" (vs. 16-17), Timothy was told to "*Preach the word*" (4:2).

In fact, Paul solemnly charged Timothy (and I believe us, too) in the presence of God and of Jesus Christ. Now if the Scriptures will make us wise unto salvation, will be profitable for doctrine, will make us perfect, and furnish us unto all good works--why would we want to preach anything but the Word?

It is too easy to shove aside the standard in difficult times. Almost by instinct, when we are in need we gather together the latest writings from the best men and women of our day and seem more concerned with what some sociologist or psychologist said about the matter than we are about what God has said about it.

We have to "*be instant in season, out of season*" (4:2). This means to be ready, be on hand, have an alert mind. If we don't, it's only a matter of time before we get sucked into the world system and we backslide. Don DeWelt made this observation in his commentary: "**There is no season when the Word is not to be preached. There are times when**

**it does not seem at all convenient; there are times when men will mock it, ignore it, oppose it. There are other times when men will welcome the herald and his good news. Above and beyond all outward circumstances, the preacher has a message that must be told"** (Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus, pg. 249).

The time to preach it is now. By tomorrow the preacher, hearer, or both, may be gone. The truth can never be out of season. It is always needed--in all places, in all our duties, temptations, and trials. The Word must be preached when it will be welcomed and when it will not be welcomed; when it will make us popular and when it will make us unpopular; when the people want it and when they don't want it.

Each of us make a stand--"*reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*" (4:2). Taking a stand involves our saying, "I will do right, whether anybody else in my family, my neighborhood, or my church does right or not." Sin must be brought home to the sinner's consciousness in order that he may repent. The sin must not be toned down.

Why are we to do all of this? Why is so much time and space given to urge us to "*Preach the Word*"? Paul says the time will come when the Truth will be rejected and lies will be supported: "*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own Trusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables*" (4:3-4). There is the development of an accommodating theology. Teachers will be found that will only say the things they want to hear. These preachers will be skilled in the art of "beating around the bush" so as not to expose sin. Many of them are skilled, too, in the art of rationalization and misinterpretation. So great is their hankering to have their ears tickled that they pile up teacher upon teacher. This reminds one of Jeremiah 5:31, "*The prophets prophesy falsely. . . and my people love to have it so*" and of Ezekiel 33:32, "*And lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not.*" The people pictured here are more interested in something different, something sensational, that they are in sober truth.

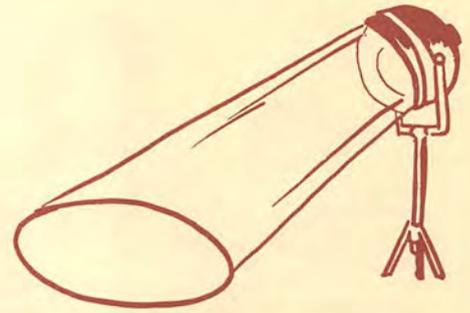
Stability is the badge of the Christian in an unbalanced and often insecure world. If you are the individual who has determined that his life style will be in accordance with the Bible, then most likely you will find yourself in the minority. But doing it God's way results in reward (Heb. 11:6). The world we've described needs many who will take a stand. God uses such ones as "salt" and a "light" in their communities. Don't give up; don't slow down. Stand for what is right and continue to "*Preach the Word.*"

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# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## JOHN GAMBINO

**How did you happen to learn the gospel?**

I grew up in Lake Jackson, Texas (south of Houston). My younger brother started dating a girl that was a member of the church of Christ. This preacher, Jim Everett, came to our house one day to study with my brother. He brought some film strips to show and I stayed around and watched them. I got interested in the teaching. Jim was a fan of football and that gave us something in common to talk about. We became friends, continued to study together, and I was able to learn the Truth.

I had majored in education in college, but I never pursued that field. Jim gave me lots of encouragement and I started preaching in August of 1977. I'm now working with the Pioneer Park Church in Nacogdoches. I moved here in January of this year.

**I understand that your family has recently grown. Can you tell us a little about that?**

Donna and I have three children: Lauren (age 6), John David (4), and Daniel (2). But on February 8, we became the sponsors of three Vietnamese boys: Bao (age 17), Bach (14), and Binh (11).

These boys left Vietnam in July of 1983 aboard a 40-foot boat carrying 68 people. Two days out, they were picked up by a U.S. naval vessel and taken to a refugee camp in the



Philippines. My name and telephone number was sewn inside Bao's shirt. The captain of the vessel contacted me to let me know the boys were safe. I was expecting the whole family. Donna and I shifted gears and prepared ourselves to care for the boys until the rest of the family could arrive.

**Why was your name sewn to Bao's shirt? How did you make contact with this family?**

I had become close friends with their father, Leo Luong, while I was stationed in Vietnam from July '67 to July '69. Leo was the interpreter for

the military advisory team I was attached to. At that time the children were not born. We had no idea the country was going to fall to Communism, we were there to keep that from happening. But Vietnam did fall in April of '75.

I had been in sporadic contact with Leo, oftentimes using go-betweens and coded letters. I had sent him an invitation to my wedding, but it was several months before I ever heard from him. Our contacts were definitely sporadic.

The family made an escape attempt in July of 1982, but everyone was captured with the exception of the group leader. Leo was put into jail for 45 days and the rest of the family returned to their hometown with nothing. They had sold everything they had to pay for their escape.

**How did the three boys finally get out?**

Leo started in 1980 trying to get the boys out of Vietnam. I heard from him in November of that year that he was going to keep trying.

In July of '83, the boys were told by their father to go with a man. The boys were not told it was an escape attempt. Leo wanted to make sure that if they were captured, they wouldn't have any information for the Communists. They went from western Vietnam to the coast, boarded a small boat, were picked up by the U.S. naval vessel and made it to the U.S. They arrived at the Houston airport on February 8.



*This picture was taken in January of 1983. It shows Luong Van Leo and his wife, Le Thi Soi, with their children: Bao (17), Nguyet (15), Bach (14), Houng and Bihn, twin brother and sister (11), and Trang.*

**Did Mr. Luong ever know his boys had arrived to the U.S.?**

Yes, I received a letter from Leo acknowledging the receipt of my telegram informing him his sons were safe. The letter was dated 30 May 1984. In that letter, he said: "Freedom is reserved for everyone living in the world." Many times Leo would say, "Free or dead." His letter said: "I can't live without freedom. You and your friends are luckier than I. My children will follow your good examples and I hope my sons will become the useful men to serve for the human beings. I hope to see you very soon: My best wishes to you and your friends. I thank God."

**Were you expecting Leo to arrive in the States soon?**

We were really expecting the whole family, when only the boys arrived. We got a telegram several months ago saying an escape was planned for June 6. We always knew there was the possibility of death in any escape attempt. But that intangible thing called hope kept us believing things would work out for the best. When

July came and we hadn't heard from them, I guess I knew they were probably dead. But I held onto hope and prayed they had made it to some deserted island in the ocean. There's a fine line between not facing the truth and hope.

**As you now know the story, what happened?**

Leo left Vietnam on June 6 as planned. He, his wife, and three daughters were among the 82 people on the boat. Five days out to sea, the boat lost its motor. For the next 20 days, the tiny boat was violently tossed about as they encountered storm after storm. The boat was headed for Malaysai but storms and the motor loss caused the boat to drift toward the Philippines.

On July 7, a Filipino fishing vessel stopped to help the survivors. The Luong family were not among the 14 survivors. Officials said the deaths of the 68 others were caused by starvation, exposure and dehydration.

**How did you learn of their deaths?**

On Wednesday, August 1, Bao got a telephone call from California. It was

from a friend of the boys that had been in the same boat in their escape attempt and later in the same refugee camp in Palawan. He had just arrived to the U.S. and confirmed our unspoken fear of the family's death. We didn't want to believe it; the boys had been through a lot.

I made a phone call to the Philippines and Thursday morning it was all confirmed--Leo's quest for freedom was over. He had always said he would either be free or die trying.

**What are your plans now for the boys?**

We have gone from being the boys' sponsors to their parents. I haven't checked into adoption yet. I have to check with a lawyer and an accountant and find out the financial expediency. Finances will be a big burden. I will provide for the boys. But I want all things to be honorable in the eyes of all men.

I have told the boys not to worry. They will have food, clothes, a place to live and our love and support. We are looking for a house that will be adequate for eight people now. I thank God we have the boys.

I have been criticized by many for trying to help the family out of Communist Vietnam. Some have said there are enough people in the United States and refugees come to live off our welfare. Leo dreamed of freedom, of providing for his family in a country where people could work and build and vote and offer a better life for their children. These people have grit. They will sacrifice everything to get out. I honestly believe their deaths counted for something.

**Are you receiving any financial help for the boys?**

Yes, the brethren and the community have been very generous. Arlene Harkrider, our close friend here in Nacogdoches, has opened a special fund for the boys at the Superior Savings Association. She knows that I will not take government help. Somehow, by the grace of God, I will provide for my new family.

**Readers may write to John Gambino at 501 Lenwood Drive, Nacogdoches, TX 75961.**

# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

"A few of my friends wear clothing styles that cause them to show off too much of their body. I enjoy spending time with them and want them to come to my house, but I don't want them to wear immodest clothing when they come, what should I do?"

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



You need to go to your friends and explain to them that you didn't want the immodest clothing worn at your house. Explain why you don't think it is right to wear that type of clothing. Tell them that you are trying to live a christian life and set a good example. Explain that you believe that type of clothing promotes lust and it wouldn't be right for you to let them wear the clothes at your house.

They should consent to wear more modest clothing, at least to your house. If they refuse to wear more modest clothing don't have them over because you don't need them as friends in the first place.

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 17



If you wear modest clothing, most people will feel embarrassed to wear immodest clothing when they are in your presence. For example, if you and your girlfriend went shopping and you

had long pants on, she'd probably feel compelled to wear long pants instead of shorts.

If your example doesn't help then just tell them you feel uncomfortable around them when they aren't dressed appropriately. After all, "Honesty is the best policy."

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



I would talk to them about their immodest clothes, telling them that if they want to come over, that they must wear the proper attire.

I would also talk to them about the times when they are out in public, telling them that whether or not they know it, that wearing those kinds of clothes can be advertising. That's not what the body was made for. Our body was made by God and for God to be used in his service. We are told in 1 Tim. 2:9, that we should dress in modest apparel before all men. We need to always try to do this.

**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13



I see this as a teaching opportunity. I would talk to my friends about how I feel and what the Bible teaches about wearing immodest clothing and why it is wrong to wear them not only at my house, but anywhere. I think that if I do this with the right attitude, and try to set a good example for them, that

they might even be interested enough to want to know more about what the Bible teaches!



**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 17

As a Christian, and especially as a high school student, the pressure to conform to society's "new morality" is great. Yet, being a Christian, we must strive to be set apart from the world, to be "different." Therefore, the best solution is to go straight to your friends and tell them politely but friendly that you enjoy their company but would prefer they dress modestly or else refrain from coming.

They may ridicule you at first for voicing such an opinion. Nevertheless, if you hold to your belief (not blaming it on church dogma, the preacher, or your parents) they will respect your choice and abide with it. Perhaps one may reject you for expressing such an attitude, but one must remember that we are here to please God not man. Additionally, if your friends are **real** friends, they'll respect you for your opinion and will change their dress to please you and in doing so you will please God.

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# Why I Desire To Attend Every Service

by Wayne Earnest

Paul told Timothy, *"Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine"* (I Tim. 4:13). The word **"attendance"** in our passage means, **"to take heed or to give heed."** Vine says it **"suggests devotion of thought and effort to a thing."** Our exhortation in this article centers on assembling with the saints because not enough thought is given to the importance of church attendance, and not enough effort is put forth by many, to cause the *"assembling of the saints"* to hold the place in the heart that it should.

## DESIRED ATTITUDE

How many times have you heard someone say, *"How many services of the church do I have to attend in order to get by?"* Is this your attitude? When Jeremiah wrote a letter to the captives in Babylon, he said, *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart"* (Jer. 29:13). He made God's will to the people known and let them know that God doesn't want a half-hearted service. Folks who have an attitude of just trying to attend enough to get by are not seeking after God with their whole heart. Furthermore, if the only kind of service that you care to give God is the kind that you've got to, then just go ahead and do whatever else you want to and forget about the Lord because neither action pleases God. Wouldn't it be wonderful if every child of God had the attitude of David, when he said, *"I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord"* (Psa. 122:1)?

## WHY STAY AWAY FROM THE CHURCH SERVICES

Why don't you go to every service? Is it because you are too busy? You will not be too busy to die and you will not be too busy to meet God in judgment, for the Hebrew writer says, *"And it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"* (Heb. 9:27). Is it because you are too poor? There is no admission charge. Is it because there are hypocrites? You associate with them daily. Remember that God said, *"Thou hast a few names. . . they shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy"* (Rev. 3:4). Thus, there are also some who are not hypocrites.

Instead of looking at a hypocrite and letting that cause you to miss heaven, why not rather look at a faithful Christian's example, and let that cause you to go to heaven! Do you stay away because it is raining? You go to work in the rain. You go shopping in the rain. You go to a relative's house in the rain. You go to a football game and watch it in the rain. Is it because you are too tired? Jesus said he would give you rest. *"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest"* (Matt. 11:28). Is it because you don't like the preacher? He's human just like you. Is it because it is too far? People don't miss services because they are too far away from the building. They miss services because they are too far away from God! Paul said, *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom. 8:37-39). Is it because you say it doesn't do you any good? A farm boy told his Dad, *"I just go to church because you require me to go, and I just stay long enough to say I have been there. What good does it do?"* The farmer told his son to go get a potato hamper (basket) full of the freshly dug sweet potatoes and for him to dip it in the creek. And he told him to dip it *"again, and again and again."* The father then said, *"Where is the dirt on the potatoes?"* The boy said, *"There is none."* He saw that the dirt was gone and that the potatoes were clean because he had dipped them *"again, and again and again."* Just because you don't see the good at first doesn't mean that it's not doing you any good. Attendance is like that. Every time you attend a worship service a little more dirt is washed out of your life.

## GOOD REASONS FOR ATTENDANCE

There are some good reasons why I ought to have a desire to attend all the services. I can at least let the Devil know who's side I am on. An elderly gentlemen that could hardly hear or see

was always led to a seat near the front of the auditorium in the church building. One day another member of the church finally got his question through to him, asking him, *"If you can hardly hear or see, why do you attend?"* The elderly saint replied, *"I want the Devil to know whose side I am on."* If you were trying to tell whose side some members of the church were on by their attendance, you might conclude it was the Devil's. Here are twelve more good reasons why I ought to have a desire to attend all the services. (1) I want to worship my God in spirit and in truth (Jno. 4:24). (2) I want to glorify God lest I become unthankful and my heart be darkened (Rom. 1:21). (3) I want to be in the presence of the Lord (Matt. 18:20). (4) I want to be one of the better-informed members of the church like Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:26). (5) I want to be found seeking His kingdom and His righteousness first (Matt. 6:33). (6) I want to be able to distinguish truth from error (Eph. 4:14). (7) I want to set a good example that will draw men to the Lord (Matt. 5:16). (8) I want to acquire the proper knowledge to zealously serve Him (Rom. 10:2). (9) I want to be found maintaining good works (Tit. 3:8). (10) I want to grow spiritually (2 Pet. 3:18). (11) I want to have the fellowship of the saints (II Cor. 6:14; Phil. 1:3). (12) Finally, I want to be with God in that Celestial City with the *"spirits of just men made perfect"* (Heb. 12:23).

## PROVING GROUND

We presently are traveling in a land that is not our own. We have but a brief stay at the very best since life is so short. James said, *"Go to now, ye that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away"* (Jas. 4:13-14). We are making preparation here for eternity. Hopefully, we are learning to enjoy habitually being in the presence of the Lord worshipping Him. After all, Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. If I do not

enjoy this in this life I would see no reason for enjoying it in the next.

### HARM OF NOT ATTENDING

If I do not set a good example in church attendance, I tear down the teaching that is being done with the new convert. I discourage other brethren from being the faithful example they should be. I frustrate the elders in their work as they sorrow over my lack of concern. I hurt the local church because I, as a member, do not attend all the services. I teach my children that the church for which Jesus died is not important by my not attending. Perhaps, most important of

all is the fact that my soul is at stake. Will I be able to hear Him say "Well done thou good and faithful servant?"

### ATTENDANCE IS REALLY NOT THE PROBLEM

I have tried to show that attendance is not the problem. The problem is the disposition of the heart. This is where the real sickness is. Failure to attend is merely the symptom. If our attitude is right, we are busy doing everything God would have us to do as his "son or daughter." Our faith will be growing. Our love will be demonstrated, and our attendance will be manifested. If our attitude is

wrong, we let godliness give way to worldliness. Whether this worldliness resorts to lying, cheating, gossiping, drinking or lethargy, the results are the same: attendance is down! Thus, if I can get my thinking right, the right action will follow. I think this must have been what Paul was talking about when he said, "*See your affection on things above, not on things on the earth*" (Col. 3:2). It is a matter of getting the attitude right.

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# GOD WON'T FORSAKE US

by Mason Harris

An old European proverb says, "*If you can swallow a toad every morning before breakfast, you have conditioned yourself for the troubles of the day.*" Yuk! There must be an easier way for me to meet my fears and frustrations and conquer my periods of depression.

Anxiety is a major problem of our day. Some are troubled about their health, while others are troubled about financial matters; some are troubled about an unpleasant vocation, while others are troubled about not having a job; some are troubled about the welfare of their children, while others are troubled about the state of the country. The threat of nuclear war, new diseases, inflation, spiritual distractions, --there seems to be no end to the list. Such things have a tendency to depress out spirit, mar our happiness, and cripple out performance.

But Jesus said, "*Do not be anxious, saying: What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we clothe ourselves? . . . But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow*

*will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*" (Mt. 6:31-34)

Ah, but Lord, my faith is weak and my heart is faint. --Help me! I'm too much like Peter when he was walking on the water. As he looked to Jesus, he successfully walked on the water, but when he looked away from Him to the boistrous waves, he began to sink. All weary pilgrims are urged to "*lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith*" (Heb. 12:1-2). And in the same context the writer said, "*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet*" (Heb. 12:12-13). There is the answer. Lay aside the things that beset me, run with patience looking to Jesus, lift up my hands, strengthen my knees, and make straight paths for my feet. But like Peter, I sometimes take my eye off of Jesus and am frightened by the boistrous waves!

Engineers, in planning a structure, make provision for an ample reserve factor (or safety factor). They design it

to be able to withstand a strain ten to fifteen times as large as anything to which they expect it to be subjected in the ordinary course of its existence. Man also needs a reserve factor that he might keep from reaching a breaking point. He has need for courage, patience, and faith.

When my courage is tested and when my faith is tried, I need to look to God, "*casting my anxiety upon Him, because He cares for me*" (Cf. 1 Peter 5:6-7). I need to remember that when the ancient Israelites cried from Egyptian bondage, He heard them and delivered them! I also need to remember that later when they cried to him because of the oppressions brought upon them by the pagans in the land of Canaan, He sent men like Gideon, Samson, and Samuel and delivered them. I need to remember that He delivered the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace and Daniel from the Lion's den. I need to remember that this is the same God I serve! Will He forsake me? No, the problem is: I may forsake Him. I may deprive myself of the strength He offers.

Paul said, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 4:6-7). Someone has said that "*what appears to be the dark cloud of trouble is often the shadow of God's wing.*"

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## JUDGES

by William C. Sexton

**S**eventh in line, in God's revelation to man, is the book called "Judges." It is the second in the group we classify as History. Following on the success story recorded in Joshua, we are "let in" on a 300 year history of ups and downs, with a lot more downs than ups! Yet, the book is significant, we believe, first, of course, because God placed it in His Book and He doesn't do any thing of **no significance!** Secondly, the book points to man's failures when he is left to follow his own course, even when the Divine directions are available to him.

The setting of the book is indicated in its opening words: "*NOW after the death of Joshua it came to pass. . .*" (1:1). The declining condition of the Israelites is depicted in the following verses: 1) ". . .the children of Israel asked the Lord saying, *Who shall go up against the Canaanites first, to fight against them?*" (1:1). 2) "*And the children of Israel arose and went up to the house of God, and asked counsel of God, and said, Which of us shall go up first to battle against the children of Benjamin?*" (20:18). In the beginning they had nations around them as their enemy; at the end they were fighting their brethren.

### HUMAN FAILURE, AND ITS CAUSE--DRAMATIZED!

The key idea in this book, as I see it, is **FAILURE**. First, there is the picture of them failing to complete the job they are given to do. Secondly, there is the failure to carry through with the lessons learned in reform. Thirdly, there is the failure to deal with a family or national, community -- problems. The chief reason of failure was **NOT** that they didn't have the information, the ability and/or resources. Rather, their failure was due to their un-use, irrational, justification of their behavior in their "own eyes" (Cf. 17:6; 2:10, 11-15, 19; 3:7).

Human failure still comes dressed in the same garments. Thus the wisdom

of God should shine through to our perception brightly today: we need to be careful **NOT** to repeat the mistakes of the past as done by many of God's people.

### ORGANIZATIONALLY--THREEFOLD!

The book divides easily, it seems, into three sections: 1) Development of the Corrupting Conditions (1:1--2:10); 2) Cycles of Forsaking, Spoiling, Crying and being Rescued (2:11--16:31); 3) Consequences of Continued Corrupting practices (17:1--21:25).

**First** the stage is set, when they fail to complete the job given--to drive out the enemy and keep themselves separated from them, (Cf. 1:21, 27, 28, 29, 31, etc. Notice "*neither did. . . drive them out*").

The "angel" came and reminded them of their deliverance from Egypt, the promise to "*never break my covenant with you. . .*" They were reminded also that they were forbidden to make a "*league with the inhabitance*" of the land (2:1-2). They were told, "*but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?*" They were told that it was due to this lack of obedience that the enemy had not been driven out and that they would "*be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you*" (2:2-3). If we fail to grasp this significant factor, we'll miss a great deal in understanding the book. When reminded of this **condition**, the people wept, naming the place "*Bochim*," meaning weepers (2:4-5)! Yet, as I have noticed, many people who are emotional, crying and weeping for their conditions, often never really develop the determination and will-power to actually follow through with behavior that is appropriate and effective in producing the desirable state. So, it was with these people, leaving us a record to be recognized and **NOT** repeated. However, I suggest that such is a lot

easier SAID THAN DONE! It is much easier to sit 3500 years this side of them and say "stupid people," that it is to learn the principle and humbly and carefully **avoid** falling into the same pit. The record is there, however, left by the eternal loving Father for our **LEARNING** (Rom. 15:4). Shall we?

### THE PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT OR LACK OF

The writer, guided by the Spirit of God, lays out the developmental problem real well--for the discerning person to see the basic factors in the terrible conditions.

1. "*The children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim*" (2:11).

2. "*And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.*" (2:12-13). "*And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.*"

3. "*And the anger of the Lord was hot against them*" (2:14).

4. "*Nevertheless the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them*" (2:16).

5. "*And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods. . .*" (2:17).

6. "*. . .it repented the Lord because of their groaning by reason of them that oppresses them and vexed them. And it came to pass, when the judge was dead, that they returned and corrupted themselves more than their fathers, in following other gods to serve them, and to bow down unto them; they ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way*" (2:18-19).

. . .IF. . .???

If they had **LEARNED** the lesson: That evil brings pain and misery!

If they had **TAUGHT**: That

Departing from God's word always bring misery and thus demonstrated that they were going to TRUST in God and humbly submit to His way, then the children MIGHT not have suffered, too.

If we, looking back to Israel, the "church" for nearly 2000 years, and LEARN that the principle is still operative among fleshly men, perhaps we and our children would NOT SUFFER as much!

If we would admit that God is wise, good, and powerful; that we are not able by **doing** that which is RIGHT in our "own eyes," to achieve righteousness, success, happiness for ourselves nor others, then perhaps. . . Oh, yes perhaps a great deal of GOOD could/would be ACHIEVED!

#### THE CONTINUOUS CYCLE

*"And when the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer (Shophet--one who was to "bring into right relationship with God" WCS) to the children of Israel, who delivered them. . . ." (3:9). Fourteen people, thirteen administration (two people: Deborah and Barak being jointly) served in this capacity, according to this book.*

1. Othniel (3:7-11) was "raised" and "the Lord delivered," and "the land had rest forty years."

2. Ehud (3:12-30): the man with "the dagger" placed it in the "belly" of the "fat man." ". . . the land had rest fourscore years."

3. Shamgar (3:31) "slew. . . six hundred men with an ox goad."

4. Deborah and Barak (4:1--5:31): the woman who asked for assistance and got it. With the job finished, they sang, "Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel; when the people willingly offered themselves. . ." (5:1ff). "The land had rest forty years."

5. Gideon (6:1--8:35): The man who ask, "Why then is all this befallen us?" Having been convinced that God was speaking, he followed the instruction and won a battle with lamps, pitchers, and trumpets.

6. Abimelech (9-1-57): The man whose "wickedness: God rendered."

7. Tola (10:1-2) "arose to defend Israel."

8. Jair (10:3-5): The man with "thirty sons," judged "Israel" 22 years.

9. Jephthah (10:6--12:7): The man who vowed, which brought him "very low."

10. Ibzan (12:8-10): The man with "thirty daughters," and "thirty sons."

11. Elon (12:11-12): A "Zebulonite" who judged Israel "ten years."

12. Abdon (12:13-15): A man with "forty sons" who judged Israel 8 years.

13. Samson (13:1--16:30): The man with strength in his "hair," who told his secret to a bad lady and lost his freedom, whose last act brought down the walls!

It should be pointed out that there is more "rest" in the book than is apparent to the surface reader. It is always attributed, however, TO GOD--it comes to the people ONLY after they cry out to Him and He delivers them. Truly, lasting REST is achieved by the person(s) who place their trust in God by following His practical plan. That lesson is missed so often; suffering results. May we look to the JUDGE of all men; accept His Judgements (Psa. 19:9) as being "true and righteous altogether," capable of being kept, bringing "great reward."

#### CONSEQUENCES OF CORRUPTION--ILLUSTRATED!

The last five chapters picture for us results of a people without a leader, a knowledgeable person(s) of the Divine Revelation.

First in (chapter 17) we see **religious zeal without knowledge:** A mother failing to instruct her son correctly by teaching the truth of God. They devise them a system of worship and rationalize that "Now I know that the Lord will be good to me. . ." (Cf. Rom. 10:1-3).

Secondly, we see in (chapter 18) the tribe of Dan taking by force the system away from the family and setting it "up" for themselves. Here we see the **progress** of corruption from the individual to the family, to the tribe, nations, world, Etc. As the **Leaven** Jesus spoke of--evil or the power of the Divine message works from the inter to the outer, from the small individual parts to the whole of all parts. Man will either commit him/herself to God, accept His teachings and continually apply and make corrections immediately, OR he'll go from bad to "worse," (Cf. 2 Tim. 2:13). Men either make use of what light they have and make improvements, or they lose what light they have and grow darker and more evil. Beloved, let us take heed!

Thirdly, (chapter 19) shows the

depth of moral corruption which follows close on the heels of religious corruption. Sexual perversion is usually in the middle of immorality. This man's home was not safe from the abusers; he was unable to protect his visitors, even by offering the abuse of his own family members. The sin was so distasteful that the man demonstrated his mental craziness by **dismembering** her body and sending such through all Israel.

Chapter 20 pictures the reaction of Dan toward Benjamin for the terrible sin committed. The tribe is almost destroyed--Sin brings destruction, beloved! Sin disrupts decent and satisfying conditions in the individual, family, community, nation, and in the world.

Chapter 21 points to the deprivation: men left without women. A plan is devised as to how to supply the women.

#### CLOSING: LESSONS!?

The book ends with, "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Beloved, if the Lord was not aiming to give us a picture of behavior, conditions, sufferings and shame which results from people following their one rationalizations, then I grant that I failed the **comprehension test**. If I have failed to provoke you to see the distastefulness of sin-fruits, then I failed to hit the target I was aiming at. If we read the book and do not come away with a greater determination to Do Right, and that can happen ONLY when we pay close attention to and follow the Lord's instruction, then we fail the value-test.

Thanks for coming along with me on this survey. I hope we have found the boundary lines, left the proper markers. May we see Man's lack of ability to cultivate his property so as to reap a bountiful harvest without the Lord. May we see the Lord's ability to deliver man from problems of his own making, His goodness to respond when we truly cry out to Him. May we, therefore, allow Him to be the judge, NOW in our lives, lest He deliver us in the end to that place prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41-46).

Christ is the only answer (John 14:6; 6:44-45).

# Government Welfare & The Family

by Jeffery Kingry

Several years ago I wrote an article called "*The Christian & Poverty*" (*Truth Magazine*, 9/17/77). There followed some controversy as to the factual and scriptural validity of that article.

I still believe in the truthfulness of my series of articles. It is especially appropriate to consider this matter in this present time in which our President observes that people go to soup kitchens because it is easier to get a free meal than to work for it, and when the highest adviser to the President is a man who believes that he sees no evidence of hunger or poverty in America. Such views are common, not only among national leaders, but also among brethren. The position taken by my reviewer six or seven years ago was "There is no poverty in America today." In a letter from an editor of one of the journals published by brethren, the editor said, "I also think there is a considerable difference in poverty in our society and in New Testament society - a difference which makes virtually **inapplicable all N.T. allusions to poverty.**"(!)

But, you can study your Bible and reach your own conclusions with a gentle heart on matters already written on. This article is actually to provide a factual "other side" to the emotional questions of governmental welfare and its effects upon the Christian and his work. While it may appear to be contradictory to concern and involvement for the poor and needy, actually it is not. The material gathered for this article was amassed by my wife, Anna, for one of her classes in early childhood development.

## AID TO FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

When Carter came to the Presidency he assigned a task force to gather "grass roots" information about the effects and effectiveness of the HEW's efforts at improving the plight of the poor. That information was put into a document called, *Welfare Reform, Final National Summary On Regional Outreach* (HEW, 4/15/77). Its conclusions are not the usual "liberal" propaganda that are churned out of government.

The national consensus of welfare administrators, welfare recipients, and legislators was, "**present welfare programs have had disastrous effects on the family structure**". The one program that was cited as being most detrimental to the family was Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). In many states an **intact** family was not eligible for AFDC. Families with a single parent had an easier time applying for and receiving benefits. The benefits paid to single parent homes was higher than paid to two-parent families. The observation was made that in homes with conscientious adults, most often one parent would leave, or pretend to leave his family during hard times.

Carter used a Missouri father as typical of families in this situation. By staying with his family of five, the man's family drew \$2,618 in assistance. On the other hand, if he abandoned his family, they would receive \$4,057. In addition the father would personally get to keep an additional \$661 in food stamps that he would be ineligible for if he stayed as head of his household.

## FOSTER CARE

In some states an unmarried parent is not eligible for assistance for his children. When the family situation deteriorates to the point that the parent can no longer hold things together financially, the children are usually taken forcibly or otherwise to be placed in "foster" homes. Because of initial lack of employment and income, and then lack of any kind of effective welfare benefits, the home situation becomes unable to provide adequate care for children. Because of the same reasons, compounded now because of the government stigma of having taken the children out of the home, the parent is unable to improve the home sufficiently to receive the children back. Thus, instead of Foster care being short term and temporary, the system actually encourages Foster care as a permanent arrangement.

Further, AFDC funds move to the foster home rather than to the original home. The result is that the welfare system encourages the break-up of the

family rather than strengthening it. It makes permanent the destruction of that home by subsidizing Foster care and penalizing the natural parents.

## EXTENDED FAMILIES

Present welfare programs have built-in discouragement for relatives to help each other. People who take in a needy person receive no assistance. The rules of the Supplemental Security Income Program demand that recipients who live with others are to lose their benefits. While the stated idea is to "equalize" benefits, the effect is to discourage relatives or friends from helping one another.

Elderly or disabled people sometimes live together and pool resources to form a social "family". Although such an arrangement provides companionship, security, and stability that would otherwise be impossible as individuals, the system discourages the needy from doing such. The net effect is that institutionalization is encouraged for these people rather than prevented.

## WELFARE PROGRAMS ARE ANTI-FAMILY

The government's policies for offering welfare to the needy actually is destructive of all the Christian holds as dear in the family relationship. The government policy philosophically does not regard child-rearing as full-time worthwhile work. Therefore, welfare mothers are often required to work, usually with government subsidized day-care services available. On the other hand, many families can not afford to work, for fear of losing benefits which they have grown dependent upon to survive, even with a job.

Economic hardship and insecurity breeds stress and conflict in the family. The welfare family atmosphere contributes to juvenile delinquency and crime, loss of emotional well-being, and faulty development of children. The system dehumanizes and demeans, all the while it develops dependency. It cannot truthfully be called a "welfare" system when it consistently leads to the break-up of the family. These are the observations of an unbiased government investigatory task force.

They reflect a reality nationwide.

### PERSONAL OBSERVATION

I am not interested in reforming the government's welfare system - I am concerned only about the effect it may have on Christians who are involved with it. If a Christian is going to receive welfare, he needs to be aware there are some hidden "costs" to participation.

Having had some experience with brethren who were trapped in the welfare "snare", I have made some observations of my own. The present welfare system actually encourages dishonesty and lying. One family in my experience had their benefits cut. The husband worked full-time, from 5:00 AM till 2:00 PM five and six days a week as a custodian. Even with 15 years with the company, he was still trying to provide for a family of six and an aged mother on less than \$11,000 a year. He received food stamps and certain FHA benefits in buying his home. He got a \$50 a month raise by his employer. His taxable income increased by 20%, and his untaxed benefits were cut by 40%. He asked me, "What should I do?" After the appeals process was unsuccessful, it was evident that it would be in his favor to (1) lie about his raise, or (2) refuse the raise altogether. Now, the loss of \$100 in foodstamps may seem a little matter to those who have abundance, but when one eats starchy, cheap meals to stretch the food dollar, and some months are scrimp and add another cup of water to the bean soup, a \$100 is crucial. (The truth of the matter was that as a hard worker he actually made far less than he could expect if he quit his job and applied for state and federal welfare. As a Christian he refused to do what many fall into).

Another family I know of was seemingly unthinkingly failing to acknowledge or claim matching benefits from separate programs. When one can get a check from one agency by merely failing to declare that one is also receiving similar help from another agency, it is a powerful temptation to lie by keeping silent.

Another problem I observe was incredible waste. I make a comfortable living, and no one in my family ever had to worry about going without. Yet, my wife takes the bone from the ham or the roast beef and makes a small pot of soup from it. The left-over beef or chicken pieces go into a cup or two of

water with some vegetables and make a stew for tomorrow's lunch. We are careful about how we use our food because food is expensive, and waste is profligate.

We were asked to eat with a welfare family once. "Come over Friday. We'll be getting our food-stamp allotment then, and we're going to have steak!" The family had four little children, all under five. Little ones are counted as adults by the government, and while the brother was feeding a family of six, he practically only needed food for about three. The dinner of steak was delicious, but the children (ours included) could not finish the sirloin each was served. Whole steaks, with one or two bites cut off, were scraped from full plates into the dog dish. I choked and tried to think of some way to graciously protest. When I suggested that the steak might be better used for beef stew, the husband waved his hand and smiled, "Don't worry about it. We have plenty of food, and it doesn't cost us anything." We talked that night. For what it is worth, the five pound blocks of cheese they used to throw away now go to needier families. The boxes of cereal and oatmeal that used to mold in stacks in their closet now go to others. Something that costs nothing is inevitably wasted.

The welfare policies of our government encourages dependency. Another family in my experience had been living on welfare for several years. One Sunday the brother was told "XYZ Corporation is hiring. You ought to go down there and apply for a job." The reply was, "They pay minimum wage. That's \$3.65 an hour. In an eight hour day I would make \$30.00 gross, about \$24.00 take home. That's \$480 a month for a lot of hard work. My AFDC grant is \$605 a month, tax free. I get another \$243 in free food stamps, also tax-free. Our Fuel Assistance from the state is \$120 a month, all tax-free. I can't make more than \$25.00 a month or I lose my benefits. I can't afford to go to work! I couldn't provide for my family unless I got a job that made at least \$1,100 a month, then I'd only take home about \$850 or \$900." The brother was ultimately persuaded to get out of the welfare rat-race even though it cost him money to do so. The church and individual brethren helped him as he needed it.

Welfare is destructive, not only of the family, but of the individual as well. Nothing is more demeaning than having to work with the welfare system. It puts even the rawest recruit's experience with the military to shame. At least the recruit in the military has the pride of his uniform and the potential for advancement to help him square his shoulders. The welfare father or mother in the dirty county welfare office is a despised and resented character. Drive by the welfare offices in your town someday. Better still, go in and make application for help. You are treated as a failure, a liar, a person of little or no character. You are someone who must be watched, reported on, checked up on. Some may object that this is because bureaucrats have to deal with people of no character, and they are brutalized themselves. That is true. But, for the Christian, it makes no difference why the system is brutal. They have to just know that if they get involved in it, that it will not respect them as honorable people. Try spending your food stamps in the nice supermarket without blushing. The welfare recipient hardens their heart to these blows, especially when there appears little way out.

### BIBLE OBSERVATIONS

It does little to help the brother in the welfare trap to say, "Why don't you get a job?" That is not to say that encouragement to find meaningful work is out of place. I refer to the contempt that often accompanies such a comment. The scriptures say, "*If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warned, be ye filled; notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit*" (Jas. 2:15,16)? The brother who is "naked" - needs clothes. How many of us have closets full of clothes, an extra coat, or a pair of shoes that are still in good shape?(I believe the offence some feel when given such help is not because "hand-me-downs" are demeaning, but because of the patronizing attitude that often accompanies such acts of "charity"). The brother who is hungry-needs food. There may be many reasons why they are in need of food. But, the **immediate** need is something to eat. The **longer-term** need is the ability to provide for oneself. To say "Get a job..." is about the same as

saying, "Be ye warm, be ye filled..." We need to help them get a job. There are plenty of ways to help. Some brethren need help in how to apply for a job, how to take an interview, how to prepare a resume, or type one up. I have often used my own experience in job-hunting to encourage others. "You need to spend your eight hours a day looking for a job. That is your job-find a job. Then when you get off in the evening or on weekends, you don't feel guilty about it-you have done your day's work."

Sometimes, we could help by supporting someone while they learn a trade, or a skill. We might give them money to learn how to run a computer, or a cash-register, or take a dental-assistant course. We might help them

go to a Vo-tech school or college. We might personally intercede, if we have some influence, for an entry-level position. It helps an employer when the preacher in town stops by and says to the boss, "I will guarantee this man will be on time and diligent in his work. If he isn't, he'll not only answer to you, but to the church as well." (Eph. 4:28; 2 Thess. 3:7-10).

Anyone in need has liberty to accept help and benefit from the government. But, brethren need to be made aware of the inherent dangers associated with the welfare system. Needy brethren **should** be cared for by the church. I believe that churches do not fulfill their obligation to the Gospel of Christ when they push the brother to depend upon unbelievers-

the government-to care for his needs. Paul said that such work is the Gospel of Christ, "*For your act of service to the saints, it is needless that I write unto you. . .for the ministry of this service not only provides for the needs of the saints, but it also yields a rich thanksgiving in the name of God; for through the proof which this affords, many will give honor to God when they see how humbly you obey Him and how faithfully you are subject to the Gospel of Christ, and will thank Him for your liberal contribution to the Judean saints and all brethren*" (2 Cor. 9:12, 13).

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# Why Did God Hear Cornelius' Prayer?

by Roger Hillis

There are several verses in the New Testament which point out that God does not answer the prayers of non-Christians.

*"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil"* (1 Peter 3:12).

*"Now we know that God hereth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth"* (John 9:31).

This concept runs in opposition to the thinking of most religious groups today. Many believe in salvation by faith only. When a person believes, they come to the altar and "pray through" for forgiveness.

When we read the above passages and point out that non-Christians do not have the right to pray for forgiveness of their sins, most people bring up the example of Cornelius in Acts 10:1,2. "*There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a*

*centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God always."*

Why did God hear Cornelius' prayer? That's an honest and legitimate question. It deserves an answer.

## 1.) Cornelius was a faithful Gentile.

Cornelius was not bound by the law of Moses. He was not a Jew. But he was evidently very faithful to the old Patriarchal law. It was not until this very incident with the household of Cornelius that Gentiles heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, any Gentile who lived faithfully under the requirements of the Patriarchal dispensation was acceptable to God. Not many more, but Cornelius was such a Gentile.

## 2.) Prayer was not a condition of his salvation.

Because Cornelius and other Gentiles were now recipients of the

gospel, they were accountable to its conditions for salvation. God did hear Cornelius praying. But his prayers **did not** save him. Consider these thoughts.

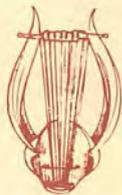
a.) God told Cornelius to send for Simon Peter for this purpose: "*he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do*" (Acts 10:6). The things that Peter said to Cornelius were described as "*words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved*" (Acts 11:14). This was told him **AFTER** he had prayed to God and he still had to be told what to do to be saved. Despite his prayers, Cornelius was not yet saved.

b.) Acts 10:48 points out that Peter commanded Cornelius to be baptized in water. Again, this took place **AFTER** his prayers. 1 Peter 3:21 says that baptism saves us and we read in Mark 16:16 that salvation comes after belief and baptism. All of Cornelius' prayers had not saved him. Prayer is not a condition of salvation for a non-Christian.

## 3.) It is not wrong for a non-Christian to pray.

As a non-Christian, Saul of Tarsus prayed and the Lord heard him (Acts 9:11). But he was not saved until verse 18 when he was baptized for the remission of his sins (Acts 22:16). It perhaps begins a good habit and frames a proper attitude for the time when a person becomes a Christian. But all the prayers in the world will not save a non-Christian.

Route 4  
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# Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

## FOUR VOICES

(Chapter 2)

A great number of the psalms are prophesies of the promised Messiah. David in spirit called him Lord (Matt. 22:43). Some students such as Ironside have suggested that all the Psalms are of this nature, in one way or another. This second psalm is the first Messianic Psalm that is definitely mentioned as fulfilled in the New Testament (Heb. 1:5; 5:5; Acts 13:33). Keep in mind that the Hebrew term, "Messiah" means anointed and is equivalent to the Greek term, "Christ."

Read this second Psalm and notice:

### THE WORLD'S VOICE (v. 1-3)

We have here a picture of the emotions which brought on the crucifixion of Jesus (Acts 4:24-29). The disciples quoted these words of David and then said, "*The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ for of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together.*"

The heathen (Gentiles) are raging, the people (Jews) imagine a vain thing. They are in an uproar over something. What are they upset about?

But the thing they planned was vain or fual. They imagined that they could kill Jesus and thereby terminate His mission of establishing a kingdom.

The people are in a rage, but the kings and rulers "take counsel together." They work craftily. Matthew says, "*They took counsel to put Him to death.*"

Why did they oppose Christ with such vehemance? Because they were unwilling to submit to His righteous reign: "*Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords*

*from us*" (v. 3). They sought freedom from all moral restraint. "*We have no king but Casear, they cried*" (John 19:15).

How common, and yet how pitiful. There can be no freedom without restraint, and only if the Son makes us free are we free indeed (John 8:31-36). Yet this third verse still echos the world's voice: "*Let us break their bonds asunder.*"

### THE FATHER'S VOICE (4-6)

How does the heavenly Father react to all this? Does He tremble? Hardly! "*He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. . . .*" So absurd are the puny efforts of man to destroy the purpose of God, He "*shall have them in derision.*"

Then He speaks in His wrath: "*Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.*" Such was already an established fact when David penned these words. It was as sure as if it had already taken place. All the assemblies and counsel and craftiness in the world could not disrupt God's determined purpose. Rather, unwillingly, these enemies of God accomplished His purpose.

### THE SON'S VOICE (7-9)

"*I will declare the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee.*" Paul relates in Acts 13:33 that the day upon which this was said was when He arose victorious over the grave.

It was the custom of rulers to give favored ones their wish and so Jesus was told by the Father, "*Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. . . .*" "*Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.*"

There are two senses in which this is accomplished. First, His is a universal kingdom. People of every land and tongue have been won by the gospel of Christ and have come willingly into His Kingdom. These have been broken before God in repentance.

But in a second sense, Jesus rules in the affairs of men and nations. It was He who decreed the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. 24) and of Rome (Revelation). "*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ: and he shall reign forever and ever*" (Rev. 11:15). He is "*the prince of the kings of the earth*" (Rev. 1:5). (Comp. Rev. 6:2; 12:5; Psalm 45:2-7)

He rules over His kingdom with a scepter of righteousness and over the nations with a rod of iron.

### THE SPIRIT'S VOICE (10-12)

Here, He who guided David in his writing of scripture (2 Peter 1:20:21) gives advice to the kings and judges of the earth: "*Be wise,*" He says, "*be instructed.*" Take heed while there is time. Wise men still seek Him.

"*Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.*" There is no contradiction between godly fear and joy (Matt. 28:8).

"*Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.*" Submit to this King of Kings. Pay Him the homage that is due Him.

Why? Lest He be angry! "*Behold the goodness and severity of God*" (Rom. 11:22). Rebellion will bring eternal ruin, but trust will bring salvation and happiness.

Have you kissed the Son? Bowed at His feet? Surrendered to Him? Blessed are they who put their trust in Him!

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**STUDIES IN THE PSALMS** by Joseph Bryant Rotherham. Questions for discussion of each of the 150 psalms have been prepared by Don DeWelt. College Press, the publisher of these two volumes, says the aim is to induce the readers to become *real* students of Psalms. Volume I contains 468 pages. Regular price--\$14.30, Sale price--\$12.15. Volume II contains 440 pages. Regular price--\$13.80, Sale price--\$11.75.

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# The Book Worm



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**DEVELOPING POSITIVE CHRISTIAN ATTITUDES** by Roger Hillis (J.R.B. Publications: Bowling Green, Kentucky), 1984, paperback, 28 pages, \$1.95.

The way you think (your attitude) determines how you act. Before our actions can be right, our thoughts (attitudes) must be right. For this reason, Hillis has come up with this 13-lesson study on positive attitudes. The author is convinced that we must emphasize positive attitudes and eliminate negative ones.

The workbook is divided into two sections. The student will first look at some positive attitudes which must be planted and cultivated in our minds. A lesson is devoted to a study of zeal, humility, gratitude, spiritual maturity, brotherly love, commitment, and joy. But before these can grow, we must rid ourselves of the "weeds" of indifference, pride, complaining, envy, and discouragement.

This is not the type of workbook where the student fills in the blank and goes home blank and unfilled. Hillis has not only filled each lesson with many Scriptures, but the workbook is filled with discussion questions, thoughts for self-examination, and modern-day applications.

The lesson on commitment alone is worth the price of the book. I would heartily recommend this book, whether for a class study or private home study.

**AN EXPOSITORY OF BIBLICAL WORDS** by W.E. Vine, Merrill F. Unger & William White, Jr. (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 1324 pages, \$17.95.

For the first time, Vine's enormously popular **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**

and **Nelson's Expository Dictionary of the Old Testament**, by Merrill Unger and William White, Jr., are combined in one volume, making this one of the most useful reference books available for the serious Bible student.

The book is organized in such a way that it becomes at once a dictionary, a commentary, and a concordance. English equivalents are listed alphabetically throughout the text, along with either Greek or Hebrew words from which they are translated. Readers are able to go from English to the original languages throughout the text. In addition, Hebrew and Greek indexes allow readers to go from the original languages to the English. This volume makes it possible to study the meanings of biblical words in the original languages, with little or no formal background in either Greek or Hebrew.

With nearly 6,000 entries in all, this volume is destined to become a classic in its field.

**HE TOLD IT LIKE IT IS** by Gary R. Beauchamp (Christian Communications: Broken Arrow, Oklahoma), 1984, paperback, 217 pages, \$5.95.

Have you been looking for a book that would help you make modern applications to many of the sermons and parables of our Lord? If so, this may just be the book you have been looking for. The book, designed for use in standard Bible courses, contains 28 chapters. The discussion questions at the close of each chapter cannot be answered with a yes or no; you will not be able to choose between two or three possible answers. The book forces you to open up and make real applications.

The book covers such subjects as Our Prodigal Generation, Count the Cost, A Reason to Strike, Be Prepared, Forgiving and Forgiven, Childish or Childlike, Solid Rock or Shifting Sand, A Message From Hell, and much, much more. The book will be great for a small group discussion or use in a

large auditorium class. These studies have been evangelistically applied in a number of growing churches.

If you worship with a congregation that is blessed with a teacher that really wants the students to study, think, and apply, then you will want to use this book in an upcoming class.

**RISING ABOVE STRIFE--OVERCOMING STRESS** by Nancy Inez Witte (Quality: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 90 pages, \$4.80.

The aim of this little book is to help the reader become more spiritually minded. It was designed for a class for ladies, but the material is applicable to any and all readers. The author's goal was to point out ways to overcome strife which are revealed in the Scriptures and to distinguish between the things that can be changed and the things that cannot be changed.

From the first chapter on "What Causes Stress?" to the last chapter on "When Strife Ceases--Peace Prevails," the author is seeking to lead the reader into a more tranquil, peaceful way of life and to an eternal life with God. She realizes it takes time to grow to maturity and desires to observe that transformation in thought, word and deed.

This would make for an excellent study, whether in a public class or private use. The book will not promise you the absence of troubles, problems, and worries, but the ability to cope with them. All this will be possible only by maturity.

**WOMEN IN MID-LIFE CRISIS** by Jim and Sally Conway (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois), 1983, hardback, 394 pages, \$10.95.

Maybe Mrs. Conway said it all in the first paragraph of the first chapter: "I wanted to crawl under a bed. Or better yet, I just wanted to disappear. I didn't want to run away and be somewhere else on the earth. I just wanted to be gone. I didn't want to commit suicide. I simply wanted to cease existing."

Only in recent years has the mid-life crisis experienced by both men and women been identified and addressed by authors, counselors, doctors, and preachers. The authors of this book have been pioneers and pacesetters in this field. Jim published *Men in Mid-Life Crisis* in 1978 and Sally published *You and Your Husband's Mid-Life Crisis* in 1980. Out of their years of counseling experience and their formal research on mid-life, they have become convinced that women between the ages of thirty-five and fifty are acutely vulnerable to their own mid-life crisis. This book seeks to deal with the problem, the prevention, and the solution.

The authors definitely feel that women in mid-life suffer a bewildering and crushing array of physical, emotional, and spiritual stresses. This book is a compassionate, understanding book, full of reassurance, encouragement, and practical direction for facing and coping with mid-life. The book will stimulate your thinking, expose the real you, and explain the inward journey in an attempt to return you to reality. Maybe you will be appreciative of some of the explanations in such chapters as *The Homemaker Runs Dry*, *Wonder Woman Tries It All*, or *A Stale Marriage*.

*RESTORATION THEN AND NOW*, compiled by M.H. Tucker (*East Tennessee School of Preaching and Mission: Knoxville, Tennessee*), 1983, paperback, 349 pages, \$7.00.

This book contains 29 chapters of fascinating reading on the Restoration Movement of the 1800's. Part I, containing five chapters, is on *The Restoration Heritage*; Part II, containing eight chapters, is on *Men In The Movement*; Part III, containing seven chapters, is on *Problems We Have Faced*; Part IV, containing four chapters, is on *Contributions To The Restoration*; and Part V, containing five chapters, is on *The Continuing Restoration*.

If you are looking for some often unknown pieces of information on some of the men or events of the Restoration Movement, you will certainly enjoy reading this book.

I feel certain sections of the book under *Problems We Have Faced* were written with a bias (dealing with liberalism, legalism, and the cooperation issue) and deal more with issues confronting the church today than it deals with the history of the restoration.

If you enjoy studying that period of time known as the Restoration Movement, you will enjoy adding this book to your library.

*THE PERSON AND LIFE OF CHRIST* edited by Eddie Whitten (*Christian Supply Center: Bedford, Texas*), 1983, hardback, 300 pages, \$11.95.

Some of the finest study books being printed today are the results of various lectureships being held all across this country. This book is a result of the sixth annual Fort Worth lectures conducted by the Brown Trail Church in Bedford, Texas.

The lectures contained in this book have been designed to help the reader to have a greater insight into the great heart of God through the knowledge of His Son, Jesus, the Christ. Each lecture attempts to draw us closer to the character of Jesus; to help us see, with understanding, the humility, yet the boldness of Jesus; His compassion, yet His firmness; His meekness, yet His power.

The book contains 33 different lectures, covering everything from *Christ's Relationship To The Scriptures*, *The Suffering Servant*, *The Risen Christ*, *The King Of The Kingdom*, to *The Historical Jesus*. Four chapters are devoted to the theme: *The Person and Life of Christ in the Elevation of Womanhood*. One such chapter in this section is *The Emancipation From Tradition*.

Each chapter begins with a short outline and most lessons end with a fine biography. This is an excellent book to add to any library. I have enjoyed reading this 1983 lecture book and hope to receive the 1984 lecture for review.

*LESSONS FROM A SHEEP DOG* by Phillip Keller (*Word Books: Waco, Texas*), 1983, hardback, 125 pages, \$7.95.

When we think of Christ as the Good Shepherd, we usually think of ourselves as His sheep. But Keller takes a different approach and gives us a whole new perspective and insight into what it means to follow Jesus Christ, to be a disciple. He argues that we are not sheep—we are undershepherds, we are coworkers.

Through the captivating story of his experiences with Lass, his border collie, Keller shows how the power of

love changed a snarling, rebellious, castaway collie into a trusted, valuable coworker on a rugged sheep ranch in British Columbia. This is a modern-day parable that will give insights into the relationship God desires with His people.

*LIFE WITH A PURPOSE* by J. Noel Meredith (*Meredith Publishing: Lawrenceburg, Tennessee*), 1983, hardback, 111 pages, \$10.00.

This little book has large easy-to-read print and contains some very thought-provoking material. The readers will find such subjects as worry, life with a purpose, love, and trouble very relevant subjects for today's society. My favorite chapter was on gardens in which Meredith discussed the Garden of Eden, the Garden of Gethsemane, the Garden of the Tomb, and the Garden of Heaven.

The chapters are of such that it would make wonderful devotional studies for early morning or at the close of the day. Bound in a lovely blue cover with gold lettering, the book would make a nice gift.

*INTRODUCTION TO SOUL WINNING* edited by Clayton Pepper (*Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas*), 1983, paperback, 68 pages, \$1.95.

This little book describes the personal qualities needed in soul winning, where to find prospects, how to arrange a study and tells how to use many methods of teaching. Pepper has compiled these 13 lessons from different men on different areas of doing personal work. Jule Miller has a chapter on the use of filmstrips; Ermon Bain discusses the use of wall charts; J.T. Bristow talks about winning souls with a one-lesson study method; and Pepper shows how to mark your Bible for successful soul winning.

The book is designed to show that any Christian can be a personal evangelist. Thought questions are included at the end of each of the 13 chapters. This would be good for a quarterly study.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:  
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# RESTORATION HISTORY

By David Padfield

## ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

*Set For The Defense Of The Gospel*

The life of Christ was filled with conflict. In 1970 John R.W. Stott wrote a book titled, *Christ the Controversialist*. In this work he simply showed that the nature of Christ's teaching spawns controversy, and Christ was a master controversialist. In like manner, the preachers of the restoration movement were more than willing to meet the enemy in public discussions. Out of these polemic engagements arose many gallant warriors, including Alexander Campbell (1788 - 1866).

In his book, *Campbell and Controversy*, Bill Humble said, "The great religious debates in which Campbell met with the Goliaths of atheism, Catholicism and portray vividly the controversial background of the Restoration Movement. Wherever Campbell and his colleagues went in preaching the ancient gospel, they became controversialists, occasionally by choice, but more often by necessity. The choice was between defending their cherished convictions or surrendering them be default" (page 21).

In this article we would like to take brief notice of some of the "Goliaths" who chose to do battle with Campbell.

**JOHN WALKER**

Minister of the Secession  
(Presbyterian)

Campbell's first debate was with a Presbyterian preacher, John Walker. The debate was held in the small village of Mount Pleasant, Ohio in June of 1820. The subject was "Christain Baptism." According to a written agreement each speech was to be 40 minutes long. However, Walkers first speech only lasted two minutes. He stated his major premise, "I maintain that baptism came in the room of circumcision; that the covenant on which the Jewish church was built, and to which circumcision is

the seal, is the same with the covenant of which the Christian Church is built, and to which baptism is the seal." He believed that baptism took the place of circumcision.

Campbell, usually taking full advantage of the time allotted to him, reverted back to his famous "*Sermon On The Law*." When the debate closed, it was obvious that Walker fell in defeat. Campbell's next debate was a direct result of Walker's failure to uphold Presbyterian doctrine.

**W.L. MACCALLA**  
Presbyterian

After his debate with Walker, Campbell issued an open challenge for another debate. Three years later, another Presbyterian, W.L. Maccalla sent a letter to Campbell expressing his willingness to meet on the polemic platform.

The debate was held on the property of the Washington, Kentucky, Baptist church. The old meetinghouse was reconstructed on the original site in 1980.

Using the same basic arguments of Walker (but dressed up much better), Maccalla attempted to prove baptism to be the seal of the New Covenant, while at the same time refusing to

examine the arguments of Campbell.

**ROBERT OWEN**

Champion of Skepticism

Owen, a well known social reformer and industrialist issued a debate challenge while giving lectures in New Orleans in 1828. He considered religion, marriage and private property to be the three "formidable prejudices" which caused all of the misery of mankind.

Campbell answered the challenge and debated Owen on April 13-21 at Cincinnati, Ohio. When the debate was over, it was published in book form. The Title page reads: "*The Evidences Of Christianity, a Debate between Robert Owen, of New Lanark, Scotland, and Alexander Campbell, President of Bethany College, VA. Containing an Examination of the 'Social System' and all of the systems of skepticism of ancient and modern times.*"

Skepticism was dealt a crushing blow during this debate; even the secular newspapers of the day claimed Campbell as the "winner." The facts of the case were presented plainly and simply by both men, without personal reflection upon the opposition.

Eighteen years after the debate, Campbell happened to meet Owen again, while on a trip to Europe. Campbell



*Washington Baptist Church. Used from 1785 to 1889. Site of Campbell - Maccalla Debate.*



*Meetinghouse at Washington, KY. A result of the debate with Maccalla.*



*Robert Owen (1771 - 1859)*

spoke of their conversation in a letter to his oldest, daughter, Clarinda, recorded in the *Millennial Harbinger*, 1847, page 420. "He never alluded to the scenes of Cincinnati, but with the most perfect courtesy and kind feelings inquired after everything interesting to me, and especially after the health and happiness of your grand-father (Thomas Campbell, dap). I am sorry for the honor of sectarian Christianity, but glad for the honor of human nature, to state what you may have heard me say on other occasions, that, of all my opponents in debate, the infidel Robert Owen was the most candid, fair, and gentlemanly disputant I have yet met with; and a saint in morality, compared with some of my opponents. He is, however, still the philosopher of one idea; and destined to die, as he had lived, the victim of an empty and false, though well intended philosophy."

**BISHOP PURCELL**  
Catholic

Bishop John Baptist Purcell was born in Mallow, Ireland on February 26, 1800. He was ordained at the Cathedral of Notre Dame on May 26, 1826. After moving to the United States he became the Bishop of Cincinnati, and the second most influential Catholic in America.

In 1836 Campbell met Purcell at the College of Teachers in Cincinnati. After several public lectures by Catholics advocating a removal of the Bible from public schools, Campbell challenged Purcell to debate. A petition was signed by 57 prominent residents of Cincinnati

begging Campbell to press Purcell into a public discussion. Purcell finally gave in.

The debate was held during the week of January 13-21, 1837, at the Sycamore Street meetinghouse. Over 500 people attended the debate, and hundreds had to be turned away due to a lack of space. Campbell was well prepared for the debate, having written many articles over the years in the *Millennial Harbinger* exposing Catholic doctrine and practice. "Both the Catholic prelate and his opponent were polished scholars, both were logicians, realizing the necessity of logical proof, and both demonstrated an unshakable confidence in their respective faiths." (Campbell And Controversy, page 133).

**NATHAN L. RICE**  
Presbyterian

"It was twenty years after the Maccalla encounter before Alexander Campbell met another representative of the Presbyterian Church in a formal public debate, and during those intervening years momentous changes in the Restoration Movement transformed a small group of energetic reformers within the Baptist fold into an independent religious body which was militant, aggressive, and growing. Those two decades witnessed the phenomenal growth of Campbell's personal prestige among the Baptist churches, the widening breach which finally separated him and even entire associations from their communion, the union of Campbell's followers with the older movement of Barton W. Stone in 1832, Campbell's great defenses of Christianity against Owen and Protestantism, against Purcell, and the rapidly increasing power of the Restoration Movement throughout the West. By the 1840's many areas in the Ohio Valley has seen the Christians overtake and eclipse the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists in their race for the greatest membership; and in Kentucky especially, the Presbyterians had been hard hit by the Restoration Movement." (Campbell and Controversy, page 185).

On November 15, 1843 at the Main Street Church in Lexington, Kentucky Campbell met the champion of the Presbyterian church, Nathan L. Rice. Henry Clay, the "monarch of the American forum, acted as chairman" during the debate.

The discussion centered around three main areas. First, the subjects of baptism and how it is to be administered. Second,



*Nathan L. Rice*  
*Presbyterian Champion.*

the work of the Holy Spirit in conversion. And third, the question of human creeds.

At the conclusion of the debate, both sides claimed victory. Campbell set forth his opinion in the *Millennial Harbinger* . . .

