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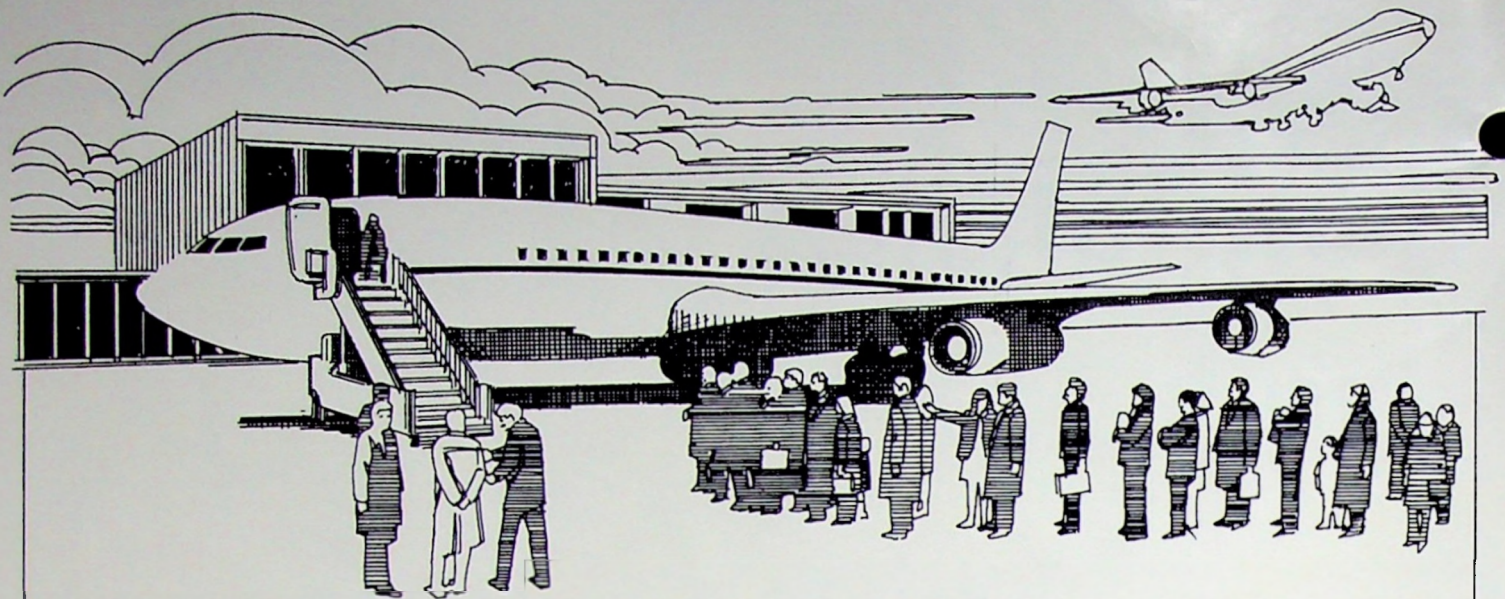
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The Search for Peace

PERHAPS one of the most elusive things in the world today is peace. Nations search for it within their own borders, but are unable to attain it. Diplomats fly to summit conferences called between the major powers, but all that we often end up with is an armed truce. Labor and management are often at odds over who should do and get what. If an agreement is impossible we have a strike with the end result that both sides suffer.

Most people will agree that wars and conflicts are undesirable. We wonder why the leaders of mighty nations cannot learn to live with each other. You can point to different languages, cultures, and customs as certainly being factors which do not make for unity. It should not be so hard to understand why nations can-

not get along better when we see the people within nations, or provinces, or localities, unable to get along better than they do.

It is certain that we will never experience peace among people until these people are able to have peace within themselves. Many people live lives of quiet desperation, going from one crisis to another, never experiencing the peace that they can and should be able to enjoy.

You can experience peace in your life. This is a promise made to us many times in the Scriptures. Jesus said in John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." It seems strange indeed for Christ to speak about peace when men were planning to murder him. Soon even his disciples were going to desert him for a period. He was going to be alone, and to suffer severe

pain, yet he was able to speak serenely of the peace which he had. This peace was also promised to his followers, and through them to us. Anxiety was banished from his mind. He was able to experience the effects of hatred without having any in his heart.

It is possible, although doubtful, that we will experience the severe mental and physical torments which Jesus did. Since you may be confronted with trials, tribulations, or testings, remember the promise Jesus gave to his followers, "Peace I leave with you, my peace give I unto you." This is a promise of Christ to all those who would name him as their Savior and follow him. As one saintly black lady said when describing the peace which she had in her mind, "The world didn't give it; and the world can't take it away."

— by Pastor John Hearp —

Editor's Viewpoint . . .

Summer, Harvest, and Salvation

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (Jer. 8:20, RSV).

When Jeremiah uttered this lament, the world was in political chaos. Assyria, mighty ruler of the world, had just been defeated as armies laid up an appalling siege around the capital city, Nineveh. But the tiny nation of Judah, home of the prophet, had been paying taxes to the Gentile empire. What would become of the Jews, Jeremiah's people? Who would step into the political gap?

Two claimants for empiring waited in the wings. Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt was making a lot of noise about expanding his borders. And king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had like aspirations. In Judah no one trusted the Babylonian and the politicians looked to Egypt for help.

During this timeframe Judah's king Josiah came under spiritual conviction to begin a religious revival. Jeremiah supported him and some spiritual progress was made. But with the demise of Nineveh and the portends of a new world ruler, the revival fires cooled and the people turned to politics for their salvation. To them, Egypt looked like a savior in the upcoming showdown.

But God gave Jeremiah another answer. Because of Israel's sin of idolatry, she would be taken into captivity by Babylon. Don't rush into Egypt's arms expecting rescue. Those who go south will experience a worse fate.

As you might expect, Jeremiah's message met rejection. The prophet was later incarcerated and the people heard only the lonely voice of a prisoner.

In the midst of these circumstances Jeremiah sorrowfully lamented, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved" (8:20, RSV). The metaphor depicts Israel's feeble grain harvest between April and June, a meager gathering of summer fruits during July through September, and a barren land thirsting for a salvation destined not to come.

Perhaps in the western world circumstances mirror those of Jeremiah's time. The political seasons in the Mideast have changed. Economic woes continue worldwide. Business recovery in America is dragging its feet. In the harvest of inner values mankind still experiences a shortfall of morals.

What is needed to change our lament into hope once again? A Josiah-like national revival? Personal humility for our sins? Is there no balm in the western world? Is there no physician there? (Cp. Jer. 8:22.)

Even in despair Jeremiah saw the answer for his people. It applies to us today. "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah.

... I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. . . they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:31, 33, 34, RSV).

What have you and I done to make this take place in our lives?

The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text

When a pair of Dallas Theological Seminary alumni recently completed edit work on the hundreds of Greek manuscript fragments to formulate the Greek New Testament, they reopened a long-standing can of worms. Dr. Arthur Farstad and Professor Zane Hodges named their project "According to the Majority Text" because former Greek New Testaments were based on the century-old work of B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, who used primarily two manuscripts discovered in Egypt. While the great body of the "Majority Text" was available to Westcott and Hort, they labeled it as a Syrian recension—the manuscripts were a revision effort done probably in Syrian Antioch. If that were true, then the Majority Text should be accorded little weight in determining the original text. Thus W-H decided that the Egyptian texts were untouched by editorial revision and closer to the autographs.

But the Hodges-Farstad team claims that the W-H tradition is largely disregarded by critical New Testament scholars today. One of the Majority Text manuscripts is very similar to the main manuscript used by W-H, proving that it is a reliable source and should be consulted in formulating the Greek text. They further charge that W-H were wrong in assuming that their Egyptian documents contained the purest form of the original autographs.

To spice the controversy, Thomas Nelson has published the Hodges-Farstad edition of the Majority Text. The Nelson product features nonitalicized typeface, English paragraph titles, and contemporary Western punctuation, making it highly readable.

What does all this mean to you if you are unable to read the New Testament in the original Greek anyway? Oregon Bible College instructor Eugene Stilson views the Majority Text as having fewer doctrinal problems since immortal soul and trinitarian assumptions are more difficult to ascertain from it. Orthodoxy has long cherished the W-H tradition because of its more interpretative leanings.

If the Hodges-Farstad Majority Text is a step away from traditional theology, perhaps documentation now exists for conditional theologians and the worm will turn on the majority.

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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PART 1

The Ideal Church

Before any congregation can have an effective mission and ministry for the Lord Jesus Christ, the BODY MUST BE HEALTHY! The objective of this series is to determine what makes a local church SPIRITUALLY HEALTHY AND MATURE. For *until that is achieved, few great things can happen for the glory of God.*

Foundational Text

Ephesians 4:15, 16 (NIV)

"We will in all things GROW UP into HIM who is the HEAD, that is, CHRIST. From him the WHOLE BODY, joined

and held together by every supporting ligament, GROWS and BUILDS ITSELF UP IN LOVE, as each part does its work."

Three important matters clearly emerge from this text. If a local congregation is going to reach its full potential it must:

(1) RECOGNIZE AND SUBMIT TO THE "LORDSHIP OF JESUS."

"Therefore God exalted him [Jesus] to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth

and under the earth, and every tongue confess that JESUS CHRIST IS LORD, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:9-11, NIV).

To say "Jesus is Lord" involves far more than giving him the title of "Mister" or "Sir." To acknowledge him as Lord is to GIVE JESUS OWNERSHIP. That means giving him the keys to one's life, the claim to all one's parts, thoughts, and possessions. *How distant this is from the superficial, surface commitment experienced by many!*

That this is of utmost importance is

Building Up the Body

By Pastor Don Needham

shown in the writing of Paul, who makes acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus a prerequisite to salvation: "If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord' . . . you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9, NIV).

When a body of believers will consciously strive to exalt Jesus to the position of Lord in their private lives, and in their corporate worship, they are well on their way to attaining a congregation that is spiritually fit and robust!

One sure examination for determining submission to the Lordship of Jesus is to answer the question he asked in Luke 6:46: "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (NIV.) The test of Lordship is OBEDIENCE. Am I obedient to his teachings in all areas of my life? My career? My material possessions? My time? My marriage? My devotional life? My future?

For Jesus to be your Prince of Peace, there must be a *coronation service* in your heart. For him to be your Lord, there must be SURRENDER TO HIS OWNERSHIP.

(2) UNDERSTAND THAT THE CHURCH IS "ONE BODY WITH EVERY MEMBER A VITAL PART."

Five individuals playing their own games of one on one, or five bodies molded together playing as one cohesive unit—which will be the winning basketball team? But Paul went even beyond calling the church a team, he saw it as one *single organism, comparable to a human body*.

"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Rom. 12:4, 5, NIV). "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it" (1 Cor. 12:27, NIV).

Learn a profound lesson! "Look at the unified functions of your human body and it will show you how a local congregation should operate."

Ears, eyes, a nose, legs, fingernails are all designed differently but each contributes to meet a vital need. Members of the one body of Christ are different too, but diversification exists so that all needs can be met. Teaching, faith, pastoring, helps, and hospitality are just a few of the spiritual gifts that God distributes to members of the church. And like a finely tuned motor hitting on every cylinder, the body of Jesus will operate at maximum efficiency when each member knows his spiritual gift(s) and exercises it. (See 1 Cor. 12:4-11, Rom. 12:6-8, and Eph. 4:11, 12 for a list of spiritual gifts.) In the body of Christ there are NO LITTLE PLACES, AND NO LITTLE PEOPLE. Everyone, with a job of any size, is important.

Take note of the unity that exists in a human body. One eye cannot decide to read a newspaper while the other watches TV. One leg cannot decide to jog while the other swims—another lesson for the church. For a congregation to purr along at peak performance, THERE MUST BE COOPERATION AND UNITY. As parts of the human body work together for the common good, so must the members of the body of Christ. This sometimes means laying aside personal preference for the good of the whole. Like an ingrown toenail that needs to be extracted, one selfish, ornery, thoughtless, stubborn member can make the whole church miserable! *God has built unity into the original design of the church; it is up to the members to maintain it.*

DEPENDENCY is another example the body shows the church. For all the glory that goes to an eye, it is totally dependent upon the hand to remove a speck of dirt. Accordingly, the ideal congregation is not achieved when each member moves in his individual circle, but when each learns to lean and depend upon one another. Empathy (the feeling of one's joy or pain in another's heart) is also necessary.

One word that summarizes this whole "one body" concept is SUPPORTIVENESS: Everybody pulling together and for everyone else. **A local congregation will not experience significant numerical growth unless and until it views itself as one body, and acts as such.**

(3) HAVE LOVE COMPOUNDING.

That quarterly reminder from a savings account to inform that the principal has compounded interest, is always a pleasant notice. But how much more delightful is a congregation that is COMPOUNDING LOVE!

Members will be falling deeper into *agape* with one another. People will be forgiving and not holding grudges. When a difference of opinion does surface, the love is so deep that the matter can be worked out without causing a split.

"Deep Love" does not just happen. It only flows forth when people grasp what happened at the cross of Calvary. "So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being ROOTED AND ESTABLISHED IN LOVE, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how WIDE AND LONG AND HIGH AND DEEP is the LOVE OF CHRIST, and to know this LOVE that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God." (Eph. 3:17-19, NIV).

Wow! That's Unconditional Love! Overlooking Love! Forgiving Love! Empathetic Love! Never-Quitting Love!

Love may or may not make the "world go 'round," *but it certainly does make the church function at a level higher than any man-made institution can attain!*

The first three steps to being an ideal congregation:

(1) Recognize and Submit to the Lordship of Jesus.

(2) Understand that the Church is One Body with Every Member a Vital Part.

(3) Have Love Compounding.



The flight south is done with graciousness.

The Art of

GEESSE FLYING SOUTH do it with graciousness. Their gliding through the air in the famed "v" formation is in itself a picture of grace. But that attribute doesn't stop with just looks.

Observe the lead gander. In his youthful enthusiasm he calls hope and cheer to his followers. Glad to take the lead where there's more wind resistance so older geese can enjoy the relative ease of the drag, he sings a merry song.

The other geese in the formation return his gleeful honks with sounds of encouragement and appreciation. Gamely they keep up in the struggle because of the lead gander's fine example.

The symphony of grace continues even when their leader must fall back to take a rest. Another upstart in the group announces his gratitude to the leader, voices his desire to lead for awhile, and moves up to point. The two youths exchange pleasantries, and the tired goose relinquishes the leadership gratefully. All the way back into the formation the other geese honk notes of thankfulness for the wonderful leadership he provided. He joins them in sending cacophony of praise and enthusiasm up to the new leader.

There's no better way to fly south than by doing it with graciousness.

* * *

While the foregoing story sounds a bit high-flown, the moral is clear. When graciousness is a way of life,

events go smoother and life is fun and meaningful.

A friend confided to me about some of the things which recently happened in his life. He now lives each day cherishing their memory. On one Sunday in church he received three compliments on his work. Some friends in a nearby state hosted him and his wife for a weekend at their cottage on the lake. Another couple spent a whole day with his family "just working around the house." An acquaintance telephoned from a distant state to merely spend some time to cheer him up. Flagged down while driving his car around town, he peered through the window to discover the arm waver was a friend who wanted to express appreciation for his work. When offering a church family a lift home from services, the father complimented his participation in the worship hour.

My friend continued to tell of gracious comment after comment. I could see that his life took a turn for the better when so many took time to express to him love and compassion. It sounded like a reprise of the geese concert.

Graciousness Begins With God

Why is it that humans glow when paid a compliment by their peers? What is there about courtesy and compassion that scores bigger in the psyche than violence on television? How does mercy bring warmth to the heart while envy and malice set our nerves on edge? What is there

about cutdowns which make us feel erased from humanity while compliments boost our morale?

If we can observe graciousness in the flight of geese and feel it in human relationships, then there must be a source for this life-changing trait. Like Ponce de Leon searching for the fountain of youth, men will expend every effort to discover the pot of grace at the end of the rainbow.

Gratefully, our longing for the fountainhead of mercy can be fulfilled swiftly and completely. The God of the universe offers abundant grace. He has exercised it constantly in his dealings with mankind. Looking down from his heaven on our affairs, he doesn't treat us as we deserve for our ways. Historically, his mercy and grace extend beyond the reach in all directions—both on the earth and in the universe. The Psalmist best expresses his thankfulness for God's graciousness:

The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in
steadfast love.

He will not always chide,
nor will he keep his anger for
ever.

He does not deal with us according
to our sins,
nor requite us according to
our iniquities.

For as the heavens are high
above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love
toward those who fear him;

Graciousness

by Russ Magaw



Cultivate the art of graciousness in conversation.

as far as the east is from the west,
so far does he remove our
transgressions from us.

As a father pities his children,
so the LORD pities those who
fear him.

For he knows our frame;
he remembers that we are dust.
(Psa. 103:8-14, RSV.)

God is both the source and perfect example of graciousness. By coming to catch some grace from him, we experience a new birth in this lost art of graciousness.

Grace Demands No Repayment

God's graciousness is a daily experience for us. Each new day he gives us is an example of his grace. But how is this attribute operative in us? Just what is involved on the human scale to put grace into practice? What is grace?

In the Hellenistic age of the ancient world the Greeks had a word for it: *charis*. Grace embraced beauty, the "grace" of the physical form, favor, gratification, homage—all things which delight. Aristotle defined *charis* as something which is conferred guilelessly for pure joy, with generosity and open-heartedness. But surely *charis* is more than pure beauty and gratification. Had the Greeks missed something? Doesn't grace affect more than merely human appetites?

Two of many Hebrew words expressing grace similar to the Greek *charis* are *hen* and *hesed*. To the

Jews this grace was a lovingkindness and mercy which is entirely undeserved and demands no repayment. God conveyed such mercy on Moses, and the receiver wanted more and more of it. The prophet's request of the Lord was: "If I have found *grace* in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find *grace* in thy sight" (Ex. 33:13). God still calls in such love and mercy to his people as revealed by Jeremiah: "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. 31:3).

The New Testament further verifies that God's mercy toward his people extends beyond their misgivings. This freely given, unconditional love is not earned or paid back. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). Paul speaks of God's "exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us" (Eph. 2:7), and declares that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Rom. 5:20).

Clearly grace is best described in God's view of us. He is for us. Moreover, he is for us who in ourselves are against him. Additionally, he is not for us merely in a general attitude, but has effectively acted towards us. In fact, grace is summed up in the name of Jesus Christ, his Son.

Graciousness Comes by Jesus Christ

What Israel knew about the grace of God remained a mystery for the rest of the world. While nations longed for more grace than existed in Hellenistic thought, God finally revealed that mercy through his Son. Not that God had failed in the past to reveal grace. By the active force of his *logos* the Father created all things. Life and light were evident early on planet earth (John 1:1-5). But men failed to fathom his lovingkindness. Even Israel could not grasp it fully.

Then just 2,000 years ago God activated his *logos* in a new and living way. He presented the facts of his grace in the human form of his Son. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father" (John 1:14, RSV). Truth and graciousness had arrived. Mankind could fully experience God's love and forgiveness through knowing his Son.

John goes on to describe the "fulness" we have in Jesus. He uses our key word twice to illustrate the value of love and mercy brought to light through Christ. "And from his fulness have we all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (vv. 16, 17, RSV). God had shown the facts of law and justice upon sinful man in



the past. Now he pictures in his Son his love and mercy freely given to us; that's *grace*.

Through the obedient suffering, sacrificial death, and triumphant resurrection of his Son, we not only see that God is gracious but that God is acting with grace toward us in his Son. God's mercy and love overcome sin and enmity and set up the covenant of fellowship for those who accept his grace.

Thus we grasp the fullness of the meaning of grace when we come to God through his Son Jesus Christ. The supreme act of grace is an accomplished fact. All we must do is accept the gift.

How You Can Become Gracious

Want more grace to flow from your life? Do you desire to love others by word and deed instead of playing the games of oneupmanship and cutdowns? There's graciousness offered to you through Jesus. How can you take it for your own?

1. *By Faith Accept God's Grace*

There's no way you can change yourself to become gracious overnight. All attempts to "try" to do better only anticipate that sometime you'll slip back into your old ways. Then you will likely consign yourself to the scrap heap of failure.

Realize right away that graciousness is a product of the grace of God. He has offered it to you freely in his Son. Take the time to pray that Christ will create in you the trait you

so need. Ask God to begin the process of graciousness in your life. Experience for yourself the same transcendence which God gave you in your conversion experience when you first accepted Christ in faith, repentance, and baptism. Then true grace will take hold in your life. "By grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. 2:8). Faith your way into God's grace.

2. *See Yourself as a Changed Person*

Imagine that Christ is the vine and you are a branch. His love and grace flow through you to produce fruit—graciousness. Recall continuously the words of Jesus, "As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. . . . He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit" (John 15:4, 5, RSV).

Visualize acts of kindness and care that you will do as attached to Christ's grace. Go out of your way to help a neighbor, compliment a friend, lend a hand to a stranger.

3. *Live Thankfully*

Be prepared to understand every event and circumstance in a new perspective. Just because you are now living by grace doesn't mean that life will flow richly without problems. But it does mean that you can face every difficulty in a new way—gracefully. Instead of bemoaning your lot, cursing God, or taking out your frustrations on your loved ones,

you now appreciate what living is all about. You're in God's hands. He is able to bring about good through every circumstance. "If God is for us, who is against us? We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, who are called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:31, 28, RSV).

Approach events and circumstances with an attitude of thankfulness. It's not that you appreciate the problem, but rather you face it with gratitude that God and Christ are with you and care for you through it. Paul had this in mind when he wrote, "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thes. 5:18, RSV).

THE ART of graciousness can be yours. Give your life into the hands of God and Christ; they will fill you with mercy and compassion. Trust them. Open up new vistas of opportunity to live thankfully. "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt" (Col. 4:6, RSV).



The First Sunday School

By Dorothy Williams

Betsy Farthingale climbed the great stone steps leading to the door of the publisher of the Gloucester Gazette.

Timidly she lifted the heavy brass knocker and let it fall. Soon the door opened and a very tall, thin man peered down at her.

"Yes, Miss, what can I do for you?" he asked.

"Please, sir, I'm looking for a Mr. Raikes, Mr. Robert Raikes, Mother said his name was. Please, is this where he lives?" The tiny girl, in a shabby brown coat and shoes that were little more than bits of leather strapped to her feet, trembled as she gazed up at him.

"Yes, I am he. Won't you please come in?" The tall dignified man spoke softly.

"Mummy told us—that is my brother and me—that you have a school here on Sundays. A school for children like us. Is it true?"

"Yes, Miss . . . ?" He hesitated, hoping she would offer to tell him her name.

"Betsy, sir. I'm Betsy Farthingale. My brother's name is Edward. We work in the mills now and we walk past here every evening on our way home from work. Someone told our Mother about your school and she said I might stop by and inquire. You see, we, that is our Father, Mummy, and Eddie and me—that's all of our family—just moved here from Southampton where we all worked in the mines. Mummy said it was such hard work, and that our health was getting delicate from it. She and Father decided we must seek employment somewhere else."

Betsy settled back with a look of satisfaction on her tiny face after having told Mr. Raikes about the family.

"Well, now, we'll see about that! You know, I watch the children going past here morning and night and I thought they might like to come to school on Sunday. Would you and your brother Edward like that now?"

The tall thin man sat down in a chair opposite Betsy in order to catch her half-whispered phrases.

"Oh, Mr. Raikes, we should like it very much. Mummy says we simply must get some schooling somehow, but I am working nine hours holding spindles in the mill, and brother Edward works 12 hours every day. We're always too tired to study at night, although Mummy has a Hornbook for us."

"Well, you and Edward stop by next



Children's Page

Rachel Carr, Contributing Editor

Sabbath day, at two o'clock in the afternoon, and we'll have some schooling for you."

"Ragged school, that's what I call it!" Maggie Hall scoffed when she looked out her window and saw the children trooping into Mr. Raikes' home. "Did you ever see such an odd assortment in your born days? Not enough rags on any one of those children to cover them. Seems as though they ought to stay home where they belong, not be wandering in and out of Mr. Raikes' house of a Sabbath afternoon."

"Why, if my Mary Ellen were dressed as shamefully as one of those children, I wouldn't let her out of the house, you can believe me." Martha Ashdorf agreed with everything Maggie Hall had said about the curious goings on at the Raikes' house. "You'd think a man of his station—publisher and all—wouldn't want such a troop of

ragamuffins in his house at all, let alone going out and asking them to come in. Why, I saw him up at the mill just yesterday, talking to some of the children. Bet he was telling them all to come. Like as not he's got some scheme going to put them to work on Sundays too, since that's the only day in the week they are not working now. He'll probably have them running the printing press and doing all his odd jobs before he gets through with them."

Despite the criticisms of these ladies and other people like them, Betsy and Edward did attend the first Sunday School, started by Robert Raikes in 1780. Here they learned lessons from the Bible, and at the same time learned to read and write. The Sunday School prospered and eventually spread into the vast network of Christian education for children that we know today.

The Content of the New Testament Gospel

by Anthony Buzzard

Popular evangelism bases its appeal upon the death and resurrection of Jesus, and the need for personal faith in his atoning sacrifice, followed by new life grounded in the fact of his resurrection. An examination of tracts offering information required for salvation will reveal that some such formula is common to nearly all "schools" of evangelism. A leading evangelical, John Stott, formerly pastor of All Souls Church in London, speaks of the Bible's Message for world evangelization as properly defined by the Lausanne Covenant

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe (*Perspectives on the World Christian Movement*, ed. Ralph D. Winter and Stephen Hawthorne, p. 5).

Our aim is to show that the "received" definition of the good news differs from the New Testament gospel in one important respect: It makes no mention of the need for belief in the kingdom of God as the Messianic reign to be established by Jesus at his future coming. To speak of the *present* reign of Jesus, as the Lausanne Covenant does, is not an accurate reflection of the New Testament's call for belief in the future kingdom of God on earth.

The New Testament documents contain a precise and full definition of the good news which must be embraced for salvation, and warns us against the danger of adding to or subtracting from the all-important content of the gospel (Gal. 1:8, 9). That full definition is given throughout the synoptic Gospels and unmistakably in the Book of Acts, which records the activity of the apostolic church following the resurrection of Jesus:

When they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized (Acts 8:12, RSV).

The same verse is rendered by Weymouth as follows and must be taken as a summary statement of what kind of belief was required in potential converts prior to baptism:

But when Philip began to tell the gospel about the *kingdom* of God and the *name* of Jesus Christ, and *they embraced the faith*, they were baptized.

This crucially important two-fold definition of the gospel is clearly a fundamental motif in the writings of Luke, for he repeats it at important junctures in his material—at the end of the Gospel, where the *name* of Jesus and the forgiveness of sins are to be proclaimed (Luke 24:47); at the beginning of Acts, where the central issue is "the things concerning the *kingdom of God*" and "the restoration of the *kingdom* to Israel" (Acts 1:3, 6). At the end of Acts (28:23) Luke unites the two strands of the good news message by reporting that Paul was "witnessing the kingdom of God and persuading them concerning Jesus," and (v. 31) "proclaiming the kingdom of God

and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ." The picture is no less clear in Acts 19:10, where those Jews and Greeks who "heard the message of the Lord" had been listening to Paul "lecturing and persuading them concerning the kingdom of God." The centrality of the kingdom in Paul's preaching is given even more striking prominence in Acts 20:24-27, where his solemn witness to "the good news of the grace of God" is defined as a "proclaiming [of] the kingdom of God" as the "whole counsel of God" (v. 27).

In Acts 14:22 the kingdom of God is given a clear definition as the kingdom to be entered by Christians at the second coming, *not* at conversion in the present age. It is clear that "through much tribulation" the Christian life is to be lived out until the end, the terminus being entry into the kingdom of God at the *parousia*, as in the synoptics. Thus E. Haenchen (*The Acts of the Apostles*, Oxford, 1971, p. 141, n. 2) says:

The preaching of the kingdom in Acts obviously refers to the kingdom of God which will begin with the *parousia* (emphasis mine).

So also H. J. Cadbury, in *Acts and Eschatology*, says:

Nothing obviously distinguishes the term kingdom of God in Acts from such apocalyptic use as it has in the synoptic Gospels (The background of the New Testament and its Eschatology, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daube, Cambridge, 1956, p. 311).

It is indeed evident that Luke thinks of the kingdom of God primarily as a kingdom which has *not yet* been inaugurated. This is not, however, to overlook those passages in which the kingdom is used in a different sense to denote the power of the future kingdom evident *even now* in the work of the kingdom's representatives, i.e., in preaching, healing, and exorcism. The predominance of the future kingdom in Luke's thinking is made clear by the following texts:

We are to pray "Thy kingdom come" (Luke 11:2).

Jesus will no more partake of the Passover until "the kingdom comes" (Luke 22:15-18).

That Passover will be fulfilled "in the kingdom of God" (v. 16).

The kingdom of God was *not to appear immediately*, but only when Jesus, as the nobleman of the parable, "returned, having received the kingdom" (Luke 19:11, 15).

The thief looked forward to the future moment when Jesus would come "in [i.

e., bringing in] [his] kingdom" (Luke 23:42).

Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus, was waiting for the kingdom of God (Luke 23:51).

To see the kingdom of God is to see Moses and Elijah resurrected and with Jesus in the kingdom (Luke 9:30).

It will not be until the *parousia* that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob will recline in the kingdom" (Luke 13:28).

It will be at the signs of the approaching advent of Christ that we will be able to say: "The kingdom of God is *about to come*" (Luke 21:31).

In view of these texts it is correct to say with Professor Kevin Giles, writing in *The Reformed Theological Review*, Sept. - Dec., 1981, p. 66:

Luke's understanding of the kingdom [is that] it is still in the future and it will mean the restoration of Israel. He goes on to quote J. Jervell (*Luke and the People of God*, Minnesota, 1972, pp. 41f, 72), who refers to the apostles' question about the restoration of Israel and says: "Luke's theology anticipated a restored Israel." The way in which so many commentators attack the disciples [on the eve of their proclamation at Pentecost] for their expectation of a restored Israel points to a wide-spread antipathy to the New Testament hope for the coming Messianic kingdom.

Since the New Testament attaches so much emphasis on the future kingdom of God and sees the kingdom as the central message of Jesus, it is clear that there must be more to the good news of the kingdom and the things concerning the name of Jesus than the death of Jesus and his present exaltation to glory with the Father, essential as those certainly are. That the facts about the death and resurrection of Jesus form only part of the gospel can be easily demonstrated by considering the following facts. The disciples were dispatched to preach the gospel of the kingdom (Luke 9:2) while they were still without any understanding of the death and resurrection of Jesus (Luke 18:34). From this it is obvious that the gospel of the kingdom cannot contain information about the sacrificial death of Christ. That information was, however, added to the content of the gospel *after* the resurrection of Jesus and the two-fold formula emerges as recorded by Luke in Acts 8:12:

When they believed Philip preaching the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized.

The loss of the information about the

post-parousia kingdom of God has come about by a subtle distortion of the Biblical definition of the gospel. It is popularly taught that Jesus is the message; and as a consequence the message of the kingdom of which he is to be King reigning in a restored earth has been merged with "the things concerning his name" (Acts 8:12). Mark 8:35, though, indicates a distinction between Jesus and the message, however closely they may be related: "For my sake and the gospel's." There is an interesting confirmation of the two-fold nature of the gospel to be found in comparing Matthew 19:29, Mark 10:29, and Luke 18:29:

For the sake of my name; For the sake of the gospel; for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Thus to give up everything for the Master is equally a sacrifice for him or his message, or the kingdom. Between them the synoptic writers have recorded exactly the same two-fold definition give us by Acts 8:12, 28:23, 31. The kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ form the irreducible content of the New Testament good news.

It is the eschatological factor in the good news message which has been neglected. This is largely due to the persistent influence of Augustinian eschatology which permeates the churches. An interesting comment by C. E. B. Cranfield in the *Cambridge Greek Commentary*, page 67, points to a fundamental confusion about the kingdom of God in relation to the church. His recognition of a deeply seated flaw in Christian thinking must be taken seriously if we are to proclaim the Biblical message faithfully:

It should be plain that the identification of the kingdom of God with the church made by Augustine, which has become deeply rooted in Christian thinking, is not true to the teaching of Jesus.

It is also untrue to equate the kingdom of God with the present rule of Christ in heaven. Our texts in Luke (and the point can be established from elsewhere in the New Testament) have shown that the kingdom of God is seen as beginning with the Second Coming. It is therefore very significant that the Lausanne Covenant, quoted earlier, makes no reference to the *future* kingdom, while Paul labored to proclaim it from dawn to dusk (Acts 28:23) as the very heart of the gospel of salvation.

Professor Dumbrell of Sydney, Australia, writing in the *Reformed Theological Review*, May-August, 1981, page 33, points to the same inadequacy of the popular message of salvation when he states:

The term "gospel" has in times past been too narrowly construed, too personalized, and too subjectively applied from a base which can only be described as too restrictively redemptive.

He urges that

the preaching of the gospel must be allowed to demonstrate the fulness of the content with which the New Testament endows it. Our conclusion will be that the content of the gospel as linked in the Synoptics to the concept of the kingdom or in Paul to God's fidelity to Abrahamic promises has direct reference to the intention of God through the ministry of Jesus to accomplish by the act of redemption in Christ not merely the salvation of the redeemed but the "restitution" of all things.

In short we may say that the eschatological kingdom of God has in general not been presented to the would-be convert as an essential element in the facts which must be grasped for the process of salvation and belief. The eschatological 'restitution' (Acts 3:21—*apokatastasis*) is obviously related to the apostles' hope for the restoration (Acts 1:6—'Is this the time that you are going to restore—*apokathistaneis*—the kingdom?) of the theocracy to which the entire Old Testament hope was directed.

The vital importance of grasping, upon repentance, a clear view of the ultimate object of repentance is contained in the first recorded utterance of Jesus. In Mark 1:15 it is reported that he began his ministry by announcing a summons to "believe the gospel." "Much hangs," says Professor Dumbrell, "on the manner in which the unique phrase "believe in the gospel" is translated (*op. cit.*, p. 38). We should note that Jesus did not at first urge belief in himself as Messiah since he forbade that information to be made public (Luke 4:41). Scholars tell us that Mark 1:15 should be rendered "Repent and believe on the basis of the good news," or "within the terms of the good news." At this stage the gospel contains no information at all about the death and resurrection of Jesus, but simply belief in the good news of the kingdom. It is this "good news of the kingdom" which is to be proclaimed world wide "before the end comes" (Matt. 24:14). It is this gospel of the kingdom of God which Jesus saw as the underlying reason for his mission (Luke 4:43). "The content of the gospel is not limited to personal renewal or the experience of redemption. This gospel *must* be construed in the widest possible terms as God's intention to bring in a new world order through Christ" (*emphasis mine*). (*Ibid.*, p. 37.)

What You Put



Cathy Boley
1952-1982

by
**Carol
Daniels**

"Lord, just let me do what you put me here to do. Let me be what you want me to be and I hope it will cheer you. I'm listening and I think I can hear you.

Lord, be with me—love me, surround me, protect me, guide me, shelter me. Lord, invade my thoughts; let me feel your warmth.

I want to feel your hand on my brow, my head on your breast.

I want to touch your robe, hear your words. I want to walk with you. O Lord, you are my shelter, my love, my hope.

O Lord, I sing your wonderful praises for you are mighty and eternal. You are all things to me. I want to shout your name. I want to call you King.

My words aren't adequate, but I love you, Lord. For you have always walked by me, even when I didn't know it. You've done all I asked. Everything has turned out for the better in my life.

O Lord, sustain me in all things." The writer of those words, my friend Cathy, is dead. At 29. Suddenly, swiftly. With no time for final preparations or good-byes. And I am dealing with death again. This seems the year to do it.

In February, my beloved nephew Eric died at 2, then an aged great-uncle, and now my dear friend Cathy. How different the circumstances of each death, yet how similar the familiar sting of response. The nausea. The weak knees. The numbness. The soul-wrenching sorrow. The emptiness. The loneliness. The void.

Even though a universal reality, death strikes not only its victims, but its survivors with a shocking and terrifying intimacy. The grieving process is an intensely individual and personal experience for those who must endure it.

It is easy to imagine that no one has felt this great a pain, that I alone am

singled out to experience grief so profoundly. It is the black night of our existence.

And yet there are lessons to be learned from tragedy. Stark realities of life catch us up short and snap us to attention.

People do indeed die. It certainly does matter how we spend our time. God is faithful to sustain us and love us in our times of need. As Christians, we do not grieve as those without hope.

Love is eternal. Friendships can be blessed and used of God.

My relationship with Cathy was like that, and, as such, was very special.

In the emotionally charged hour of fresh grief, how easy it would be to say ours was a forever-smooth, forever-ideal relationship. But it wasn't. It was better than that.

For it was genuine, complete with the highs and lows, the ups and downs, the ebb and flow of a sustained relationship. We recognized the cycles and accepted the inevitable changes forced by circumstance and time.

But underlining our friendship were the constant themes of forgiveness, reconciliation, and love. Our friendship was of God, and we knew that.

He was often the topic of our conversations. We shared with each other our thoughts and feelings and moods and insights and awe about our life with him. In doing so, we influenced each other for eternity.

"Now it came about . . . that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself"—(1 Sam. 18:1, NASB)—a verse we thought described our relationship, as well.

From a prayer she wrote me . . .

"O Father, thank you for using Carol to sustain me. Even when I turn my face from you, Carol causes me to see you again. As always, dear Father, you creep into my every move and

Me Here to Do

action, and even without my asking, you lift me out of my black moments through Carol. O Father, help her to know me for what I am and understand and love me. Help me to express my love to her so that she may be uplifted also. But most of all, dear Father, thank you for leading us together. O Lord! How can we serve you? Show us, Lord. What can we give you, O Lord? Abide in us as we do in you. Help us to love as you have loved. Thank you, O Father, for the great gift of our friendship."

From a prayer I wrote in my journal

...
"God, I thank you for so many things, especially right now my dear friend Cathy, with whom I have learned so much about being a friend—to truly care and truly give, to share openly, to allow someone in, to venture forth into another's life. To give as well as receive. Dear God, she is a part of me, and I her. A wondrous gift, Father, and one I want to last forever. I ask only fine things for her, God—beautiful gifts from your heart to hers. I thank you for what we have come to mean to each other, and pray you will bless us as we seek to honor you. I think you have great things in store for this friendship, Lord, and I ask your blessing upon it."

I miss Cathy, and think I always will. I will miss her physical presence, her hand on my arm, her interest in my life, and her concern for me. I will miss her sense of the dramatic and her ability to express herself so effectively through acting and directing—what she considered her greatest talent. I will miss her warmth, her sensitivity, her genuine love for others, and the way it shone in her eyes.

But because of the love she gave me, I have more love to give to others, for it has become a part of me. Even though we are separated physically, a part of her lives on in me, and will continue to touch others through me.

My link to her is eternal, for we both belong to the Lord. Through his love we are united by an indestructible bond, untouchable even by death.

"Love one another," Jesus said, "as I have loved you."

That means in spite of discovering faults and weaknesses. That means incorporating that love into my own life and passing it on to others. That means eternally. So have we loved each other.

As with Eric's death, I realize anew the excitement of the kingdom. Now that I have "banked" loved ones into the Lord's safekeeping, awaiting their entrance into immortality, the kingdom has become more tangible to me. God has planned things for us too wonderful to conceive, but an aspect we can grasp is being reunited with those we love—and them being strong and well and whole.

I cannot wait for the day when they will live again in more than my heart.

Even in her death, Cathy comforts me through words written to me after Eric died. In them I see hope and love and courage, and from them I draw strength.

"Dear Carol, My dear friend, I don't need to tell you how I feel about Eric's death. Your grief is my grief, Donna and Jim's grief is my grief, Jane and Dan's grief is my grief, and Chris' loss is my loss.

"I wanted to speak with you tonight but I had no words. They are so inadequate. I had no strength to comfort. I was afraid the minute I heard your voice I would lose control, or you would. Dear little Eric is in no pain, and he will be whole the next time you see him. But for two small years, he brought much joy and love into the lives of your family. It's his legacy to all of you—a bond that can never be broken between you and yours. He presented you with a gift few people can have in a lifetime and he did it in two years!

"I hate death. Death doesn't hurt its victim—only its survivors.

"A close friend lost his father this week; you lost Eric. I can identify with both losses. Death opens up fresh wounds in many people each time. Just when you think it's closed for good, it opens. Carol, you will never be the same. But you will be better for it. You will understand pain and grief and be a comfort to others who need you. You will grow less afraid of death itself. And time will be like a salve to you. It will heal you. You won't hurt forever. (Although it seems like you will.) Life will become so much sharper for you and you will hear the cries of humanity much stronger now. Christ's death will be more real because you've felt the pain of death, as God did. But you also know of the eventual triumph over death."

There's more to the letter... there's more to say about Cathy. But the most important things—as Cathy herself believed and wanted to express in her life—have been said.

She loved God and other people, thus fulfilling the commandment of her Lord, and the request of her prayer, "to do what you put me here to do."

"I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with me, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

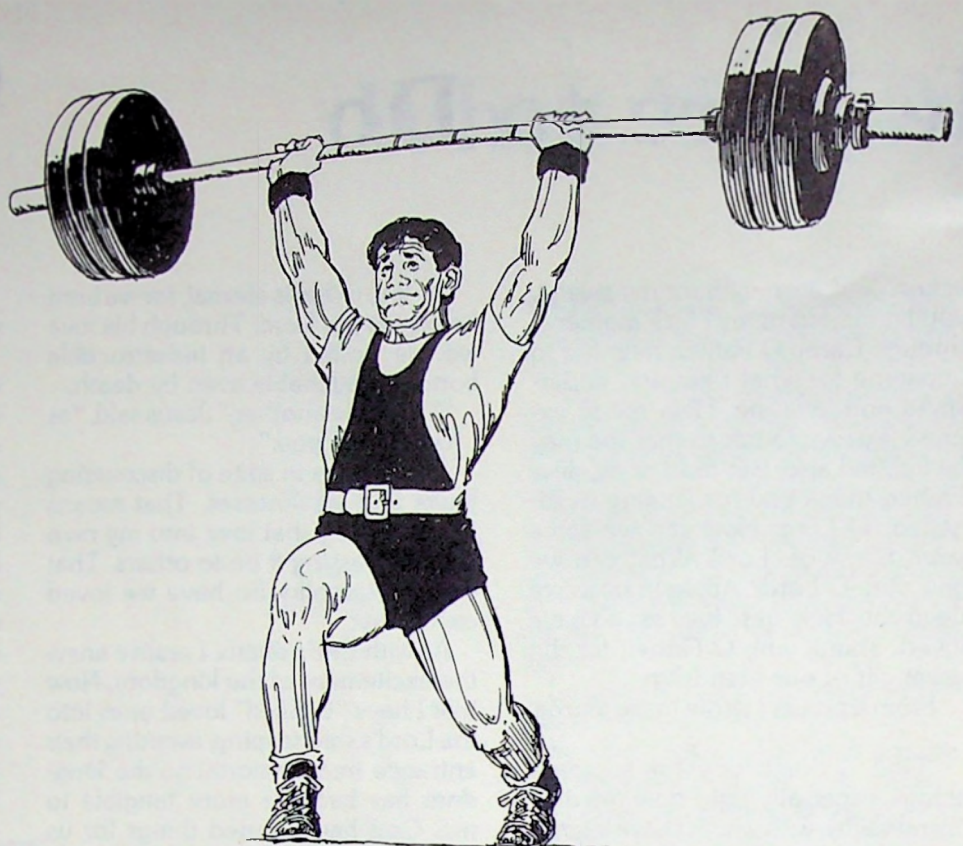
"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:3, 4).

"Behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:12, 20).

BE A BODY BUILDER

by
Pastor
Don
Needham



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“Be a Body Builder.” Sounds like the title of a Charles Atlas book on turning 90 pound weaklings into muscle-bound goons. But you’re not going to read about turning rubber band muscles into bulging biceps. If I knew anything about that I would have taken the advice myself.

This article deals with how every Christian is a part of the Body of Christ and how we should interact with one another. My text comes from 1 Corinthians 12, a favorite book and chapter of mine. In this chapter Paul compares the structure and operation of the human body to the structure and operation of the church. As your body has a head, eyes, a nose, ears, and feet—so does the church, for the church, Scripturally called the Body of Christ, IS ONE BODY WITH MANY PARTS.

The best proof to me of the greatness of God is the masterpiece of his creation—the human body. It is truly a marvel. Consider these parts and their functions:

Human Brain: No computer yet constructed is so talented, so versatile, yet so small. Some computers store more information, but these mechanical marvels can’t appreciate a sunset, nor can they give and accept love.

Human Eye: The most expensive camera is but a cheap toy compared to this taken-for-granted miracle. It is capable of focusing on a close or dis-

tant object, and of distinguishing colors. God has so designed the eye that it is constantly being bathed with a mild antiseptic, powerful enough to destroy most bacteria which attack the eye, thus preventing infection from entering the body.

Human Heart: There is a phenomenal muscle within your chest. If your heart-beat averages nearly 70 beats per minute, it will beat 4,320 times an hour, 103,680 times a day, 37,843,200 times a year, 2½ billion times in 70 years. It pushes an incredible 250 pounds of blood an hour. Imagine a machine that could hold up under such demand.

Every part of the human body is to be appreciated, including the skin and the blood. Everything about us points to our Creator and says, “HOW GREAT THOU ART.” Paul had this kind of appreciation for the human body, for he so beautifully used it as an *illustration of what the church should be when it is operating properly.*

The Church and the Human Body

1 Corinthians 12:12: “For Christ is like a single body with its many parts and organs, which, many as they are, together make up one body.”* The term *church* in the New Testament did not mean a building; it meant people. Regenerated Christians are the church.

Paul said, “Christ’s body is a single

body with *many parts.*” If you belong to a local church body, statistics show the average church has 75 members. If one divides 75 by 75, what answer does he get? The answer is ONE. Here is how the body of Christ multiplies, yet still remains one. When a new member is added, we simply raise the total as well as the number by which we are dividing (Example: 76 divided by 76 = 1). This happens because the common denominator of the church is the blood of Jesus Christ!

1 Corinthians 12:13: “Indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink.” How are we brought into the church, the Body of Christ? Paul says “*it is by God’s Holy Spirit.*” God, through his Spirit, convicts us. After that conviction we place our faith in Jesus, we repent of our sins, we are baptized. Then we are placed into the church by an act of God’s Spirit. This is why the teaching of the work of God’s Holy Spirit is so important, and we dare not bury it!

1 Corinthians 12:14-17: “A body is not a single organ, but many. Suppose

* All Scriptures are quoted from the New English Bible.

the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it does belong to the body nonetheless. Suppose the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it does still belong to the body. If the body were all eye, how could it hear? If the body were all ear, how could it smell?"

Paul writes as though parts of the body can think and talk to other parts. He has the foot and ear talking. I don't find that a bit unusual. For as I think back to my childhood, I'm sure my eyes were very thankful they weren't my ears. I'm sure my eyes for years thought my ears were wings instead of ears! Paul's purpose in this discussion was to illustrate the distinctive work each body part performs in making up the unified whole of a person.

Similarly, Paul says, "Realize that parts of your body are like people in the church." They all come together to make up the one body. God puts diversity in the church by equipping various people with all needed skills, or Spiritual Gifts. That's why some folks are skilled at teaching, others at preaching, others at praying, some at writing, others at calling, and some at driving shut-ins to the doctor. He knows what the total needs are, and he makes sure the abilities to accomplish every task is present in some member of the church.

Realize now that *no one person is the church*. Some folks get the big head and think that they are indispensable—that the church would collapse without them! Let's make one thing clear. There is no one person in any local church so important and so indispensable that he has become the church! Your head is very important to your body. It is the center of your consciousness. Yet as vital as it is, it needs the neck to support it, and the neck needs the shoulders. No one person in the Body of Christ is so important that others are useless. Every individual in the church should be supporting every other member.

The human body has many parts and organs, and when all contribute what they were designed to give, the body is healthy and works well. The church is the same way. The Body of Christ has many parts (members) and

when every member is exercising his gift, the church is healthy and works well. If you wonder how the church should work, go to a mirror and look at your body. Here is a living illustration of what it should be—**ONE BODY, DIVERSIFIED BUT UNIFIED, CO-OPERATING FOR THE GOOD OF THE WHOLE!**

1 Corinthians 12:18: "God appointed each limb and organ to its own place in the body, as he chose." God made each part of the human body. He made an eye an eye and a tooth a tooth. There is no explanation for why a nose is not an elbow except God made it that way. We have to accept that about our bodies. When we come into the Body of Christ, God equips us with specific organic functions called "spiritual gifts." This is the simple explanation for why we have exact capabilities. For this reason one person has the gift of hospitality, another the gift to teach, still another is gifted with leadership to chair the board. God has given you your several gifts because *your local church needs these functioning skills*. So if you are looking around thinking, "Why don't I have that person's gifts?" the answer is simple. God didn't intend for you to be so equipped. God made you the way you are for a purpose. He has a ministry for you and he "gifts" you for it.

Often local churches know very little about spiritual gifts. Consequently, a lot of round pegs are stuck in square holes. A position in the church needs to be filled, and often the first warm body that will say "yes" is stuck into the job. As a result the church gets frustrated people doing an inferior job—they are not serving in a way to use their spiritual gifts. A study of *spiritual gifts* can be very valuable, for once a person knows his gifts, he can accept a ministry that utilizes those gifts. I strongly recommend the book "YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS" by C. Peter Wagner, for study on this subject. You may not agree with everything he says, but there is much valuable information to be learned about the "distribution of spiritual gifts throughout the body." The church works much more effectively when it gets round pegs into round holes. There is a very good spiritual gifts inventory available from Fuller Theological Sem-

inary. I can make this available to any who request it.

1 Corinthians 12:21: "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I do not need you,' nor the head to the feet, 'I do not need you.'" Parts of the human body are dependent on other parts. A speck of dirt gets in the eye, and the hand goes to the rescue. If the head wants to go somewhere, it needs the feet to carry it. The church is the same way. In the Body of Christ **EACH PERSON IS NEEDED**. Sometimes persons act and treat each other as though they don't need one another—but the reverse is true. All are not teachers, song leaders, nursery attendants, grass cutters, or preachers. What a mess if in the church there was but *one gift!* God has distributed the gifts so that one complements the other. Every person is needed. Members should learn to really lean on each other, depend on each other, and support one another. This is how God intends for the church to operate—and when it does, *it is beautiful!*

1 Corinthians 12:22: "Quite the contrary: those organs of the body which seem to be more frail than others are indispensable, and those parts of the body which we regard as less honourable are treated with special honour." There are no unimportant parts of the human body. In this verse Paul is saying there are no useless, vestigial members in the body of Christ. Be it the grasscutter, the songbook arranger, the Sunday School superintendent, or the preacher—every member of Jesus' Body is important! **IN GOD'S CHURCH THERE ARE NO LITTLE PLACES AND NO LITTLE PEOPLE**. In reality it must be recognized that some members of the church get more attention and praise than others. Many toil in obscurity, doing a valuable job but not getting much recognition. But it's not *what people see but what God knows* which is important! Yet some get very jealous and envious if others get more spotlight. How much more would be getting done for the Lord if *petty* people weren't so concerned about *who gets the praise!*

1 Corinthians 12:24, 25: "But God has combined the various parts of the body, giving special honour to the humbler parts, so that there might be no sense of division in the body, but

The church will experience significant numerical growth when it sees itself as one body and acts accordingly.

that all its organs might feel the same concern for one another." Can the human body be divided? Can your legs independently decide they are walking off in opposite directions? Can you read a close newspaper with one eye, and watch a distant TV with the other? Some fish have independent eye control, but humans don't. Parts of the human body must coordinate to be effective. So must the church body! For this to happen obviously *everyone* must lay aside some stubbornness and personal prejudices and think about the good of the whole. **ONE SELFISH, THOUGHTLESS MEMBER CAN MAKE A WHOLE CHURCH MISERABLE!** A dominating, self-centered person who has to have his way can destroy the unity of the church. Maybe your church has had heartbreak and tears because one member of the church, one selfish, thoughtless person was miserable—and wanted to have everyone else join his misery!

Have you experienced a painful ingrown toenail? An ingrown toenail weighs less than an ounce. It grows into the flesh where it's not suppose to and causes a lot of pain. One has to walk differently to lessen the pain. The toe must be held up to avoid putting weight on it, and that soon produces a sore and hurting calf muscle. Because of the adjusted walking, a backache soon develops. Before long, all this produces a tension headache. All because of one measly ingrown toenail! Similar problems can happen in the Body of Christ when one member gets his "nose out of joint." He can make everyone else miserable. Misery is *not* eliminated by spreading it around!

1 *Corinthians 12:26*: "If one organ suffers, they all suffer together. If one flourishes, they all rejoice together." Empathy means putting oneself in someone else's place, trying to feel exactly what he is feeling. The Body of Christ needs *empathetic* members. Members need to sorrow with those who are sorrowing, to pray, "Lord put part of his hurt on me so he won't hurt so badly." Members need to be able to look at a new Christian, see that he may not quite know what's going on, that he might soon fall away if someone doesn't begin to encourage him. So put yourself in his place, identify

with him—help him. When good fortune comes along to someone, be happy with the person who has happiness. That is how to stop a lot of church jealousy. When members are rejoicing over another's good fortune, they cease being envious and jealous.

"Supportive" Is the Word

The term to best describe much of what I have said is *supportive*. The church should be supportive of all members within its fellowship. It is many, but it is *one*. It is so appropriate to think of the church as the "Family of God." It has this oneness because all members were all bought with the blood of Jesus.

If the back of the neck itches, the hand doesn't say, "Tough, I'm busy." It runs back there and scratches the itch. If a mosquito sits down on the nose and begins to drill, the rest of the body doesn't laugh because of the nose's misfortune. The hand goes to the rescue lest the entire body be miserable. Supportive! This is how the human body operates, and the Body of Christ is *meant to operate*.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if everyone in your church was supporting everyone else? Imagine how *dull* the board meetings would be! Just think of how wonderful it would be if everyone left the church with an *internal* and *external* smile saying, "Oh, it's been great to be with my Christian brothers and sisters." All members need to work at being encouraging, supporting, affirming people—complimenting one another, building each other up. Say often and with meaning, "You're doing a great job," or, "I enjoyed that special," or, "I miss you when you are not present."