"An occurrence in Nashville sets this argument in fair light. I once had a public talk there with the late Obediah Jennings, D.D., which Presbyterians manufactured into a great debate - which, of course, I was, as usual, gloriously defeated. The city rang with Presbyterian acclamations for some ten days; when an aged citizen accosted one of the boasters in the following style: - 'You, Presbyterians, have gained, you say, a gloriously victory. How do you know when you gain a victory? I do not understand how you ascertain a victory. Do tell me how you know when you beat. I will tell you how in old times we counted victories when I was engaged in the Indian wars. After the battle was over we counted scalps. Those were said to have conquered who could count the largest number of scalps taken from the enemy. Now since Mr. Campbell has been here, he has immersed some thirty, amongst whom were many of the most intelligent citizens of Nashville. How many have you added to your church by this debate?' 'I have not heard of any,' said the Presbyterian friend. 'Pray, then, my dear sir, tell me how you know when you have gained a great victory?'"



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “TESTING”

**Greek Word: peirasmos**

**Meaning: trial, temptation**

This word occurs twenty-one times in the Greek N.T. And the verbal form from which it is derived, **peiradzo**, occurs thirty-nine times. And though the general idea of the word is fairly easy to grasp it turns a little slippery on us when we try to define it too narrowly in certain texts. “**It is an unusual word**” (Nigel Turner, **Christian Words**, p. 441).

In secular Greek it could mean trial, in the sense of testing. It could mean trial in the sense of the necessity of enduring aggravations such as scurvy, epilepsy or cataracts on the eyes. There is but one instance known in secular Greek in which the word comes close to its more specific use in several Bible passages: Apollonius of Rhodes uses the verb to mean, “**to seek to seduce**” (cited in Turner, **op. cit.**).

In the N.T. we encounter a decidedly more spiritual connotation in connection with the use of **peirasmos**. The general idea of trial or testing is there, as in secular Greek. But it is trial and testing in reference to the Christian’s relationship with God. The trials might be the same in substance, but far different in meaning to the pagan and the Christian. And, in the N.T. we find the concept of specific enticement to do evil quite often, whereas the secular use of **peirasmos** (**peiradzo**) has thus far given us only the use by Apollonius in this way mentioned above.

The N.T. uses the verb **peiradzo** in three places to mean to “attempt” or “assay” to do something (Acts 9:26; 16:7; 24:6). And in these passages can be seen the general idea of testing the water, so to speak, to see if a given approach to things will work. But the preponderance of N.T. usage deals with the two ideas of general trial or testing of an individual and the more specific enticement to do evil. The Book of James provides us with an illustration of this distinction.

In Jas. 1:2 we are told to “*count it all joy*” when we “*fall into divers temptations.*” The context will show, I think, that the general idea of trial and testing is under discussion here. The same may be said for Jas. 1:12: “*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried (dokimos), he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.*” Both these passages convey the idea that trial, faithfully endured, leads on to maturity in Christ and final reward. And in both it is the nominal form, **peirasmos**, that is used.

As we read on into Jas. 1:13-14 it is clear that the inducement to do evil is the primary burden (in this particular text) of **peiradzo**, the verbal form of our word: “*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.*”

But this distinction, seen in Jas. 1, between the general and the specific uses of **peirasmos/peiradzo**, is not so clear in other passages. In 1 Thess. 3:5, in a context dealing with “afflictions” and “tribulation” Paul expresses fear that the brethren might be tempted (**peiradzo**) by the tempter. It seems to me that the verb here includes **both** trial and the specific inducement to do evil--or trial that becomes specific inducement to do evil. In Lk. 8:13 in the parable of the sower Jesus says those who “*have no root*” believe for a while but fall in “*time of temptation*” (**peirasmos**). Here the noun seems to include **both** trial and the specific inducement to do evil (cf. Heb. 11:37).

In view of the fact that both the verbal and nominal forms of this word can include **both** trial and specific inducement to do evil I have taken another look at the first chapter of James. I wonder if James is not telling us about two paths that may be taken in the face of a given trial or specific temptation growing out of trial.

They each begin at the point of a

trial or temptation and then part company: 1) The Christian may move from trial to temptation to joyous acceptance of the challenge, through endurance, on to spiritual maturity (Jas. 1:2-4); or, 2) He may move from trial and temptation resentfully or weakly into lust (the desire to do evil in response to the challenge, whatever its form), thence through overt sin, on to spiritual death (Jas. 1:13-15). In other words I am saying that James may be showing us two sides of the same coin in these passages, that the distinction between trial on the one hand and the specific inducement to do evil on the other may not be as clear cut in these two passages as one might first think.

## “REINS”

**Hebrew Word: kilyah**

**Meaning: kidneys, fig. body, heart, mind, soul**

It has been suggested that this word would make an interesting study. It occurs some thirty-one times in the Heb. O.T. It occurs in Akkadian, Aramaic, Arabic, Ethiopic, and Ugaritic--an indication that the concepts it conveys were very common among Semitic peoples in ancient times.

“**In all of these languages, the term refers to the twin organs located in the lower back, the function of which is to filter impurities from the blood. With the fat they were of special significance in certain Hebrew sacrifices. When used figuratively, the term refers to the innermost aspects of personality**” (Theo. Wordbook of O.T., vol. I, p. 440).

It is used in sixteen passages in the O.T. to indicate the kidneys of animals used in sacrifice. Animals given for various offerings were to have the kidneys and the fat surrounding them removed and burnt on the altar. No clear reason is given for this but two suggestions are: 1) That the fat was a special delicacy reserved for God and hence the kidneys enclosed by fat were taken for Him (c.f. Lev. 7:22-25; 1

Sam. 2:16); 2) That the kidneys because of their density and color (and a possible perception of their function) were associated with blood and, therefore, deemed forbidden (cf. Lev. 7:26-27). The first conjecture is probably the most likely of the two. The purity and delicacy of the fat and kidneys is indicated by the description of the choicest wheat as "*the fat of the kidneys of wheat*" (Dt. 32:14; cf. Isa. 34:6).

The kidneys of human beings are regarded as vital in two passages where death and destruction sent from God are said to be arrows slashing into the kidneys (Job 16:13; Lam. 3:13). A near eastern warrior was quite vulnerable when attacked from behind. Hence the importance of armour-bearers in ancient near-eastern warfare.

By the figure of speech, synecdoche (by which a part is put for the whole or vice-versa), the word "kidneys" is translatable as "body" in Psa. 139:13 and Job 19:27, standing for the entire physical body of man. And in this usage is seen the beginning of a migration of *kilyah* from the literal to the figurative.

In nine passages the word *kilyah* is used to convey the concept of the "innermost being" of man (T.W.O.T., op. cit.). It has been suggested that this is an appropriate symbol of the inner man for O.T. times because in dismembering an animal the kidneys are the last organ to be reached (I.S.B.E., III, 1797).

For instance, Jeremiah tells the hypocrites of his day that God is near "*in their mouth, and far from their reins (kilyah, kidneys)*" (Jer. 12:2). Jeremiah is also using our word this way when he says that God tries "*the reins and the heart*" of man (Jer. 11:20). The Psalmist says it grieves his "*heart and reins*" when the wicked prosper (Psa. 73:21). And the wise man of Proverbs says his "*reins rejoice*" when his son speaks rightly (Prov. 23:16).

The K.J.V. uses the word "reins" in most passages to translate *kilyah* (derived from Latin, *renes*, kidneys). But later versions try to distinguish literal and figurative uses of the word with such English terms as kidneys (literal) and heart, soul, mind (figurative). I suppose modern translators are here operating on the assumption that modern English-speakers will not find it easy to see the

connection between kidneys and the "innermost being" of man. And I suspect they just don't like the sound of the word "kidneys." Frankly, I am skeptical of such short cuts. I think it prudent for translators to retain as much of the flavor of the original text as is consistent with grammatical English and trust diligent Bible students to taste it.

#### "TO SPARE"

**Greek Word: pheidomai**

**Meaning: To spare**

In the Book of Romans Paul tells us that God Almighty did not **spare** his own Son but gave him up for us all (Rom. 8:32). He did not hold back anything and will not hold back anything that is essential to our eternal salvation. And the proof of this is our word, **phaidomai**.

As a verb this word conveys the idea of holding back or withholding or even "*to grudge*" (J.B. Phillips, **The New Testament in Modern English**, Rom. 8:32). It is used one time in the New Testament in the form of an adverb, **phaidomenos**, and this usage is a fine illustration of the word's flavor. Paul writes, "*He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly*" (2 Cor. 9:6).

When God the Father "*spared not*" his own Son but delivered him up for us all he proved to us beyond the shadow of a doubt that he is not stingy, not one to grudge us a favor, not a withholder of good things. He did not sow **sparingly**! He gave, for our sakes, the absolute best there was to give.

There are two things to see in this: 1) If God is not a stingy grudging God, we cannot be his children and fail to give the best we have to give, **unsparingly**; 2) If he **spared not** his own Son he will also surely give us all things (Rom. 8:32). We can count on him for the very best. He is "*for us*," not against us (Rom. 8:31).

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**Is there a particular word you would like to see discussed in this column? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.**

# Positive Christian Living

by Lynn Trappe

**C**hristians must face the trials and temptations of the Devil everyday of their lives. We are always in the midst of a battle with Satan, and winning that battle is what the Christian life is all about. Yet it is unfortunate that few professing Christians have learned to overcome temptation. Many will go through life committing the same sin over and over again; never gaining the victory. However, there is hope. There is a way to overcome sin in our lives and face each day renewed in Christ. The formula for overcoming sin is positive Christian living.

The person who coined the phrase, "Idle hands are The Devil's workshop," was aware that the easiest way to allow sin in our lives was to be idle in the performance of good. It may be easy for one to say he is going to quit sinning, but if he does not replace the evil with good he is not likely to succeed. When Paul told the Ephesians to "*lay aside the old self*" and "*put on the new self*" (4:22-24 he gave them a practical guide for doing so that emphasized replacing the negative aspects of their lives with positive Christian living. Instead of lying they were told to speak the truth with their neighbors (v. 25). Instead of continuing in anger, they were to resolve the problem ("*do not let the sun go down on your anger*," v. 26). Stealing was to be replaced with laboring so that they might be able to help the needy (v. 28). Kindness, tender-heartedness, and a forgiving spirit was said to take the place of bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice (vs. 31-32). The formula that worked then will continue to work now. Why not begin to put on positive Christian living and, thus, begin to overcome your faults!

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# The Family Affair

**\*WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?** Write a family dictionary together. When an important word comes up in conversation, on the evening news, or in the preacher's sermon, talk about the meaning and write out your family's own definition in a notebook reserved for the purpose. Then think of a relevant Bible verse to add that further illuminates the meaning. Start your dictionary by having your family define happiness, love, sharing, salvation, ambition, reputation.

**\*UP TO THIS POINT IN TIME.** Sit down with your child this evening and help him or her write out their life history. Include where they've been, what they've done, talk about their talents and when they learned to do what. You'll be amazed at what the two of you together can think of. Express your pleasure with them and tuck away the history to be read again five years from now.

**\*HONOR YOUR CHILD.** Set aside a family night to honor each of your children. Call it "Child's Name Night." Serve their favorite food or go to the restaurant they choose. After the meal, share together a "flower" you have made for the one being honored. Draw a flower on construction paper. Then cut out the center and each of the petals. Write the child's name on the centerpiece and give each family member one of the petals. Have each person write on his petal what he appreciates about the honoree and give it to him. Then ask the one being honored to paste his flower, piece by piece, on a sheet of construction paper and keep it as a reminder of his family's love for him.

**\*THE WISE SHOPPER.** It is important that we teach our children the value of a dollar. Spotting a "good buy" is essential these days. Next time you visit a shopping center or mall, give each child \$1.00 and an hour in which to purchase the most value they

can for the money. When you rendezvous, let each family member unveil their "bargain" and then vote to see who was the wisest shopper. The winner chooses where to stop for dinner on the way home.

**\*WHAT'S NEWS?** In our fast-moving society, it is difficult to keep up with all of the news happening in the world, neighborhood, church, and family. Once or twice a week, agree that each family member will give a brief news report at dinnertime. It may be personal, or something of interest from the TV, radio, newspaper, church bulletin, magazine, or what's happening with the neighbors.

**\*LAUGHTER MAKES THE MEDICINE GO DOWN.** Experts are even now saying that laughter aids in digestion and it is great for us to laugh at the dinner table. Ask everyone in your family to contribute five jokes or riddles on slips of paper. Keep them on a jar on the table and during Saturday night's dinner take turns drawing them out and reading them.

**\*CREATING A SHORT-CIRCUIT.** Too many families are becoming glued to the TV for too many hours. A quiet reading hour can center around a storybook or novel you read to the family aloud. Or agree to read individually and then gather to talk about what was read or learned. Allow the children to take turns during the week reading their Sunday morning or mid-week Bible lessons. The purpose of this exercise is to short-circuit runaway television and ease the tension children may feel when first denied their habitual programs.

**\*EXPECTING AN ADDITION TO THE FAMILY?** To your yet-to-be-born child write a letter. Express the joy and anticipation you feel as a parent. Talk about the desires that have led you to want to have this child. Put in words your hopes concerning the character and faith you trust the child will

cherish as an adult. Then put the letter in the safe deposit box to be opened again and shared on the child's 12th birthday.

**\*CHEF OF THE WEEK.** Most of the world's great chefs are men. How long has it been since the man of your house offered to cook a meal? A week... month...year? Why not assign Daddy one meal a week and help him cultivate his culinary artistry? Everyone has to start somewhere...and think how impressed and amazed the wife and kids will be!

**\*LITTLE, BUT BIG.** "When I saw this, I thought of you" are magic words when scrawled on a note and attached to an object to be given to a husband or wife. The item could be a flower, a picture, a clipping from a newspaper, a picture postcard, a travel brochure, a new book, or a piece of their favorite candy. It's the little things that often count big.

**\*CLOSE OBSERVATION.** Helen Keller supposedly said that many people who have eyes don't always use them to see with. How observant are you and your family? Tonight after dinner play a little game to determine how observant you really are with your eyes. Gather the whole family into the living room and look around for about three minutes. Then have one person leave the room. Change the location of one object—a vase, lamp, chair, or something more subtle like a slip of paper. You can easily adapt this game to the age of the children and make it as easy or as complicating as needed. Make sure you move the object enough to be noticeable if the person looks carefully. Then have the person return and try to discover what's been moved. Next week try it in the kitchen, the next in the den, etc.

**\*I'LL TRADE CLEANING THE TABLE FOR EMPTYING THE TRASH.** Re-examine family chores from time to time to see if changes are in order. Have each person list his or her chores (help the preschoolers with their lists). Then ask them to rate each from the most enjoyable (number one) to the least enjoyable. List any new family chores that need to be added. Then review each person's list, allowing family members to trade jobs as they wish (assuming both can do the jobs being traded). Make sure everyone has an equal share of those jobs deemed least desirable. One month later, do a second review.

# CAN I TRUST THE NEW TESTAMENT?

by Daniel H. King

**W**hether or not something is dependable can be very important. That is especially so when we must entrust our lives or our future to it. For example, if you were planning on going on a trip and had it in mind to fly to your destination, you would select an airline that you considered both reputable and safe. On the other hand, had you heard of several airplane accidents all involving the same airline, then you would most likely try to avoid a trip on one of their planes. How much their fares cost would appear insignificant when compared to your safety and that of your family. If you considered the airline trustworthy you might use their services; otherwise, you certainly would not.

This little illustration makes plain the reason many people today do not read or study the New Testament. It also evinces the chief reason that they do not arrange their lives with it in view. **They simply do not trust it.** Several factors enter into their decision not to trust it. For example, some people **do not want** to trust it. If they did, then they would have to give up many things that they enjoy, but which are condemned by it. They would also feel compelled to do some things which it demands, things which they have not the slightest intention of doing. Therefore, they do not trust the New Testament.

It is not for people like this that our thoughts are penned. We know people of this sort cannot be brought to believe the New Testament is God's communication to man. These lines are written for the person who honestly does not know whether he or she can trust this set of documents as divinely authored. Such an individual can be reached with the truth on any matter because they tend to be objective in their viewing of the evidence. And evidence is, after all, what truth is about. We intend to offer some, and by 'some' we mean the barest skeletal outline, of the evidence available which convinces us of the verity of the New Testament as a document which is not only sacred but also trustworthy. We hope that you

will at least give the New Testament the benefit of this brief reading.

## REVELATION AND INSPIRATION

Prior to His leaving this earthly realm, Jesus promised His disciples that the Holy Spirit would empower them in a special way. He had taught them many things in a personal capacity (Jn. 14:25), yet He had much more to say to them. Knowing He would no more be with them in bodily presence, He told them they would be comforted by the living guidance of God's representative: *"The Comforter, even the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you."*

The first idea presented here is called "revelation." Jesus told them they would be taught things through the Spirit which they had not formerly known. Paul later gave an instance of this process in his mention of the part which the Gentiles were destined to play under the New Covenant (see Eph. 3:3-6 *"how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery..."*). The fact that the Gentiles were to have a part in the New Covenant Community, the church, was something which God made known directly to His people (see Acts 10 for details). The second idea is that of "protective guidance." The Spirit was to bring to their remembrance "all" that He had said to them. Now, any of us will surely know how necessary was this process. And we will know it by personal experience. Remembering an entire phone number at one time gives this writer some difficulty. Yet these men were expected to recall all that Christ had said; after all, could any of His teachings have been deemed unimportant or nonessential? Since they could not be so viewed, and ordinary men could not have performed such a feat of memorization without divine help, divine assistance was provided.

Another idea which needs noticing is that of "inspiration." Two texts from the New Testament form the

basis of the Scriptural doctrine of "inspiration." They are 2 Timothy 3:16f. and 2 Pet. 1:21. In the first passage the word "inspiration" itself is used. Paul asserts that *"all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is (therefore) profitable..."* The word for "inspiration" in the original is the Greek word **theopneustos**. Its literal meaning is **"God-breathed,"** that is, **"breathed out by God."** So that, what the Apostle proclaims about Scripture is that, even after it had gone through the process of human writing and recording, it was yet the product of God's out-breathing. It also should be noticed that Paul called the writings themselves "God-breathed" and not the men who set them down on paper. This is particularly important because some students have ignored this fact and come up with the idea that since God used fallible men to reveal His will the end-product was a fallible revelation. To their mind this would be like a great trumpeter blowing into a cheap trumpet and producing an inferior sound. The difficulty with this analogy is simply that this is not what the text says about inspiration in the first place. What it says is that **Scripture** was "breathed-out" by God, so that it is genuinely the work of divinity and not of humanity.

In Peter's comment upon the process of God's making known His Word, he writes that, *"no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."* The point being put forward here is that God brought these men along to the destination which He, in His eternal wisdom, had in mind for them. They did not go on their own. They did not of their own volition choose the destination and it was not theirs to select the mode of arrival. They *"spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."* Once more, the emphasis is placed upon the work of God in the origination of Holy Scripture. In both of these cases the place of the human component is set in the background, not because it is not there or because it is unimportant, but because

what is special about these writings is not that which they possess on account of the human contribution to them, but because of that which is divine about them!

### INERRANCY

*"Can we trust the New Testament on all fronts?"* This is one of the most haunting questions among all those that are brought before the modern Christian for his consideration. What makes it so hard for him is that things are not now as they once were. A good many religious people are not even in agreement about this all-important issue. On the contemporary scene there are a number of religious leaders and top-ranking theologians who answer it in the negative.

Many of those who have taken this position in dealing with the New Testament and the Bible as a whole have done so on what they consider intellectual grounds. But that may in most cases be translated into the observation that this is a very popular position among intellectuals and academicians at the present time. When one closely examines the cases which they put forth as proof for the existence of mistakes in Scripture, he finds that in every instance where mistakes are documented, there is at least one alternative way of viewing the text or datum within the passage being considered which does not require that the Scripture is in error, and sometimes there are several. Yet the modern critic will elect in almost every instance to posit that the Bible is wrong and the modern interpreter right. When two texts seem, on the surface at least, to be in conflict, he will labor to prove them so, ignoring every sign that they may be complimentary to one another.

We hope the reader will not be taken in by such inequitable reasoning or methods. In a court of law they would amount to a "guilty until proven innocent" approach to justice. Obviously, such methods are neither "intellectual" nor are they "academic." The younger Bible student should not therefore give up his faith in the Bible on account of some shallow attack made against it by a professor or intellectual. If the answer to whatever objection is made to the Bible is not immediately evident, he ought to give it some additional study or ask someone who might know the answer. Surely our faith is worth that! At times one will be amazed at how simple the answer really is and

wonder why he did not think of it himself.

The Bible does claim to be inerrant, despite what some may say about it. The careful student of the Word of God will observe it more in the form of an overall attitude taken by all parties speaking or writing in the Bible than in specific proof texts. For example, when the general sentiment of Christ toward the written Word is noted, it will be seen that He always has absolute respect for it and views it as the final court of appeal in matters pertaining to life. How can we forget His oft-repeated quote, *"One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all is fulfilled"* (Matt. 5:17, 18)? In the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16) the poor rich man in hell begs that a testimony be given to his five living brothers. But the answer comes that they already have a testimony--Moses and the prophets. The rich man urges that a further appeal be made by a message from the dead. The answer comes back: *"If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."* In His debate with the Sadducees about the resurrection of the dead, Christ chided these intellectual but Scripturally ignorant Jewish proletariats with the words, *"Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures not the power of God"* (Matt. 22:29). For Him the ultimate error is to be ignorant of the written Word of God, the Scriptures. This is the same attitude taken throughout the Bible by all its authors and every individual endowed with divine insight to comment upon such. For them no source could take its place as a guide in the life of men, and to misread its contents was the ultimate rebellion against its divine architect.

This also is evident in a rather simple passage having to do with something altogether different than an argument over the authority of Scripture. *"The Scripture cannot be broken,"* said Jesus in a parenthetical note which assumed the agreement of His opponents in John 10:35. This aspect of the point both parties in the text could agree upon. It was in getting His enemies to accept the force of what the Scripture said that gave Christ difficulty. As already suggested, consensus on this could not so easily be assumed today as it was then, but this verse strikingly demonstrates that it is the everpresent assumption of Scripture as to its own

nature and integrity.

Thus, throughout its multifarious parts the Bible argues its own infallibility and on this account is able to assume also its authority in human life. It could only have been through divine oversight that this miracle of Scripture was possible. Imagine getting some forty different writers to sit down in different places over several centuries and coming up with sixty-six books--every one devoid of statements contradictory to what the rest had set down in their own compositions! That is a feat beyond the capacity of unaided human beings to perform.

### THE CANON

*"How can we know that the right books were chosen to go into the New Testament?"* This is a very commonly asked question these days, one which causes some people deep concern. They feel that God may have inspired the Bible at the first, but that God's work was to some degree thwarted by the foibles of prejudiced or incapable men during those years which followed the original writing process. In other words, they think that in some cases the wrong books may have been selected for inclusion in what we call our "canon", the catalog of sacred books which make up our New Testament.

But is this logical? If God could produce these books in the first place through divine guidance and providence, is it not reasonable to suppose that He was every whit as able to oversee the process of preservation and selection of these books for inclusion in the New Testament? For our part, there seems to be little reason to believe otherwise. Certainly in the time of Christ it was assumed by Him, the early apostles and the others who wrote the New Testament books that those documents which had been selected by earlier generations of orthodox Jews were the right ones, and that they were sufficient to reveal the will of heaven for man. No objections are raised to those books previously selected and they make no argument on behalf of any other work than the ones found in the present Old Testament. For example, we observe Jesus quoting from Isaiah (Matt. 15:7) and Malachi (Matt. 11:10); Luke mentions Jews observing the laws found in Exodus and Leviticus (Lev. 12:2-6 in Lk. 2:22; and Ex. 13:2, 12 in Luke 2:23; etc.); Peter quoted from Joel on Pentecost (2:28ff. in Acts

2:17ff.) as well as David (Psalm 16:8ff. in Acts 2:25ff.); and Paul cites passages from the Old Testament throughout his writings as do the rest of the New Testament authors. One researcher, Roger Nicole, reported that a very conservative count discloses unquestionably at least 295 separate references to the Old Testament canon in the New Testament. These occupy some 352 verses of the New Testament, or more than 4.4 per cent. Thus one verse in about every 23 of the New Testament is a quotation! This indicates that the writers were confident that those books earlier selected as inspired of God and worthy of inclusion among the other books of Scripture were the right ones. That process was an historical one, completed at least two hundred years before any of those writers were born. The documents which today comprise our Old Testament made up their Bible then. Each book, by external and internal evidence, had established itself in the hearts and religious lives of the people over the span of Hebrew history to that point in time.

If you will consider the matter carefully, you will see that we find ourselves precisely where Christ and the apostles found themselves. We are the benefactors of a "canon" or list of books chosen over the space of many generations of people as critical and difficult to convince as are we. We had nothing to do with the process, we have merely inherited its benefit. But this does not indicate that God had nothing to do with the process. The providential hand of the Almighty was actively preserving for others what He had revealed for the first congregations of Christians. Therefore, we can quote Isaiah 40:6ff. with as much confidence as could Peter (1 Pet. 1:24) when he argued for the ability of the Word of God to persist in the face of whatever obstacle that impeded its continuing to speak to new generations of the sons of men: "All flesh is grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower falleth; but the word of the Lord abideth for ever." We may live out our lives in total confidence that the proper decision was made in each particular instance. Our New Testament contains just those books that God wanted it to contain, and so persists as the unassailable memorial to the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

## THE DOCUMENTS

*"We hear of scribal errors, of conflations and manuscript differences. Can we depend upon the text of the New Testament?"* Notwithstanding the presence of scribal errors, conflations and so forth, in the manuscripts of the New Testament books, still we can say with confidence that we do have the Word of God and that we can trust the text of the New Testament. The reason: much more has been made of such occurrences in biblical manuscripts by critics of biblical authority than the evidence actually justifies.

To begin with, it has been alleged that the very absence of the original manuscripts of biblical books, the "autographs," poses a problem for the Christian, since anything could have entered into the later copies and corrupted the truths originally enshrined in their sacred wording. But this is a transparent case of shallow thinking. If we did possess the originals our faith would, in reality, stand in greater jeopardy. For if one or more of the autographs had been retained, but only after some human tampering had already been performed upon their contents, then some error would always characterize the greatest treasure of the church. As it stands, we have thousands of manuscript copies to work from. We can compare the contents of these copies and usually quite easily dispose of those readings which are corrupt, thereby obtaining a true picture of what the original looked like.

It has often been observed that the Bible is the best attested of all the ancient works. This is no overstatement. One may make the comparison himself if he does not believe it. For Caesar's **Gallic War** (composed 58 and 50 B.C.) there are only nine or ten good manuscripts, and the oldest is some 900 years later than Caesar's day. The **Histories** of Tacitus (ca. A.D. 100) only partially survive. The text of these extant portions of his two great historical works depends entirely upon two manuscripts, one of the ninth century and one of the eleventh. The **History** of Thucydides (ca. 460-400 B.C.) is known to us from only eight manuscripts, the earliest belonging to about A.D. 900, and a few earlier papyrus scraps. Yet, who would venture to argue that we do not have the words of Thucydides or another of these ancient authors? Are we not obligated to believe similarly

when it comes to the documents of the early church, especially when we base our conviction upon multiplied thousands of manuscripts and fragments, some of which date within a generation of the original texts themselves?

As to the import of scribal errors, F.F. Bruce, a scholar of considerable stature, has written: "Fortunately, if the great number of manuscripts increases the number of scribal errors, it increases proportionately the means of correcting such errors, so that the margin of doubt left in the process of recovering the exact original wording is not so large as might be feared; it is in truth remarkably small. The variant readings about which any doubt remains among textual critics of the New Testament affect no material question of historic factor or of Christian faith or practice" (*The New Testament Documents: Are They Reliable?*, pp. 19-20). Textual criticism has developed into a very exacting science in the larger discipline of Biblical Studies, given the tremendous number of biblical manuscripts in existence. The result of this precise study and the careful methods which it imposes upon the materials it treats, is that we can say we do possess the original text of the New Testament with greater certainty than we can with any other document or set of documents from antiquity.

## CONCLUSION

This short essay has not been intended as a complete study of the questions raised. Much more could obviously be said about each topic. What we have written here was calculated to make you think. So often in our dealings with those who hold the positions they do on matters like these, we have been stricken by the thoughtlessness with which they have taken up some of these views. The New Testament, since it reveals Jesus, the most arresting figure in all of human experience, is not a body of literature to be taken so lightly. Neither can it be sold out so cheaply as some have tended to do. This rich spiritual heritage is worthy of your most serious contemplation. For it men and women have sacrificed their lives, and through the centuries multitudes have enriched themselves spiritually by drinking deeply at its fountain. Why not give it a closer look?

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **PREACHERS ADVISED TO FIND WAYS TO DEAL WITH STRESS**

Ministers, organizational leaders and others in positions of responsibility sometimes create their own stress by assuming that they have to be able to answer every problem brought to them.

"We shouldn't give an answer when we don't have one," warned Brooks Faulkner, supervisor of the Baptist Sunday School Board's career guidance section. "We need to say 'I don't know.' To deal with stress, you have to learn to live with ambiguity."

Stress is related directly to physiological problems, Faulkner stated. "Either deal with stress or it will affect your health, as it may weaken your immune system," he said.

To help manage stress Faulkner advised using I Thess. 5 as a guide for living. "Live in peace with one another," he said, "admonish the unruly, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all persons."

He also suggested the importance of setting priorities in life, learning to say "No" and developing a support system of friends who will be honest with you. Too much stress, according to Faulkner, can make a person aggressive, distort realities or make one a compulsive conformer to show that stress isn't taking its toll.

## **RELIGIOUS BURIAL FOR ABORTED FETUSES DENIED BY CALIFORNIA COURT OF APPEALS**

A request by pro-life groups to provide a religious burial for the more than 16,000 aborted fetuses found in a storage container two years ago was denied by the California Court of Appeals.

Focus on the Family reported that the presiding judge, Arleigh Woods, ruled that while many groups consider

abortion murder, "it is a belief not universally held. Any state action showing preference for this belief...must be invalidated unless it is justified by compelling government interest."

Further appeals to the California Supreme Court will be made according to pro-life groups in that state.

## **REAGAN ADMINISTRATION CUTS FUNDING FOR INTERNATIONAL ABORTION PROGRAMS**

Through a change in policy by the Reagan Administration, international family planning programs which advocate abortion will no longer be funded with federal money.

"Abortion is an unnecessary and repugnant method of population control," said a government spokesman. Under the new guidelines, government aid to any organization which supports abortion abroad will be cut off, even if it raises money from other sources to support abortion programs. Because of this new rule International Planned Parenthood could lose up to \$11 million a year if it does not revise its policy to meet this regulation.

Many underdeveloped nations which receive U.S. aid and have provided abortions at government expense will continue to get aid, but it cannot be used for abortions. "Attempts to use abortion, involuntary sterilization or other coercive measures in family planning must be shunned, whether exercised against families within a society or against nations within the family of man," stated the new U.S. policy on population control.

As an alternative to abortion, the U.S. population policy statement suggested voluntary family assistance programs for couples wanting to regulate the size of their families. In some countries, such as China, abortion is often used to end unwanted pregnancies.

## **COURT ORDERS TWO SUNDAY SERVICES FOR DIVIDED BAPTIST CHURCH**

The First Baptist Church in Jamestown, Ohio, is now holding two services each Sunday—not because of overcrowding, but because of a court order.

This situation resulted from a lawsuit which seeks to have Steven Thacker, a conservative-fundamentalist, removed as pastor for "conspiring to gain control of the church." The suit also asks for \$500,000 in damages. The separate services will continue until October 9 when the case goes to court. Approximately half of the 80 members attended Thacker's regular service while a visiting pastor preached to the rest.

Thacker stated that he had made his position with the church clear when he became pastor last March. He said he will start a new church in the same community if he loses the case.

## **EXPERTS SAY NEW KIDS FILMS MORE VIOLENT AND DEPRESSING**

Critics and child psychologists have noted that new films such as "**Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom**" and "**Gremlins**" are darker and more violent particularly for preteen audiences. They also expressed concern about the casual attitude toward killing in "**Star Trek III: The Search for Spock**."

Muppet creator Jim Henson, whose new film, "**The Muppets Take Manhattan**," will be released this summer, commented that "**Indiana Jones**" and "**Gremlins**" have more intense scenes than would have been shown two or three years ago.

Neil Postman, an expert on the effect of the media on children, said that while "**Star Trek III**" is considered mild today "there are plenty of people, incinerated, knifed or otherwise blown to bits."

Besides the graphic violence and sex in today's kids films there is also a great intensity in many scenes. Bruno Bettelheim, the child psychologist, warns that the breakneck pace and "emphathetic editing" can be overpowering to young children. "In many ways the authoritarian nature of movies can be more damaging than the content," he said.

The real difference between the new and the old films, according to the experts, is not so much in their content, but in the way the stories are told.

Disney films presented a world in which there was a moral order," said Postman, "The way they told their stories is several levels removed from the vivid realism of "Indiana Jones." In the pursuit of an ever-larger audience, film-makers have escalated the amount of brutality and terror in their films."

#### **CRUDE, ANTI-CATHOLIC PAMPHLET PART OF RECENT RASH OF ANTI-CATHOLIC ACTS**

A crudely anti-Catholic pamphlet charging that the Vatican orchestrated the assassinations of Presidents Abraham Lincoln and John F. Kennedy is being circulated around the nation by a controversial religious foundation.

The eight-page flier, entitled "The Pope's Secrets," has been distributed in at least 20 states in the last few weeks by the Tony and Susan Alamo Christian Foundation, based in Alma, Ark. The foundation, which operates a church and a small network of Christian schools, has drawn attention in the past when critics alleged that the Alamos exercised cult-like control over members of their movement.

The publication of the tract followed the appearance of posters in several American cities asserting that the Vatican secretly owns most of the major news organizations in this country. The burst of anti-Catholic propaganda has prompted the president of the National Conference of Christians and Jews to publicly repudiate the Alamo pamphlet and to ask the conference's 76 regional offices to "condemn and counteract. . .the libelous and irrational attacks" on the Catholic Church.

Jacqueline G. Wexler, president of the interfaith conference, said distribution of the tract has become "too widespread to ignore." In a

prepared statement, she expressed fear that the "scurrilous material (and) nonsensical charges. . .may stir anti-Catholic sentiments still present in some parts of American society."

The Alamo literature represents the most virulent attack on the Roman Catholic Church since the distribution three years ago of anti-Catholic comic books published by the California based fundamentalist Chick Publications and written by a purported former Jesuit priest. That hate campaign was widely denounced by most evangelical and fundamentalist Protestant leaders, provoking several Christian bookstores to remove all Chick-produced material from their shelves.

In a recent interview with Michael Clark, a reporter for the Memphis Commercial Appeal, Tony Alamo said he is undaunted by opponents of his crusade, asserting that no one who is "a true Christian" would try to suppress the charges. He said he intends to distribute 50 million copies of the tract in the United States and abroad. Mr. Alamo said he has long been preaching against the Catholic Church, but indicated that the literature was prompted by the recent establishment of formal diplomatic ties between the U.S. government and the Vatican.

He had particularly harsh words for such widely known Protestant evangelists as the Rev. Billy Graham, the Rev. Jerry Falwell and the Rev. Oral Roberts, accusing them of being "in league" with the alleged international Catholic conspiracy.

In addition to his allegation that the Vatican plotted and executed the assassinations of Presidents Lincoln and Kennedy, Mr. Alamo charged in his tract that the Catholic Church controls virtually all agencies of the U.S. government, "most of the heavy-weight news media," the United Nations and organized crime.

In the world according to Mr. Alamo, Jesuit priests posing as Jewish rabbis also have infiltrated the Israeli parliament as spies. Mr. Alamo also contends that the late People's Temple leader, Jim Jones, was in fact a "Roman Catholic Jesuit deacon posing as a Christian," who was "murdered along with his flock by the Vatican to make the world look. . .suspiciously upon innocent Christians retreats." The tract blames the Vatican for World

War II and the Nazi Holocaust, as well as for current conflicts in Central America, the Middle East and Lebanon.

The Alamo Foundation is thought to have only about 1,000 followers, but newspaper reports have estimated the movement's net worth at \$25 million, compiled largely through Alamo's western-style clothing store in Nashville and other business interests operated by members of the group. Tony Alamo has been the movement's principle figure for two years since the death of his wife Susan.

#### **NEW CHURCH MEANT FOR SINGLES ONLY**

A 42-year-old bachelor who wants single people to come together over prayer, not beer, is starting a congregation called "Green Pastures: The First Singles Church."

"We'd rather have the Lord be the matchmaker than Coors (beer)," said Bruce McDonald, a carpenter and minister who has booked a conference room at an Arlington motel for the initial service.

Although many area churches have singles ministries with as many as 2,000 people enrolled, McDonald said a church specifically for singles is still needed.

In a metropolitan area where nearly half the population is unmarried and the divorce rate is one of the nation's highest, McDonald said many singles hesitate to "sit in a regular church service because they feel uncomfortable without a wife or husband."

McDonald's plan has met with skepticism from some ministers who lead singles groups.

David Roddy, Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Dallas, predicted a short life for Green Pastures as a singles-only endeavor.

"In a period of time I bet all of them get married and they'll have a church of married people," he said.

Susan Monts, an associate pastor who works with single adults at First United Methodist Church in Dallas, wondered if people would have to leave McDonald's congregation once they marry.

"We're not going to be that strict," McDonald said with a laugh. "If they want to stay and work with the singles, that's fine."

Bob Kaumeyer, minister to 750 single adults at First Baptist Church in

Eules, which McDonald formerly attended, said a church "has to be for everybody."

While McDonald agreed that a traditional church would be the "ideal situation," he said "a lot of people just don't attend."

McDonald said he wants his church to be independent because a lot of people have "preconceived ideas about denominations."

The idea, he said, is to "reach people that aren't considering coming to a regular church."

### **CAPROCK CHURCH PLANS LECTURESHIP--**

October 28 thru November 1 will be the dates for the Bible lectureship planned by the Caprock Church, 5201 University Avenue, Lubbock, TX 79413. Four very capable preachers who are well known through the brotherhood and highly respected for their great faith and ability in presenting the Word have been invited to work together during this endeavor. Their subjects are timely, interesting and challenging.

The speakers and their subjects are as follows: Harry Pickup, Jr.--"Living As A Saint In A Modern World"; Dee Bowman--"Oh, What A Saviour"; James P. Needham--"Secular Humanism"; and John Kilgore will also speak at some of the services and lead a half-hour of singing each evening before the lessons.

Grover Stevens, the local preacher with the Caprock Church, says the Christians there are opening up their hearts and homes to provide hospitality to those coming for the week. If you need further information, write Bro. Stevens at the address above.

### **EX-ASTRONAUT ON THIRD MISSION TO FIND NOAH'S ARK ON ARARAT**

James Irwin, a former Apollo Mission astronaut who landed on the moon in 1971, is now on his third attempt to find Noah's ark on Mount Ararat. With him on this expedition are Dick Bright, John Christianson, his son-in-law, and a Turkish guide.

During their week-long stay on Mount Ararat they will concentrate on an area where a guide saw a piece of wood sticking through the ice last year. While on that expedition with 20 other Americans Irwin and his party had to

come down early because of severe weather. In 1982 Irwin was injured on Mount Ararat when he fell from a glacier.

Before leaving on this year's climb Irwin expressed hope in finding the ark because "there are many areas we haven't looked yet." They were to return to Ankara, Turkey on August 30.

A later report from New York on August 27 stated that samples of rock and decayed wood had been brought back from Mt. Ararat by the Expedition. These specimens were to be tested to prove the existence of Noah's ark.

### **JIM IRWIN DOUBTS AUTHENTICITY OF ROCK SAMPLES FROM ARARAT**

Former astronaut Jim Irwin returned here from his own search for Noah's ark on Mount Ararat and expressed doubt that the rock samples brought back by another expedition will prove the existence of the ark. He said he had been in the area which the rock specimens were taken from and had seen only 'ordinary rocks.'

Turkish police reported that they had seized eight pounds of rock and wood samples from another Mount Ararat expedition from Mark Steffins as he was going through customs at Istanbul's international airport.

### **VERMONT CHURCH GROUP CHARGED WITH CHILD ABUSE SEEKS TO ANSWER TO PUBLIC**

Spokesman for the Northeast Kingdom Community Church warned their fellow town residents that there would be a "lost generation" if children were not adequately spanked.

They presented their view at a special meeting to discuss their religious beliefs with local residents who have accused them of child abuse. Just a few weeks ago the state ordered 112 children of church members to be examined for evidence of physical and psychological abuse. A few hours later a judge ordered the children's release because there was not enough evidence for the charges to stand.

During the meeting a former teacher asked the church leaders when they began to punish a child. "If you wait until a child is able to reason, then you have waited too long," said Charles Eddie Wiseman, a church elder. "We are going to raise a lost

generation of children unless they are properly disciplined and spanked."

Leaders of the Northeast Kingdom Community Church attempted to make their views known, but there unable because of a barrage of questions from the village residents and 50 reporters in attendance.

Wiseman explained that discipline is necessary because it is part of "the standard of God." He shook a finger at the audience and quoted "Serve the Lord with fear" from the Psalms.

The group was founded 12 years ago near Chattanooga, Tenn., by Eugene Spriggs, an ex-carnival worker. Their most common method of disciplining children is with a light wooden rods for offenses such as lying or asking for seconds at mealtime. One member faces charges for beating a 13-year old child for seven hours.

### **IS CHRISTIANITY DANGEROUS?**

A recent news report from Donald E. Wildmon and the National Federation for Decency calls for more than passing concern. Billy Graham's new movie, "The Prodigal," was given a PG rating by the Hollywood authorities.

The PG rating is usually applied to a film because of violence, profanity, or sex. Not so in this case. The Motion Picture Association of America declared, "Pre-teenage children should not be exposed to Christianity without their parents' consent." As Wildmon observed, "No film containing anti-Christian content produced by Hollywood has ever been given a PG, R, or X rating because of that anti-Christian content. Graham's film was not produced by Hollywood."

Although I can't share Graham's denominational teachings, I was shocked at such a treatment of his movie. Such obvious anti-Christian bias is but another example of the powerful ungodly forces that dominate the American film industry.

### **MINNESOTA MAN FOUND AFTER TWO MONTHS WITH KRISHNA GROUP**

Joel McCabe, a young Minnesota man who had been missing for two months was found in Coralville, Iowa, by police after they checked his identity in response to a complaint by a local business man. He had been traveling for two months with a party of Hare Krishnas, a Hindu cult group.

Police said McCabe had disappeared in Minneapolis while on his way to report to an Army Reserve training unit in Missouri. At the time he was apprehended, police said, he was physically exhausted though in apparently good health. He was also unable to account how or where he had joined with the Hare Krishnas.

While he was in the custody of the Hare Krishnas the young man had lived in Chicago for a while, then traveled to Denver, Colorado, and Cheyenne, Wyoming. His head had been shaved, though he was not wearing the traditional white robes at the time he was picked up. He had wanted to call his parents several times during that interval but said he didn't have the opportunity.

After the police had finished questioning McCabe he was returned to his parents supervision. They refused to make any public comment. A spokesman for the U.S. Army Reserve said his status with the army was "undetermined" pending a review of the situation. Several unsuccessful attempts by friends from his hometown to find him in Minneapolis had turned up no leads. He had left only his luggage in the hotel from which he disappeared.

### **PRESIDENT REAGAN TO SIGN EQUAL ACCESS BILL**

When President Ronald Reagan signs the Equal Access bill, he will ink into law what Christian Legal Society officer Sam Ericsson calls the "strongest statement of religious liberty that the U.S. Congress has ever written."

The bill is expected to be signed by the president in early September, report White House officials, noting that Reagan has been a vigorous supporter of Equal Access since it was first introduced almost two years ago.

The measure, which grants student religious groups the same right as other organizations to meet in public high schools, originally fell 11 votes short of passage in the House of Representatives last May. When it was presented with revisions on July 25, it passed by a vote of 337 to 77.

"The overwhelming approval sends the strongest possible signal to the 16,000 school districts across the land," says Ericsson, "that religious ideas belong in the dialogue and meetings of students as much as any

other type of speech." Forest Montgomery, counsel for the National Association of Evangelicals, calls the congressional action "a historic victory in a 20-year battle regarding religious liberty in public schools."

The bill was extensively altered in the Senate after originally failing to pass in the House on May 15. The revised measure dropped any penalties for school districts that refuse to grant access to religious groups. Also, unlike the original measure, the bill now stipulates that student religious groups are limited to meeting before or after—not during—school hours, and must be student-led.

These changes made the bill acceptable to a great many who previously had opposed the measure. The congressmen were also influenced by thousands of cards, letters and phone calls in support of Equal Access.

However, Ericsson cautions that the battle is not yet over. Those who oppose the act will try to reduce its impact by enforcing strict, narrow guidelines of interpretation, he warns. That is all the more reason for Christians to express their gratitude by writing thank-you notes to their congressmen, especially to those who changed their vote to yes for Equal Access. The next time they are asked by Christians to support a measure, he says, "congressmen will remember how they were treated."

### **MAYOR'S ORDER TO HIRE HOMOSEXUALS OVERTURNED BY NEW YORK COURT**

A controversial ruling by New York's Mayor Ed Koch, which withheld city funding from the Salvation Army, the Roman Catholic archdiocese and Orthodox Jewish groups providing social services to the city because of their refusal to hire homosexuals, was declared unconstitutional recently by a New York state judge. Judge Alvin Klein, ruled that the mayor of New York had acted beyond his authority by issuing an order that should have come from the city council.

In his statement the judge said that the New York administrative code has not been amended to include "sexual orientation" or "affectional preference" as protected classifications. Neither are these classes protected in any federal or state codes, he said.

Meanwhile, leaders of the three

groups who had contested the ruling expressed their satisfaction with the judge's ruling. This will allow them to continue to provide services to the city for child-care, youth shelters, housing for the homeless and other human needs of a large urban center.

"We're certainly gratified by the decision. We're equally pleased to be able to continue our relationship with the city which we've had for 40 years."

The Salvation Army had said that its services would be available to all people whether they were homosexual or not but maintained that to hire homosexuals would be to approve or condone the practice.

## *In Memory*

### **D. D. ISONG UYO**

He was one of the truly great gospel preachers of this generation. At his death he was 57 years old and had preached for 30 or more years, the last 25 years in Ajegunle, a suburb of Lagos, Nigeria.

Isong Uyo was of the Efik tribe and lived 600 miles from Lagos, but he willingly came to the capital city to assist in that great work when I first went there in 1959. He never returned to the home area to live. He reared his good family in the most congested area, and he always demonstrated the greatest concern for truth, fidelity and family. He could preach in three languages and was respected by Christians everywhere in Nigeria and by all Americans who have labored in that country. I, personally, considered him a truly beloved brother in Christ, and as faithful, fruitful and devoted as any man I know.

A year ago he had surgery in the throat area for removal of malignant flesh. He was given radiation treatment that was improperly administered and resulted in radiation burn. The doctors there determined that he must be sent to America to save his life by treatment here. On July 11 our brother arrived in Louisville (through the efforts of Dr. Ken Embry, a faithful gospel preacher, who engaged the help of Dr. Michael Flynn, a highly regarded surgeon).

He died August 30, 1984, in Norton Hospital in Louisville. He is survived by four daughters and two sons and by his mother.

He will be missed grievously by faithful brethren in all of Nigeria. He was supported in the work in the Lagos area by the West Side Church in Aurora, Illinois, for 25 years, and for the last several years also by the 77th Street Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

A memorial service was held in Aurora. His body was returned to his home village in Nigeria for burial.

--Leslie Diestelkamp  
Aurora, IL

# FIELD REPORTS

**Huey Hartsell, P.O. Box 55,  
Mt. Olive, AL 35117**

I am happy to report a reconciliation between the brethren of the Meeks St. church in Corinth, Miss. and the Central congregation in nearby Farmington. On August 26 men of both churches met and fully resolved their differences. It was my privilege to serve as moderator of the meeting. During their discussion wrongs of attitude and action were confessed, and forgiveness was sought and granted. We thank God for brotherly love and the fine attitudes manifested by all.

These good brethren want Christians everywhere to know that they are now working together to advance the Lord's cause in the area. They will continue to meet as separate congregations, but will henceforth support and encourage one another as brethren should.

The faithful evangelists of these churches (Roy Fudge of Meeks St. and Eric George of Central) were most helpful in bringing about this amending of differences. Let us "love one another from the heart fervently" (I Pet. 1:22).

**Gene Taylor, 3575 Pickett Ct.,  
Tallahassee, FL 32301**

After laboring for seven years in southwestern Indiana I moved to Tallahassee, Florida, the first of July to work with the Westside church.

The Southwind church in Mt. Vernon, with whom I've spent the last four and a half years (working with both them and Northwest in Evansville during 1980) is showing its first growth since it began meeting in January of 1980.

Studies over the last year with brethren from the institutional church in Mt. Vernon have prompted three families to take a stand for truth on the institutional issues and place membership at Southwind. Included in these is Jeff Adkins who had been preaching for the institutional church.

Jeff is a young man of ability and courage. We began studying the differences between the two congregations in Mt. Vernon about eight months ago. It was our hope to be able to resolve them so we could unite the two groups. As we progressed in our studies, we found that our personal views were very similar and that in most areas we agreed.

In April we attended the Stauffer - Vick debate in Indianapolis together where L.A. Stauffer ably showed the lack of scriptural authority for the sponsoring church arrangement and church support of benevolent institutions. Following that debate Jeff told me that there were no basic differences in what we believed on these issues.

We then arranged two meetings involving the men of both congregations in Mt. Vernon to see if there could be unity. Following the second meeting the men from the institutional group made it plain to Jeff that they had no interest in continuing to meet with us or study the matter any further and that he should stop his

involvement with the "anti's" or face losing his support.

At that point the Southwind brethren, knowing I would be leaving in late summer, suggested to Jeff that if he would be willing to take a stand for truth, they would be willing to work with him and support him as their preacher.

Jeff met with them and they quickly agreed to work together. Of course, as soon as he told the institutional brethren of his decision he was immediately relieved of his duties with them.

I very highly recommend Jeff. He has manifested courage, strength and wisdom that few, especially those as youthful as he is, rarely display. Since his decision he has been marked by our liberal brethren and been the object of a great deal of verbal abuse but he remains firm in his resolve to preach the truth.

The Southwind brethren are to be commended for their willingness to give this young preacher the opportunity to grow and mature in the faith. Their knowledge of the word of God and their love for the Lord will serve as an example to Jeff and to all as to what true Christianity is.

I am looking forward to a pleasant and profitable association with the Westside church in Tallahassee. The congregation is eager to work. Our building is located at 2150 Belle Vue Way. If you are planning on visiting northwest Florida, or possibly be attending Florida State University, we would welcome you to any of our services.

**Stefano Corazza, via Tagliamento 9/2, 33100  
Udine, Italy**

We moved in Udine, having found a comfortable and available apartment close to the downtown, and so much closer to my work as evangelist. In fact, since then I am doing a better work in any sense: more visiting with the brethren, more studies together, more time dedicated to distribution and home Bible classes, more opportunities to meet people interested in studying God's Word. So we are truly happy to have solved this delicate problem and thank God for His care toward us.

**Eric Reed, P.O. Box 637, Bellville Cape 7530,  
Republic of South Africa**

My family and I just returned from a 3-week, 2,500-mile preaching trip deep into the Transvaal providence in order to work with the brethren of Springs, Brakpan, Kwa Thema, Daveyton, Lebowa and Cerutiville. In addition to partially supporting two South African evangelists, the white church in Brakpan (with whom I labored before moving to the Cape province) has just moved into a new church building (fully - paid for) with a seating capacity of about 150 people. The coloured brethren in Cerutiville (the largest sound coloured congregation in South Africa) are just about to do the same, with their building (also fully - paid for by them) comfortably seating up to 300 people. After suffering a major setback due to the apostasy of a previously

strong brother, the native black brethren in Kwa Thema are now growing in "leaps and bounds". And the black brethren in Daveyton are currently doing well in their efforts to grow both spiritually and numerically.

But the best report (Acts 14:27) comes from the Northern Lebowa districts of the Transvaal, where up until just recently the liberal brethren were very strong and their areas were very difficult to penetrate. The white liberals often refer to us as "antis" but the black liberals here know only of the "anti-Christ's" (I Jn. 2:18, 19) referred to in Scripture and therefore have applied this term to all sound brethren in the country. However, after studying with us carefully and closely examining what we teach, the blacks soon reject this false label of "anti-Christ" which then backfires right into the faces of those in the liberal camp! Recently, large numbers of black brethren have swarmed away from their institutional associates and once again taken a stand on complete Bible authority in religious matters. We indeed rejoice over such changes! Brother Sam Phori (a local black preacher) and my father-in-law, brother Ray Votaw (previously known by some of these as "Chief of Anti-Christ's") are currently doing all within their power to draw these brethren out of institutional error. We bid them God-speed!

Upon my return from this trip, I had a very large pile of correspondence courses waiting for me on my desk, of which it has taken me several weeks to clear. And even after I had cleared all 86 correspondence course lessons from my desk, it seemed I still "couldn't win for losing". A few days later, I mailed off another batch of 19 only to pick-up 21 more! Then a day or two later, I sent off 6 only to fetch 16 more! And even as I take time to write this report, there is a total of 37 more courses waiting for attention on my desk right now!

Please don't get me wrong. . . I'm not complaining! I love every minute of it and truly enjoy being used in the Lord's work in this way. But I thought a note of explanation might be in order here. The recent distribution of another 8,000 introductory lessons to the "Know Your Bible" correspondence course (superbly written by brother Gene Tope while preaching here) has thusfar brought me 171 new students, pushing my total enrollment now to well over 800! And it seems the way they keep "rolling in", I may hit 1,000 by the end of the year! Also, in addition to these figures, brother Hendrik Joubert (a young, white, South African preacher with whom I am currently working) has several hundred more students taking the course in the Afrikaans dialect. We truly thank the Lord for this effective teaching medium and pray that much fruit will thereby follow, Lord willing, in the months and years that lie ahead!

**Wayne S. Walker, 5170 Chippewa Road,  
Medina, OH 44256**

The work here is going well. We have baptized six so far this year and had one family place membership with us recently. Our attendance has been running between 50 and 60 on Sunday mornings with a contribution averaging near \$400 each week. And this has continued through the summer months without the usual seasonal slump. We had a spring meeting with Lewis Willis and a summer lecture with different speakers each night. Our fall meeting will be with Fred Shewmaker.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

October 1984

Number 10

## PATIENCE - The Foundation Of Our Hope!

by Ron Mosby

**P**atience was called, "The Queen of the Virtues," by John Chrysostom, one of the early church fathers. In Greek culture, patience (**hupomone**) has always a background of courage. Cicero defines **patientia**, its Latin equivalent, as: "**The voluntary and daily suffering of hard and difficult things, for the sake of honor and usefulness.**"

Didymous of Alexandria writes on the temper of Job: "**It is not that the righteous man must be without feeling, although he must patiently bear the things which afflict him; but it is true virtue when a man deeply feels the things he toils against, but nevertheless despises sorrows for the sake of God.**"

Christian steadfastness does not simply sit down and accept and endure. There is always a forward look in it. ". . . *Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God*" (Heb. 12:2b).

Christian steadfastness, is the brave and courageous acceptance of everything that life can do to us, and the transmuting of even the worst event into another step on the upward way. (Cf. Barclay on 2 Peter, page 358).

### PATIENCE & OVERCOMING

Patience is always and necessarily

connected with the Bible concept of overcoming. The word for "overcometh," is **nikao** which means, "**to gain the victory.**" The word for "patience," is **hupomeno** which means, "**to remain under.**" The word is sometimes translated, "endureth." Patience pictures a man under a very heavy load which is pushing him down. He is tempted to throw aside the heavy load, but for the sake of what is right, he remains under it to the very end! To the Christian, this heavy load may be in the form of sickness, temptation, or persecution. Patience is "**the suffering or enduring (of pain, trouble, or evil) with calmness and composure; the quality or capacity of so suffering or enduring. It is the forbearance under provocation of any kind; especially, bearing with others, their faults, limitations, etc.**" The word, "long-suffering," in 1 Cor. 13:4, though a different word, has the same basic meaning.

The absolute necessity for the Christian to overcome by remaining under whatever load he must carry is mentioned throughout the New Testament. In His letters to the seven churches of Asia, Christ Himself follows His instruction to each church with an exhortation to overcome, coupled with a beautiful promise. Read

each exhortation and promise as follows: Ephesus 2:7; Smyrna 2:11; Pergamos 2:17; Thyatira 2:26; Sardis 3:5; Philadelphia 3:12; and Laodicea 3:21.

### SELFLESSNESS REQUIRED

To overcome the devil and the forces of evil will require complete selflessness on our part. In Rev. 12:10-12, we read of the three things necessary to overcome the Accuser of the brethren. God has provided the BLOOD and the WORD while we must provide complete self-abasement. We learn to love not our lives unto the end when we observe how Christ loved not His life unto the very end (John 15:13; 2 Cor. 5:14).

### HOPE, FAITH, & PATIENCE

Romans 8:24-25 teaches us that we are saved by hope. Read it. If hope is not seen then what is it? It is "**a feeling that what is wanted will happen; desire accompanied by anticipation or expectation**" (Webster). More simply stated, hope is desire plus expectation! Well then, what is faith? It is the "**assurance of things hoped for the conviction of things not seen**" (Heb. 11:1). Faith then is the assurance of things that are desired and expected. Hope must be based upon faith. Our faith supports our hope. Our hope grows as that which supports it grows.

If we lose our faith and patience we will lose our hope! God is the Author of our hope (Rom. 15:13), and Christ is the subject (1 Tim. 1:1). Hence, our faith and hope must be in God and not man (1 Pet. 1:21). Hope is the anchor of the soul (Heb. 6:18-20). In the 6th chapter of Hebrews, the writer puts hope, faith, and patience together and shows how they relate to each other. We read, "And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that you be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises (6:11-12). The writer then gives Abraham as an example of one who accomplished this in the Old Testament (vs. 13-15). We can see how patience is that foundation quality of character that enables the Christian to keep on trucking even when the going gets tough!

#### ENDURANCE IS TOUGHNESS

Someone has said, "When the going gets tough - the tough get going! This is the patient man! Endurance is close ken to that virtue which will outlast both faith and hope - that of love (1 Cor. 13:13). It is because of love for the Lord and for what is right that a man can remain under whatever load may be upon him until the very end.

Let us note some of the passages where patience is translated endurance and see both the attitude and action of the word itself.

The lesson of endurance (patience) is always learned under the greatest stress. Christ warned the apostles even under the limited commission that they would be hated of all men for His name's sake, but "he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mt. 10:22). He repeated the same promise to those found involved in the destruction of Jerusalem (Mt. 24:13). The 14th characteristic of love in 1 Cor. 13:7 is, ". . . endureth all things."

At the time of their illumination, the Hebrew brethren could take anything the old devil could throw at them and were ready for more! Their great fight of afflictions included reproaches as well as afflictions while they were not ashamed to associate with others who were treated likewise. Their faith and hope were on heaven where they knew, that no matter what happened here on earth, they had an incomparable and an enduring

substance awaiting them there. However, the foundation of their faith and hope was slowly giving way because they had need of patience (Heb. 10:32-36). They simply had got tired of remaining under the daily grind of keeping on keeping on and some had already fallen by the wayside. This shows that patience in the long run is more important than merely winning a battle! One might win many battles with the devil but be finally defeated in the total war of life for lack of patience! Remember the patience of Job?

The remarkable account of Job is filled with examples of his gaining the victory (overcoming) while remaining under (patience) all the Lord allowed Satan to do unto him. Read Job 1:12-22; 2:7-13. This, the greatest example of patience, except for Christ, reverberates even over into the New Testament as we can read in James 5:7-11.

#### GLORY IN TRIBULATIONS

Paul said he gloried in tribulations (Rom. 5:3). One immediately would ask, "Why would any one in their right mind glory in tribulations?" The answer is given in the same verse where we read, "that tribulation worketh *patience; and patience, experience* (approvedness - ASV); *and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us*" (vs. 4-5). We can see how all of it is tied together. We should naturally glory in anything that will give us more patience, approvedness, and hope!

We read the same thought in James where he writes, "*My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience, but let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.*" And again in verse 12, "*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him.*"

#### CONCLUSION

How we react in times of trouble or temptation will pretty well indicate whether or not we have yet learned patience. The load gets heavy at times and we can get mighty weary, but we have encouragement throughout the Bible not to quit but to keep on

pressing on and in due season we will reap - if we faint not (Gal. 6:9).

Peter tells us that trials are given us to test our faith to see if it is genuine or just superficial (1 Peter 1:6-9). We can be thankful God has promised not to allow us to be tempted above what we are able to bear (1 Cor. 10:13). We also know that we will be glad we were faithful when all is said and done (1 Pet. 4:12-13). Paul said, "*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us*" (Rom. 8:18). To the Corinthians he wrote, "*For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen eternal*" (2 Cor. 4:17-18). Don't you know Job was glad he developed patience and remained under his trials until they were removed (Job 42:12-17)? Remember, we will either overcome or will be overcome (Rom. 12:21). It takes conscious effort to overcome and with God's help we will (Rev. 21:7).

114 Bowman Lane  
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## Examples

by R.C. Smart, Sr.

Not all examples found in the New Testament should be followed by Christians. However, we can learn from examples things that are pleasing to God and vice versa. Those examples which clearly have the endorsement of inspired men are authoritative.

For instance (Acts 20:7) the first day of the week observance of the Lord's supper is the only day for which we have approval. Likewise, the first day of the week "laying by in store." (1 Corinthians 16:1-2)

The New Testament contains the pattern by which we are to build the Lord's house. We do not have a carte blanche from God.

P.O. Box 109  
Harrington, ME 04643

# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## THE COLLINSVILLE LAWSUIT-- THE PHIL DONAHUE PROGRAM-- THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Most people are familiar with the lawsuit against the elders of the Collinsville Church of Christ in Oklahoma. The trial took place in the Tulsa County District Court from March 12-15 of this year. The elders were sued by Marian Guinn, a 36-year-old divorcee, who had admittedly carried on an affair with a divorced ex-mayor of the town. After numerous efforts pleading with her to repent, the church's elders finally announced a withdrawal of fellowship. The impenitent sister not only stubbornly refused to give heed to the admonitions of the church, but in her blatant rebellion to the disciplinary action by taking the church and its elders to court for invasion of privacy and willful intent to inflict emotional distress. She sued for \$1,350,000. At the conclusion of the four-day trial, the jury (of which newspapers reported that only four member of the panel attended religious services regularly) awarded Guinn \$390,000. The fornicating plaintiff was so delighted that she posed for a news photograph standing in front of the Collinsville church building with a big smile on her face. This entire episode has ended up being a fiasco when you consider the sensational details of which the liberal media gleefully tells this story.

The suit received slanted news coverage from an obviously biased reporter in the February 27 issue of *Newsweek* magazine. This was followed up in the "Letters" column in the March 19 issue by presenting two scathing responses from readers against the church's disciplinary action. The news story in *Time* magazine of March 26 was a little more balanced, but one can still detect a prejudiced press when he reads about "the kind of treatment that was meted out to Guinn." The March 31 issue of *TV Guide* offered congratulations to the fornicator and reported that she has received several Hollywood

offers. One story reported that one Hollywood firm has offered Guinn \$390,000 for the movie rights--playing on the figures of which the court awarded her. An article appearing in the July issue of *Mademoiselle* called "Can the Church Make Laws About Love?" tries to show that "a lot of stones were cast at Marian Guinn. . . . And not to allow her to quit, but to 'fire' her from the church, seems to me to be an exercise in whimsy if not in cruelty." And the latest attempt to ridicule the church, the practice of discipline, and the Bible was on the CBS network with the *Phil Donohue Show*.

The filming of a Phil Donohue program was done on Monday, August 20. The program aired in different cities on different time spots last month. It is scheduled to be shown in many areas throughout this month, too. Donohue invited Guinn and her attorney to appear on his show. He also invited the elders and attorneys for the Collinsville church, but since the case is being appealed to the Oklahoma Supreme Court they were advised not to appear on the program and make any public statements. Garland Elkins, preacher for the Getwell Church of Christ in Memphis, was invited to appear on the program as "a representative from the church of Christ" to explain why the church took the action it did. Fifteen members of churches of Christ from the Chicago area where the Donahue program is taped (including preachers, elders, and women) were also invited.

Glenn Jobe, a member of the church from Schaumburg, Illinois, attended the program. He gave this explanation: "We all knew we were walking into a 'lion's den,' but the world needed to hear what the Bible has to say about such matters. Twenty minutes before the panel members arrived the audience was primed by one of the Donahue staff. The fifteen members of the church of Christ were all seated in a separate section. The staff member proceeded to tell the audience as to the terrible manner in which she thought Marian Guinn had been treated by the Collinsville Church of Christ. Although she seemed to know very little about the case or the individuals involved (she had to repeatedly ask for assistance regarding the facts), she did introduce Marian Guinn as a person who had been humiliated and persecuted by the church. After each statement she added: 'That's not right, is it?' or 'That's none of the church's business.' Just prior to the appearance of Mr. Donahue and the panel members, the staff members asked if there were any members of the church of Christ in the audience (knowing there were and where we were seated). When we identified ourselves, the audience began booing and expressing disapproval."

If ever there was any doubt in anybody's mind about people being ignorant, unbelieving, and contemptuous toward the Bible, Donahue's program removed all doubt. Donahue, Guinn, her lawyer, and the great majority of the audience relentlessly ridiculed the Bible and those who

# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."  
— Proverbs 27:1

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believe it to be a code of moral ethics and a standard for "modern" man. Repeatedly, they displayed absolutely no Biblical concept of what it means to be a Christian.

Also appearing as a guest on the program was a young woman who claimed to be a Christian and had posed nude for *Playboy Magazine*. She was there to tell her story of how her Christianity "was a private matter and of no concern to any other." She had become very upset because her minister had refused to marry her and her boyfriend. She continued by stating that one could be a Christian and pose for *Playboy*. She could see no conflict between her religion and the nudity of the magazine.

It was so glaringly obvious that Donahue repeatedly avoided allowing brother Elkins, who was there to defend the truth, to enter into the discussion. I can't enjoy watching the Donahue program just because of how liberal, prejudiced, and unfair the man is. He ignores what he can not handle and tries to prevent everything adverse to his degeneracy from being heard. I have seen him to do this with the abortion issue, his pro-E.R.A. stand, homosexual rights, and other such moral issues. This program was no exception. There were three guests condoning fornication and only brother Elkins against it, but Donahue acted fearful of what might happen if the audience had the opportunity to let truth have equal opportunity.

Donahue was repulsed at calling fornication what it is--FORNICATION! The audience really did not want sin condemned and even contended that God never condemned anybody. Over and over the crowd wanted to argue that Jesus offered forgiveness for everyone by showing tolerance and compassion rather than rejection and castigation, and that if the church is going to "throw stones" at Guinn in violation of the "Judge not" of Matthew 7:1 they must first be "without sin." Shallow Bible readers always fail to notice that Jesus offered no forgiveness at all to those who refuse to repent. His message was repent or perish (Luke 13:3). Jesus denounced hypocritical fault-finding in Matthew 7:1, but not "righteous judgement" (John 7:24). Bro. Elkins pointed out that the adulteress of John 8 was not forgiven in spite of her sinful ways but was told to "sin no more" (vs. 11).

Bro. Elkins did an admirable job considering the slant, bias, and unfairness he was put under. His humble and meek countenance was in strong contrast to that of Guinn's lawyer, Mr. Frazier. Throughout the program, Bro. Elkins had to ask for opportunities to speak or respond to some outrageous charge. When he was given an opportunity to speak, he didn't give some kind of "I think so" or "this is official church of Christ doctrine." He simply quoted passages from the Word of God. The attitude of several in the audience began to change toward the end of the program. Some who claimed to be "born-again Christians" began to realize they were booing and hissing the Bible and not really the church of Christ.

The unjust decision on this lawsuit and the great publicity from the liberal press has discouraged some men from becoming elders out of fear of having to go through some such legal hassle and it has caused many churches to have second thoughts on practicing necessary and proper discipline. Some brethren are even seeking to find a view that could prohibit any action of withdrawal. The latest of these is a misunderstanding of the Lord's parable on the

wheat and the tares in Matthew 13:24-30. Please take the time to read this in your Bible before continuing with this article.

Some are now taking verse 30, "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn," and concluding that the Lord is talking of members of the church as wheat and tares and saying to leave them both alone until the judgement. They are trying to make "the field" the church, "the wheat" as the strong member, and "the tares" as the weak or worldly member. There's only one problem with this position: it is wrong!

Let us consider the characters in the story: (1) Verse 24 states, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." Verse 37 tells us that "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." Verse 41 calls Him "the Son of man." We should have no trouble understanding this to be our Lord. (2) The field is not the church. Verse 38 says, "the field is the world." We are talking about two classes of people in the world, not classes in the church. (3) The "good seed" of this parable is not to be confused with the seed in Luke 8:11, where it says "the seed is the word of God." According to verse 38, the seed of this parable is "the children of the kingdom." (4) The "enemy" is "the devil" according to verse 39. (5) The "tares" (or "weeds" as they are called in several translations) are "the children of the wicked one." (6) Verse 39 goes on to say that the "harvest" is the end of the world. (7) The "reapers" are the angels (vs. 39).

To change the "field" in this parable to the church and then use such an interpretation to discourage discipline is to ignore many other plain passages on the subject. Paul said, "To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:5, 12-13). Paul also said, "Now we command you, brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thess. 3:6). It didn't say this was an optional matter, he said "Now we command you."

"Let both grow together." This is one of the main points of this parable. The time of separation will come at last. Righteous people are not going to be destroyed just because they are in the world with a bunch of unrighteous folks. The wheat got its share of rain, sunshine, air, and care from the servants during its many months of growth. As Christians, we are **in** the world, but not **of** the world. So the wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest; at that time a separation was made by first gathering up the weeds for burning (see Matt. 3:12).

Satan, the enemy of God and righteousness, will always be about the business of trying to sow tares and hindering the work of the kingdom. We should not be too surprised when some of his people show up to do their work within the church and others without. There will always be those Marian Guinns, the Phil Donahues, and a great host of other anti-religious people. Don't let them get you down! The "harvest" is coming some day.

# The Teaching Of Women's Liberation About Marriage

by David Pratte

All of us tend to have a natural sympathy for people who have truly been oppressed and denied their freedom and rights. We readily admit that many people have suffered at the hands of tyrants who abuse their authority. Specifically, it cannot be denied that there are men who have cruelly abused women. It is surely not the intent of this study to justify any man who truly is guilty of misusing a woman.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that many movements designed to overcome oppression, have swung to an opposite extreme and become immoral of themselves. In particular, many "liberation movements", in their zeal and anger to correct the wrongs that they perceive, have often been guided only by human desires and selfishness, and so have often gone astray and done far more harm than good.

The purpose of this study is to examine the tenets of the Women's Liberation movement. We will let the leaders of this movement speak for themselves by quoting their publications and public statements. Probably the most influential group in the movement is the National Organization of Women (NOW). We will often quote from their official statements of resolutions and policies they have officially adopted. These statements are published in a booklet entitled *Revolution: Tomorrow is NOW*. We will also frequently quote *The Document: Declaration of Feminism*, and other sources.

We recognize that some people accept some of the goals of Women's Liberation, yet would not agree with all the views we will be quoting. But that is one of the purposes of our study--to show that the real beliefs and goals of the leaders of the movement are not what many people think they are. Some people think it is just a movement to gain women better jobs and pay, or perhaps other rights they deserve but have been denied. We are convinced that the real goals are far deeper. There

are many sincere people who do not realize where this movement is really headed. If these people really are sincere, and if they find that the leaders are taking the movement in a wrong direction, then surely they will cease following such leaders!

We will assume, as we proceed, that you have carefully considered and accepted the evidence which convincingly demonstrates that the Bible is God's inspired and infallible word. We will see that Women's Lib leaders do not share this view. We can only appeal to such people to be honest enough to examine the evidence that the Bible is true. But even among people who claim to believe in the Bible, there are far too many people who have been to some degree influenced by the popularity and subtle selfish appeals of some Women's Lib views. It is our hope that this study will help such people re-examine Women's Lib in light of the Bible.

## THE TEACHINGS OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION

**Marriage has existed for the benefit of men and has been a legally sanctioned method of control over women. . . A married woman is expected to be the domestic slave of her husband (often it is even stated in the marriage ceremony: "the wife shall be subject to her husband"). It is her duty to cook his meals, wash his clothes, clean his house, and raise his kids. . . she receives no salary for this work. . . She is expected to be subservient to him, to obey his requests and orders. . . he is "king of his castle."** --Document, p10f

**Within the institution of marriage a woman is legally required to perform sexually for her husband at his command. . . Male society has sold us the idea of marriage. . . In the past we women have been afraid to admit that marriage wasn't all it was cracked up to be because it meant we had**

**failed. Now we know it is the institution that has failed us and we must work to destroy it.** --Document, p11.

**The end of the institution of marriage is a necessary condition for the liberation of women. Therefore it is important for us to encourage women to leave their husbands and not to live individually with men. . . This must go hand in hand with the conscious building of a viable movement of women to confront male power and overthrow it.** --Document, pp. 11, 12.

**The very earliest communities were matriarchies in which the institution of marriage was unknown and the work of the mothers was the important work of the society. . . When the men took over, women and children became their property. Marriage was instituted to control women. . .** --Document, p12.

**. . . for the sake of those who wish to live in equal partnership, we have to abolish and reform the institution of marriage.** --Gloria Steinam, editor of MS., in a speech in Houston, Texas (reported in Pro-Family Forum)

**Resolved that the wife should be able to keep her own name or the husband to take his wife's name, and/or there should be the option of both partners choosing a neutral second name. . . A woman's title should be "MS" without differentiation as to marriage. . .** --Revolution, p16.

## THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

Clearly, Women's Lib is one of the forces in society that is working for the outright destruction of the family. The leaders do not seek to simply correct some abuses they find in the practices of some family members, but they seek to completely abolish and replace the institution of marriage. To them, a lifetime one-man-one-woman commitment makes the woman too dependent on the man and makes the

woman a slave to the man. Their objection to the woman wearing the man's name and the title "Mrs." is based on the fact this symbolizes marriage and all it stands for which they hate.

Regarding the origin of the institution of marriage, it is clear that Libbers completely reject the infallibility of the Bible, which clearly states that marriage was instituted by God, not by men (Gen. 2:18-24). It was also God's idea that the woman wear the same name as the man (Gen. 5:1,2). These same truths were reaffirmed by Paul (Eph. 5:31) and by Jesus Himself, who explained that the relationship is to be a one-man-one-woman lifetime commitment (Matt. 19:3-9). To deny these truths is to deny the inspiration of the Bible and the authority of Jesus.

Further, contrary to Women's Lib, marriage was instituted for the good of all people, not for the benefit of any one group of people to the oppression of others. Like all that God created, marriage was created "very good" (Gen. 1:26-28, 31; 2:18, 24). Note that reproducing of man and woman was "good", but from the beginning it was good only in marriage. This is confirmed in the New Testament (Heb. 13:4). The marriage relation is compared to the relation of Christ to His church (Eph. 5:22-33). To belittle the institution of marriage, therefore, is to belittle the relationship of Christ Himself to His church.

Women's Lib is also wrong in its rejection of the Bible doctrine of the authority of the husband in the home. In fact, the statements of the Lib leaders show that they really do not even begin to understand what the Bible says about this subject. God has ordained several authority relationships--civil rulers over citizens (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13,14), parents over children (Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:20), elders over churches (Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3), etc. In all these relationships, authority is needed so that there is someone who is recognized as having the right to make decisions in matters that cannot otherwise be settled. Somebody has to be in charge and somebody has to submit. But God instructs those who possess authority how to use it properly--it is to be used for the good of the group, not for the self-gratification of the rulers. But in none of these relationships does God permit people to destroy the institution

simply because people in positions of authority misuse their power (cf. 1 Sam. 8).

All this applies likewise to the husband-wife relationship. God explicitly affirms that the man does have authority over the woman (Gen. 3:16; 1 Pet. 3:1,5,6; Eph. 5:22-24,33; 1 Cor. 11:3; Col. 3:18; Tit. 2:5). It is interesting to observe the efforts of Libbers to set aside this evidence. Some say this was just the opinion of one man, Paul. But the passages were written by Moses and Peter, as well as by Paul. (Libber's attitude toward Paul shows their desperate inconsistency. They reject him as "an old reprobate bachelor." Yet as much as they dislike marriage, you would think they would respect Paul for refusing to marry. So they reject any evidence given by married men because they were married, but they reject Paul's evidence because he was a bachelor! Clearly they are just determined to reject all evidence because it is not what they want to hear!) Again, it is said that these verses just discuss the customs of that day which do not apply today. Yet the writers affirmed that these were decrees of the eternal God (Gen. 3:14,16; 1 Cor. 14:34,37). The subjection of woman to man is as much a part of God's law for today as is the subjection of the church to Christ (Eph. 5:22-24). To rebel against it is to rebel, not just against man, but against the Creator and Ruler of the universe!

Another important point misunderstood by Libbers is that God gave plain restrictions regarding how husbands are to use their authority, and he will hold them accountable in the judgment for whether or not they used their authority properly, just as He will hold wives accountable for whether or not they submitted to their husbands. Man must use his authority with love just as Christ did (Eph. 5:25-30; 1 Pet. 3:7). He must strive to understand the needs of all, discuss alternative courses with those who will be affected by them, and then make decisions according to what would be best for all. To use authority selfishly for personal gratification or self-exaltation would be unloving and sinful (1 Cor. 13:4-8). God has always viewed greatness in terms of service rendered, rather than in terms of degree of authority exercised (Matt. 20:25-28).

Libbers apparently understand neither love nor authority, so they are

jealous of the privilege and honor they think men possess. Actually what men have is a responsibility, stewardship, and sacred trust which must be fulfilled diligently else they will be condemned in the judgment. Rather than being a special privilege granted to men, it often becomes an extremely difficult burden to bear. It is true that many men do use their authority selfishly, but Christians realize that such men will be punished by God in eternity. Furthermore, let it be remembered that many men have been cruelly treated, their hearts broken, and their lives destroyed by selfish, unloving women. It is doubtful that anyone can prove whether men or women are more guilty of mistreating the opposite sex.

We recognize that subjection is difficult for women. This should not be surprising since it is viewed by God as part of women's punishment for sin (Gen. 3:16). But remember that man also bears punishment for sin (Gen. 3:17-19). The difficulty of the command does not justify rebellion against God. Libbers think that, by trading places with men and gaining man's place, they would be happy. Should they accomplish this, however, they would find that they have simply traded one punishment for another in this life, while at the same time dooming themselves to eternal punishment after this life (Matt. 25:46).

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## Work and Pray

by Bill Beasley

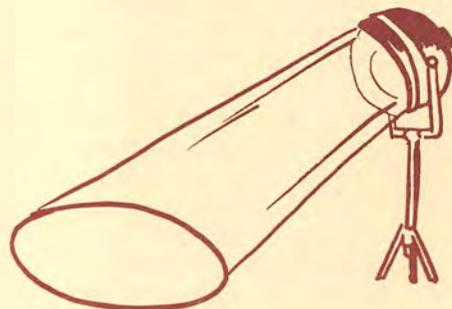
Success comes to the one who will work and pray. Perhaps it will not be the immediate success for which we reach, but then God's measure of success is not the same as man's.

Paul prayed for Israel's salvation (Rom. 10:1-3), spent his life to accomplish such, and thanked God for what He "had done with them" (Acts 14:27).

We need to pray as if God were going to do it all, and work as if we worked alone! All too often we pray as if we were going to do it all, and work as if God must do it all.

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# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## DIOSDADO P. MENOR

### What does your name mean?

My name, Diosdado Menor, comes from the Spanish tongue and is composed of two Spanish words. Dios means God; Dado means Given, so that Diosdado is "God-given" in English. Menor means Small; so Diosdado Menor means "Small Gift of God."

### How did you happen to learn God's word?

The late Bro. H.G. Cassell, the first American missionary sent to the Philippines in 1928 by the then Southwest Church of Christ in California, came down to Calapan, Mindoro, from Manila City in the early part of 1930, with a native preacher whom he converted in Manila from the Christian Church. They both conducted more than two weeks of gospel meetings in Calapan. Bro. Cassell preached in English and the Filipino preacher (Pedro V. Azada) was his interpreter. Such gospel meetings resulted in the conversion of no less than 200 penitent believers. Among the first converts were the Menor and Sikat families which up to this time have faithfully remained the nucleus of the Calapan Church of Christ in Mindoro. I was one from the Menor family, and my wife from the Sikat. family. The Menor and Sikat families were both Methodists in Pangasinan before they migrated or moved to Mindoro in 1927. The late brothers Cassell and Azada had both spent considerable time of teaching before they had finally converted me to



the truth. I was buried in baptism with Christ on November 9, 1930, by Bro. H.G. Cassell.

### Do you have any idea as to when the Lord's church was established in the Philippines?

In the summer of 1927, Bro. George Benson who was then missionary of the Church of Christ in Canton, China, accidentally made a vacation trip to the Philippines, with a U.S. Navy Officer, and they landed at the coast of southern Mindoro in the community of Paclasan, formerly a part of the town of Mansalay, Mindoro. Bro. Benson single-handedly

conducted a 2-week protracted gospel meeting, converting approximately or no less than 100 persons. Among the earliest converts were the late brother Leoncio Adap, who died three years ago, and his wife, Dolores Dimatulac, who is still living today. She is now the only survivor of the first converts which composed the church of the Lord, the first to have been established in the Philippines in 1927. Bro. Benson also moved to central Mindoro where he preached and converted no less than 50 others, in the town of Pinamalayan, but most of the converts were later absorbed by the Christian church which had already members and an

established congregation in that place.

On the return of Bro. Benson to China, he might have informed his home congregation in the United States about the result of his work or accomplishment in southern and central Mindoro. The following year, 1928, the Southwest Church of Christ, California, sent as its first American missionary to the Philippines, Bro. H.G. Cassell, with his wife, Marie, and their two small sons, Marion and Maurice. Bro. H.G. Cassell took over the work begun by Bro. George Benson.

Upon arrival in the Philippines in 1928, the Cassells had for more than two years needed to stay in Manila and often needed to go to Baguio City during summer to fully adjust themselves with the Philippine climate and also with the culture of the Filipino people. During their stay in Manila for sometime, Bro. Cassell was able to convert some native preachers from the Christian church, who later on became his interpreters and fellow workers. In 1938, the late Bro. Pedro V. Azada moved to Mindanao and worked with another American missionary (Orville T. Rodman) and they both established the Lord's church there.

#### **When did you start preaching the gospel?**

Immediately after my conversion and at the same time having finished my high school course, I went to Manila City and enrolled at the Union Theological Seminary in June 1931. After three and a half years (supposed to be four years) I obtained my Bachelor's degree in Theology. Simultaneously while I was a student at the Seminary, I had been the lone student under the tutorship of Bro. H.G. Cassell in Bible study classes during my off hours in the Seminary, and also during the evenings, 6:00 to 9:00. After finishing my course at the Seminary and having studied the Bible with Bro. Cassell for approximately no less than a thousand hours, I went home to Mindoro, and began preaching full time. I had assisted the late Bro. Pedro V. Azada in the work at the Calapan church, then for two years - 1935-1936, I pioneered in a preaching and teaching work in the areas around Calapan, I was still single at that time and during the summer-time I had to help my father make some clearings in our homesteads which were then still covered with



primeval forests. After the planting of rice and corn, I used to leave for personal evangelistic work among the people in the rural areas, traversing only trails in the midst of the forests, swarmed or infested with small but terrible worms or leeches, clinging at the leaves of shrubs and grasses. The leeches are very thin and small before sucking persons or animals passing those trails, and after sucking sufficient blood they will become inflated and will be a little bit smaller than a cigarette. Sometimes they automatically pull off after getting big enough with blood. Before reaching a neighboring locality and before beginning to preach and teach, I would surely have some parts of my legs, up to my thighs or neck bleeding so that I could say that I had also preached the gospel of Christ with my own blood.

In March 1937, I was married to one of the fair daughters of the Sikat family. As I had foreseen that we would soon have children of our own, I decided to seek some secular job while at the same time have to do some part-time preaching and teaching work in Calapan. I had to schedule some Bible study classes during the evenings and in the afternoons, after my office hours. I would have to pedal my way by my bicycle for some 8 to 10 kilometers from town for personal evangelism, sometimes benighted on the way when it rains before my scheduled time to go home.

#### **Is most of your work in your hometown or do you do a lot of traveling?**

My work as a preacher is not con-

fined to preaching and teaching at the Calapan Church of Christ. More often than not, I have to respond to invitations of younger preachers around Calapan or places and towns in southern Mindoro, to help them conduct series of gospel meetings for three to five evenings. Also in the neighboring island provinces of Romblon and Palawan, my services to preach and teach are also needed. Every quarter, we have our preachers' training seminars, which necessitates me to prepare the needed lesson outlines to be distributed as hand-outs to the participating preachers in our seminars in Mindoro and in Isabela or northern Philippines. There are also some younger preachers near and around Calapan some 30 to 50 kilometers away, but they use to request me to have a couple of days of Bible study classes with them. Nearly every two weeks I need to travel within Mindoro, but since August of 1983 up to the present I also need to go as far as Isabela in northern Philippines where there were six preachers formerly with the Church of God (Pentecostal) and more than a hundred people were converted and baptized. This now necessitates me to go to northern Philippines more often in order to further establish their faith--to "make all men see" (Eph. 3:19), point them to the "due order" (I Chron. 15:13). There might be a possibility that we will expand our work from Isabela even farther north to Cagayan province. Brothers Vic Tibayan, Sr. and Jr. had both greatly helped and assisted me in our former preachers' training seminars among the newly converted preachers in Isabela. The necessity of making more frequent trips to northern Philippines is really prompted by our feelings and desire to exhort, teach and train those newly converted Isabela preachers to better prepare them to know the whole truth so that later on, they may be able to teach also the young converts under their care, and others whom they might also bring to Christ. We want to forestall any possible chance for false teachers to work among them thereby gaining ground to be able to inject to the elect their unscrupulous teachings.

I had observed that right at southern Isabela there are some brethren or preachers in the church who advocate the teaching that women should wear head covering or veil while

worshipping, otherwise they have no hope of salvation. And also another group of preachers teaching that only one cup should be used while partaking of the fruit of the vine. These two things had already divided or fragmented not only a few congregations or churches in northern Philippines, and we have to guard against such teachings and need to counteract those obnoxious doctrines, by strengthening the still young Christians whom we have snatched from their former error of denominationalism.

**Where do you observe the greatest response to the gospel?**

The greatest growth or number of conversions in this country as I see are in the rural areas, in the far-flung country side or in out of the way places where people are more receptive to the truth than in the crowded towns and cities or urban places.

**What is one of the main things you emphasize to young preachers in your training classes?**

Native preachers can approach people by engaging in personal work or personal evangelism among the inhabitants of a given place or area. They could befriend the people by distributing some tracts or pamphlets and make a follow-up work. If possible, a preacher should be bringing with him an extra copy of the Bible in the translation or dialect the people in that particular place speak so that both the preacher and the prospect could jointly read. Later on the request to have Bible study classes will come from the prospect rather than the preacher. Personal work can only be realized when a native preacher really appreciates the value of a soul. It should be remembered that a personal worker is a soul-winner. But to become involved in such a work, training, consecration, study and experience are vital preparations for this great work.

**What are some problems that hinder the spread of the gospel in the Philippines?**

One of the things that could be accounted to have hindered the spread of the gospel in the Philippines, is the very extreme poverty of the majority of the people. Some are plucking in crowded cities where unemployment is most apparent and prevalent. Of course they are more prone to look on

the material things in life. Also, the fact that our country is in a geographical location that it is right at the typhoon belt in the Pacific, every year rice and corn crops, including citrus and other fruit trees are damaged by the strong winds and the swift flood waters. We are fortunate if we have only ten to fifteen tropical storms or typhoons during the year, and not that the Filipinos are all lazy.

Another reason is the lack of financial assistance to deserving native preachers, in order to help alleviate their situation in life so that they could extend more time and effort in the preaching and teaching work. In fact among the thirty preachers we have in Mindoro, only seven of us are receiving minimal foreign support.

**Do you feel "American" money has helped or hindered the native work?**

I have been preaching for the last twelve years with American financial assistance or support. I can say that American money has been a blessing and I have used the money to the best advantage in my preaching and teaching work. American money might be a curse to the undeserving native workers. The loss of support to many good preachers has truly hindered their work. They must now take time away from preaching to try to earn money to support their family.

**What do you see as some of the "needs" of the native preachers?**

Preachers here mostly need reference books or materials such as

Bible Concordance, Bible Dictionary, and some commentaries, sermon outlines and various tracts. Only some supported preachers could afford to subscribe to religious papers like *Today*, *Guardian of Truth*, *Gospel Anchor*, or *Searching the Scriptures*. Even used class materials which could be sent to us here will surely be very highly appreciated. Every now and then there are congregations being established in Mindoro and northern Philippines and there is really a great need for English songbooks.

**Having visited the United States, what did you find the most memorable experiences of your trip?**

Many of the physical aspects of the country had greatly impressed me and my wife. Also the gradual change of the weather, especially in the northern States. When we first saw the snow falling on our heads, oh how we loved to see it, but only to dread it when we saw snow on the lawn about three feet high, and we could not sleep soundly with the extreme cold, even if we had four or five heavy blankets. One thing I dreaded was to shovel the snow and ice at the concrete path or driveway of about 30 yards from the garage to the highway.

It was, however, very nice to see the multifarious colors of the leaves of trees during Autumn. To me it was during Autumn when the landscape was at its most beauty.

But I was more concerned with the church and the brethren whenever and wherever we went from one state to another. The fine, warm and wonderful Christian hospitality accorded us by the brethren in church and in their homes had greatly impressed us. How could we ever and soon forget the wonderful association and fellowship we had shared with them whom we have met there? But there were also some congregations that did not care for our going to them, Bro. Connie Adams had scheduled me to go to some churches to speak, but some did not like me to speak to them and they told me that brethren like Bro. Wallace Little and others had already explained to them about the work in the Philippines, and that they felt it would be better for me to schedule the time with some other congregations.

**Could you observe much difference between the morals of the people in this country and in yours?**

I think there is no great difference,



as a whole. In this country I could see the lowering of our standards of morality, but I also observed it in America. Women and girls in both countries allow their fashion to be dictated by the world, rather than Christ, regardless of what the Bible says about modesty in their dresses.

Formerly I had known when members of the church opposed mixed swimming because of the immorality ignited in the mind as a result of both sexes stripping themselves of their clothes and frolicking about almost nude, but not anymore. Now even some members of the church defend it and actually invite and encourage others to do it. You must know that in nearly everything, the Filipinos are great imitators, and sometimes even go beyond. There are church members who unashamedly participate in the most ungodly, indecent, bodily movements of the modern dances. Homosexuality is now also prevalent here. There are even people living in open adultery, attend the church services without censure, let alone withdrawal of fellowship. These things should not be so!

I hope that Christians in America and in the Philippines should not lose their distinctiveness as a "people for God's own possession."

#### What is your age?

I am still 76 years young. The other meaning of Menor is also "minor" - minor in age, hence, I still feel young.

#### What are your plans for the future?

I still want to carry over my plans twenty years ago: (1) To make a Christian out of everybody; (2) I still feel it my obligation to exhort and admonish everybody among the brethren, most especially the younger preachers: "Wherefore, I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of those things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth. Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle--moreover, I will endeavor that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."

I am really enthused with the work

and it had been my intense desire to be with the young Christians in northern Philippines, in Mindoro, Romblon and Palawan. It might also have been my obsession to be always with the young Christians or infant churches in the faith who really still need to be nurtured, strengthened or established lest they fall easy prey to seducers by their unscrupulous teachings which are strange to the Bible. I always pray for them with tear-dimmed eyes, that God may still grant and enable me to visit and revisit them for whom I had been instrumental in bringing them all to the Way, the Truth, and the Life - that is to the True and Living Way.

Oh yes, my body is now slowing down with my age, but the Lord said, "My grace is sufficient for thee", and the apostle Paul also said, "for my strength is made perfect in weakness. . . for when I am weak, I am strong".

In my case there is no retirement! Yes, I have retired, but have put on a new tire, so I can still go.

**Readers may write to Diosdado Menor at Calapan, Oriental Mindoro 4401, Republic of the Philippines.**

# Led By The Spirit

by Daniel H. King

A part of the current emotional craze in religion is the belief that we are somehow divinely led by God in all that we do. This assumes that God leads each of us personally, helping us to make decisions, to study the Bible and come up with the right meaning, to live the Christian life, to teach others, etc.

Is this really true? Does God actually do that? We believe the Bible says "No" to both these questions. The Lord does love us and want us to do and think what is right. He also wants us to make the proper decision in life and search the Scriptures with profit. But He will not force us to do any of these things, nor will He do them for us. And, beyond even this, He will not give us a special revelation outside the one which he has already

supplied to all men equally.

The Bible **does** teach that we are led by the Spirit and that we must walk by the Spirit. The place where it is taught is Galatians 5:16-25. Close study of this passage, however, will not disclose any sort of mystical communication. There is nothing here or elsewhere in the Word of God which suggests that God somehow leads us through feelings, perceptions that are "better felt than told," or God-given intuitions. Whoever first suggested this doctrine and placed this interpretation upon the wording of this passage must have dreamed it up because there is nothing in Scripture that resembles it!

"So," you may ask, "how **are** we led by the Spirit of God?" That is quite simple. **God directs us by his inspired Word.** The Spirit of God was the One

who guided its writing (Jn. 14:26; 16:13-14). He moved its authors along to their destination (2 Pet. 1:21). He saw to it that it included everything necessary for man's spiritual rebirth and his growth as a child of God (2 Pet. 1:3). In fact, when He finished with it, it was so comprehensive in its scope that it was sufficient to make the man of God "*complete, furnished completely unto every good work*" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

The result is that we are today led by the Spirit of God just as people were in Bible times. The miraculous element is lacking, of course, but that is true on all fronts. Yet even back then it was essential for people to seek the direction of the Spirit of God by giving heed to what He said in the written Word. Thus, the writer of Hebrews says, "*Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith. . .*", and then quotes Scripture (Ps. 97:5ff.). No amount of emotional fervor or mystical experience can replace that kind of divine direction. If you cannot walk on water or raise the dead then you will have to be satisfied with it!

מִנְיַן הַיְעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קָרָה  
זֵנוּתוֹ יִצְמוֹעַ קוֹל שׁוֹפָר דָּר



# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “WEAKER VESSEL”

**Greek Word:** *asthenesteroi skeuei*

**Meaning:** a vessel or utensil without strength, weak

It has been suggested that this phrase, “weaker vessel,” would be a good subject for study in this column. And I certainly agree. In recent years the relationship of man to woman, and vice-versa, has been a highly controversial subject. And the use of this phrase in 1 Pet. 3:7 has held a significant place in this controversy. A proper understanding of it will be helpful to any Christian, and particularly to husbands.

The word *skeuei* is the dative singular form of the neuter noun *skeuos*. A.T. Robertson says *skeuos* “is an old and common word for vessel, furniture, utensil (Mt. 12:29; 2 Tim. 2:20)” (Word Studies, in loc.). It is used twenty-three times in the N.T. And though its usual meaning is vessel or utensil or household goods it is a broad enough word to be used for the sail of the ship on which Paul travelled to the shipwreck off Malta (Acts 27:15).

But in our passage its exact definition, i.e., pot, pan, chair or vase, is not essential to our understanding of Peter’s lesson. He is using the word figuratively. In context I believe it will be seen that he is describing the woman as a vessel or utensil in the Lord’s house, the church. All Christians fall into this category (cf. 2 Tim. 2:20-21). The husband is also “a vessel. . . meet for the master’s use” (Ibid.). But the wife is called “the weaker vessel.” Why?

The word *asthenesteroi* is a comparative form of the adjective *asthenes*, meaning weak or without strength. Its dative singular neuter form answers to the word *skeuei* which it modifies. *Asthenes*, is used twenty-five times in the N.T. for such conditions as weakness of will (Mt. 26:41), physical illness (Mt. 25:39), physical disability (Acts 4:9), spiritual bankruptcy (Rom. 5:6), weakness of

conviction (1 Cor. 8:7), physical weakness (2 Cor. 10:10), and others. But it is never used to describe intellectual weakness, the lack of mental capability, in the N.T. And herein lies the key to our understanding of the phrase “weaker vessel” in 1 Pet. 3:7.

Peter is observing and commenting on the obvious. Through the use of a metaphor he describes the wife as though she were a fine delicate piece of crystal (a weak vessel) belonging to the Lord. The husband is also a utensil (vessel) belonging to the Lord, but a physically sturdier one--perhaps a pair of silver tongs (cf. 2 Tim. 2:20-21). Both are the Lord’s property and the pair of tongs must take care not to strike the delicate crystal because it is more fragile than he. If he loves the Lord of the house, he will take care to honor the Lord’s vessels, and be careful, especially, for the weaker ones.

Now in plain terms this boils down to the fact that most men (not all) are physically capable of beating-up on their wives. This was a common practice in the Greco-Roman world in which Peter wrote. (His instruction may have some reference to the relative weakness of women before men in Roman law.) And he condemned the practice with a warning that a wife-beater’s prayers get no higher than the ceiling of his house (1 Pet. 3:7). Contrariwise, the husband was told to “dwell with her according to knowledge,” i.e., knowledge of womankind and of the Lord’s will, and “give her honor” because she is the Lord’s vessel, too (Ibid.). The passage says **nothing** about woman’s supposed intellectual inferiority to man, nor do the scriptures elsewhere.

## “SLACK”

**Hebrew Word:** *remiyyah*

**Meaning:** slack, loose

I suppose all of us have had the experience of shaking hands with someone whose grip reminds us of a

wet noodle. This sort of slack, unenergetic greeting is repulsive and enervating. The word *remiyyah*, when used as an adjective in the O.T., has the same flavor as that kind of handshake. It so used some seven times.

It is used in Hos. 7:16 and Psa. 78:57 to describe a loose or slack bowstring. It renders the bow useless. And this fundamental idea is carried metaphorically into human activity by the O.T. writers to teach two very valuable lessons:

First, in the Proverbs the wise man admonishes us to work hard and deal wisely or we’ll wind up in the poor house. “*He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand: but the hand of the diligent maketh rich*” (Prov. 10:4). “*Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an ilde soul shall suffer hunger*” (Prov. 19:15; cf. also Prov. 12:24,27).

Second, the Prophet Jeremiah, in a context of judgment on evil Moab, calls for the Lord’s servants to deal vigorously in the administration of divine justice. He says, “*Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully (negligently, A.S.V.)*” (Jer. 48:10). If we are idle in the Lord’s vineyard this passage should frighten us.

The writer of Ecclesiastes exhorts us to do what we do with enthusiasm: “*Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might*” (Eccl. 9:10). Everything from handshakes to waiting on the Lord’s Table to seeking the lost ought to be done with energy and commitment. To do less is to be an accursed loose bowstring.

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Is there a particular word you would like to see discussed in this column? If so, let us hear from you. We’ll try to work it into a future column.



## History Of Our Hymns

By Bob Buchanan

### ABIDE WITH ME

During the first half of the last century, it was a common occurrence for the townspeople of the little fishing village at Lower Brixham, Devonshire, England, to see a frail middle-aged man stroll thoughtfully by the seashore. The mild-mannered man was Henry F. Lyte, the local preacher. He had taken his daily walks by the sea for more than twenty years. That was the way he thought out many of his sermons.

On the Sunday afternoon of September 4, 1847, the preacher walked with a heavy heart. His health was rapidly failing. His steps were uncommonly slow. It is recorded that Lyte nearly had to crawl to the pulpit that morning and his message came as from a dying man. He knew that this particular afternoon would be the last time he would walk the familiar path by the sea.

Henry Lyte was born in Scotland on June 1, 1793. Life had not been easy for him. Poverty plagued his youth, but he managed to complete his education at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. At twenty-one years of age, he settled down in a small parish in Ireland. But even there doubt haunted him and he began feeling uncertain about his ministry and wondered why he had not followed the medical profession instead. A visit to a dying minister wrought a transformation in his life and caused him to plunge into his work with increased devotion.

In 1823, he was appointed perpetual curate for the Church of England in that little fishing village at Brixham, where he labored tirelessly as hard as his frail body would allow him to. But even there peace and quiet were denied him. In search for good health, he made frequent trips out of town. During his absences from the congregation, dissensions arose in the church, members withdrew, and finally even the choir refused to sing.

Mr. Lyte had hoped the salt air at Brixham might help mend his health. Now, when he was fifty-four, his lung

ailment had grown worse. Doctors said he would have to leave Brixham and go to the warmer climate of Italy. "I must get away," he said. "My feeble frame cannot endure much more." But he pushed himself to complete a small booklet, *Spirit of the Psalms*, which he published in 1834. This volume included, among other poems, one entitled "Praise, my soul, the king of heaven." Little did he dream that after the passing of more than a century a future Queen of England, Elizabeth II, would choose this as the opening hymn for her wedding to Lieut. Philip Mountbatten, because it had been sung at the wedding of her own parents, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth.

"Twenty-four years is a long time to stay in one parish," the weary pastor said, as he prepared for his trip to Italy. "I must put everything in order before I leave because I have no idea how long I will be away," he continued. As he went about the task of packing books, and sorting accumulated papers, sermons and miscellaneous manuscripts, he suddenly discovered in the bottom drawer of his desk, a poem he had written nearly a quarter of a century earlier.

"Strange how appropriate these words are now," he commented, as he read a few of the lines to members of his family. "I remember the night in my first parish, Wrexham, when I was called to the bedside of William Augustus LeHunte. As he lay dying he kept repeating the words 'Abide with me, abide with me,' possibly from the story of Jesus and the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. After leaving his bedside, I wrote this poem and had completely forgotten it until the pages came to light today."

On the Sunday afternoon of September 4, 1847, Lyte preached his last sermon for the folks at Brixham. His gardener recalled that he walked in the garden in front of the home for a while, and then went down on the rocks by the sea where he sat for a long

time, working over his manuscript. After the sun had set he returned to his study. His family thought he was resting, but he was putting the final touches on his finest hymn.

He left with his family the very next morning, September 5, and arrived soon after at Mentone, near Nice, France, at the foot of the Maritime Alps, in a climate of perpetual sunshine. His life slowly ebbed away and just a little over two months after leaving Brixham Henry Francis Lyte died. He never reached Italy.

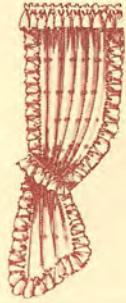
Lyte's prayer-poem never became widely used in England until it was first published in a book, *Lyte's Remains*, in 1850. Its first appearance in America was in Henry Ward Beecher's *Plymouth Collection* in 1855 with the notation that "this hymn was meant to be read and not sung." It was later discovered by William Henry Monk, music editor of the well-known Anglican Church hymnal, and was included in the first edition of that hymnal published in 1861. It is claimed that Monk wrote the music to "Abide With Me" in ten minutes.

The words to this prayer-poem are numbered among the songs that do not die:

**Abide with me! fast falls the eventide,  
The darkness deepens, Lord, with  
me abide!  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O, abide with  
me!**

**Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;  
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories  
pass away;  
Change and decay in all around I see;  
O Thou who changest not, abide  
with me!**

**I need Thy presence ev'ry passing hour,  
What but Thy grace can foil the  
tempter's pow'r?  
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay  
can be?  
Thru clouds and sunshine, O, abide  
with me!**



## A Woman's Point Of View



# THINKING OF MOTHER

by Doris Willagene Bratcher

Solomon wrote in Proverbs the thirty-first chapter: *"Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her...She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands...She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household. ...She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."*

This passage of Scripture makes me think of Mother because I believe she possessed all of these characteristics.

Mother is now ninety years old, mentally and physically incompetent. Earlier in life she told her children that when she had reached this stage in her life she wanted to be placed in a nursing home. She is still here in body but her mind is very confused.

When Father met Mother and later married her, he truly found a virtuous woman. Mother became a Christian when she was fifteen years old. She based her life and lived it according to the way she believed the Bible taught. Strength and dignity were her clothing. She believed that God intended a wife to be a helper to her husband.

Mother and Father were married February 5th, 1915. They bought a farm and lived on it in Butler County, Kentucky. Eleven children were born to them of which eight lived to adulthood. Knowing and believing the Bible teachings about life on earth, Mother had a loving God and an Everlasting Arm, through Christ, to lead her through her journey on earth.

Mother's interests were those of the family. She worked all day and into the night to provide for the needs of her family. She picked berries, worked in the garden, picked and canned vegetables from the garden, pieced and quilted quilts and made soap. She had to do the wash by hand because there was no electricity available. At times she would have to carry the clothes to a nearby creek to wash, because there wouldn't be enough water in the well. When she had finished her work for the day she would read the Bible to her children, put them in bed, help them with their prayers, and give them a good-night kiss.

Mother would stay up until midnight sewing for her children and herself. She made dresses, slips, and "bloomers" for her girls, and dresses, slips, and aprons for herself. Some of the girls' dresses she would embroidery so they would have a "nice" dress to wear. She made most of the clothes from the sacks which contained the feed that Father fed to the cattle.

Although Mother was burdened with the cares of her family, she could always do something for a neighbor

less fortunate than her. She would bake cakes or cookies, gather vegetables from the garden or dress a chicken to send when a neighbor was ill. On several occasions she found time to go sit with a terminally ill neighbor.

Mother never spoke evil of anyone; she tried only to see the good in people. She said to her children, "If you can't say something good about a person, don't say anything." Idle words never fell from her lips.

Mother disciplined her children with kindness but with firmness. She taught her children morals, respect for others, and obedience to the laws of the land. Because of the example set forth in the life she lived, her children and husband respected and honoured her.

Mother endured many heartaches and much sorrow. During World War II Mother and Father were called to Chicago to the bedside of a son. He was a soldier, who lay unconscious, his body mangled from an automobile wreck. The doctors told Mother and Father that there was nothing they could do for their son. There was no way he could live. Mother stayed close by and prayed night and day for her son. At the end of the twenty-first day, her son regained consciousness. The doctors told Mother that it was nothing they had done for her son, only God could have helped him. Her son still had a long battle back to normal health. One year and three months later her son was released from the hospital.

Other heartaches were those of a child who almost bled to death from complications which resulted from being hit with a foul-tipped baseball; a child who fell from a pony and knocked a hole in his head which required a steel plate to be placed in his head; a child who had diphtheria and almost died; a child who had pneumonia and almost died; and a child who received brain damage at birth which resulted in retardation. Her abiding faith in God helped her to endure these heartaches.

The sorrows Mother encountered were the loss of three babies. One lived for a year and three months. Because the baby was what the doctors called at that time a "blue baby"--which meant the valves to his heart weren't working--Mother had to sit up with him day and night because he couldn't breathe unless he was held in an upright position. She would sleep when one of her older

children could watch the baby. She sorrowed over the loss of an adult daughter, two sons, and in later years her beloved husband.

But Mother also had much joy in her life. She enjoyed seeing her children grow up, receive an education, marry and have children. She loved her grandchildren. She enjoyed playing games with her grandchildren--such as checkers, Old Maids, or drop the hankie. It was a joy for Mother to be able to visit a child and grandchildren in Detroit; Washington, D.C.; Ashville, N.C.; or Birmingham, Alabama. She found joy in telling stories and reading from the Bible to them. She would quote nursery rhymes and poetry to them.

One of her great joys was being able to attend the services of the church. Perhaps the greatest joy which brought with it tears, was when Father obeyed the Gospel and became a Christian. This was a joy she had anticipated for many years. As the years went by, she saw each child become a Christian.

Mother knows because of her obedience to God and the promise that He made to those that obeyed Him that there awaits a home in heaven for her where there will be no more sorrows, no more heartaches, no more tears--only joy.

Mother, a virtuous woman, deserves the praise of her children and husband. Blessed and great is this mother and wife.

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*Winnie Young, Gene's mother, resides at the Colonial Manor Nursing Home in Bowling Green, Kentucky.*



## Life and Laughter

### Welcome, Stranger--

Ray Clark, one of our good readers in Indianapolis, passes on this little story that appeared in his hometown paper of Salem:

It seems that a man attending a crowded worship service refused to take off his hat when asked to do so after being seated by the ushers. Others also asked him to remove his hat but he remained obstinate.

The preacher was perturbed and waited for the man after the service. He told the man that the church was happy to have him as a guest, but he explained the traditional decorum and said, "I hope you might conform to that practice in the future."

The man then replied: "Thank you. And thank you for taking time to talk to me. It is good of you to invite me to identify with this congregation. In fact, I've been a member here for three years and have been coming regularly all that time, but today is the first time that anyone paid any attention to me.

"After being an unknown for three years, today, by simply keeping on my hat, I have had the pleasure of talking with the ushers, two of the elders, three of the deacons, three or four ladies seated around me, and now I have a conversation with you, who has always appeared too busy to talk to me before."

### Why Not Swap Kids?

One thing that might solve the problems of bringing up children in the way they should go would be for all of us to swap children with another family in the congregation. It seems everybody knows what ought to be done to the other folks' kids.

### Making A Strong Point

When the sociologist finished his speech before the P.T.A. meeting, one mother asked, "Sir, do you believe in clubs for teenagers?"

The speaker replied, "Only if kindness fails."

### Out In The Rain

"Johnny," called the mother, "tell your sister to come in the house and out of the rain."

"I can't, Mom," the boy called back.

"And just why can't you?" demanded his mother.

His reply was, "We're playing Noah's Ark, Mom, and she's a sinner!"

### Solomon The Gardener

A little girl, coming home from Sunday School, was asked by her mother, "Well, dear, what did you learn today?"

"We learned about Solomon," the girl replied.

"And what did you learn about Solomon?"

"That he had 300 wives and 700 cucumber vines," replied the little girl.

### Dumb Brother

Bill Heinselman of Cary, North Carolina, tells a cute story about a little boy misunderstanding one of the hymns. The little congregation he was working with had a "song service" one Sunday night a month in place of the usual preaching service. While one of the song leaders was walking down the aisle the little lad of about four-and-a-half asked him to please sing the "dumb-brother" song! The songleader replied that he was sorry but he didn't believe he knew that one and looked to the boy's mother for some help but she did not know what song her son meant either.

However, during the course of the evening, one of the songleaders selected, "Are You Sowing The Seed of the Kingdom Brother?" And the boy excitedly exclaimed to his mother, "That's the one, Mommy! That's the one!"

Bill says he has never forgotten the incident and still believes that if you are not sowing the "seed of the kingdom" you are, indeed, a Dumb Brother!

# THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST

by Allan Turner

*"But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.*

*The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*

*And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.*

*Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hands, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

*And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and My God" (John 20:24-28).*

We normally think of the resurrection in terms of our own salvation and redemption. Paul said: ". . . if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:16). And every serious Bible student knows that the resurrection was God's ultimate testimony that Jesus is the Savior of all mankind. Peter makes this very point in Acts 4:8-12. There the resurrection is described as the authentication of Jesus as the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (verse 12). Not wishing to demean the spiritual significance of the resurrection, it would, nevertheless, be profitable for us to spend some time considering the political ramifications of Jesus' resurrection from the dead.

## NOT JUST THE CHURCH, BUT THE WHOLE WORLD

Many have failed to see that Jesus is not just Head of the church, but is Lord of the whole world. In the scripture quoted at the beginning of this article, Thomas, after realizing

Jesus had been resurrected, declared Jesus to be Lord of God. In other words, Jesus's Lordship, as understood by Thomas, was universal in nature. When we try to limit the Lord's sovereignty to just the church, we denigrate His divinely appointed position of Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev. 17:14), and place ourselves in opposition to the Scriptures.

Ephesians 2:22-23 deals with the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over the church, but verses 20-21 make it very clear that as a result of His resurrection from the dead, He is, "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the world to come." Paul explained that the only one excepted from the Lordship of Christ was, and is, the Father "which did put all things under Him" (I Corinthians 15:27).

## JESUS CHRIST RULES OVER THE NATIONS

As he was moved by God to speak, the prophet Daniel informed Nebuchadnezzar "that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will" (Daniel 4:25). In Daniel 7:13-14, a prophetic vision unfolds revealing Jesus as receiving all authority from the "Ancient of days." In that vision, He was given "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve Him." There can be no doubt that Jesus Christ now rules the world exactly as His Father did then. "All power (authority) is given unto me in heaven and in earth," He said in Matthew 28:18. Who among us would dare to dispute His word? But, unfortunately, far too often, those who call Him Lord are willing to acknowledge Him as the true Lord over only a portion of what is really His.

## SECULARIZATION: ANOTHER NAME FOR ANARCHY

In truth, secularization is just

another name for anarchy. It is rebellion against the lawful authority of our Lord. Furthermore, its propaganda is but the arrogant voice of a government which sees itself as being omnipotent. Statism (the government seeing itself as supreme) has always been a powerful tool of the Devil (Revelation 13). The fact that Satan has seduced many with a metaphor (i.e., the separation of church and state), does not bother me nearly as much as the fact that he has convinced many Christians that the scriptural and historical reality of government "under God" is somehow destructive of domestic tranquility. In truth, government "under God" vis-a-vis Romans 13 actually insures domestic tranquility. But secularism, the Devil's doctrine, denies that God is ruling in the secular affairs of man. Furthermore, it teaches that man is totally autonomous and answerable only to himself and the institutions he has created. Left unchecked, such thinking eventually leads to the development of the Almighty State. Man, convinced he is unable to save himself, resorts to idolatry and bows before his own totem: the omnipotent State.

## THE SEPARATION OF GOD AND GOVERNMENT

Secularization has neutralized the central sectors of society (i.e., technology, science, politics, and business) of religious influence. As I write this article, a Secular Humanist is making his bid for the White House and is attacking his opponent as un-American for believing that biblical based morality should be a part of government. My friends, it is not just a guess that more than a few Christians would agree with Mr. Mondale. Many of God's people have allowed themselves to be seduced into believing there is to be an impenetrable wall between God and Government. I wish it were not true, but it is. Many Christians think it perfectly scriptural

to compartmentalize their religion into that which is sacred and that which is secular. Such thinking has caused Christianity to be privately engaging, but socially irrelevant. "Privatization" has caused many Christians to so internalize their religion that they might best be identified as secret disciples, i.e., the "Joseph of Arimathea Syndrome (John 19:38). This secret discipleship has caused Christianity, in too many cases, to be without any real impact in the public sector. Afraid to mention the name of our Lord publicly, except within very limited parameters, for fear of being thought un-American, uncivil, un-professional, anti-social, sectarian, and fanatical, many Christians find themselves without any real "witness" in their communities.

#### A LAW ABOVE THE LAW

Christians, of all people, should know there is a law above the Law. In the Old Testament, it was expressed thusly: "He that ruleth over man must be just, ruling in the fear of God" (II Samuel 23:3). In the New Testament, the Lord, as He stood before the highest representative of the Roman government in Palestine, explained it this way: "*Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above*" (John 19:11). And whether or not the nations like it, "*the most High (still) ruleth in the kingdom of men*" (Daniel 4:25). As Christians privileged to live in America, where the historical heritage of government "under God" has traditionally been honored, we should not allowed ourselves to be aligned with the Devil's doctrine of secularization. To do so would not just be going against scripture, which is certainly bad enough, but it would actually be a denial of the resurrection of Christ, which is even worse. In reality, the political and spiritual implications of the resurrection are no more inseparable than God and the State. Our Lord Jesus Christ is either Lord of all, or He is the Lord of nothing.

#### THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE

Yes, we believe the Lord taught a separation of church and state, but the very modern concept of an **inseparable** wall between church and state surrenders to a simplistic understanding of a somewhat complicated subject. It is clear from His teaching that the Lord rejected the "theocracy" advocated by

the right-wing, religio-political activists, as well as the "inseparable wall" advanced by the hypercritical separatists. Rejecting theocracy, He, nevertheless, legitimized the authority of the state "under God." The Kingdom of God (the church) and the Kingdom of Men (the civil government as recognized both by the citizens of a country and by foreign powers) are not the same, but each coexists on this earthly plane with the other. But, far from being mutually exclusive, church and state are mutually beneficial. For example, the church is instructed to pray for civil authorities--that certainly is beneficial to the state--who will, in turn, conduct themselves in such a way as to be beneficial to the church (I Timothy 2:1-3). Civil government, then, is ordained by God as a mechanical remedy against evil so as to make life in this fallen world somewhat tolerable (Romans 13:1-7). And although it is certainly true that the church has no authority to steer the vessel of state, it benefits the state by marking off the channel in which the ship of state is to move. Within that safe channel articulated in God's Word civil government is free to maneuver as the helmsman thinks best.

For the Christian to believe that in order to honor Jesus Christ it is necessary for him to eliminate the Lord from ALL of government and MOST of society, is totally irreconcilable with the truth taught in the word of God. As individual Christians, we must learn there is no basic conflict between discipleship and God ordained political power. The Lord, in Matthew 10:32-33, said: "*Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.*" We desperately need to learn that biblical faith is more than a private pill to be swallowed, it is a prescribed regimen which must become a part of every facet of our lives.

*27 Then saith He to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.*

*28 And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.*

# Childlike Or Childish

by Bruce Everett

Let's look at two words that seem to be very similar but actually are very different. The first is "childlike." Christ commands us to take on this characteristic if we are to inherit the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 18:3). When described as childlike it denotes the idea of humility and innocence. Children have a great capability to trust and have faith in others. This is an attribute that all of God's children must possess. We must learn to forgive and forget when we have been wronged. Children can disagree one minute and forget it the next. We're not advocating tolerating sin but rather the ability to hate the sin and yet love the sinner. Jesus loved us all while hating the sins we were caught up in.

The second seems to be identical but is at the other extreme: that word is "childish." It carries with it the idea of foolish and immature. Paul said there comes a time to give up childish things (1 Cor. 13:11). We are instructed to grow up in the faith (Heb. 5:12; 1 Cor. 3:1-3). We must mature and grow up in the faith while holding on to humility and innocence. So often we show off our childish ways by having little tantrums when things don't go our way. It reminds me of a sandlot baseball game when somebody says, "I'm taking my ball and going home; I quit!" Some people like to quit playing church every once in a while when things don't go their way. Brothers and sisters, we don't "play church!" Our service to God is not a game!

While cultivating a childlike nature as we mature as Christians let us put away our childish actions. Let us grow and add the qualities of a Christian character as Peter describes them: faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love (2 Peter 1:5-7).

# Ye Are The Salt Of The Earth

by David McClister

In what is commonly called the sermon on the mount (Matt. 5-7), Jesus discusses various aspects of the righteousness of the kingdom of heaven. The sermon is set as a contrast, often extreme, between the righteousness of Christ's kingdom and the prevailing ethic of Jesus' day (predominantly Pharisaistic). It was only natural that in such a discussion Jesus would pay no little attention to the ethical character of the citizens of his kingdom. The citizens of the kingdom are described generally as, among other things, "*the salt of the earth*" (Matt. 5:13).

What does this mean, "*ye are the salt of the earth?*" We must be careful not to push this figure too far. For example, salt sown in a field renders the field useless for growing plants (cf. Judges 9:45). Certainly this is not one of the intended lessons suggested by the figure. Yet Jesus' words here are a positive statement concerning the Christian's role and relationship to the world. Jesus was addressing the common folk (you and I), and His figure should be understood in terms of the way the common man used salt.

What does salt do? While salt is used in hundreds of applications, it basically has two fundamental uses. First of all, salt is used as a seasoning and flavoring agent for food. This is probably the most common use. Salt, when applied to meats, vegetables, etc., powerfully enhances the flavor of these foods. So it is with the Christian in his relation to the world. The Christian makes this world a better place in which to live by enhancing that which is truly good in life. Because the Christian is a man of love, gentleness, compassion, and meekness, his influence makes life more enjoyable and palatable. It is sad that God's children are often stereotyped as being "weak and sweet" in character. Jesus did not say "ye are the sugar of the earth." Instead He portrayed the citizen of the kingdom as a powerful and active influence for good. Goodness is ultimately strong, and so are God's people, "the salt of the

earth." Secondly, salt is used as a preservative. This was a very common usage of salt in Jesus' day, for the ancients knew nothing of pressure canning, freezers, etc. The ancients depended upon the preservative power of salt to keep their meats from spoiling. Because of its ability to retard deterioration, and because of its purifying efforts, salt was highly valued and was used symbolically to represent the perpetuity and virtue of a covenant relationship (cf. Num. 18:19). Generally speaking, there is a wholesomeness and vitality associated with salt.

Thus the Christian, as the salt of the earth, is one who combats spiritual and moral decay, upholding and defending the truth which is able to save men's souls. His role in the world is that of a purifying and preserving agent. He must live so as to maintain an element of moral purity in the world and prevent, yea even reverse, the progress of sin. What goodness there is in the world is there because of the influence and effects of the salt of the earth, God's people. And whether or not that measure of goodness will continue and even increase depends upon the salt of the earth retaining its ability to preserve and purify morally.

That is why Jesus warned, "*but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men.*" An underlying theme in the sermon on the mount is consistency, and Jesus emphatically stressed this important quality as it applies to the salt of the earth. When salt becomes contaminated with foreign materials it loses its ability to enhance, preserve, and purify. Without these abilities it is useless and may even, because of its contamination, become a deadly poison.

So it is with the Christian who becomes contaminated by worldliness. Because of his love for the world he does not fight against the sin that is in it. Instead he embraces it. The result is that he ceases to be an influence for

good for Christ, and in His eyes he is thus "*good for nothing.*" Brethren, Christ has no use whatsoever for worldly followers!

It is a terrible thing never to have entered the kingdom, but it is even more tragic to have entered and been cast out (2 Pet. 2:20f). Whether or not we will be kept in the kingdom depends upon how well we maintain our usefulness to the Lord as the salt of the earth. Like salt, the Christian's purity depends upon who or what he is kept with. "*Evil companionships corrupt good morals*" (1 Cor. 15:33). We must therefore "*abstain from every form of evil*" (1 Thess. 5:22), lest we become defiled by it and thereby render ourselves useless to Christ.

Beyond keeping ourselves pure, we must also involve ourselves in the business of salting the earth. Just as the salt which only sits upon the shelf will never be useful in seasoning or preserving food (no matter how pure it may be), the Christian who does not apply himself to the task of contending earnestly for the faith serves no real purpose in the kingdom of heaven. The present moral condition of the world requires that God's salt be vigorously and generously applied. But while this thought may be felicitous to Jesus' figure, we are beginning to run the risk of pressing it beyond its original import.