What is your personal attitude about your local church? What kind of conversation usually occurs during Sunday dinner at your house? Do you sit around talking about everything that was right at the gathering, or does the conversation often degenerate into talking about everything that was wrong—ripping people and things apart? It's no wonder some children grow up having no respect for their folks' church. All they hear about the church is *criticism* and *condemnation*. Why should they respect it or de-

sire to be a part of it when they've heard nothing but derogatory remarks about its members? The church desperately needs positive, encouraging, supportive members. Condensed into one sentence, church members could say to each other: "I AM A PART OF YOU AND YOU ARE A PART OF ME —BECAUSE WE ARE BOTH A PART OF JESUS CHRIST." That should make each care about the other.

1 *Corinthians 12:27*: "Now you are Christ's body, and each of you a limb or organ of it." You should have a good self-image. If you are in Christ, you should recognize your worth. For you are an elbow, or nose, or toe, or mouth, or ear, or hand—you are some part of the Body of Jesus Christ. That gives you value!

To succeed, teamwork is needed. Often there are teams, but they are divided instead of united. Here is a key statement I don't want you to miss.

A LOCAL CHURCH WILL EXPERIENCE SIGNIFICANT NUMERICAL GROWTH WHEN IT SEES ITSELF AS ONE BODY AND ACTS ACCORDINGLY. Is your church not growing? Could it be stagnant because the membership has not yet realized that it is to be *One Body in Jesus*? You get that vision and the love and unity which go with it. Soon your church will begin to explode! You'll need to get the building committee organized because you're going to need more room! Folks will start coming because it's a nice place. They will see people who love and care about one another, that treat each other kindly—they'll want to be a part of it. It will become the sweetest place on earth.

The key is 1 *Corinthians 12:13*, "For indeed we were all brought into one body by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink." God's Holy Spirit is the cause for growth—spiritual and numerical. Growing churches are congregations which understand that they are *one body*, with *many spiritually gifted members, equipped by God* to do various jobs. They are also unified by God's Spirit dwelling in the lives of each member.

BE A BODY BUILDER!

Facing the Issue of EUTHANASIA

by Pastor Don Needham



Sail on life's seas as long as the winds allow.
Vera Smith painting and photo.

Some Call It Mercy Killing

The sanctity of human life is under attack today as never before. Those who do not view man as a unique being created in the image of God see persons as *expendable raw material*—to be molded, exploited, and then discarded. THIS HUMANISTIC PHILOSOPHY is far removed from the Judeo-Christian ethic that has contributed to the greatness of America.

The first candidates for reclassification as nonpersons were the unborn. Our Supreme Court's decision on January 22, 1973, which legalized abortion, was the initial step in the devaluation of human life. That ruling which states that "only viable human beings who have the capability for meaningful life may, but need not, be protected by the state" has opened the door for over 1,000,000 annual killings of the preborn. It is estimated that 95 percent of those massacred are done merely for *convenience*, leaving only five percent destroyed because of medical problems, incest, etc. Over 30 percent of American pregnancies are ending in abortion.

Since the abortion domino has fallen, what will follow? Who next will be reclassified and considered discardable because they are *unwanted, imperfect, or socially embarrassing*? Will it be decided that the senile, infirmed, retarded, insane, and incontinent are objectionable segments which need to be eliminated under one pretext or another? **When one portion of society is being systematically destroyed before birth, how long can it be before some advocate destroying those at the opposite end of the life cycle? When a society abandons the Biblical perspective that mankind is a special creation of God, there is no base from which to argue for the worth, dignity, and preservation of human life.**

Current Practices

EUTHANASIA, or "mercy killing," is the taking of deliberate measures to speed death. It is a term usually associated with the elderly, but it can be practiced upon those of any age. The practice of eliminating the newly

born is INFANTICIDE. This is accomplished by a direct act on the part of someone, or by denial of ordinary care vital to a child's survival, such as feeding.

Little is being said about infanticide, but its practice is becoming more common. The prestigious Johns Hopkins Medical Center has enthusiastically endorsed and is promoting it. Professors Raymond Duff and A.G.M. Campbell from the Yale University School of Medicine announced in a recent *New England Journal of Medicine* article that over a two-year period, 14 percent of the deaths in the Newborn Intensive Care Nursery were deaths that were "permitted to happen" because it was their considered judgment after discussion with the family that these children had "lives not worth living."¹ "Inattention" is the cause attributed to many of these fatalities, but "starving to death" would be a more accurate way of describing what is happening.

Three reasons are commonly given in support of infanticide. First, the state does not want to, or cannot afford to, finance the caring for of anyone, child or otherwise (because children grow up), who is malformed or abnormal physically or mentally. The second reason given is to relieve the parents of the strain, mental anguish, and embarrassment which they may have because of an abnormal child. Third, those who are malformed are just not wanted—not good enough to be part of our society.² *But do those reasons justify slaughtering babies?*

For some, abortion has become an acceptable form of birth control. Infanticide is following the same pattern. But should anyone, parents or doctors, have the power for deciding to kill self-sustaining infants? Whether a handicapped life is worth living should appropriately be addressed to those impaired by some affliction. Here is an opinion from a malformed person, written to answer an assertion in *Newsweek* magazine that "the public has got to

¹ Gary Bergel, "1980—Abortion in America." *Right to Life of Michigan*, VI (May, 1980), p. 1.

² Chalm U. Lipschitz, "Martin Ginsberg's Unbelievable Speech," *These Times*, (November, 1977), p. 15.

decide what to do with vegetated individuals who have no human potential”:

I'll wager my entire root system and as much fertilizer as it would take to fill Yale University that you have never received a letter from a vegetable before this one. But, as much as I resent the term, I must confess that I fit the description of a "vegetable" as defined in the article, "Should This Child Die?" Due to severe brain damage incurred at birth, I am unable to dress myself, toilet myself, or write; my secretary is typing this letter. Many thousands of dollars had to be spent on my rehabilitation and education in order for me to reach my present professional status as a counseling psychologist. My parents were also told, 35 years ago, that there was "little or no hope of achieving meaningful 'humanhood' for their daughter." Have I reached "humanhood"? Instead of changing the law to make it legal to weed out us "vegetables" let us change the laws so that we may receive quality medical care, education, and freedom to live as full and productive lives as our potentials allow.

Sondra Diamond,
Philadelphia, PA³

Even a child with a grave physical and mental handicap can experience such emotions as happiness, gratitude, and love, so therefore deserves protection from methodical elimination. This matter can only be decided on the basis of what is morally right or wrong—not what is expedient.

Some Who May Have Been Destroyed

Had infanticide been practiced on all who were born with handicaps, imagine the talented people society would have missed: Charles Steinmetz, a malformed and even somewhat grotesque individual who became a giant among scientists; Alec Templeton, blind from birth but lauded as a gifted pianist; etc. Those who come into life with less seem to appreciate life more!

The Quandary

In our generation, the advancement of medical technology has created a paradox. The medical ability to extend life has raised the issue of when to mercifully end it. Life support systems have made it possible to keep the body alive long after brain activity has ceased.

Advocates of euthanasia say that when there is no reasonable hope for recovery, a patient should be allowed to die as peacefully and painlessly as possible. Some even advocate procedures such as giving morphine to terminally ill patients which may advance the moment of death. However, there is little question that giving a patient a fatal injection in order to end his misery is legal homicide.

What criterion can be established that will allow for death to take its natural course, yet at the same time respect and protect the wonderful uniqueness of human life? I believe there is an answer. **NEITHER DOCTORS, NOR FAMILIES, NEED FEEL MORALLY OBLIGATED TO USE EXTRAORDINARY ARTIFICIAL MEANS TO SUSTAIN LIFE WHEN THERE IS NO REALISTIC HOPE OF RECOVERY. ONCE THE TECHNICAL GADGETRY THE DOCTOR IS USING IS MERELY PROLONGING THE EXPERIENCE OF DYING, RATHER THAN EXTENDING LIFE, HE CAN WITHDRAW THE EXTRAORDINARY MEANS AND LET NATURE TAKE ITS**

COURSE, WHILE KEEPING THE PATIENT AS COMFORTABLE AS POSSIBLE. THUS IN HOPELESS CASES WHERE A RESPIRATOR IS USED, IT IS CONSIDERED AN EXTRAORDINARY MEANS OF PROLONGING LIFE AND MAY BE STOPPED. WHEN ARTIFICIAL SUPPORT IS DISCONTINUED, IT IS THE DISEASE THAT KILLS AND NOT THE WITHDRAWAL

Where Will It Lead?

But what of those cases where death is not imminent and the patient is physically capable of extended life—the stroke victim, the infirmed, the senile, the retarded? A declining national birth rate is eroding the base for supporting an ever-increasing number of elderly citizens. The economics are devastating. Where will it lead? *Will a society which has assumed the right to kill either infants in the womb, or abnormal babies—because they are unwanted, imperfect, or merely inconvenient—have difficulty in assuming the right to kill other human beings—especially older adults who are judged unwanted, deemed imperfect physically or mentally, or considered a possible social or economic nuisance?* If some are already saying "a life should not come into this world if it is imperfect," then tomorrow some will be saying that if a life is already in this world, and becomes distorted, **WE SHOULD NOT PERMIT ITS CONTINUED EXISTENCE!**

Again, as with abortion, the bottom line to the euthanasia dilemma is the question, "**Is there a life not worthy to be lived?**" Some humanists answer that with a Yes. The unwanted preborn, the retarded, some handicapped, the elderly who cannot experience "meaningful life," do not need to be kept alive to clutter up the system. They can justify those feelings because they do not appreciate that life, all life, has **WORTH TO GOD.**

But those who base their moral beliefs upon the revealed Word of God are compelled to recognize the value of life. With the Psalmist they should declare, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (139:14a). *Such appreciation of and respect for life should inspire us to vigorously defend the sanctity of human life.*

Beware the Currents

As Christians, we must guard against being carried along with the tide of humanist thinking which devalues life. There are a number of recent episodes in the history of man to show that atrocities follow when men depart from the belief that human life is sacred. The Jews were considered to be nonpersons in Nazi Germany. Indians have often been treated as nonpersons in the United States. In the Dred Scott Decision in 1857, the Supreme Court virtually declared Negroes to be nonpeople. Lieutenant Calley expressed the opinion that the Vietnamese were not human.⁴ And now preborn babies are nonpersons in our society. **WHO WILL BE NEXT? THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS: ABNORMAL BABIES, THE RETARDED, AND THE INFIRMED ELDERLY—UNLESS CHRISTIANS UNITE AND CRY OUT IN OPPOSITION.**

³ Francis A. Schaeffer and C. Everett Koop, M.D., *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* (Old Tappan, N. J.: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1979), pp. 80, 81.

⁴ C. Everett Koop, M.D., "Where Is the Abortion Decision Taking Us?" *Eternity* (October, 1973), pp. 36, 37.

How to Renew Your Herald Subscription



There are two ways to renew your subscription to THE RESTITUTION HERALD. You may do it in fellowship with believers at your local Church of God, or you may send in your renewal personally by mail using the enclosed envelope.

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Each participating Church of God affiliated with the Church of God General Conference will sponsor RESTITUTION HERALD SUNDAY on December 5, 1982. Attendees at the morning worship service will be given a subscription renewal card to fill out. The church will then collect the cards and arrange for payment of \$8.00 subscription to THE RESTITUTION HERALD. Pastors and church secretaries will soon have a packet of information about RESTITUTION HERALD Sunday.

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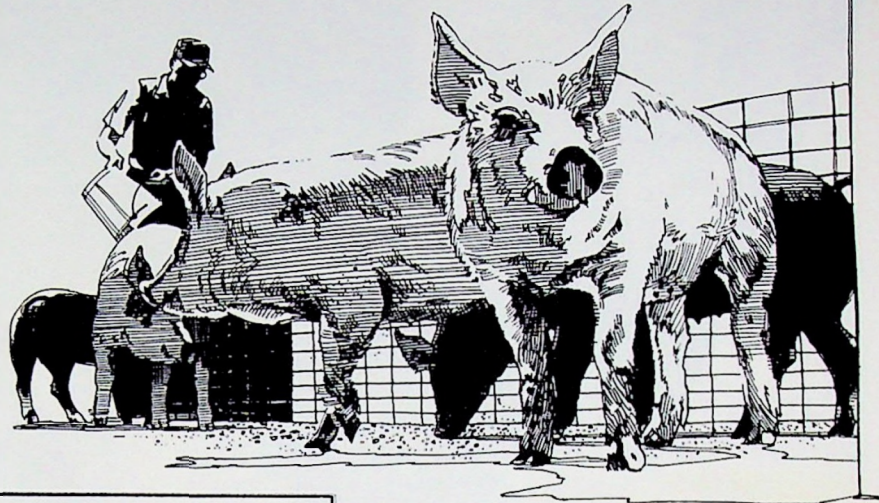
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Use the enclosed prepaid envelope

“How many hired servants of my father’s have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father.”

Luke 15:18, 19a.

by Shirley McQuinn



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The prodigal son took nothing home
but an appetite.
His waiting father filled him
with a feast,
Asking for nothing more than
his presence.
Often I hurry to my heavenly Father
With my hands full of
self-righteousness.
“Look, Father,” I boast,
“Here are all my good deeds.
See how busy I’ve been for you?”
I hear his answer. “Too busy, child.
Too busy for precious time
alone with me.”
Then I realize again that He
wants me to come,
Not with heavy hands, but with
a hungry heart
So He may fill it with a feast of
His goodness,
His wisdom,
His love.



The
Restitution Herald

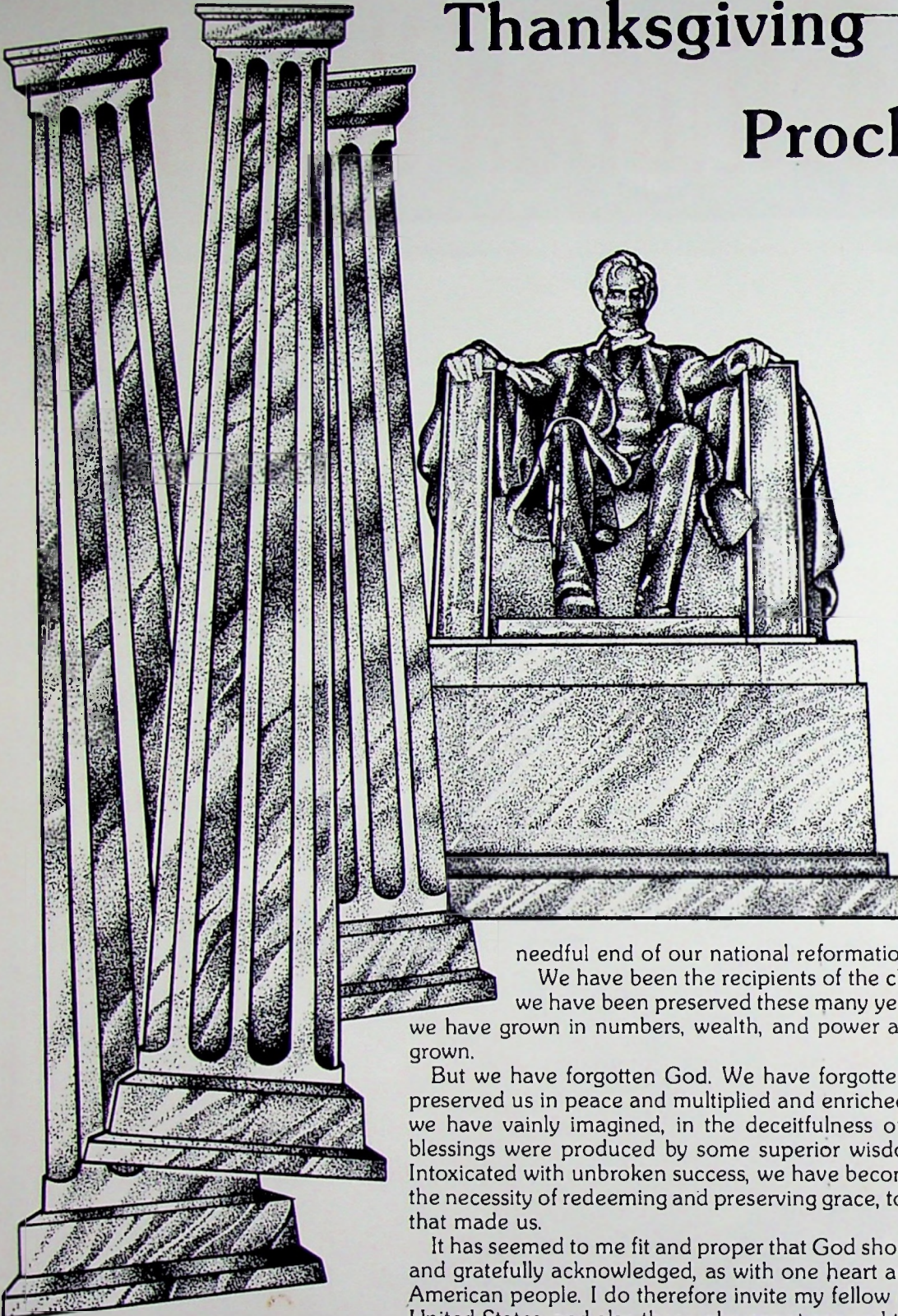
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Thanksgiving

Proclamation



It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We know that by his divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the

needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown.

But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently, and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens.

Abraham Lincoln, 1863.



Editorial Decisions, Layout, and Dummy-Up

If the above clip-art gives you a hint, then you know what goes on at the editorial desk. Each time a publication of the Church of God General Conference reaches your mailbox, countless hours of work go into its production. While your editor mostly makes decisions about what copy to publish, how it should look (layout and dummy-up), and what it should "say," the work of doing "pre-press" falls into the hands of those listed in the "masthead" on this page. Before you receive the final product, we all have feverishly labored over each word of copy, cutline, byline, headline, blurb, kicker, photo, artwork, etc., appearing on each page. Hard work, perspiration, and creative dishevelment run amuck throughout the General Conference building.

In this Thanksgiving month I'm taking opportunity to thank you, our readers, for your faithfulness; I'm thanking our industrious staff for their sterling efforts; but most of all I thank God for his blessings. To him and his Son go all praise and glory for what they have done in our lives and for the good of humanity.

Second Quarter of Distinctive Biblical Issues

The second quarter of the adult elective, "Distinctive Biblical Issues," begins with the week of December 5, 1982. It will continue for 13 weeks through February 27, 1983. If your church needs elective material for a Sunday School class, mid-week Bible study, home Bible study, or another special study group, I suggest that you consider Distinctive Biblical Issues. Write to me for more information regarding the December-February quarter.

Four of the Distinctive Biblical Issues lessons will make use of four articles found in this issue of THE HERALD. Students in the elective will study "Koinonia" by Pastor Don Needham, "One God of the New Testament" by Sir Anthony Buzzard, "Crime and Punishment" by Richard Worley, and "Creation, Evolution: Which?" by Pastor Rex Cain.

Remember to Renew Your Subscription

With the February, 1983, issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD, the new subscription year begins. If you have a one-year subscription, your last issue will come in the mail next month. Make plans now to renew. Use the enclosed envelope for this purpose.

With Christmas around the corner, you might consider sending a gift subscription of THE HERALD to a friend or relative. Use the enclosed envelope for this purpose as well.

May God bless you and yours through the pages of THE HERALD.

Thanksgiving Memory

Crisp, cool air surrounded our family outside as the car moved along the country road enroute to church Thanksgiving morning. The early light of the sun flashed through thickets along the roadside. Fall breezes wafted bronzed and drying leaves skyward as hunters walked the fields in search of game. The scene, etched in my memory, created a feeling of joy and thanksgiving in me to ready me for the service at church.

During the time of thanksgiving and praise that morning, one of the members expressed with tears of joy his praise to the God of the universe for the blessings he experienced. Other members followed with expressions of gratefulness. Adoration of God and personal rejoicing filled the service as the annual Thanksgiving offering was received for the Lord's glory.

Another Son shone on the drive home from church after the service. While the light of the sky reminded me of the glories of nature provided by God, an inner light created anew in me a sense of his presence which I will always cherish.

"In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son. . . . He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature, upholding the universe by his word of power" (Heb. 1:1, 2, RSV).

Happy Thanksgiving to you and yours.

The Restitution Herald

Vol. 72 November, 1982 No. 2

THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a nonprofit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed monthly except January and August.

The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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God's church attentive as a family to his Word.

CHRISTIANS have been likened to a bunch of porcupines on a cold winter's night. Being cold they move together. But then they begin to disagree, and bristle up—which causes them to move apart. Soon they get cold and recognize that they need one another, and move closer again. This process just keeps going on like a slow religious dance.

Unfortunately there is probably more truth in that woodsy story than most congregations would like to admit. The relationships we see between some individual Christians—the dissonance, friction, and trouble that occurs in some congregations—clearly tells us that SOMETHING IS LACKING.

This little ditty says it well: "To dwell in the future with saints we love that will be glory. . . . To dwell in the present with saints we know, *now that's another story.*"

HOW CAN A CONGREGATION DEVELOP AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE, AND WARMTH, AND CARING—A FEELING OF FAMILY? We need only visit the Jerusalem New Testament Church to see how such an atmosphere was achieved.

3000 Babies!

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' *teaching* and to the *fellow-*

ship, to the *breaking of bread* and to *prayer*. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:42-47, NIV).

Pentecost! The most exciting day in the history of the church! The first sermon after God's Holy Spirit ignited and unified 120 people into a world-changing force—and 3000 converts on the first day!

But what could be done with 3000 babies? They were still dripping wet from their baptisms. How could these new believers be turned into mature disciples?

The formula fed to these infants in Christ consisted of four important ingredients. Had any one of the four

been left out, it would not have provided a nutritious, balanced diet.

THE FOUR ESSENTIALS

(1) **Teaching** (v. 43)—The apostles were the nurses that fed these infants a rich diet of the WORD, and verified their authority with miracles,

(2) **Prayer** (v. 41)—Not repetitious phrases, not hollow, empty, formal words—but life-changing, earth-shaking prayer. The buggy that transported this congregation of toddlers about was PRAYER.

(3) **Ordinances** (v. 42)—Though in the original language the expression "breaking of bread" simply may mean eating a meal together, very likely in this text it denotes observing the Lord's Supper. The early church practiced baptism and regularly received the communion emblems.

(4) **Fellowship** (v. 42)—*And what fellowship they had!* Not the artificial fellowship that many congregations have today. Not those kinds of relationships where people fear to get from behind their facades and take off their masks. Not that phony situation where people glue on their plastic smile and live behind that valium face, while their world is crumbling inside—but real, genuine FELLOWSHIP.

Of these four essentials, are any frequently missing from the menu of today's congregation? Is *teaching*? Not really. Films, overhead projectors, seminars which train in teaching skills—all have upgraded the techniques of Christian education. . . . What about *prayer*? Never enough, and at times a bit sterile, but generally today's church is still a praying church. . . . And the *ordinances*? We still practice baptism and observe communion.

You guessed it. The one dimen-

BUILDING UP T

By Pastor
Don Needham



Catching a backward glance plays a role at fun gatherings.

cial distinction." It didn't matter if one was a millionaire or a pauper, he was welcome. Participation was open to everybody. No cliques. No discrimination.

Are things frequently different today? Is your congregation quick to put out the welcome mat, quick to make visitors and new members feel accepted? Oftentimes congregations are not. They seem to be suspicious of new people, or give them the football stiffarm until they have "earned" their right to be a part. What a disgrace it is when the "old guard" make newcomers feel unwanted, hoping they won't return. Their raw motive is to run new folks off. If they are not around, they can't move in, get elected to the board, and take some power

sion, frequently conspicuous by its absence: NEW TESTAMENT FELLOWSHIP!

"Wait a minute," some say. Our congregation has fellowship! We meet three times per week! The fanatics get together on five or six occasions. But "together times" may no more be fellowship times than a stack of lumber is necessarily a house. Having bodies in the same building does not guarantee automatic fellowship!

Three Qualities of New Testament Fellowship

If you desire a test to determine if your congregation is experiencing meaningful fellowship, consider the following:

(1) New Testament Fellowship Included Everyone.

At the beginning there was no "so-



Inquisitive curiosity keeps people close and caring.

and control away from the inner circle. Pure selfishness!

A CONGREGATION MUST WORK OVERTIME TO MAKE SURE VISITORS (over)

THE BODY-PART 2



Togetherness at a songfest.

AND NEW MEMBERS ARE BEING ACCEPTED.

(2) New Testament Fellowship Held Them Together.

A basketball announcer was heard to say "he's guarding his man so closely they could wear the same jersey."

What glue there was between these early believers! There was a closeness, a unity that was almost beyond belief. They realized that being a tiny religious movement in a big pagan world required them to pull together or they would soon disintegrate. Soon-to-follow persecution made the bond even tighter.

Culturally speaking, today many Americans are isolationists. Suburbanites run for home to hide behind tall fences, not knowing or wanting to know much about their next door neighbors. "I DON'T WANT TO BE INVOLVED" is a fitting motto.

Disaster, sheer calamity when that same attitude prevails in a body of believers! There cannot be closeness when people pull back from concern and interaction with fellow Christians.

(3) New Testament Fellowship Met Needs.

Two outstanding reasons why a congregation has the right to exist at

the corner of 1st and Main are: (1) to point people to the cross of Jesus for salvation, and (2) to meet needs.

We are in a life-and-death struggle. This verdict of eternal life or eternal death is not a Dr. Suess theme. Eternity hangs in the balance for the unsaved, and congregations get bogged down in pettiness, quibbling over the color to paint the johns!

The New Testament Church grew because it offered a NEW WAY OF LIFE and IT MET NEEDS. How churches today must constantly be evaluating their programs to see if they are doing the same! Few things are harder to dispose of than irrelevant organizations within the church that have been around since "great grandpa gave the land for the first building." *But meeting needs requires addressing the issues and hurts of the day—with current methods and techniques that are effective.*

Summed Up in One Greek Word

Early Christians had a word to describe this unique kind of fellowship: "KOINONIA." It means *EXPRESSIONS OF GENUINE CHRISTIANITY FREELY SHARED AMONG THE MEMBERS OF GOD'S FAMILY.*

A look at these "expressions" will involve getting into deep water. They include Love, Acceptance, Encouragement, Unit, Serving and Submitting, Admonishing, Bearing One Another's Burdens, Bearing With One Another, and Greeting One Another.

When a congregation has these expressions in action, there will be a *sense of family.* THAT WILL BE NEW TESTAMENT FELLOWSHIP!



Watermelon fellowship.

In Everything Give Thanks



round us. We become so wrapped up in living we forget that life has purpose.

When Jesus is the center of your life, things are different. We learn from each experience and draw upon the Word of God for instruction and the expansion of our minds. As we read the Word we learn what God is trying to help us find out about morals, righteousness, and faithfulness. Our lives are changed because we are seeking to please him. Instead of spending all that time on ourselves, we find that helping others and reaching out to God creates greater pleasure.

November 25 is Thanksgiving Day. While you are thanking God for your blessings, don't forget to thank him in your difficulties. Thank him for the growing you will do as you learn from the hard knocks in life. Let him know that you trust him and expect to learn from life. Accept your problems and ask God what he wants you to learn from them. This is the beginning. You will go on to higher ground and experience great blessings. You will gain a greater awareness of what you have to thank God for. Remember, don't get trapped in the "Why me?" attitude. God has good for you in everything that happens. Overcome your troubles with the proper attitude towards God and your problems. The difference will be a thankful life that knows the real joy of the Lord.

IN A DAY when everyone seems to want and expect everything to work out for self, it is time we stop and think about life. Why does everything have to be centered around man? The "give me" attitude reflects man's self-centered nature. We would do well to consider that problems and difficulties are also worthwhile. Can we be thankful for our troubles?