But there is another thought which, I believe, would have been recognized by Jesus' original audience as a legitimate application of the figure, "*ye are the salt of the earth.*" It does not take an entire shakerfull of salt to provide enough seasoning for a meal; all it takes is a sprinkle or two. This is because pure salt is very potent, and it only takes a little to get great results. And so it is with the salt of the earth. God does not reckon the strength and ability of His people by counting heads (as we often view strength). Instead He considers the purity, the quality, of His people to be the real indicator of their strength. That is why our Lord spent so much time in the sermon on the mount in describing the character and

behavior of the citizens of the kingdom. Sure, it is nice to see a church building filled with worshippers, but spiritual strength is really the important consideration. The Lord "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6) with twelve men, because those

twelve went throughout the world leaving an influence for good in everything with which they came into contact.

So must it be with us. We must keep ourselves pure and work so as to spread the gospel, pervading

everything we touch with its purifying and enhancing influence. This is the duty of the salt of the earth.

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# The Natural Conclusion

by Dennis D. Tucker

By now everyone has heard of Vanessa Williams. For a number of days she was the source of national news and controversy. Her name has been on the front page of numerous newspapers and magazines. In fact, it was a magazine and some photographs that started the whole uproar. It appears that Miss Williams posed nude in some very lewd pictures for a certain photographer a few years back. She was paid to pose nude and she willingly accepted the money after she had done so.

Eventually the pictures wound up in the August Issue of *Penthouse* magazine. A so called adult magazine, meaning that they show pictures of individuals in sexual positions and acting out sexual encounters. It is worth noting that several magazines turned down the rights to the pictures of Miss Williams, realizing that such publicity would harm her career and harm the Miss America Pageant. Those magazines turned down a good size profit, *Penthouse* has to be pleased with her August sales.

Once the pictures of the naked Miss Williams hit the news stands, everybody reacted with horror. Miss Williams was stunned that the photographer would have the gall to sell those pictures and that any magazine would print them. Organizers of the Miss America Pageant were shocked and angered by the photographs. They cited that the contestants of the pageant sign a contract with a morality clause. This clause allows the organizers to relieve the winner of her duties if she acts in any immoral way or brings reproach upon the pageant.

They stressed that this was the first time that they had to actually use this clause, and wanted to stress the cleanliness and decency of the Miss America Pageant.

Publishers of *Penthouse* responded by calling the organizers of the Miss America Pageant a bunch of hypocrites. *Penthouse* did not claim that the pictures were wholesome or innocent, they recognized the pictures for what they were: photographs designed to stimulate a sexual response. They challenged the pageant to be honest with itself and admit that they have the same goal, that is to show off flesh.

The whole pageant is designed to show off the bodies of some pretty young girls. No matter how hard pageant officials try to present a wholesome pageant, they fail. If the pageants very purpose is wrong, if its goals are wrong, its results will be wrong. Young ladies are shown wearing bikinis, one piece bathing suits, and evening gowns. These articles of clothing are designed to show off the bodies of these women. Pageant officials have tried to keep a certain level of respectability, however, it is impossible to have a wholesome event if its purpose is not wholesome. Talent and ability play a very little part in selecting the winner. There is a question for the 5 finalists to answer, but the nature of this question does not require a great deal of knowledge. For the most part the winner is chosen on the criteria of looks.

Many of the sponsors of the pageant use the young ladies to model their fashions and makeup. They will

use these ladies and other models in their advertisements. Such advertisements are often aimed at stimulating sexual response or at showing other women how to be provocative. They will do this by showing women posing skimpily dressed wearing their product or with their product, so as to catch the eyes of men. The same happens with the pageant, women are skimpily dressed and people watch so as to drool over these young ladies.

*Penthouse* made a good point, their pictures of Miss Williams are The Natural Conclusion. People who are immodest enough to stand in front of a national audience barely dressed, will have little trouble appearing naked in front of a photographer. Miss Williams should not have been shocked, after all she posed nude for the pictures, the fact that he would eventually sell her pictures is The Natural Conclusion. Organizers of the pageant should not have been shocked, if somebody is immodest enough to try to show off their body it will not matter how under dressed they are. People with immodest attitudes will do immodest things. Persons with modest attitudes will dress and act modestly (I Tim. 2:9).

It would shock most individuals to sometimes see the natural conclusion of the attitudes. Those individuals who could see nothing wrong with "church supported orphan homes" or "church supported colleges" 20 years ago, should not be shocked by the church businesses we have today, it is the The Natural Conclusion. People who start missing worship services and eventually fall away, should not be shocked, it is The Natural Conclusion. Individuals who advocate social drinking or immodest dress, have no right to be shocked by alcoholism or adultery, it is The Natural Conclusion. *Penthouse* was honest enough to see and admit The Natural Conclusion. How about you?

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# The Book Worm



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*VOICES CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS* by David Roper (Restoration Publications: Salisbury, South Australia), 1979, hardcover, 475 pages, \$15.95.

When Roper was searching for a phrase or theme that would tie together this presentation on the restoration plea, and that would, at the same time, convey the challenge involved in presenting that plea to an often indifferent world, he could find no words more fitting than the words used concerning John: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness" (John 1:28-29). Roper said, "To me, the words convey a **feeling**: Standing for something. Standing for that something against great odds. Often standing alone, but still standing, still speaking, because it is the right thing to do."

This volume is a history of the Lord's church with special emphasis being given to the work in Australia. The author moved to Australia in 1968 and left there at the end of 1977. During that time, he taught classes on Restoration History in Sydney. For most of the ten years that Roper was in Australia he was doing research constantly--including visiting most of the locations referred to in the book. He spent his last few years in Australia going through a lot of old libraries, amidst dusty books, letters, and other relics.

This book is, without question, one of the finest one-volume studies I have seen on the Restoration Movement. It begins with the need for restoration, what is meant by restoration, and considering whether or not restoration is really possible. Although the book was written to tell of the Lord's church in Australia, Roper knew the history of the church in that country could not be properly understood without some

basic understanding of the history of the church in other areas--specifically Great Britain and the United States. So, he begins with some small minority groups and early beginnings--before it could properly be said that there was a "restoration movement" in Great Britain or the U.S.

Roper has well researched and footnoted his material. As a matter of fact, I have seldom seen a more well-documented book. The book contains a 12-page bibliography, as well as a 6-page appendix telling where periodicals can be found in Australia.

Starting with Barton W. Stone and continuing to men like Marvin Phillips (who left Australia in 1970), the book contains photographs of numerous preachers. The book also contains several charts and a wonderful appendix correlating the movements in the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia--giving important dates, events, and names of preachers.

My strongest complaint against the book would be the references to "restoring the restoration movement." I'm confident the author did not intend to leave this impression, but it sometimes comes across that several men are trying to restore the restoration movement of the past instead of actually restoring the Lord's church. I wish the author had used some other terminology, but even with that "flaw" I loved this book.

Roper did one of the finest jobs I have ever seen in print in the way he handled his discussion of even those men with whom he would differ. He did not ignore, nor seek to pervert facts, concerning preaching endeavors of those with whom he would disagree--whether it was those that apostatized with the instrumental music or those that he referred to as "ultra-conservative." I can illustrate the point with two of his footnotes. In referring to Sewell Hall, he said: "In 1966, a U.S. preacher, Sewell Hall, spent three months in Australia--most of it at Bundaberg." The footnote said: "Like Dark, Hall's coming paved the way for

certain 'ultra-conservatives' to come to the U.S." And then he said: "In 1967, Harold Comer from America came to work for several months with McDowell." That statement was footnoted to say: "Comer was one of the first full-time workers to come to Australia for an extended period who were opposed to certain types of co-operation." Roper mentions other names that most readers of this paper would recognize: Robert Harkrider, Jim Everett, Sam Binkley, Jr., Phil Morr, Jim Sasser, Tommy Poarch, Bill Hall, Robert Turner, Jim Beech, Harry Pickup, Jr., Leslie Diestelkamp, Roy Diestelkamp, and Cecil Willis.

I just can't say enough good things about the kind of research that has gone into this book, the accuracy of the dates, places, people, and events, and the open-mindedness with which the author presented his material. Although Roper and I would disagree on such things as the "co-operation issue", I am pleased to recommend this book to all students interested in knowing more about the Restoration Movement in the U.S., Great Britain, and Australia.

*DAUGHTERS OF EVE* by Lottie Beth Hobbs (Harvest Publications: Fort Worth, Texas, 1963, paperback, 235 pages, \$3.95.

This book has been around several years, used by numerous churches all across this nation, and continues to be loved by all that use it. The author seeks to give the women of today a new strength by looking at the women of yesterday.

It is hard to over-estimate the power and influence of women, either for good or evil. The rise and fall of nations may be traced by studying the rise and fall of womanhood. The Bible openly describes every kind of woman that ever lived--the mother, the career woman, the peasant in the field, the woman on the throne bedecked in all her finery, and the harlot that leads many men astray. God pictures the women who corrupt, poison and

destroy as well as the righteous, pure, and those that are towers of strength. But a study of the lives of each of them can be helpful, if the women of today can learn from the women of yesterday.

Starting with Eve and concluding with Dorcas, Priscilla, Euodias and Syntyche, the author seeks to reveal as much as possible on the character of each woman. Each chapter is followed by a wonderful review exercise and questions for thought and discussion. Having used this in classes before, I can heartily recommend the book for all ladies.

**RESTORATION MOVEMENTS AROUND THE WORLD** by W. Ralph Wharton (Wharton Publishing: Houston, Missouri), 1980, paperback, 116 pages, \$3.95.

For those readers that enjoy studying the Restoration Movement, this book will be a little different than most others you read. This book looks to a different field: those little-known men around the world who have trod the same spiritual paths by studying the Bible, accepting its truths without guidance from anyone who had gone before them, forsaking whatever denominations may have claimed them as members, speaking out for a return to the biblical pattern, and literally restoring the church which Jesus had founded in the first century.

One of Wharton's purposes was to convince his readers that the church of Christ is not of human origin and just one more denomination. He seeks to show that there would be a church of Christ here today even if Campbell and Stone had never lived: or, though living, had never turned from sectarianism to the light of God's Word.

This little book is a result of research Wharton began in 1959. The author feels that for too many years we resorted only to theory in which we argue that if a Bible should suddenly come into the possession of a people on a desert island who had never heard of God or the Bible; and if they read it, believed it, and obeyed it, the result would be the restoration of the Lord's church. This book argues that that which we have postulated in theory can now be adduced in fact. It has been said that "there is no proof like demonstration." The truth has been demonstrated, repeatedly, at many times and in many places around the world. This book is a look at many of

those.

This book looks at movements in Ethiopia, France, Germany, India, Italy, Poland, Spain, as well as several locations in the United States. The book closes with a chapter on unconfirmed or discounted stories about restoration.

The author has spent much time and research into the preparing of this book. It is very interesting reading. It is not the type of reading that makes for casual late-at-night reading, but I would recommend it to anyone interested in restoration history.

**THE STORK IS DEAD** by Charlie Shedd (Word Books: Waco, Texas), 1983, paperback, 120 pages, \$4.95.

Sex is spelled with only three letters --it is not a four-letter word and should not be treated as such. Shedd's book gives straight answers to young people's questions about sex. He knows that what teenagers want is honesty. He speaks with frankness and good sense about dating, going steady, going "all the way," getting married, and understanding each other. He deals with touchy subjects that are often left undiscussed--subjects like pornography, venereal disease, and birth control.

This book has met with such favorable response it is hard to keep the book in print. The book is divided into 13 chapters with a special section of questions and answers. The chapters are short, usually only on the average of about four pages each. It is easy and enjoyable reading. Most teenagers will read the whole book at one sitting once they start.

I have used this book for graduation gifts and have also had it on a list of required reading for all young people prior to my agreeing to perform their wedding ceremony.

**HEART TO HEART**, written by 13 different men (Harvest Publications: Fort Worth, Texas), 1983, paperback, 111 pages, \$2.95.

This book was written especially for teens, written by successful men--men who have experienced the joys, conflicts, and questionings of youth; men who have searched out, tested and tried the answers to life's questions.

These men do not speak as preachers (though some of them are); not as lecturers (though some of them do);

not as judges (though some of them would make fine ones). The book is designed to come to the youth from friends--someone they could sit with, talk with, and search for what God would want in their lives.

This book is not necessarily designed to give all of the answers, but it is designed to make the teens ask all the questions. It is not a simple "Yes" or "No" book either. Life is not made up of such simple answers. This book is designed to probe into the real teen and cause him or her to come up with some real convictions about them.

This would make a wonderful study book for a high school or college-age class.

**THAT THEY MAY TRAIN THE YOUNG WOMEN** by Ruth Thompson (B&D Enterprises: LaMesa, California), 1980, paperback, 154 pages, \$3.95.

This material was originally prepared for and taught in a Bible class for young women. The author is convinced that Titus 2:3-5 commands the older women to teach the younger women in seven areas: 1. love their husbands, 2. love their children, 3. be sober-minded, 4. chaste, 5. workers at home, 6. kind, and 7. being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. These are the titles for her seven chapters in the book.

The author fills each lesson with Scripture and with principles that go to make a wife and mother pleasing to God. But as I heard one woman say after using the book: "The last section of practical suggestions was worth the price of the book. Sister Thompson talked about our dress, our make-up, our health, and things that really matter. This is one of those books that will be read and re-read many times. I'll keep it by my bedside and read it often at night. I would recommend this for any ladies' Bible class."



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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## RUTH

by Darrell Hymel

**T**he Bible contains many forms of literature including prose, poetry, and apocalyptic literature. But the book of Ruth is a masterpiece in the form of a short story. Ordinarily we think of short stories as being fiction, but here is a true story as delightfully presented as the best of fiction. The book of Ruth is both a love story and an adventure. It relates the romance of a poor, widowed, Gentile woman: with a rich, powerful, Jew of Bethlehem. But the romance develops only as a result of the providential guidance of God in the life of a problem plagued family of Israel. Through the death of the father and two sons of this family in the foreign country of Moab, the name and inheritance of this family are endangered. However, the extreme circumstances of the three widows in this story, turns out to be God's opportunity to insert another link in the Divine scheme of redemption. Owing the noble actions of a kinsman-redeemer, Boaz, the Messianic lineage remains unbroken. The story fills us with sympathy for Naomi and Ruth and the drama unfolds as we wait to see if their life of heartaches can be turned around. In four short chapters, the story alternates from sorrow to joy, from tears to laughter, from weeping to singing, and ends in a typical story-book fashion with the marriage of the two lovers.

The events recorded in the story occurred in the days of the Judges (1:1), three generations before David. David lived approximately 1000 years before Christ. We know nothing of the author of this book except that he lived after David was born (4:17-22). If it were not for the book of Ruth, we might have a distorted view of life under the Judges. The book of Judges is full of sordid stories of crime and blood shed, of lawlessness and savage revenge. But the book of Ruth tends to soften that view. It demonstrates the

workability of the law of Moses in the everyday affairs of the common people. The nearest kinsman was to redeem both the family property and name (Deut. 25:5-10; Lev. 25:25). Boaz fulfilled this role in the story. The law of Moses also provided for the care of the poor, and this is illustrated by Ruth gleaning in the fields of Boaz (Lev. 19:9-10; Ruth 2). The book of Ruth supplements the book of Judges by giving a clearer picture of domestic life during that period.

But it is probably at the close of the story (4:17-22) that the author suggests its main purpose for inclusion in the divine record. This book fills a gap in the genealogy between Abraham and David that led to the Messiah. These two men were probably the two most important men in the lineage; the book of Ruth describes the founding of the all important family of David.

The promise given to Abraham included the blessing of all nations of the world through his seed. God, in choosing Ruth the Moabitess to bring this seed into the world, was even in the Old Testament showing he had a place for the Gentiles in his purpose. Ruth joins Rahab of Jericho and possibly Bethsheba, as Gentile women in the genealogy of Jesus (Matt. 1:5-7).

Ruth's character is best remembered for her kindness, loyalty, and willingness to take a humble task. She had showed great kindness both to her first husband as well as to her mother-in-law (1:8) She will forever be an example as to how wives are to love their husbands. Our attitude in marriage is not only important for our spouses, but for all who see our marriage at work. Older women are to *"encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, KIND, being subject to their own husbands, THAT THE WORD OF GOD MAY NOT BE DISHONORED"*

(Titus 2:4-5). We can not be a disgruntled, unkind mate, and expect our light to shine in the world. Ruth also showed kindness to her mother-in-law, Naomi. There is often much friction between inlaws, and this friction has often caused problems in the church. Ruth is an example to all in that she truly loved Naomi.

We need more loyalty today like Ruth for each other and for God. Ruth said to Naomi, *"Do not urge me to leave you, or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge, your people shall be my people, and your God, my God"* (1:16). If only young people would seek their heroes among men and women in the church instead of off the T.V. screen. Ruth recognized a good example and followed her.

Ruth indicated her willingness to take a humble task. She was willing to glean for what was left over. How many today simply fold their hands in laziness due to a supposed lack of talents and opportunities. Ruth did what she could with what opportunity was hers and God rewarded her with enough that she had plenty to share with Naomi. In fact, the riches of Boaz became hers because she worked for others. The riches of God await us when we use only one talent unselfishly.

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**JOSHUA-JUDGES-RUTH** by Willard W. Winter, professor at Cincinnati Bible College. This is combination commentary, workbook, and teaching manual. Ten questions for review are included for each chapter just studied.

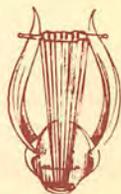
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# 19 Promises The Christian Can Count On

Biblical Promise	Scripture Reference
1. You will never be tempted more than you can bear, and God will always provide a way of escape! (With God's help you can conquer anything through faith and prayer.)	I Cor. 10:13
2. Your basic necessities will be provided for if you seek the kingdom first along with Christ's righteousness.	Matt. 6:33
3. Anything you have to give up or sacrifice for the kingdom's sake will be repaid you one hundred fold - in addition to receiving eternal life.	Mark 10:29-30
4. If you abide in Jesus, <b>ask whatsoever you will and it shall be done unto you</b> - if you ask according to His will.	Jn. 15:7; I Jn. 5: 14-15; Jas. 5:16
5. Seek diligently and ye <b>shall</b> find! (Doubts and questions about God's will can be resolved.)	Mt. 7:7-8; Jer. 29:13 Deut. 4:29
6. Soon the troubles of this world will be passed away. . .no more tears, death, mourning, or pain!	Rev. 21:4
7. You can trust in God and find peace in the fact that God is the supreme ruler over the universe. Even in the midst of world turmoil it is He that determines the rise and fall of nations. Our <b>real</b> citizenship is in a kingdom that will last forever and never be moved!	Dan. 2:21-22; 4:34-35 Isa. 44:6-8 Acts 17:26; Heb. 12:28
8. Jesus will return to take us home to immortality if we yearn and long for His appearing.	Acts 1:10-11 II Tim. 4:8; Rev. 22:20
9. Keep your mind on God and you will have perfect peace. A peace those in the world cannot fully grasp or understand.	Isa. 26:3-4; Jn. 14:27 Phil. 4:6-9
10. Do not become weary in well doing, for if you persevere you will receive a bountiful harvest. Even though you may not be able to see visible results immediately, they will come, and your labor is not in vain.	Gal. 6:9; I Cor. 15:58 Isa. 55:10-11 Rev. 2:10
11. The way up in the kingdom is down! When one is surrendered, then the power of God can make one strong. The greatest in God's kingdom is the one that <b>serves</b> the most.	Matt. 23:12 II Cor. 12:9-10 Matt. 20:26-28
12. Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not upon your own understanding and <b>He will direct your paths</b> (and give your life purpose).	Prov. 3:5-6 Rom. 8:28
13. The people you convert will serve as a foundation of continual blessings to you.	Prov. 11:30
14. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think if we will let Him work in us.	Eph. 3:20
15. The more you will give, the more you will receive. The way to get is to give!	Lk. 6:38; II Cor. 9:6-11
16. God is bigger than any of your problems! (There is nothing too difficult for God!)	Jer. 32:17; Rm. 8:31 Mk. 10:27
17. As God's child you have a sure inheritance, "a living hope" - a personal <b>reservation</b> in heaven you can count on!	I Pet. 1:3-4 I Tim. 1:12; Jn. 14:1-3
18. You can cast all your anxieties upon God knowing that He <b>does</b> care for you.	I Pet. 5:7
19. In Jesus you shall live even if you die. We hope in the future resurrection!	Jn. 11:25-26 Acts 24:15

Compiled by members of the North Street congregation, 610 East North St., Tampa, FL 33610.



## Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

# WHEN THE ENEMY ATTACKS

(Chapter 3)

The third Psalm is the first with a title. These titles are of unknown origin, and ancient in age, being found even in the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament. We're told that this is "A Psalm of David when he fled from Absalom his son." The historical record of this event may be read in 2 Samuel 15-18.

Remember Absalom? He had a lot going for him. He was good looking (2 Sam. 14:25,26). Absalom was proud of his looks. Just got a haircut once a year! He had a great personality. Absalom won the hearts of the people. He was clever, popular, and proud. He was also a smart aleck, but was able to keep this concealed when he wanted to. He wanted to be top-dog. There was one fellow more important than him (his father, the king), so Absalom started scheming.

He bought a magnificent chariot and horses and hired fifty footmen to run ahead of him. This was to get attention. Then he arose early each morning and paraded to the gates of the city where official business was carried on and decisions were made. There he did his "politicking", meeting newcomers, shaking hands, and kissing babies. He talked about what the King should do, and what he would do if he had the chance. And yes, he won the hearts of the people.

This evil son then set up a rebellion against King David. When David got the news, he was unorganized. Almost all Israel was supporting Absalom. David fled from Jerusalem (2 Sam. 15:14). It was this dark day of trouble and evil that serves as a backdrop to the third psalm.

### DAVID'S COMPLAINT (1, 2)

*"Lord how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me."* The devil tries to overwhelm us with numbers. He has many allies. Think of David. He was not only a fugitive from his own throne, but a broken-hearted father.

His enemies sought to discourage him with their speech: *"Many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God. Selah."*

If the enemy of our souls can bring us to doubt God's love and goodness, he will win the victory everytime. They were saying, "His God won't help him now!"

The word "Sleah" is apparently a musical notation. Some say it signified a pause in the music. To us, it may signal a good place to pause and meditate in our reading.

### CONFIDENCE IN THE LORD (3, 4)

Let's take our eyes off our troubles and fix them on the Lord. David described God as his shield. It makes all the difference when we place Him between ourselves and our troubles (Comp. Eph. 6:16). He had been driven from the glory of his throne and capital, but he still had God whom he described as his glory, and he rested in hope that the Lord would yet lift up his head, or exhalt him. His head was now hanging in despair, but it would again be exhalted in joy.

In verse 4, David testifies of past experience. He knows that God hears and answers prayer, for he has heard and answered him. This gave him confidence for the future.

### SAFETY IN SLEEP (5, 6)

*"I laid me down and slept; I*

*awaked; for the Lord sustained me."* His faith and confidence permitted him to lie down, possibly in an open field beneath the stars, and sleep. "He giveth his beloved sleep." We often need this when we're perplexed by troubles.

Yet he was not oblivious of his situation. He was courageous in the Lord: *"I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about."*

### STRENGTH FOR THE FUTURE (7, 8)

David cries out for salvation from the Lord. He is confident: *"...for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone: thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly."* The past tense is used as if such had already been accomplished. "The battle is the Lord's," Exclaimed a younger David when he faced the giant. Even the roaring lion who seeks our souls (1 Pet. 5:8), can do little damage if his teeth are broken out.

*"Salvation belongeth unto the Lord: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah."* They may seem far from blessed sometimes (Comp. 2 Cor. 11:24-26; Heb. 11:36, 37), yet even when they are cursed, they are blessed (Matt. 5:10-12).

Why not read this Psalm again and take note of how we should act when the enemy attacks!

2212 Jordan Lane S.W.  
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# The Poet's Page

## INFLUENCE

Influence like a light  
Shines forth with all its might,  
Reflecting to all the world - we care,  
Lending a helping hand  
Willing to understand  
Whatever the task or need.

Words of Kindness, a smile we can give;  
The world will know the way in which  
we live.

We are read like a book  
By those who know us best  
When they take a good hard look  
Can I stand the test?

When the world looks at me -  
Exactly what will it see?  
One read by all as loyal and true  
Standing for the right in all that I do.

Am I like a candle?  
Flickering very low  
Or a lamp shining brightly  
Giving off a warm glow.

Is there beauty all around?  
In places I am found  
Oh for this beauty I fervently pray  
The beauty of Jesus shining from me  
each day.

--Thelma Sherrill  
Old Hickory, TN

## A LITTLE REMEDY

I've found a little remedy  
To ease the life we live  
And make each day a happier one,  
It is the word FORGIVE,

So when at night you seek your bed,  
'Ere your eyelids close  
Lay all your problems, doubts, and acts,  
Before the one who knows. .

And wait the verdict of the one,  
Who knows just why you live,  
And hear the blessed words of peace.  
"Forgive, as I forgive."

--Eula Coe  
Russellville, KY

## THE LETTER

About the place where now I live  
There is so much to tell.  
It is so calm and peaceful here.  
God reigns supreme, and all is well.

I am with loved ones and with friends  
who settled here sometime ago,  
And of the joys I with them share  
I'm sure you will be glad to know.

We have no racial problems here,  
No one is lonely or alone,  
And how I wish you could see  
The stately mansion that I own.

There is no sickness, grief or death  
To mar the beauty of this place,  
And light that's brighter than the sun  
Shines from the Blessed Master's face.

So do not grieve for me, my dears,  
But rather when you kneel to pray  
Thank God for my arrival home,  
Where free from pain I am today.

Keep Christmas and the birthdays, too,  
That to us all were very dear,  
With love to keep your memories green,  
As I shall always keep them here.

The time has come for me to close,  
And there isn't much more I can say,  
Except don't think of me as gone;  
I'm only just a prayer away.

--Lura Haynie  
Nashville, TN

## CIVILIZATION

An unlearned man, with knife of stone  
Carved images from wood and bone,  
And hanging them from ledge and limb  
Occasionally would worship them.  
The world looked on in great surprise  
And called this man uncivilized.

A learned man, with arduous toil,  
Dug golden nuggets from the soil.  
And from this ore, dug from a pit  
He fashioned coin, and worshipped it.  
The same world somehow rationalized  
The learned man was civilized!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## PLAIN AND SIMPLE

To say it plain and simple  
So there will be no doubt,  
"Jesus died to bear our sins,  
That's what it's all about!"

No one will enter Heaven  
And see Eternal Day,  
Free of pain, and death and tears;  
Except they go His way.

He set a good example,  
Taught men what they should say--  
All must hear, believe, repent,  
Confess, wash sins away.

And then though ills beset us,  
We'll have no fear to die--  
The questions we can't answer,  
Our Christ will make reply.

--Duane D. Huntley  
Athens, AL

## ENTER IN

I watched the sun this morning as it  
rose to start the day,  
And I knew that God had planned it  
so that man might find his way.  
The sun's relentless onslaught of a  
disappearing night,  
Revealed, through works of nature,  
all God's majesty and might.

Now some are wont to discount  
what God's beacon doth reveal,  
And continue works of darkness,  
little effort to conceal.  
Oh, I hope that you're not partial  
to their works of knavery,  
For gain thus ill-begotten, is the  
Devil's victory.

Life is so short to squander, and  
I'm sure you must agree,  
Your deeds, by far, are better, if they  
serve humanity.

And God is pleased to honor, with a  
home that's free from sin.  
Yes, wouldn't it be great to hear,  
"Good servant, enter in!"

--Duane D. Huntley  
Athens, AL

# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

**"My parents are not very religious, but I started attending services with one of my school friends. I was recently converted and baptized into Christ. My parents plan special trips and family gatherings for Sundays and then demand that I go with them. I feel my place is with the church. Should I miss the services of the church and be with my family in order to keep peace at home?"**

**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15



No! God specifically commands the meeting of the saints (Heb. 10:25). I would talk to my parents about the Sunday outings and see if they could be changed to another day. I would explain to them that my place is with the Lord and that I should seek the kingdom of God first, (Matt. 6:33).

I could try other ways to be able to go, such as getting a ride to church.

Of course, if your parents force you, there is no way you can get out of it. But just remember the words of Christ. *"Whosoever loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me"* (Matt. 10:37). Try to always make it your goal to meet with the saints.

**Troy Reece**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14



The first thing you need to do is talk with your parents. Explain that

Christ comes first in your life. Try to get them to plan such activities on Saturdays or whenever else you have time. If they won't agree, tell them you won't participate in the activities.

You could talk to them and try to get them to go to church with you. If they say no you can get a ride.

God commands us to gather with the saints (Heb. 10:25). We either serve the Lord or reject him and we need to stand up for what we believe.

When Paul said, *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord,"* he did not mean to obey them if their command would be in violation of something God wanted in your life. I believe this situation would fall in that class. God wants you to love and obey your parents, but not to the point of forsaking the assembly.

**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 13



In Ephesians it says to honour your mother and father, but sometimes it gets to a point where you have to turn from your parents and turn to the Lord.

I would sit down with them and tell them about my problem. I would say that it is more important to me to attend church services than to go to family gatherings, and that is what I would rather do. I would also ask them if they would like to go to church with me on Sunday mornings and then from there go on our trips. If they wouldn't let me go to church, I would respect their wishes and try to continue faithfully in the Lord by: 1) praying without ceasing; 2) studying the bible daily; 3) attending church services as often as I am able, perhaps Sunday and Wednesday nights. I would still love and respect my parents and always love the Lord.

**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 17



One thought which a Christian must always keep firmly in mind is that God is first. He must be placed foremost in everything. In this situation the Bible would teach that, in order to put God first, one should attend church rather than the social activities. Not that one should do so to disrupt the family, however, it is necessary to place God in His rightful position.

Therefore, the solution here is to go to your parents and state that God is now first in your life. If they (your parents) wish to have you attend the family gatherings they will have to schedule them in a manner that will not conflict with services.

They may react favorably or unfavorably. Yet, no matter what their reaction will be, it is our duty to place God first and there will always be faithful Christians to support and help you.

**Michelle McClelland**  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 17



The best thing to do is talk to your parents about it. Tell them how much the Lord means to you. Try and show them how much God can do for them. Maybe you can convince them to allow you to go to church where ever you're visiting. If not, then you'd better try and stay home.

God says to *"obey your parents in the Lord for this is right!"* That doesn't include when obeying is going against God's laws though.

Hopefully you can bring your parents to the Lord and you won't have these problems, but for now stay with God. God and one man make an army. He won't tempt you or try you past that which you are able to handle.

# Evil Companionships

by Larry Houchen

**Robin Underwood**  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14



Well, that is definitely a problem. I think we have to look and see what the Bible has to say on this matter. In the Bible it says not to forsake the assembly of the saints (Heb. 10:25). In Matthew 6:33, it says "seek ye first the kingdom of God." Therefore, we have to put God first so we can have the hope of salvation.

In Luke 18:28-30, Peter tells Jesus they had left their homes to follow him. Christ said to him that there was no one who had left his family and home that shall not receive many times more in this life and eternal life.

The word Christian means Christ-like so we have to decide what Christ would have done. I think it is clear to us that Christ would have chose to serve God.

**Gretchen Manco**  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 14



Did you try to sit down with your parents and discuss the problem with them? They may be more understanding than you think. Since they are not very religious, they may just not understand how important it is to you. It is very important that you keep the doors of communication open. Many parents have eventually been won to the Lord because of the dedication and commitment of one of their own children. If you will stand up for what is right, you may be able to see them converted to Christ, too.

The Lord said if we love Mother or Father more than we love him, we really don't deserve him. Being a new convert, we must show our parents that we have turned our lives over to Jesus and plan on doing only what He would want us to do.

The apostle Paul said, "Do not be deceived: Bad company corrupts good morals" (1 Corinthians 15:33). In the fifth chapter of the same book, Paul admonished the Corinthians to withdraw their association from an immoral member. The reason given was "that a little leavens the whole lump of dough" (5:6). Aside from the Bible's warnings of evil companions, human experience ought to teach one the danger of bad associations. How often in lamenting one's moral deterioration has a person said that "so and so" fell into the wrong crowd?"

Peer pressure is such a strong influence on lives. Often it can be beneficial if there is pressure on one to do what he ought to be doing. However, if the pressure is a negative influence, there is a strong temptation to even the strong in the faith and the weak will most likely yield to the temptation. Moses wrote, "You shall not follow a multitude in doing evil. . ." (Exodus 23:2). The teenage years and the early twenties is a time in life when peer pressure can have its most influence. It should behoove each parent, then, to actively encourage his/her children to associate with Christians and others who live by high moral standards. One practical way of implementing such encouragement is by commenting positively in the presence of one's children the good qualities of their friends; "My, but Greg is such an honest young man," or, "We really appreciate the fact that Mike does not use foul language." All too often parents' comments about their children's friends, though positive, are in regard to an outward appearance--"Shirley is such a beautiful young lady," etc. A beautiful young lady can have an ugly character and vice versa.

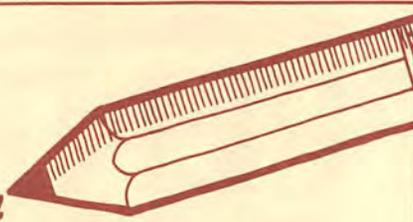
Christians can also help with the young people's associations by providing opportunities for the associating with other Christians. Sometimes we never think about having a young people's party until we ourselves have teenagers. Then, sometimes, when our once teenagers

grow older and have their own families, we cease providing opportunities for our young people to have good associations. Brethren, the need is always there to provide wholesome activities for our children as well as for others'.

The problem of evil associations is not just a young people's problem. Many Christians in the work force are working side by side with those of low morals or at least lower than the Christians'. Based on an eight-hour, five-day-a-week job, nearly one-quarter of one's live in the work force could theoretically be with bad associations. (Perhaps you are blessed with a favorable working environment). One may not associate socially with his fellow employees, but he may still be in bad company. If one is at the crossroads selecting a new job or changing jobs, he would do well to remember the words of the wise man, "Do not enter the path of the wicked, and do not proceed in the way of evil men" (Proverbs 4:14). If the job he is contemplating is not conducive to a wholesome environment, if undue pressure will be put upon him to do what he knows he ought not to do, such a job is not worth losing his soul -- no job is. If one is now working in an unwholesome environment or in one which leaves much to be desired, then he needs the association with other Christians as often as he can get it. (This, of course, is a strong argument for attending as many worship services as one possibly can).

The Psalmist wrote, "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers" (Psalms 1:1). The wise man said, "For as he thinks within himself, so he is" (Proverbs 23:7). Since one's thinking is heavily influenced by outside sources (environment, etc.), he should surround himself with those folks who will edify him rather than destroy Him.

## Short and to the Point



### The Wisdom of a Skunk

We often accuse the skunk of being an uncommonly stupid creature, but this is hardly the case. In fact there is one sense in which he may be smarter than his human skeptics. The lowly skunk has devised an ingenious way to rid himself of fleas. First, he takes a mouthful of grass and then slowly wades into a stream until his muzzle is barely visible. At such a time the grass gives him the appearance of having a large bushy mustache. As the animal submerges, the fleas busily move upward to get out of the water, until the dry stalks protruding from his mouth are black with hundreds of the tiny insects. Our black and white friend then opens his mouth, letting the grass and his unwelcome guests float harmlessly downstream. He rids himself of these itch-producing pests by placing them in an unfavorable environment.

Are we wiser than the skunk? Our sins are far more serious than a few fleas. Fleas may produce an itch within the skin but sin causes a serious sickness within the soul. For the skunk, the infestation of fleas may be physically irritating for a time; for man, the cancer of sin is spiritually fatal. Ezekiel wrote, *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezekiel 18:20). Similarly, Paul warns, *"The wages of sin is death"* (Romans 6:23). And again, James says, *"Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death"* (James 1:15). So serious and dangerous is sin that Christ gave up his heavenly home, came down to a sin sick world, and shed his blood that we from sin might be redeemed. (Philippians 2:5-10; Ephesians 1:7; Revelations 1:5).

Knowing that sin enslaves, we ought to desire freedom from sin. (John 8:32-36; Romans 6:16-18). If we were truly wise, we would hate our sins and desire freedom from them as much as, and even more than, the skunk

wants to rid himself of pesky fleas. We ought to hate sin with all our being and stay as far away from it as possible.

We are wiser than the skunk, aren't we?

--Dalton Key  
Box 563  
Liberal, KS 67901

### What Has Happened To "The World"?

Jesus said, "The field is the world" and again he said, "Go into all the world" (Mt. 13:38 and Mk. 16:15). Outside of North America, how many American preachers are living and working in foreign fields, among those who oppose church support of human institutions, etc.? Of course, I may not know of all of them, but I fear there may be very few more than a dozen. What a pity!

With hundreds of faithful preachers available and with great sums of money lying in church treasuries, why should there be so few in foreign fields? I certainly don't know all the answers, but too many preachers are devoting their time, it seems, to disputing, wrangling and otherwise causing troubles-followed by a trail of broken fellowship and divided churches. And too many congregations may be "looking inward" instead of out upon the whole world-continually looking toward more and more "things" for which to spend the Lord's money right there at home.

Everywhere I go I plead that we, "do a better job at home so that we can do a bigger job around the world." But most brethren seem to hear what I say on almost every other issue but turn a deaf ear when I speak of world evangelism. Sometimes I weep about this, but that doesn't do any good either! What do *you* do-and what does the church where you worship do about it? Perhaps the problem may be with

"local preachers." Does the preacher where you worship very frequently speak of the needs, the opportunities and the responsibilities regarding world evangelism?

--Leslie Diestelkamp  
1730 W. Galena Blvd. #102 W  
Aurora, IL 60506

### What To Expect. . .

In any circumstance of life, one feels more comfortable when aware of the events that shall take place. Therefore, as you are invited to attend our gospel meeting, we would like to make you comfortable by informing you what to expect when you attend the services.

#### We will sing. . .

We will lift our voices in praise to the Lord with congregational singing: *"Speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord"* (Eph. 5:19). There will be no musical accompaniment. For such, we have no scriptural authority.

#### We will pray. . .

*"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Eph. 5:20). Someone will be asked to lead the congregation in prayer. You will not be asked to offer prayer against your wishes. You will be asked to stand for prayer, if you find it convenient to do so.

#### We will study. . .

A qualified evangelist will be on hand to present a scriptural lesson from God's work. He will not attempt to teach the doctrines or creeds of men, but only the soul-saving gospel. *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation. . ."* (Rom. 1:16). You are invited to bring your Bibles and follow along with the scriptures. Bring pencil and paper and take notes - then compare the lesson with the word of God. Only *"the truth will make you free"* (John 8:32).

#### We will NOT collect money. . .

There will be NO nightly collections. This is not the way the Lord's church is to raise funds. At the close of the Sunday morning service, the weekly offering will be taken up. (I Cor. 16:2).

--Roger Hillis  
Route 4  
Olney, IL 61450

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **ATHEIST TV PROGRAM BEGUN IN OHIO**

Frank Zindler, a former college professor who operates a "Dial-an-Atheist" service here, has begun broadcasting the American Atheist Television Forum on four cable systems. His programs, which are carried on Columbus public access channels, deal with such topics as creationism, church-state separation, school prayer, and the Moral Majority.

The first few programs have been supplied by the American Atheists organization headed by Madelyn Murray O'Hair. When Zindler produces his own shows he hopes to interview preachers and creationists.

Zindler, who once studied for the Lutheran ministry, says he expects some hostile reactions from fundamentalist Christian groups, though he doesn't think any cable network operators will lose their licenses because of it.

Jerry Murray, the general manager of Warner Amex Qube cable service in Columbus, said he didn't hear about the new series until it appeared in the press. He said he didn't expect any public reaction. "We have everything from CBN to the Playboy Channel," he said.

## **DIVORCES IN GERMANY UP 120 PERCENT IN 20 YEARS**

The German people's inability to love, to share and to solve conflicts is almost as frightening as that nation's high unemployment rate according to a German psychotherapist and marriage counselor, Reinhold Ruthe.

Speaking at the recent National Evangelical Convention, he claimed that by the end of this decade approximately 30 percent of all children will be emotionally disturbed. The reason for this disturbance is that "these children do not learn the basic rules for fellowship and love, sharing

and forgiveness.

Ruthe pointed out that in West Germany over 100,000 couples are divorced every year. Many people no longer regard marriage and families as orders set up by God, he said.

## **BLACK PREACHER ATTACKS SO-CALLED BLACK LEADERS**

Henry Mitchell, a black preacher of Chicago, IL, says that "It is high time for the so-called Black leaders to stop misguiding the black people, by creating the image that the white man is to blame for all of the poor conditions that exist in black communities across America." He claims that their condition is no better than it was 30 years ago in spite of "the so-called Civil Rights Movement" which, he says, only benefited the leaders, who encouraged the rioting and burning of that era. In fact, he points out that the black leadership generally disassociates itself from the blacks. "I live in the Lawndale area of Chicago, which is 99% black," he writes. "We don't have one lawyer that lives in the community. I can count the teachers on my ten fingers and still have fingers left." He accuses Jesse Jackson of supporting the Communist cause and being an enemy of the American people.

## **CATHOLIC BISHOP BANS CHURCH WEDDINGS FOR UNMARRIED COUPLES WHO LIVE TOGETHER**

The Roman Catholic archbishop of St. Cloud, Minnesota, this week issued a ban on church weddings for couples who live together before marriage.

The "Rev." George Spelz issued his directive in a pastoral letter to the 150,000 Roman Catholics in his diocese. His new policy directs priests to question couples who come to them for marriage, and find out if they are living together. Those who do live

together will be told to live separately until they are married.

This policy by Spelz, which forbids unmarried people from living together is the first of its kind in Minnesota. "I don't know of any other way of making it clear that the church has not changed its moral teaching on premarital sex," he said.

Rev. Roger Vossberg, one of the priests who helped prepare the new directive, said that of 200 couples who had come to him seeking an annulment of their marriage 99 percent admitted that they had engaged in premarital sex.

"Sex before marriage is poor preparation because it does not give the people the chance to deepen love, talk through differences and face other possible problems in a non-sexual manner," concluded Spelz. "The use of sex outside of marriage can shorten the full, personal exchange of two people."

## **MORE TEENS TODAY BELIEVE IN ASTROLOGY THAN FIVE YEARS AGO**

Today some 55 percent of teens interviewed in a Gallup poll indicated that they believe in astrology, compared with only 40 percent in 1978. Overall, eight out of every 10 teens indicate that they believe in at least one of eight supernatural phenomena listed in the survey.

Six of every 10 teens believe in extra sensory perception (ESP). This marks a decrease from 1978, when 67 percent said they believe in ESP.

Astrology was in third place in the 1984 list. More young teens (59 percent) and young women (58 percent) believe in astrology than the 55 percent of teens as a whole.

Following these three phenomena there is a considerable drop; in 1984 28 percent of all teens believe in clairvoyance, 24 percent in Bigfoot (the

Abominable Snowman), 22 percent in witchcraft, and 20 percent in ghosts.

Among those who attend church regularly, 76 percent say they believe in angels, compared to 61 percent of those who are not regular church attendants. This is the only instance in the survey where churchgoers show a greater tendency than others to believe in the supernatural.

### **HOME FOR UNWED MOTHERS REJECTS GOVERNOR'S GIFT OF \$1,500**

The leaders of a home for unmarried mothers rejected a gift of \$1,500 from New York's Governor Mario Cuomo because they disapprove of his acceptance of legalized abortion.

Eugene Keane and Marita Paul of the Nazareth Life Center said that the acceptance of the governor's gift would imply that they were not in accord with the Roman Catholic church's edict banning abortion. They said their action was a matter of principle, and that they did not mean to be rude or ungrateful.

### **OLD LETTER FROM JOSEPH SMITH MAY SHED NEW LIGHT ON FOUNDING OF MORMONISM**

A letter from the first Mormon to Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, may shed new light on the founding of that religion.

In the letter from Martin Harris, which is being kept in a bank vault in Salt Lake City, the writer says that Smith found golden plates carrying the message from God with the help of a "seer stone," or a kind of magic looking glass. The letter also states that at first Smith was kept from getting to the plates by an "old spirit" which had been transfigured from a white salamander.

The most common explanation of how Joseph Smith got the plates is that an angel told him where to find them and that he translated them with the help of seer stones.

When the existence of the "white salamander letter" became known among Mormon historians last year, Mormon church officials refused to comment on the letter or to say if it is authentic. Protestants critical of Mormonism have said that this letter is an indication that the Book of Mormon is not of divine origin.

The letter, dated Oct. 23, 1830, was purchased by Salt Lake City

businessman Steve F. Christensen, who is also a bishop of the Mormon church. He announced its existence last March, and said it would not be made public until its authenticity had been verified. Christensen expects to write a book on early Mormon history, and said this letter got him started on the project.

### **ISRAELI RESEARCH SCIENTISTS SEEK TO FIND SECRETS OF ANCIENT GRAIN STORAGE USED BY JOSEPH**

Research scientists in Israel are trying to find out how Joseph was able to preserve grain for seven years in the hot climate of Egypt. So far they haven't met with too much success, according to the Jerusalem Post.

Researchers at the Volcan Center in Rishon Lezion are experimenting with temporary silos for the same reason that Joseph built them; extra storage during the good years will prepare for the bad ones to follow. When there is a bumper crop today, very often there is not enough storage available to hold the entire harvest.

Joseph's feat of preserving grain for seven years is considered almost impossible today. Problems caused by micro-organisms, pests and rodents that attack storage places often result in the loss of a crop.

Scientists believe that Joseph used a method still utilized by the Bedouins today; they dig deep holes in the ground and fill them with grain. This method has some drawbacks however, it is difficult to fill and empty such holes, and they can be susceptible to rodent attacks.

To overcome these problems, Israeli agriculture researchers are now using a large silo made of heavy metal mesh covered with heavy plastic sheets. Each silo will hold 560 tons of grain and be ventilated with cool air at night and hot air by day. Scientists plan to store wheat in the silo for a three year test.

### **MONTANA AP REPORTER REMOVED FROM POST BECAUSE OF ALLEGED RELIGIOUS BIAS**

Garry Moes, the Associated Press reporter covering the government beat for the state of Montana, was demoted to a desk job last week, shortly after a newspaper, the *Montana Christian*, described him as a "beacon in a national media outlet that is obviously agnostic and atheistic."

In the Montana Christian article Moes told of his experiences as a reporter for a national news service. He explained that while assigned to the Salt Lake City bureau of AP he had numerous clashes with the officials of the Mormon church during his probes of their activities. In one instance he wrote that the Book of Abraham, one of the Mormon scriptures, was a fraud. Another time he wrote about homosexual activities at Brigham Young University.

Moes had also been censured by the AP bureau chief and ordered not to write anything about abortion during a two year period. This came about, he said, when his wife was observed standing in the crowd during an anti-abortion rally. On the same day, his father, a minister and chaplain of the Montana House of Representatives, delivered a prayer at a pro-life rally. Fellow newsmen observed this and complained of his assignment to cover the event.

Moes' attorney, Douglas Alexander, stated that the Associated Press was in violation of a Montana state law which outlaws discrimination based on religion. Alexander said he had contacted a civil rights group about the matter and would take it to court if necessary.

Hugh Van Swearingen, the Helena, Montana, AP bureau chief, would not make any comment on whether Moes would be permanently removed from the beat or if other action would be taken.

In the *Lewistown News Argus*, another Montana journalist, Lauren D'Arcy Simpson, wrote: "a good reporter is able to put aside his bias to write an objective story about a controversial issue. But Moes' 'Christian' bias may make him a better reporter than his employers realize, for he said he uses his Christian principles to search for truth."

### **FALWELL REFUSES LARGE GIFT**

Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority and featured speaker on the Old Time Gospel Hour headquarters at Lynchburg, VA, has purchased the house where he has lived for the past four years. The home had been given to The Gospel Hour broadcast in 1979 by a donor who stipulated that it go to Falwell and his family. Falwell reportedly paid the ministry \$160,000 for the house because he felt it was not appropriate for ministers to accept large gifts.

# FIELD REPORTS

**Clint Springer, Rt. 11-Box 243C, Tyler, TX 75709**

After five good years with the Union Road congregation in Lufkin, Texas, Dolores and I are now living on property we own near Tyler, Texas. For the past couple of months I have been doing fill-in preaching and running a little antique store, but expect to eventually work full time again with one of the churches nearby. We turned down several good offers in order to live in this area on our place, as Dolores also had a job opportunity that looked good. Later this year or early in 1985 I intend to revive my Tape Service, and again have sermon tapes and debates for sale. I would be interested in hearing from preachers who are willing to supply tapes for reproduction. I will hold a gospel meeting in Ranger, Texas, next spring, but have extra time if any other congregation needs a meeting.

**Gary Martin, Projensdorfer Str. 70, D-2300 Kiel, West Germany**

Some have asked how long Glenn Jones and I plan to work together in Kiel. Until the work here really gets on a solid basis, where native Germans are able to do more teaching and are thoroughly grounded in the faith, Glenn and I see the value as well as the wisdom in continuing to work together. The mutual encouragement and edification in the past has been of extreme importance in our efforts to keep pushing forward in the work and not letting ourselves get slowed down by discouragements. We are, however, looking forward to the time when our work here will be superfluous, that is, when two preachers in the same congregation are more a hindrance to growth than an asset. This can happen when members begin to depend too much on the preachers and not get out and work enough themselves. When we see this happening, one of us will move so that the native members are forced to pick up more and more of their own work.

**Jon Quinn, 2616 Mackin Rd., Flint, MI 48504**

The church at Flint has asked Ronald Killebrew to come and work with us and he has agreed to come as soon as he can raise the needed support. There are many good reasons to ask Ron to come our way: First, Ron is black and we are painfully aware of the scarcity of faithful black preachers. Also, our own contacts through "Dial A Bible Moment" are about 60% black (of the five filmstrip studies in progress presently, three are with blacks and all have begun through our taped phone message). Other doors of opportunity are also opening in the black community; one of our members has even been invited to speak at a denominational church.

Ron wants to quit his secular job and go into full time preaching. I believe that his time here would be a time of growth and development for him as a preacher while at the same time the church here would be helped by his efforts. Upon meeting Ron and his family, I have every confidence that such an arrangement would be

beneficial.

A little more about the church at Flint: When my family and I decided to move here almost two years ago the church numbered twelve members. We now have twenty-seven. The number of additions includes nine baptisms, 4 to repent and place membership with us and five to simply place membership. Of those, seven came from institutional backgrounds. We have had to withdraw from some and have had some move away, and we are about to lose one of our most mature, hardworking families who are moving. After they move we will have very few left who have been Christians for longer than three years. With mainly new converts and all the opportunities in our city (in addition to the filmstrips, we are setting up about twenty correspondence courses each month as well as several face-to-face studies), we simply could use Ron's help. When he comes, he'll be the seventh faithful full time preacher in our state - that is not very many. Brethren, please give brother Killebrew your consideration. Thank you.

**Ronald E. Killebrew, 4475 North Hollywood, Memphis, TN 38127**

I have been preaching the gospel for two years. I have a faithful wife and three children. My family and I, after much prayer and thought, have decided to move and work with the church in Flint, Michigan. The opportunities in Flint are many.

The church in Flint has a very active program in teaching the gospel. John Quinn, the local preacher, has generally been well received by the blacks that he has studied with, and there are three new black members among the church there. However, it has been awkward at times at trying to win the blacks' confidence while presenting the gospel to people of a different cultural background. Fortunately, the love of Christ has removed all such feelings from among the members who live as one in Him.

The church has asked me to move and work with Jon, a faithful white brother, because of the great response in the black community. I feel that the local church would be helped through my efforts. My family is ready to move to Flint and begin working. However, we will need \$2300/mo. in support to live comfortably. The church at Flint has agreed to help with \$150/mo. of this amount.

I am ready to work hard to help the church become self-supporting as soon as possible and am asking for your assistance with my support or with my moving expenses. If you have any questions about the work or about me, please contact the following: Jon Quinn (313) 234-1818; or Tim Stevens (313) 653-3716.

**Keith Pruitt, 530 Monroe Ave., East Alton, IL 62024**

There is no doubt in this scribes mind that this month has broken every record at East Alton. Consider the following. We ended last month with a record 90 present. . . and the Lord blessed us with eight responses. And add to that the great

singing we've had lately, and this congregation is really on fire for Christ. What's more is that there are many more prospects.

In recent days, talk has increased as to trying to secure new facilities for the congregation. We hope to have more to report on this in the months to come.

We are to begin publication this month of another bulletin called *The Evangelist*. The purpose of this work will be to take simple gospel messages to those in this neighborhood. Pray for the work.

**Jim Venturino, 10256 Duffield Rd., Montrose, MI 48457**

With the aid of brethren Art Adams, Rick Leggin, and Ted Lovell, the Lord's church at Montrose, Michigan proved that door-to-door work can still be very profitable in today's society. These brethren came from Indiana the first week of October to help conduct a religious survey of the Montrose area. During this week the four of us knocked on 438 doors. Of that number 200 were not at home and another 57 refused to participate in the survey. From the remaining 181 however we found a very receptive and encouraging response. During the week we conducted 13 home studies, had 37 people request further studies, 6 enroll in Bible Correspondence Courses and 12 request literature on a variety of subjects. Most of the home studies requested were either a lesson on where the different churches originated or the Jewell Miller filmstrips. I think one of the big factors in our success was the fact that we conducted the survey in a fairly informal way. We dressed casually and approached each house with nothing more than a clipboard in our hands. This approach seemed to quickly break through the defensive attitude most people had toward someone coming to "teach" them the Bible. We also stressed that our goal was to simply help people become better Bible students. As a result we did not try to pressure people into being baptized, but rather began leading them to a conviction of their lost condition. Four or five of the above number are very close to the point of asking "What prevents me from being baptized"? The rest of our prospects range from very good to questionable, but the success of this effort has indeed brought glory to God and demonstrated the power of His Word. The church here is small (25) but united and strong and looking expectantly toward the future.

**Edward O. Bragwell, Jr., P.O. Box 1521, Anniston, AL 36202**

There will be a public discussion in Anniston, Alabama, on January 14, 15, 17, and 18, 1985. The discussion will be held in the building of the church of Christ that meets on the corner of E Street and S. Quintard Avenue in Anniston. Sessions will begin at 7:00 P.M. each night.

Those participating in the discussion will be Roger Jackson and myself. I am the preacher at the Golden Springs Church of Christ and Roger Jackson preaches for the Betta-View Hills Church of Christ. The propositions that have been signed for discussion will deal with the orphan home question on the first two nights and the question of limited benevolence on the last two nights.

I hope that many can come and hear these things discussed. If you need any further information, feel free to contact me either by mail or by phone. My phone number is (205) 236-3158.

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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

November 1984

Number 11

## GOD WANTS OUR BEST!

by David McClister

**Q**uality is an important subject when we speak about serving and pleasing God. God realizes that the quantity of service each individual is capable of delivering varies greatly from person to person. The person with less resources or talent in some field of spiritual service is not penalized by God for not delivering the same quantity of service as someone else. God desires **quality** service. Quantity is a consideration only if it is lacking due to a deficiency on our part in not giving the quality of service of which we are capable.

The parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30) provides an interesting study on the subjects of quality and quantity as they relate to pleasing God. The parable teaches, among other things, lessons concerning the importance and value of high-quality service, our responsibility to produce it, and knowing where our personal limitations lie.

### SECOND BEST IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Consider the three servants of the parable, and compare them with each other. The servant entrusted with five talents lived up to the master's appraisal of his ability, and he produced five more talents. The same was true of the servant who was entrusted with two talents. These two men each produced the best quality of

work of which they were capable, although the quantities of work done differed. The master knew their capabilities and only expected out of them as much as they were able to do. Also, these two servants were richly rewarded for the good work they had done.

The one-talent servant was of a different breed. The master knew that he was not capable of producing the same quantity of work as the other men, so he charged him accordingly to his more limited ability. He was in no way penalized or shamed for this. In reality, he was given the same responsibility proportionally as had been given to the other servants. Thus when the master returned the one-talent servant was severely and terribly punished, not because he did not produce the same quantity of work as the other servants, **but because he had failed to do anything of any quality.** He had used his talent only to fill a hole he had dug in the earth, when he was capable of using it to produce another talent. The one-talent servant had done some work, but he was punished because he had not rendered quality service to the master.

Now the basic difference between the one-talent servant and the other servants was that he was willing to settle for second-best in his work. He figured that if he could not (only by his

fear) produce another talent, then at least he could safely keep the one he had. That was not the best he could do, but it was the second-best. Yet his master was not content to accept second-rate work! The other servants had done their best according to their abilities, and so they were rewarded. The one-talent servant, however, learned -- the hard way -- that second best was not good enough for the master.

So how about us? God knows that we each have different abilities, and we are never given a responsibility we cannot handle (1 Cor. 10:13; 1 Jn. 5:3). What God desires of each of us is that we do our very best work for him, putting out the highest quality of service of which we are capable. Furthermore, God is very displeased when we offer second-rate service to him, as when we neglect opportunities to teach the lost, fail to give as we truly have been prospered, or disregard visiting the sick. You see, the ability to stand still for a long time is not called progress by God. We must do more than simply retain our talents; we must be productive with them. Only then is God delighted in us.

There is a very positive lesson here. God desires that we each live up to our potential. Too many people are too pessimistic about their ability to serve God, and too easily settle for second-

best saying "I could never do that: I can't lead singing or prayer, I can't speak very well, I have trouble talking with other people about a subject as personal as religion, etc." But God would not have told them to do it if it were impossible for them! We will never be **really** productive for God until we begin to approach the fulfillment of our potential. What we need is the right attitude, one which is always willing to take new opportunities for growth and which is not hindered by defeatism. I believe that there is a tremendous amount of work that could be done for the Lord in a very short time if more Christians would just unlock their self-imposed restraints and work up to their potential. The one-talent man of the parable could not do all that the other servants could do, but he still could have done something!

#### QUALITY IS MEASURED BY ABILITY, NOT POSITION

While it is certainly true that God wants us to perform up to our potential, it can be a very disastrous thing when one tries to perform **past** it. It is possible to try to do too much, to bite off more than one can chew. We may fail by not doing enough, but we can also fail by trying to be somebody we are not.

This may have been part of the one-talent servant's problem. He said to his master, "*Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst now sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter*" (Matt. 25:24). Perhaps this servant was trying to compare himself to the other servants who had more ability. Maybe he reasoned that if he could not do as much as the others, he should not try at all. Whatever his reasoning, he obviously overrated his master's expectations of him and figured that he could never do well.

Some Christians have this problem. They try hard to do service for which they are not prepared or equipped, and the results can be disastrous. The new-born Christians should not attempt, for example, to engage a Pentecostal preacher in a discussion of the Holy Spirit with the purpose of converting him. That would be a task for someone with greater knowledge and even some special abilities in presenting argumentation. Trying to work above one's ability often does more harm than good.

What each one of us needs to do is honestly examine ourselves to see if we are one-, two-, or five-talent servants. Five-talent servants should recognize the great responsibility placed upon them and accept it with a spirit of humbleness. I have a great admiration for the five-talent servants; their ability is inspiring and instructive. Two-talent servants need to realize that they are not five-talent servants. They need to realize their limitations and not try to match the five-talent servants. Instead they should be content with their abilities, still strive to fulfill their potential, and realize above all that there is a great amount of good work they are capable of. No one need apologize for being a two-talent servant! The one-talent servants must especially realize that they are not useless in the Lord's service. They may not have some of the abilities of the other servants, but so what? There are still some things that they are capable of doing quite well. There is absolutely no need for feelings of inferiority, for God demands of **all** his servants that they give the highest quality of work of which they are capable, and this is best done when each servant finds his place and occupies it.

Many fights and divisions in the past have been caused simply because a one- or two-talent servant refused to accept his position and became jealous of his five-talent brother. Some fights have been due to the five-talent servant trying to pass as a one- or two-talent servant. If we would all humbly accept our positions, and allow others to fulfill their positions (even when it means admitting that they have more ability than we), then we could all be productive for the Lord instead of wasting precious time and energy devouring one another. There are times when it is best to step into second place and let others do what they do best, instead of creating an atmosphere of competition.

Each of us must do our best according to our abilities. It does not matter that some are more capable than others, for all will be judged individually. But we are required to work together, and that will take accepting each other's merits and faults, and our own.

## THE SECRET OF INVOLVEMENT

by Ken Green

Brother Guthrie Dean has very perceptibly pointed out that "people who are personally involved in helping the poor, or visiting the sick, or doing personal work seldom ever 'quit the church'. Those who 'cool off' and quit are generally people who want the limelight, won't cooperate and would like for the whole church to run after them."

I suggest that members do a little testing. The next time a member of the church complains about others not visiting him when he was sick try to ascertain just how involved this member has been in visiting the sick. The next time a member complains about members not doing enough to lend comfort when he was bereaved, recall the occasions upon which this member offered consolation and aid when others were bereaved.

The next time a member of the body criticizes the unfriendliness of the group, observe the efforts (or absence of such) of that person to warmly greet people without respect of persons (Jas. 2:1-9) and get to know them better.

It all reminds me of the baseball coach who declared, "We have the greatest all-round player that the league has seen. He believes in getting a hit every time at bat, never makes an error on the field, and plays every position without a flaw. If we could just get him to lay down his beer and hot dog, come out of the stands and help us, we'd really have it made!"

Those who are involved in building up the cause are not found murmuring on the sidelines or screaming from the bleachers.

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## TOTAL COMMITMENT

Commitment involves living for Christ 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year and all the years of your life. You are either a Christian every minute, at all circumstances, or you are not a faithful child of God. As F. F. Bruce said, "Doctrines are never taught in the Bible simply that they may be known; they are taught in order that they may be translated into practice" (*The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, pg. 225).