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thessalonians 5:18). Can you grasp that? God is not asking us to thank him FOR our difficulties, but to be thankful IN those difficulties. Our

first reaction is usually, "Why me?" Our attitude needs to be: "Father, I don't understand what is happening, but I will not let it get me down. I will trust that you have something good for me in this experience and I will accept it and wait for your blessing to show its self." God doesn't allow troubles to come our way without purpose.

As you look back into your life experience, what have you learned from your difficulties? Everything we experience is there to teach us something. The trouble is most of us don't want to learn. We float through life without paying any attention to the messages that sur-

by Pastor David W. Cheatwood



Children of Abraham by Faith

ABRAHAM has two sets of children or seed: 1) those by lineage and 2) those by faith. Two very important passages of the Bible should be considered at this time. They are both in Galatians 3. The first passage says, "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ" (Gal. 3:16). Many Christians think this



is a direct quote from Genesis. It is not. God promised that through him (Abraham) he would bless all the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3; 18:18). In studying the Scriptures in relation to Jesus and his descent from Abraham, we understand this to be the medium through which the promise would be fulfilled.

The second passage in Galatians 3 is verse 29: "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." The prerequisites for being Abraham's seed are: 1) faith (Gal. 3:24) and 2) baptism (Gal. 3:27). We need to examine closely the Bible verses and records to determine in what manner and to what extent Christians become Abraham's seed.

In an encounter Jesus had with the Pharisees and other Jews, he said to them, "The truth shall make you free. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? . . . If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you" (John 8:32b-37). Jesus, too, was the seed of Abraham and the Bible recognizes Jesus as "son of Abraham" (Matt. 1:1). However, to be of the seed of Abraham did not give the Jews the inherent right to be "in Christ." In somewhat the same manner, those who have professed Jesus and claimed him as Savior are not automatically made the "seed of Abraham."

What, then, is the way that a person baptized into Jesus Christ becomes Abraham's seed? The answer is found in the third chapter of Galatians: "Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (vv. 7-9).

We should be reminded that the *heathen* used in Galatians 3:8 refers to all Gentiles, which includes you and

me. The Apostle Paul was definite in teaching the importance of faith. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ" (Gal. 2:16). Again, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" (Gal. 3:5). We know that Christians receive the "gift of the Holy Ghost"—spirit (Acts 2:38b) at the time of baptism. Having become a Christian, a child of God, of the household of faith, and of the "body" of Jesus Christ, then one is under the influence and leadership of God through the Holy Spirit. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

Heirs According to the promise (Galatians 3:29b).

Heirs to what promise? The promise of being "heirs" has to do with Jesus, his return and reign. The church is "to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thes. 4:17b). It is understood also that the "members of the body of Christ" will be given a place of very special honor when he comes. They are referred to as a "bride." And John the Revelator gave this promise: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). The answer to the most important phase in being *heirs of promise* is found in Paul's letter to the Romans. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together" (Rom. 8:16, 17).

The *promises* to the church supersede those made to Israel. The church will reign with Jesus. Israel will be ruled by him. The church will *inherit* all things with Jesus. Israel will inherit a portion of land. The promises to the church and Israel are completely different because they are for separate classes of people in the plan of God.

Why Church Suppers



Are Dangerous

Many practices in today's church may not be condemned in Scripture, but by example we can see that they are dangerous. Take, for example, church dinners. At these times we gather together for a good time of Christian fellowship, gluttony, and a race to see who can get the last piece of Hazel's good apple pie. There is no question but what church dinners/suppers are dangerous. Consider:

Israel had sinned against God and God had given them over to the Canaanites as a punishment. Jabin was the King of Canaan at that time and his number-one man was Sisera. Well, God called Deborah and Barak to deliver Israel from these men. As a slap in the face to Barak for not having the intestinal fortitude to do this without Deborah's help, God said he would not get the glory but that Sisera would, of all things, be taken by a woman.

Sisera escaped the army of Barak and fled to the tent of a woman by the name of Jael. She consoled him, gave him a glass of milk, and told him to take a nap. When Sisera fell asleep Jael took a tent peg and nailed Sisera's head to the ground. So, we see that church suppers are dangerous. When Sisera had a stake in his temple it killed him.

Sagaciously,
Sanguine Satire.

by Pastor Francis Burnett

WHO IN THE NEW T E S T A M E N T



*Which creed will you adopt—
“Let us believe that the Father
and the Son and the Holy Spirit
are one God” (Augustine), or,
“To us there is but one God, the
Father” (Paul)?*

U nanimous assent will be given to the proposition that our understanding of the Godhead is a primary question if we are to worship “in spirit and in truth.” Yet a surprising misunderstanding seems to stand between us and the clear Biblical witness to “the one who *alone* is God” (John 5:44).

It is popularly believed that John’s

Gospel provides solid evidence for the doctrine of “three persons in one God.” The recorded statements of Jesus are strikingly against any such idea; the Christian believer who “trembles at the Word of God” must deal honestly before his God with the following statement in John 17:3:

“This is eternal life: that they may know you, *the only true God*, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (NIV).

These words are addressed by Jesus to the Father (v. 1). The Savior himself here provides the simplest and clearest definition of “the only true God,” as distinct from the one he sent, Jesus Christ. The phrase “only true God” is found in Jewish literature outside the Bible. It was well known and well understood as a state-

ment of the absolute unity of the person of God.* There can be no doubt that Jesus shared this view of God, and the laws of language do not permit the possibility that anyone else can be "the only true God," once this description has been given of the *Father* alone.

The well-known commentary on John by Barrett, p. 420, makes a helpful comment on this verse. "The God whom to know is to have eternal life is the only being who may properly be so described; he and, it must follow, he alone is truly God." Jesus here addresses the *Father* as that "only true God." In Barrett's words, "He *alone* is the only being who may properly be so described [as God]; he alone is truly God."

Another commentary is most revealing in its reaction to this verse (John 17:3): "It splendidly echoes Jewish monotheism" (Barnabas Lindars, commentary on John, p. 519). Can anyone deny that his observation is correct? Here then, in a summary statement about eternal life, Jesus makes a plain assertion about the Godhead which has nothing whatsoever to do with "two [or three] persons in One God." At the heart of Christianity is a doctrine of God which any Jew would recognize at once as monotheistic and unitarian.

It is a highly significant fact that the Latin Fathers of the Church, Augustine, Ambrose, and Hilary were driven to rearrange the words of this verse to read: "that they may know you and Jesus Christ, the only true God" (see Alford, Greek Testament, Vol. I, p. 823). Alford is right to describe this as "violence to the text" and "of course, inadmissible." It was indeed a desperate attempt to fit Jesus' words into their own theological system. The important question is whether in fact the beliefs of most students of the Bible do not coincide with the rearranged version of the Latin Fathers, and not with the statement of Jesus, recorded as Scripture by John.

For the ordinary reader, the statement that the Father is "the only true God" will put an end to doubts about the Godhead, and he will then begin to judge other passages of Scripture in the light of John 17:3. Encouragement in his search for the truth of this important matter can be found in a number of similar passages. To the Pharisees Jesus said: "How can you believe, who receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from *the only God*. Do not think that I will accuse you to the *Father*" (John 5:44, RSV). Note that the King James Version is wrongly rendered "God only," instead of "the only God." The passage

*Philo. Spec. 1, 332. 3 Macc. 6:18.

must be presented in various translations to confirm the proper rendering and give the full force:

"... the glory which comes from *Him who alone is God*" (Amplified).

"... the glory that comes from *the only God*" (Living NT, RSV).

"... the glory which comes from *the only God*" (Henry Alford, comm., Vol. I, p. 709).

"... the honour that comes from *him who alone is God*" (NEB).

The correctness of these translations is confirmed by Plummer in the Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges, John's Gospel, p. 143:

"... the glory... from the only God, from Him who alone is God."

Barrett comments that the view expressed by Jesus is "of course a commonplace in the Old Testament and in Judaism." But the statement appears in the heart of the New Testament! And in connection with the very meaning of "eternal life."

In John 6:27 we have the following statement:

"This one [the Son of Man—Jesus], the Father, even God, has sealed."

The various versions render correctly, giving exactly the same sense:

"Him God the Father sealed" or more precisely "On Him [Jesus] the Father, God, has set His seal" (Weymouth). The position of the Father is expressed here with unique clarity. The frequent title of God in the New Testament is "God the Father," "God and Father," or "God and our Father"; in John 6:27 we have: "the Father, that is: God."

(The phrase "God the Son," so popular in later theology, appears nowhere in the Bible.)

The evidence of these passages gives us the following data: that there is "one who alone is God, the one God, the only true God," as distinct from Jesus Christ whom He sent (John 17:3, 5:44).

It is difficult to see how language can define the Godhead more clearly than this. Indeed, what language could be used to express the idea that no one else is God except the Father, if not the language of these verses?

In Philippians 4:15 Paul says, "Not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except *you only*." We all understand this without difficulty. Everyone else is excluded from the category of a giving church within Paul's reference. But this is exactly the language used in the biblical descriptions of the Father as God. They are absolutely exclusive of any other person than the Father, who "alone is God," "the only true God." (over)

IS THE ONE TRUE GOD ?

by
Sir
Anthony
Buzzard

This emphasis on the uniqueness of God the Father is equally clear in the writings of Paul:

First Timothy 1:17; 2:5 (KJV): "To . . . *the only wise God*, be honour and glory. . . . There is *one God* and one Mediator between God and man, the *Man Christ Jesus*. Throughout First and Second Timothy, as everywhere in the New Testament, Jesus is referred to as the Lord and Messiah. The same verses in the Amplified version read:

"To the only God, be honour and glory . . . there is *only one God*, and only one Mediator between God and man, the *Man Christ Jesus*." The Living New Testament has, "He alone is God"; "the only God" (RSV).

The central credal statement of Paul is found in 1 Corinthians 8:4-6:

"But to us [Christians] there is *but one God, the Father*, of whom are all things . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ . . ." (KJV).

"There is *no God but one*. . . . Yet for us there is *only one God, the Father*" (Amplified).

"There is only one God, the Father" (Living New Testament).

"There is only one God and no other" (Living New Testament).

Jesus' own brother, Jude, finishes his epistle with the following words:

"To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory." (KJV).

"To the one only God, our Saviour, through Jesus Christ, our Lord" (Amplified).

"To Him who alone is God who saves us through Jesus Christ" (Living New Testament).

Again in Paul's letter to the Romans: "To the only wise God be glory through Jesus Christ" (Rom. 16:27).

And in Ephesians:

"There is . . . *One God and Father* of all, who is above all" (Eph. 4:4).

It has been calculated that the term God—*O Theos*—is used to define *the Father as distinct from Jesus the Lord and Messiah*, some 1300 times in the New Testament. This massive evidence for the absolute unity of the Father as the One and Only God does not seem easily to "get through" to the reader of the Scriptures. But can language express more clearly than the New Testament does that *the Father alone is the One God*?

The detailed study on the Trinity by Arthur Wainwright (SCM Press) contains the following statement:

"The evidence shows that God was regarded as one and that *the one God was believed to be the Father* of the Lord Jesus Christ. Statements of this nature [i.e., the passages already noted, and

many other similar ones]* hardly seem to provide ground for the growth of a doctrine of the Trinity" (p. 42). His remark is a British understatement. If words have any meaning at all, the biblical statements about the One God absolutely forbid the inclusion of anyone else in the One God, but the Father. It was the celebrated English poet, John Milton, who was well able to understand the meaning of words, who wrote:

"For my own part I adhere to the Holy Scriptures alone; I follow no other heresy or sect. If, therefore, the Father be the God of Christ, and the same God be our God, and if there be none other God but one, there can be no other God besides the Father."

James, the brother of Jesus, writes to the Christians: "You believe that God is one; you do well." His statement reflects the monotheism of the Old Testament which remains undisturbed by the New Testament writers.

It is fair to ask the question whether we have "done well" to interfere with the unity of the "one person in one God" demanded by our quotations from Jesus Christ the Savior, John, Paul, Jude, and James. The fact is widely recognized that these unitarian statements are confirmations of the Old Testament declarations about the unity of God. This is acknowledged, for example, by the Layman's Parallel New Testament which quotes the Amplified version, "There is no God but one. . . . There is only one God, the Father . . ." as a reference to Deuteronomy 6:4: "Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one God." The New Testament makes it quite clear that the One God is the Father, and "*besides Him there is no God*" (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

The student of Scripture must face squarely the information conveyed by these quotations (and there are many others), which amount to the simple fact that there is no other God but the Father, that he is "the one God, the only God, the one who alone is God, the only true God." In all these passages, plus 1300 others, he is distinguished from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is said to be the "Son of God," never God, the Son. No scholar, I believe, will challenge the correctness of the Living Bible's paraphrase of 1 Corinthians 8:4-6:

"We all know . . . that there is only one God, and no other. According to some people, there are a great many gods, both in heaven and on earth. But we know that there is *only one God, the Father*, who created all things."

The Roman Catholic Church has often admitted that the doctrine of "three

*Brackets mine

persons in one God" is a later theological development and not found in the Scriptures. Since that church allows the authority of tradition to weigh heavily in its doctrinal scheme, its members are not troubled by the non-trinitarian statements of Scripture. The Protestants, however, claim to have the Bible as their sole authority, though many are uncertain about the extent of traditional influence in their teachings. Those who believe that the Scriptural records, taken as a whole, represent the mind of the God who inspired them, must find good reason to overthrow the statements about the One God previously quoted, in favor of a Godhead which includes two other "persons in the One God." The popular claim that Jesus Christ is as much "the One God" as the Father cannot fairly be reconciled with the Biblical evidence. Our quotations from Jesus and the apostles allow for no invasion of the sacred precincts of the One God, the Father. To talk of Jesus as God, in the sense in which the *Father* is God, is simply to contradict Scripture.

It should not be forgotten that the traditional "Trinitarian" dogma was developed over a period of some 400 years after the time of the apostles, and only in constant opposition from equally dedicated students of Scripture who remained firmly "unitarian" (not, however, "unitarian" in the sense in which that term is used now, to mean a belief that Jesus was "just a man," or "just a good man"). A contemporary scholar was frank enough to write recently that

"The Church has not usually in practice (whatever it may have claimed to be doing in theory) based its Christology [doctrine of Christ in relation to God] exclusively on the witness of the New Testament. . . . The Reformers, for all their recasting of the tradition and insistence on the New Testament as their sole authority, *remained fully traditionalist* in Christological doctrine. Leonard Hodgson points out that, in the debates of the 17th and 18th centuries, 'the unitarians as well as their opponents accepted the Bible as containing revelation given in the form of propositions' and concludes that 'on the basis of the argument which both sides held in common, *the unitarians had the better case*.' And yet for all that it was not the unitarians who won the day. Christological doctrine has never in practice been derived simply by way of logical inference from the statements of Scripture." (Maurice Wiles, *The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 54, 55, quoting Leonard Hodgson, *The Doctrine*

of *The Trinity*, 1943, pp. 220, 223, emphasis mine).

Students of the Bible must make a simple choice between "the exclusive witness of the New Testament" which does not include Jesus Christ in the "One God," but reserves that title for the Father alone, and the later traditional teaching about the "three persons in the One God." The distinction between the two systems is crystal clear. It is obvious that the "church fathers" have gone far beyond what the language of the New Testament will permit, in formulating their doctrine of God.

Our insistence on the uniqueness of the Father in the New Testament will not detract from our estimate of Jesus as having the most intimate association with the One God. He perfectly represents the will of the Father. He was conceived supernaturally under the influence of the Divine Spirit (Matt. 1:18). At his exaltation "all authority in the universe" has been given to him (Matt. 28:18). "In him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead" (Col. 2:9). "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). He will appear as the "vice-regent" of the Father in the kingdom, bearing the Father's Name. There is no need whatever to deny this stupendous status to "the Man Jesus Christ" (1 Tim. 2:5). We seem reluctant to let God do what he wills with his Son, the "second Adam," that is, the Second Man from heaven:

"The second Man is from heaven" (1 Cor. 15:47, RSV; note that the MSS do not include the word "lord" here, though the title is, of course, elsewhere constantly used of Jesus).

Paul says that through a man (Adam) death came, so also through a man (Christ) comes the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15:21).

Peter introduces the Lord Jesus Christ as "a man approved by God among you by the powerful deeds and wonders and signs which God did through him amongst you" (Acts 2:22).

Jesus refers to himself as a "man who has spoken the truth to you" (John 8:40).

Paul presented Jesus the Messiah to the Corinthian philosophers (who, as Greeks, would have been well-disposed to the idea of a god who had become man) as "a man whom God has designated to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness, providing a guarantee to all by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:31, *Interlinear Greek New Testament*, ed. Marshall). Paul's view was unchanged when he wrote to Timothy shortly before his death; having described the Father as "the only God"—"the one who alone is God" (1 Tim. 1:17), he further says:

"There is one God and also one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). He later described the Father as "the only one having immortality, whom no man has seen nor can see" (cp. John 1:18: "No man has seen God at any time").

John, who describes the Father as "the one who alone is God" (John 5:44) and "the only true God" (17:3) reports Jesus as saying:

"As the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself." The life of Jesus is derived from the Father, as also is Jesus' authority to judge and resurrect the dead:

"The Father gave the Son authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man." It is important to realize that "Son of Man" means "human being" (cp. "sons of men," Eph. 3:5), though a unique and special human being foreseen in the vision of Daniel (Dan. 7:13, 14). Thus the tremendous authority and power granted to the Son do not exclude him from the human race, even allowing for his supernatural birth under the power of the Holy Spirit.

With the predominant evidence about the One God, the Father, which is simply a doctrine of "one God in one person," the remaining evidence can be fitted within the framework of the quotations given at the beginning of this study. This may not be without its difficulties, but these are nothing to the difficulty of having to overthrow the plainest statements about the unique status of the Father, who "alone is God" (John 5:44).

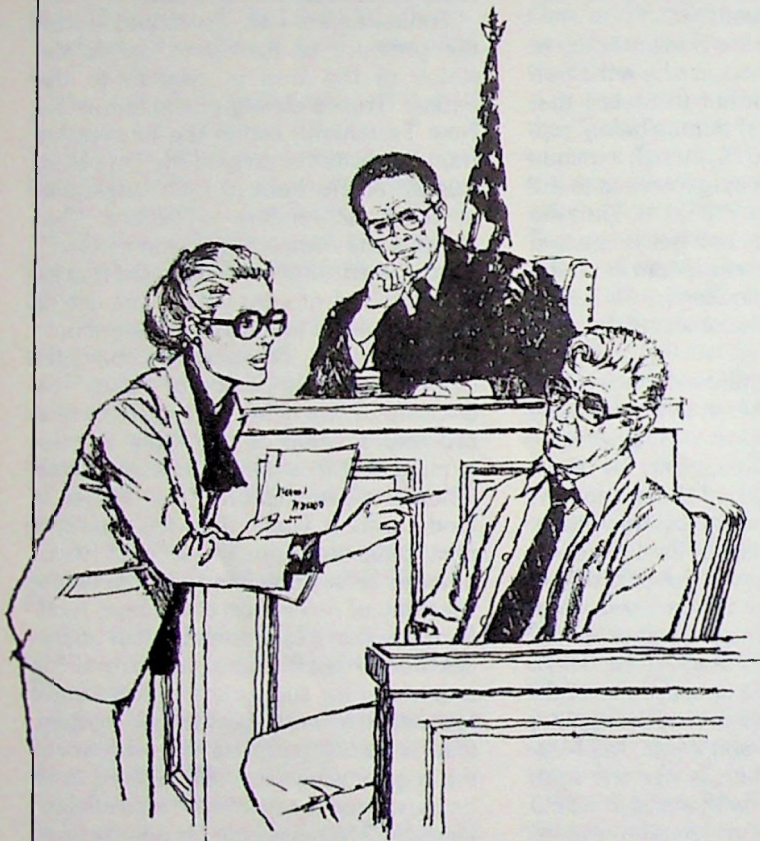
In contrast to the more than 1300 verses which describe the Father as God, as distinct from his Son Jesus, the Messiah, a handful of verses use the term "god" in connection with Jesus. It would hardly be wise to understand this to mean that after all Jesus is God," in exactly the same way that the Father is God. Moses had been called "god" (Ex. 7:1); so also had the judges and rulers of Israel enjoyed the title "god." The lexicons (Brown, Drivers, and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 43) define "god" in these passages as "a god-like one." No Hebrew understood this use of the term "god" to imply that the doctrine of the One God was threatened. In Psalm 45:7, the king is addressed as "god," but he is evidently a human being, since he is likened to the "children of men" and described as a "mighty one." None of these titles implied that the person addressed was more than a man, though, of course, he represented God in a special way, and therefore enjoyed a divine title.

In the New Testament, Jesus is ad-

dressed as "god" when the Messianic Psalm (45) is applied to him (Heb. 1:8). In another quotation (Heb. 1:6), all the angels are to worship Jesus. In the Psalm from which this is probably taken (97:7: "worship him all you gods"), the angels themselves are called "gods." It is obvious that the title "god" denotes the highest possible honor; Jesus has been exalted as Lord of the universe, and to him every knee shall bow (Phil. 2:11). None of these facts, however, must lead to the conclusion that he is the One True God, for that title is used, as we have seen, exclusively for the Father.

Trinitarianism was developed under the pressure of having to define the status of the Son in relation to the Father. This is clearly presented in the New Testament, within the unalterable framework of the unity of the One God, the Father. The book of John was written to teach its readers to believe "that *Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God,*" which is very different from belief that he is "very God of very God." The use of language never found in Scripture should make us wary of accepting the later definitions of the person of Jesus. The doctrine of the Trinity, as scholars and ordinary readers of the Bible are beginning to discover, founders on its own inherent contradiction. "The Father is God; Jesus is God," they say; "yet this means that there is only one God." It is an attempt to support monotheism, while speaking of *more than one* who is God. Realizing that a fatal contradiction underlies the attempt to make two into one, it is customary for supporters of this notion to speak of an incomprehensible mystery. Church history is replete with evidence of the dogma being given official status as an unquestioned tradition of "mainstream" believers. The question must now be faced as to whether this allowed for freedom to believe the New Testament records, rather than the tenets of a dogmatic system. In times of religious freedom an opportunity exists for all to rethink the most fundamental of all questions about worship; a decision must be made between the worship of the "One who alone is God, the only true God, the Father, through Jesus the Messiah His Son," and the worship of "one God in three persons" who are co-equal and co-eternal. Until now, as Maurice Wiles says, "the Church has not based its Christology exclusively on the witness of the New Testament" (cited earlier). A giant step towards unity amongst all believers could be taken if the "exclusive witness of the New Testament" were taken as our guide in the worship of the One God, the Father, through his Son, the Messiah.

CRIME, PUNISHMENT,



AND THE BIBLE

by Richard
Worley

IN EVERY SOCIETY and generation there have been people unable or unwilling to conform to the laws of society and live in harmony with other people. This started as early as the first children, Cain and Abel, and continues until this very day. The problem that faces us is how to deal with these people. In the case of Abel's murderer, Cain, a mark was put upon him to prevent others from killing him and he was banished from the presence of the Lord. (Gen. 4:9-15.) As time progressed and the population of the earth grew, God started giving basic laws to govern man's crimes against society. The first and most severe that we have on record is immediately after the flood when God said, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6). This law was never revoked by the Lord God.

Israel's Laws

When the Israelites left Egypt and migrated to the land that God had promised to Abraham, they were given laws to live by. In essence, God gave Israel two sets of laws—religious and civil. Since Israel was a nation as well as a people called out of the world to worship God, their situation was unique. There has never been another nation in history that has been responsible to God in a civil as well as religious aspect. However, when any nation makes laws to govern its people, it would be difficult to improve upon the civil laws that God gave to his people Israel. Many lawmakers are beginning to realize this.

Recently, while working on a cellblock in the Texas Department of Corrections, I listened to two inmates talking between their cells. One was reading and explaining the Old Testament concept of restitution. The passage he was reading was Exodus 22. I asked the inmate if he felt that was a good concept and he said he thought it was. The 52nd District Court of Texas has implemented an "Earn-it" program whereby victims of crimes can receive restitution. Offenders who must make restitution will be given aid in finding jobs and they will be allowed to keep one-third of their income and two-thirds will go to pay the victim for his losses. There is a definite need for people to develop and feel a sense of moral obligation for pain, suffering, and loss they cause other people. This law was given as a civil rule for the people of Israel, and I don't see that it needs to be replaced.

One of the underlying factors of crime in the United States is the lack of discipline in the home, the church, the schools, and eventually in penal institutions. There are many people who grow into adulthood with no concept of discipline. Laws, they think, are made to be broken or at least circumvented. It becomes a game to many of these people. Sad to say, this is also evident in the church. The rationale is to make God's law more lenient because we do not want to discipline ourselves. To add to this, the church has seemingly lost its authority in disciplining its people for a violation of God's law.

The home, where authority begins and is developed, is becoming more permissive with each generation. This is reflected in the courts and their laws concerning the handling of convicted felons. A majority of the prison populations are doing the same things on the inside of the prison walls that they were doing on the outside. Rehabilitation is attempted, but to be effective people must want to be rehabilitated and many inmates are very happy to constantly buck any authority or system. I think the role of the penal system is three-fold.

1. Security. Protect society from an element of people who are a threat.

2. Penalization. People must realize that all things cost—even crime.

3. Rehabilitation. Unfortunately, this will not work on all people.

Discipline is a must in the home, in the church, and in the judicial system.

Maximum Punishments

One of the laws that is being re-thought today is capital punishment. The Christian-humanitarian feeling is that this is a distasteful form of punishment, and some feel it is a punishment contrary to Scripture. Let's examine the Scriptures to see what they say. First, we will recognize that capital punishment was meted out in Israel upon the conviction of breaking God's religious laws as well as the civil laws that governed the people.

In John 8:1-12 we have an account that has been the basis for many to believe that only the sinless people can make judgments, that Jesus abolished capital punishment, and that forgiveness is automatic. I do not believe any of these conclusions is correct.

A woman was taken in the very act of adultery and brought to Jesus by the Scribes and Pharisees so he could pass judgment upon her. This should be the first indication that something is wrong. The primary purpose of the Scribes and Pharisees in their dealings with Jesus was to entrap him. Why would they bring this woman to him except for the same reason?

Jesus heard the charges and wrote something on the ground. We do not know what he wrote, but when he did pass judgment, there was no one there to cast a stone. Let's suppose that Jesus wrote in the dirt the law of Moses concerning the situation. This is what he would have written: "The adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death" (Lev. 20:10). Now, let's suppose that he wrote the penalty for a false witness as well, which would have been, "If the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; then shall ye do unto him as he had thought to have done unto his brother" (Deut. 19:18, 19). It is just conjecture as to what Jesus might have written, but when he passed judgment, no one was there to be an accuser. Note especially that Jesus did pass judgment. Because of her act she should have been stoned and Jesus said so, but there were no

accusers to cast the first stone because they had not kept the full law of Moses in this matter. Both the man and the woman were to be stoned, but they brought only the woman. What happened to the man? Was he set free? Were they trying to enforce just half the law? Were they trying to trap Jesus into making a mistake about the laws of Moses?

With no witnesses to accuse the woman, Jesus had no right under the law to condemn her to death because the law said, "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established" (Deut. 19:15).

If the accusers had brought both parties to Jesus, and if they had made their accusation according to the law, I am confident that this woman would have been stoned.

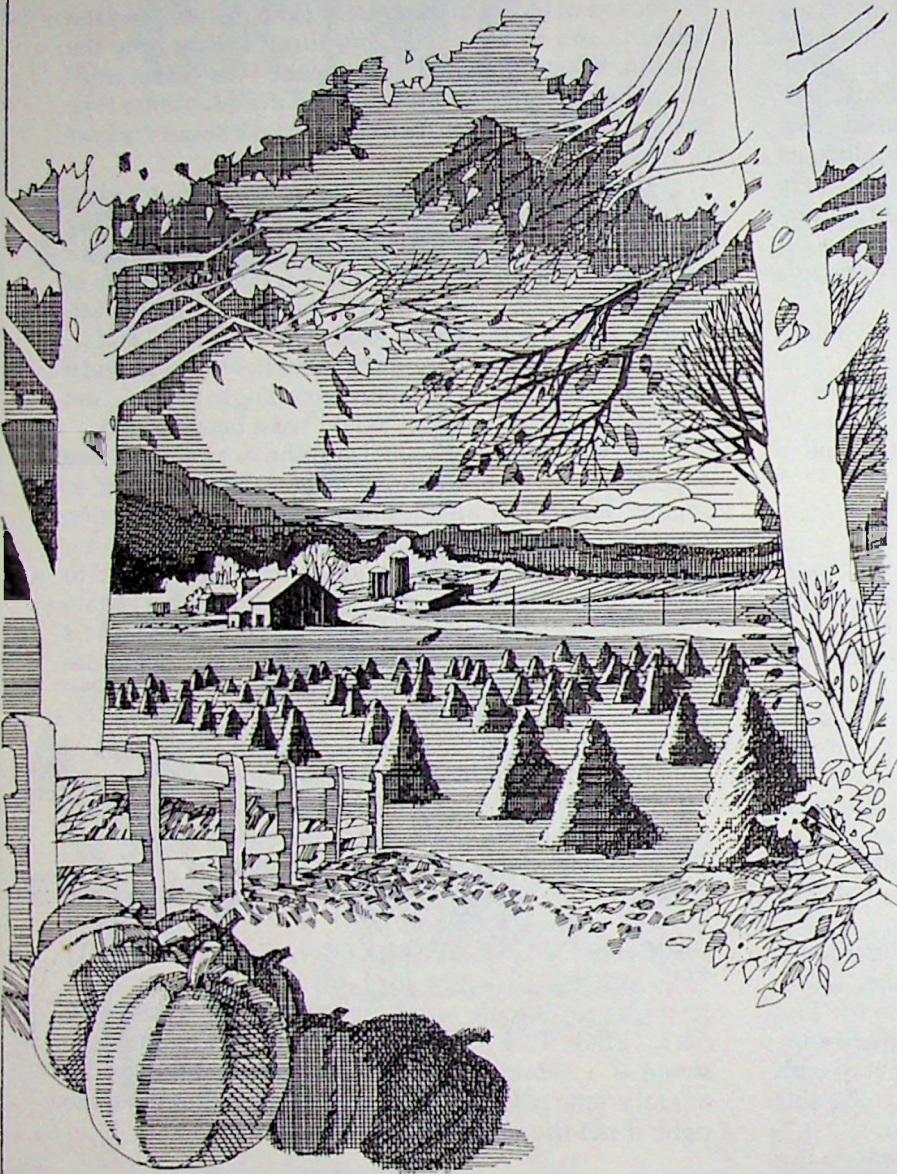
Some will argue that capital punishment does not give a person time or opportunity to be rehabilitated or to repent. This is just an argument. There is no reversing capital punishment after it has been enacted, but remember, capital punishment is not to rehabilitate but to punish. God said in his laws to Israel that in doing certain things you forfeit your right to live. This is done so others might see the example and put away these practices from among the people. Swift, sure punishment is a deterrent to crime and disobedience.

When Paul wrote the Romans, he verified the right of nations to inflict capital punishment upon people who will not adjust to the laws of society. He said, "Rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. BUT IF THOU DO THAT WHICH IS EVIL, BE AFRAID; FOR HE BEAURETH NOT THE SWORD IN VAIN: for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil" (Rom. 13:3, 4). I believe the inference to bearing the sword is a *definite* allusion to capital punishment. So after the time of Christ, Paul felt that the nations had the right, if not the responsibility, to execute.

CONCLUSION

Rules and laws are made to abide by. Those who choose to ignore them put themselves in jeopardy. It is necessary for the rest of the family, the church, or society to enforce the rules that have been made. This is especially true when we are speaking of rules that have been given to us by our God. The word that frightens us is "discipline." Remember why God said his laws should be enforced in Israel? "And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you" (Deut. 19:20). The Bible is a book of mercy and love, but it is also a book of law and judgments. The safe way to avoid these punishments is to follow explicitly the commandments of God. May we have the desire and power to do so.

CREATION



EVOLUTION

"It is out of the question that man should have descended from a monkey. Monkeys are faithful to their wives; they don't perform abortions. Monkeys have no bombs with which to exterminate their own species. Crime, alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution are unknown among them. They neither make nor view immoral movies.

The monkey, creature of God which has remained as God made it, never claims mankind for progeny. The Darwinist theory is an insult to the ape. No ape ever conceived a book as unsubstantiated as "Origin of the Species."¹

This humorous (yet sober-truth) quote makes a reflective spoof of this whole concept of man descending from monkey . . . or even further back, the amoeba.

As is often the case, the "father" of a theory often discovers that his protegee glosses over—even ignores—some of the serious doubts of the original thinker. Not only that, his devout disciples have a tendency to expand and even enlarge upon the original concepts. Darwin might

be surprised what has been taught since his book!

As we well know (thanks to the Creation vs. Evolution controversy revival in Little Rock, Arkansas), Darwin is the creator of this whole extraordinary theory. Underline *theory*. Yet, in his world-famous volume, "Origin of the Species," we seldom hear his doubts quoted for public consumption. Here is one, and it concerns his prolonged meditation over the intricacies of the human eye. Darwin conceded:

"To suppose the eye with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree."²

At the time Darwin was struggling

WHICH?

with the eye question, he wrote in a private letter:

"The thought of the eye made me cold all over."³

If the originator of this novel theory considered the human eye being developed by natural selection as "absurd in the highest degree," why should we bother to discuss this subject any further? But we will. The fact that virtually every unchristian school child is taught and accepts this theory without question requires that we must deal with it. But let me say this: this brief article in no stretch of the imagination begins to grapple with this vast subject in a scientific or logistic sense. I know I'm writing predominantly to Christians who already believe in a Creator, so detailed arguments need not be labored here.

As I've just suggested, time and space would fail us to ponder all the impossibilities inherent in the theory of natural selection—the basis of the evolutionary thought. Even Darwin recognized that! To conceive of a thickskinned, solid-boned, dense-bodied reptile finally metamorphoz-

by Pastor

ing into a light-weight, thin-skinned, hollow-boned bird staggers human reason! It's easier—really—to believe a god created . . . any god.

Someone has well said, "To believe this world just happened by chance is no less ridiculous than to believe that an explosion in a printing factory showered down the unabridged dictionary!" While this doesn't concern evolution per se, it does bear on creation void of God. If our world was generated by the recently touted "big bang" theory, from where did the elements come that permitted it? You see, we have a problem. No matter how far back you want to go, the fundamental question is always there: who created "something" which HAD to exist first that permitted the suggested "cause" of life as we understand it? Who made the ooze from which we wiggled? The water? The earth's mass? The oxygen, gravity, heat, light, and all else that makes evolution possible? Always and forever, "something" is missing if God is not there!

Solomon challenges our thinking with these words:

"I have seen the business that God has given to the sons of men to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful in its time; also he has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end" (Ecc. 3:10, 11, RSV).

It strikes me that Solomon hit the nail on the head! Evolution is something that man has "busied" himself with—but can't discover what



Rex F. Cain

God has done. God has left it to men of faith to find out: God created—I believe—no more questions. Even if I have questions (granting the concept of eternity be allowed in my brain), there are no answers of which I'm capable. We are reduced (and humbled) by the child's question, "Where did God come from?" Can you answer? You know why you can't? Re-read the above verse. God designed us with limited capacity. Point and period.

A Few Words From the Lettered

In February of 1980, I attended a two-hour debate at Western Illinois University on Creation vs. Evolution. Dr. Lane Lester, professor of Biology at Liberty Bible College, stood for God, while Dr. Ben Stidd (PhD. in Paleobotany), professor of Biology, Western Illinois University, stood for evolution. It came as a surprise to me how all through the debate, Dr. Stidd willingly permitted loopholes for creation possibility. Finally, in his summing up, the evolutionist stated:

"As a child I was taught the creation model, but it did not seem intellectually defensible. This is an important issue. If God created man, I don't want to be in opposition to the Creator."

It was evident this evolutionist was "scared" of offending God and being on the wrong side of the creation fence. From the debate, it sounded as though it would take little to return him to his childhood teachings. Would this not be the place to emphasize the scripture: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it"? (Prov. 22:6.) This debate was tape recorded. I will loan the tape to anyone requesting it.

I only wish I had the space here to quote the whole chapter on evolution from the book, *God's Truth*. (It's available from the General Conference.) Doctor Hayward documents the doubts of many eminent scientists who, despite their doubts, stand on the side of evolution. He also quotes several renowned scientists whose writings demonstrate the foolishness of evolution. He further cites much doubletalk from scientific

journals. After one of them he laments:

"It is a pity that the laymen is unable to follow the controversies in the biological journals. If he could, he would realize the foundations of evolution are as firm as quicksand in a hurricane."⁴

Doctor Paul Brand in his recent book spends meticulous pages on pointing out the wonders of the human body: cells, bones, muscle, nerves, skin, and the like. At one point in the volume, he admits to leaning toward evolution in his earlier years. But the recent revelations and studies of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) has all but clinched his doubts. He writes:

"In medical school I was taught by such secular biologists as J. B. S. Haldane and H. H. Woolard, pioneers of evolutionary theory. I noticed that some churches nourished a kind of intellectual dishonesty on this subject. In the university their students took exams and recited the theories of evolution; when they joined the church, they declared their faith in a way that contradicted their exam answers. Ultimately this dichotomy led to a sense of intellectual schizophrenia.

Only after much research and long periods of reflection was I able to put together what I had learned at church and what I had learned at school. But in the meantime I determined that my faith was based on realities that could stand by themselves and that did not need to be subordinated to any explanation of science. Either I would discover that evolution was compatible with the God of my faith, or I would find that evolution was somehow wrong and I would stay with my faith. I operated on that assumption for years during which I was unable to fill in all the blanks about how creation and evolution fit together. (In recent years, new understanding of the nature of DNA has made the possibility of chance evolution so unlikely that *the position of one who believes in supernatural intelligence has been tremendously strengthened.*)⁵ (Italics mine.)

And so, we have listened to some men—scientists, men of letters—who, being most honest and forthright, place evolution in its rightful category; theory only. I might mention here "theistic evolution." This is the concept that God created life through the process of organic evolution. This has been hailed as a great

problem solver of both the churches and scientific community. However, Robert Gentet has written:

"The deep and profound meaning of Genesis 1 is lost from view by theistic evolution. The well-intentioned individual who joins together the opposites of creation and evolution will miss the fundamental significance of 'after its kind.' Genesis 1 is the key which unlocks the meaning of man's existence as well as the key in understanding the when and how of God's creative acts."⁶

For those of you who may still doubt that there was an immediate mature world created by a supernatural power, have you an explanation of the archer fish? The whale's nipple and feeding technique? The migration ability of birds and sea turtles? Why a sea horse? What natural selection process required the evolution of this creature? And what of the marvels of the homo sapien? Muse over just one item belonging to most creatures—the eye—and you will be overcome by awe! Even Mr. Darwin, the father of evolution, had to be honest: "To believe the eye . . . could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest degree." I agree. It's absurd!

Our Faith—Our "First Cause"

Often it is claimed the creation is only a theory since man cannot "prove" it. We recognize no eyewitness accounts are available, neither can man demonstrate creation in the laboratory. When scientists and philosophers are pressed for the cause behind the first cause, they can only shrug their shoulders or say, "We don't know." The Christian at this point can declare his faith.

Faith affirms the omnipotence of a creative God. We maintain a faith in the God of Scripture who existed **BEFORE** the "first cause."

Here are two men who have come to terms with the first cause:

"By **faith** we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen [trees, animals, man] was made out of things which do not appear" (Heb. 11:3, RSV).

"Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and

power, for thou didst create all things, and by **thy will** they existed and were created" (Rev. 4:11, RSV).

Note the words of the prophet who was given a direct vision of God and these matters:

"For thus says the LORD, who created the heavens [he is God!], who formed the earth and made it [he established it; he did not create it a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited!]; I am the LORD, and there is no other" (Isa. 45:18, RSV).

Many honest scientists readily admit and even write that there must be "something" behind the first cause. (I've already quoted some). That is where theory fails and faith steps forward.

Job, as he argued with his friends, recognized that the created world should provide enough evidence to convince any reasonable man there is a God. At one point, Job sarcastically suggests that if one can't figure that truth out for himself, then

"ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds . . . and they will tell you; . . . the plants . . . and they will teach you; . . . the fish of the sea will declare to you. . . . In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (Job 12:7-10, RSV).

This humanistic, anti-God, self-righteous world simply chooses to defy the evidence! It's all about us, as David has clearly written:

"The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork. . . . their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world" (Psa. 19:1, 4, RSV).

You would have to be spiritually deaf, blind, and retarded not to hear the voice of God in the wondrous acts of creation above us, beneath us, and all around us!

Getting back to the simple matter of the eye (which Darwin conceded was beyond his theory), I'm reminded of this verse:

"He who formed the eye, does he not see? . . . He who teaches men knowledge, the LORD, knows the thoughts of man, [like the evolutionary theory], that they are but a breath" (Psa. 94:9-11, RSV).

The integrity, truth, and inspiration of God's Word (which is another

study in itself)—including the account of creation—remains unshaken in the light of confirmed scientific discovery. Given an adequate concept of God, one's faith need not be shaken, however plausible the naturalistic theories may appear to be. This is God's creation. The marvelous precision and intricacy of it all bespeak a Power behind it that transcends human comprehension. At the pinnacle of this creation stands man—who would flaunt his denial of the God who created him—or, who will humbly recognize he is a unique created being from the hand of the Almighty. As for me, I will take my stand upon God's own conclusion of this whole matter of evolution:

"IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH . . . [AND] EVERYTHING . . . AND BEHOLD, IT WAS VERY GOOD" (Gen. 1:1, 31, RSV).

A FOOTNOTE

For your own personal inspiration in the truth that though the Bible is not a scientific book, it is nevertheless scientifically correct, I submit the following for your own personal enrichment. You might even consider developing it into a lesson.

ASTRONOMY AND THE BIBLE:

Study: Psalm 19:1, 6; Job 26:7; 38:14, 31, 32; Jeremiah 33:22; Isaiah 40:26, 28.

PHYSICS AND THE BIBLE:

Study: Job 28:25; 37:16; Ecclesiastes 1:6; Amos 9:6.

THE BIBLE AND BIOLOGY:

Study: Genesis 1:11, 24; 2:7; 1 Corinthians 15:39; Acts 17:26; Leviticus 17:14.

SANITATION AND ECOLOGY:

Study: Leviticus 11:29-36; Deuteronomy 23:12; Leviticus 13:45 and Leviticus 15; Deuteronomy 22:6; Exodus 23:10, 11.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well" (Psa. 139:14).

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¹Richard Wurmbbrand, *Reaching Toward the Heights*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1977. March 20th devotional.

²Quoted from *Plain Truth* magazine, August, 1982.

³*Ibid.*

⁴Alan Hayward, *God's Truth*, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, London, 1973, p. 221.

⁵Dr. Paul Brand & Philip Yancey, *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1980, pp. 94, 95.

⁶Quoted from *Plain Truth* magazine, June-July, 1974.

Rachel Carr,
Contributing Editor



Melissa Counts Her Blessings

By Linda L. Gordon

It was a cool fall day. The supermarkets were crowded with people buying their Thanksgiving turkeys and hams. Melissa's mother had already bought hers. She could hardly wait to taste it. She thought the food always tasted better on this special day. But the food wasn't Melissa's favorite thing about Thanksgiving.

The best part came when Melissa and all her relatives sat down at the table and joined hands. Then each person told one thing for which he was thankful. After everyone had taken his turn, Grandpa said a prayer and thanked God for all the things he had given them.

But this year Melissa didn't know what she was the most thankful for.

"I sure do like my doll house that I got for my birthday," she thought. But she was certain she could think of something

else that she was more thankful for.

So Melissa thought about all the things she had to be thankful for. Melissa's daddy said he was counting his blessings. There were so many to count!

Thanksgiving Day finally arrived. All of Melissa's relatives gathered around the table. Grandpa sat at the head of the table and always started the favorite tradition. Everyone held hands.

"We all have so much to be thankful for," said Grandpa. "Let's each think of just one thing that is special to us. Who would like to begin?"

Melissa's Aunt Julie spoke up first. She said she was thankful for a loving family. Uncle Dan was thankful for good crops on his farm. One by one each person named one thing for which he was thankful. Finally, every-

one had taken his turn except Melissa.

"And how about you, Melissa?" asked Grandpa.

"Well," began Melissa, "I couldn't think of what I was the most thankful for, so I decided I was thankful for God because he made everything. I'm thankful for everything he made. I'm especially glad that he gave me Jesus to be my personal Savior and friend. So this year I'm most thankful for God and all the blessings he gives me."

Melissa's family smiled and nodded their heads in agreement.

"I think you made a good choice, Missy," said Grandpa. "Without God we'd have nothing to be thankful for. Let's all bow our heads now and thank God for all the blessings he gives us."

So hand in hand, everyone bowed his head and thanked God for this special day.



**Exploding
the
Abortion
Myth**

by
Pastor
Donald
Needham

THE PRIMARY CAUSE of death in the United States last year was abortion. Though such statistics are shocking, no complete count (RHS) of abortions has been made since 1974. The CDC's most recent estimate is 1.5 million abortions a year. In 1974, 1.2 million abortions were reported. The CDC's estimate is based on the number of abortions reported by the states. It is a minimum estimate because many states do not report abortions. The CDC's estimate is based on the number of abortions reported by the states. It is a minimum estimate because many states do not report abortions.

The Law of

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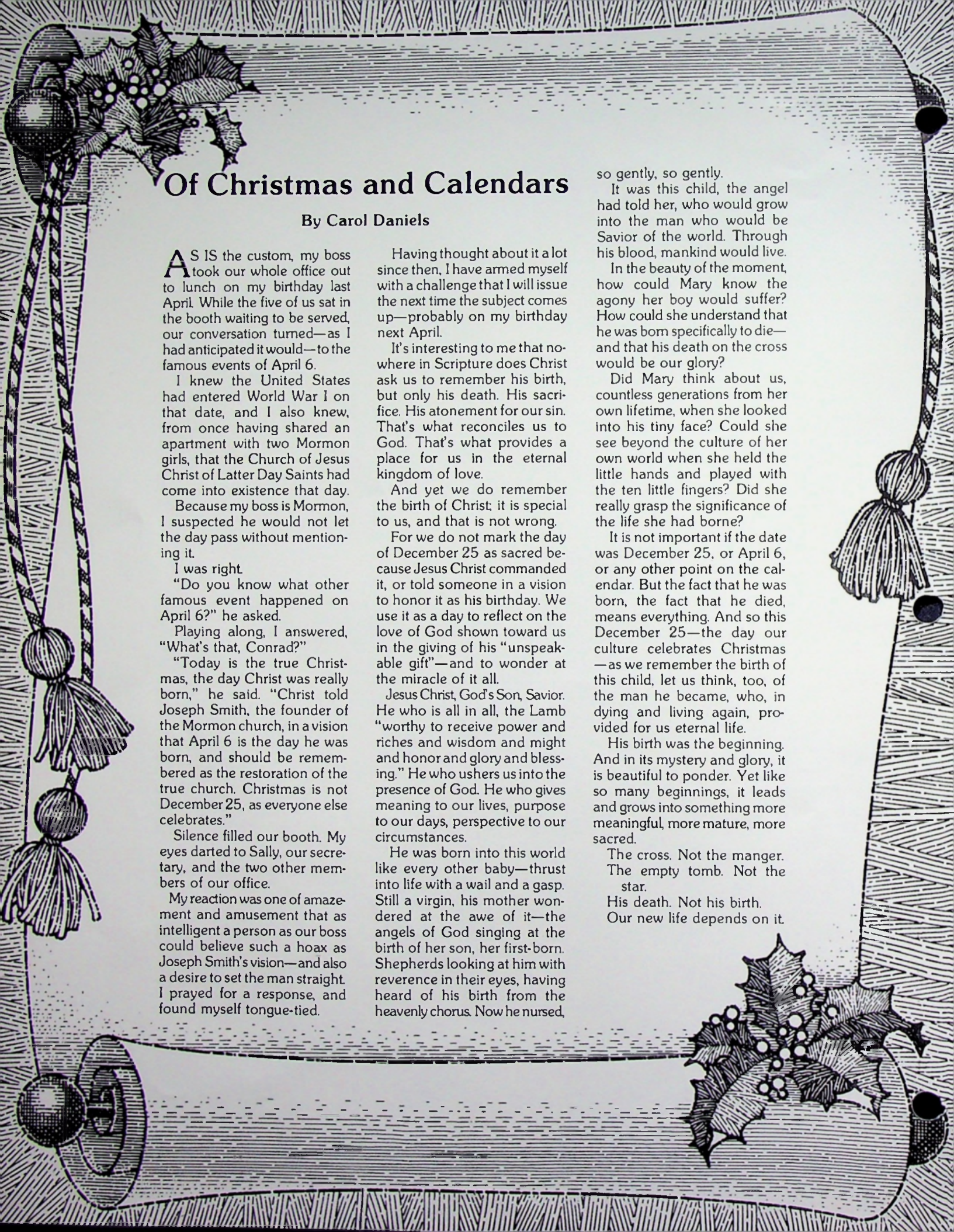
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Of Christmas and Calendars

By Carol Daniels

AS IS the custom, my boss took our whole office out to lunch on my birthday last April. While the five of us sat in the booth waiting to be served, our conversation turned—as I had anticipated it would—to the famous events of April 6.

I knew the United States had entered World War I on that date, and I also knew, from once having shared an apartment with two Mormon girls, that the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints had come into existence that day.

Because my boss is Mormon, I suspected he would not let the day pass without mentioning it.

I was right.

"Do you know what other famous event happened on April 6?" he asked.

Playing along, I answered, "What's that, Conrad?"

"Today is the true Christmas, the day Christ was really born," he said. "Christ told Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon church, in a vision that April 6 is the day he was born, and should be remembered as the restoration of the true church. Christmas is not December 25, as everyone else celebrates."

Silence filled our booth. My eyes darted to Sally, our secretary, and the two other members of our office.

My reaction was one of amazement and amusement that as intelligent a person as our boss could believe such a hoax as Joseph Smith's vision—and also a desire to set the man straight. I prayed for a response, and found myself tongue-tied.

Having thought about it a lot since then, I have armed myself with a challenge that I will issue the next time the subject comes up—probably on my birthday next April.

It's interesting to me that nowhere in Scripture does Christ ask us to remember his birth, but only his death. His sacrifice. His atonement for our sin. That's what reconciles us to God. That's what provides a place for us in the eternal kingdom of love.

And yet we do remember the birth of Christ; it is special to us, and that is not wrong.

For we do not mark the day of December 25 as sacred because Jesus Christ commanded it, or told someone in a vision to honor it as his birthday. We use it as a day to reflect on the love of God shown toward us in the giving of his "unspeakable gift"—and to wonder at the miracle of it all.

Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior. He who is all in all, the Lamb "worthy to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." He who ushers us into the presence of God. He who gives meaning to our lives, purpose to our days, perspective to our circumstances.

He was born into this world like every other baby—thrust into life with a wail and a gasp. Still a virgin, his mother wondered at the awe of it—the angels of God singing at the birth of her son, her first-born. Shepherds looking at him with reverence in their eyes, having heard of his birth from the heavenly chorus. Now he nursed,

so gently, so gently.

It was this child, the angel had told her, who would grow into the man who would be Savior of the world. Through his blood, mankind would live.

In the beauty of the moment, how could Mary know the agony her boy would suffer? How could she understand that he was born specifically to die—and that his death on the cross would be our glory?

Did Mary think about us, countless generations from her own lifetime, when she looked into his tiny face? Could she see beyond the culture of her own world when she held the little hands and played with the ten little fingers? Did she really grasp the significance of the life she had borne?

It is not important if the date was December 25, or April 6, or any other point on the calendar. But the fact that he was born, the fact that he died, means everything. And so this December 25—the day our culture celebrates Christmas—as we remember the birth of this child, let us think, too, of the man he became, who, in dying and living again, provided for us eternal life.

His birth was the beginning. And in its mystery and glory, it is beautiful to ponder. Yet like so many beginnings, it leads and grows into something more meaningful, more mature, more sacred.

The cross. Not the manger.
The empty tomb. Not the star.

His death. Not his birth.
Our new life depends on it.

Editor's Viewpoint

John Milton, Revered Poet and Conditionalist

When Barbara Buzzard brought devotions to the General Conference staff on November 1, 1982, she focused her thoughts on the work of John Milton, renowned English poet of the 17th century and author of "Paradise Lost." Mrs. Buzzard informed us that Milton believed in a premillennial view of prophecy and shared with us the truth of conditionalism. The fact that he was an Arian Baptist is little known in England today, even though over 40,000 persons annually tour a library built in his honor in his home town. The Queen of England personally oversees the Milton memoirs.

A brief reprinting of a few lines from "Paradise Lost" will enlighten you regarding Milton's spiritual pilgrimage:

The world shall burn and from her
ashes spring
New heaven and earth wherein the
just shall dwell;
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days.

Paradise Lost, iii. 3:334.

Mrs. Buzzard plans to research the works of Milton to uncover further the gems of truth which motivated his genius. I look forward to seeing the results of Barbara's work.

Christmas After Christmas

"Mary remembered all these things and thought deeply about them" (Luke 2:19, GNB).

What does the holiday season mean to you? Will it bring you any lasting benefits? Are you anticipating Christmas with joy because of its spiritual meaning, or do the activities surrounding its celebration burden you with feelings of "I can hardly wait till the holidays are over"?

If you find yourself in varying stages of the "Christmas blues," perhaps you need to face the holiday with fresh insight. Take a look at Christmas from the perspective of Mary, the mother of Jesus. How did the first Christmas affect the one who gave birth to the Christ child? As a principal character in

the original event, how did she handle Christmas?

A mother experiences a mixture of joy and pain at the birth of her child. Yet the feelings of happiness and gratitude far outweigh every discomfort felt at birth. What joys do you feel at Christmas? How do they compare to the pangs of dread or feelings of worry over the holidays?

After Mary gave birth, shepherds joined her in the celebration. Angels in concert heralded the moment. Heaven itself opened to announce to the world that the Lord is come. The bustle of such activity was never forgotten by her. In comparison, how big is your Christmas celebration? Can the magnitude of your holiday be compared to what happened to Mary at the first Christmas? The thrill of the real event can never be duplicated and mass produced for public consumption, regardless of the many attempts to do so by American business. What spiritual realities in your celebration of Christmas help you grasp the meaning of the real thing?