In order to be a disciple of Jesus, one must be willing to submit to the requirements which He has dictated. The Hebrew writer said Jesus learned "obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9). There is no way for one to claim to be a Christian without giving his whole life in obedience to and for Christ. Paul said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). If a Christian is to be a living sacrifice then he has got to be totally committed to Christ.

But what is this thing called commitment? I'm convinced that it is probably one of the strongest words in the English language. The dictionary defines it to mean "the act of making a pledge, promise, or engagement." It involves a total surrender to one idea or person. And in religion, this total surrender is stronger than any other commitment we could possibly make.

James Coffman, in his commentary, said: "The believer indeed presents his body for baptism, this being an important element in the new birth itself, and thus accomplishes a sacrifice which requires the volition and assent of the whole person; but the presenting does not end at the baptistry. There is also the formal and faithful

presentation of the body in public corporate worship, regularly throughout the Christian's probation. Now, as in Job's day, 'when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord' (Job 1:6), the sons of God still present themselves before the Lord in the Lord's Day assemblies of the church (and other times also), a duty which Christians are categorically commanded not to neglect (Heb. 10:25). Nor can it end there. The body is the chief instrument of the person and is to be presented to God through service to humanity, by preaching, teaching, ministering, and helping men, and not merely for some space of time, but throughout life" (*Commentary on Romans*, pg. 426).

David Lipscomb and J. W. Shepherd wrote: "They were to restrain and hold in abeyance all the sensual appetites and lusts, and consecrate all their faculties and ability to the service of God. ...Let God have full possession, not only of your spirit and soul, but of your physical body. Yield every member up to him. ...in everything, from this moment forever, we are not only to get our own will, but we are to desire not to get it--to will and be controlled by another wholly and unceasingly. This is, indeed, dying to this world. The sanctified body might be called a 'living sacrifice,' because its natural life is not consumed like an ordinary sacrifice, but is presented to God 'alive from the dead.' There is in every sacrifice a death, and in this sacrifice a death unto sin, out of which arises a new life of righteousness unto God" (*A Commentary on the New Testament Epistles--Romans*, pgs. 217-218).

Albert Barnes, writing on this same subject, said: "The word used here commonly denotes the action of bringing and presenting an animal or other sacrifice before an altar. It implies that the action was a free and voluntary offering. Religion is free; and the act of devoting ourselves to God is one of the most free that we ever perform. The bodies of animals were offered in sacrifice. The apostle specifies their bodies particularly in reference to that fact. Still the entire animal was devoted; and Paul evidently meant here the same as to say, present YOURSELVES, your entire person, to the service of God (1 Cor. 6:16; Jas. 3:6). ...A sacrifice is an offering made to God as an atonement for sin; or any offering made to him and his service as an expression of thanksgiving or homage. It implies that he who offers it presents it *entirely*, releases all claim or right to it, and leaves it to be disposed of for the honour of God. ...This is the offering which the apostle entreats the Romans to make: to devote themselves to God, as if they had no longer any claim to themselves; to be disposed of by him; to suffer and bear all that he might appoint; and to promote his honour in any way which he might command. This is the nature of true religion" (*Notes on the New Testament--Romans*, pgs. 269-270).

# Today

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."  
— Proverbs 27:1

Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37). Partial service is no service; it is either all or none. Jesus tried to emphasize this point to a great multitude following Him, when He turned and said unto them: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest happily, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Lk. 14:26-33).

The first requirement laid down by our Lord to those who surrounded His feet then and to those of us grappling through life today is that we must "hate" father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, and, yes, even our own lives. Many people read this, place the same definition on the word as we use today, and walk away grumbling, "He has asked too much. I can't do it." The word "hate" in Christ's day meant to love less. The parallel passage in Matthew 19:37 says, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." All of this is simply saying we cannot allow our love for our earthly family or ourselves to come before our Lord.

The second requirement to being His disciple was found in verse 27: "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple." What does it mean to bear one's cross? *The Pulpit Commentary* offers this explanation: "Now, as Christ carried his cross to die upon, so must we take our lives in our hands, and be ready at any moment to sacrifice them for Jesus. He was crucified for us: are we ready to be crucified for him, or to die in any other way he wishes? It is the martyr-spirit which Christ here insists upon. He is surely worthy of such self-sacrifice." Commitment to Jesus must cost us everything. We must determine, regardless of any tribulations, that we will be true to our Lord. Jesus had this kind of determination. When He knew it was His time to die, the

record says, "He stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem" (Lk. 9:51). He knew the horrors that He was about to face. The thoughts of the mocking, railing, slappings, scourging, and the inhuman torture of the cross did not slow Him down. The path was lonely and disheartening, but He never looked back.

Thirdly, Jesus said I must forsake all that I have in order to be His disciple (Lk. 14:33). When a certain man came to Jesus and asked the greatest question in all the world ("What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"), Christ responded by saying, "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor" (Mk. 10:21). The next verse says: "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions" (Mk. 10:22). Friends, let us not allow our possessions to possess us. The apostle Paul said, "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (1 Tim. 6:7). The perfect and upright Job, one who feared God, said, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither" (Job 1:21). As someone said, "We cannot take it with us, but we can send it on ahead (Matt. 6:19-21)."

A man of conviction is one that refuses to compromise truth and right. The world's pressure is to conform. The convenient thing to do would be to give in, to go along with the crowd. But CONVICTION says, "I will do right regardless of what people around me say or do!"

John said, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18). A person can talk about love all he wants to, but until he **shows** love it is of no use. And love involves commitment! We have no choice but to give up our lives to Him and show Him to others by our lives. This is all a part of commitment.

One of Satan's greatest victories is to get us to laugh at, wink at, or tolerate sin. A man of commitment for Christ will **love** truth and **hate** evil (see Heb. 1:9; Amos 5:15; Psa. 97:10). How about you? Are you willing to speak out against dancing, gambling, immodesty, pornography, drugs, drinking, etc.? Every Christian has to be committed. And he has to be **totally** committed to the Lord and willing to give up his whole life.

The price we pay is indeed great, but the reward that awaits us is far superior to what it costs us now. Jesus said, "Every one that hath left houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or children, or lands, for my names's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life" (Matt. 19:29).

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## “THE BIBLE SAYS”

### Short Radio Manuscripts

by Clint Springer

#### We Have A New Testament

The Bible says in Hebrews 8:15, “*And for this cause he is the mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*”

It will be our express purpose in this short program, to prove beyond the least doubt, that so far as law and authority is concerned, we have a New Testament - we are not under the Old Testament. Let it be fully understood that we believe the whole Bible, both the old and the New, to be the complete, inspired Word of God. However, the law of Moses was given to the Jews, the Israelites, and to them alone. Furthermore, it can easily be shown from the New Testament, that all prophecies in the Old that pointed to the coming of Christ and the establishment of the kingdom have been fulfilled. The writings of the Old Testament are valuable and necessary today for history, examples and for our learning, but do not represent a standard of authority. Romans 15:4 says that “*whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning. . . .*” But as our text from Hebrews 9:15 indicates, we now have a New Testament which is given us in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Many passages could be cited to show that the Old Testament law was given only to the Jews. Exodus 19 and 20, telling about events leading up to the giving of the ten commandments, as well as the giving of those commands, indicate that “the house of Jacob”, or “the children of Israel” were the ones to whom Moses was to deliver the law. Of course it should be remembered, the ultimate result in God’s plan was that all people on earth would be blessed - but the law of Moses was given to Israel until Christ could come. Paul said in Galatians 3:24-25: “*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith, But after*

*that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster.*” A big problem with many is that they read into the text the word “only” every time it speaks of faith, but James chapter two denies that we are saved by faith only, so Paul is talking about the gospel plan or system, called faith, in and through which we are presently saved.

It is significant to notice that Christ stated that He came to “*fulfill*” the law. (Matt. 5:17,18) There is no question but that He accomplished that task and has indeed given us a New Testament. He did not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill. Our text, Hebrews 9:15, says that after the death of Christ we were given a New Testament.

Now, since we have a New Testament it should be of interest to us to know how we should receive and apply the teaching of Jesus. In Col. 3:17 we are told that “*whatsoever we do in word or in deed, we are to do in the name of christ.*” To do something in the name of Christ is to do that thing by His authority. Therefore, everything we practice, whether it pertains to telling people what to do to be saved, or what we should do in worship to God on Sunday morning, must be by the authority of Christ. That is, we must be able to give book, chapter and verse for everything we believe and teach.

It is also important to know, since we have a New Testament, that we need to be members of the New Testament church. Actually, in Bible language, salvation and church membership are the same, for the Ephesian elders were told to “*feed the church of God which He has purchased with His own blood*” (Acts 20:28).

#### About The Bible

The Bible says, “*The grass withereth, the flower faideth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever*” (Isaiah 40:8). The Bible, properly speaking, is not one book but a collec-

tion of many books by many authors throughout many ages; It is the Word of God containing history, laws, prophecies, songs, poetry, proverbs, epistles, and complete instruction for mankind throughout all ages. It is imperative that the student of the Bible be equipped with enough knowledge to “*rightly divide the word of truth,*” and that’s one of the reasons we urge people to attend Bible classes and read their Bibles daily.

The Bible, in its entirety and as we have it today, contains both the Old and New Testament. The first translation into the English language was made many years ago, but many still use the King James version of the Scriptures. The important thing, however, is the desire to know the truth, regardless of what translation is our favorite. Many scholars believe that the American Standard is the most reliable, being also better suited to our way of speaking today.

As the inspired Book of God, the Bible has done more for mankind than any other book in existence. In conjunction with that which is expressly stated within its own context, we believe the Bible to be an inspired work because of the following reasons: It is the only book that tells us about God and His Son, Jesus Christ; because we can see the fulfillment of prophecy; and because the Bible has had an influence for good on mankind, more than any other book, thing or person (excepting Christ, of course). The teachings of the Bible have lifted mankind to a moral standing that would fall with a heathen crash should it be taken away.

Paul, in his epistle to Timothy, said, “*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth*” (II Timothy 2:15) Other versions render this last phrase as “*handling aright.*” In order, then, to rightly divide or handle aright God’s Holy Word, we must understand the difference between the Old and the New Testaments. Although their very name indicates that distinction, too many do not know the proper relation that exists between the two, and which portion is law unto us today. The Old Testament was not directed to the Gentiles, so far as authority and law is concerned. Rather, the promise made to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through his seed (Gen. 12:1-3)

was expedited by the giving of the law of Moses unto the Israelites. The specific promise that all of us would be blessed, however, was not consummated until the coming of Jesus Christ and the giving of the New Testament. The Old Testament is necessary to help us understand the New, and to give us examples of obedience, but our law presently is in the New Testament, the

gospel of Jesus Christ. Galatians chapter three clearly sets this forth. Verses 26 through 29 of that chapter says, "*You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus*" . . . that is, if we have been baptized into Him.

We must learn to develop the kind of love and respect we ought to have for the Bible, and the need to establish New Testament authority for

everything we believe and practice today. In the meantime, I invite you to dust your Bible off and start reading from it every day. That's the only way God talks to us presently, and our starting text says "*the word of our God shall stand for ever.*"

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# The Mark Of The True Church Mentioned Specifically By Jesus

by Gardner Hall

How many times have you heard a sermon entitled, "Marks of the One True Church" with the main points arranged something like this:

- \* Established A.D. 33
- \* Uses only Christ's name
- \* Partakes Lord's Supper each Sunday
- \* No Instrumental music
- \* One collection on Sundays, etcetera

It shakes me up to realize that in a sermon with such a title, I have never heard the one "MARK" which Jesus gave most specifically and directly during his ministry on earth: "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another*" (John 13:35).

Have you ever heard this "mark" mentioned in a sermon entitled, "Marks of the One True Church"? Though Jesus is speaking specifically to the apostles in this passage, His language indicates clearly that He intends this to be applied to all who want to be marked as His disciples. Why is this mark, love for one another, almost always omitted in lists of "Marks of the True Church"? Could it be that we omit this obvious mark because sometimes in such sermons we might be trying to attract people to a group of men, and we are subconsciously aware that the group of men that we are trying to use as an attraction is not particularly known for its love?

## DISCOMFORTING THOUGHTS

The church in Jerusalem was easily recognized by the love and concern shown by its members toward one

another. Notice the terms of closeness in Acts 4:32: "*And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and soul: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.*" Other passages use terms such as "*together*", "*gladness and singleness of heart*", and "*tenderly affectioned one to another*" to describe the relationship of Christians to each other (Acts 2:43-47, Romans 12:10).

I thank God for being able to know local churches today that could be described with these same words. However, when I am honest with myself I realize that many local churches that I have known about, while containing many good individual members, as groups could not be described with the words quoted in the above paragraph because there is not strong love and affection among the members. The uncomfortable truth is that because of shyness or self-consciousness we are often not "close" to each other but simply "check in" with each other at services and then go our separate ways, never truly sharing our love for God, our everyday problems and our homes and goods.

In some local churches the problem goes beyond shyness and aloofness to open suspicion, hostility, "power plays," jealousies and strife. Yet such churches will continue to proclaim in their communities that they are the "true disciples," making themselves the laughingstock of all who know the

"mark" given by Jesus in John 13:35.  
**AVOIDING EXTREMES AND FACING THE FACTS**

Some who have recognized this problem among brethren have reacted by going to extremes. They seem to say in effect, "love is the only thing that matters," and imply that insisting on having authority for our practices is ugly "legalism" and somehow inherently incompatible with love.

The fact that these with lax attitudes are always talking about love and peace in sugar coated terms like hippies of the 60's, while denying the need for authority, makes some Christians uneasy about talking about love. These Christians seem to feel that talking "too much" about love and tender affections would somehow be succumbing to the extremists. I'm afraid that such uneasiness indicates that some have accepted the erroneous concept of the loose thinkers that emphasizing love for the brethren and an insistence on Bible authority are incompatible. May we never give quarter to that unbiblical concept! Love for God demands a humble demand for Bible authority, but it also demands "tender affections" among brethren.

The glaring fact is that if we fail the challenge of being known for our love and are unable to fundamentally change old power struggles and aloofness in some local churches we will see a shocking lack of growth in these churches. Sects that emphasize strong bonds and affections among members such as Pentecostals, Mormons, and Jehovah's Witnesses will grow in spite of their false doctrines while those who demand a "thus sayeth the Lord" will founder for failing on the one mark most specifically given by Jesus: "*By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another.*"

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## I SAMUEL

by Keith Storment

**T**he book of I Samuel is the first of a fourfold history of the kings of Israel--the other three being 2 Samuel and the books of Kings. Originally, Samuel and Kings were each one book, the two eventually being divided into four. First called 1, 2, 3, and 4 Kings, they later came to be known by the titles we use today. In this survey we want to consider the background and contents of the book, then see what applications it contains for us today.

### BACKGROUND

The book of I Samuel is a book of transitions; beginnings and endings. Here we find Samuel, last of the judges (Acts 13:20) and the first of the prophetic office (Acts 3:24). (Although there were many who had the gift of prophecy before Samuel--most notably Moses--Deut. 18:15--it is with Samuel that we find the beginnings of a line of prophets running to the close of the Old Testament.) I Samuel tells of the first real king of Israel, Saul, and also of the anointing of David who would always serve as a type of the Messianic reign. And it was a time of change for the Israelites as well: From a loosely knit federation of tribes under the leadership of judges to a united kingdom under one leader--the beginning of the nation of Israel.

During this time (approximately 1100 to 1000 B.C.) the primary foe of Israel was the Philistines. This fierce race of warriors invaded Canaan some time before the Israelites arrived and were already well-entrenched in Joshua's day (Joshua 13:2). They began to expand into Israelite territory in the time of the judges (Judges 13) and Samson was too much of a moral weakling to effect deliverance for God's people. Much of I Samuel revolves around the efforts of Samuel and Saul to free the people from the Philistine yoke. It remained for David in his kingship to completely subdue the Philistines (2 Sam. 8:1).

The major theme of I Samuel

(carried on and concluded in 2 Samuel) seems to be the uniting of the tribes into a nation under a single leader--a king. This was in accord with God's purposes. As early as Ex. 19:6 He had announced His intention that Israel be a 'kingdom'. In Deut. 17:14-20 the Lord gave laws to regulate the kings that would rule them. The problem, as developed in I Samuel, is not the people's desire for a king, but their **reason** for wanting a king. So along with the monarchy we find the beginning of the prophetic office. These men of God were designed to keep both the people and their king on the path of spiritual development that God desired.

### CONTENTS

As we survey the book of I Samuel we find that it readily divides into three sections centering around four men;

1. Eli and Samuel--chap. 1-8.
2. Samuel and Saul--chap. 9-15.
3. Saul and David--chap. 16-32.

It is under these three headings that we hope to summarize the contents of this most interesting book.

#### 1. Eli and Samuel--chap. 1-8.

Chap. 1-3 records the birth, early childhood, and prophetic call of Samuel. This finds us at a low point in Israel's history. Politically, the nation is oppressed by the Philistines with no effective judge to deliver. The religious and moral state of the time is clearly indicated in 2:12-17: even the priests were corrupt, necessitating the judgement of God (vss. 27-36). Into such a climate Samuel was born to Hannah, a previously barren wife of Elkanah (1:1, 2, 20). As soon as he was weaned, Samuel was given to the service of the Lord in accord with a vow his mother had made (1:11, 24-28, 2:11). Growing up in the house of the Lord, Samuel was called one night to deliver the Lord's message (3:2-14). Eventually ". . . all Israel. . . knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of

the Lord" (3:20).

In chap. 4-7, the Philistine storm hanging over Israel breaks. In the initial battle 4,000 Israelites are slain. In another indication of the spiritual state of the times, the ark of the covenant is brought into camp with the idea that **it** (not the Lord) will deliver them (4:3-4). The move proves futile; the Lord's judgement is against Israel. 30,000 people fall and the ark is captured by the Philistines (4:10-11). Also, the Bible elsewhere implies (Jer. 7:12), and archeological evidence confirms, that Shiloh, then the center of worship, was destroyed. 7:2 well describes the mood: ". . . all Israel lamented after the Lord."

In chap. 7, we find Samuel filling all three of his divinely given offices. As **prophet** he calls on the people to repent (vs. 3) with greater success than many who followed him as prophet. As **priest** he gathers Israel together and intercedes for them with prayer and sacrifice (vs. 5-9). Then, as **judge**, he leads them to victory over the Philistines ending, for a time, their threat to Israel (vss. 10-14).

But as Samuel grew older, he appointed his wicked sons as assistant judges. Their evil gave the people an excuse to ask for a king (8:1-5). As we noted in the background, it apparently was not the asking for a king that constituted their sin but the rejection of God that prompted the request (vs. 7). They wanted a king to judge them, not God (vs. 5). They wanted a king to lead them in battle, not God (vs. 20). Worst of all, they wanted to be like the nations around them (vss. 5, 20) not the holy and special "*kingdom of priests*" God intended (Ex. 19:6). But to teach them their folly God consented to give them a king "*like the nations*" (8:19-22).

So the stage was set for Samuel to step down as leader. Though he would continue as prophet and priest for a number of years, there would no longer be judges in Israel. That place of leadership would now be filled by a

king--Saul of Benjamin (9:1-2).

### 2. Samuel and Saul--chap. 9-15.

Chap. 9-11 record for us the ascension of Saul to the throne of Israel. In these chapters is evidence of the noble side of Saul: his early humility (10:22; 11:7, 13); and his forgiving nature (11:12-13). Saul wasn't always bad or even all bad in his later years. He was a good man who failed to conquer the temptations of high office. History notes many such.

His rise to the kingship took three stages. First was his private anointing by Samuel (9:1-10:16). Secondly, he is presented to the people by Samuel as king (10:17-26) but some refuse to accept him (vs. 27). Third, an old foe of Israel, the Ammonites, threaten and when Saul's hastily raised army puts them to flight all Israel accepts him as king (11:1-15). Chapter 12 then gives us the "Farewell Address" of Samuel as he steps down as judge.

Chap. 13-15 tell of Saul's fall from divine favour. In chapter 13, Saul grows weary of waiting for Samuel to arrive to offer sacrifice, so the king dares to perform the act himself (vss. 8-9). For this rash act, Samuel informs Saul that his kingdom will not endure, it will not be his to pass on to his son. Rather, the Lord would appoint as ruler 'a man after His own heart' (vss. 13-14). The remainder of chapters 13 and 14 primarily recount Saul's first Philistine war. It brought him no glory (his son, Jonathan, was the hero) and gave no clear victory to either side (14:46).

In chapter 15 Saul is commissioned of God to utterly destroy the Amalekites (vss. 1-3). Saul, however, spares the king of Amalek and all the good stuff (vs. 9) because he fears the people more than God (vs. 24). This time Samuel informs him that Saul, personally, has been rejected as king because he has rejected the word of the Lord (vss. 26-28).

Saul will continue to wear the crown and title of king for some time after this but it will be a hollow title lacking divine approval. Soon the Spirit of the Lord that came on him shortly after his anointing (10:10) will depart; leaving him to the influence of an evil spirit (16:14). The time has come for the king 'after God's own heart' to enter the picture.

### 3. Saul and David--chap. 16-32.

"Saul was the king after Israel's own heart (1 Sm. 12:13), David the

king after God's own heart not because of his greater piety of goodness, but because, despite his failings and sins, he fully embodied the Divine idea of Israel's kingdom, and for this reason also he and his kingdom were the types of our Lord Jesus Christ and His kingdom." (Edersheim--O.T. Bible History---vol. 4, pg. 63)

The first half of chapter 16 tells of the anointing of David as king (16:1-13), Samuel's first inclination to anoint another Saul is stopped by the Lord: this king must meet God's qualifications, not man's (vss. 6-7). But though anointed, David is not yet ready to take the throne. Many years will be needed to prepare David for the kingship and to prepare the people to accept him. The remainder of 1 Samuel is the story of that preparation.

16:14-18:5 tells of David's providential attachment to the court of Saul; an ideal spot to begin his preparation. Intertwined with this is the history of Saul's second Philistine war. It brought him no more glory than the first, this time David is the hero.

So chapter 18 follows the development of two ideas: David's increasing favour with the people and Saul's increasing jealousy of David. More than once Saul seeks to take David's life. Increasing persecution by Saul forces David to flee for his life; first temporarily (chap. 19), then permanently (chapter 20).

Chap. 21-26 see Saul almost continuously hounding David who by this time is the leader of a band of outcasts (21:2). The presence of a prophet (22:5) and a priest (22:20-23) with David attest to the divine approval of David's position at this time. Meanwhile the continuing moral decline of Saul is evidenced by his massacre of Nob simply because one of its citizens helped David escape (22:11-19).

Although time and again God shows David His ability and willingness to protect, the future king finally desponds and commits a grave error, he seeks refuge among the Philistines, sworn enemies of God's people (27:1). Thus he fails to be in Israel at her time of need, the Israelites suffer a tremendous defeat, David barely misses having to fight his own people, and an awful civil war ensues (2 Sm. 2).

For the Philistines gather for their third and final war with Saul and David with his men are expected to

participate (28:1). Unable to receive counsel from the Lord, a desperate Saul resorts to a medium (28:6ff.) But the only answer given is that the long-decreed punishment (15:26-28) is about to take place: tomorrow Saul and his sons will be among the dead (28:17-19).

A brief interlude tells of David's escape from taking part in the coming battle and subsequent battle with the Amalekites (chap. 29, 30). Then chapter 31 takes us to the terrible battle on Mt. Gilboa. Israel is routed, Saul's sons are slain, and Saul himself is wounded. In a final fit of despair, Saul commits suicide. Truly, his third Philistine war brought him no glory either.

### APPLICATION

From the book of 1 Samuel, many lessons can be drawn. Among them:

1. From the people's request for a king we learn that a desirable end can be negated by the wrong motives.

2. From Saul's transgression in the matter of Amalek we learn just the opposite; the right motive cannot make a wrong thing right.

3. And from the selection of David, we can see that God's qualifications for service and man's are not always the same.

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# What Jesus Christ

# Has Done For Me

by Dudley Ross Spears

To write of what Jesus Christ has done for me is a delightful task. I suppose every human of rational mind and behavior enjoys the recipient of eminently desirable favors. And, to serious thinking people, there are no more desirable favors than those the Lord can and does bestow on us. As the Psalmist exulted, *"Come and hear, all you who fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul"* (Psa. 66:16).

It is equally a fearful task. To write of the things the Lord has done for me makes me aware of the things I should do for Him. To paraphrase a well known expression of the late John F. Kennedy, "I ask not what the Lord can do for me, but what I can do for Him." It is fearful to write of these things also because of my inadequacies. I am incompetent to tell all that the Lord has done. I might try and then express, "The half has not been told."

It is a dangerous task. There is a danger of exaggeration. One may find oneself attributing to the Lord things that come only from the field of fanciful imagination. Such should be avoided always. Personal testimonies are of no value. To avoid such things, I seek to follow these simple rules. I suggest them for your consideration.

(1) I can know what the Lord has done for me through what He reveals. If I read of things the Lord promises to do for me in His word, then I am assured that He will do what He promises.

(2) I know that what the Lord does for me. He will do for all. He makes no special cases. He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:35).

(3) I know that what the Lord does for me does not override my own will. If I refuse to let the Lord into my life, He makes no attempt to storm the bulwark of my own will.

(4) I know that what the Lord does for me is consistent with His love for me.

(5) I know that what the Lord does for me is good for me (James 4:17).

(6) I cannot always depend on my experiences, because, at the best, experience in this life can but be confirmatory--not documentary.

Here are some of the things I am convinced the Lord has done for me.

(1) **He has provided for me salvation from my sins.** He proclaimed that He came to seek and save the lost (Lk. 19:10). His seeking is constant. Through the shedding of His blood, He made remission of sins possible (Matt. 26:28). By the gospel of Christ being preached, He makes it possible for all who hear it to be saved (1 Cor. 1:21). He revealed a plain and simple gospel message that is to be believed and obeyed (Mark 16:15-16; Eph. 3:4). When I heard it and obeyed it, He saved me.

(2) **He provides for my guidance through life.** As the Psalmist once wrote, in a familiar passage, *"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want, He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters"* (Psa. 23:1-2). He sent the Holy Spirit upon select individuals to reveal a perfect way of living. He said to His apostles, *"Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth"* (John 16:13a). There has never been a more sure guide than the revelation which came through those apostles of Christ. I still must look to it as an infallible guide to help me along the way of life.

(3) **He provides for my cleansing as a Christian.** Through the apostle John He said, *"But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His son cleanses us from all sins"* (1 John 1:7). This is something the Lord continues to do for me, as I continue to walk in the light of His word and example. Continual cleansing by the blood is a great blessing enjoyed by all who walk in the light.

(4) **He provides me assurance in this life.** Again, through John, the Lord says, *"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming"* (1 John 2:28). To have this constant confidence, one must abide in Christ. Abiding in Him is being in Him and staying there. It does not mean that this is forfeited by a single act of sin. Johnny Stringer, made a very pointed and true comment

about this several years ago. He wrote on 1 John 1:7-2:2:

**"These verses show that even the one who walks in the light sins occasionally, so that he must be cleansed by the blood of Christ. The one who walks in the light, therefore, is not one who never commits an act of sin; rather, he is one whose general walk is in accordance with God's word, and who, when he does occasionally sin, renounces it, seeking God's pardon on God's terms so as to be cleansed."**

**"Since John's statement cannot mean that the one who abides in Christ never commits a single act of sin, it must mean that sinning is not his way of life. Greek scholars confirm this conclusion. They affirm that the verb used by John denotes habitual action, not a single act of sin" (Guardian of Truth, April 9, 1981, p. 226).**

This surely gives assurance to those who try to live a good life in Christ, but stumble from time to time. There could be very little assurance in a view of abiding in Christ that is fluxuating and vacillating with each minor infraction done through either weakness or ignorance. Such is not biblical teaching.

In addition to what the Lord provides for me, there are some promises He gives me. He promises me eternal life. John wrote, *"And this is the promise that He has promised us--eternal life"* (1 John 2:25). Some look at eternal life as a quality of life, enjoyed here and now. Others view it as life that waits beyond this present dispensation of time. There is a sense in which I now have eternal life. John the Baptist said of the matter, *"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life, and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him"* (John 3:36). I like the comment made by the very astute George Benedict Winer. He said:

**"The notion which John attached to *dzoe* not only admits, but almost requires, the Present (tense, DRS). And apart from this, the expression**

*echein dzoen* (has life, DRS) might very well be used of one who indeed is not yet in the enjoyment of eternal life, but who in the certainty of his hope already as it were possesses it" (A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament, by G.B. Winer, p. 266).

The Lord also protects me. Jesus compared Himself to a shepherd who guards His flock (John 10). He said, "I am the door of the sheep" (v. 7). In ancient times, a shepherd built a corral in which He kept His sheep at night, and left an opening in it. To assure protection to the sheep from wandering astray into danger or to prevent a ravenous beast from entering, the shepherd slept in this opening, and was, in that sense, "the door to the sheep." This cannot be taken literally, but it does indicate that if we leave the safety of Christ's protection, we do so when we wander astray.

Christ also intercedes for me. The Hebrew writer said, "Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He ever lives to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25). Among the things His intercession accomplishes is the mediation of my prayers to the Father in Heaven and the pleading of my case in the Father's presence. A thought worthy of some serious consideration is based on Paul's statement in Romans 8:33-34. Here Paul wrote: "Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us."

The thought this suggests is that the Lord Jesus stands as my intercessor to answer any false charges leveled against me before God. One is reminded of the experience of Job. In the 9th chapter, Job argues his own case. Job feels alone to plead his case and says, "Nor is there any mediator between us" (v. 33). However, when Satan's darts are hurled against me, I believe that the Lord will intercede for me to answer any false charge against me. Satan is our adversary (1 Pet. 5:8) and our accuser. Since Paul speaks of accusations against us in the presence of our Father in Heaven, it is not unlikely that he means to say that Christ is there to repel and false charge of condemnation. This is not to say

that Christ absorbs or ignores any valid accusation against us, but that we do not need to worry about each and every false accusation Satan might use to try and sway God's judgment of us. It is a thought worth more study.

As my intercessor, He represents me to the Father in Heaven. It is written, "For Christ has not entered the holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24). I emphasize the words "for us." Christ is indeed for us and if He is for us, what does it matter who is against us?

Christ is also my head. Paul wrote, "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ" (1 Cor. 11:3). In a very special sense, however, Christ is the head of those who are in His body, His church (Eph. 1:22-23). The head gives directions to members of the body, and normal functioning members obey the directives of the head. The analogy teaches me that I am wonderfully blessed by being under the direction of Christ. No wonder that Paul praised God because of the "spiritual blessings of Christ" (Eph. 1:3).

I expressed the caution that one might not be able to know or tell all of the things the Lord has done for him or her; however, these are some of the things that are important and basic. One could look at this from several points of view. As King, Christ governs me with absolute love and a perfect law. As my Lord, He rules my heart by His love and grace. As my Savior, He redeems me by His blood and keeps me free from sin as I turn from my wickedness. As my Prophet, He reveals God to me through the word (Heb. 1:1; Acts 3:22-23; 1 Pet. 1:4). As my High Priest, He represents me to the Father (Heb. 3:1; 4:14). As my King, He rules in my heart by my faith in Him (Col. 3:15; Eph. 3:17).

If there is any real point in my writing this and your reading it, it must be that what the Lord has done for one He will do for others. Also, if something has been said to those who have not surrendered heart and soul to Christ by way of encouragement, it is not a waste of time and paper. May God help us all to know, enjoy and exult in what the Lord has done for us.

## Soldiers Of The Cross, Arise!

by Allan Turner

We seem to spend a great deal of our time today trying to work up what no longer is present in many churches. Song leaders try to create a joy that the singers do not really feel. Preachers try to create an enthusiasm, a spirit of giving, a love for souls, a zeal for the work of God that does not exist. Often we arouse nothing more than a simulated interest that produces only play-actors, pretending what only a true love for God and His word can produce and maintain.

The story has been told of a battle where the flag got far ahead of the soldiers. An officer called back to his superior and asked, "Shall we bring the flag back to the regiment?" "No," came the reply, "make the regiment catch up with the flag!" The New Testament standard is far ahead of most of the church today.

I realize that the church consists of all kinds of people at various stages of development, but the standard must not be lowered to give the appearance that these have caught up. We must try with all our being to catch the standard that precedes us. It is only then that we can be pleasing to the captain of our salvation.

When Gideon's three hundred won their battle the rest who had been fearful and had not joined in the conflict fell in at last and shared the victory. Instead of concentrating on the majority who are fearful and not ready for spiritual warfare, we must accommodate the minority who are ready. Then when battles begin to be won many of these laggards will change their minds and join us.

If all this sounds quite hard to you, the chances are great you are one of the many who seem to be making up a fearful majority in the church of Jesus Christ. The cowardice being exhibited by those who claim to be soldiers of the cross is nothing less than disgraceful. "But the fearful. . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8).

# Frustrations We Share In Preaching The Gospel

by Keith Clayton

God's word instructs us to share our mutual concerns, *"rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another"* (Rom. 12:15-16). Those who are active in the spreading of the gospel of the grace of God (as they should be) have plenty of mutual concerns to share and help one another bear. There will never be a lack of joys, sorrows or frustrations to tell to one another. Particularly, regarding the subject of this article, as we go about preaching Truth and exposing error Satan rebels and sees to it that we don't have an easy time of it. *"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution"* (2 Tim. 3:12).

If we back up a few verses in **2nd Timothy 3**, we see a whole host of troublesome attitudes and problem areas that will frustrate the efforts of the faithful in converting the lost from sin and to the Lord. **Verse five** tells us of those "religious" folks who claim to follow God, but who only, in reality, follow a powerless god. . .and imaginary deity. These folks could well be the denominationalists of our day who try to prejudice others against us by claiming to others about us, "their religion is too narrow. . .you can't do anything in their religion. . .no freedom to do the things you like." Their allure to others is, "you can do what you want to and be a member of our church." **Verse seven** tells us of the "intellectual" person who is always "studying," yet never allowing application of the Truth to come forth. Certainly, we can see it is frustrating to prove the doctrine of Christ from Scripture, only to hear, "well, I'll have to study that some more. . .how can all these others be wrong. . .if I believe that then I'll have to believe in some other things I don't like. . .that is hard to accept so I'll just have to keep studying" (when they really mean, they see the point is in the Bible, but they don't like it. . .otherwise known as "selective acceptance"). **Verse nine** tells us of those who will not grow in the Truth, that is, they remain spiritual babes (immature). The faithful end up

having to hold their bottle for them in an unending attempt to feed them the Truth that they might grow. The babe ultimately dies because of a lack of growth in the faith. **Verse thirteen** cues us in as to the battle we have with evil men who don't see themselves as evil, but godly. They will grow worse and worse in their self-deceit and, consequently, deluding others to follow their destructive, false ways. . .all the while affirming they follow God. In short, frustrations attack us from many directions and in diverse manners.

Generally, we think of this list of frustrational sources as originating with Satan. I believe this to be so. However, it does not follow that the launching pad for the trouble is always from without the body of Jesus Christ, the church of Christ. These frustrating attitudes and actions come from within and without the church of our Lord.

The frustrations that come our way from without the church are easier, for the most part, to pinpoint. This is not to say these attitudes are exclusive to the alien sinner. It is quite evident that some who have named the name of Christ are partakers of some of these problems. However, there are at least five easily spotted attitudes that frustrate our attempts to spread God's word: premium on worldly wisdom, flesh and blood family, human traditions, prejudice, disrespect for God's word (abuse of Scripture).

Recently, brother Jay Vrooman and I went to have a meeting with a new convert, her family and a Baptist preacher. A whole series of articles could be written about that encounter alone. But, this instance points out the insanity of relying on worldly wisdom. The family who called this meeting did not have a single open Bible from which to check out the discussion that was being carried on for their benefit. At one point, the mother of the new convert did make a reference to something "in the Bible" (actually, in the Biblical notes section in the back of the Bible, not the Scriptures themselves).

Just previous to that, the Baptist preacher chided us for our lack of "theological" training and disdain for "wisdom" (meaning his wisdom and the wisdom of theologians who want to get around passages of the Bible they don't want to obey). He referenced, not a Scripture, but a footnote! He was trying to prove that "wise" men don't believe baptism (immersion) is essential for the forgiveness of sins, making an argument on the Greek word in Acts 2:38 for "unto." Of course, it escaped his attention that NO BIBLE TRANSLATION has the words "because of" as the translation for this particular Greek word, "eis." People are not baptized because their sins are already forgiven, rather so their sins can be forgiven, which is consistent with the rest of Scripture (but inconsistent with humanly written footnotes). Now, the implication of this Baptist preacher was evident, "don't let these unlearned and untrained men lead you astray. You don't have to be baptized to be saved." The result? This family listened to worldly wisdom and not to God's word. Be consoled, however, our brethren of the first century had this happen to them also! When Jesus was not apprehended by a group of men sent for the purpose of arresting Him, a similar instance happened to the would be escort. When they returned to the religious leaders who sent them to bring Jesus back to them, the leaders rebuked them. The men exclaimed to the leaders, "never a man so spake" (as Jesus had to them). The arrogant verbal attack of the religious leaders is similar to that of the Baptist preacher. The leaders implied the ones who failed in bringing Jesus back were ignorant for having listened to Him and not the religious elite. *"Then the Pharisees answered them, 'Are you also deceived?' Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him"* (John 7:47-48)? The same thing happened to the apostles of Jesus. When Peter and John were performing miracles and teaching about Jesus, the religious

leaders forbid them to continue, for the apostles were "uneducated and untrained men" and were acting without authorization of the religious hierarchy of their day. They were asked, "by what power or by what name have you done this"? Then they were told, "speak to no man in this name" (Acts 4:7, 17). Be encouraged, however, in the Truth of God, "for since in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). We are ordained (sent) to preach the message of God's word, without the embellishment of worldly wisdom and human schemes. We will find some honest hearts who will bow in submission to God's word and reject the wisdom of the world, which has always been a source of frustration in preaching the gospel.

Satan will also use our physical family (flesh and blood) to frustrate our attempts at persuading folks to be obedient to the Truth. As with the case just mentioned, it was family who rebelled at the obedience to the gospel by their daughter. Of course, this daughter is fully grown and has children of her own and should have cut the apron strings long ago. She should never have allowed her mother to be an obstacle to obeying God's word. But, it happens, over and over again. To be forewarned is to be forearmed! Let us warn folks who are considering obedience to the gospel that there will be attempts to undo the fruit of their obedience to Truth. Jesus said it would come from our own flesh and blood family (that is, from those who don't love the Truth themselves), see Matthew 10:34-39. Warn our new babes in Jesus that we, their teachers, will be unjustly charged as "family wreckers, children stealers, etc. . ." The babes will be charged also with family disloyalty and the like. "Well, John, what will your father think. He has probably seen from his grave that you have joined up with that cult and rejected his religion. Do you believe he has gone to Hell?" Of course, these statements reflect on the lack of honesty on the part of the family member uttering them. The charges are not true and the family knows it, further, these false thoughts are expressed, generally, by those who have no real first-hand knowledge of

the situation (and they don't wish to have any either). These family members must be pleaded with, to be reasonable and make their judgments after objective study of the Truth, if possible. It is good to point out to these family members that their offspring is only following through with the good teaching they received as children: to love God, to be honest, to respect and obey Truth, etc. . Further, the parent needs to know the exact same opportunity exists for them to show their sincerity toward God and the revealed Word of God.

Then comes that old enemy and hater of Truth--tradition, namely, human tradition bound as a matter of religion, but actually being an obstacle to objective understanding of Scripture. "It's so different from what I am used to" is an infamous line frequently used in this situation. . . a fatal line that eventually damns eternally. Sometimes it comes out as, "I feel what I have done for thirty years has been all right, so I don't need to change now. . . I'm an ok person, besides it was good enough for my parents." The only observation that can be made for this problem is one that will get the person to realize they have been "used to" error and not Truth, this is why it seems so different. Their feelings need to be adjusted by the Truth, and they need to know that is what the problem is. This frustration can be easily overcome, if the one doing the frustrating will objectively step outside of himself and look at the matter in Truth.

**Prejudice** is a biggy! "You feel you are the only ones going to Heaven, what about all these other good people?" This can be real frustrating on the best of days. The problem is that jargon has replaced Truth as a basis for reasoning. There is not much we can do to overcome those whose minds are made up so solidly as not to desire God's Truth at all. But, we can keep the frustration and its effect from becoming bigger by not falling into the trap that prejudice tries to snare us in. The specific statement just quoted is a trap. The one speaking it wants to falsely portray you as willing to "play God." Don't fall for it! Simply speak the truth and reject any claim to superiority over other men. Remember, the big difference between the Christian and the non-Christian is forgiveness. Put the ball in their court,

"do you think you can be saved outside of God's plan," or "do you think every person is saved, in spite of clear Bible teaching to the contrary"? Help them see, somehow, their quarrel is with God and His word, not with you. We are simply the message bearer, not the author of the message. We have no right to change any of it. To change one word of God's message in the Scriptures would be to play God, which we have no right.

**Disrespect for God's word** (abuse of Scripture) is a common ploy Satan uses to frustrate our attempts to teach the Truth and have it received acceptably. Peter warned of this very thing in Second Peter 3:14-18, as he admonished Christians to be on guard against being "led away with the error of the wicked" (v. 17). He further exhorts that the one whose heart is not set on God would abuse the Scriptures and would "twist to their own destruction, as they also the rest of the Scriptures" (v. 16). Thus, the Bible has fallen on hard times and disrespect for its authority has increased. We can see, understandably, why some might discount the Bible's message because of what some have taught in the name of God (which really had nothing to do with God or His word): Jehovah's Witness doctrine of forbidding blood transfusions, Christian Science's avoidance of modern medicine, cultish doctrines concerning communal living, etc.. But, probably more problematic is the willingness to abuse Scriptures to the end that there is no condemnation for any doctrine men may dream up, no matter how false and without Scriptural justification. A famous line for this type of disrespect for God's word is, "the Bible says to 'Judge not'." Of course the text under consideration is Matthew 7:1, but the context is completely avoided! It is hypocritical judging that is under consideration in Matthew 7:1. Further, this type of statements reflects a willingness to ignore what the rest of the Bible says on the subject. Additional study of Scriptures relating to "judging" demonstrate that God's word is to be preached and used as a basis of our "righteous judgments" (John 7:24). The judgments we make are to be from God's word and not our personal opinions. Again, this frustration is overcome with the whole Truth. Don't let context be overlooked nor other Scriptures avoided or abused.

Thus far, I have primarily written about frustrations that present themselves from without the church of Jesus Christ (though, obviously, not exclusively from without). I would be negligent, indeed, were I to not warn of some areas of concern arising from Christians: **reluctance, personality distinction, euphemism**. These are those who have not circumcised the heart the way they should have, that they might have good spiritual eyesight. They have failed to "*crucify the old man*" (Romans 6:6) and throw away worldly perception as they seek to live according to God's word (see Romans 12:1-2; 2:28-29; Ephesians 4:17-24). This sort of failure prevents individual saints from growing spiritually, and as a further consequence, hinders the spiritual progress of newer babes in Christ as they observe the improper example of those who should know better but don't. In short, we need more circumcising of the heart that it might be more moldable by God's word.

A sister in Christ is heard to say, "you're pushing me"! A brother in the Lord is caught saying, "it's so different from what I am used to. I feel that once a week is enough time to give for worship, besides, where I came from no one made a big deal if we didn't come to every worship assembly possible." Both of these statements express the central problems concerning reluctance to obey God: lack of love for God, lack of faith in His word. These folks still want self to have first priority, not God. They want to be left alone while they offer minimal service to the Christ who died for them. Brethren, we need to freely admit that we sometimes "push" brethren in order that they might do right, thus be saved from wrath by repentance. The Lord is easy to please and, at the same time, hard to satisfy. That is, God is pleased at our efforts to serve Him, but He is not satisfied until we give full service to the King of kings. To this end, we might remind fellow saints we would rather be pulling with them in the same direction than pushing against them because they are headed in the wrong direction. However, we must make known in certain terms, when we need to "push" we will do it. "*Therefore, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men*" (2 Cor. 5:11). Make no apology for loving a Christian and caring for their

soul, to the extent you are willing to "*restore such a one*" (Galatians 6:1). Plead guilty every time we are charged with "pushing," and may there be many times we can be charged with pleading with a saint to do right, without hesitation. "*And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart*" (Gal. 6:9). Let us drive out of our hearts the attitude of **reluctance** to follow God in everything. . . as a firm basis for life. Let us remember that when we are walking by the revealed will of God there is no cause for hesitating in acting upon the Truth, either for the babe or the mature in Christ. Acting upon God's word is not like trying to walk on uncertain territory, rather it is solid, as building on the rock (Matt. 7:24-27).

A pet peeve of mine is this thought, as regards going to a brother in Christ who is in error, "you better not talk with him/her, you'll only make matters worse." This is a problem of respect of persons, alias, **personality distinction**. This hurts deeply, for one of the things we do in being faithful to God is show no partiality in admonishing brethren. God is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34), so neither should His children be. The child of God needs to learn, from day one as a Christian, Truth is Truth. . . no matter who speaks it! The sooner we get this principle across the sooner the church will cease to be frustrated by this sort of thinking. A Christian must, early on, learn to be easily entreated (James 3:17) and to avoid being a rockhead (Jer. 5:3). We cannot excuse ourselves from listening to the Truth because we don't like the way a brother/sister in the Lord might say something. All Christians must learn to esteem other saints higher than our own selves (Philippians 2:1-5) and grant that the other has our best in their heart. Of course, this does not excuse any Christian from being formed into the image of Jesus, even in realms of personality.

Some brethren frustrate spiritual progress with spiritual blindness, which surfaces and identifies itself with the use of euphemisms. We sometimes fail to see sin as ugly as it really is. We need to paint a terrible picture of sin, not laughing at it or calling it something else. We need to be as ugly in our terminology about sin as sin is in God's sight (remember, it did cause a

rather grotesque scene on Calvary some years ago). Let's not allow brethren to excuse themselves, by default, from an all out effort to live righteously in God's sight. Sin is not a "mistake" we make. It is sin, plain, old, ugly, soul-condemning, filthy sin which we need to recognize. . . yours and mine. It is all ugly. Let us correct our speech in this matter and perhaps our thinking will change also, "call Bible things by Bible names." Don't be guilty of poor spiritual eyesight, thus giving sin a higher place than it deserves. Be truthful and frank about sin, insisting that we and others use words and descriptions of sin that are consistent with the Biblical view of the horror of sin. God spoke to Jeremiah of old concern His attitude toward the forsaking of the Word done by the Jews. "*Therefore thus says the Lord: 'Ask now among the Gentiles, who has heard such things? The virgin of Israel has done a very horrible thing. . . My people have forgotten Me, they have burned incense to worthless idols. And they have caused themselves to stumble in their ways from the ancient paths'*" (Jer. 18:13, 15). Again, in Ezekiel, as God has pronounced punishment for sin, we see the attitude expressed at the consequence of sin--horror! "*Those who survive will escape and be on the mountains like doves of the valleys, all of them mourning, each for his iniquity. Every hand will be feeble, and every knee will be as weak as water. They will be girded with sackcloth; horror will cover them; shame will be on every face, Baldness on all their heads*" (7:16-18). If we can instill this attitude toward sin, erase the word "mistake" from our spiritual vocabulary, then perhaps we will alleviate part of the frustration that comes from abiding sins that are euphemized away as something else.

One last point to ponder is not a frustration, rather a promise. Through all frustrations, trials, tribulations and persecutions, Jesus is with His people. He will preserve, protect and defend us into eternity (Romans 8:31-39). We will not overcome, rather we shall overcome in Him! Jesus is with us to the end of the world if we be faithful to Him and His word. The Lord made this promise and He keeps it. God has always been with the faithful throughout the trials of faithful living in a sinful world. Consider Elijah, being dejected, and then God twice asking

him, "what are you doing here," as he was letting the frustrations of preaching cause him to draw back from the work. The clear implication was that God was on Elijah's side. Even though he was seemingly a minority of one and his troubles were considerable. Think of Jeremiah and the ungodly and hostile society he had to work with. No one, apparently, would listen to him (Jer. 6:10). Even before he begins his mission of preaching, the

ominous warning of trouble to come is present, but not without the attendant promise from God of divine fellowship, "they will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you" (Jer. 1:19). This promise to the faithful has not changed. The Lord was in the fire with Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego, to deliver them from the fire. Jesus is with us in our "fires" too (Matt. 28:18-20).

We must learn to not bow or bend to the frustrations of preaching the gospel of God. For in the fires and troubles and frustrations our fellowship with the Lord is the most intimate, for therein we receive the promise of assistance and the special blessing of tested growth in Him.

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## "What Must I Do To Be Saved?"

by Larry Hafley

There are numerous great questions in the Bible: "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" (Matt. 22:42). "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him?" (Psa. 8:4). "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mk. 8:36, 37). "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4:17).

These, and many others that could be cited, are sublime, profound queries, pregnant with eternal substance. However, no question is greater than our topic, "What must I do to be saved?"

### HOW WILL SOME MEN ANSWER?

Certain preachers think man can do nothing to effect his salvation. They believe God has decreed and declared, "from all eternity," the specific individuals who shall be saved and who shall be lost. Others say man can do nothing until the Holy Spirit personally and directly operates on the heart of the sinner, regenerates it, and gives him power to believe. Most people teach that all one must do to be saved is to "receive Christ into your heart as your personal Savior," or "simply reach out by faith and say a little prayer, 'Lord Jesus, I confess that I am a sinner. I now trust in you and confess you as my Savior.'" Perhaps you have heard these answers to our question, or something similar to them. Next, let us notice what some other men have said in response to the question, "What must I do to be saved?"

**Respondent Number One:** "Believe

on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31). This was a direct reply to our title question. It was spoken to a jailer in Philippi. He was told to believe. He was **not** told to "only believe," or "all you have to do is believe." But do we not agree that he was told to "believe on the Lord Jesus?" Certainly, we do. So far, so good.

**Respondent Number Two:** "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Remember, this is an answer to a question posed by those who have been convinced that Jesus is Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36, 37). They need not be told to believe, for they already believe, else they would not have been "pricked (cut, stuck) in their heart." They believe; so, they inquire of Peter and the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. . ." (Acts 2:37, 38).

We may not agree as before, but at least we know what the apostle Peter said in response to the question. I believe and teach what he said. Do you? Does your preacher?

**Respondent Number Three:** "And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16). Saul, who became the apostle Paul, asked, "What shall I do, Lord" (Acts 22:10)? God sent a man named Ananias who told him to be baptized as noted above. Saul believed on the Lord. This is seen by the fact that he

went into Damascus as the Lord told him to do. He evidently repented because he did not continue his murderous mission against the disciples. Thus, Ananias told this believing, penitent man to "be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord."

Again, we may not agree, but we know what the answer was. My answer to our title question is the same as the one Ananias gave. Is it yours? Is it what your preacher would say to a believer who asks, "What shall I do, Lord?"

Observe that the last three answers we have given are Bible answers. They are not "Church of Christ" answers. They are the answers given in the word of God.

### A FINAL PLEA

"But," you say, "I like the first answer. It is the only one I will accept; just believe on the Lord and be saved." If you do that, you exclude repentance and baptism, and you reject the word of God. Suppose I were to say, "I like the third answer. It is the only one I will accept; just be baptized and wash away thy sins." What would you say? How could you object? If you can take one answer and deny the others, why cannot I do the same? If I contend for baptism only, I deny the necessity of faith and repentance. Therefore, I must include Acts 16:31. Of course, one must believe on the Lord to be saved! So, we can both tell one to believe and be in harmony with the truth of the gospel.

Why, then, should either of us refuse the response that commands the believer to repent and be baptized "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38; 22:16)? I believe, teach and preach all three responses. Do you? Does your preacher?

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# The Book Worm



**PUBLISHERS:** Send all books for review to:  
**The Book Worm**  
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**SERMON OUTLINES FROM PROVERBS** by Charles R. Wood (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 88 pages, \$2.95.

We all agree that the Bible is a practical book that really relates to life, but the author of this little sermon outline book feels that Proverbs is the most practical book within the Bible. These outlines were prepared with living in mind and each sermon outline is designed to produce some tangible change in the living of the reader or the hearer.

This book contains 35 outlines, mainly expository messages designed to take the passage of Scripture and to draw out its message from the passage itself. In many instances the outline is based on the very words of the passage and the order in which they appear.

These outlines are short, readable, and useable. It doesn't contain a lot of denominational jargon. I really enjoyed reading them.

**IS BAPTISM ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION?** by Charles A. Holt (Holt Publications: Chattanooga, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 92 pages, \$2.95.

This book was not written for the scholar or the religious professional. It was written for the common man or woman on the street or in your neighborhood. This material was originally presented on TV in Chattanooga.

Holt's purpose is to set forth what God has spoken on the subject of baptism and try to show the difference between truth and error relative to this issue. I believe this book gets right to the Scripture and right to the heart of the issue.

The first section of the book deals with the work of John the immerser, Jesus' emphasis on the baptism of John, and a summary of John's baptism. The second section is a look at the baptism authorized by Jesus. The third section is a look at Acts and examples of conversion. Section four deals with baptism in the epistles.

This little book would be an excellent study for a church to use in a class or for one to give to a friend searching for Truth. It is short, simple, and to the point. It is not clouded with all of the arguments and Greek words that often confuse people.

**THE STORY OF THE BIBLE**, edited by Johnny Ramsey (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 95 pages, \$3.95.

The one book all men should know is God's book, the Bible! In days past, folks seemed to spend more time studying their Bibles and being able to give Bible answers to Bible questions. Our society is moving at such a fast pace that few take the time to do the Bible studying they should. Few seriously meditate day and night upon the sacred text (Psa. 1:1). Many go through life knowing very little about the Bible.

This book is small, but it is valuable. It gives a unique summary of all 66 books of the Bible. From Genesis to Revelation, the writers take us into many rich adventures of Bible study. You'll enjoy this easy-to-read book.

**CHRISTIANITY FOR THE TOUGH MINDED**, edited by John Warwick Montgomery, (Bethany House: Minneapolis, Minnesota), 1982, paperback, 296 pages, \$7.95.

This book was not written for everybody to read. It is deep, scholarly, and thought-provoking. These essays were written by young scholars convinced that Christianity is the only intellectually satisfying philosophy in the world today. This book will be enlightening to any honest American who chooses to challenge the claims of

Christ.

The writers of these essays know of what they speak. They were once the religiously undecided, troubled, or antagonistic scholars themselves. They are now convinced that the claims of Christianity are not only relevant but in fact true, and they write in an effort to show those who stand where they once stood that the contemporary objections to religion are vastly overrated.

Chapters are devoted to a look at Bertrand Russell, situation ethics, Buddhism, existential psychology, Martin Luther, LSD, agnosticism, and more.

The purpose behind this book is to show that the tough-minded can become tender-hearted without any loss of that intellectual sharpness which is, in fact, one of God's precious gifts.

**FIND YOURSELF, GIVE YOURSELF** by Dick Wulf (NavPress: Colorado Springs, Colorado), 1983, paperback, 215 pages, \$4.95.

This book, written by a counselor, enthusiastically encourages and helps you to overcome wrong views of yourself that can lead to depression, guilt, and persistent spiritual defeat. The author wants each reader to see himself as a wonderful expression of God's creativity. This book is designed to give you godly self-respect.

Part One contains four chapters and deals with the broad problem of low self-respect in the church and the basic solution--seeing yourself as a redeemed child of God and all that it means.

Part Two contains eight chapters and gives practical steps to take in building up self-respect: realizing your unique design, communicating daily with God, recognizing your God-given strengths, accepting your weaknesses, growing in righteousness, battling personal sins, and sincerely pursuing your spirit into your work that you might grow.

Wulf states that we can effectively

serve God only when we realize how He sees us and how He wants to use us. Only after we thus find ourselves in God can we truly give ourselves to others.

***BUILDING AN EVANGELISTIC CHURCH THROUGH TOTAL EVANGELISM*** edited by Clayton Pepper (Quality Publications: Abilene, Texas), 1983, paperback, 64 pages, \$1.95.

This book contains thirteen chapters written by eight different men. Emphasis is given to how churches can use different methods to reach different people. Pepper's first chapter is on "Building According To The Apostolic Pattern of Total Evangelism." He shows that four things were necessary to multiply: 1. They multiplied intent; 2. They multiplied opportunity; 3. They multiplied the time devoted to teaching the lost; and 4. They multiplied the number of people working to reach the lost. The book deals with how churches should use numerous programs (such as letter writing, telephone work, etc.) to become more evangelistic.

***THE APOSTLE PETER, HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS*** by W.H. Griffith Thomas (Kregel Publications: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, paperback, 304 pages, \$7.95.

This book is a look at Simon Peter, his life, character, and writings. The first section of the book (containing 30 chapters) deals with Peter's life and character. This section begins with his early associations, his early character, and his conversion. It looks at his great confession in Matthew 16, the choosing of the twelve, the transfiguration, and many other events that had a great bearing on Peter. The second section of the book (also containing 30 chapters) deals with the exposition of 1 and 2 Peter.

This was designed as a word-for-word or verse-by-verse commentary. It is light, easy reading. The large print makes it appealing as a devotional commentary.

***DIVERGENT PATHS OF THE RESTORATION*** by Steven L. Shields (Restoration Research: Bountiful, Utah), 1982, hardback, 282 pages, \$12.95.

The Mormon Church is one of the fastest growing religious groups in the

United States. Their many door-to-door missionaries would have you believe they are one of the most united religious groups in existence. This book destroys that false notion. Over 100 churches, organizations, and individuals are discussed in this fact-filled volume. Every church known to have existed since Joseph Smith's time--which based its beliefs on some part of his teachings--is presented in this excellent book. Several photographs, brief historical essays, and doctrinal summaries make this book one of the most significant history-related publications of this decade.

Shields, a fifth-generation Latter Day Saint, has been studying and researching church history in depth for the past ten years. He has written and published several books and magazine articles on a variety of subjects. He edits a magazine dedicated to examining and preserving little known facts about the Latter Day Saint movement.

This material was first published in 1975. Over the past several years, the content and presentation has been revised and completely rewritten to provide an up-to-date and invaluable reference tool for anyone wanting to know more about the Mormon Church. This volume is an absolute must for anyone trying to keep with the LDS growth, development, or division.

***WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT SUFFERING*** by Willie W. White (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1984, hardcover, 305 pages, \$13.50.

Suffering takes many forms: the infant having an asthma attack; the aged man sitting in the nursing home, forgotten and alone; the widowed mother who just received word that her son was killed in a plane crash; the heart-broken father who enters the police morgue to identify the body of his boy who was driving under the influence of liquor; the woman who is bending low over the hospital bed to say "good-bye" to the one who has been her faithful and loving companion for fifty years; the little girl who fell on her roller-skates and cut her knee; the preacher who watches a young couple end their home in divorce; the parents sitting in the waiting room at the hospital, as they wait to hear if their child made it through the surgery.

All of us have faced suffering in

some form at some time in our lives. How many times have we asked, "WHY?" This book is not intended as a profound treatise for the scholar, but as a common-sense answer for the common man. If we are ever going to understand suffering, it will not come from the hands of a scholar--it will have to come from the One that has the divine answer.

White spends fourteen chapters looking at different aspects of suffering. He then summarizes in chapter fifteen by showing that suffering is the common lot of men, it came as a result of sin, it is not a penalty for the sufferer's sins, it may be caused by the sins of others, etc. The author shows that Christians are not immune to suffering, that God cares when we suffer, God is with us in our suffering, and we ought to learn how to rejoice in spite of suffering.

This book was written by one who says he knows what it's like to suffer and to be lonely. It is written with a hand reaching out to those who are in need of understanding and companionship. It is a wonderful addition to the "What The Bible Says" series.

***SONGS FROM DEEP WATERS and RIVER SONGS*** by Jill and Stuart Briscoe (Thomas Nelson: Nashville, Tennessee), hardcover, 80 pages, \$9.95 each.

These beautiful volumes are the third and fourth in a series of gift books that offer a brilliant pictorial presentation of the Psalms. They feature some of the most beautiful full-color nature photographs that can be collected of God's great creation.

*Songs From Deep Waters* covers Psalms 40-67, *River Songs* covers Psalms 68-86. The first two books in this series are still available.

Each Scripture is taken from the New King James Version to retain a familiar, poetic quality while providing a contemporary text. These volumes will be ideal for gifts or can be proudly displayed in the home or office.

All books reviewed in this column can be ordered directly from the publisher or from:

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# The Teaching Of Women's Liberation About Family Roles

by David Pratte

**I**n this article, we want to look at the views of the leaders in the Women's Liberation Movement, as compared to the Bible.

## TEACHINGS OF WOMEN'S LIB

Resolved that marriage should be an equal partnership with shared economic and household responsibility and shared care of the children. [This should be enforced by law--page 13.] ...Resolved that government-sponsored child care centers should be available to all in acknowledgement of the responsibility of society toward children. --Revolution, p. 16.

The father has equal responsibility with the mother for the child care role... NOW endorses the ideal goal of free child care facilities, available as a community service as are libraries, schools, playgrounds, and public parks...NOW endorses the goal of child care available 24-hours per day... [this page earlier says this care is to be available for "all children from preschool through adolescence..."] --Revolution, p. 14.

Women have been a vast source of unpaid labor, placed in bondage by the institution of marriage...In order to break the tyranny of class oppression, it is necessary to establish a socialist order based on...[t]he economic independence of women from men...In the final hours of capitalism we will dance on the grave of corporate America. --Document, pp. 4,5.