Mary viewed the whole spectacle afterward and allowed its memory to motivate the rest of her life. Will your Christmas of 1982 carry with you as long as you shall live? That's too much to hope for, but will it have significance until Christmas 1983?

Find your answers to your Christmas questions. May they bring you joy after the holidays.

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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Jesus faithfully wore a crown
to the cross for us.



What Does It Mean to Be Faithful?

by David Krogh

IN 1 Corinthians 4:2 it says: "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." What does it mean to be faithful? What is God's standard of success for those who are his stewards?

The Parable of the Talents, recorded in Matthew 25:14-30 gives us important insights into God's expectations for his stewards. This parable presents three main ideas:

Servants Have Various Resources

The parable says that one servant was given five talents; one was given two; and one was given one. They were distributed "to every man according to his several ability" (v. 15).

Servants Have the Same Goal

What was the goal of the servants in the parable? Since the two who increased their resources were rewarded, and the third who merely protected his talent was scorned, we must assume that the goal was increase.

Faithful Servants Receive Similar Reward

The parable says that the servants began their stewardship with various resources. Therefore they had different results. The servant with five talents doubled his and he ended up with 10. The servant with two talents brought four. But though the results were different, notice that verses 21 and 23 say that both servants received the same reward: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

It was the servant who produced no increase who faced the wrath of the master.

Application of Parable to the Church

In applying this passage to our situation today, we find several important principles.

Churches Have Various Resources

Among the best resources that God has given to every church are PEOPLE RESOURCES.

1. The members of the church. First Corinthians 12 talks about the people resources found in each church. The first part of this chapter lists spiritual gifts—the differing abilities which God's Spirit has given to each person in the church. The second part of the chapter talks about the different members who make up the body of Christ: "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body:

so also is Christ" (v. 12). The passage mentions the foot, the ear, the eye. And then in verse 18 it says, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." The word "set" in this verse means "appointed or ordained." This verse says to me that God has given the appropriate gifts, and he has brought together in each church the necessary persons who have those gifts for the body to function properly.

2. Pastors and church leaders. Another valuable PEOPLE RESOURCE in the church is the leadership. God has also given spiritual gifts to the leaders of the church: gifts of administration, leadership, evangelism, serving. Each pastor and leader is unique. Not all have the same abilities, but all are called to Shepherd the flock.

Acts 20:28 indicates three tasks for which the leaders are accountable:

- protecting
- leading
- feeding

Similar thoughts are found in 1 Peter 5:2, where elders are instructed: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof." The effective shepherd will not permit the wolves to eat the sheep; he will not permit the sheep to run all over the place, falling over cliffs, getting stuck in quicksand, etc. Nor does the effective shepherd permit his sheep to starve to death.

These are two essential resources that God has brought together in the church: the *members* of the church, and the *leaders* of the church. It is certainly not helpful for a pastor to complain about the people in his congregation and to wish he had another congregation that was better. There is no such thing as a perfect congregation, and it is likely that there are obnoxious people in every congregation.

And it is certainly not helpful for the congregation to complain about their pastor and wish that he had more or better spiritual gifts. Unfortunately, there are no perfect pastors. All have weaknesses.

God has given the *members* and the *leaders* their gifts, to be used to achieve his goals for each church. And these we must use.

Churches Have the Same Goal

The principle of growth and reproduction is presented very clearly in Scripture:

John 15:2: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch

that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

John 15:16: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."

2 Timothy 2:2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

1 Corinthians 3:6: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase."

Matthew 28:19, 20: "Go ye therefore, and disciple all nations . . ."

Faithful Churches Receive Similar Reward

It would have been wrong in the parable for the servant with four talents to be envious of the one who had 10. And it would have been wrong for the one with 10 to be critical of the smaller results of the servant who had only four talents. As shown by the reaction of the master, the fact that results were achieved was more important than the exact amount of increase. The Master's intent was not that every servant should end up with the identical number of talents.

There is no room today for jealousy between churches or between pastors. There is no room for envy or criticism. We are not in business to compare our attendance figures with the figures of another church. Rather, our business is to multiply disciples and expand our ministries so that the Master can say to us: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

A Theology of Failure

Perhaps you have heard someone say, "God doesn't want you to be successful; he wants you to be faithful." This statement fosters the attitude among many pastors and churches that they can be unproductive and still be faithful. This has made it possible for churches to be faithful failures.

What will Christ's response be to the church which has concluded that growth is unimportant? Does it make the head of the church happy when we simply maintain what he has given us without any attempt to increase it?

What did Paul mean when he said, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful"?

What did Paul actually do? He went out from Antioch faithfully preaching the Word of

God, expecting people to respond. He expected to establish churches; he even returned to Antioch to report his *results*. As far as Paul was concerned, faithfulness meant seeing results. Paul never could have accepted the concept of plugging away faithfully without ever seeing any results. In fact, he spent very little time in Athens—a city he perceived as quite unreceptive—and went on to Corinth, where he stayed a year and a half. "For I have much people in this city" (Acts 18:10). His was not a theology of failure, but of success.

The modern church-growth movement has caused many pastors and church leaders to shift nervously in their theological seats. It is no longer easy to be faithful and unproductive. We have been forced to ask serious questions about our ministries. Do we dislike numbers for biblical reasons or because they reveal our ineptitude? Are we actually in favor of small churches and against large ones because we are not in a large church? or because it requires too much work to have a large church? Is it faithful to maintain a church for 10 years without any new people becoming disciples?

Is this faithfulness, or is it stagnation? Is this faithfulness, or is it complacency?

Church leaders who are only concerned with guarding and feeding the congregation, while neglecting to lead them forward in growth and reproduction, must realize that they are not pleasing to the Lord.

Conclusion

I believe that God's standard of success is reaching his goals with the resources he has given us. Do you agree with this standard of success?

I believe God's goals are measurable. Effective goals are always measurable. Below are three areas where perhaps we should check ourselves:

1. Our ministry is successful if we are making disciples. This implies that we have people with whom we are currently working. Matthew 28:19 makes it clear that discipling is primarily directed toward nonbelievers, not believers.

2. Our ministry is successful if we are adding people into our church.

3. Our ministry is successful if we are teaching others to move into ministry and disciple-making. (2 Tim. 2:2.)

May God help us to be faithful stewards.





The Priority

HAL DAVIS and Burt Bachrach collaborated to produce a secular song that needs but one word changed to have an important message for the church. The lyrics you will recognize: "What the world needs now is love, sweet love; no, not just for some, but for everyone. Lord, we don't need another mountain; there are mountains enough to cross, enough to last till the end of time. What the world needs now is love, sweet love; no, not just for some, but for everyone. . . . It's the only thing that there's just too little of."

What minor modification is needed? "World" to "church." "What the church needs now is love, sweet love."

The church? Why, the church should already be overflowing with love! People who are active in congregations know that Christ died for them, and the natural outgrowth of that understanding should be a dynamic love for others.

But it doesn't always work that way. When board meetings could better be advertised as "Thursday Night at the Fights," when congregations have ugly splits, when Christians don't speak to one another, or communicate with glares and razor-edged tongues—it is obvious that love is missing. *More love can be*

found in the world than in some congregations. A more perverted advertisement for the gospel of Jesus Christ is not possible.

"By This Men Shall Know"

"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another" (John 13:34, 35, NIV).

No small talk here. Jesus didn't say, "Fellas, I suggest that you try to love one another." Commandment! A new command I give you. "BECAUSE OF THE LOVE YOU SHOW TO OTHERS, PEOPLE WILL KNOW OF YOUR ALLEGIANCE TO ME."

The dimensions of that statement are mindboggling—not because of carrying a KJV, or because one's car is adorned with a "Honk . . ." bumper sticker; not because 10 percent of one's income regularly hits the collection plate, or because one fills a pew everytime the church doors are opened—but AGAPE is the identifying mark of a follower of Jesus.

If you are unfamiliar with this word *agape*, there's great wealth here to be minded. It is one of several Greek words from which "love" is translated. It does not ex-

press just "friendship love," nor "husband-wife love," but the highest form of love a mortal can experience. It means love that "SEEKS THE HIGHEST GOOD OF ANOTHER."—wanting circumstances just as good, if not even better, for someone else as we want even for ourselves.

When *agape* is present in a body of believers, a lot of other special things are there too: forgiveness . . . forgetfulness . . . understanding . . . patience . . . trust . . . comfort . . . acceptance . . . support. Ugly things are absent or toned down: jealousy . . . gossip . . . envy . . . pettiness . . . selfishness . . . hatred . . . greed . . . resentfulness.

SMALL WONDER THAT JESUS SAID, "AGAPE IS THE TRADE-MARK OF MY DISCIPLES!"

1 Corinthians 13: The Agape Chapter

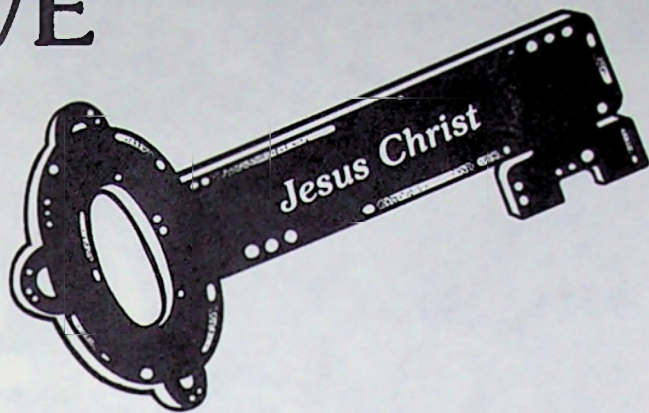
Talking to someone familiar with Scripture about this portion of the New Testament is like conversing with a farmer about a tractor, a teacher about a dictionary, a meat-cutter about knives. Very familiar material. Not only does this section stand high in comparison to other passages of the Bible, but it is recognized as a classic in all of literature. One could spend a lifetime studying here, and not fully fathom the depths of its riches. If allowed to, it can perform open heart surgery on one honest with what he finds.

Notice the incisive comparisons of the first three verses. One may possess the gifts of tongues and prophecy, have mountain-moving faith, even give away all his belongings—*yet if he lacks agape . . . he is as empty as a gong or cymbal—he is nothing (from Greek word zilch, meaning zero)*. Heavy stuff! Good works, not motivated by *agape*, are of little value.

Fifteen Characteristics of Agape

As gently and carefully as one would walk through a mine field,

of LOVE



BUILDING UP THE BODY

let's walk through these components of love.

"Love is patient; love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude; never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs; does not gloat over other men's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face; there is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance" (1 Cor. 13:4-7, NEB).

(1) Love Is Patient

Feel like a frog that just jumped into a campfire? Why must Paul bring out the big guns on this very first quality of love! Look through the entire list—though and you will find no marshmallows, no rest areas.

How fitting the American's prayer: "Lord, give me patience, and I want it right now!"

We readily understand the expression "short tempered." The person with a not-so-long fuse. Quick to blow. Enjoys spewing his venom on others, for it makes him feel better.

Our language lacks the expression, but "long tempered" is an excellent translation from the original. Our word thermometer (to show heat) comes from the same Greek word. Literally it could be translated "long before we get heated."

Some see patience as a sign of weakness, when in truth it is a sign of strength. It shows evidence of self-control. Seeking the highest good of another means demonstrating patience with people. Wives. Children. Imitating neighbors. Obnoxious fellow employees. Even brothers and sisters in Christ.

(2) Love Is Kind

One ancient church father defined it as "sweet to all." More completely it includes helpful, free from petty criticism, of a positive spirit, friendliness. Who is the kindest person you've ever known? What makes him kind?

Being morally good, even faithful, does not automatically make one kind. *Some of the staunchest moralists have a heart of stone.* Hard, intolerant, even cruel. They line up with the Pharisees of John 8, and say "Pass the stones." Kindness involves giving another chance, forgiving, being pleasant.

(3) Love Envies No One

(Jealously, KJV)

"Envy" and "jealousy" are sister words. The difference is this: jealousy is a passion to keep what one already possesses; envy is wanting what belongs to another.

Elvie McAlister cleverly assesses the way envy moves in church circles:

*Envy went to church this morning.
Being legion, he sat in every other pew.*

And envy fingered wool and slick fabrics, hung price tags on suits and neckties.

Envy paced through the parking lot scrutinizing chrome and paint.

Envy marched to the chancel with the choir during the processional.

Envy prodded plain Jane wives and bright wives married to milk-toast dullards, and kind men married to knife-tongued shrews.

Envy thumped at widows and widowers, jabbed and kicked college girls without escorts.

Envy lighted invisible fires inside khaki jackets.

Envy conferred often this morning with all of his brothers.

He liked his score today, but not enough.

Some you see, some of his intended clients had sipped an antidote marked grace and wore the wonderful flower named love.

Whole congregations have been brought down, effective ministries destroyed by this monster. There is no room for jealousy and envy in agape.

(4 & 5) Love Is Not Boastful or Conceited

Because there is such kinship between these two words, they can be considered together. *Boastful means to act, or play the braggart.* With a superior attitude, to let others know of our accomplishments. Few things grow old faster than listening to someone play and sing his own song.

Conceited, or arrogant, comes from the Greek word meaning "to blow." Think of bellows used to heat up a fire.

Thus arrogance is an attitude a person can possess; bragging is what a person may do. Having agape is not blowing our own horn, but singing the praises of others.

In the next issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD we'll discuss the other 10 qualities of agape.

PART THREE

By Pastor Don Needham

I A

IN THE FOU

OUR LORD on several occasions used the phrase "I am," sometimes of himself, and sometimes of others. It behooves us, therefore, to search for the meaning of this interesting expression.

In the Olivet discourse, in Mark 13:6, Jesus says, "For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many." The original Greek expression is *ego eimi*, "I am," and in translating it, the translators have rightly supplied the word "Christ." Other translations have "I am he," but the point is the same.

Jesus is saying, in effect, that in later times many will come claiming his title and office. In doing so, they will say, "I am Christ" or "I am the Messiah." Recognition of this sense of "I am" in Mark 13:6 indicates that it means, "I am the Messiah," not "I am God."

Further evidence as to the mean-

ing of "I am" is in the parallel passage in Matthew 24:5. There Matthew, in his Greek text, has written out the full expression, *ego eimi ho christos*, "I am the Christ." Hence it was not necessary here for the translators to supply anything.

The Gospel of Mark was written before the Gospel of Matthew, and it is quite possible that Matthew had a copy of Mark before him as he wrote. Hence the passage in Matthew shows how he interpreted Mark's words. He took them to mean, "I am the Christ," and wrote accordingly.

In Mark 14:61, 62, the high priest asked Jesus, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Jesus replied simply, "I am" (*ego eimi*). The context requires that we interpret his words as meaning, "I am, indeed, the Christ, the Son of the Blessed."

"I am" occurs frequently in the Gospel of John. There too it would mean, "I am the Messiah." This is proven by the familiar John 20:31, where the beloved disciple plainly says, "Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God."

This would be true of John 18:5, 6, where Jesus said, "I am," and those who came to arrest him went backward and fell to the ground. For a moment, the Messianic power manifested itself.

This would be true also of John 8:58, where Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I am." An expanded translation of this passage, based on its Greek text and the preceding context, would be, "Before Abraham comes into existence again, I am the Messiah, the Light of the world." In that future day, when Abraham lives again in the

by Sidne

*"Many shall come in my name,
saying, I am Christ" (Mark 13:6).*

M

R GOSPELS

kingdom, God's ancient people will have recognized Jesus as their Messiah.

The "I am" of the New Testament is often associated with the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14, where God spoke to Moses from the burning bush. The two expressions, however, are different in several respects. The Hebrew verb in Exodus 3:14 is *hayah* which means to "become, happen, appear," etc. God, in effect, is saying to Moses, "I will appear on your behalf."

The verb *hayah* of Exodus 3:14 is a stronger verb than the *eimi* of the New Testament. *Hayah's* Greek equivalent would be *ginomai*, not *eimi*. This is proven by the Septuagint, the Greek Old Testament, where the Hebrew *hayah* is most often translated by *ginomai* which also

means to "become, come forth, appear, happen," etc.

It is not proper, therefore, to identify the "I am" of the Gospels with the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14. If the two expressions were identical, the Greek New Testament would probably have used the verb *ginomai*, not *eimi*.

In the "I am" of the New Testament, the emphasis is on the word "I," not "am." Thus Jesus is saying, "I am the Messiah, not someone else." But in the "I AM" of Exodus 3:14, the emphasis is on the verb. No personal pronoun is present; it is simply a part of the verb form. Thus God is saying, "I will become," "I will appear."

In this study we have not attempted to deal with such full expressions as "I am the bread of life," "I am the light of the world," "I am the good shepherd," "I am

the first and the last," etc. We have limited ourselves to the short phrase, "I am" without a predicate noun. However, as we peruse these titles of our Lord, we recognize that in no way do they contradict what we have written here.

In the light of the foregoing evidence, it is only fair to conclude that the phrase "I am," when found on the lips of the Savior, implies "I am the Messiah," not "I am God." The Scriptural evidence is against the latter interpretation. It may stem from a desire to exalt our Lord, but it must be recognized for what it is: reading theology back into Scripture. We do not honor our Lord when we read into his words things he did not actually say.

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THE STORY IS TOLD of a man who came to a certain village and was thinking of settling there. "What kind of people live here," he asked? "What kind of people did you leave?" the villagers wanted to know. The man replied, "The meanest kind of people I ever saw." "You'll find the same kind of people here," the villagers assured him. The man left.

Later another man came to the same village, and asked the same question: "What kind of people live here? The villagers asked him "What kind of people did you leave?" He replied, "Oh, the finest and kindest people I've ever known." The villagers said, "You'll find the same kind of people here."

The point is: A great deal of what we see depends on what we are seeking. Many people carry their problems around with them.

Don't let negative, critical thinkers warp your thinking, because your behavior will follow your thought pattern. **YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK!** Jesus said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt 12:34). Solomon, the wise man, said: "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7). Whatever is in the well comes up in the bucket. "If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things above, not on the

good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about" (Phil. 4:8, LB). In this paragraph on mental health, the apostle draws up a list of virtues on which the Christian's mind is to be centered. The King James Version says we are to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report. Let's take a quick look at these six terms.

1. *True*: sincere in words. If we think about truth, we will most likely speak truth. Scripture says, "Lying lips are abomination to the LORD; but they that deal truly are his delight" (Prov. 12:22).

2. *Honest*: honorable. Whatever is decent. Whatever becomes you as a Christian, do that. Think about that. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men" (Rom. 12:17). No exposition is needed for this verse.

A woman once said to Mark Twain, "I can't understand some parts of the Bible." He replied: "It's the parts that I do understand that bother me." I identify with him.

3. *Just*: just toward others. What is right? Whatever is agreeable to justice and righteousness. It includes what you owe God, your neighbor, and yourself. "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within" (Rom. 12:2, Phillips). Moreover, we are to forsake man's evil ways. "Let the



Think Good Think

things that are on earth" (Col. 3:1, 2, NASB).

Crooked thinking causes trouble; it leads to the enemy—worry, while a mind saturated with the Bible and guided by the Spirit of God is not likely to be upset by worry or sinful attitudes. "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom. 8:6). So where is your focus? The peace of God which passes all understanding is the fruit of a Spirit-controlled mind (Phil. 4:7). Someone said, "Our fruitage for Christ reveals our rootage in Christ." This pastor could not agree more.

You Are What You Think

This is a Biblical principle. The Christian whose life is based on the finished work of Christ thinks positively. He has every reason to do so. "Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine,

wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:7). He who fills his mind with fleshly thoughts cannot please God (Rom. 8:8). The just walk in increasing light, but the wicked walk in darkness (Prov. 4:18).

4. *Pure*: Whatever is chaste. Pure thinking leads to pure living. Our lovely Lord said, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt 5:8). This should motivate us to think pure thoughts. If we focus on evil thoughts, they will inevitably lead to sin.

Can a Christian maintain a pure heart in an impure environment? Just as the pure white lily grows from the blackest dirt, so the heart of a Christian remains pure in an evil world. Facing temptation is not sin, but yielding to it is.

The Heart

"It is the thought-life that pollutes. For from within, out of men's hearts come evil thoughts of lust, theft, murder, adultery, wanting what belongs to others, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, pride, and all other folly. All these vile things come from within; they are what pollute you and make you unfit for God" (Mark 7:20-23, LB). Make no mistake about what Jesus is saying to us. This sewer of corruption comes from the hearts of men. Impurity begins in the heart. We cannot blame it on someone else. Man is a fallen creature.

Augustine, one of the early church fathers, said: "An evil thought passes thy door first as a stranger. Then it enters as a guest. Then it installs itself as a master." How very true! The best way to overcome evil thoughts is while they are still strangers. Never invite them into your mind and they won't become your masters.



David allowed an evil thought to grow until it produced adultery and murder. Every carnal desire is an enemy to our Christian life.

The Source of Sin

The Bible speaks clearly and plainly about the source of sin. Listen to James, the practical writer of the New Testament: "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. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (1:13-15). God cannot be tempted. He does not tempt. Many people today tend to blame everything that happens to them on either God or the devil. It's clearly an effort on their part to escape facing up to their own sin. The successful Christian is focused on Christ. Spirituality is what a person is, not what he does. One is tempted by his own lust which is allowed to conceive and bring forth sin. Then sin brings forth death.

The late D. L. Moody once said: "I go to the theatre as often as I want to." A woman who overheard him was shocked. Moody explained: "I simply don't want to go." God had changed his want. That's the secret

regularly don't knock like the others. I never feel stronger than when in prayer.

Our word "healthy" originated from the Old English word "holy." In other words, at one time someone felt that a holy person was a healthy person. Ministering to the spiritual aspect and producing a holy person can produce a healthy person as well. Medical authorities continue to tell us that a large percentage (some as many as 80 percent) of hospital beds are occupied with patients with psychosomatic-related illness. Thinking good thoughts is important. Friend, think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report.

It is said that two kinds of birds fly over the California desert—the hummingbird and the vulture. All the vulture can see is decaying flesh, because that's all he wants. He thrives on that diet, but the hummingbird ignores decay and looks for the tiny blossoms of the cactus flowers. Each bird finds what it is looking for. What are you looking for? What you are finding tells what you are really looking for.

Your Destiny

What is the destiny of those who do not let God purify their lives? Speaking of the New Jerusalem that comes down from God out of heaven, John the Revelator wrote: "There shall in no wise enter into it

h o u g h t s

By Pastor Hollis Partlowe

We are as pure as our thoughts. "Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7). Purity is a state of the heart and mind which is reflected in the spoken word and outward action. What we do and say merely advertise the condition of our innermost natures. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9.) It has to be cleansed before Jesus Christ dwells there. Cleanse the heart and the entire life will be clean. Evil suggestions may come to us, but with Christ in possession of our hearts, they will be promptly repelled. Birds may light on our heads; we need not let them nest there.

Sin is far more than a word or act. It is a condition of the heart. Words and acts are only symptoms of one's spiritual condition. Jesus struck at the very root of the matter in Mark 7:20-23. Either we control our thoughts or our thoughts control us.

to overcoming sin. We must bring every area of our lives under control of the Holy Spirit.

5. *Things Lovely*: lovable, gracious. Do that which inspires love.

6. *Good Report*: excellent, admirable, praiseworthy. Talk about the good of a person, not the bad. Think and speak about what will render us beloved and make us well spoken of by others. Think on these six things, Paul the apostle says. Practice them fervently.

Then, too, prayer is extremely important in maintaining a good thought pattern. One of the great verses on this subject is Philippians 4:6. The Living Bible renders it as follows: "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything; tell God your needs and don't forget to thank him for his answers." Someone said, "Building a life without prayer is like building a house without nails." Knees that bend

any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21:27). No seed of sin, no evil thought, will ever enter God's eternal kingdom. Only the redeemed will walk there (Isa. 35:9). Throughout eternity they will retain the same purity. Consequently, our prayer should be: "Create in me a clean heart. O God; and renew a right spirit [attitude] within me" (Psa. 51:10).

If you think you can't maintain these thought patterns, remember this: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. 4:13). Our sufficiency lies in another, not in ourselves. If you want to live a pure life, yield yourself completely to Jesus Christ. Think good thoughts, because you are what you think. We must develop a good thought pattern in order to have a good behavioral pattern. "THINK ON THESE THINGS!"

The Intermediate State—

by Anthony Buzzard



THE SHATTERING OF ILLUSIONS is no doubt a painful process; yet if this should lead to a deepening of our comprehension of the Apostolic Message of the New Testament, the distress will be more than offset by joy at new discovery.

The reader is invited to take a closer look at the almost universally accepted opinion that death for the faithful means an immediate presence with Christ in a realm beyond the skies. The New Testament is, of course, everywhere concerned with life beyond the grave. An important question arises, however, as to how far our cherished traditional notions about departing at death to heaven are

consonant with the New Testament view of our future.

The Christian Ministry of Information, whose aim it is to provide instruction about Christian belief on a wide variety of subjects, tackles this subject in a pamphlet entitled "Life After Death." Here we find it stated that "Paul described death as being 'absent from the body and at home with the Lord' (2 Cor. 5:6, 8), and 'departing to be with Christ' (Phil. 1:23, 24). At death the spirit is immediately clothed until the resurrection with a *temporary* body . . . At death the natural body is laid in the grave, where it returns to dust and remains till the resurrection, when it is raised 'a spiritual body.'"

A quick glance at the verses offered as proof-texts might



An Unscriptural Illusion

Part I

well satisfy the enquirer, provided, that is, that one or two questions are not posed: Why the enormous emphasis throughout the New Testament on the resurrection at the return of Christ, if in fact the real moment of glory is to be achieved at death? If the resurrection is to be genuinely a resurrection "from the dead" (as the New Testament describes it), how can it also, according to the popular scheme, be the conferring of a spiritual body upon already living departed spirits? Would this really be a resurrection at all? The traditional idea becomes even more perplexing when we see that the New Testament verb describing the act of resurrecting the dead is the ordinary word for "to awake from sleep." What possible sense can be made of the "waking up" of already fully conscious spirits in possession of the beatific vision?

The fact is that the average church-goer has not given the matter much attention. The assumption is that the "experts" must know what they are talking about. The traditional idea is thus embraced whole-heartedly; ways must be found of squaring it with the New Testament. The task is apparently performed with ease, as the Ministry of Christian Information has shown. But the nagging question remains: What sense can be made of an "awakening" (i.e. resurrection) of the living spirits of the departed? And there are other difficulties, not the least of which is the striking lack of passages in the New Testament describing any present conscious state for the dead. For while the New Testament states clearly that Jesus has "passed into the heavens" (Heb. 4:14), no such description is applied to the dead, who are constantly pictured as having fallen asleep; and as remaining asleep until the resurrection; and the resurrection is invariably placed in the *future*, at the return of Christ.

There can be no doubt that what the apostle hoped to attain to was the resurrection of the dead, to coincide with the reappearance of Jesus at the end of the age:

"If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead... This one thing I do... I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus... For our conversation [citizenship] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:11, 13, 14, 20, 21). This passage contains the three indispensable elements of Paul's eschatological view: resurrection, second coming (the Lord from heaven), and change of state from mortal to immortal. In complete agreement with the verses quoted, the great exposition of resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15 places the wakening of the dead in Christ at the second coming and equates this event with the moment when mortality is exchanged for immortality.

"In Christ shall all be *made alive*. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming... so also is the resurrection of the

dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption... As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly... Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption... We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, *at the last trump*: for the trumpet shall sound, and *the dead* shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality... *Then* shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:22, 23, 42, 49-54).

How, we are bound to ask, can this passage possibly be reconciled with the popular concept that the departed dead are *already* in possession of immortality? Surely it is patently clear that it is resurrection which confers immortality. And resurrection is unquestionably placed "at his coming," "at the last trump." It is then that the dead shall be "raised," i.e. "wakened," "*made alive*." Is it not clear beyond all question that the dead must remain in the grave until they are "raised" from it? There is no suggestion here that resurrection means the reuniting of an already conscious spirit with its body. We are faced with an irreconcilable contradiction if the dead have *already* been made alive. For it is quite specifically stated that they are to be *made alive* "at his coming" (v. 23).

In 1 Thessalonians 4, the question had arisen in the minds of the believers as to what would be the fate of those Christians who had died before the expected return of Jesus. Now Paul could have so easily removed all anxiety by pointing out that the dead "in Christ" were already happily with Christ, having at the moment of death overcome the grave and passed to their reward in heaven. It is well known that he says nothing of the sort; rather, he reinforces the certainty that at the coming of Jesus, the dead in Christ, those "asleep" (v. 14), will be resurrected and united with those who survive until the great day. The antidote to despair was thus the prospect of the resurrection at the return of Christ, not the consciousness of the dead in another location, of which "intermediate state" Paul says not one word.

Such is our reluctance to question the accepted scheme that we have not taken seriously the remarks of New Testament scholars who, though they may not be concerned with what we choose to believe, nevertheless make it quite clear that the New Testament writers pinned their entire hope on the second coming and the resurrection to occur at that time—and not before. The important question is whether we have not tried to "jump the gun" in ascribing immortality to departed spirits *apart from* resurrection. To do this we must begin with an assumption of an intermediate conscious state for the dead between death and the

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resurrection—and then “find” it in the New Testament. A more scientific method would be to start with an open mind and test the received hypothesis against Scripture. It is the purpose of this paper to suggest that such scrutiny will show the received teaching to be unsound and not fit to be associated with Apostolic Christianity.

There are two passages in the New Testament which are supposed to provide solid evidence for Paul's belief in the departed dead being immediately “with Christ.” But before examining these, we note the remarks of J. A. T. Robinson about 1 Corinthians 15 (quoted earlier), the resurrection chapter. His observations suggest that there has been some “foul play” in this matter of trying to square our popular belief with Paul's teachings. This fact should arouse our suspicions, for it is clear that if the popular view does not accord with Scripture, we should expect just such evidence of unfair handling of the New Testament. J. A. T. Robinson says: “The reading of 1 Cor. 15 at funerals *reinforces the impression* that this chapter is about the moment of death: in fact it revolves around two points, ‘the third day’ [Christ's resurrection] and ‘the last day’ . . . The modern age *tries to apply his* [Paul's] language . . . to a *single resurrection thought of as following immediately upon death*” (In the End God, p. 105—emphasis mine). These facts are sufficient to show that this central passage (1 Cor. 15) has not been allowed its proper sense; it has been forced to lend support to an idea unknown to Paul. There is evidence of similar mishandling in the other section of Scripture normally quoted in support of the popular view. J. A. T. Robinson has this to say: “It is to this passage [2 Corinthians 5:1-8] that the modern view, if it refers to Scripture at all, makes its appeal: . . . ‘We are willing rather . . . to be at home with the Lord.’ This is commonly interpreted to mean, *in clear opposition to 1 Cor. 15*, that our spiritual body is waiting for us to put on at the moment of death” (In the End God, p. 106—emphasis mine). Elsewhere John Robinson speaks of the “remarkable transformation which overtook Christian eschatology almost as soon as the ink of the New Testament was dry. And it affects the centre of interest or pivotal point of the entire subject. The interest of the modern man in Christian eschatology . . . centres in the fact and moment of death. . . . But it comes as a shock to realise *how foreign is this perspective, which we take for granted*, to the whole New Testament picture upon which Christianity is *supposedly based*. For in the New Testament, the point around which hope and interest revolve is not the moment of death at all, but the day of Parousia, or appearance of Christ in the glory of his Kingdom” (In the End God, p. 42—emphasis mine).

This analysis by a leading New Testament scholar provides us with the necessary key to unravelling the perplexing discrepancy between the actual facts of the New Testament in regard to life after death and traditional thinking on this subject. The truth is that our scheme represents a “remark-

able transformation” of the New Testament plan. Our view is quite “foreign” to the New Testament upon which Christianity is “supposedly based.” The only wise course is to face the unpalatable fact that Christian belief has undergone a radical change. It is no exaggeration to say that the teachings of the apostles have been grossly mishandled in an effort to find justification for a view of eschatology unknown to the writers of the New Testament. The all-important moment of the coming of the kingdom of Christ at his return has been replaced by the moment of the individual's death. Our understanding of this matter is therefore not recognizably Christian by New Testament standards, and on a question so central to the faith! History shows, however, that rather than admit this, we persist with the illusion that a satisfactory compromise can be achieved between original Christianity and its development in a transformed state. We are apparently unwilling to disturb our own tradition, while wishing to enjoy the comfort of the belief that our faith rests upon apostolic teaching. The compromise can only be attempted, however, by a subtle change of language. For the New Testament speaks only of the resurrection of *dead people*, who are to be raised to life at the return of Christ. We speak—and the creeds reflect this—of the resurrection of the *body*, thus opening the way for the insertion of the belief that the actual conscious person in a disembodied spirit form¹ has already gone to his reward in heaven, while his body alone awaits the resurrection. We attempt thus to reserve at least some significance for the future corporate resurrection, so clearly taught in the New Testament, by maintaining that it is a resurrection of *bodies only, as distinct from real persons!* The crucial question is whether the New Testament countenances such a distinction between the body and a separable, fully conscious “soul” or “spirit.” The student of history will realize that the Hebrews knew nothing of the doctrine of the innate “immortality of the soul,” which owes its origin to the Greeks.

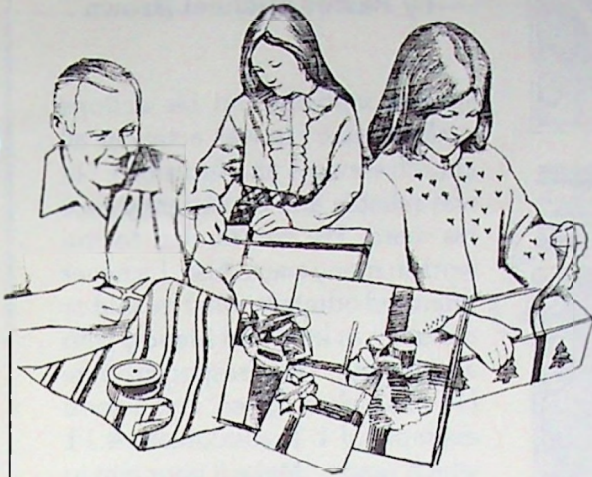
The inevitable result of the new “twist” which was given to eschatology is of course to shift the center of interest away from the future resurrection to the moment of death, and in consequence—and this is highly significant—away from the great event which the New Testament everywhere associates with the future resurrection, the second coming, and the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Quite clearly it is what happens to the conscious person after death, not what happens to his body, which captures our interest. The transformed system, taking its cue from alien Platonic ideas, introduced into the original faith the foreign (to the Hebrews) concept of the immortality of the soul. Scope was then available for the placing of the “departed soul” in conscious bliss immediately at death. The whole idea of resurrection at a later time then becomes quite secondary, if not entirely unnecessary! No more deadly blow could have been struck at the entire New Testament eschatological scheme.

Note: Part II continues in February, 1983.

¹The Ministry of Christian Information attempts to avoid the notion of disembodiment, by inventing the idea of a “temporary body.”

Why Should I Give?

By Pastor David W. Cheatwood



As we approach the celebration of Christ's birth, we do so with a lot of different feelings. The children are looking forward to the receiving of gifts. Many adults are also looking forward to exchanging gifts. Some will be hurting in depression and loneliness. There are

cards to send, messages to write, and shopping to finish. During all the running around and business of the season, some are starting to ask themselves what this is all about. Some are asking themselves, Why am I giving all these gifts, cards, etc.? Why should we give?

The first thing we must remember is that God has given us his Son. Without Christ as your Savior and Lord, you are without hope and without the promise of eternal life in his coming kingdom. That child who was born in a stable grew into a man who was hung on a cross for the sins of mankind. He lived a perfect life and willingly died that we might have life eternal. We get his reward for perfection if

we accept Christ as our own personal savior.

As you give to others, remember this wonderful gift from God. You might also consider what Jesus says in verse 38 of Luke 6: "GIVE, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; GOOD MEASURE, PRESSED DOWN, SHAKEN TOGETHER, RUNNING OVER, THEY WILL POUR INTO YOUR LAP. FOR BY YOUR STANDARD OF MEASURE IT WILL BE MEASURED TO YOU IN RETURN" (NASB). Interesting words, aren't they?

The main thrust of what Christ is sharing with us is that, as we do to others, so God does to us. If we want more, we must give more. We will get in direct proportion to what we give. Too many people are seeking something for nothing. We won't even send a card if we don't think we will get one back. If we are not getting enough attention in our lives, maybe what we really need to do is start giving attention to others.

Remember that God is going to bless you just as you are a blessing

to others. The more you do for your fellow men, and the more you accomplish with your life, the greater your experiences are going to be. God will give you a blessing you will not be able to contain. This also applies to your giving to his work. Some people are limiting their income because they are holding back God's share. Think about this! Who has given you what you have? Is not God the supplier of everything on the earth? Give and you will receive.

During the business of the coming week, take time to sit down and thank God that you are able to be out and doing. Remember that he has given you a mind, arms, legs, and life itself. Without his supply to your needs you could do nothing. Express your thanks to him for his gift to you. Give of yourself to others and experience the joy of giving. God will see that you are cared for.

I wish you a Blessed Christmas and a fantastic New Year. May God be the center of your life and the director of your steps both now and always.

by Pastor Michael Brown

spoken verbally, but his *actions* really spoke. He was active at all church services and functions. He was reliable and consistently kept his word. He contributed to the work in many ways. Also, he never offended others by what he said or did but was kind and friendly with all persons. They respected him. He was truly a "giver" and a good example of 1 Thessalonians 4:11 which reads, "Make it your aim to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to earn your own living" (TEV).

This quiet lifestyle may seem difficult and, indeed, it is. There must be discipline, humility, and desire to mind one's own business and labor earnestly and honestly. Yet, we are encouraged when we know the result is harmony with our fellow man.

When Leonard Bernstein, the famous orchestra conductor, was asked, "What is the most difficult instrument to play?" he wittingly responded, "Second fiddle. I can get plenty of first violinists, but to find one who plays second violin with as much enthusiasm or second French horn or second flute, now that's a problem. And yet, if no one plays second, we have no harmony."



A GOOD GOAL TO SET

I CAN think of no greater compliment one could give toward someone else than to say he or she leads a quiet life, is hardworking, and dependable. I'm thinking of those special people who do not seek attention from others but quietly go about their business, ef-

fectively serving the Lord. They are the ones who are always working behind the scenes, making sure things are running smoothly, yet are never looking for compliments or rewards.

I knew of an elderly man who fit such a description. He wasn't out-

Harmony in human relationships is accomplished when we live quietly, working hard in the church and at one's own affairs, effectively serving God. The Apostle Paul says, "Make it your aim." How can we fail with that sort of goal in mind?

Rachel Carr,
Contributing Editor



Working Together

Michael walked slowly along the sidewalk, kicking the dry, dead leaves. He had much on his mind and was very confused. He needed to talk to someone about what his teacher had told the class that day.

Christmas was only four weeks away, and Michael was looking forward to the wonderful times of singing Christmas carols and having a part in the Christmas program at school. He loved hearing the story read from the Bible. He especially liked the part about the angels telling the shepherds the baby had just been born in a stable in Bethlehem. He thought the songs the angels sang must have been the most beautiful music ever heard.

Then Michael remembered again what the teacher had read to the children. Her voice had trembled and tears were in her eyes as she spoke. "Children, there is something I am told that I must read to you. The government has passed a law that our schools are not to be allowed to present any Christmas programs that tell about the birth of Jesus. We will not be able to sing any of the carols that tell about him either."

"There are some people who don't believe in God or his Son

Jesus. They don't want anyone to talk about them or teach about them. So they have worked hard to get laws passed that do not allow the schools to have any religious celebration of Christmas. So we will not be having a program this year."

When Michael got home he found his father and mother sitting before the television set listening to a newscast. They looked very sad and worried. They had just heard the same news Michael's teacher had told his class.

Michael went to them and they put their arms around him. "Why, Mother and Dad, is this happening in our country?"

"It's because there is so much wickedness in the world. It may be, too, that we as Christian people have not been as eager to fight to keep our religious freedom as these other people have been to take it away."

"Isn't there anything we can do?" asked Michael.

"Well," said his father, "if wicked people can influence our government, then Christian people must join together and present our side to the government. If we pray and work together we can help others see how very important it is to keep

our freedom to worship God and to teach others about him. To start things going, I will go to the PTA meeting tonight and talk about this. I will ask that we write a petition which people can sign. If each one will take a petition and make copies of it so many people can sign them, it will be like a snowball rolling downhill, gathering more and more snow as it goes. Then the government officials will know how we feel about this new law."

Michael started to smile. He said, "You know, Daddy, I feel better already. I know God will help us."

"Yes, Michael, he will. But let's remember, too, that no matter what kind of laws our government passes, we can always love God and worship him in our hearts."

(Editor's note to parents: From time to time there are various petitions circulated among Christian people. Many are legitimate and are a good way to voice our opinions and concerns. However, some have been found to contain erroneous information. When asked to sign a petition or to circulate one, always check to be sure the information is correct. You might contact your pastor, a Christian radio station, or Christian bookstore to check on it.)

By Maxine Herr

The Unspeakable Horror



One of the great debate topics of today, abortion, used to be mentioned only in hushed tones, if at all. It was a shocking subject and considered to be at best, very, very unfortunate. Today abortion is a legal and acceptable solution to unwanted pregnancy and a freely discussed "option."

The Constitution, that legal lifeline linking the realities of today with the dreams of yesterday, does not speak to the issue of abortion. Nowhere in the Constitution is there anything remotely suggesting either that "women shall have the right to abort their fetuses" or that "the un-

born, being beneath a certain age, do not receive the protection granted to all United States citizens."

Rather, the Supreme Court, reading carefully, deeply, and thoroughly between the lines, has found certain "rights" in the Constitution. And in the case of the killing of the unborn, the implied right is the right of the prospective mother to privacy. (I am not too clear on whether the female is guaranteed bodily privacy against invasion by conceptus, or whether the privacy guaranteed is simply that what she does is nobody's business but her own. The latter, on further considera-

tion, I think is what is intended.)

It is strange, is it not, that while the Constitution guarantees reasonable punishment to any common criminal, there is no protection at all, there is no due process, for the innocent little fetus? If Mother says Fetus should not be there, he is guilty without trial and receives capital punishment as quickly as possible. There is never a pre-sentence hearing. There is no chance of appeal.

It was in *Roe v. Wade*, 1973, that the Supreme Court found that termination of pregnancy was a private matter. The court declared that it is impossible to know when life begins. Therefore, it does not begin until birth.

Countless women living out the expectant days of pre-motherhood must have dreamed or imagined that they were carrying life! In the days when science was less exact than it is today, women "felt life" at about four months of pregnancy. Then there was some debate, understandably, about exactly when life began, but everyone knew that with "quickening," life was there.

Today, two living human cells can be united in a test tube and, if the cells are carefully kept alive, the product or zygote, can be implanted in the female to achieve pregnancy.

By Ann A. Hunter—Reprinted from *Northern Virginia Daily*, September 22,

But the Supreme Court does not know when life begins.

Some months ago, the Human Life Bill, S. 158, was introduced in Congress to resolve the question "When does life begin?" The bill, which was defeated, stated, "The Congress finds that the life of each human being begins at conception." And the bill went on to add, "The Congress further finds that the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States protects all human beings."

No one, of course, is forced to submit to an abortion; at least let us hope not. A woman may choose, if she can resist the pressure to terminate, to submit to her pregnancy and thereby give life to a new human being. But one million unborn babies a year are killed in the United States alone. Ten million dead humans in 10 years! In this nation, America, we have now lost more than were lost in the holocaust of World War II. And all, every single one of them, were innocent of any wrongdoing.

The abortion debate is not over. It can never be over until all conscience is dead, or the killing stops. Whether it is resolved through constitutional amendment or by statute remains to be seen.

Resolution

"We believe life is a sacred gift from God which should be protected from the time of conception until the occurring of natural death. Therefore we oppose the practice of abortion, feeling that it is morally opposed to the Word of God, and its practice results in the devaluation of all human life."

—Adopted by delegates of the
Church of God General Conference
August, 1982.



**Exploding
the
Abortion
Myth**

by
Pastor
Donald
Needham

THE PRIMARY CAUSE of death in the United States last year was abortion. Though most statistics are responsible to control, over 300,000 women have died since 1973 through various forms of abortion. Control laws are needed to protect unborn children, and the health of the family, and the nation. At the same time, the availability of abortion must be restricted to prevent the loss of unborn children, and prevent family breakdown through a vicious cycle.

The Law of

The Roman Catholic Church has been a leader in the fight against abortion since 1868. In 1973, when the Supreme Court decided in *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*, it declared that a woman has the right to abort a fetus in her uterus. Now, more than ever, it is the duty of the Church to protect the unborn child. The Church has always taught that the embryo is a human being from the moment of fertilization. The Church has always taught that the embryo is a human being from the moment of fertilization. The Church has always taught that the embryo is a human being from the moment of fertilization.

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GOOD NEWS IS FOR GIVING

By
Pastor
Richard
Eldred

AN ARMY OFFICER teaching Artillery at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, after the Korean war complained that everyone fell asleep through the training sessions. It seemed that no one cared enough about the training to stay awake and learn. The same officer teaching the same class at the same post during the Vietnam war said, "No one fell asleep."

What made the difference? His men knew that human life was at stake. Failure to learn the job could cost his life and the lives of everyone depending on him.

I believe we approach the great commission—"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I command you" (Matt. 28:19, 20a)—much the same way that those first soldiers at Ft. Sill approached their military training. We don't practice evangelism as a life-or-death situation.

I believe that if we don't "approach" our responsibility to the great commission diligently, prayerfully, and tearfully, we are a "reproach" to God. If we have the truth, it is high time that the Church of God diligently and effectively take this message of "LIFE" to a dying world. This job starts with each individual sharing Jesus Christ right where he lives. No more sleeping in class!

Must Have a Burden for the Lost

Doesn't everybody have a burden for the lost? No. The greatest evidence of spiritual maturity is to see another person's burden for lost people. I fear that we have become "spiritual navel gazers"—that is, we are more concerned about ourselves than about others.

Spirit-filled Christians reproduce. If we are not reaching out to the lost with this GOOD NEWS of salvation, we are spiritually dead and dead things do not grow or multiply. You have heard it said, "We don't want quantity; we want quality." You can't have one without the other; if you are a quality Christian you *will* reproduce and the quantity will come.

I am greatly concerned about those who call themselves "Christian" and yet never speak to others about their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus himself said, "For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart" (Matt. 12:34a). If you are content not to talk to others about their salvation, you had better get on your knees and ask God to give you a burden for the lost.

On the other hand I get excited when I see the tremendous burden that is carried by the Spirit-filled Christian. While praying with one of my discipleship groups, one of the men, with salty words as his voice broke, said, "God, if I could win just one (sob) just one person to Christ."

That, my friends, is a healthy Christian; he is driven with a burden. If you don't have a burning burden for the lost, you had better pull your own spiritual "dip stick" and check your own commitment.

It all begins with a burden. Now you are ready for step two.

Share Your Own Testimony

If you can't tell someone else what Christ has done in your life, you will never be able to convince him that he needs Jesus Christ in his life. The salesman that isn't sold on his own product isn't very likely to convince anyone else that he should try it.

It is important to write out your testimony and force yourself to question, "What has God really done in my life?" Be transparent. Share your own failures before you met Christ. This will help people to see what God has done in your life and to see the peace of mind that you now have knowing that your life is grounded in Christ.

Three times in the Book of Acts Paul's conversion experience is given. First is the actual experience of meeting Christ on the Damascus road (Acts 9). Then, before the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and before King Agrippa and Festus in Caesarea, Paul shares his conversion testimony. Paul said, "I was on my way to Damascus to stamp out Christianity. I was persecuting the Christians when I met Jesus Christ and my whole purpose in life changed." Now after this experience he can say, "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21) and again, "It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20).

With all the enthusiasm you can muster, stand up and be counted with Jesus Christ.

The question is not, "Are you a witness?" You *are* a witness. The question is, "What kind?" With your own life in order and a ready testimony, you are ready for step three.

Pray for Opportunities

Before we speak to men about God, it is important to speak to God about men.

A. Ask God to give you someone to witness to. Trust him enough to name specific individuals. God is big enough to handle it.

B. Ask for the right words when the opportunity comes.

C. Ask for the Holy Spirit to direct you to the right Scriptures for the occasion.

D. Ask for Christ's strength. Paul said, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). As long as you think you can handle it on your own; God will let you.

E. Be confident. As opportunities come your way, know that God is in it, Christ is there beside you, he will not fail you. "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20).

F. Speak with boldness. "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31). "For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power... therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord" (2 Tim. 1:7, 8).

Pray for opportunities, then roll up your sleeves and get ready to go to work. God answers those kinds of prayers. You need only to be sensitive enough to grab them.

On the way to work one day, I asked God to give me an opportunity to speak with my boss about Jesus Christ. That is being specific. Who? My boss. What? Speak to him about Christ. When? Today.

I had a great rapport with my boss. He knew exactly where I stood with Jesus Christ. He was supportive, but he wasn't a Christian himself. All day long he was busy and I hardly found a chance to speak to him about anything. Finally at 5:00 o'clock John left for the day. I really didn't think too much about it and I even forgot that I had asked God for such an opportunity.

About 9:00 p.m. my boss came back to the shop as I was working alone, backed his pick-up in the door, dropped the tailgate, unloaded some parts on the floor, and said, "Come on over and sit down. We haven't had a chance to have a good talk for some time."

Was God in it? At a time like that you don't say, "What do you want to talk about?" No, you say, "John, your being here is an answer to prayer. I asked God on the way to work today to give me a chance to talk to you about your relationship with Jesus Christ."

We sat down and he paid an hour and a half's wages to learn all that was involved in making a commitment to Jesus Christ. He said, "Don't mark this off your time sheet [as he knew I did with other people]; I have enjoyed this."

A few months later my boss's father said in a voice that alarmed me, "Did you hear about John?"

"No, what happened?" I replied. "John is going to church."

John was baptized about a year later.

On another occasion before leaving the church to officiate at a funeral, I stopped at my favorite place of prayer, the altar, and asked God to help me comfort this hurting family, "But more importantly to speak to someone through the message that I might have a future chance to speak to them about Christ."

Riding back from the cemetery I got acquainted with one of the pallbearers. As we were walking to our cars I said to him, "Do you go to church anywhere?"

He said, "I was hoping you would ask me that. Could you come to my house sometime and talk to me? I have lived a rough life and I know I need to change."

God answers prayers.

Get on Common Ground

Paul said, "To the Jews I became a Jew... to the weak I became weak; that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:20ff).

Paul is not saying, "Loosen your morals and sin with the sinners," but he is saying, "Look for opportunities to get acquainted and make friends. Find a common point of interest; fishing, hunting, golf, sports, etc. It is easiest to win people just like you—people who share your interests."

Personality plays a big part in being able to witness effectively. Often I will walk into a group and in a joking manner say, "I can whip anyone here." I have yet to get whipped; when I do I will learn a new approach. The point is this: We need to be accepted before we can witness. If they reject you they will reject your message.

Witnessing is like being in a large room full of doors. You have to keep checking them until you find one that is open. It will surprise you that even the old rugged, scarred up, crusty, rough doors are seldom dead-bolted. On one-to-one, people will often talk with you if your approach is right.

Have a Planned Message

The successful salesman knows exactly what he is going to say. The hardest sale is the first one. The hardest time to witness if you have never done it is the first time. Expect to be clumsy the first few times—you will be—but each time it gets easier.

(Continued, page 4)

The Restitution Herald

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Good News Is for Giving

(Continued from page 3)

I never used to talk to anyone about Christ, not until I got on my knees and got serious about serving God. I asked him to help me to love him more and to fill me with the Holy Spirit and my whole life began to change. I found myself burdened with the lost and wanting to share Christ with them.

I was in the welding business at the time and began to witness to the customers that came into the shop. I was clumsy at first. I didn't know how to get the conversation started; I didn't know my Bible—but I did know Christ.

The more I tried to witness the easier it became and the more I learned about the Scriptures. Repetition made it easier; I began to feel comfortable with a particular message. It is like baking a cake; after a while you no longer need to look at the recipe, but you begin to plan and know the next step.

The point is, we must start working on a message that we are comfortable with and one that we can tie personal illustrations into. All of this takes us to the next step.

Do it

James 1:22 says, "Prove yourselves doers of the word and not merely hearers." Jesus said, "Go . . . and make disciples."

It is one thing to know all the methods, and it is another thing to "do it."

We must plan time to go witnessing. Failing to plan is planning to fail. There is a story of a Bible College student who had disciplined himself to witness to someone every day. One night as he lay in bed he realized that the day had gone by and he hadn't witnessed to anyone. He got out of bed, put on his clothes, and went out on the streets of Chicago and waited until a man came along. He began to witness: "The Bible says, 'He who believes and is baptized shall be saved; he who has disbelieved shall be damned'" (Mark 16:16). The man grew angry, but the student was persistent and quoted it again and again until the man told him, "Leave me alone; I don't want to hear it."

He went back to the dormitory and went to bed and in a few minutes a knock came on the door and the dormitory director said, "Have you been out on the street witnessing?"

"Yes", was his reply.

"Well, there is a man here to see you," he said. The young man was a "doer."

Last year at General Conference Warren Sorenson challenged us to get off dead center and get involved in winning the lost to Christ. He asked us to sign a contract with ourselves and state a number that we could be held accountable for winning. Writing this article has caused me to get tough on myself. I have 10 people to win to Christ this year. It will never get done until I become a "doer." That means I have to plan my day and actively make plans to involve myself in "soul winning." Since I have come to this realization, I am experiencing more out of my ministry than ever before. I am forcing myself to get out of the office and be a "doer."

Ask for a Commitment

That is the preacher's job, right? Wrong. Jesus has commanded all of us to go and make disciples.

If a salesman has the greatest sales pitch in the world, but fails to get a signature on the contract, he has done nothing. I have found one major weakness in my own witness—that of asking the person to make a commitment to Christ.

Somehow we feel that if we can get them to church they will find Christ there. That may be true, and that is usually what happens, but is it enough? Does it have to be done that way? No, I don't think so.

You say, "What if I ask them to make a commitment to Christ and they do, but they never show up in church; was the commitment real?" Probably not, or else you failed to do the rest of your job. It is our responsibility to teach them the importance of coming to church to be with other believers, to make a public confession, to be baptized, and to become an active, working, supporting part of the body of Christ.

Asking for a commitment is a delicate step. It may take a number of visits. It may take weeks, months, years. It is a process that must be carefully thought out.

It may be easiest to invite people to church and allow others to minister to them and to help them there to make a decision and to be baptized and then to help them to grow.