Within the structure of the nuclear family children are oppressed because they are defined as property...We support parent controlled child care centers as a necessary step toward the feminist-socialist [sic] revolution...With the destruction of the nuclear family must come a new way of looking at children. They must be seen as the responsibility of an entire society rather than individual parents. --Document, pp. 13, 14.

NOW urges educators and legislators to work with us toward... the notification of publishers that linguistic sexism and other images of girls and women presented in books for

all courses and libraries will be taken into consideration on any future purchase...[If NOW members find "sex discrimination" in a text, they should] inform the local institution ("You must not use this textbook one more day!")...[Colleges should provide] role models outside the traditional sex role to reflect a society where women have status equal to men. --Revolution, pp. 9, 10.

So Women's Libbers believe women should be just as responsible as men to work outside the home to provide family income, and men should be just as responsible as women to work to care for the household duties. To make this easier, the government should provide care for the children whenever the parents want them to (and perhaps all the time after the "revolution"). Public schools are to use text and library books that instill these ideas in children, and books must not be used if they fail to do this. (How's that for censorship! And only people who are thoroughly ignorant of what is happening in public schools would think the Libbers have not been successful in this effort.)

The end result of Liberation would be that women are economically independent from men, so it is easier for them to provide for themselves if this is necessary to avoid the authority of men. And in their view, employment outside the home offers financial rewards, authority over people, and status in society which cannot be obtained in the lowly task of keeping house and raising children.

## THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE

Again, Libbers are in direct contradiction to the Bible. Many scriptures show that the husband is responsible to have an occupation whereby he can provide income and support for his family. This responsibility was part of the punishment placed on man for sin (Gen. 3:17-19). (It is interesting that Libbers view employment as such an exalted ideal, whereas the Bible pictures it as a role involving hardship and punishment! And most men can

tell you it's true!) Man must work to provide for himself (2 Thess. 3:7-12; 1 Thess. 4:10-12), but he is responsible to care for his family as he is for himself (Eph. 5:28-29). One who will not so provide is worse than an unbeliever (1 Tim. 5:8). Many Bible characters had occupations outside the home to provide for their families--farmers, shepherds, fishermen, tax collectors, physicians, carpenters, etc.

Many passages show that married women, especially if they have children at home, are primarily responsible to work at home to care for their family. Woman was created to love her husband and be a companion to him (Gen. 2:18; 3:16; Tit. 2:4). She is to love her children and train them (Tit. 2:4; 2 Tim. 1:5; Prov. 1:8; 31:1). To do this, she is to work at home, rule the household, and be a homemaker (Tit. 2:5; 1 Tim. 5:14; Prov. 31:10-31). Worthy women considered this work to be, not just a responsibility, but also a joy for which they praised God (Psa. 113:9). Women who practice it diligently should be honored and praised by their family (Prov. 31:28-31). It is a sinful woman who rebels against her work at home and insists on spending most of her time away from home (Prov. 7:11,12).

Doubtless there are emergencies when the husband is unable to provide for the family, so the wife, being his helper (Gen. 2:18), would help fulfill his responsibilities. Likewise, there would be emergencies when the wife is unable to do her normal work, so the husband may do it for her. But no passage authorizes a mother, under normal circumstances, to leave the home like men do to accept primary or equal responsibility to provide for family income.

A mother is simply forsaking her God-given duties if she regularly leaves her children unattended or under the care of someone else so she can make money, when she could manage, if she really wanted to, to live on her husband's income.

It is clear that one thing most

lacking among Women's Libbers is an understanding of what it means to really love and serve other people. They get no satisfaction out of a role that involves caring for people who depend on them and need them. They find no joy in guiding a child to learn, mature, and become a useful adult. They have no understanding that "it is

more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), and "whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant" (Matt. 20:27). They fail to realize that no one else can really meet the needs of a family like a loving wife and mother can. They do not realize that there simply is no position more influential, fulfilling,

and honorable than that of a wife and mother. What career could possibly be more meaningful? A woman who seeks some other role is simply settling for second best.

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# "A NON-PERSON"

by Luther A. Bolenbarker

One of the things I learned when studying American history in school was that the road to our greatness didn't always follow the most humane course. For instance, in 1857, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in the Dred Scott decision that black skin people were not legal "persons" or "non-persons" according to the U.S. Constitution. A black man or woman who was a slave was the property of the owner and the owner could do as he pleased with his property: buy and sell and use or dispose of at the owner's discretion. Later the 13th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution corrected this terrible ruling.

In January, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled again (history repeated) in the "Roe vs. Wade and Doe vs. Bolten cases that "unborn human beings are not legal persons according to the U.S. Constitution and that the baby is the property of the owner (mother) and she can have the child killed at her request, even up to the time of birth if her doctor agrees."

Even in all of our greatness our country has some very strange views on life: i.e.

- \* We have laws protecting wildlife, horses, cats and dogs but not defenseless babies!
- \* It's a \$5,000 fine and a year in jail to take an eagle's egg from the nest. Eagles protected by federal law, but babies allowed to be murdered!
- \* Catch and keep a pregnant lobster and the fine is \$6,000 and jail, but killing innocent babies is encouraged and advertised! (sign on 610 Loop).
- \* In Massachusetts, goldfish cannot be given away as prizes as this violates the anti-cruelty law, but throwing babies away is not cruel.

\* Beagle dogs cannot be used for experiments (passed while H. Humphrey in office, he owned Beagles) and it is so stated in the U.S. House and Senate records, but the same records say it's alright to kill babies!

## STRANGE VIEWS INDEED!

In the 14th Amendment the word "person" does not apply to the unborn baby.

Since this 1973 Supreme Court decision, more than 17 million unborn children have been murdered in the United States. That works out to be 4,257 every day, 177 per hour; 3 every minute and one every twenty seconds. In the time it took you to read this paragraph one baby was murdered by abortion!

Abortion is the third most common method of birth control.

Pro-Abortion advocates say that if abortion was permitted that child abuse will be reduced because unwanted children will not be there. I wonder why it is that child abuse is up 400% since 1973 if this be the case?

But, abortion is needed because of "rape and incest" they say. Less than 3% of the abortions are because of "rape, incest or handicap children" while a full 97% occur for convenience and economy of the parents. I wonder how they (the aborting parents) would feel if their parents thought they were too poor or they were not ready for a child yet?

The government says it is selective as to who can receive funds for "elective abortion", yet the taxpayer (you and I) shell out annually \$85 to \$140 million dollars.

Let me share with you some statistics about women who do have abortions here in America:

- \* The chances for a second pregnancy is only 32%.
- \* Second pregnancy problems abound: miscarriage 85% higher, premature birth 67% higher risk; labor complications 47% higher risk; damaged cervix assured; delivery complications 83% higher.
- \* Among teenagers these effects are even higher.
- \* Abortion-on-demand laws give to one person (the mother) the legal right to kill another (the baby) in order to solve (?) their problems.

It is hard for me to believe this can happen in a civilized society. If a people can say that the unborn child is "not a person" can they also say one day that people become "non-people" and introduce Euthanasia for the elderly?

Brethren, Abortion is sinful! and as Christians we cannot participate in it nor condone and support it if we are truly "seeking first the kingdom of God." We must do what we can to stop this useless, senseless waste of human life. As citizens in our country and with the privilege to vote we can vote against it and those who approve of abortion! "Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thess. 5:22).

Brethren, here are some additional passages for you to read regarding this: Gen. 1:27 (babies included) 9:6; Deut. 27:25; Eccl. 11:5; Prov. 24: 11,12; Job 31:15; Psa. 100:3, 127:3-5, 128:3,4, 139:13-16; Isa. 59:7, 5:20,21; Mt. 18:10, 19:14; Gal. 1:15,15.

Brethren and Friends, Abortion is murder, a shedding of innocent blood. In the book of Numbers 35:31-34 we can see what God said about their land because of their "shedding innocent blood." God has not changed in our day and time, nor will our land escape the wrath of God just because it has decreed that "the unborn child is not a person"!

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# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## “SICK”

**Greek Word:** *astheneo*

**Meaning:** to be weak, without strength

This verb, the pres. act. indic., third pers. sing. of *astheneo*, is used 36 times in the N.T. It is a member of a family of words: *astheneo*, to be weak; *asthenes*, weak; *astheneia*, weakness; *asthenema*, infirmity. And it can be seen readily that the basic idea of the word is the absence of strength.

And this information may help us to understand an otherwise puzzling passage. In Jas. 5:14 we read, “*Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*” Are elders healers of physical disease? Is the modern equivalent of oil anti-biotics, and should our elders be dispensing them?

If we bear in mind the fact that the word “*sick*” in Jas. 5:14 can refer to spiritual illness we may have our answer. The word *astheneo*, to be weak, is used 14 out of its 36 occurrences to describe weaknesses that are not physical illnesses (cf. Rom. 4:19; 8:3; 14:1-2, 21; 1 Cor. 8:9, 11, 12; 2 Cor. 11:21, 29; 12:10; 13:3, 4, 9).

The “*affliction*” mentioned in Jas. 5:13 is from *kakopatheo* which, in its four uses in the N.T., denotes the suffering of hardship or affliction but not necessarily in the form of physical illness, unless only in Jas. 5:13 (cf. 2 Tim. 2: 3, 9; 4:5). The phrase “*anointing with oil*” (Jas. 5:14) does not demand a literal anointing with any physical substance but can be a figurative reference to the conveyance of a blessing of good will (Heb. 1:9; but cf. Mk. 6:13).

In Jas. 5:15 the word “*sick*” in the K.J.V. translates *kamnonta*, a participle form of *kamno* which, in its 3 N.T. uses, means spiritually weary or faint, unless physically ill, only in Jas. 5:15 (cf. Heb. 12:3; Rev. 2:3).

And finally in Jas. 5:16 notice that the healing under consideration is spiritual, not physical. It would seem a strange and abrupt shift of thought to

move from physical to spiritual illness so quickly if verse 15 does indeed deal with the sickness of the body.

And the upshot of all this is that Jas. 5:13-16 is, in my opinion, not discussing physical illness at all, rather, spiritual illness or weariness that may even have led to sin (5:15b). The elders of the church are to pray for such a person. This prayer coupled with the healing oil of good will and encouragement will raise this man out of his spiritual stupor, and he will be forgiven the sins he may have committed. So beneficial is such a course of spiritual treatment that all are encouraged to confess their sins to one another and pray for one another in the full expectation of healing, ie. forgiveness of sin (5:16).

## “RELIGION”

**Greek Word:** *threskeia*

**Meaning:** religion

This word is used four times in the Greek New Testament as a noun (Acts 26:5; Col. 2:18; Jas. 1:26,27). Its adjectival form appears once (*threskos*, religious, Jas. 1:26).

In Acts 26:5 Paul affirms before Agrippa that “*after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.*” In Col. 2:18 Paul argues against Judeo-Gnostic-Elkasaism (head-religion, removed from reality): “*Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels. . .*” In both these passages there is a hint of the essence of this word *threskeia*. Its essence is formal external religious practice, the right kind or the wrong kind, that takes scant notice of practical needs (cf. Mt. 23:1-3; Col. 2:19).

William Barclay writes about its use in Jas. 1:26: “*The word translated religion is threskeia, and its meaning is not so much religion as the outward expression of religion in ritual and liturgy and ceremony. It is worship in the sense of which we speak of the worship part of the service. . .*” (D.S.B., in loc.).

James writes: “*If any man among you seem to be religious (threskos) and bridles not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion (threskeia) is vain*” (Jas. 1:26). He means that a person may be scrupulous in observing the Lord’s supper, public prayer, etc., but kidding or deceiving himself. He seems (to himself) to be religious, and he is, but his religion is external and divorced from the practical need to guard his tongue in everyday life (Jas. 3:1-13). So his “*religion*” is vain.

On the other hand there is the man who validates his scrupulous observances in the assembly with practical care for the fatherless and the widow outside the assembly. This man’s religion is real. It is “*pure and undefiled*” (Jas. 1:27). It takes **both** kinds of service to God to make our prayers meaningful before His throne.

Jesus makes this precise point in his denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees: “*But woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy, and faith: these ye ought to have done, and not to leave the other undone*” (Mt. 23:23).

## “BAALZEBUB”

**Hebrew Word:** Baalzebub

**Meaning:** Lord of flies

This interesting word is used only four times in the Hebrew Old Testament, but it is pregnant with significance for the student of the Bible as a whole.

In 2 Kings 1:2,3,6,16 there is the account of King Ahaziah’s attempt to inquire of “*Baalzebub, the god of Ekron,*” concerning an illness resulting from a fall. Elisha rebuked him for seeking counsel from this pagan god, and told Ahaziah he would die.

This word means, literally, “*Lord of flies,*” but this is probably a Hebrew pun on the original name of the Canaanite god, Baal, combined with

the local usage in the Philistine city of Ekron, Baal-zebul, "Lord of the exalted dwelling" (cf. Wm. Holladay, *Lexicon of Old Testament*, under *zebul*). In other words the Philistines called this pagan god, Baal-zebul, "Lord of the exalted dwelling," but the Holy Spirit chose to mark him with the similar sounding name, Baal-zebul, "Lord of the flies," in 2 Kings 1:1-16.

In the New Testament this name is

carried over intact in the Greek text as **Beelzebul** but shows up in our K.J.V. as **Beelzebub** but shows up in our K.J.V. as Beelzebub (Mt. 10:25; 12:24,27; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15,18,19). The A.S.V. footnote on Mt. 10:25 indicates that the underlying Greek text reads **-zebul**, "dwelling," not **-zebub**, "flies." And the N.A.S.V. says, "-zebul." So the Greek New Testament recovers the old Philistine god's dignity in the spelling of his

name. But the contexts of all the New Testament passages cited above show that the recovery of the original spelling of Beelzebul's name is not accompanied by a kindlier attitude toward him. Over the centuries his name came to signify the very person of the Devil, "the prince of demons" (Mt. 12:24, A.S.V.).

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# Have You Ever Thought About Paul?

by Berry Kercheville

Well sure you have, but have you thought about how this man was driven to preach the gospel the way he did? A young man named Saul is converted after seeing the Lord on the road to Damascus. Through I realize he was miraculously empowered by the Holy Spirit following his conversion, he was a new convert, a babe in Christ. Now miraculous power did not **make** anyone preach or teach. Paul, in fact, later warned Timothy to "*stir up the gift that was in him.*" And yet Paul as a new convert "*straightway proclaimed Jesus.*" What we need to see is the boldness, the courage of this young man. He was so courageous in his preaching that "*after many days were fulfilled, the Jews took counsel together to kill him.*" Now Paul did not purposely try to make anyone angry by preaching in an abrasive manner. But Paul was not afraid to stand boldly and speak, and in fact, preach such words that would cause people to want to kill him.

Now when we contemplate this fact as it relates to our own lives, we must ask ourselves if there are not times that we have not spoken **all** of His word when we realized that in doing so it would make the hearer angry. It is not true that our society has emphasized peace so much that we often shrink back from saying or doing anything that might upset someone? We should never upset anyone just for the sake of doing so; but the gospel when properly

taught will upset a great many people. Yet, when is the last time we have upset anyone because of the gospel we taught them? We are attempting to make "painless conversions." We want it painless for the individual we are teaching as well as for ourselves lest we jeopardize the relationship we have with them. That is not the gospel Paul taught. I believe we have gone astray from the aggressive, courageous way Paul and other first century Christians preached Christ.

And have you thought of Paul as he ventured out on the first journey, going in areas the gospel had never before been preached? May I remind you that he did not fly in a jumbo jet, or ride in an air-conditioned car, or even ride a nice motorcycle. Have we thought of the fear and trembling (1 Cor. 2:3) that was within Paul when he would first stand before a group of pagan Gentiles and tell them about one Jesus who had risen from the dead? Yes he would preach that to them knowing full well that they thought the concept of life after death was outrageous.

Have you thought of Paul as in the midst of his speaking he would see anger in the eyes of some of his listeners. And yet even as their anger grew strong he would continue to speak words that were sure to cause them to explode. Have you thought of Paul as those same hearers began to pick up stones and then throw them at

him relentlessly until he would drop unconscious? What courage this man showed by rising from such torture to preach and teach Christ again!

Why did Paul do this? City after city, year after year, he pushed himself facing every obstacle as a new victory to be won for Christ. "*I am a debtor,*" he said. "*I am not ashamed,*" he proclaimed. "*All who will live godly will suffer,*" he affirmed. "*Be imitators of me,*" he exhorted. But why, Paul? Why did you strive so? "*I am the chief of sinners,*" we would hear him say. "*But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not found in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.*" And we hear Jesus say, "*But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.*"

How much were you forgiven? Is this the reason we are afraid of upsetting someone? Is this the reason we are not aggressive and courageous? Is it that we just don't believe that we were forgiven very much? Is it that we do not have a deep awareness of the seriousness of the sin in our lives and what God did for us when He took away our sins? Have you ever thought about Paul? It is time to speak. It is time to ask people for studies. **IT IS TIME TO TAKE SOME RISKS!** It is time to put ourselves on the line for Jesus regardless of who gets upset or who would despise us. Did not Jesus say it would be that way? Are we warriors for Christ or are we looking for a peace treaty with the Devil! **PEOPLE ARE LOST.** And it is high time we said, "**I AM A DEBTOR.**" Hooray for Paul. We need more like him.

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## Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

# AN INTERRUPTED PRAYER

## (Chapter 4)

The fourth Psalm is dedicated "to the chief musician on Neginoth," and is described as a Psalm of David. The chief musician or choirmaster was the director of music in the temple (1 Chron. 6:31, 32; 15:16-22; 25:1,7). The Hebrew word, "Neginoth" is believed to refer to stringed instruments. Such instruments of music were specifically authorized in the Old Testament temple worship (2 Chron. 29:25). Now we are to "make melody in our hearts" (Eph. 5:19).

Spurgeon called the third psalm "The Morning Psalm" and this one "The Evening Psalm." We shall consider this Psalm from the viewpoint of its being an interrupted prayer. Prayers are easily interrupted. Our minds tend to wander. Thoughts of the day and plans of the morrow readily crowd in.

### THE PRAYER (v. 1)

First, David speaks to God, and then to man. That order should be followed by all preachers and teachers of the word:

*"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me and hear my prayer."*

David pleads for a hearing at the Throne of Grace. He recognizes God as the author of His righteousness, and recalls days of distress in which God enlarged him. This is a figure of speech signifying the idea of one cornered by the enemy. Suddenly, God enlarges the corner and provides a way of escape. The children of Israel at the Red Sea are an excellent example.

One translation says: "In pressure

*thou hast enlarged me."* Pressure and tension are the culprits of our modern age. Much time and space are utilized in the media advising us on how to cope with these and even how to eliminate them. But we would be pretty useless without some pressure. In an engine, pressure provides the power. In a stringed instrument, tension is essential. In our lives, pressure and tension are assets if we but learn to control our response to them. Too much pressure in the engine will cause an explosion. Too much tension and the string will snap. Paul had pressures (2 Cor. 1:8-10), but he knew that God would push the relief valve before it became unbearable (1 Cor. 10:13).

In the same spirit of trust, David cried "Have mercy."

### THE INTERRUPTION (2-5)

David stops praying and starts preaching. "O ye sons of men" Most commentators say this term signifies greatness. David's enemies were great and mighty men; "how long will ye turn my glory into shame?". He likely refers to his glory as king; the honor due his position; "how long will ye love vanity": The things men generally seek after are empty. They have no substance. They satisfy not (Isa. 55:2); "And seek after leasing?" Leasing is an old Saxon word for falsehood. Like the Gentiles of Rom. 1:25, these had exchanged the truth for a lie; "Selah": Stop and think. Meditate on the folly of the wicked.

In an effort to get the attention of his audience, David had raised some piercing questions. Now he introduces the one who provides the answers to

life: "But know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the Lord will hear when I call unto him." Men may show contempt and rejection, but he has faith that God will hear him.

Verse 4 is magnificent: "Stand in awe," he instructs. We live in a scientific, technical age. Just think of the advance of the past two generations! Yet we have but scratched the surface into the secrets of the universe. Compared to the enormity of the infinite cosmos, our little earth seems so insignificant. Compared to the vast ocean of eternity, our brief fraction of time in this world seems insignificant. Compared to the great storehouse of wonders, our limited knowledge pales into utter insignificance. Think of the power that brought it all into existence and stand in awe!

"Sin not" continued the psalmist. Sin destroys fellowship with God. (Isa. 59:1,2). When we're aware of our sins, we feel that loss of fellowship. When this happens, we don't feel like praying or meditating upon His word. Don't live a life of sin!

"Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still: Take time to talk to yourself. Tell self some things you need to hear. Contemplate on your day, your life, your future.

What next? Worship Him who has made us: "Offer the sacrifices of righteousness"; David, under the law of Moses, offered animal sacrifices. We must offer our own selves as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1,2). Public worship without inward trust is as dead as faith without works (Jas. 2:12-21), so "put your trust in the Lord."

### THE PRAYER CONTEMPLATED (6-8)

"There be many that say, who will shew us any good?" The good they demanded is spoken of in verse 7. They wanted that immediate evidence of corn and wine. They wanted to walk by sight rather than faith. But David desired the real good: "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." As Asaph later prayed: "Cause thy face to shine, and we shall be saved" (Psalm 80:3,7,19). Spiritual blessings were what he desired most of all.

"Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their oil and their wine increased." David realized that life consisted not in the abundance of things he possessed

(Luke 12:15). With this attitude, he didn't need a tranquilizer at night: "I will both lay me down in peace and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safty."

Paul spoke of the peace that passes all understanding. Don't ask me to

explain that. If it could be explained, it wouldn't pass all understanding. Spurgeon said, "a quiet conscience is a good bedfellow; They slumber sweetly whom faith rocks to sleep; No pillow so soft as a promise."

David was a man under great

pressure, yet he was one who had peace!



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# Spiritual Nutrition

by Ramon A. Madrigal

Many people are getting into nutrition these days. I suppose that this is simply a variation on the whole theme of better health, which, along with proper exercise, is a very good thing indeed. Health food products, including vitamin supplements and other natural products are expected to reach record sales this holiday season. Yet, in order to keep things in balance, Christians should concern themselves with spiritual nutrition as well.

## THE BASIC FOUR

Most nutritionists divide all food products into four essential categories: The Bread and Cereal group, Milk and other Dairy products, Meats, and the Fruit and Vegetable Group. In order to maintain good physical health, it is necessary to consume balanced portions from each of these four food groups. Let me suggest to you that it is no different with spiritual health. The Scriptures speak of these four food groups in figurative language, that is, with a spiritual application in mind. While an exhaustive survey of this language is not our present purpose, we shall look at some of these expressions concerning our eternal health.

(1) **BREAD.** Jesus claimed that "I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall not hunger, and he that believes on me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). This is the first of seven existential statements (I am's) made by our Lord and recorded in the Gospel of John (see also 8:12, 10:7-16, 11:25, 14:6, 15:1). They all reveal essential aspects of spiritual life and health for the child of God. That man truly needs spiritual bread is clear from these words of Jesus: "man does not live by (physical) bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Here, the word of God is likened unto the daily bread

which we eat. This both satisfies our hunger and contributes to our healthy bodies. We should, therefore, break open the "bread of life" on a daily basis, enjoying the benefits of a healthy relationship with God.

(2) **MILK.** Every disciple should earnestly desire the spiritual milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby (1 Pet. 2:2). This is another figure symbolizing our attitude and affection toward the things of God. Milk and other dairy products are absolutely necessary to a balanced diet. Milk is the food of newborn babes and infants. In spiritual terms, "milk" represents the elementary principles of the Gospel, including faith, repentance, baptism, resurrection, and eternal judgement (see Heb. 6:1-2). The deeper principles of Christianity are described by the Biblical writers as "meat".

(3) **MEAT.** The Apostle Paul criticises the church at Corinth because they were unable to digest the meat of the Gospel. He reproves them, saying, "I fed you with milk, not with meat; for you were unable to bear it. . ." (1 Cor. 3:2). I suppose that were Paul around today, he would offer the same judgement to many contemporary churches and individual Christians. How complete is our knowledge of the Word? Do we really study to show ourselves approved unto God? Are we able to give an answer for the hope within us? Or are we still only reciting the elementary principles of faith, repentance, and baptism? While milk is essential food for newborn babes, it should not be the only form of nourishment for mature Christians.

(4) **FRUIT.** While the Bible certainly describes our aliments in figures of bread, milk, and meat, it uses the figure of fruit to represent the spiritual products of our energies

expended. Paul admonishes us to "increase the fruits of our righteousness" (2 Cor. 9:7). He characterizes the products of the spiritual life (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control) as "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23). Jesus himself calls this "fruit unto life eternal" (Jn. 4:36).

Any spiritual diet should be balanced with liberal portions of each of these basic four food groups.

## BEWARE OF JUNK FOOD

While our spiritual diet should be rich in parables, proverbs, prophecy and prose, we ought to be on the lookout for fraudulent food and deceitful diets. In spiritual terms, we need to avoid any and all adulterated and altered "gospel" snacks that may tempt our palate (see Gal. 1:6-9). Through the powerful medium of television we are influenced by a great religious smorgasbord of dishonest doctrine and other false teaching. Most messages are cunningly subtle in their presentation of immorality, promiscuity, and permissiveness. Others are bold declarations of false doctrine on the essential nutrients of grace, law salvation, and forgiveness. Those who would be healthy children of God need to develop a discriminating diet and an intense taste for Truth.

## FOOD SUPPLEMENTS

Although our Feast of Faith consists of the basic four food groups, we ought to habitually supplement our diet with other morsels of spiritual health and growth. Some of these tasty treats include prayer, meditation, study, and worship. We might try an occasional visit or call to the discouraged and downhearted. A song of praise works wonders for the famished soul and spirit. Indeed, we need to be mindful of all these aspects of spiritual nutrition as we strive toward maturity and perfection in righteousness.

Boy, I think I've worked up an appetite during this discussion. Aren't you hungry?

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# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

"I was recently riding around town with some of my friends and we saw my grandpa coming out of a liquor store. He was staggering like he might have been drunk. I didn't know he ever did anything like this. He claims to be a member of the church. How should I handle this? Should I go to my grandpa first, talk to my parents, or go to the elders?"



**Michelle McClelland  
Sparks, NV  
Age: 17**

You must find out the truth directly from your grandpa, otherwise you'd be gossiping. There could be a number of reasons why your grandpa came out of the bar looking drunk. He may have been in there trying to talk to a friend who needed help and stumbled when he came out, or he may have needed to make a phone call!

You shouldn't ever jump to conclusions about anyone! First talk to them about it. If nothing changes, take two or three people with you and talk to him. If nothing then happens, you take it to the elders.



**Robin Underwood  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14**

I think you should go to your grandpa, not in a hateful way, but with the expectations of teaching him. Tell him what the Bible has to say on the subject of drinking (Gal. 5:21). It may

take a while for you to change his mind, because chances are he either likes drinking, or he is addicted to alcohol. It's going to take a lot of hard work, and a lot of patience and understanding. We have to realize that sin is sin, and what he's doing is wrong. If he wants to inherit the kingdom of God, he must go by God's law and not mans.

If he persists in his actions you should then confront your parents with the problem, and ask for their help. If this still doesn't work then you can ask for the help of the elders.



**Chris Reid  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15**

First, I would go to my grandfather with an attitude of love, telling him what I and my friends had seen, showing him that drunkenness is a sin, a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:21), and those that do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven (I Cor. 6:10).

Because he claims to be a member of the church, I would tell him that he doesn't set a good example for the others when he is drunk. A Christian needs to set the right example for non-Christians and keep himself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27).



**Gretchen Manco  
Jackson, TN  
Age: 15**

You should first discuss this with your grandpa and no one else. You saw him and therefore, it is your respon-

sibility as a Christian to go to him to find out what happened. You also have to consider **all** of the possibilities as to why your grandpa might have been in there. Could he have been making an emergency phone call? Is your grandpa lame, or crippled or have arthritis? Any of these could have been "acting up" that day and maybe he couldn't keep but stagger. You **cannot** judge by appearance only. If your grandpa is a Christian as he professes to be, then he will tell you why he was in the liquor store. If your grandpa does not tell you immediately what he was doing in there, it may be because he is ashamed or embarrassed. However, if he should tell you soon after you have had a talk with him, and, if he doesn't then it would be advisable to talk to your parents and then to your elders. If everyone **really** tries maybe something will come about.



**Troy Reece  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14**

You should go to your grandpa first because things may not be as they appear. There is a chance he had to make an emergency call or had some reason for going in to the liquor store. When he came out he tripped and staggered making him appear drunk.

If he was drunk you need to handle it as Christ taught in Matt. 18:15-17. Confront him with it and if he refuses to listen bring witnesses to confront. If he still refuses to listen, take it before the church. If he doesn't listen to the church, the church should withdraw fellowship with him.



**Paul Schreiner, Jr.  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 17**

The best action to take in a situation such as this is to go straight to the

elders with the problem. Tell them what was seen and the circumstances your grandfather was seen in. The elders have both the authority and the responsibility to confront your grandfather with the alleged problem. If he indeed has a drinking problem, the elders will be able to show him how he is sinning against God. They will be able to study with him and guide him back to a life which is in accordance with God's law. If your grandfather repents, both he and the elders will thank you for noticing the problem and going to the elders with it.



**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14

I would first go to my grandpa and ask him if it was him I saw. I would go to him with an understanding and kind heart. If it was him, I would help him. I would tell him that he needs to repent, ask forgiveness, and stop going to liquor stores. I would also tell him that there are places that work to treat people like him. I would pray for him, too.

But let's say that he denied that he was there. I would then go to my parents. I'd tell them the situation and ask for their advice. I would probably try again to talk to him except this time with my parents. If he still won't repent, I would continue praying, and keep on encouraging him.

#### A BOOK OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO TEEN-AGERS

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# A Christian Is A Member Of The Lord's Church

by C.A. Burcham, Sr.

Sometimes we hear a person described as a good "Christian man" and later learn that he is not a member of Christ's church. According to Luke's inspired account, ". . . the disciples were called Christians. . . ." (Acts 11:26). **W.E. Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words** says a disciple is a learner and consequently a follower. A disciple of Jesus will learn and follow His Word (John 8:24); Repent (Luke 13:3); Confess Him (Matt. 10:32-33); Be baptized (Mark 16:15-16).

If a man wants to be saved, he will obey what Jesus said (Heb. 5:9-8; Matt. 7:21). If he does not obey God, yet, expects to be saved; it is evident he is a follower of a man. Jesus said, "*No man can serve two masters. . .*" (Matt. 6:24). Peter and the other apostles said, "*We ought to obey God rather than men*" (Acts. 5:29) When a person learns and obeys the will of the Lord, he will be saved from the guilt of past sins and will be added by the Lord to His church. Luke writes, ". . . and the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved (those that were saved) ASV" (Acts 2:47).

According to the Bible teaching, one must obey the Lord to be saved. When he is saved, he is at the same time made a member of the Church of Christ. He should associate himself with local disciples for purposes of collective work and worship (Acts 9:26). A "Christian" is a follower of Christ and is "Christlike". Christ obeyed God and is the head of the church which is his body (Eph. 1:22-23). Christians are members of the body of Christ (cf. Romans 12:4-5; I Cor. 12:13-14) They

are "*in Christ*" by virtue of being scripturally baptized "*into Christ*" (Gal. 3:26-27). Remember that it was the Lord and not man that taught the necessity of baptism (Mark 16:15-16).

The fact that men, even religious men, ridicule, mock and deny the words of Jesus does not negate their veracity. The belief that one must obey Jesus and be a member of His church before he can rightfully wear the designation "Christian" is considered narrow-minded, bigoted, and prejudiced by most men today. No person of responsible mind wishes to be disliked. None wants to be considered intolerant or self-righteous. However, it still remains a fact that the way that leads to life is small and narrow (Matt. 7:13-14). It is a truth that will never be disproved that we will be judged by the Word of the Lord and not that of man (John 12:48). Therefore, let us be content to ". . . let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written. . ." (Rom. 3:4). As Peter said, "*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf (in this name-ASV)*" (I Pet. 4:16).

The "Christian" wants to help all people to be saved. He knows the Lord is ". . . not willing that any should perish. . ." (II Pet. 3:9). However, the "Christian" also knows that he cannot promise salvation to anyone on any conditions other than those authorized by the Lord. The "Christian" will not tell you that membership in the church that belongs to Christ is non-essential.

# Games, *puzzles*, & Riddles

Can you find 39 Bible Books?

## HIDDEN BOOKS

While motoring in Palestine, I met Chief Mejud gesticulating. His fez raiment and features were odd. I never saw so dismal a chief! On market days he pumps alms from everyone, a most common practice. A glance shows that he acts oddly. Excuse me for speaking so, but he was showing a crowd how they used to revel at Ionia bouts, when the brew started to boil.

A fakir was seated on a hammock, minus hose and shirt, and wearing as comic a hat as they make. He pointed up eternally toward a rudely carved letter "J" on a high cliff. My companion, Ian, excitedly cried, "See that J. Oh, now I know we are near ancient Ai." Was this Ai a holy place? From answers given elsewhere, I'll say not! We asked the age of the big stone J. "O, eleven centuries at least," was the answer.

I knew that in such a jam, escort was necessary. Besides, our car stuck in a rut here. So leaving the sedan, I elbowed nearer the fakir. A toothless Hag gained access to his side and paused to rest herself. She hinted, "You have treasure?" To which I retorted, "Not I, Moth, you know, and rust corrupt earthly store."

Mejud expressed a wish to accompany us, but I decreed, "Thy party we will not annex, O Dusky Chief. I am at the work of tracing a cargo of lost tapestries. This is my job.

My brother is a tramp (rover), B.S. from Harvard, too. His name is Eugene. Sister is nursing him now. They asked, "Where is the prodigal at?" I answered that it used to be incorrect to use the word "at" that way, but the flu kept Eugene at home this year. It is really to bad I ahungred for the Orient, and he, a tramp at home in bed.

We ate bologna, humming as we started to bite. There, beside me, was a graph. I, lemon in hand, squeezed it to flavor the tea. This ended lunch.

It was sad about the Philco loss. Ian saw the problem but remained numb. Ersatz Coffee would taste good right now. Ian hailed from Adelphi. Lippi, anserine the goose, just walked away. And this ends this non-sensical little story--but how many books of the Bible did you find? Read again, and see if you can find them. Have fun!

### Grandparents & Grandchildren

Children have always enjoyed Thanksgiving meals with grandparents. Biblical children shared many holiday meals with their families, also. Draw a line to connect the Biblical grandparents and grandchildren. Use the Scriptures to help you.

<b>TIMOTHY</b> (II Timothy 1:5)	<b>DAVID</b>
<b>EVE</b> (Gen. 4:1, 17)	<b>SOLOMON</b>
<b>ABRAHAM</b> (Matthew 1:2)	<b>LOIS</b>
<b>JESSE</b> (Matthew 1:6)	<b>JESUS</b>
<b>BOOZ</b> (Matthew 1:5)	<b>ENOCH</b>
<b>NOAH</b> (Gen. 10:1, 22)	<b>JESSE</b>
<b>OBED</b> (Matthew 1:5-6)	<b>JACOB</b>
<b>JACOB</b> (Matthew 1:16)	<b>ARAM</b>

### A PEOPLE SCRAMBLE

Unscramble and rearrange the letters to find the names of these men and women listed in the Bible.

- ROANA \_\_\_\_\_
- LIAGIAB \_\_\_\_\_
- RAAHBMA \_\_\_\_\_
- DAAM \_\_\_\_\_
- JIHLEA \_\_\_\_\_
- EDINAL \_\_\_\_\_
- VADID \_\_\_\_\_
- NOMSIE \_\_\_\_\_
- SAIBLETEH \_\_\_\_\_
- MASLUE \_\_\_\_\_
- HAAIIS \_\_\_\_\_
- JHERMEIA \_\_\_\_\_
- SSJEU \_\_\_\_\_
- RASHA \_\_\_\_\_
- NHJAO \_\_\_\_\_



# MY GOALS AS AN ELDER'S WIFE

by Martha Whitehead

I am an elder's wife. I am a person greatly blessed because I have a husband who is following Christ through the Biblical teaching of God's Word. Knowing and abiding in Christ, he loves me deeply and treats me kindly so that his "prayers are not hindered". I must be sure that I do not take advantage of my husband's Christlike nature and make any hardships for him to be an overseer in God's church.

I must never strive to be the head of the household or to be demanding in any way. I must be one who is submissive and has a "quiet, gentle spirit"—not one who will drain his strength attempting to keep me under control. He has to give constantly to his spiritual family and that must be the first priority in his life, therefore his physical family must be one who is truly helpful to him.

I will realize that God gave the work of the elder to him, not me, nor to both of us. It is his and his fellow elders' God-given responsibility to shepherd the flock in the congregation where he has been chosen. I am a part of the congregation the elders oversee. I must not interfere and take away from his authority. I realize that his is one of the most important works in the world. To make it easy for him as possible, I will do all the little jobs I can for him so that he can give all possible time to his work. Likewise, I will be a part of and attend every meeting and activity of the congregation that I am physically capable of attending.

I will be positive, encouraging and daily pray that God will give him the wisdom of James 3:17 as he serves and works and plans for the upbuilding of the whole body. I will emphasize his strengths and not be discouraging and negative. I will respect, love, submit, adapt to him and pray to be the wife my particular husband needs. I will manage the household well and love and train the children so they will have Christ first in their lives also.

I must be one he can trust in all aspects: tongue, dress, spending of money, and conduct. I will be flexible, adapting to my husband's schedule and life. I must be ready to change plans or entertain company at any time. I will have a thankful and joyful spirit. I know these attributes can come only through truly abiding in Christ.

As a "daughter of Eve" I can easily be deceived and confused by words from people who demonstrate thoughtlessness and unkindness. I will guard my heart to be objective and not be overcome by my personal feelings. An elder's wife must constantly guard her tongue, never being a gossip or a busybody. My words must be uplifting, true, helpful and kind. I will especially avoid being jealous or inquisitive regarding confidential matters. As I pray in faith, with true humility and complete dependence on the power of God for strength, God will in time cause me to grow in self discipline and controlled thoughts (keeping my mind on things above and things that are noble, and of good report, but most

especially on the Lord and His great love). Through Christ's power, which He has promised to each of His children, I will continue, more and more, to overcome the sins of the heart that so easily beset so many women.

I cannot be a weak Christian. I cannot be a lukewarm Christian. I must be one who puts the Lord first in my life. I cannot be a true Christian or a true helpmeet without growing in "faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and love" (II Pet. 1:5-7). This I plan to do through personal, daily Bible study and prayer. I will also meet with other Christian sisters for fellowship, encouragement, study and prayer. I will have open communication with my husband as we strive together to overcome the specific sins or shortcomings that may be weak areas in our lives.

I will strive to be aware of the physical and spiritual needs of others and will do all I can in serving these needs, but not to the neglect of my own family. I will be hospitable. I will always look for opportunities to influence non-Christians to come to the Lord. As I daily strive to grow in these areas of outreach, I will be able to relinquish my husband for his service with joy and not with self pity. I will have all that I can possibly do. I only need to open my eyes and look around and become sensitive to the needs of others.

The rewards will be greater than anything I can imagine as I grow in the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). Most assuredly the "peace that passes understanding" will be with me always and most especially during the trials that will surely come.

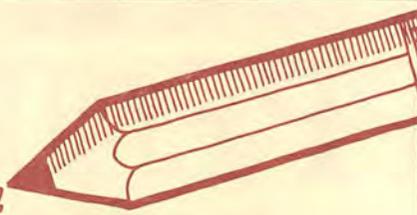
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## Short and to the Point



### I Like Grapette

When I was small, I remember going to the store with my Dad and immediately making my way to the "coke box." They didn't have vending machines then (sometimes I wish they didn't have them now the way some of them work about half the time and the way your foot hurts when you kick the door), so it was an easy matter to peer over into the "box" and look at all those delicious items.

One end of the container was a great big block of ice. I can still feel just how cold that water was when I would run my hand down in there and pull out a Grapette.

There was always a small debate in my mind, because the R.C. Colas were so much bigger than the Grapettes, but eventually the Grapette won out. Then it was a trip to find my Dad to see if I could talk him out of a nickel to pay for the thing. I was always confident that he had an extra nickel somewhere - Dads tend to be that way you know - and then for a few minutes ecstasy became a reality while I sat on a feed sack or some such thing to drink my "pop."

I always imagined that being an adult had to be the greatest thing, because then you could drink all the Grapettes you wanted.

But things aren't simple like that anymore. Now you have to choose between 85 different soft drinks, and they come in bottles with hard tops, or screw-on tops or flip tops. They come in glass bottles, aluminum cans, plastic containers of various sizes and the content-choices are getting unbelievable.

You can pick regular or diet with or without caffeine. You can get the diet drinks with saccharin or with the new nutra-sweet (which is an ominous choice because there are warnings about saccharin, and there will be about nutra-sweet as soon as some poor little rat has ninety thousand

gallons of it poured down him and he develops a wart on the end of his nose).

You can choose the one that has no caffeine and "never has had" (and you can't help but wonder why they don't put "no rat poison and never has had" on the thing) and on and on it goes.

Whatever happened to the "coke box" the ice water and the simple little Grapette?

Know what it reminds me of? Jesus said "upon this rock I will build my church" and now we have to sort through 400 religious bodies to find it. Whatever happened to simplicity?

--Harold Turner  
P.O. Box 164  
Saratoga, AR 71859

### The World's Biggest Winner - - Or Is He?

Recently Michael Wittkowski won the largest lottery stake. The Illinois Jackpot totaled \$40 million over 20 years. One TV commentator observed, "All his problems are solved". Another said, "He is the most enviable man on earth". These thoughts basically capture our sentiments.

Michael is impressive. The lottery ticket was "family". He has a wholesome concept, "This will not change my life". He intends keeping his job as a printer. He is engaged to be married. The family is to divide the moneys equally and to make decisions together. This is right and good.

But will this fortune be a blessing or a monster? What will happen down where he works? Will this help or hinder his intended marriage? Will "cousins by the dozens" show up wishing handouts? When the euphoria ends what will the neighbors really think? You cannot be a celebrity and yet remain common. Can Michael handle the press, the business propositions, the "new life"? It is hoped he can.

"The poorest man is he that has

only money". Money creates as many problems as it solves. Will Michael discipline himself, work, learn and grow? Or will this fortune consume him? One thing Hodge knows, he needs our prayers.

--Charles Hodge  
P.O. Box 56  
Duncanville, TX 75138-0056

### Indifference

With the possible exception of a lack of Bible knowledge, the most serious problem in the Lord's church today is **INDIFFERENCE**. This problem affects many areas.

Our worship will never be what it should be if we are indifferent. Our singing will be lifeless, our prayers will contain empty words, our study of God's word will not be profitable, our giving will suffer, and even communing with God at the Lord's Table will not hold the proper spiritual meaning. In short, we will not worship God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

Indifference also adversely affects our evangelistic efforts. Those who are lukewarm have no vision for evangelism. Such Christians are inactive and unconcerned. Their lives are characterized by spiritual apathy. You cannot be indifferent and zealous at the same time. Indifference destroys zeal.

How can you know if you are lukewarm? What are some signs of indifference that you can look for?

- \*Drudgery to attend services-a "have to" attitude.
- \*Get upset if the preacher goes over 10 minutes.
- \*Don't enjoy being with Christians in social activities.
- \*Intolerant to the mistakes of others.
- \*Do not support activities of the congregation--ladies Bible class, mens training class, gospel meetings, etc.
- \*Finding fault with others, thinking you are perfect.
- \*Mind constantly drifts to other things during the sermon.
- \*Uncomfortable talking about "church" with friends.

"Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away" (Hebrews 2:1).

--Roger Hillis  
Route 4  
Olney, IL 62450

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **PARENTS CONVICTED IN CHILD NEGLECT CASE**

Two members of a church in Columbia City, Indiana, which teaches that seeking help from doctors is related to witchcraft now face up to 12 years in prison.

Gary and Margaret Hall, members of the Faith Assembly Church, were charged and convicted of child neglect and reckless homicide. Their son, Joel David, died February 16 of pneumonia at less than one month of age because medical treatment was withheld.

In the one-day trial Hall acted as his own attorney and denied any negligence on his part. He told the court that "the law says prayer is a legitimate defense and that's where we stand."

The prosecutor, John Whiteleather Jr., countered that any "reasonable, prudent, parent" would have provided medical care. The county coroner also testified that the child would most likely have recovered if he had been treated with antibiotics.

## **TEEN-AGE SUICIDE CALLED A FAMILY PROBLEM**

Dr. John Hipple blames a lot of teen-age suicide on the modern family.

"There is a lot of pain and pressure in families today - financial and marital. That kind of environment will get to kids. Kids need protection. Parents need to supply it."

Hipple, a counseling psychologist, is associate professor of education at North Texas State University.

"What happens if you're 13 years old and you have to come home to an empty house every day? That can be hard to handle when you're a kid."

Hipple says a suicidal adolescent is a long-time problem child.

"Most adolescent suicide is something that has roots that go way deep. It's important for people to remember that suicidal teen-agers have long-standing problems. A kid doesn't

all of a sudden lose a girlfriend and kill himself."

Hipple likens a suicidal adolescent to a fire! "The logs have been in the fireplace for a long time. The kindling is there. It only takes one spark to set a fire." He says the spark can be anything from the death of a parent to losing first chair in the orchestra. He says the best way to prevent an emotional fire is to pay more attention to your child.

"When a kid is suicidal he's trying to say something to someone. He has a message to get across. Parents need to listen more carefully.

"When a kid is telling you he's hurting, believe him. Reach out to him."

## **SEXUAL ABUSE OF GIRLS AFFECTS 28% BEFORE AGE 14**

A new survey of 930 women in the San Francisco area indicated that 28 percent of girls will be sexually abused by age 14, and that 38 percent will have had that experience by the time they are 18.

The study, conducted by Diana E.H. Russell of Mills College, showed that sexual abuse of women is more prevalent than previously believed. Earlier estimates of the number of women victimized ranged from 20 to 33 percent, said Russell.

For this study, sexual abuse was defined as "unwanted sexual contact, ranging from kissing and fondling to rape." Russell attributes the increase in sexual abuse to child pornography and the "sexual revolution."

Of women who were incest victims, 17 percent said they were abused by stepfathers, only 2 percent were abused by their biological fathers. Of all the women in the study, 4.9 percent had been abused by an uncle, 4.5 percent by a father, 3 percent by a cousin and 2.2 percent by a brother. Strangers made up only 11 percent of the

abusers, while 29 percent were relatives and 60 percent were known but unrelated to the victims.

## **PRO-LIFE GROUPS SEEK TO OUST JUDGE OF 'BABY DOE' CASE**

An Indiana citizens' group has organized a voter drive to "Remember Baby Doe" in opposition to Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Richard M. Givan. Givan upheld a circuit court decision which allowed food and water to be withheld from an infant who was born April 9, 1982, with Down's syndrome and an esophagus detached from the stomach.

E. Ray Moore, co-chairman of the "Remember Baby Doe - Retire Judge Givan Committee," said voters will not have another opportunity to vote yes or no on the retention of the Indiana chief justice for another 10 years.

"Without legal precedent, Judge Givan led his court in a three-to-one decision that established 'quality of life' as the judicial criteria for deciding between life and death for Indiana citizens," Moore said.

Moore asked Indiana citizens to remember the Baby Doe decision when considering Judge Givan's credibility as a man responsible for protecting the rights of the innocent and upholding the Indiana constitution.

## **NEW KING JAMES BIBLE SALES HIT THREE MILLION IN TWO YEARS**

After being on the market for two years the New King James Version of the Bible has sold more than three million copies, making it second in sales to the original King James version.

The New King James Version was developed by Thomas Nelson, Inc., the nation's largest Bible publisher, after seven years of study by 130 scholars,

two nation-wide surveys and \$4.5 million in research and development. The study of Bible users indicated that most people preferred the familiar KJV, but that 62 percent of the population also didn't find the Bible relevant.

As a result the New King James Version has replaced archaic words such as 'taketh' with 'take' and 'lest' with 'since' to make it more understandable.

Buyers of the Bible are from all segments of society, including "the rich and poor and middle-income people, white collar and blue-collar workers, moms and dads and single parents," said Robert Schwab, vice president of advertising for Thomas Nelson, Inc.

Bible sales accounted for 58 percent of Thomas Nelson's projected 1984 sales of \$61.5 million. Nelson produces 550 styles of Bibles in eight of the nine major translations.

Nationwide, the sale of religious books has risen from \$117 million in 1972 to \$454 million last year, according to Association of American Publishers. This increase has made religious publishing the fastest growing segment of the publishing industry.

### **TYPHOON IKE KILLS 1,000 IN PHILIPPINES AND LEAVES 1.2 MILLION PEOPLE HOMELESS**

Typhoon Ike with its 137 mile-per-hour winds killed more than 1,000 people and left 1.2 million homeless as it swept through the central and southern parts of the Philippines, September 3-5.

Jun Vencer, NAE World Relief's Philippine director, estimated damages in excess of \$110 million. World Relief, the Red Cross and other agencies provided emergency aid immediately to the victims of what the Red Cross said was the worst typhoon since 1947.

Denominations whose churches in the Philippines were affected include the General Association of Regular Baptists, the Baptist General Conference, Conservative Baptist Association, the Southern Baptist Convention, the Assemblies of God, Christian and Missionary Alliance, New Testament Churches, Church of the Nazarine, Evangelical Free Church of America, Free Methodist Church of North America, Foursquare Gospel Churches and the Bethany Fellowship.

Hardest hit of all World Relief

projects was in Limaswa, an offshore island in the southern islands of the Philippines. Vencer reported that there 17 Christians died, and many more were missing. Relief offices were destroyed there as well as many homes.

World Relief already has assisted more than 10,000 families in 14 relief centers with the help of national Christians of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches. Vencer predicted that more than \$200,000 would be needed to help the people in World Relief area projects.

### **BAKKER DEFENDS LIFESTYLE**

PTL Club founder Jim Bakker shrugged off criticism of his financial affairs after buying a \$449,000 desert home near Palm Springs and two cars worth \$100,000. In an interview with the Chicago Tribune, Bakker asserted that it "would be phony for me to drive an inexpensive car to convince people to give me money."

Bakker bought a new \$45,000 Mercedes-Benz 380SL coupe and a 32-year old classic Rolls-Royce valued at \$55,000 to use at the new Palm Springs home, which he described as a retreat.

Critics of Bakker's lifestyle claim his spending is not appropriate in the light of his recent assertions during his telecast that his ministry is \$5 million in debt to the 200 stations carrying his religious programming. Bakker assured his viewers that no PTL donations were used to buy the house or cars, claiming that his salary and benefits are paid for by the 1,200 member Heritage Village Church, an Assembly of God fellowship he founded, "I make a nice salary and I know I earn it," he said. "What would you pay a man to raise \$100 million a year? What's that worth?"

### **CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY TAX EXEMPTION REMOVAL IS UPHOLD IN U.S. TAX COURT**

The U.S. Tax Court has ruled that the International Revenue Service acted properly in removing the tax exemption of the Church of Scientology. In a September ruling the court held that the controversial group "made a business out of selling religion," and therefore did not deserve tax-exempt status.

The court's decision said Scientology officials "diverted millions of dollars through a bogus trust fund and a sham corporation." The court

concluded "A religious organization can have incidental nonreligious purposes and still maintain its exempt status. However, if from its activities it can be inferred that the organization has a substantial commercial purpose, it is ineligible exemption."

### **PRINCIPAL SUSPENDED FOR ALLOWING WEEKLY RELIGION CLASSES IN SCHOOL**

An elementary school principal in Key Largo, Florida, was suspended Sept. 2 for refusing to stop weekly religion classes in his school. Ed Caputo was suspended for "gross insubordination" when he refused to follow the school board's order to halt the classes.

Local PTA members voted 84-1 to support the classes, which were optional, taught by volunteers, and open only to students with parental permission. The first class included studies in Judaism, Catholicism, and Protestantism. Civil liberties groups opposed the class as a violation of separation of church and state.

### **PRISON MAY BAN HOMOSEXUAL WORSHIP SERVICES, SAYS COURT**

Worship by prison inmates affiliated with a homosexual church may be banned by Michigan prison authorities, according to a ruling by the Sixth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The court upheld an earlier decision that security concerns allow prison officials to ban worship services conducted by the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches.

The church argued that prison officials had violated constitutional guarantees of freedom of religion by allowing other groups to worship, but prohibiting worship services by the Universal Fellowship. The court noted that the prison allows individual counseling and ministry between prisoners and church officials, and supported claims by prison officials that homosexual love triangles and jealousy played a major role in inmate assaults.

### **PREACHER CHARGED IN KIDNEY PATIENT'S DEATH**

The founder of a religious faith-healing sect whose followers refuse medical care has been indicated on charges of aiding and inducing reckless

homicide in the death of a 15-year-old-girl who succumbed to kidney failure without receiving medical treatment.

James and Ione Menne, parents of the girl, were also indicated by a grand jury on charges of reckless homicide, criminal recklessness, and neglect of a dependent.

Hobart Freeman, leader of the Faith Assembly, teaches his followers to seek healing through divine intervention, rather than through a physician. Two other Faith Assembly couples have been convicted when their children died of illnesses that authorities said could have been treated medically.

### **BUSINESSMAN SAYS HE WOULD GO TO JAIL RATHER THAN COMPROMISE CHRISTIAN CONVICTIONS**

Art Owens, a St. Paul businessman, said last week that he would go to jail rather than compromise his Christian convictions about operation of his health clubs. Owens and his business associates were found in violation of state law prohibiting discrimination against employees on the basis of religion; they have appealed this decision to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Owens' attorney, Clyde Anderson, told the Supreme Court that a Christian was obligated to apply biblical principles to all areas of life, including business. When the law requires a person to abandon his conviction, Anderson said, it violates one's right to freedom of religion.

"You can practice your religion in your church, in your home, maybe in your school, but when you get into the marketplace, you're supposed to turn off the switch. That's hypocrisy," said Anderson.

In employment interviews conducted by Owens, prospective employees were asked questions about their religious and personal lives. Some employees complained that their civil rights were being violated.

A hearing officer ruled that it was illegal for Owens to ask single women living alone if they had their father's permission to do so and that he could not ask married women if they had their husband's permission to work. The hearing officer also ruled that it was wrong for Owens to insist that employees being considered for management positions share his religious views.

Anderson contended that Owens' Christian commitment precludes compliance with the human rights law. Devout Christians, Anderson said, are bound by the faith to share their beliefs with everyone they meet, including business contacts.

Owens is also involved in hearings with the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission because of complaints against his health clubs by homosexuals, who claim club rules discriminated against them unfairly. "I will not let these people act out their perversion in my clubs," Owens said.

### **U.S. SUPREME COURT TO RULE ON RIGHT OF HOMOSEXUAL CONDUCT**

During this session of the U.S. Supreme Court it will decide if an Oklahoma law which forbids homosexual school teachers from engaging in "public homosexual conduct" is a violation of the Constitution's free speech guarantee.

The court has agreed to clarify a decision by the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. The decision upheld a portion of the Oklahoma law regulating public behavior by homosexual school teachers while striking down another provision.

The appeals court ruled that a section of the law forbidding teachers from engaging in "public homosexual activity" — defined as sexual acts committed with persons of the same sex indiscreetly and not in private — does not violate the privacy of the teachers.

At the same time, however, the lower court struck down another portion of the law prohibiting teachers from engaging in "public homosexual conduct," defined as "advocating, soliciting, imposing, encouraging or promoting public or private homosexual activity." That section of the law, the panel held, violates teachers' right of free speech.

In the current term, the Supreme Court will also review another lower court ruling that invalidated Washington state's anti-obscenity statute. In that decision, the Ninth Circuit Court held that inclusion of the word "lust" in the anti-obscenity law as part of its definition of "prurient interest" is "unconstitutionally over-broad."

The term "prurient interest" was coined by the high court in a 1957 decision (Roth vs. U.S.) to indicate a

boundary between sexually explicit materials that are obscene and those that are not. In the pair of Washington cases accepted for review, the question facing the justice is whether expansion of that concept to include use of the word "lust" was legitimate. The last major obscenity decision by the court came in 1973 when it ruled that a community might define obscenity for itself based on prevailing community standards.

### **PROBLEMS OF AGING — NOT SOLVABLE, BUT ACCEPTABLE, SAYS 80-YEAR OLD LUTHERAN PROFESSOR**

The problems of aging cannot be solved, only accepted, according to Dr. Joseph Sittler, professor emeritus at the University of Chicago Divinity school and professor-in-residence at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Sittler made his comments at the closing session of a four-day symposium on aging held by the Lutheran Council in the USA in Zion, IL last month. It was attended by 100 representatives of Lutheran organizations and dealt with the demographic, medical, social, economic and spiritual aspects of aging.

Sittler warned that considering only the outward aspects of aging is not sufficient. What goes on inside a person in the process of aging, he said, can only be learned by "sensitive listening."

One cannot talk about the aging process without a sense of infinite and implacable loss, Sittler stated. "We must not talk about ultimate pathos as being sociologically solvable. It is not solvable, but it is not without joy or hope," said Sittler, who is 80 and virtually blind.

The church needs to refine its preaching about death and eternal life. Sittler insisted. "One is prepared for death by life. Death is not something to be preached about only at funerals," Sittler said, nor is eternal life "some lovely country club after death. It is not an everlasting duration of things we didn't have time to do here but can do there."

The hope, said Sittler, is that "in death as in life we are the Lord's. Eternal life is union with Christ. What it shall be we cannot say; what it is, is the promise of Christian hope."

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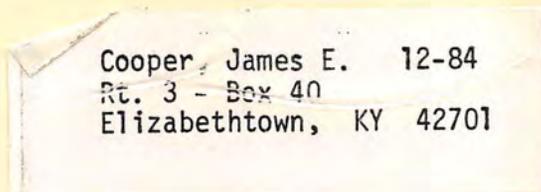
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# Today

"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

— Proverbs 27:1

Volume I

December 1984

Number 12

## THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DAY IN TIME AND ETERNITY

by Jefferson David Tant

**C**ertainly there are many days that have been momentous throughout history: the day of creation, when the great power of the Eternal God brought this world into being; the day of Adam and Eve, when God crowned his work of creation with that which was made in his own image; the day of the great flood, when man came to realize that God was quite serious about righteous living; the day of the birth of Christ, when the heavens exploded with the songs of angels announcing this unique and wondrous event; the day of the crucifixion, a day when incomprehensible love was shown to those who were totally undeserving; the day of the resurrection, when the power of God was manifested over the enemies death and Satan. There is yet to come the day of the end of the world, when a great cataclysmic upheaval of the elements of this universe will bring to nothing all the material realm. Yet as awesome, fearful and wondrous as any and all of these events may be, there is another day that in a sense causes all of these days to pale in comparison.

There is yet to come THE DAY OF JUDGEMENT. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done,

*whether good or bad"* (II Cor. 5:10). This day is so significant that God guaranteed it would happen. "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because he has fixed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom he has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31).

Picture with me in your mind's eye a great throne placed in the heavens, and upon it one arrayed in royal garments of white, with angels and other creatures gathered around. "After these things I looked. . .and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne. And he who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads. And from the throne proceed flashes of lightening and sounds and peals of thunder. And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God; and before the throne there was, as it were,

*a sea of glass like crystal; and in the center and around the throne, four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind"* (Rev. 4:1-6). Later John describes the particular scene at judgment: "And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds" (Rev. 20:11-12). So before this throne is every soul that has ever lived on the face of the earth. The Judge has called for the books, and now judgement begins.

As you stand in awe, the name of each individual is called, the record is examined, and judgment is rendered. Beginning with Adam, you stand amazed, not only at the vast multitudes that come before the throne, but at the names that have lived only on the pages of history books. There stands Enoch, who walked with God. There stands Methuselah, who lived 969 years. There stands Noah, Abraham, Moses and David, faithful men in spite of their human failings. And we look on as Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar,

Cleopatra, Charlemagne, Martin Luther, George Washington, Queen Victoria, Adolph Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Ghandi, Idi Amin, and other notable names of history are called. And we marvel as Ruth the Moabitess, Rahab the Harlot, Hannah, Delilah, Bathsheba, Jezebel, Mary the mother of Jesus, and other notable women, both famous and infamous, are called. And there is Paul, Peter and John--people just like you and me.

And can you imagine the feelings within your being as the succeeding generations pass before the throne and the time draws near for your own generation? Your grandparents are called. Your parents, your aunts and uncles. Even neighbors, school mates, fellow workers. And while you have had a great curiosity about those whose names you have recognized from your history books, and a sadness has come upon you as most of those were sentenced to eternal destruction, what intense feelings you have as those you have known stand before Jesus Christ. What immeasurable joy as you hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the eternal city." But what unspeakable heaviness of heart as you hear the weeping and wailing of the damned--faces you have known, names that are as familiar as your own. People that YOU are responsible for. "When I say to the wicked, 'You shall

*surely die'; and you do not warn him or speak out to warn the wicked from his wicked way that he may live, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet if you have warned the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness or from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered yourself"* (Ezek. 3:18-19).

And then your name is called, and your heart skips a few beats. For the moment, let us put aside all other considerations--your baptism into Christ for the remission of sins, your faithful church attendance, your righteous living, your kindness shown to others, your frequent prayer to God. Let us consider another factor in your judgment--THE BLOOD OF OTHERS. Will there be any on your hands as you stand before the One who shed his blood for you? When the great apostle Paul stood before the throne did you hear him say, "I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I did not shrink from declaring. . .the whole purpose of God. . .teaching. . .publicly and from house to house. . .night and day with tears. . .My heart's desire and my prayer to God for them was for their salvation. . ." (Acts 20; Romans 10).

As you ascend the steps that lead to the throne, your mind wildly races over the events of your life. You remember your last song in a Lord's Day

assembly, and the words ring in your ears: "When in the better land before the bar we stand, How deeply grieved our souls will be; If any lost one there should cry in deep despair, 'You never mentioned him to me.' O let us spread the word where'er it may be heard Help groping souls the light to see That yonder none may say, 'You showed me not the way, You never mentioned him to me.' A few sweet words may guide a lost one to his side, or turn sad eyes on Calvary; So work as days go by, That yonder none may cry, 'You never mentioned him to me, You never mentioned him to me, You helped me not the light to see; you met me day by day and knew I was astray, Yet never mentioned him to me'" (J.D. Gaines).

And as you take the final steps that bring you face to face with the Judge of all mankind, the words of another song sweep through your mind: "Must I go, and emptyhanded? Must I meet my Savior so? Not one soul with which to greet him: Must I emptyhanded go?"

Then you stand alone to have your eternal destiny pronounced. Life or death. How do you plead? Guilty, or Not Guilty?

350 Knollwoods Dr.  
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## Reach Out And Touch Someone

by Austin Mobley



Many of us have been influenced by an appealing TV commercial. It encourages the use of the telephone, especially for long distance calls. Its message urges us to "reach out and touch someone." No doubt millions of people have responded by doing just that.

For Christians that slogan can have a special significance. It can be a helpful reminder of our privilege and responsibility to "reach out" to those in need of Christ. We have no reason to expect unbelievers to come to us; rather, we are to take the initiative and reach out to them (Mark 16: 15, 16), telling them what Jesus means to us and what He can do for them. We can

urge them to obey the gospel and have the forgiveness of sins and the peace found only in Jesus Christ.

There is another way to reach out and touch someone, and that is by the way we live. This involves not only what we don't do, but also what we do. The world generally thinks of Christians as people who are miserably deprived because of what we deny ourselves. They seldom view us as truly happy because we are trying to do what is right and best. Here we can see the strong need for Christians to be separated from sinful worldly practices (Rom. 12:1, 2). Sad to say, in many instances it is almost impossible to distinguish the believer from the

unbeliever because of the worldly practices of speech, dress, and morals.

The Christian ought to be characterized by more than those negatives in his life. The positives are vital too. In addition to teaching others the saving message of the gospel, living an exemplary life is a most effective way to reach out and touch someone for the Lord. It causes others to desire the same qualities of life that characterize the Christians.

We who have heard the gospel and trusted in Christ by obedience to His will have the blessed privilege and solemn obligation to represent Him and to share with others the good news of salvation. Therefore, every time we hear the slogan, "Reach out and touch someone," let it remind us to do just that - both in what we SAY and what we DO!

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# EDITOR'S CORNER



**Bob Buchanon/Editor**

## CHRISTMAS: TRUTHS AND TRADITIONS

There is a certain "feeling" at this time of the year which nearly everyone must surely enjoy. Families and friends get together for visits that haven't seen each other for the past year. The smells of cookies, cakes, pies, and spices perfume the air. Concerts are held all over town and the radio sounds out some of the most beautiful of musical scores. There are wreaths, lighted trees, gaily decorated packages, and poinsettia plants decorating many businesses and homes. There are smiles on every face, a twinkle in every eye. It is a season like none other of the year. What is it? Why, 'Tis the season to be jolly"--it's Christmas!

"Christmas Cheer" is the well wishes of many we meet. Much is said about "The Spirit of Christmas," an expression that really means many different things to as many different people, and may mean nothing to as many others. Some with pious tones speak of "putting Christ in Christmas." Some with pretended and sanctimonious airs reprove us for letting Christ get out of Christmas and so urge all to "put Christ back into Christmas." What does it all mean? Do people really know what they are talking about when they talk about Christmas?

### THE DATE FOR CHRISTMAS

As startling as it may seem "Christmas" is not a religious holiday that is spoken of in the Bible. December 25 is nowhere said to be the birthday of Christ. We find no record of the apostles or the early church observing an annual celebration of Christ's birth. The exact time of his birth is unknown and there is no way to ascertain it. If it were important to know when Christ was born, God would have recorded it.

"Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church. Irenaeus and Tertullion omit it from their lists of

feasts" (Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 724).

"The earliest mention of the observance of this day is in the Philocalian calendar, drawn up in Rome in the year 336. It was only adopted at Alexandria about 430 and it was still unknown at Jerusalem when St. Jerome wrote early in the 5th century" (Chamber's Encyclopedia, Vol. 3, p. 540).

We cannot know the precise date of the Lord Jesus' birth because the Bible does not tell us. He lived on the earth 33 years and yet we are not told in His inspired Word that anyone ever knew what day of the year was His birthday. As far as what is recorded, He never celebrated it with anyone, nor told anyone else to celebrate it.

Multiplied dates have been given over the years for the birth of Christ. Clement of Alexandria alludes to several dates but condemns them as being superstitious. He says that the following dates were alleged to be the birthday of Christ: April 19, April 20, or May 20. Clement believed it to be November 17. Another person who was supposed to have had a private revelation set it on March 28. January 6, March 25, and December 25 have also been popular dates for this observance. By the beginning of the fifth century, December 25 was becoming the most popular date and is the one that has become the one generally accepted. This date comes from a pagan observance of the birthday of "The Unconquered Sun." Pagan festivals--highlighted by feasts, parades, special music, gift giving, lighted candles, and green trees--took place around the time of the winter solstice, when the days begin to lengthen, to celebrate the "rebirth of the sun."

In 354 A.D., December 25 was adopted "by order of Bishop Liberius of Rome" (**World Book Encyclopedia**). The Catholic Church had not fully developed at that time, but apostasy had led strongly in that direction. Constantine, a Roman Emperor, had been "converted" (?) to Christianity in the 4th century and such conversion became the popular thing. Masses of pagans were converted, bringing pagan practices to incorporate them into "Christianity." The pagans celebrated the Mithraic feast of the Sun-god around December 22 or 25. At this time of year the days were shorter and the pagans thought their god was losing his strength. They built bon fires to increase the strength of their god, and sure enough the days began to get longer (not because of their efforts, but because of the design of God in creating the universe). This celebration was for the triumph of light over darkness and was rather easily changed with regards to Christ who is the "light of Christians. Liberius set December 25 to celebrate the birth of Jesus in an effort to turn attention away from these pagan feasts.

Albert Barnes, noted commentator, says with reference to the shepherds keeping their sheep in the field: "The climate was mild, and, to keep their flocks from straying, they spent the night with them. It is also a fact that the

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"Boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"  
— Proverbs 27:1

Jews sent out their flocks into the mountains and desert regions during the summer months, and took them up in the latter part of October or the first of November, when the cold weather commenced. While away in these deserts and mountainous regions, it was proper that there should be some one to attend them to keep them from straying, and from the ravages of wolves and other wild beasts. It is probable from this that our Saviour was born before the 25th of December or before what we call Christmas. At that time it is cold, and especially in the high and mountainous regions about Bethlehem. But the exact time of His birth is unknown; there is no way to ascertain it. By different learned men it has been fixed at each month of the year. Nor is it of consequence to know the time; if it were, God would have preserved the record of it. Matters of moment are clearly revealed; those which He regards as of no importance are concealed."

### THE NAME CHRISTMAS

"Christmas" is composed of two words: "Christ" and "Mass." It is from the old English "Christe Masse," a special communion which grew out of the Roman Catholic feast day, dating from 1038. A "mass" is supposed to be an unbloody sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ. It is the Catholic perversion of what the Bible calls the Lord's supper. The Catholics teach that Christ is sacrificed every time they have the mass. This doctrine is in complete contradiction with the Bible: "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. . ." (Heb. 9:28). Many religious people who deny the doctrine of the power of the pope are being swept right along with this Catholic doctrine.

### SHEPHERDS AND WISE MEN

Another matter that is commonly accepted tradition is that there were three kings or wise men that brought gifts to the Christ child. The truth of the matter is that the Bible simply says "wise men." We are not told how many men. We know there were at least two since it says "men," but that could be two, three, twenty, fifty, or a hundred. The wise men brought three gifts--gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matt. 2:11). But the Bible simply does not tell us the number of the wise men who brought these gifts. Two men could have brought the same gift or one man could have brought two gifts. What if I said my daughter, Deborah, had a birthday party and her guests brought toys, clothing, and money. How many people attended her party? You don't know! And the truth of the matter is that the number of wise men is not even hinted at in the Scripture.

Another tradition, in contrast to actual Bible truths, is when the wise men arrived. The average nativity scene portrays the wise men kneeling at the manger. The shepherds visited Jesus the night of His birth (Luke 2:18-20). The wise men, however, traveled from the East and did not arrive until at least after the presentation in the temple (Luke 2:21-22). This would have been at least 40 days after the birth (Lev. 12:1-6). According to Matthew 2:11, the wise men came "into the house" to see "the young child with Mary his mother." He was no longer in the manger.

### SANTA CLAUS

The modern American Christmas observance would not be complete, many people say, without one other tradition--the appearance of Santa Claus. This fat, jovial, white-whiskered old man who reputedly flies through the

skies dispensing gifts from a magic sleigh is a combination of three gift-bearers of the past: the real St. Nicholas, a fourth-century bishop; the mythical Christmas Man, who makes toys at the North Pole; and Father Christmas, who dressed in red garments.

Over the centuries, the Catholics have done a good job of "pushing" Santa Claus. This is really the story of Saint Nicholas, the Bishop of Myra. He was regarded as a friend and protector of children. Many so-called miracles have been ascribed to him. Upon his death, the children started praying to Saint Nicholas. The children's song, "Jolly Old Saint Nicholas, lend your ear this way," is proof that Santa Claus and Saint Nicholas are considered one and the same.

### AN APPEAL

When one opposes rather than endorses a time-honored and widely-accepted religious tradition, he will likely be marked as an atheist or infidel. It should not be this way. The Bible tells us to "prove all things" (I Thess. 5:21). We are never to accept something as truth until we have first given it a test in light of the Word of God. If this annual observance is really Christ's birthday and if God wants us to render special service in memory of that day, then we ought to be able to find the necessary information in the Bible. If there is no mention of Christmas in God's Word, then the silence of the scriptures must be respected. God in His divine wisdom has delivered unto us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3).

The stores are going to be crowded for the next few weeks with frustrated shoppers who can't find the right gift and total chaos (as opposed to the "peace" they sing about) leaves its mark on this day. Too many will be wrapped up in the phoney, fancy toil of goudy gifts, high-cholesterol Christmas dinners, and other empty rituals. But every year, people shout "peace" and "brotherhood"--for one day. The scripture says to rejoice in the Lord **always**, but says nothing about a beserk celebration of which nobody knows the true meaning.

For a moment, please leave the plastic nativity scene, the Christmas tree and mistletoe, and the little man in the red suit. Get away from the manger and move to the cross of Calvary. That baby in the manger grew up and was nailed to the cross. His blood was shed to redeem men from their sins (Eph. 1:7) and become the author of eternal salvation (Heb. 5:9). Will you quit bowing at the manger and bow before His authority as the Son of God?

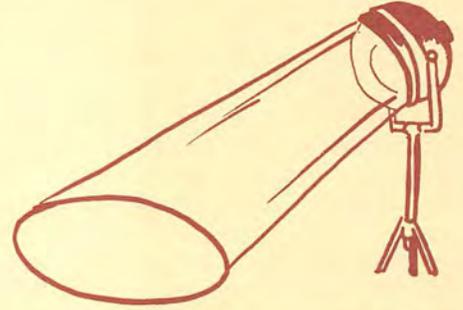
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# Today's Spotlight



An interview with

## DUDLEY ROSS SPEARS

**What prompted you to get involved in the work of preaching in Europe?**

In 1972, brother James P. Needham and I were invited to stop over in Germany after we had finished our preaching trip in the Philippines. You probably know that Jim married Maria Dechert, a native German. Her relatives still live in Frankfurt. Brooks Cochran was in the Air Force there and had started a small group of Americans meeting. He asked us both either to come and work in Germany, or find someone who would. It was not possible for Jim to move then, I couldn't find anyone else, and so, after a long correspondence with Brooks, I decided to go. It was not easy to do, but in the long run, I am really glad I did. I believe it was the providence of God that really got me interested.

**When did you go and how long did you stay?**

I went the first time early in 1972, then again in late 1972, but both of those trips were sort of scouting expeditions. My family and I moved in June 1973. Unfortunately, my family had to return to Kentucky by September of that year, due to the problems we encountered with the schooling of our children. I stayed until the next fall, when brother Glenn Jones came to take the work there.

**What sort of problem did the children have in school?**

Well, they were both very young--our daughter was in the fourth grade and our son was in the sixth grade. We



and tried to get them enrolled in German schools. Due to the age of the children, the language problem and some emotional changes, the Director of the school informed me that they were not permitted to remain in the school. The emotional changes were largely due to some pretty rough treatment some of the older German boys gave our daughter. The International school cost \$100.00 per month (12 months in the year) per child and we just simply couldn't afford that. So, we did the best we could and they came back here and I joined them after

finding a replacement for the work there.

**What were some of the more unusual and exciting things you experienced during those years?**

It was all really an adventure that I will never forget. So many things come to my mind, that it is really hard to sort out what might interest readers of **Today**. I suppose just learning to speak and communicate in German was among the most memorable experiences I had. You wouldn't believe some of the blunders I have made. One may learn a lot about German, but speaking

it in Rheinland-Pfalz is another matter. It might be compared to learning about swimming and then trying to apply it by being tossed into a bottomless pit of water. I still try to keep current on German, but in those days, I learned so many grammatical errors and errors of expression that it is very difficult for me to overcome it. Learning also how to shop, how to drive on streets just wide enough for two cars to pass, learning the customs of the German people and being befriended by many of them. This last matter, becoming personal friends with German people, is the most enduring of all my experiences over there, because I continue a rather heavy correspondence with a number of people with whom we got acquainted and especially with whom we had regular Bible studies.

Just a few years ago, a German doctor and his wife, (Helmut Eidenmueller and his wife) visited the States. They called us and we got together with them in Meisenheimer, North Carolina, for a brief visit. They were on a guided tour, no car, and had to remain with the tour most of the time. It is one of those lasting blessings from having been in Germany.

#### **How many congregations existed then, and what was their condition?**

Well, there was the one I mentioned that Brooks Cochran started, but that was really an American work. Among

the Germans, there was then no congregation other than those who stand identified with the institutional churches. I mean by that, the preachers were all supported by sponsoring churches here in the States. I should not really say "all" because there was one, possibly two, self-supported preachers among the Germans. The conditions were such that I was regarded as one with leprosy in the final stages. One of the American preachers over there had circulated a letter among all the German speaking churches in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, that a fierce "anti" was coming and would try to split all the churches in Europe. He dug up a few things out of a past I would like to forget, and that I know God has forgotten, things that happened when I was a student at Harding College, and circulated them to demonstrate my ungodliness. So, I really had an obstacle to overcome from the very first.

One particular thing that demonstrates the condition then was my effort to attend the annual "Maenner Freizeit". It is what some may call a "Retreat". It is usually held at some resort area, each participant pays his own way and a series of lectures and Bible studies are conducted. I had it in my mind to attend to better myself with the German language. I submitted my "Gebuhr" (entrance fee) one day, and it was returned the day following

with a curt note telling me I was not wanted, would not be welcome and would be asked to leave if I tried to attend it. So, rather than cause a scene, I just forgot it, but that, I think, illustrates the intense feelings then toward the "antis".

#### **You spoke of conditions then--are they any different now?**

Oh, my yes, the conditions are drastically different. I have returned several times for what some call "short trips" and have noticed a gradual change. Brother Glenn Jones, who now lives in Kiel, has been invited several times to speak at the "Maenner Freizeit" lectures. He is highly respected among the German preachers and brethren due to his excellent command of the language, and his knowledge of the Scriptures. Glenn has spoken directly to the issues that caused such hard and ugly feelings, and while it is natural for some of those brethren to reject it, his forceful presentation of truth, in a spirit that cannot be criticized, has resulted in a real change in attitude. When I mention change in attitude, not only do I mean a change in attitude toward those of us they call "antis", I also mean a change toward the Scriptures.

A number of things have taken place that have also played a part in this. When the work began in Germany, it was "assumed" by the elders of the old Broadway and T congregation in Lubbock, Texas. At that time, Germany was on her knees and began trying to recover from the devastation of World War II. The brethren from Lubbock used this as a means to preach to the Germans. One of their famous leaders, I think during the David Lipscomb College lectures, back in the late forty's said something like, "We were faced with the problem of feeding people and unless we tried to reach them through their hungry stomachs, we couldn't have reached them with the gospel". That is not a direct quote, but essentially what was said. So, that's what they did and were successful. At one time there was nearly a dozen churches in the Frankfurt area alone. Now, there is only one German speaking church there.

In the following years, Germany has become a financial and industrial leader again, and no longer need care packages or second hand shoes. I can just imagine the response a German



would have if some American offered him a worn out suit or old pair of shoes. But, anyway, now that has had its effect on Christianity there. As Germany has become independent as a nation, so churches are becoming less and less dependent on American sponsors. I know of at least three very able German preachers who would be totally unwilling to take their orders from American churches now. The old view of the rich American coming over to Germany, hiring an interpreter, and reaching people is gone. We can all be thankful for that. When I say they are not dependent on Americans I must also add, they would not be open to anything I might try to impress on them either. I have found that those who are more independent are impressed with a "thus saith the Lord", and who can argue with that?

#### **What do you regard as the best opportunity for preaching now in Europe?**

That is hard to say, because we have done almost nothing in countries like France, and the Ben-Lux nations. We have done a little in Scandinavia, some in Switzerland, but the greatest amount of focus has been on both Germany and Italy. It would be hard to say where the best opportunity is now in Europe for preaching, because, it is like standing in the middle of a large watermelon patch full of all ripe melons. I would say that Italy is a real good place to concentrate on preaching the gospel. There are seven full time men working in Italy now. I say without reservation that I have never seen any group of brethren more sacrificing and more dedicated to the task before us. I am trying to help brother Francesco Fosci raise enough support to go into full time preaching. The Italians are very worthy of support and they really need it.

I would also say that we ought to concentrate on getting some good men and women into the work in France. The problem is that languages are so difficult to learn, and it is so easy to think, "I'll stay here and help someone else go." But, when you start looking around for that "someone" you just cannot find him. We need good people in Belgium, Austria, Holland and, if possible, behind the "Iron Curtain". That's the problem, though, who will go, and how will they get there and how long can they stay?

#### **You said you have gone back several times. How long do you stay on these "short visits" and how can you accomplish anything in a short time?**

I have returned almost every year at the invitation of brethren in Germany. I suppose the reason is that I know the language, know a lot of people and they feel that I can do some good during my stay. I remember someone telling me that they didn't feel these "short trips" did much good, and my reply was (and still is) that after two weeks, it ceases to be "a short trip". Actually, a lot of good can be done. I doubt that Paul stayed very long on his first trip of preaching, and had he been able to use modern transportation, it would have been even shorter. But, not only do I have excellent opportunities to study with some Germans, one of the best things is the encouragement and edification of those faithful few who are isolated from other brethren. I will never forget both Glenn Jones and Gary Martin telling me, that if nothing else was accomplished, the encouragement and strength from our long (sometimes almost all night) talks would justify coming. Of course, there is much more, the teaching, preaching, visiting, trying to reach a contact, but this is one of the most valuable things--this thing of encouragement. Until one has experienced the lengthy stay away from one's own native language, homeland, and relatives, it can hardly

really be appreciated. But to those who are there, it is really an encouragement. I am about as far from being Paul, the apostle, as one can get, but I always remember the statement Luke made about him as he traveled abroad "*confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith.*" (Acts 14:22). That's what I try to include in my trips.

#### **What are your future plans--Do you ever intend to move back over there?**

My future plans are to do whatever I can, as the opportunities arise, to help the work in West Germany, Switzerland and Italy. I wish it were possible for me to go back and live there. That is my first love. I have never really recovered from my return. I really did leave part of my life over there. I plan to go back on short trips, whenever invited and whenever possible that some good may come, and continue to try and get brethren interested in the work over there. And, I want to thank you for making these ideas known in the pages of your paper.



**Readers may write to Dudley Ross Spears at 2081 Old Scottsville Road, Alvaton, KY 42122.**





# WORD STUDIES

By Don Bassett

## "RESPECT OF PERSONS"

**Greek Word: prosopelempsia**  
**Meaning: "receiving of a face"**

Now this word is a mouthful. I recently tried to say it during a radio program. And I was instantly visited with a vision of Bob F. Owen telling a speech class, "Seldom, if ever, pronounce Greek words while preaching. Your audience does not speak Greek and you don't know much of it yourselves." I should have paid better attention that day.

This word is a combination of two smaller ones: **lambano**, to take or receive, and **prosopon**, face. Our word, therefore, means literally, the receiving of a face. In the N.T. the "face" often means the "person" himself. The word **prosopon**, face, is often translated "person" in the K.J.V. (Mt. 22:16; Lk. 20:21; 2 Cor. 1:11, et. al.). Our English word, person, comes from the Latin **persona** which originally meant a "mask worn by an actor" (Cassell's Lat. Dict.), but came to mean the character represented by the mask.

In earlier usage our word, **prosopelempsia**, meant the receiving of a person in either a good or a bad sense. The Septuagint (LXX, Grk. trans. of O.T., ca. 200 B.C.) used **lambano** and **prosopon** in Mal. 1:8 to ask whether a governor would accept the persons of those who offered gifts to him as inferior as those they were offering to Jehovah. The same book uses the same words in the LXX to condemn the showing of favoritism by being "partial in the law" (Heb. Text, literally, "receiving faces concerning the law") (Mal. 2:9). Here there is a clearly negative meaning, the one we find in the N.T., the idea of partiality.

The negative usage into which **prosopelempsia** fell through the centuries can be seen in each of its four N.T. occurrences. In Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9 and Col. 3:25 we are told that the Godhead show no "respect of persons" (cf. **prosopelempies**, Acts 10:34).

In Jas. 2:1 we are warned against showing respect of persons or partiality: "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons." In Jas. 2:9 a verbal form of the word is used: "But if ye have respect to persons (**prosopelemptein**) ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors."

Of course all of us accept this principle from the word of God. We believe in impartiality. But we don't always practice it. The brethren to whom James wrote were tempted to show partiality to the fellow who came to their assembly in very nice clothes and to snub the poorly dressed visitor (Jas. 2:1-9). And I sometimes behave just like them. When I look out the door of the meeting-house in which I sit while I write this and see an old rattletrap of a car pull up outside, I get pretty hard-hearted. No doubt the folks in it are panhandlers, or so I snappishly judge. It would do me good to ask myself what people must think when they pull up outside and see my old '77 Caprice tied to the hitching-post. No doubt many a freeloader has taken one look at that wreck and driven away, believing that another down-and-outer has beaten him to the prey. Appearances are deceiving. The Lord uses better standards by which to size up people (1 Sam. 16:7) and decide how He will treat them (Deut. 7:7-8).

## "HOUSEMASTER"

**Greek Word: oikodespotein**  
**Meaning: to rule a house**

In 1 Tim. 5:14 we find the only use of this verb in the New Testament: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house. . ." (A.S.V., rule the household). It is derived from two words: **oikos**, a house; and **despotes**, a master. English speakers will see here the roots of our words "economics" (cf. **oikos** and **oikonomia**), and "despot, despotism, despotic." Is Paul telling the young women to marry and

become "despots of the household"? Let's see what he means.

In ancient times the word **despotes** did not necessarily convey the idea of irresponsible bossiness. In the synoptic gospels the nominal form of our word (**oikodespotes**) occurs twelve times. Most of these instances describe the work of a vineyard manager or estate manager (cf. Mt. 13:27, 52; 20:1; 21:33). It was used in the Hellenistic world to describe the work of a household steward (Moulton & Milligan, **Vocab. of N.T.**). There are less typical uses: In Mt. 10:25 Jesus describes Himself as the "master of the house"; and the Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, spoke of God as the "manager of the world." But the consistent feature of this word is its emphasis on **careful, farsighted, considerate** management of a particular property and the people within it.

So Paul instructs young women to be **careful, farsighted, considerate** managers of their households. Of course she rules under the authority of her husband (Eph. 5:22-23). But there is a unique realm of rule and management for wives and mothers. And confusion ensues when they manage in a careless fashion. Tragedy follows when they do not manage at all.

Reams could be written on this theme but I will content myself here with saying that the science/art of home-economics which has fallen into such disrepute among the feminists of our time is surely a noble calling. I have one word for those who tempt young women to forsake it: **Shame!**

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Is there a particular word you would like to see discussed in this column? If so, let us hear from you. We'll try to work it into a future column.

# JESUS IN ISAIAH

by Keith Storment

*"And Phillip opened his mouth, and beginning from this scripture he preached Jesus unto him" (Acts 8:35).*

This statement occurs in the midst of Phillip's encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch and tells us the text of Phillip's sermon on this occasion. What was "this scripture" from which Phillip preached Jesus to this man?

In the verses immediately preceding this we learn that the eunuch was reading from the prophet Isaiah (vss. 28, 32, 33). Specifically, he was reading from Isa. 53:7,8. It was this reading that prompted the official's query: "Of who does the prophet speak?". And it was from this text that Phillip "preached Jesus" on this occasion.

Isaiah is often titled "the Messianic prophet" because of his many prophecies of the Messiah. Indeed, John said Isaiah "saw His (Christ's) glory, and he spoke of Him" (Jn. 12:41). Chapter 53 is the epitome of Isaiah's prophecies concerning Christ. It is from this chapter that we hope to see, as Phillip caused the eunuch to see, "Jesus in Isaiah".

## THE LIFE OF JESUS—Isa. 53:1-3

Isaiah prefaces his remarks on the life of the Christ with a statement of incredibility (vs. 1). "Who has believed our message?" After all, who could believe that the Messiah, Israel and the world's Saviour, would come from a totally obscure background (vs. 2a)? That there would be no physical attraction in Him, no material inticements to accept Him (vs. 2b)? That He would be utterly rejected by men and that His life would be one of suffering (vs. 3)?

Yet this is exactly what happened. Jesus was born to a simple, peasant woman, supposedly the son of Joseph, a blue collar worker of the time (Mt. 1:18ff; Lk. 1:26ff; 3:23). He was born in a little-known village of Judea (Mt. 2:6) and came to manhood in ill-famed Nazareth, another little-known place in lower-class Galilee (Mt. 2:23; Lk. 2:51, 52; Jn. 1:46). His lowly origins were a constant stumbling block to many during His life-time (Jn. 7:41, 52). He had to remind people to follow Him for spiritual truth, that He had no

material advantage to offer (Jn. 6:26, 27; Lk. 9:57, 58). Jesus suffered much during His life: Constant attacks by the Pharisees (Mt. 12:1-8, 9-14; 15:1-9); persistent spiritual blindness on the part of many (Jn. 9:35-41); and desertion by many of His followers (Jn. 6:66). And He was ultimately rejected by the very ones who should have been most receptive to Him (Jn. 1:11).

Indeed, as John begins to draw to a close his account of the earthly life of our Lord, he quotes the very words of Isaiah's prophecy (Jn. 12:38). "Who has believed. . .?" Certainly not the Jews or they would not have rejected Him. Do you believe? Will you believe?

## THE DEATH OF JESUS—Isa. 53:4-9

Having noticed Jesus' rejection, Isaiah moves on to describe the result of that rejection: the death of our Lord. It was not for His sins He suffered, but for ours. Though He would be thought cursed by God; it was our grief and sorrow that He bore (vs. 4). It was our sins that brought about His suffering and it is only through His suffering that we can have spiritual healing (vs. 5). In vs. 6, Isaiah affirms the universality of both sin and the atonement: Though we had all sinned; yet God laid all our sins on Jesus to bear.

In vss. 7 & 8 Isaiah graphically depicts the condemnation and death of Jesus. He was oppressed--unjustly set upon--then afflicted--unlawfully punished. Though all that surrounded Him was a mockery of true justice, He offered no defense. By "legal" means--judgement--He was taken and cut off from among the living. But Isaiah closes vs. 8 with a reminder: All this was on behalf of people who had rightly earned the vengeance of God.

His death would be with the wicked (vs. 9) yet His tomb was to be with the rich. Now Isaiah reiterates the innocence of this One. No wrongful deeds had He done; no harmful words had He spoken. In the two ways man may detect sin in another, this Man was totally innocent. If He did not die for His own sins; for whose **did** He die? Isaiah's answer, time and again, is: "For our sins--for our iniquities."

And in the gospels we find ample testimony to the truth of Isaiah's prophecy. The arrest, trials, and conviction of Jesus were shot through with illegalities, impriorities, and injustices. He was arrested by night though His captors had every opportunity to seize Him openly (Lk. 22:52, 53). The Jews sought to convict Him on the basis of solicited false testimony (Mk. 14:55-59). Despite the illegal treatment, Jesus offered no defense (Mk. 14:60, 61). Later, Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, time and again declared Jesus to be innocent (Jn. 18:38; 19:4; Lk. 23:4, 14); but delivered Him up to be crucified anyway (Jn. 19:16).

Then, again in perfect accord with what Isaiah had wrote almost a 1,000 years before, Jesus was crucified between two thieves (Lk. 23:32, 33); thus being classed with criminals. But when He was dead Jesus did not share the common grave of evil-doers. Matthew alone records the interesting fact that the man who offered his own tomb for Jesus' burial was a "rich man" (Mt. 27:57ff.). Just what Isaiah had prophesied!

But the central fact, emphasized over and over in the gospels, as in Isaiah, is that Jesus did not die for some evil He had done; nor as a martyr for some nebulous "cause," NO, He died as the Lamb of God to take away the world's sin (Jn. 1:29). He gave His body that the world might have life (Jn. 3:16; 6:51). His blood was shed so that our sins might be forgiven (Mt. 26:28). Jesus gave His life for you. Have you given your life to Jesus? Are you willing to obey His way of salvation even as the eunuch did (Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:36-38)?

## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Isa. 53:10-12

Isaiah clearly indicates that the death of Jesus would not be the end of the story. In vs. 10 the prophet informs us that it was God's will for Jesus to die--to become a guilt-offering for the world's sin. If the Messiah would submit to God's will, three things are promised: He will see His children, His days will be extended, and God's will shall prosper under His reign. All of

which necessitates the return of Jesus from the dead.

And as the Messiah comes out of this great travail, God will see it and His righteous anger against sin will be satisfied (vs. 11). And man must play a part in his salvation--it is through the knowledge of the Messiah that the many will be justified.

Isaiah closes in vs. 12 by returning to the theme that God would abundantly

bless the Messiah for His obedience to the Father's will and willingness to die for the world's sin.

And as we turn to the New Testament, we find these same ideas. Since Jesus was willing to die, He now has a host of spiritual children (Hb. 2:10-13; Jn. 12:23-26). Since Jesus endured the cross, He now lives forevermore. (Heb. 12:1, 2; Rev. 1:18). Since He was obedient in all things. He

has now been made Lord of all (Phil. 2:5-11; Acts 2:36). It is only by His blood and the grace of God that we can be saved (Mt. 26:28). But it can only save us when we come to a knowledge of Him and are willing to obey His will (Rm. 10:17; Heb. 5:7-9). Have you done this?

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# Salvation Army

by Roger Shouse

Who are those bell ringers? We see them just about everywhere. Many think they are courageous for withstanding the bitter cold seeking donations to help the needy and afflicted. Others despise their subtle ways of getting us to drop any loose change into their iron kettles.

This group is THE SALVATION ARMY. What few people recognize is that the Salvation Army is a religious organization. They are active members of the World Council of Churches. Legally, the Salvation Army is a religious, charitable, non-profit organization whose officers can perform marriages, and burials, administer social welfare, conduct business of the organization and spread the Gospel. The Salvation Army has its own creed book, officers, and church buildings.

In 1865, William Booth left the Methodist ministry to preach in the slums of London's East End as an independent evangelist. Many of his first converts were prostitutes, drunkards, and thieves. The original and still paramount purpose of the Salvation Army is to lead men and women into a "right" relationship with God. Booth believed no one could absorb Christ's message if he was hungry, cold and homeless. Booth soon established "Christian Mission Centers" as a place for shelter and worship. In his Christian Missionaries he provided the necessities of life, and



always, new hope. He fed, sheltered, clothed and sought to save his people. He aimed at alleviating suffering while providing the means for the victims to get a firm, new start toward a self-supporting life, based on Christian faith. Booth and his followers rallied to their cry of "Soup, soap and Salvation". To attract crowds, they used showmanship, like magicians doing card tricks on street corners, whipping off their capes, to unveil their new Salvation Army uniforms and preaching to the crowds. His ideas caught fire. They swept through England, Scotland, and over to America.

In 1978 the name of the organization was changed to "The Salvation Army". The movement was structured after the British military system. Because of discipline and efficiency, Booth felt this was the best means to accomplish his goals. The top of the organization is the "general". Members are called "soldiers". The church as a whole is considered the

"corps". The meeting house is referred to as the "citadel". Prayer meeting is known as "Knee drill". Salvationists consider death as a "Promotion to glory". They all wear uniforms and salute by pointing towards heaven signifying their goal and mission. The articles of faith or creed book is called "The articles of War".

In their publication, *Preparation for Soldiership*, the steps for salvation are given as: repentance toward God; faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and conversion by the Holy Spirit. The Salvation Army teaches that "all men are born in sin because of Adam and Eve". They do not observe the Lord's Supper and rarely practice water baptism.

The Salvation Army is best known for its service. They are involved in health clinics, hospitals, homes for unwed mothers, orphan homes, foster care services, homes for the aged, summer camps, missing persons bureau, employment services, prison reforms, half-way homes, disaster relief, servicemen's centers, anti-suicide patrols, alcohol rehabilitation, institutions for the blind and many other works.

We write this to inform you and enlighten you. Perhaps the next time you feel charitable maybe you should send a check to some organization that does not have religious ties. To give to the Salvation Army is to SUPPORT the Salvation Army, a religious organization. We must always do the will of our Father (Matt. 7:21-23) even when helping the needy.

Information gathered from: "What everyone should know about the Salvation Army" "The Salvation Army", *Christian Herald*, July, 1965. "Preparation for Soldiership" (Salvation Army publication). "The Salvation Army", *Christianity Today*, December, 1983.

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# TEEN TALK

*A Column for teens and by teens*

"Several of my friends go out to eat together every Friday night and then go to a movie. They have asked me to start going with them and I would really like to, but I have a fear about doing so. There have been a few times that they have gone to see R-rated movies. I don't think Christians ought to see these. How can I turn down the movie and still keep them as friends?"



**Michelle McClelland  
Sparks, NV**  
Age: 17

Let your friends know how you feel and if they want to go see an "R" movie anyway then tell them you can go when they see a "PG" or "G" movie. You'll be surprised to see how often they will go to a "PG". Their reason may be "it's not cool to go to a "PG movie" but when they see you want to, it might become a fad. I think the important thing is to be a leader and not a follower. A leader can lead good or bad. When you stand up for your beliefs you'll find others who believe the same way will also stand up with you! Always remember: Be a Leader!



**Chris Reid**  
Birmingham, AL  
Age: 15

There is a possibility that you could change their ideas about the kind of movie that they decide to go see. By telling them that you would prefer to

see only a movie that is clean and decent, you might be able to influence them for good and show them your good example. Suggest to them that the R-rated movies are just not the type that young people should be seeing.

If, however, you cannot change their minds, you could still go out to eat with them but skip the movie. Remember: a Christian is to keep himself clean and unspotted from the world. Also, he needs to think on only things that are pure, just, honest, and of good report (Phil. 4:8).



**Ginger Clark**  
Bowling Green, KY  
Age: 14

I would tell my friends that I am a Christian and that I don't feel like I should see some of the movies they see. If they were true friends, they would understand how you feel.

There are also some things that you could do with them like: (1) you could go out to eat with them and then go home or (2) after you go out to eat you could go to the movies and see something else either by yourself or (3) see something else with your friends.

You could also invite them to church, and teach them why you don't see those movies, and also teach them right and wrong.



**Robin Underwood**  
Middlebourne, WV  
Age: 14

We all must take a stand for our beliefs and what we know to be the

truth sometime in our lives. I think that turning down this movie, and maybe even many more, is a small sacrifice compared to what God and Christ have done for us. I don't think Christ would have said "but my friends might not like me if I teach your will."

Anyway, if your friends are worth having, they will understand your decision, and respect you for taking a stand (Prov. 17:17, Prov. 18:24). We have to remember, our life is just a dot on a line that goes on forever. I'd rather do God's will in that short amount of time, than spend eternity in torment.



**Paul Schreiner, Jr.**  
Oxford, OH  
Age: 17

The best solution is to ask your friends, before you go with them, what movie they plan to see. If it is an acceptable movie then there's no problem. However, if it is an R-rated movie tell them what you believe. Don't make excuses for your beliefs. You, as a Christian, can't be afraid to let others know you are different. We are to be set apart from the world, not made to look like it.

Perhaps you could go to eat with them and then leave before the movie or you could ask them to see a more suitable movie. Whether they comply with your request or not, I'm sure they won't turn you down as a friend because of your beliefs. If they do, they have a lot to learn about friendship.

Yet, the most important thing is to let them know where you stand. Don't feel you must give in to peer pressure and compromise God's will to keep them as your friends.

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# AGE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

by Keith Ward

At some point, children become accountable to God for their actions. Because the Bible gives no definite age, many despair of finding a solution, and leave the whole matter to chance. Others manufacture solutions that may well spiritually harm a child. Discerning God's guidelines in this matter is of utmost importance since we must not advise delay to an accountable person. But, neither should we burden the unaccountable with unfair decisions and responsibilities; not to mention the false-security they may feel, later in life, thinking they have obeyed God when, in fact, they could not.

## CHILDREN ARE INNOCENTS

Children are not saints. The New Testament applies that term only to Christians, men who have been saved, Children, having never been lost, cannot be "the saved." Paul says, "And I was alive apart from the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died" (Rom. 7:9). This passage teaches that one who is not responsible to the law is innocent before God, and becomes accountable when he understands the law sufficiently to disobey it of his own will—to sin. Thus, children are born innocent, and remain innocent, for some time. Our aim is to explore the Bible for clues to help us determine when that time of innocence ends.

## PERMANENT TEETH

One unusual means of determining accountability is the assertion that children become accountable when they get permanent teeth. This view is based on a wresting of figurative language in the fifty-eighth Psalm. David speaks of the wicked as young lions, calling on God to break out their great teeth (Psa. 58:6). Completely ignoring that this refers to the teeth of lions, one has deduced that "great" means "permanent," and that the wicked, thus, have permanent teeth. Somehow ignoring the figure between that compares the wicked with serpents, he says that verse 3 shows that the time young people begin to

develop permanent teeth is the same time they begin to understand what a lie is. Were not children being terrified by this foolish story, it would not even bear mentioning. The young lions are wicked men, impenitent, hardened sinners whom David prays for God to slay in vengeance, so men may see that "There is a God that judgeth in the earth" (Psa. 58:10-11). The Psalm nowhere speaks of accountability.

## "I'M NOT GOD"

"...and I could never tell them not to obey." No one ought to play God, but sometimes we should play parent, and teach our children some guidelines. Any one with even common-sense psychology could take a four or five year old child and drill him in all the right answers to all the questions a preacher could think to ask. Then, for good measure, he could terrify the child to nightmares and tears with stories of eternal hell if he is not baptized. Then, when this problem is dumped on the church, all would be astonished at the child's answers, professed dedication to Jesus, and tearful determination to be baptized to be saved. Then they proclaim, "Well, we can't play God. . . ." We know the situation would be ridiculous at age four or five, but we begin to lose our senses about eight or nine. You may ask, "Who would brainwash an innocent child in this manner?" Every parent does who brings their children to services week after week to hear sermons on faith in Jesus, the plan of salvation, the purpose of baptism, the consequences of disobedience, the terrors of hell, etc., but never provides the child any guidelines regarding accountability. Such a course is in fact, if not intent, a program of brainwashing. Under these circumstances we should not be at all surprised to see unaccountable children "coming forward." Some cases rival the Catholic practice of infant baptism.

## FOR OUR LEARNING

In Old Testament times, God held

people accountable only insofar as they were capable. We see one good illustration of this principle concerning who was kept out of the promised land. Many presume that every adult perished in the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. God said, "Not one of the MEN of this evil generation shall see the good land. . . ." and "All the generation of the MEN OF WAR were consumed from the midst of the camp as Jehovah sware" (Deut. 1:35, 2:14). We learn that the men of war were "every male from twenty years old and upward" (Num. 1:20). When the spies reported, the men of war made the wrong decision and refused to enter the promised land. Evidently, only men of war had a vote in decisions involving war; only they were capable. They were the ones responsible for the decision, and they were the ones held accountable. Since this was a war decision the women and younger men were not capable of entering into, they were not held accountable.

## TODAY

Of course, twenty is the age of accountability ONLY for being a soldier in Israel. Our aim was to show that to be held accountable by God, one must be capable of doing what God requires. We do not need to be "males twenty years and upwards" to become Christians; we need to be capable of faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

## FAITH

In order to hear and believe, one must be capable of taking in evidence, weighing it, and deciding whether to accept or reject the conclusion that follow from it. We are quick to point out to our religious neighbors that sin is not inherited (Ezek. 18:15-20). Someone needs to remind some of us that neither is faith inherited. It may be instilled, as it was from a Lois to a Eunice to a Timothy, but each one must hear and believe for himself (2 Tim. 1:5). Faith is an exercise of the will as men choose to believe or

disbelieve. The parroting of facts and attitudes that a child learns at church and home is not faith, but only a perception of what is expected of him. Some have confused the ability to regurgitate facts with faith.

#### REPENTANCE

Repentance is a turning of the will, an inner determination to cease from self and sin, and to submit to Jesus. Before one can repent, he must have a consciousness of sin. By consciousness of sin, we refer to the personal awareness that one has sinned, and is responsible to God for his sins. Some who are being baptized for remission of sins cannot even define covet, adultery, or other works of the flesh they are supposedly turning from.

Guilty feelings are not repentance. Children begin exhibiting guilt at age three or four as every parent has observed.

Realizing that repentance is an act of the will, some have discouraged their children when they asked to be baptized. This is done continually, until the child obeys without asking the parent first. At this sign of a supposedly "strong will," the parent says, "Now you are ready." One problem is that children are not so dumb that they will not learn that this is expected of them, too. Another is that it teaches the child to be "*disobedient to parents*" (Rom. 1:30). Finally, it confuses stubbornness, or rebellion, with repentance.

As well as a turning from sin, repentance is a turning to the Lord. Can a child who yesterday wanted to be a jet pilot, and today wants to be a fireman or a nurse, make such a serious commitment? Even adults are sometimes undecided about career choices, but we do recognize that they are capable of the choice. Our patronizing attitude toward the ten or eleven year olds, "I'm going to be a \_\_\_\_\_ when I grow up," shows that we understand that he is incapable of the decision. Is the decision to obey God less important, or easier, than these temporal decisions?

Evidently, some have confused Pavlovian responses, conditioned by the hundreds of sermons and Bible classes the child receives by age eight or nine, with repentance.

#### CONFESSION

Our proverbial three year old has sufficient vocabulary to say the words with a little coaching. But, how can

one confess what he cannot believe? And, how can one believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God when he does not know the "facts of life"? Though he may parrot that Jesus was born of a virgin, was both God and man, he cannot confess it.

#### BAPTISM

Can one be baptized to be eternally saved when 90% of all his time and thinking is given to playing? (Some adults ought to chew on that a bit too!) One professes to be baptized to receive the blessings that are in Christ Jesus, but really he is more concerned about "the blessings" in next year's Christmas stocking. Such a mockery of a God-given institution.

When Jesus was twelve, he performed the first accountable act the Bible records of him (Lk. 2:45-51). Dare we say that our children become spiritually mature at an earlier age than Jesus? Twelve is not "the age of accountability," but perhaps we should pause before accepting those who are younger.

#### RE-BAPTISM

"Well, when they grow up, they can be re-baptized if they decide they are not satisfied." First, the speaker realizes they are not grown up, or he would not make the statement. Thus, he knows already that the whole action is a farce. Next, we must face the possibility that the child may accept the act as valid because the whole church did, and never question his childhood act. Then, what if it were not valid? [With so many affirming that sincerity forgives ignorance, I must press and ask, "If one were sincerely, ignorantly sure that his baptism as an infant were valid, would that make it acceptable to God?" Even here I fear some would say, "Yes, if he lives righteously." Such simply is not so, "*Ye must be born again*" (Jn. 3:3-5)]. Finally, such a false start places a severe emotional strain on the child when he does grow up. On the other hand, when he begins to feel the genuine consciousness of sin, he will have no remedy. Believing he has already been saved, he will feel doubly guilty for his sin and awareness of it. Where can he turn? What can he do? Many have given up in despair. On the other hand, he faces an agonizing self-examination. Not only must he decide whether to obey God as all sinners must, he also must decide how to obey God--repent and pray, or repent and be baptized. The uncertainties

of such a decision have led many others to despair.

I know. Forgive the personal references, but I hope they will help to show the seriousness of this problem. I was baptized at twenty-four. I had heard brother James Cope preach a sermon in which he recounted having preached the gospel to the husband of a member. When the man arose from the kitchen table and said, "I'm ready to be baptized," the wife said she was, too. Brother Cope related that he turned to her in surprise, "I thought you were a Christian already." She replied, "I thought I was too, but hearing these lessons has made me realize I did not know what I was doing as a child." That little anecdote struck me like a thunderbolt. I had been baptized as a boy of thirteen or fourteen. Now, I agonized, "Was it valid?" Through the years, I had led singing and prayers, waited on the Lord's table, and even preached on occasion. But, I knew that did not alter the facts. We tell our Baptist friends that the reason is as important as the baptism. So, I knew that I could not be baptized "to be on the safe side." Such is no better a reason than being baptized because you "have already been saved." Neither is scriptural; baptism must be "*for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38). I prayed to God for help, in tears, not knowing if He heard me as His child or not. I wandered the rainy night examining and re-examining every thought and motive I could remember having on that earlier day. I knew I did not need to know everything about baptism for it to have been valid--I know even more today. I recalled how I had felt pushed when I learned before services that my younger sister intended to be baptized. And, I knew Dad and Mom wanted it; I knew the right answers and reasons, so I got wet. After "three days and nights" of tortured self-examination to be sure I was not merely taking the easy answer to my problem, I was finally baptized into Christ. In a way, I was lucky, for fourteen was old enough for me to remember what I had done and why. Those "baptized" at ten or eleven have a greater problem. I have learned that many have experiences much the same as mine. I wonder how many we never hear of because they give up in despair and go to the devil?

#### A SPECIAL PROBLEM

Those who believe women must

wear a head-covering have a special problem. I do not intend to discuss the covering question, just to bring to our attention a problem I have observed for consideration. Their young girls see "Mary Jane" wearing a veil now, and they want to wear one too. They know that they must be baptized first. Since any eight year old who has attended services a year or more can give all the right answers. Mother is soon on the way to the store for a new veil, which daughter can hardly wait to wear and show at the next services. A chain reaction may take place with many children going forward. This chain-reaction happens among children of non-covering brethren as well. Perhaps, some boy wants to take the Lord's Supper like "Johnny," and triggers it. Everyone rejoices that "We

are saving our young people," and anyone who has any qualms will be wise not to voice them.

#### THE SOLUTION

Let children be children. The youngest person recorded as having been baptized in the New Testament was Timothy, and he was old enough about two years later to leave home and be useful to Paul as a fellow preacher, and even to go alone at times (Acts 14:8-10, 16:1-2; I Thess. 3:6). As parents, we need to establish guidelines for our children so they will know when they are "old enough." Those guidelines should be based upon the qualifications a person needs before he can obey the plan of salvation. We also need to realize that if we do not establish some guidelines, give some definite answers and standards

ourselves, our children will be terrorized into a false obedience by repeated sermons. Or, pushed by anxious parents. Or pressured by their friends having gone forward. Such precipitous action sets the stage for tragedy. Guidelines based on qualifications to believe, repent, confess, and be baptized should solve problems of setting an age limit. Some will never qualify no matter how old they become, for their mental faculties never develop. Others develop at various rates, and no arbitrary minimum age limit should be set. Yet, more often than we like to think, we are baptizing the unaccountable--just like the Catholics.

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# IS IT A SECRET?

by Don Truex

One of the admirable virtues so often lost with haste among Christians is that sense of joy and conviction at the time of conversion that in essence says, "I want the world to know, I AM A CHRISTIAN." That sterling attitude of courage and zeal is often replaced with an attitude similar to that of Joseph of Arimathea of whom we read in John 19:38. He was a "disciple of Jesus," but **secretly**. Here was a man of position, wealth, social distinction who could have been a tremendous asset to the cause of Christ and yet was afraid to make an open avowal of his faith "for fear of the Jews." Though finally he broke the chain of fear that gripped him and begged and buried the body of Jesus, the many opportunities to stand with Christ during His life were now gone.

My friend, secrecy in discipleship is not only a personal shame and disgrace, it is also a severe hindrance to Christ's cause in general. Are you aware of the formidable challenges to New Testament Christianity that the world is confidently presenting? The battle concerning evolution is once again beginning to rage. Humanism, the ideal that the human is the focal point of everything and thus pleasing

him is all important, has gained more than a foothold. Further, we are constantly urged to accept an ecumenical viewpoint that would have us bestow fellowship to those to whom God has denied salvation. And the list could be easily multiplied time after time. The question arises as to who is to meet the challenge? Gospel elders, deacons, and preachers alone? Such thinking is too shallow and narrow. God once asked, "Who shall order the battle?" The answer resounded, then and now, "Thou!" But how can this be done if we, like Joseph, fear embarrassment, ridicule, the unfavorable thoughts and looks of others, or perhaps even fear our own possible failure?

Allow me to suggest that there is absolutely no need for the Christian to fear any of these. "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" (Psalms 118:6). Consider that Paul encourages us that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds" (2 Cor. 10:4). The Christian who has learned to use well the "sword of the spirit, which is the word of God" need have no fear. He stands superior to his spiritual foe. And, when coupled with

the aid promised by God, the Christian and His cause are invincible.

The language of victory never manifested fear of man or failure. We would do well to incorporate these attitudes as our own. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. . . The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and His ears are open unto their prayers. . . Thanks be to God which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. . . I can do all things through Jesus Christ who strengthens me." (Psalms 46:1; 1 Pet. 3:12; 1 Cor. 15:57; Phil. 4:13). To the Christian in possession of these attitudes, the idea of secret discipleship is repulsive.

It is interesting that Peter enjoins virtue, i.e., courage and moral persuasion, upon us immediately after faith (2 Peter 1:5). Very simply, faith without the courage of our convictions is useless. But courage that induces an expression of our faith, whether by word or action, fortifies that faith and illustrates our sincerity to others. Is this not what churches so desperately need? Let us strive to build congregations full of men and women who are incensed at ungodliness, anxious to let it be known whose they are and whom they serve, and who have prepared themselves through diligent study to not only passively stand opposed to unrighteousness, but actively defeat it with the power of God's word.

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**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT WORSHIP** by Lynn Hieronymus (College Press: Joplin, Missouri), 1984, hardback, 362 pages, \$13.50.

Abraham Lincoln, in his famed "House Divided" speech, stated that if we could know first where we are we could then know better what to do and how we should do it. The author of this new book has adopted that homespun logic to a study of worship. He has structured his book in two parts.

The first part, "How We Got Here!", is a careful examination of the worship practices past and present of many Christian Churches/Churches of Christ as well as a study of the biblical model of worship. This section contains six chapters. The first chapter looks at some of the pioneer preachers, starting with the influence of Alexander Campbell, and examines a rising awareness of a need for "order". The second chapter surveys the present practices: the order of the morning service, the priority of the Lord's Supper and the sermon. The third chapter examines worship in the first-century synagogue and the first-century church. The fourth chapter defines "worship". The fifth chapter looks at the relevance of restoration and examines the tension between form and content. The final chapter in the first section explores Biblical themes such as the day of worship, the places of worship, and the practice of fasting.

The second part of this book, "Where We Can Go!", is a study of possible places for improvement in worship services today. In this section, the author considers such topics as the preaching of the Word, the observing of the Lord's Supper, developing congregational participation, and the planning of the actual service.

A special study on Alexander Campbell and the hymnbook is divided into eighteen chapters toward the end of the book. It deals with Campbell as a reformer, an editor, a hymnwriter. Hieronymus has collected quotes from Campbell on his views on choirs, singing schools, instrumental music, and several other topics.

Whether one agrees with everything the author says or not (and this writer did not agree with every section), it is a book well worth reading to better understand and appreciate worship--past and present.

**THE PRECIOUSNESS OF PREACHING** by Eldred Stevens (Stevens Publications: Dallas, Texas), 1980, hardback, 116 pages, \$8.50.

In the fall of 1951, Abilene Christian University began a series of lectures entitled **Lectures on Preaching**. The material in this book comprise the lectures delivered during the twenty-second series. There are seven lectures: "Preciousness of Preaching," "Preparation for Preaching," "Pertinence in Preaching," "Personality of the Preacher," "Power in Preaching," "Prayerfulness of the Preacher," and "Perseverance of the Preacher."

This is one of those little books that can help everyone that reads it. For those contemplating preaching the gospel, it explains some of the joys involved. I would recommend it for all preaching-training classes. For those already in the midst of an active ministry of preaching, I would recommend it for renewed strength. And for those contemplating leaving their work of preaching to enter secular work, I would recommend the last chapter in the book with a look at "tent making."

**MARRIAGE IN THE FAST LANE** by Perry C. Cotham (20th Century Christian: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, paperback, 182 pages, \$4.95.

This book is designed as a one-month survival manual for couples that want happier homes. There are

thirty chapters, one for each day of the month. The topics are numerous and varied and the chapters are short. One could easily read it in two or three sittings, but Cotham is hopeful that husbands and wives will read it together and then discuss the material.

The reader will find fresh and stimulating approaches to a wide variety of topics, such as authority, debts, death, sex, adultery, mid-life crisis, gender differences, jealousy, and much, much more.

The material is not real deep--it's not designed to be. It is packed full of practical information for analyzing and enriching Christian marriages. The author's approach is balanced by a wholesome respect for Biblical authority and also by his experience in counseling and his study of modern research findings in the social sciences.

**THE VICTOR HANDBOOK OF BIBLE KNOWLEDGE** by V. Gilbert Beers (Victor Books: Wheaton, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 640 pages, \$29.95.

Most Bible handbooks are arranged book by book, chapter by chapter, and verse by verse through the Bible. A few are arranged topically. This handbook stands out as being different from all of the rest. Beers has arranged this book story by story through the Bible.

This book contains more than 1,350 illustrations--including hundreds of drawings taken from objects or monuments of Bible times, photos of Bible lands today, archaeological discoveries, full-color paintings, reconstructions, and colorful maps which show the Bible in action. The book moves through the Bible, story by story, with background information in word and picture for the 300 most important Bible stories.

Beginning with the creation, the Garden of Eden, cherubims, and a look at the word "begat", the text is written in an easy-to-read style, with much emphasis on interest as well as information.

This volume will be a wonderful

addition to every library--for the preacher, the Bible teacher, the parent. It will help lesson preparation, sermon preparation, home devotions, and Bible storytelling.

**THE NAKED PUBLIC SQUARE** by Richard John Neuhaus (Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, Michigan), 1984, hardcover, 280 pages, \$16.95.

This controversial new book, written by a culturally conservative and politically devoted Lutheran, has become a rallying point for those who agree with Ronald Reagan's stand on many moral issues. This book looks at religion and politics in America.

Secular humanists and those on the "left" argue that they want religion left out of politics, but they continue to impose their values on the country. If this book is read as widely as it should be, the atheists and humanists in this country will have a hard time pretending they're morally neutral.

This book may change the way you use the words right and left, public and private, religion and secular humanism. Neuhaus covers religious events during the past twenty years: from the new left to the new right, from the evangelicals to the mainline, from Jerry Falwell to Martin Luther King, Jr.

George Will described this book as the one "from which further debate about church-state relations should begin."

**THE NEW STRONG'S EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE TO THE BIBLE** by James Strong (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 1825 pages, \$22.95.

For over ninety years, Strong's Exhaustive Concordance has been the most valuable Bible reference tool for all students of the Bible. Now, Thomas Nelson has introduced a new easy-to-read modern print edition that will make all others obsolete. The entire text has been completely reset--for the first time since 1890.

The volume also includes a Key Verse Comparison Chart, containing 243 pages of the most significant verses compared from six major translations (King James, New King James, New American Standard, New International, Revised Standard, and Today's English Version).

Entries are now sub-divided and defined when words have several meanings or refer to more than one

person, place, or object. New features also include: alphabetical listing of every word in the KJV with variant spellings from modern editions, definitions and pronunciations for all proper names, and a numbering system with all of the errors corrected.

All of this, plus Greek and Hebrew lexicons, laws of the Bible, illustrations of Christ, the Jewish calendar, Jewish feasts, monies and weights, and more--make this a valuable tool for any library.

**YOUNG'S BIBLE DICTIONARY** by G. Douglas Young (Tyndale House Publishers: Wheaton, Illinois), 1984, hardback, 640 pages, \$14.95.

From Aaron to Zuzites, this dictionary presents the latest on-location information about customs and culture, archaeological discoveries, people, plants, animals, Bible names and their meanings, and significant locations with coordinates keyed to maps.

In 1958, Dr. Young founded the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem and served as its president until 1978. This dictionary was produced in cooperation with the Institute--the only English Bible dictionary prepared in Israel. For the latest information on archaeology with regards to names, places, and customs, this volume will give you an Israeli perspective.

The dictionary comes with a fold-out map coordinated with six-digit grids used in the dictionary. It is very helpful in finding the area you are reading about.

**ABRAHAM AND DAVID: PLACES THEY KNEW** by F.F. Bruce (Thomas Nelson Publishers: Nashville, Tennessee), 1984, hardback, 128 pages, \$12.95.

This delightful book is a companion volume to **Jesus and Paul: Places They Knew**, the award-winning reference book in 1983. The author was also named Author of the Year.

Drawing upon information gleaned from the Old Testament, early church histories, and archaeological findings, Bruce follows Abraham's journey from Ur to his final resting place at the cave of Machpelah. He also traces David's rise from his birth in Bethlehem through his exile in the wilderness of Judah to his becoming king over all Israel when he was in Hebron.

The book is filled with lovely color photographs, as well as written descrip-

tions, maps, diagrams, and detailed illustrations. Politics, agriculture, and military conquests are closely interwoven with ten places associated with Abraham and ten associated with David.

**CHECK YOUR HOMELIFE** by Knofel Staton (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1983, paperback, 176 pages, \$4.95.

You want your family to be happy and to be successful. It can be done, but there are no shortcuts. Selfishness must give way to sacrifice. Gimmicks must give way to God. God has a design for a successful family living. The author of this book shows you how success can be yours if you are willing to change whatever needs changing.

Staton feels that no one should live alone and no one develops well alone. He argues that human development comes through interpersonal sharing in love. Yet the development of man is facing a powerful enemy called "individualism," which threatens to destroy the concept of the community. Nowhere is this more vividly seen than in the home.

A study of this book should help you become the kind of people God intended.

**CHECK YOUR MORALITY** by Knofel Staton (Standard Publishing: Cincinnati, Ohio), 1983, paperback, 144 pages, \$3.95.

Abortion, homosexuality, contraception, teenage sex, dating, incest, pornography, divorce, and alcohol--these are just a few subjects that people are asking about in our modern society. This book of moral issues deals helpfully with them from a Biblical perspective. Rather than preach, author Staton offers insights on each topic to help the reader develop his or her own understanding of God's teaching.

At the end of each chapter are some questions "for your consideration or discussion."

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# The Teaching Of Women's Liberation About Moral Issues

by David Pratte

**I**n this article, we want to compare the views of the leaders in the Women's Liberation Movement to the Bible.

## TEACHING OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION ABOUT ABORTION

"A woman's sexuality is severely limited by the continual fear of pregnancy. To gain control over our lives we must have control over the reproductive functions of our bodies. We must have safe and effective birth control and access to free legal and safe abortions. The decision to have a child is ours and ours only--not the doctor's, the father's or anyone else's." --Document, p.9

"The basic human right to limit one's own reproduction includes the right to all forms of birth control (contraception, including sterilization, and abortion). . .We therefore oppose all legislation and practices that restrict access to any of these means of birth control and advocate positive measures requiring: that all public hospitals offer contraception, sterilization and abortion to anyone requesting these services. . .Repeal of all abortion laws. . .Women should be guaranteed their civil right to an abortion. . ."

--Revolution, p. 15

"NOW urges educators and legislators to work with us toward the . . .provision of contraceptive and abortion counseling in the same way that drug and draft counseling are now a part of many school programs. . ."

--Revolution, p. 9

"NOW endorses the principle that it is a basic right of every woman to control her reproductive life, and therefore NOW supports the furthering of the sexual revolution of our century by pressing for widespread sex education, provision of birth control information and contraceptives, and the repeal of all laws restricting abortion, contraception and sexual activity between consenting adults in private."--Revolution, p. 20.

Please note that Libbers view abortion as an acceptable means of birth control just like contraception.

They say it should be available to anyone who asks for it, and should, of course, be "free" (i.e., paid for by our tax dollars!).

## THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE ABOUT ABORTION

The Bible clearly identifies unborn babies, between contraception and birth, as being "children" (Gen. 25:21,22), "babies" (Lk. 1:41,44), "man-child" (Job 3:3), "sons" and/or "daughters" (Lk. 1:36; Gen. 5:3,4), etc. All these terms are commonly used elsewhere for children after birth. When used for offspring physically conceived by human parents, these terms refer to individuals that are just as human as their parents, yet are separate and distinct individuals from their parents. In other words, God speaks of unborn babies as being as fully human as those that have been born.

The Bible also teaches that parents should love, appreciate, care for, and protect their children (Psa. 127:3-5; 128:3-5; 113:9; Tit. 2:4). To fail to do this is to be "without natural affection" (Rom. 1:31, 32; 2 Tim. 3:3). It is obvious that Libbers lack this love for children. They contribute to the mindset of our society that children are "unwanted". It is a simple fact that women carry and give birth to children, but men don't. Libbers hate this because they hate any apparent advantage men have. Children also hinder Libber's careers. In other words, Libbers do not want children because, frankly, they are selfish. So they justify any means of avoiding children, including murder. (We will see, however, that they do not necessarily advocate the one legitimate and sure way to avoid children--virginity!) The solution is to learn the joy and beauty of loving and caring for children.

The Bible expressly condemns the practice of deliberately killing innocent human individuals (Ex. 23:7; Prov. 6:16,17; Matt. 15:19,20; Rom. 13:8-10; Rev. 21:8; 22:15). Specifically, we are forbidden to shed the blood of

innocent sons and daughters (Psa. 106:37,38; Jer. 7:31; Acts 7:19). But we have seen that unborn babies are sons and daughters, they are human individuals.

## THE TEACHING OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION ABOUT SEXUAL MORALITY

We have already cited quotes showing NOW advocates furthering the sexual revolution, believes people have a right to all sexual acts between consenting adults, contraceptives should be available to all without restrictions of any kind (that includes unmarried minors), and schools should teach all this to kids.

"NOW urges educators and legislators to work with us toward . . the integration of all physical education courses from kindergarten through high school. . .the upgrading of sex education courses to include factual information on contraception. . .and to remove all reference to 'ideal' or 'normal' 'masculine' or 'feminine' etiquette, social behavior and vocations;"--Revolution, p. 9

"Therefore, it is important for us to encourage women to leave their husbands. . ."

"It (divorce) makes for better family life. . .Divorce improves the quality of marriage."--Dr. Mary Jo Bane, Assoc. Director of Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, *Tulsa Sunday World*, 8/21/77 (Reported by Pro-Family Forum)

So Women's Libbers also believe schools should discuss all these issues but make no reference to what constitutes ideal or normal social behavior. Boys and girls should have physical education together. (Will girls wear typical scanty gym uniforms? What about the physical contact involved in many sports?) Further, divorce improves the quality of marriage, and NOW "affirms the right of women to choose to work as prostitutes when it is their own choice" (resolution passed at 1982 NOW convention, per Phyllis Schlafly

Report, 11/82). Clearly the "right to control one's own body" is just Libbers' jargon for doing whatever you feel like doing sexually.

#### THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE ABOUT SEXUAL MORALITY

Premarital sex is **fornication**, and extramarital sex is **adultery**, both of which are repeatedly rebuked (I Cor. 6:9-11,18; Rev. 21:8; 22:14,15; Mk. 7:20-23; etc.) To avoid fornication, a woman should have her own husband, but she must maintain virginity before marriage and then keep herself only to her husband (I Cor. 7:2-4,9; Heb. 13:4). Men, of course, must do the same.

**Marriage is a lifetime commitment.** Divorce & remarriage constitutes adultery, except when one divorces a companion who has been guilty of fornication (Matt. 19:3-9; 5:32; Rom. 7:2,3).

In order to avoid fornication and adultery, **men and women must avoid clothing, speech, and conduct that may arouse others to illicit sexual desires.** It is not just the act of fornication that is forbidden, but so also the desire to so act (Matt. 5:28; Prov. 6:25). But we sin if we tempt or encourage ourselves or someone else to commit sinful acts or desires (Lk. 17:1,2; Rom. 1:32; 13:14; Matt. 6:13). The sin of arousing or exciting sexual desires is called "*lasciviousness*" (Mk. 7:20-23; I Pet. 4:3; Gal. 5:19-21). To avoid this sin, women are especially warned to practice chastity and modesty. (I Tim. 2:9,10; Tit. 2:4,5).

#### THE TEACHING OF WOMEN'S LIBERATION ABOUT LESBIANISM

We have already given proof that NOW "supports the furthering of the sexual revolution" and presses for "the repeal of all laws restricting. . . sexual activity between consenting adults in private." But NOW concluded that this was a grossly inadequate statement of support for homosexuals, so NOW adopted a lengthy statement in 1971, including the following:

**"NOW has been silent on the issue of lesbianism. Yet no other woman suffers more abuse and discrimination for the right to be her own person than does the lesbian. . . Not only is she assumed to be unstable or sick or immoral; but. . . the lesbian is considered unnatural, incomplete, not quite a woman. . . Be it further resolved: That a woman's right to her own**

**person includes the right to define and express her own sexuality and to choose her own lifestyle; and Be it further resolved: that NOW acknowledge the oppression of lesbians as a legitimate concern of feminism." -** *Revolution*, pp. 20,21

**"Heterosexual relationships are by their very nature oppressive to women in a male dominated society. . . Liberated sexuality is freedom from oppressive sexual stereotyping [sic.] The freedom to choose heterosexuality, homosexuality, bi-sexuality or asexuality but not to be bound by them." --Document, pp. 8,9**

**". . . our educational system is doubly oppressive to the lesbian. . . School counselors should be required to take courses in human sexuality in which a . . . positive view of lesbianism is presented. No school counselor should ever refer a student. . . for the purpose of changing her/his sexual preference from gay to straight. Such conditioning conveys to the student that her/his feelings of love are unworthy and unacceptable; . . . Courses in sex education should be taught by persons who have taken the human sexuality courses already mentioned. Students will thus be encouraged to explore alternate life styles, including lesbianism. Speakers from local lesbian organizations should be invited to these classes. . . Schools should set up lesbian study programs. . . to foster pride in the adolescent lesbian. . . School libraries should be supplied with. . . books that portray the joy of women loving women. The use of these books should be encouraged in literature and history classes. . . Lesbian clubs should be established in the schools [to]. . . help lesbians to develop pride in their life styles."--*Lesbians and the Schools*, Jean O'Leary & Ginny Vida, published by New York chapter of NOW. O'Leary was appointed by Carter to IWY commission.**

In 1982, the NOW convention voted to make lesbian rights their #1 resolution (*Chrisitan Inquirer*, 12/82). At first, one may wonder why Libbers would be so supportive of homosexuals, but a little thought gives the answers. (1) To say women can have sexual union only with men would make women dependent on men for something, and Libbers rebel against any form of depending on men for anything! (2) Libbers' literature shows

that they frankly hate men! They share this in common with many lesbians. Women who hate men yet still want sexual gratification are only left with other women. (3) Additionally, lesbians do not get pregnant, and we have seen Libbers like that too. (4) Libbers and lesbians find themselves mutually sympathetic to one another's desire to crusade against their "oppression". In short, support for Gay Lib is a natural, logical consequence of the rebellious, crusading, anti-male, anti-child stand of Women's Lib.

#### THE TEACHING OF THE BIBLE ABOUT LESBIANISM

First, the Bible would agree with Libbers who say lesbians are not mentally ill, nor are they victims of some inherited nature they cannot control. **People become homosexuals by choice.** Circumstances may encourage some people toward homosexuality more than they do other people, but still those people have the power to choose to not become homosexuals. Hence, the only real issue is whether or not the choice to practice homosexuality is a morally acceptable choice.

The Bible clearly affirms that **homosexuality is morally wrong.** It is an abomination to God (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; Gen. 19:4-7,9-11). Those who practice it will not inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9-11). To practice or condone it is to reject God (Rom. 1:26,27). The sexual union is pure and holy only within a marriage commitment between one man and one woman (I Cor. 7:2-4; Heb. 13:4).

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# Studies In Psalms

by Ken Green

## AS FOR ME

(Chapter 5)

The fifth psalm has never been a favorite, yet it is packed full of beautiful thoughts. This psalm is dedicated "To the chief Musician upon Nehiloth." It is a psalm of David. We observed in the last psalm that many Hebrew authorities believe "Neginoth" to refer to stringed instruments. This "Nehiloth" is believed by many to refer to wind instruments. It is said by some to be derived from a word which means to bore through as in a pipe or flute. Others disagree and maintain that it has reference to the melody or something else. The Septuagint translates it: "For him who shall obtain inheritance." The meaning is not that important or God would have seen to it that the knowledge was preserved.

Here, as in the first four psalms, the contrast between the righteous and the wicked is made obvious. David was in bad circumstances when he wrote.

### HE PROMISED TO PRAY (v. 1-3)

"Give ear to my words, O Lord; consider my meditation." Whether his prayer was expressed in words or in silent longings and groanings which could not be uttered, he begged for God's attention. Prayer and meditation must go together to God's throne. Words that do not spring forth from the heart are of no value. May our meditations be such that we would call upon God to consider them.

"Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my king, and my God: for unto thee will I pray." David's prayer was a cry. He did not clip off memorized words in an indifferent monotone. His cry was unto a king and a God. But David was not an alien. He to whom he directed his cry was not just any king and any God. He's "my king. . . my God"

emphasizes the psalmist. Kings are primarily interested in the pleas of their own people. The New Testament reveals God to be not only a king and a God, but a loving Father. Let us be sure He is "our Father."

Others may seem to get along well without prayer, but David vows that he will pray. Others may direct their petitions to heathen idols, but only unto the true God would David pray.

"My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." The dawning of a new day is a fit time for prayer. Sprugeon said, "Prayer should be the key of the morning and the lock of the evening."

When he prayed he would look up. This refers not to posture in prayer, but to expectation. He would pray and then look for the answer. "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

### HE GLORIFIES GOD (v. 4-6)

"For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee." God despises evil. Not until we approach the hatred that He harbors for sin shall we appreciate the blessing of forgiveness. It matters not how witty and charming the wicked may think themselves, God has no pleasure in their evil deeds and words. Such shall not dwell with Him either in heaven or on earth.

"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Doers of wickedness and evil are here called fools. God does not merely dislike them. He hates them. That He does not hate their souls is proved over and over in Scripture (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8). He hates their ways and their thoughts.

"Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the Lord will abhor the bloody and deceitful man." One may lie and suffer no consequence in this world, but God's judgment awaits (Rev. 21:8). Murderers and deceivers will not escape His court.

### HIS RESOLUTION AND PRAY (7-12)

"But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple." Regardless of what others might decide, David's determination was clear. He would worship God and give Him the glory due His name. He would worship Him publically, in His appointed way. He would worship in recognition of His infinite mercy. He would worship reverently, in godly fear.

"Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face." He realized the need for guidance. His enemies spied closely that they might accuse and destroy him. Wisdom and prudence were needed daily to stay in the path he ought to travel. "And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the Lord was with him. Wherefore when Saul saw that he behaved very wisely, he was afraid of him" (I Sam. 18:14, 15).

"For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue." David's enemies were such men. There was nothing they would not say to hurt and to destroy his character. Like an open tomb filled with decay, their rottenness was visible to all. Yet, in his presence, they flattered him with "smooth words and fair speeches." These words are quoted by Paul in Rom. 2.

"Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee."

Notice that David's primary concern is their rebellion against God, not their meanness against him. The prophet is God's mouth in condemning the wicked. He speaks not only of what should happen, but what shall inevitably happen to the wicked. David was not possessed with a spirit of revenge. When he had opportunity to slay Saul who sought to slay him, he refused to do it. He speaks here as an

inspired prophet.

*"But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, LORD, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield."*  
Joy is the privilege of the faithful. The

wicked may laugh first, but he who laughs last laughs best. *"Your sorrow shall be turned to joy"* (John 16:20). Joy is perhaps best described as peace bubbling over. David had it, and he prays that it might characterize all of God's people.

The ground for this joy is the blessing and favor of God. We need

not fear him who can kill the body and not the soul. Let us shout for joy. We are blessed now and "wilt" be blessed a million years from now.



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# The Perfect Law of Liberty

by Jim Venturino

James 1:25 says, *"But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does"*. This verse is often misused or abused in attempts to prove certain doctrines. I believe, that through careful examination, we can clear the muddy waters of interpretation regarding the perfect law of liberty.

Some attempt to identify this verse with the Ten Commandments in an effort to show they are still binding today. However, we will see that the Law of Moses, including the Ten Commandments, is one of the things from which we are freed. Another common misuse of this verse occurs when people put the emphasis on the word "liberty". They see complete freedom to act in any manner consistent with love and mercy. Such an idea only leads to anarchy and confusion. A similar idea is frequently heard, in that we now have the liberty to practice anything that has not been specifically forbidden. There is one other way in which this verse has been frequently misused. In trying to explain what the "perfect" of 1 Cor. 13:10 is, brethren will often turn to Jas. 1:25 and identify it as the perfect law of liberty. Paul was definitely referring to the gospel, but in a totally different way than James. Paul's intention was to compare their present situation, wherein the gospel had only been partially revealed, to the time when such revelation would be completed or made perfect. James' purpose was to explain the character of this law and not to show that the revelation of God had been completed, since many of the New Testament books were written at later dates.

## A LAW

The first thing necessary to properly understand Jas. 1:25, is to realize that the law of liberty is indeed a LAW. We are not freed from observing all forms of law, or to do our own thing. Such would be a state of lawlessness and 1 Jn. 3:4 identifies lawlessness as sin. The Law of Moses was a forerunner of and pointed toward, a more perfect law the LAW OF FAITH (Rom. 3:27; Gal. 3:24). Remembering that *"faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ"* (Rom. 10:17), every soul today must submit themselves to the LAW OF CHRIST (1 Cor. 9:21), through their obedience of faith. Anyone who advocates a system of "total liberty" disregards the command of God to do all things by the authority of Christ (Col. 3:17; 2 Jn. 9; 1 Cor. 14:37).

## A PERFECT LAW

The law of Christ is perfect in a number of ways. First, it has a PERFECT HIGH PRIEST who serves as a PERFECT MEDIATOR between God and man (Heb. 9:15; 8:1; 1 Tim. 2:5). Heb. 4:14-5:11 identifies Jesus as that perfect high priest because he was tempted yet never sinned. This perfection is then contrasted with earthly high priests, who had to make sacrifices for their own sins as well as for those of the people. The law of Christ has been inaugurated with a PERFECT SACRIFICE, the imperishable, unblemished and spotless blood of Christ (1 Pet. 1:19; Heb. 10:12). Due to the perfection of Jesus as our "lamb" there is no longer a reminder of sins year by year. Therefore it is accurate to say that this law has been enacted on PERFECT PROMISES, total forgiveness and redemption (Heb. 8:6; 10:1-18).

## A PERFECT LAW OF LIBERTY

The perfect law of liberty has provided freedom from two sources of slavery. The person who abides in this law, as an effectual doer, is freed from slavery to the Law of Moses and to sin.

The law of Moses was not a law of freedom, but rather of bondage and death. It could not provide justification or righteousness (Gal. 2:16-21), because, *"this commandment which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; for sin taking opportunity through the commandment deceived me and through it killed me"* (Rom. 7:10-11). The Law, including the Ten Commandments, is identified as the ministry of death (2 Cor. 3:7). Surely, such a law cannot be the perfect law of liberty, since its follower are described as the children of a bondswoman and slaves (Gal. 4:21-31). But, *"the law of the Spirit of life has set you free from the law of sin and death"* (Rom. 8:2).

Obedience to the gospel likewise sets us free from sin (Jn. 8:32). In Rom. 6:12-23 we find a discussion of slavery. Paul told these Christians that they were once living in bondage to sin. *"But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification and the outcome, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"*.

*"Since therefore, brethren, we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil, that is his flesh, and since we have a great high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water"* (Heb. 10:19-22).

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# OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY

## II SAMUEL

by Harry L. Lewis

**D**avid, the brave defender of God's glory, has become king of Israel! He has done his time. He has paid his dues. His day has come. No more hiding in the caves from his old enemies. No more accepting the hospitality of Israel's enemies in exchange for protection for himself and his family. David has arrived! David is king!

The book of second Samuel is the book which reveals to us the rise of David to power as well as his declining years (2 Sam. 2:1). As the book opens, the stage is set for David to occupy the throne. The only hinderance possible in the early history of this kingdom was a milk-sop, imbecilic kind of man so often seen in the family of kings. This man was a son of Saul named Ishbosheth. The opposition exerted by the family of Saul and its party was never a real threat to David's reign until it recruited Absalom, the son of David. This division was joined by Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, for he thought Absalom might even make him king (2 Sam. 16:3). David was able to overcome even this heart-breaking development, and at the time of his death he was able to pass the reins to Solomon, the wise man of Israel (I Kings 1). The body of the book reveals not only this great struggle of David for a stable kingdom, but also reveals the struggles David had with himself. David found that sin, the disease of the soul, afflicts kings as well as slaves, and the potential for harm is compounded many times over when the king contracts the disease.

The story of David's life is the classical story of rags to riches. He was the Youngest of eight sons of a rather obscure man named Jesse of the descendants of Judah. David was strong, poetic, musically inclined and a very attractive man as well. He had much going for him when at about the age of eighteen or so Samuel sought him out at the direction of God and anointed him king in the place of Saul.

Although Saul had much to thank David for, he tried every way to do him harm. If David had already been anointed when he soothed Saul's troubled mind with his music we are not told (I Sam. 16:14-23). The killing of Goliath and David's promotion in the army, as well as his growing popularity with the people brings the jealousy of Saul to the surface (I Sam. 17; 18:1-9; 10-30). Saul's jealousy grows with each time they meet, and finally David must flee (I Sam. 21: - 23:13). David has several chances to eliminate his enemy but refuses to lift his sword against God's anointed king. The Philistines, with whom David was living at the time, finally defeated Saul in battle. Saul was killed as well as Jonathan, his son. David mourned and wrote a beautiful elegy upon the death of his worst enemy and his best friend.

The book of second Samuel opens with a trying period in David's life as he tries to set up his kingdom in Hebron (II Samuel 2-4). There is opposition to his reign probably because he had nearly took the field of battle with the Philistines against his own people (I Samuel 27; - II Samuel 1). Civil war broke out! Abner, the chief of the armies of Saul, set Ishbosheth upon the throne of the northern tribes. This war, as all civil wars, was a heart-breaker. It lasted for several years (about seven) and drained the resources of both sides in the struggle. Even though David prevailed (II Samuel 3:1) at the end of this period of conflict Abner and Ishbosheth were at each other's throat over a different matter. Abner, being accused by Ishbosheth of a dishonorable deed, tried to turn all the people of the North to David (II Samuel 3:6-11). From this time forward David's forces continued to increase until his own Son rebelled against him. During this period of growth David defeated nearly all his neighbors, and either destroyed them

or put them to tribute. It was at this time of great accomplishment that Satan nearly destroyed the man after God's own heart.

I am told that there is an oriental proverb which says "Absolute power brings absolute depravity." In David's case, the power to have every command obeyed without question was a great factor in his downfall. The fact that David always looked upon God as being greater than himself saved him in this time of great temptation. There are those who think that what David did was not too bad. He was just weak, they say. He was only human, others say. Others, and some of these are not far from home, say that David was a man after God's own heart even while he was with another man's wife. Yes, some have said that David was not really alienated from God even while he plotted and carried out the murder of the husband of the woman he had so used. How foolish! It seems that we need to read Hebrews 5:12-14 again. It seems we have not read Romans 1 to find out why it is that God turns away from people who sin. The fact is God knew where David stood. Nathan knew by inspiration where he stood. David learned where he stood (Psalm 51). What a shame, when men try to justify such actions in the name of the God of Jesus Christ in whom was found no guile nor sin! What a shame indeed! David repented! I thank God that he will forgive when men repent. David received forgiveness for the sins he had committed, but he and his family suffered much from what he had done. The baby, the product of his affair with Bathsheba, died (II Samuel 12:14). Many sins of similar nature were committed by David's children. Who is to say that some, if not most of these were done with the attitude of so many young people--"Dad did it, so can I." There have been members of my own family who used this sort of statement to justify drinking and other

kinds of sins. Surely David remembered his sins when Tamar was violated. Amnon had the same sort of desires for Tamar that David had for Bathsheba. David could understand that. When Amnon, David's son, was killed by Absalom, another son, do you think for one moment that David did not remember his sins? Please look at II Samuel 11-13 if you want to get an idea of what was taking place in David's family. Even though David had been able to mount four offensive campaigns against the Philistines (II Samuel 21:15-22), fight winning battles against Moab, Damascus, Amalek, Edom and Amnon there was always the shadow of decay within his own family. Even as David passed from this life, his sons were embroiled in a struggle for power, over his dying body (I Kings 1:5-53).

The great king, David, fought many battles with the enemies of Israel. He took on all comers, Goliath, after a bear and a lion, king Saul and the temptation to kill him and take his kingdom, the enemies of Israel, but the greatest test of all was how he handled sin. He repented.

One other great story and lesson in

this book is the courage and trust in God shown by David when it was needed most. After his sin and repentance, David not only wanted to build God a house (II Samuel 7:1-13) but he wanted to be a vessel meet for the Master's use himself. Truly David, after his great sin, became once again a man after God's own heart. If there was a time when this resolve seemed to waver it was when the news came of the death of Absalom. David's grief was great, almost too great. Joab rebuked David (II Samuel 19), and the king went out to the gate to meet the people who had carried the day. David was a man. He could and did do wrong, but he could and did see wherein he was wrong and turned from his wrong. This is what constitutes a man after God's own heart.

The purpose of the two books of Samuel is to trace the transition from the lawless days of the judges to the order of the closing days of David's reign. That is not to say that this was more pleasing to God for it seems that He would have been pleased if the people had not rebelled against the type rule he had during the period of

Judges. The facts are, however, that people obey better with a policeman on the corner, and a king to tell him what to do. Those in the days of the judges did not obey because they could not see the king. They kept wanting such a king, and finally God gave them Saul to rule them. From then on there was all the problems of the king and his family as well as the problems of everyday living. Those things done in rebellion to God may look good for a while, but they inevitably turn into sour grapes.

This book is easy to outline then. It falls into four natural divisions: I. David's reign in Hebron over Judah alone. (1-4) II. His reign over all the tribes until his double sin (5-11). III. David's sin and its repercussions (12-20). IV. The last days and events in David's life (21-24). With this outline in mind let us make Second Samuel one of the books of the Bible with which we are on **speaking terms**.



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# The Church Of England's New Bishop

by Daniel H. King

David Jenkins, theology professor at Leeds University in northern England, is to be appointed Bishop of the Church of England. He is to serve as leader of the ancient northern diocese of Durham. What is so special about Jenkins is his doctrinal position. You see, he does not believe in miracles. He denies that Jesus was born of a virgin. He denies that Christ walked on water or was really raised from the dead. He "denies the very fundamentals of Christianity", is the way some of his opponents in the Anglican church have put it.

A church-school chaplain, William Ledwich of Hereford Cathedral School, collected 10,000 signatures on

a petition demanding that the consecration be called off unless Jenkins renounces his beliefs. People were astounded when they learned that a man designated to take this position of importance in their church held views so completely at odds with traditional biblical doctrine. They look to these men as spiritual leaders and are appalled to find out they are, many of them anyway, modernists, liberals, non-believers and infidels.

A lot of folks would be surprised to find out what their religious leaders believed. They would also be astounded at what the professors are teaching in the seminaries and theological schools. Many recent

surveys have shown that the religious leadership in most of the big denominations is out of step with the people who pay their salaries. The people tend to be conservative, or at least much more conservative than those who lead them. For example, the opinion poll taken at the 1966 Convention of the National Council of Churches showed only two-thirds of respondents believed in God and just over half thought Jesus to be divine. Only one in four believed in miracles and a mere sixty-two percent believed in life after death. Other surveys have had a similar results since then.

Of course, such views from "on high" in these denominations have filtered down and resulted in an erosion of belief in the Bible among the so-called laypeople of these churches as well. But there are many people left in these churches who are asleep to what their leaders think about some of these important matters. If you are such an individual, then why not ask your minister, priest, cleric, or whatever you call him (or her)? You might be surprised at what they tell you!

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# Changing the Revelations of Mormonism

by Dudley Ross Spears

"Realizing the importance of having correct copies, the leaders of the Church determined to publish them. Because the originals contained spelling and grammar errors, a Church conference moved that Joseph Smith should make the necessary corrections. (Far West Record, p. 16). This was the beginning of controversies and charges made by persons who do not know or understand that the text of recorded revelation can be edited and 'changed'." (Ensign, December 1984, p. 33)

Thus, begins an article by Robert J. Woodford of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormon). The Mormons exist solely because of the alleged "revelations" given to one Joseph Smith, Jr. The originals were so filled with grammatical and spelling mistakes that the "changes" and editings were surely needed. A few typographical errors and some mistaken grammar might be tolerated in these "revelations." If such were the only problem, there would not be as much "controversy" as Woodford recognizes. The controversies split Mormonism into various functions many years ago. Changes in *Doctrine and Covenants*, however, deal with much more than spelling and grammar. There are over fifty changes in meaning between the original, called *Book of Commandments*, and the current edition called *Doctrine and Covenants*. For an example, consider the original and current versions of *Doctrine and Covenants* 18:2-5, compared to *Book of Commandments* 15:2-4.

"Behold I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances that the things which you have written are true. Wherefore you know that they are true; and if you know that they are true, behold I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things written concerning my church, my gospel, and my rock. Wherefore if you shall build up my church, and my gospel, and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail

against you." (*Book of Commandments* 15:2-4)

One would assume that if the Lord actually did reveal something to someone like Joseph Smith, Jr. it would be right the first time. However, with this alleged prophecy to Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, witnesses of the gold plates, a necessary change had to take place and it involved much more than mere spelling and grammatical changes. Here is the way it reads in the version of *Doctrine and Covenants* now.

"Behold, I have manifested unto you, by my Spirit in many instances, that the things which you have written are true; wherefore you know that they are true. And if you know that they are true, behold, I give unto you a commandment, that you rely upon the things which are written; For in them are all things written concerning the foundation of my church, my gospel, and my rock. Wherefore if you shall build up my church, upon the foundation of my gospel and my rock, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you." (*Doctrine and Covenants*, 1982)

In the edition used by all Mormons (except the Temple Lot group) the word "foundation" is inserted twice. It was not in the original. The reader can easily recognize this as a change of idea and thought, not merely some "editing" out of poor spelling and grammar. In the Temple Lot Church of Christ (Mormon) edition, they have it as the original *Book of Commandments* reads. In the preface of the LDS (Mormon) group's edition one reads that the original was inspired.

"We, therefore, feel willing to bear testimony to all the earth, that the Lord has borne record to our souls, through the Holy Ghost shed forth upon us, that these commandments (the original *Book of Commandments*, DRS) were given by the inspiration of God, and are profitable for all men

and are verily true." (Ibid., preface).

The context of this alleged prophecy reveals that the church mentioned had not been established. The date for its establishment is 1830. So, this piece of "revelation" was intended to give guidelines for establishing the LDS Church. The original "revelation" affirms that all things had been written that would be necessary for building the church, the gospel and the rock. But the revision of this "prophecy" teaches that the building to be done involved building more of the church, more of the gospel and more of the rock. It becomes obvious why such a change was needed by Smith. If, as the original passage reads, "you rely upon the things which are written; for in them are all things (My emphasis, DRS) written concerning my church, my gospel and my rock," there would be no way future "revelations" could be received. Either "all things which are written" (in the *Book of Mormon*) may be relied on to build the Church, the gospel and the rock, or not. If additional "revelation" became necessary, then those things that were written were insufficient.

More obvious is it when you consider things in the LDS Church that are not in the *Book of Mormon*. Just here, let me also explain that "the things written" could only be the *Book of Mormon*. Nothing else at that time had been written by which they could build anything. In the LDS Church one finds the following that cannot be found in the *Book of Mormon*.

1. The Mormon Doctrine of many gods is not in the *Book of Mormon*.
2. The Mormon Doctrine of a changeable god is not in the *Book of Mormon*.
3. There is only a vague allusion to the humanity of God in the *Book of Mormon*, and this is an essential doctrine to Mormons.
4. The "Priesthoods" of Mormonism are not in the *Book of Mormon*.
5. Celestial and eternal marriages are not in the *Book of Mormon*.

6. Nothing can be found regarding church offices of president, etc. in the Book of Mormon.
7. The Book of Mormon condemns polygamy, a doctrine found in Doctrine and Covenants.
8. The Book of Mormon does not teach Mormon doctrine about three degrees of heaven.
9. There is nothing in the Book of Mormon teaching their doctrine on baptism for the dead.
10. The Book of Mormon does not teach their idea of man's pre-existence in some other world somewhere.
11. The doctrine of man's eternal progression toward deity is not found in the Book of Mormon.

There is really nothing in the *Book of Mormon* that is an essential Mormon doctrine. There is nothing about the LDS system at all in their *Book of Mormon*. Such doctrines had to be revealed much later in the Mormon scenario. When the original was given, it meant that all the things needed for the church and the gospel were in the *Book of Mormon*. Since many more things were added to their doctrinal baggage, not written in the *Book of Mormon*, the original "revelation" had to be changed. The meaning of the statement had to be changed so as to allow for future revelations and doctrines. The simple insertion of the word "foundation" took care of it for Smith.

Honest Mormons surely have a big question about the "inspiration" of this book lurking somewhere in their hearts. How can something "inspired" that means one thing, be changed to mean something else? No wonder that controversies sprang into existence when the *Book of Commandments* was overhauled and became *Doctrine and Covenants*. Little wonder that among pledging their allegiance to the *Book of Mormon*, there is a wide variety of positions regarding the *Doctrine and Covenants*. Personally, I agree with David Whitmer, one of the witnesses. He wrote:

**"There are false doctrines of importance in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, and I desire to prove them false doctrines, and get you to lay them aside and believe only what Christ taught and meant for us to believe."** (*An Address to All Believers*, 1887, p. 38.)

## The Decline and Fall of Judas Iscariot

by Charles G. Caldwell, Jr.

Judas Iscariot was one of the original twelve apostles of Christ and like the others was vested with the same responsibilities and the same powers that characterized the apostolic band. They were sent out by Christ on a preaching tour "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel". They were to preach that "the kingdom of heaven is at hand" and were commanded to "heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons" (Matt. 10:2-14). Each of the twelve were blessed with the wonderful privilege of journeying with Christ up and down the hills and plains of Palestine, being personal witnesses of those things that He did and hearing the marvelous messages He proclaimed. They had the exalted pleasure of His company and the thrill of His presence for more than three glorious years. Judas Iscariot in no way fell behind the others in the advantages and blessings that this association with the Master afforded. However, greed for money proved to be his undoing and the cause of his downfall. Luke tells the story this way: "And Satan entered into Judas who was called Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve. And he went away, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might deliver him unto them. And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he consented, and sought opportunity to deliver him unto them in the absence of the multitude" (Luke 22:3-6). Matthew 26:14-16 tells us that Judas received thirty pieces of silver. If this refers to the Jewish shekel, as is supposed, it would amount to about fifteen dollars in our money. And in that transaction Judas Iscariot sold himself, as well as Christ, and purchased for himself a name that is a synonym of infamy.

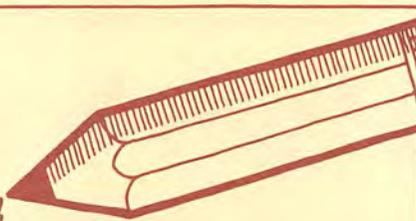
There is no indication that Judas was always an evil person, insensitive to righteousness and void of all loyalty. The germs of his evil, in all probability unfolded themselves gradually. There was needed among the Apostles, as there is needed now in the church, a man of just such talents as Judas possessed—the talent for managing business affairs. As time went on he found himself en-

trusted with larger and larger sums of money than before, and with this came covetousness, unfaithfulness, thievery. Several times he showed his tendency to avarice and selfishness. This under the very best influences, grew worse and worse, till he betrayed his Master for thirty pieces of silver.

When Judas saw the results of his betrayal he "repented himself". He realized what he had done and his conscience lashed him. He made an ineffective effort to free himself by attempting to return the money to the chief priests and elders. He proclaimed boldly to them, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood". And they contemptuously replied, "What is that to us?" And when they would not receive it he cast it down at their feet and departed from their midst with a burden pressing down upon him that was too grievous for him to bear. No doubt he was aware of the fact that his returning the money had not erased the wrong. His returning of the money was prompted first of all by the wrong spirit—a desire for relief rather than hatred of sin; and furthermore, his confession was to the wrong party, or at least to those who should have been secondary in his consideration, and who could not grant forgiveness. Someone has said, "compunction is not conversion". In complete despair, Judas then went out and hanged himself (Matt. 27:5) on the southern slope of the valley of Hinnom, near Jerusalem, and in the act fell down a precipice "headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out" (Acts 1:18).

The Bible affirms in concluding the sad history of Judas Iscariot that he went to "his own place" (Acts 1:25). Sin must of necessity terminate either in hell or in pardon. Contrast, if you will, the case of Peter and Judas. Judas attempted to prove his repentance by taking his own life. Peter on the other hand proved his repentance by serving his Master faithfully ever after. God help us to always imitate the latter!

## Short and to the Point



### The Christmas Story

Dear Virginia,

There are many things you are beginning to discover as you grow up. One of them has to do with all the fantasies we adults have invented for your entertainment. Bugs Bunny is on television every Saturday morning. The Easter Rabbit brings colored eggs in the spring. Frosty the Snowman comes to life and plays with the children who made him. Santa Claus comes down the chimney on Christmas Eve to bring your presents.

We mean no harm with our fantasy characters. Sometimes, though, we go overboard and try to convince you they are real. We blur the line between "pretend" and the real world. Of course bunnies can't talk or lay colored eggs! No, snowmen don't really come alive! And fat men don't bring you presents which have been made by elves at the North Pole!

What bothers me right now, Virginia, is the thought that what most people call "the Christmas story" might be caught up in your little mind with all the other make-believe things you are coming to recognize as unreal. I would hate for you to push baby Jesus out of your heart along with Bugs, the Easter Rabbit, Frosty, and Santa. The story of Jesus is very different. It is true.

We don't know the exact date of his birth. December 25 was chosen centuries ago when some Christians wanted to turn a pagan festival to the sun into a holy day to the Son of God.

There is nothing in the Bible which identifies the exact day of his birth or which requires us to celebrate it. But I doubt Jesus would be upset with anyone for honoring His birth on any day of the year!

It happened almost 2,000 years ago. In a little town called Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary heard the first cries of a tiny baby. He was so special. He was God's Son!

Angels and shepherds adored him that night. Several days later, Anna

and Simeon saw him; still later, the Wise Men paid their homage. Many of us worship him still--people of all colors and languages.

I want you to understand why baby Jesus was born, Virginia. He came to show us how much God loves us and wants us to live with him in heaven someday. Jesus grew up and became a man who loved everyone, helped all who would accept his help, and changed so many lives! He was Emmanuel--God among us!

I hope you will learn about him, believe on him, and make him the center of your life.

It is not a make-believe story. It really happened. Yes, Virginia, there really is a baby Jesus!

Your Friend,  
--Rubel Shelly  
2206 Hillsboro Rd.  
Nashville, TN 37212

### Mellow-Yellow

Most of you will recognize the title of this article as also being the name of a popular soft drink. Whether you like that particular drink or not, possibly the name is familiar to you.

Whenever I see that name, it reminds me of some of my brethren, especially brethren who once would stand up for the truth regarding the modern versions, gymnasiums, compromise with the Christian Church, and even to object to the doctrinal errors being taught our young people in the Bible departments of the schools and literature brethren sell.

But now and again I hear how somebody that once was known for steadfastness has joined the side of "go alongism" and has been convinced that it is more expedient to tag along with the trends and drifts than to withstand the evil and false doctrines and practices. Whether it be protection of personal prominence, the desire to be accepted by the majority, to get monetary gain it

produces, to sell books, or whatever be the motive, we cannot tell and leave that between them and God. But they have changed directions, changed positions, joined digressive and liberal camps and that cannot be any longer denied. The fruit is there.

It was explained to me that such people have "mellowed." They intend to convey the idea that they have matured, see things better, do not wish to be antagonistic, and have become sweet and gentle. But I have another name for it. They have not "mellowed." They have "yellowed." They have become cowardly and treacherous, and now siding with the very error they once properly opposed. It just does not accommodate them any longer to take a stand for truth, now that truth has become less popular.

With our pardon to the tasty soft drink called MELLO-YELLO, and it is refreshing, it is also an identification that probably explains the change of many. They had rather "switch" to error "than fight" the devil. It pays better.

--James W. Boyd  
1605 Martin Hill Dr.  
Tupelo, MS 38801

### Sons Of God

We have earthly fathers who discipline us and train us in what seems best to them for the short period of time we are with them. Why? Because they love us. Do we respect them? Yes! Does it not seem logical that our Spiritual Father would train us and discipline us in what would be best for us, preparing us for His eternal home? We are His sons, too. If we are His sons, then we need the discipline and training that seems best to Him. Our earthly father's training is good, though it may seem unpleasant at the time; but we can see good results. God's discipline and training are good, too, that we might adopt His holy character and share His heavenly home. God deals with us as Sons. Hear the words of a father to a son: "*And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as Sons. My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him, for whom the Lord loves, He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives*" (Heb. 12:5).

--Charles D. Clark  
1407 Harvey  
Bowling Green, KY 42101

# The Poet's Page

## CONFUSED

They praised me for being so patient.  
I paused and I waited, that's true.  
But I really was not being patient,  
I just didn't know what to do.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## ONCE-A-YEAR LEAR

There was once a man named Lear,  
Who prayed only one time a year.  
Each Thanksgiving Day,  
With head bowed, he'd say,  
"We're thankful to Thee, Father Dear."

But God's word says unto all men,  
That ingratitude is a sin.

"Thanksgiving," says He,  
"You should give to me,  
"Not once, but again and again."

--Steve Cawthon  
Fayetteville, AR

## TAKE A MOMENT TO LISTEN

Take a moment to listen today  
to what your children are trying to say;  
Listen today, whatever you do  
Or they won't be there to listen to you.

Listen to their problems,  
listen for their needs,  
Praise their smallest triumphs,  
praise their smallest deeds;  
Tolerate their chatter, amplify  
their laughter,  
Find out what's the matter,  
find out what they're after.

But tell them you love them,  
every single night,  
And though you scold them, be  
sure you hold them  
And tell them, "Everything's  
all right—  
Tomorrow's looking bright!"

Take a moment to listen today  
To what your children are  
trying to say;  
Listen today, whatever you do —  
And they will come back to  
Listen to you.

--Denis Waitley  
Kermit, TX

## BAD SPILL

The roughest tumbles I have taken:  
I'll admit some have been rough;  
Are the ones that I have suffered  
Falling over my own bluff!

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## FAITH'S VISION

Faith looks inward, outward, upward  
Discerning castles, strong and high.  
Reason's limited to problems  
Or those dwellings that are nigh.

--Dwayne Laws  
Bowling Green, KY

## WORSHIP

To worship something is the very nature of mankind,  
Because our creator is very real and divine.  
As our spirits search for a place to go,  
For we believe a higher power has willed it so.

Some worship idols of gold, silver or stone,  
But we must worship the true one on God's throne.  
The very realm of nature unfolds to us a greater power, that's divine  
Which directs and fulfills the deep desires of humankind.

Oh! God as I sit and meditate on Thy Holy Scheme;  
A sacrifice designed to satisfy my very being.  
Trying to discipline my mind that I may clearly see,  
The true meaning of worship in my life for Thee.

We search for a place to meditate upon Thy Holy will,  
As our inner spirit forces us that deep longing to fulfill.  
Tis a very rewarding experience when our souls come to know,  
That it's far more than just our duty here below.

Through prayer, and study, and sacrifice to Thee, we do seek.  
But somehow our best seems so very weak,  
We know our Father above knows our aims and ways.  
And promises to give us strength as our days.

As I ponder God's profound plan.  
In the giving of His only son for sinful man,  
I stand in awe, and scarce can take in, such great love for me,  
Knowing that it took the death of that Holy One, to set me free.

In partaking of that bread of life on the Lord's Day,  
Communing with God, and man we know He is the Way:  
When He shed His blood upon the cross for man,  
We try to do this in memory of His coming again.

Worship is a place of refuge for our weary hearts,  
To help us escape ole Satan's many darts,  
Through prayer, and supplication: He will help us to overcome,  
If our weary souls are striving for a better home.

Humbly we worship and serve trying to satisfy our souls,  
Of which gives joy, and comfort, striving to reach our Heavenly goals.  
Dear God, give me wisdom, and vision, to commune with Thee:  
To the height, and depth, shown by Thy great love for me.

--Flossie Hardeman  
Dyersburg, TN

# HAPPENINGS

*News and Notes  
From Around The World*

## **INJURED FETUS RULED 'PERSON' IN INSURANCE LAWSUIT**

A fetus has been ruled a legal "person" in an insurance lawsuit in California.

The case involved a child born in 1975 with birth defects that the child's parents blamed on the drug Coumadin, which the mother took early in her pregnancy. A federal appeals court has upheld a ruling that an insurance policy covered the settlement. The court determined that the fetus was a person for legal purposes at the time of the injury.

## **TAX SIMPLIFICATION PLAN CHANGES CHARITABLE GIVING INCENTIVES**

The Treasury Department tax simplification plan would change charitable giving tax incentives.

The new plan, unveiled by Secretary of the Treasury Donald T. Regan, would allow deductions for charitable contributions only if they exceed two percent of the taxpayer's adjusted gross income.

While this change could be seen as an incentive to give more than two percent, many church leaders have expressed fear the plan would curtail giving to churches and other charitable causes.

## **MICHIGAN SCHOOL DISTRICT FACES BIBLE CLASS LAWSUIT**

Bible club meetings being conducted on school property may result in a lawsuit against the small Hudsonville School District in West Michigan, making it the second in Michigan to face possible litigation because of Bible clubs meeting on school property.

Voluntary Bible club meetings had been conducted in nearby Howard City at the school for more than 30 years by a group known as the Bible Club Movement. Last spring a parent

complained to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), charging that the club violated the principle of church-state separation. The Michigan Board of Education sought and received a court injunction to halt the classes.

An organization called Citizens for a Free America has begun raising funds for a possible legal battle over this incident. Contributions include a \$1,000 check from Pat Robertson, host of television's "700 Club."

Hudsonville classes have continued despite the legal action in Howard City. State School Superintendent Phillip Runkel and Michigan Attorney General Frank Kelley have contacted both school boards, saying the club meetings on school property during school hours are unconstitutional, and advising them that legal problems could be avoided by holding the meetings off-campus under "released-time" provisions, or by scheduling meetings before or after school hours.

The State Board of Education has asked the attorney general to file suit against the Hudsonville School District because of the Bible meetings. This prompted State Senator Ed Fredericks to request a Senate Judiciary Committee investigation into the singling-out of Bible clubs. Fredericks says that striking teachers are also violating state law, but have not had an injunction filed against them.

"Does the State Board of Education consider Bible clubs during noon hours to be more pernicious than teacher strikes?" Fredericks asked the Senate.

## **A NEW RELIGIOUS PAPER**

Walton Weaver has announced that a new magazine, *The Sower's Sourcebook*, will begin publication in January. It is designed to fill a need among preachers and other sowers of the Word. The newspaper-style

magazine will be a sharing of ideas for new approaches to preaching the Bible, good illustrations, articles, book reviews, and other items of interest to preachers and teachers.

The paper will be published monthly at a subscription cost of \$7.00. For more information, write to TAM Publications, P.O. Box 10730, Jackson, MS 39209.

## **INTEREST IN OCCULT GROWING**

Britain is in the midst of the biggest explosion of interest in the occult in a century, according to Marian Green, a writer on the occult. People are turning to witchcraft, astrology, and magic, apparently in response to current social problems.

"It is the biggest occult explosion in Britain since the 1880's," said Green. Readership of Prediction magazine has reached about 20,000, she said, and a recent occult festival drew 5,000 people. All major British occult publications and festivals started in the last six years, according to Green.

A founder of a "psychic center" in north London said people are using magical spells to gain control of the world that threatens them. Many of the clients of the center's astrologers, futurologists, and palm and tarot card readers are looking for stock exchange predictions, employment, low-cost housing, and an end to the nuclear arms race.

Some anti-nuclear activists have used magic rituals in their anti-nuclear protests. A practicing "witch" in London also linked witchcraft with the women's liberation movement, saying that witchcraft is a "female thing," and that the increased interest in witchcraft is part of women "trying to regain their power."

Occult interest is also on the rise in Dallas, where occult stores report increased interest in occult candles, voodoo dolls, and in requests for "psychic readings."

## DEBATE SCHEDULED BETWEEN FALWELL AND KENNEDY

Senator Edward Kennedy and Jerry Falwell will debate on religion and politics at the next convention of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB). The debate, scheduled for Tuesday, February 5 at the Sheraton Washington Hotel, will be part of the program of NRB's 42nd convention.

The format of the debate will be a 15-minute speech by each man followed by three minutes of rebuttal for each. The two last met publicly when Kennedy addressed Falwell's Liberty Baptist College on Oct. 3, 1983.

Members of the Senate and House of Representatives are being invited to join the almost 4,000 religious broadcasters and related professionals that usually attend an NRB convention.

## BAPTIST DEACON FIGHTS HOMOSEXUAL VERSION OF PLAY

Plans to present a homosexual version of Edward Albee's domestic drama "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" were brought to a halt recently by the actions of Jim Norwood, a deacon at Tate Springs Baptist Church and member of the Arlington, Texas, City Council.

Norwood's objections to the theater group's plans soon led to other councilmembers raising their voices against the proposal. The publicity generated by the dispute brought the proposed homosexual production to playwright Albee's attention. Albee sent the theater group a telegram saying he had never intended the play be presented with a homosexual theme.

Despite charges of censorship, the production was closed down. Norwood has been targeted for defeat by a local gay rights group when his city council spot comes up for re-election in a year-and-a-half, but says it doesn't worry him. "The message I'm trying to send is that the Christian community needs to know the larger issues of the community and needs to be willing to speak up for morality," Norwood said. "I think the pastors and local churches need to lead in this effort."

## CREATION INSTITUTE FILES SUIT AGAINST NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

The Renaissance Institute, a creation-science organization, has filed suit in U.S. District Court against the

National Academy of Sciences, alleging breach of NAS's professional obligations, conspiracy to violate citizen's rights by disseminating deliberately distorted information, and suppression of scientific freedom.

The federally-funded NAS is the nation's most prestigious organization and advises the federal government on questions of science and technology. The Renaissance Institute contends that by publishing the booklet "Science and Creationism," the NAS "committed a serious breach of trust and violated its own standards of scientific objectivity."

The Renaissance Institute alleges that the booklet provides explanations for fossil evidence that coincides with evolutionary theory, while ignoring equally valid explanations that would support creationism. The Renaissance Institute is suing NAS for \$38 million to correct the wrong by distributing information on creationism, and is demanding that NAS withdraw the booklet and publish a correction.

## POLL: HALF OF TEENS ATTEND CHURCH REGULARLY

A poll conducted by TeenAge magazine shows that half of teens attend church services weekly. Of the 710 teenagers who responded to the magazine's reader poll, 73 percent said they considered religion to be very important in their lives.

Nearly half of the teens polled (44 percent) said they looked to their faith to guide them in daily activities, while more than a third (37 percent) said they belonged to a religious youth group.

On religion in the classroom, only 41 percent said religion has a place in public schools, but 63 percent said prayer should be allowed in school.

## APPEALS COURT SUPPORTS NAVY BAN ON HOMOSEXUALS

The U.S. Court of Appeals on Nov. 16 supported a Navy regulation requiring the discharge of homosexuals. In a 7-4 vote, the court refused to hear the appeal of a petty officer who was discharged from the Navy after he admitted participating in homosexual acts.

James Droneburg, a nine-year Navy veteran, was dismissed from the service in April of 1981. He maintained that the Navy regulation leading to his discharge violated his constitutional rights to privacy and equal protection.

In an Aug. 17 decision which was sharply criticized by the liberal wing of the appellate court, a three-judge panel upheld his dismissal, ruling that the constitutional right of privacy, announced by the Supreme Court in 1968, should not be interrupted as protecting "any and all private sexual behavior." The appellate court turned down Droneburg's appeal of that panel's decision.

## LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY JESUS FADING FROM USE IN JERUSALEM

Aramaic, the language thought to have been spoken by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago, is fading from use in Jerusalem. The Aramaic language is used by Syrian Orthodox Christians, but this community is dwindling quickly. In 1948 when the new state of Israel was created there were about 2,000 Syrian Orthodox families in Jerusalem, today Jerusalem's Syrian Orthodox community numbers about 100 families, about 350 people.

A major contributing factor to the decline of Aramaic use is the lack of a Syrian Orthodox school. When the new nation of Israel was formed, the existing Syrian Orthodox school was in the Jewish sector of Jerusalem, while most Syrian Orthodox families fled to Jordanian-ruled East Jerusalem. A school was opened there which would teach children to read and write Aramaic as well as Arabic and English, but that was closed in 1967 when Israel captured the West Bank of the Jordan river.

Efforts are underway once again to establish an Aramaic school, but this may not be financially possible for the tiny Syrian Orthodox community.

The Aramaic language is related to both Hebrew, which preceded it, and Arabic, which followed it. It was the language of the Jews at the time of Christ. The gospels of Matthew and Mark record Christ's last words in Aramaic: "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" meaning "My God, my God, why has Thou forsaken me?"

## MICHAEL JACKSON CALLED RETURNED CHRIST BY FRINGE JEHOVAH'S WITNESS GROUP

A fringe group within the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (Jehovah's Witnesses) is hailing rock superstar Michael Jackson as the

returned Christ.

Jackson poses a special problem for the Watch Tower leadership: as a rock star he represents a culture condemned by the sect, yet he reportedly leads an exemplary life, free of drugs, alcohol, and sexual immorality. Jackson has been known to disguise himself and distribute Watch Tower literature on street corners.

The "Michael Jackson Cult" starts with the accepted Watch Tower belief that Jesus Christ was Michael the Archangel, and goes on to say that Jackson is that same angel, returned to earth. Jackson was conceived in 1957, which Jehovah Witnesses believe is an important year in end-times prophecies; the Witnesses held their largest international assembly ever during the month in 1958 in which he was born.

A pamphlet by the Jackson cult says "If Michael is the Archangel, He's been here before. And His appearance on earth would have grave implications for Witness theology: it would mean that Armageddon has already come and gone, and that we are already living in a 'new world,' over which Michael, the returned Messiah, rules as the Prince of Peace."

### **SURVEY EXAMINES FIRED MINISTERS**

Small groups of discontent members and factions in the congregations are the two most common causes leading to termination of a minister, according to a survey conducted by the church administration department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

The survey on forced termination used a sample of 400 ministers, from which 246 usable responses were obtained. Two-thirds of the terminated pastors cited a small but powerful minority of members, while about 40 percent cited factions in the congregation. Other frequently mentioned factors included different leadership styles, inability to get along with members, and not spending enough time on the job.

One of the most surprising findings of the survey was that most respondents (62 percent) were between the ages of 35 and 54, the ages usually thought of as best for a minister's career. This finding dispels the notion that most terminated ministers are either old and unyielding or young and

inexperienced.

According to the survey, 44 percent of terminated ministers were fired suddenly, and without warning. More than three-quarters of the respondents said the church had terminated pastors or staff members previously; 63 percent of the churches had experienced two or more terminations. About 90 percent of pastors surveyed said they were unaware or not fully informed regarding the church's history of terminations.

### **NBC BACKS DOWN, WILL ADVERTISE THOMAS NELSON'S THE BIBLE**

In what National Religious Broadcasters President Dr. Ben Armstrong deemed "a historic break in a policy that has excluded religious broadcasters for 30 years," NBC Radio Network backed down from a decision to refuse advertising for Thomas Nelson Publisher's new paperback, *The Bible*.

On Oct. 15 of this year, Thomas Nelson Publishers of Nashville, Tennessee, contacted Talknet Radio regarding placement of radio commercials for *The Bible*. Talknet asked that radio scripts and a copy of *The Bible* be forwarded to NBC Radio Network. These materials were forwarded to a vice president of sales, who sent them to the director of broadcast standards.

On Nov. 7 a Thomas Nelson representative was informed by NBC's director of broadcast standards "NBC has decided to turn down all religious advertisers until after January 1, 1985. Up until now NBC has not had a religious policy. We have decided to turn down all religious advertisers, until we have consulted with our legal department."

Thomas Nelson distributed a press release Nov. 14, which detailed NBC radio's refusal to accept advertising for *The Bible*. On Nov. 15, the story was released nationwide, on wire services and in national media. The next day, Nov. 16, Thomas Nelson was informed that the NBC Radio Network had reconsidered and would accept advertising for *The Bible*. The ads were scheduled to begin Nov. 30. "They lifted the moratorium very quickly," said Ardes Burnes of Thomas Nelson.

NBC refused to allow news reporters to interview its director of broadcast standards. NBC's Vice-President for Press Kirk Block would not say what reasoning had led to

NBC's initial refusal to advertise *The Bible*. The only explanation he would give was, "We made a more complete review of the submission of the commercials and we reversed our original decision after a committee reviewed the commercial, and we will be running it." A secretary in the broadcast standards office said the director "cannot answer those questions, she's not allowed to speak to you."

Dr. Ben Armstrong, president of the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), said the reversal represented a significant break in a long-held policy. "This is a good step," he said. "This kind of pressure from Christian organizations can have an effect in helping to defeat a long-standing practice of not accepting paid advertising for religion."

Armstrong said that network radio and television have excluded paid religious advertising and programming for 40 years, and recalled that the NRB, the broadcast arm of the National Association of Evangelicals, was formed in 1944 to lobby against what was then a new policy excluding paid religious programming from the network airwaves. "We've been fighting ever since 1944 for the right to buy time for religion. We've been able to succeed for most of the country, but not with the three networks," he said.

Armstrong said NBC's refusal was probably not based on any legal fears. "There's nothing the FCC can do about that policy; they have no jurisdiction on programming. The FCC has declared that the fairness doctrine does not apply to religion."

Armstrong speculated that the real reason for NBC's sudden change of heart was concern for its public image. "When they realized Thomas Nelson was going to put out a news release they decided that their public relations would be better served by letting them have the ad. I guess what they were concerned about is that if they did not turn it down, would Thomas Nelson have any recourse?"

Armstrong said the proposed wait until 1985 "looked like a stall more than anything else. They don't want to have a public relations problem. That news release must have hit some listeners and they don't want that hassle, so they made an exception to a long-standing policy. But for public relations purposes they wouldn't say that."

# FIELD REPORTS

**Harry A. Persaud, P.O.Box 376,  
South Orange, NJ 07079**

Until three years ago, there was no conservative congregation in this part of New Jersey. This is a high-rate crime area with a mixed population of blacks and foreigners with lots of poverty. Our membership consists of four families. Attendance on Lord's Day morning is usually 17-19 persons. We are having several curious visitors from denominations every Sunday.

I am presently conducting private Bible classes with three families in an effort to teach them the Truth. This area is rough and difficult, but quite challenging.

Because of some cut back and loss of financial support, I am appealing to brethren for \$500 additional support each month to meet my financial commitments. I desire to stay in this area to live and labor for the Lord, but I can only do this if I can raise the necessary funds. If any readers of this report can help, please write me at the above address.

**Kevin S. Kay, Rt. #16, Box 208, No. 2,  
Bowling Green, KY 42101**

After four very good years of fellowship and labor with the Lord's church in Crandall, Indiana, I have recently moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky to begin my work with the Ray's Branch congregation. The work here is about ten years old. Bro. Wayne Earnest labored with this church as its first full-time evangelist for a number of years, and Bro. Keith Burnett followed in his footsteps. I have heard good things about their work, and I hope that I can help them build on the foundation that they helped to establish.

The brethren at Ray's Branch have been without a full-time evangelist for the better part of three years, and consequently the work has suffered to some extent. There is a great deal of work that needs to be done, but I believe that the prospects for numerical and spiritual growth are good. Bro. Jerry Noland has done a very fine job of "filling in" for the brethren here for the past several months, and the brethren at Ray's Branch are indebted to him for his good work and personal sacrifice. Jerry makes his living selling insurance, and he preaches whenever and wherever he can on the side. He has done this for a number of years all over this area, and I commend him for his labor in the Lord's vineyard.

The brethren seem to be excited about my coming, and we have some special things planned for 1985. We are planning to set aside the last Friday night of each month for a special singing, and I am looking forward to these opportunities to praise the name of our great God in song. We have two gospel meetings scheduled for 1985. Bro. Ron Mosby will be with us in the Spring and Bro. Edwin Hayes in the Fall. The brethren here have made a number of contacts in a recent religious census that they conducted, and so I am hopeful that the Lord will bless us with several Home Bible Studies in the near future.

The Lord's church at Ray's Branch meets in a

very commodious building that is located about five miles north of Bowling Green on Richardsville Rd. (Hwy. #185). If you are "passin' through," please stop and worship with us; we would be more than happy to have you. If you have friends or relatives in this area that I might be able to assist in any way, please contact me.

**Ramon Madrigal, 7146 S. Thomas Avenue,  
Bridgeview, IL 60455**

I began preaching in this Chicago suburb over 3 years ago, just miles from my old neighborhood. At that time, the congregation was struggling to maintain an average attendance of 30 members. Although our number has increased to almost double that amount presently, our finances are still less than is needed.

Last month I received notification that my monthly support will be reduced by \$100 monthly. This comes at the precise time that I need an increase, due to the expected arrival of our second child in December. I estimate my present needs to be \$200 monthly. Can you help in whole or in part?

I will be happy to furnish any additional information you may request along with references.

**Eric Reed, P.O.Box 637, Bellville, Cape 7530,  
Republic of South Africa**

Since America is geographically located above the equator approximately the same distance that South Africa is below it, the weather seasons here are exactly *opposite* from the States. The coldest month in South Africa is July and our hottest is December. So while we burn, you freeze and vice versa. Though it's currently "snowing all over" the States, we have already had temperatures here in the 90's and several weeks ago a "heat wave" hit our area which pushed the thermometer up to 110° in a town not too far from Bellville.

Normally at this time of the year, we are in the midst of planning another extensive preaching trip to various regions of Southern Africa during the holiday period. However, this year we have decided to concentrate our preaching efforts on spreading the gospel locally, among the coloureds of Matroosfontein. Brother Hendrik Morris, who currently preaches for the largest coloured congregation in South Africa (located in Cerutiville, just outside of Nigel, in the Transvaal Province) has agreed to come down and work with us during the December holidays. Also, brother Abram Valla has agreed to accompany Hendrik and share in the preaching responsibilities of the meeting. Please remember our efforts in your prayers!

**David McClister, 14307 Karlov Avenue,  
Midlothian, IL 60445**

I have just finished a gospel meeting in Joliet, IL. Some good honest hearts were responsive to the gospel: three were restored and one precious soul was baptized. That certainly was encouraging.

**Julian R. Snell, 632 Montclair Rd.,  
Frankfort, KY 40601**

David Joy of Paden City, West Virginia underwent successful heart transplant surgery in Pittsburgh, PA on Saturday, October 6. His prognosis is good and his recuperation is on schedule. For several weeks he had been hospitalized, first at Paden City, then Wheeling and finally transferred to Pittsburgh where diagnosis confirmed an infected heart with the only prospect for a normally active life depending upon heart transplant. David teaches school in Paden City and preaches at Fly, Ohio. Insurance relieves a great part of the medical expense but extensive personal expenses on the part of his good wife Patty (Paul Casebolt's daughter) due to attending him during the several weeks confinement, travel to and from the hospital along with remaining medical and hospital costs has been considerable. This fine family needs our help. A trust fund has been set up in the name: David Joy, at Paden City Bank, Paden City, WV 26159.

**Gardner Hall, 267 Paterson Ave.,  
Paterson, NJ 07502**

A combination of several disappointments in the Spanish work in New Jersey, combined with growing opportunities in New York City have convinced us in the past few weeks to spend more time in the "Big Apple" in spite of our small town aversions to it.

Two churches in New York City have expressed a desire for us to work more with them: the Upper Manhattan church and the Beach Avenue church in a similar area of the Bronx. From now on I will be splitting my Sunday mornings between those groups, as well as continuing to teach the class at Upper Manhattan on Thursdays. We're also going to distribute correspondence courses in Bronx and Upper Manhattan to try to get home studies in those neighborhoods.

We will continue to conduct services with the little church in Newark on Sunday evenings, but the weakness of the members there gives us a weak base to try to reach non-Christians. You simply can't build a good local work on weak Christians.

The two churches in New York that have asked for more help from us, however, are full of zealous Christians who need teaching but who exude zeal and faith and therefore will provide a stronger foundation for growth. Though I'm going to be working more with these two churches, I will be by no means "the preacher" for them as some perceive that term. Both have good, capable men who will do most of the preaching, and I'll simply help in any way I can with special classes and occasional sermons. I especially want to be careful not to stick my nose in too much at Upper Manhattan because they're going great already and I wouldn't want to mess anything up. We've worked hard to gain the confidence of these brethren and they have responded by opening their hearts to us in every way.

There are a few more difficulties in distributing courses and literature in New York than in Latin areas of New Jersey. I've already distributed courses by myself, but brethren in Upper Manhattan have advised me that that may be too dangerous. Since I'm "chicken" I'll heed their advice, but it's difficult to find others to accompany me to distribute in the middle of the day when there are less problems. We may be able to mail courses out if we can iron out some problems but till then we'll distribute by hand.

# CLASSIFIEDS

## PRINTING

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