My point is this: It doesn't have to be done that way. If you reach a person for Christ and get him coming to church, when he makes that public confession why not experience the thrill of walking the aisle with that brother whom YOU have won to Christ?

Be a "doer."

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TWENTIETH CENTURY ELISHA

Remember when Elijah anointed Elisha as the next prophet over Israel while he was plowing with 12 pairs of oxen? After being anointed by Elijah he stopped, tore the plow apart, built a fire from the wood, offered the oxen as a sacrifice to the Lord, went to follow

Elijah, entered the service to God, and never looked back.

Dick Seyster is a man who has "burned the plow" to follow God and not look back. I get misy-eyed when I think of all that God has done in this man's life.

Some of the greatest pain I

have experienced as a pastor is that of seeing someone make a commitment to Christ and find it was only shallow and insincere. On the other end of the scale is the joy of witnessing a new Christian jump in clear over his head. Dick Seyster is that kind of man.

Dick and Eva Seyster have been a thrill to my heart as they have so diligently given themselves to the Lord. Two new Christians, but WHAT A COMMITMENT. Following is the written testimony from the quill of a "Twentieth Century Elisha."

Richard Eldred,
one proud pastor.

Every Church Needs at Least One

GOD IS NOT PARTICULAR. He loves and needs us all—red, yellow, black, or white; farmer, factory worker, doctor, lawyer, housewife, or school child. No matter who or what we are, God wants us and can use us all.

All we have to do is say, "God, I want your Son to be my personal Savior and I believe in you." Then be baptized and he will do the rest.

That is what my story is about—what has happened in our lives (mine and my wife's) since we asked God to take control of our lives.

It all started in January of 1980 when my wife Eva said, "Dick, I think I'll go to church today." I said, "Fine, just don't start bugging me about going!" So she went to the East Oregon Chapel in Oregon, Illinois. She went that Sunday, and every Sunday thereafter. On June 28, 1981, my wife accepted the Lord Jesus and was baptized. By the way, I did not take the time to attend her baptism.

So it went every Sunday. She went to church, and I stayed home by myself.

Then one day she said, "Dick, we are doing a lot of work on the church; would you like to come see it?" I said I would, but not when there was a bunch of people there. So she said that she would ask the pastor for a key. Our pastor, by the way, is Richard Eldred, whom we all think is one of the greatest. So she got a key and we went up to the church one day—just the two of us. She showed me the new sanctuary and the basement that she and a friend, Betty Meier, were painting. Then my wife asked, "Dick, would you like to come to church with me Sunday?" I said, "Maybe someday." So she did not bother me again for awhile; then one day she asked again. I told her, "I'll tell you what; I'll go with you on Easter Sunday. But don't think I'm going every Sunday!"

That's when things started to happen. I've missed only one Sunday since then.

On Father's Day I was quite ill and almost didn't go. But I did go. Our pastor delivered his morning message and was giving the invitation to come forward. We

started singing JESUS I COME. Something came over me and, praise God, I took that walk. From that moment on God has taken control of my life. The Holy Spirit has started to work in my life and that of my wife.

First God has strengthened our marriage. We have been married for 27 years and our marriage has never been so strong. We are getting to know each other all over again! We see and feel things about each other that we never saw or felt before. We read the Bible together every night for about an hour and then discuss what we have read. We have learned to pray together, which is a very important part of our lives.

I believe in prayer very deeply and strongly. I think God listens to our every word. I have never asked God anything in prayer that he has not heard and answered. He may not answer the way I want, but he answers.

I'll tell you why my wife and I believe in prayer so strongly. Our three-year old granddaughter became very sick and started having seizures. She was transported to Dixon hospital by ambulance and admitted. After testing, all the doctor could say was that there was something wrong but he was not sure what. So she was sent to Monroe, Wisconsin. But once again the doctors were unable to detect the problem. Finally she was taken to Madison University Hospital. After a barrage of testing we were informed that they had found parasites in her blood which had entered her brain! This had caused the seizures and also impaired her ability to walk and talk properly. The doctor also informed us that it had taken so long to find the problem, that the impairments she had already suffered were permanent, but they could stop the sickness from spreading.

Well, we got on the phone and got our church prayer group started. My wife and I prayed all day and half the night together. The next day, which was a Sunday, before church my son Rick called

and said, "Dad, the doctor was just in after he examined Julie. He can't explain it but she is going to be totally well and her speech and walking ability are totally normal!!!"

I told my son that I wish I could have been there because I would like to have told that doctor what happened to make that little girl well again!

That is just one of the many reasons my wife and I believe so much in the power of prayer. God will perform miracles if we only ask.

When I add up the miracles God has performed in my life because of prayer, they come to five—so far. And I've only been a Christian since June 27, 1982. Here are the miracles:

1. He has taught my wife and me to pray together.
2. He has made our marriage stronger than it has ever been before.
3. He has helped us overcome our bad habits, such as smoking and swearing.
4. He has taught us to study his Word together every night.
5. He has taught us about Christian love and how to teach it and his Word to other people.

In ending this story I would like to add one more miracle to bring the number to six. Since June 28 when my wife was baptized, every adult in our family—my wife and I, my son and his wife, and my daughter and her husband—have come to accept Jesus Christ as our personal Savior and be baptized. In addition, all three of our granddaughters—Julie, Corina, and Amber—have been dedicated to God. He does work miracles!



Dick and Eva Seyster

by Richard E. Seyster

"Having the same love [agape] . . . in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:2-4, NIV).

Hard verses. Demanding words. "Considering others better than ourselves" runs headfirst into the selfish "me-ism" that dominates our generation. These instructions don't sit very comfortably next to "get to the top no matter who you have to step on and climb over" or "look out for old number one cause no one else will."

From this text, the technical definition of *agape* (seeking the highest good of another) becomes very practical. Two friends are on the same ball team, one is chosen to start, the other to sit. Two girlfriends apply for the same job to which only one can be hired. Two men are nominated for the one position of church elder. In every case the "loser" is happy and pulling for the winner. "Seeking the highest good of another" becomes more than just platitudinous words.

doctrines, doesn't give anyone rights with the feelings of others. Frequently people with a different view are seen as the enemy and we act like we've only got one chance to "get 'em," to "nail 'em." It doesn't matter if we hurt their feelings. Let's tell them what we think! So what if they leave bruised and bloody? At least they will know where we stand!

It is not enough to excuse such behavior and say of one like that, "Oh, it's just his way." The person who acts in this manner is *lacking in agape*. Unfortunately, it's not surprising to find some who are "strongest in the doctrine" to be the most rude and tactless! Bulldozers! "I may have the gift of prophecy, but if I lack love, I AM NOTHING."

Agape goes the second mile in showing consideration and gentleness for the feelings and opinions of others. This is not assuming there will never be a disagreement, but that strife will be handled in a spirit of Christian love.

(7) Love Is Not Selfish

Want to see selfishness in action? Watch a congested driving area or grocery checkout lanes. It's first in line . . . biggest slice of the pie . . . best piece of chicken . . . serve me first . . . front seat in the car . . . don't sit in my chair . . . ad infinitum!

We expect such actions from children. All babies are born self-centered. That's why they must be trained to share, to give, to understand the feelings of others. But selfishness does not automatically disappear with adulthood.

Possessing mature *agape* results in looking around to see what's good for everyone, not just for oneself. At home that means respecting the telephone rights of others, compromising when two favorite TV programs conflict, not hogging the bathroom! Within the fellowship at church, it's understanding that others may have different tastes in music, that there are other credible versions besides the King James, that doing motions with Sunday School choruses is not for everyone. *Agape* always considers and listens to the opinions of others.

(8) Love Is Not Quick to Take Offense

Eggshell people. How uncomfortable it is to be around oversensitive folks who appear anxious to get their feelings hurt. Striding around with activated radar disks, they're eager to hear something to feed their martyr complex—justifying their self-pity.

Robert Conrad projects the same attitude when setting a flashlight battery on his shoulder and daring someone to "knock it off." Christians with the proverbial chip on their shoulder walk around hoping for someone to offer a challenge, ready for a fight at the drop of a Bible.

But *agape* is not contentious, not defensive, not searching for an argument, or quick to get its feelings



Love is child's play for growing, caring Christians.

TEN MORE QUALITIES OF AGAPE (1 Corinthians 13:4-7, NEB)

(6) Love Is Not Rude Nor Without Tact

Charles Swindoll has said, "Fundamental Christianity has turned out more sharp, rude, blunt, tactless Christians than the liberals ever heard of—and as a result many people are turned off before they ever get in by our tendency toward a sharp, critical, pungent spirit."

Being conservative with the Bible, or well-versed in the

hurt. It's peace loving, even-tempered, and consistent. *It's fun to be around agape-motivated people. They make good friends!*

(9) Love Keeps No Score of Wrongs

CPA's can readily understand this one. Paul uses an accountant's term meaning "entering into a ledger."

Agape does not keep a record, entering into its columns those times one is hurt, or used, or mistreated—carrying a bitterness until a chance comes for revenge.

If taken to heart, this could revolutionize many relationships. So many are bearing resentments they refuse to release—and they are the unhappiest people around.

Agape keeps no score of wrongs! It FORGIVES. Neither does it first require an apology before it will pardon.

Are you bearing just such a grievance right now? You'll never be free and at peace until you flush your mind clean. Probably it is something bigger than you can do on your own. Ask God to help. He will. For if the God who sends the tides to wash the beaches of this world clean every day has not yet been allowed to wash your mind clean of grudges and resentments—*then you haven't experienced very much of Calvary Love!*

Grudge diaries go out when *agape* comes in.

(10) Love Does Not Gloat Over Other Men's Sins

Love has no sympathy for wrongdoing; it finds no pleasure in anything that is wrong.

Agape finds no joy when someone cheats on his income tax and gets away with it . . . when a teen-ager tries to outrun the police, and succeeds . . . when someone breaks a law of the land, or a moral law of God. It doesn't laugh and find humor in crude and vulgar jokes.

But . . .

(11) Love Delights in the Truth

Notice the hinge between these two. As turned off as love is to wrongdoing and unrighteousness—*it is turned on by truth!* Love and truth are Siamese twins. One cannot really be experiencing *agape* and at the same time be dishonest, crooked, or shady in his financial practices and business dealings.

Surfacing occasionally in an Ann Landers column is a letter about underwear. Some seem paranoid of being found in a hospital emergency room with dingy or torn underwear! What an embarrassment! And a Christian should live his life so nothing could be uncovered that would embarrass him or discredit his witness for Jesus. His testimony should not be "turning gray."

If you desire to know your real self, the real you—it is the person you are when you are alone, or apart from people to whom you feel accountability. The person you

are, the way you act in that circumstance—*that is the real you!*

(12) Love Bears All Things

"Bears" is a warrior's term meaning protecting oneself from darts, spears, and arrows. Thus *agape* is the shield that protects from the blows of others.

A possible circumstance: someone is sick; You come to his aid. Chicken soup. Wash the clothes. Haul the kids. Then the tables turn and there is no response. Not only does he fail to offer help, but a get-well note doesn't ever show. Are you offended? Are your feelings hurt?

If *agape* bears all things, that person doesn't have to reciprocate for your love to continue. It would be nice, only good manners on his part—but your love is not conditioned by his response *Agape is unconditional love!*

(13) Love Believes All Things

Careful here. The meaning is not gullibility nor naivete—but vulnerability. This is not to throw out good judgment, but to go as far as possible to trust someone, to give him the benefit of the doubt.

It can require taking a risk, leaving oneself open to be hurt, or used—or made to look like a fool.

For instance, someone has left the Lord and the church to run with the world. Ready to "eat the slop they're feeding the hogs," he realizes it is time to come home. When he arrives back at church, confessing his sins and mistakes, is he treated with suspicion? Must he "prove himself" before he can be included again?

Being vulnerable means putting an arm around his shoulder and saying, "I believe in you." Doing that requires taking a chance—the chance one might look stupid if the former offender falls back into the world. Yet it may very well be that response which communicates, "I trust and believe in you," that keeps him from sliding back.

(14) Love Hopes All Things

Agape hopes, and anticipates the very best in another. Instead of kicking someone when he has strayed, it is to encourage him with, "Last time we talked you were far from the Lord, but I expect your life is changing for the better." *Agape* is the ETERNAL OPTIMIST!

(15) Love Endures All Things

Agape is determined. It doesn't give up easily. When a marriage is shaky, it is hanging in there to make it work. When rebellious children break parents' hearts, it is loving them through their defiance. When someone spiritually immature keeps stamping and trampling on feelings, it means praying for him to soon grow up and become sensitive.

The word "quit" is not in *agape's* vocabulary! *Love hangs in there.*

AND THE GREATEST OF THESE . . . IS AGAPE.

NEVER TOO OLD

by
Patricia
Wood

"I'm too old. I can't do anything anymore. I'm no longer useful."

"I'm no longer wanted or needed. Why do I go on living?"

"I've worked all these years in the church. Now, let someone else do it."

The above comments are heard often from the elderly in our families, churches, and communities. Their thoughts point to a fear that most people have of growing older. No one wants to become useless, to feel a burden, and not be wanted or needed. One of the biggest needs of any person is to feel useful. Old age does not have to be a dread to us in the Christian church. God's Word definitely points out that there is value in every human being.

We begin growing old the day we are born. It is something we all have in common. Of course, there are those who are in ill health and cannot do the things they used to as a youngster. This is true of all of us. We may slow down a little, but we do not have to stop.

I have read that there are myths about aging. One belief is that older people have to lose their memories. If this is true, then I am really old and have been most of my life. Poor memories are not due to the age factor. Sometimes it is due to having too much to remember. We remember what is really important to us. I have learned that little notes tacked in different parts of the house help my poor memory.

Another myth of old age is that senility is caused by lack of oxygen to the brain. This can happen to the young. Our diet and exercising keep the blood producing oxygen in the brain. It does not come from old age.

A third myth of old age is that our I. Q. begins to decline and we become less and less intelligent. Again, this is often caused

by our diet and/or exercising program. Also, it is important that we keep up to date on what is happening around us. The I. Q. is still there. We are fortunate in today's world where even the blind can listen to tapes and use braille. We also need to be around people to keep our interest in life.

The Bible has a lot to say about older men and women. Paul told Timothy that the widows were to be known for their good deeds, showing hospitality and helping those in trouble. (1 Tim. 5:9, 10.) He told them to teach the younger women

to be chaste housekeepers, to love their husbands and children. It does not seem that because we are older or alone, we have the right to just stop functioning. God still has a job for us to do.

Sarah and Abraham, in their old age, started a family. Maybe this is not God's plan for today, but how about the many children that have only one parent and need a grandparent image in their lives?

Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist, was elderly when she brought forth a son. However, another responsibility God gave to her was to help and influence



Mary, the mother of Jesus, during her time of waiting for the birth of our Savior.

Scripture tells us that Abdi was a grandfather (1 Chron. 6:44; and 2 Chron. 29:12). Yet he was one of David's principal song leaders.

Noah was an elderly father who built a great ship. God used him to save a remnant by saving his sons and their wives.

Moses was no teen-ager when he led the children of Israel to the promised land. He no doubt was around 80 years old when he started that journey.

Simeon and Anna waited for the glimpse of the Savior in the temple, the Book of Luke tells us. They witnessed this great event as they went about their duties in the temple.

Samuel anointed Saul and David and still was around when Saul died. Growing older is a part of God's plan. We could go on and list numerous others mentioned in God's Word.

I know you are no doubt thinking, "Then what can I do to be of service to God and his plan?" Let me share a few things for which I see a great need:

1. **PRAY.** If you are bedridden and do not see anyone, you can pray. My mother was a great prayer warrior. After living several hundred miles away from her and not seeing her as often as I would have liked, it was not necessarily her physical presence that I missed so much when she died. More than anything else, my husband and I missed her prayers. We knew that she had been praying for us daily. She would often call long distance and ask, "Pat, is there something wrong? I have a great burden for you today." When she died, we knew those prayers were no longer ascending toward heaven and God's throne in our behalf. Thank God, he sent others to take her place.

Shut-ins that pray daily will receive great rewards. James says, "The prayer of a righteous man availeth much." Two things come into play here. One is that we must be righteous—doing what God wants us to. Another is that we must **PRAY.**

2. **A CAKE OR PIE CHEERFULLY GIVEN** can be a real blessing to others. Some goodies from the kitchen often give a lift to those who cannot cook. Often there are men without wives that desire a little something homemade. Children with working mothers delight in receiving something not out of a can. All of us have memories of our childhood when Mom or Gramma made something special for us. Maybe you can help some tired busy

mother share something special with her children.

3. **BE A GRANDPARENT** to someone who needs one. Children are very fortunate to have grandparents. However, sometimes, like mine, they die young or live hundreds of miles away. I am so grateful for the older couples who have portrayed the grandparent to my children when they could not live near their own.

Over 50 percent of all children today have only one parent. They no doubt need that hug and show of affection, a birthday card or note to let them know you are praying for them; a dish of cookies will long be remembered and an influence in their young lives.

4. **THE CHURCH NEEDS YOU.** If God has allowed you to keep your health, there is much you can do in the church. Too many times we think, "Let the younger ones do it." This sounds good in theory, but in practice there is so much in keeping a church operating that everyone is needed. One lady volunteered to keep visitor cards and pencils in the pews. It seemed such a little thing, but to a busy pastor it was one thing he could forget about and get on with other work that always awaits him.

I will always remember Ken, who worked so diligently at the church workdays. He was not as fast as the younger men, but he kept plugging along. Nearing retirement, one man decided to take an early retirement so he could be involved in the stonework on a church-building program. Assistant teachers are needed—child attendants in the nursery. Many churches are using older men to just be present in a class of young children. It gives a calming effect on the class.

5. No matter what your situation, you can be an **ENCOURAGER.** One woman who was converted later in life put together an album of pictures, bulletin covers, and items that were especially meaningful to her during her first year as a new Christian. It was special to her pastor when she presented it as a "thank-you" for his part in her experience. Encouragement is something we all need daily.

6. **GIVING A PART OF OURSELVES** is another way we can help regardless of age. As a pastor's wife I have many items in my house that are special to me because they were given to me by elderly people who wanted to say, "We care; we love you." A crocheted doily, ruby-red vases, a china bowl—all said to me some-

thing special and was a part of a life that exemplified Christ.

7. There is an instrument that is used by all today regardless of handicaps or age—the **TELEPHONE.** I remember when we were pastoring a new church. One of the ladies who was crippled with arthritis and could not do a lot of physical work would call about once a week. Her conversation would go something like this, "Hello, Pat. How are you? I don't want to bother you, but I just wanted you to know that I am thinking of you and praying for you." If I was busy she took no offense when I had to cut the conversation short. If I could take a little time, we would talk. She always had a word of encouragement for me, something the Lord had done for her. To a lonely pastor's wife, she was special.

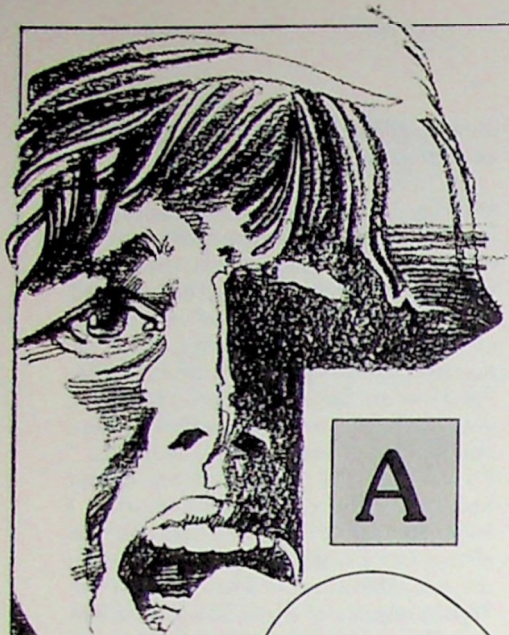
8. **TURN THE TIDE.** Look for the positive side of the situation. If we let negative comments from others go by and turn the conversation to the positive points of a person or a situation, the tide would turn in any church. Too often we add one more negative point and before we realize what is happening everything is negative.

9. **HELP YOUR MINISTER WITH FACTS OF INTEREST.** No minister gets to do all the reading he would like. Many periodicals and newspapers come to his desk with items of interest that would help him in sharing the needs to his congregation, but time is limited. We have a couple of people who, when they read an article of interest to the church, will clip it and hand it to the pastor. Please, do not hand him a whole book or magazine to read. He cannot do it. But a short article he can glance over. It may be of real help in keeping his people informed.

Another lady in our congregation often will call and ask if the pastor has heard that so and so is in the hospital. Often people think the church office should just know when a person goes into the hospital or has a problem! Church leaders need help in this part of the ministry. We can help keep them informed.

I read once that each of the geese that we see flying in a V-shape high in the sky creates a favorable air current for the one behind him much like a truck will do for a smaller vehicle traveling down the highway. The leader of this flock of geese has the hardest job, so the geese divide up the work by taking turns being first. The flock is working as a unit. That is real cooperation.

Regardless of our age, we are all needed. Let's look around, see the need, and work together.



A

Valentine

Surprise

FEBRUARY 14, 1980. It was a Valentine's Day Lou Carlson will never forget. Lou's husband, Donn had gone to work at his restaurant several hours before. At 9:00 a.m., he called home to give her a Valentine surprise: a return trip to Hawaii!

She was overwhelmed. She had everything a woman could want—a loving husband, two wonderful children (Cheri, 14 and Danny, 12), and a nice home in Phoenix, Arizona. But she and her family had lived in Hawaii

for a time, and she had always dreamed of a return visit. Suddenly her world was saturated with excitement and joy.

Another reason for Lou Carlson's joy was the security she felt in her Christian faith. During the past year she had experienced many personal difficulties. But, because of her relationship with Christ and a strong faith in the power of God, the difficulties only served to stimulate her spiritual growth. On that rainy Valentine's Day



—by Shirley

three years ago, she was confident she could handle any situation with God's help.

She had no way of knowing how soon she would desperately need that help.

While Lou was getting ready for work (she helped at the restaurant over the lunch hour), she savored the excitement of Donn's surprise.

When she turned off her hair dryer, she heard her two dogs barking loudly. Looking out the bedroom window, she saw a man standing at the front door. He was wearing a utility company blazer and a hard hat.

Subconsciously, she recalled seeing a gas utility truck parked down the street when she had driven Cheri to high school around 8 o'clock. It had been pouring rain then, but by the time Danny left for school at 8:15, the rain had stopped.

One of the workmen probably needs something, she thought as she hurried to answer the door. Opening it a crack, she asked, "May I help you?"

"Our crew just found a leak in the gas line," he explained. "Could I use your phone to make an emergency call? No one else in your block seems to be home."

Lou's first reaction was, *Oh, no! If he uses my phone, I'm going to be late for work.* It was now 9:10. She was due at the restaurant at 10:30. Suddenly the words of Jesus crossed her mind: "If anyone gives a cup of cold water . . . because he is my disciple . . . he will certainly not lose his reward" (Matt. 10:42, NIV).

After a moment's hesitation, she told the workman to come in and directed him to the phone in the kitchen. He seemed nervous, and said he'd have to notify everyone in the neighborhood about the gas leak. The man even mentioned the possibility of evacuation. "But for now," he said, "I'll find out what headquarters has to say. They'll probably get a crew out here immediately." He appeared to know what he was talking about.

"I can't seem to get through," he said after dialing the first time.

Lou made light conversation, as he

dialed again. "I didn't think we had gas out here," she said. "My husband tried to install a gas barbecue when we first moved in. I thought someone told him gas wasn't available out here."

Again the man had a reasonable explanation. "The gas lines are underground; we haven't piped into them yet. But the gas is there for future use."

Then he blurted, "Now I need to check the panel in your closet."

By this time Lou was getting a little irritated. "We don't have a panel in our closet," she declared, wishing he'd finish his phoning so she could get to work.

"That's just a thermostat on the wall," she explained as he started into the living room. "Is that the panel you mean?"

When she came to, she was looking into the barrel of a gun.

"No," he insisted. "I want to see the one in your closet."

Now Lou was getting defensive. "But we don't have a panel in our closet!" she maintained.

"Well, I just checked your neighbor's panel," the man faltered.

Then something clicked in Lou's mind. At the door he'd said no one on the block seemed to be home. "Which neighbor did you try?" she questioned.

"The one right next door," he answered.

"Our neighbor probably isn't home," she said, "but . . ." She paused, thinking that, if he were home, he would quickly solve the problem of the panel. She started toward the front door. Suddenly the man pulled a gun and held it to her head.

Because of her tremendous fear of guns, Lou became hysterical, screaming at the top of her lungs. "Put that gun down!" she yelled. He didn't move. She continued to scream.

Then the gunman struck her across the face with such force that it banged her head against the wall.

When she came to, she was lying on her back in the hallway looking into the barrel of the gun. Pulling her to her feet, the assailant forced her into the bedroom.

With sudden clarity, Lou realized why the man was here; he was going to rape her! At that moment, she wanted to die, for she saw no way out. She began sobbing uncontrollably.

When the man closed the bedroom door behind them, her terror intensified. *What am I going to do?* she inwardly agonized. She knew she couldn't handle this situation alone.

Instinctively, she lifted her head towards the ceiling, held her hands out in front of her, and through her sobs began praying out loud. "Dear God," she cried, "I am your child. I can't believe this is what you want for my life, but if it is, I accept it. Just give me the strength to go through it."

Then she prayed audibly for the young gunman. "Lord, this man doesn't know what he's doing. I know he doesn't want to be this way. Help him come to his senses. In Jesus' name. Amen."

At that moment, Lou felt a great surge of strength enter her body. Her voice was literally changed, taking on a quality of calmness that seemed impossible even to her. She began to talk to the man in her new steady, quiet voice.

Suddenly she realized he was no longer pointing the gun at her head. He had taken off his hard hat, and dropped the gun to his side. Crossing himself, he explained, "I'm Catholic."

"That's fine," Lou quickly responded.

Then he whispered, "I need help. I want to talk."

With that, Lou began speaking with him in her new, quiet voice. She can't remember everything she said, but she does recall telling him over and over again that he *could* be helped. "Christ is the only answer for you," she declared. "Give him a chance to change your life."

Finally she suggested, "Would you come to our church and talk to one of
(Continued, page 12)

A Valentine Surprise (Continued from page 11)

our counselors? I know you could receive a lot of help."

Amazingly, he consented. "Just write down a name for me," the man faltered.

Together they walked toward the kitchen so Lou could write down the name of her pastor and draw a map. The lines she drew on the paper looked like rick-rack, she was so shaky. But her voice remained calm and steady. She knew only God could give her voice that quiet, serene quality.

"I would really like to pray for you," she said as she handed him the map. "What's your name?"

"John," he replied, as he turned and walked out the front door.

Immediately Lou raced through the house making sure all the doors and windows were locked. Then she called her husband. All she could do when Donn answered was to sob into the phone.

"Lou, are you home?" Donn asked frantically.

"Yes," she stammered. "Man . . . gun . . ."

Donn sped for home right away. The police arrived just moments before he did. As soon as he got out of the car, Lou ran and fell into his arms. It was 10:00 o'clock. Her nightmare was over.

For weeks afterward Lou felt nervous, carrying with her a trace of fear. She was afraid that if she went

out she might see the man again. And the police confirmed through a composite drawing that her assailant was the same man who had recently raped and beaten two other Phoenix women.

Today Lou can speak of her experience with a joy that reflects her renewed faith in God's protective power. The turning point came for her through her daughter, Cheri. "Has this experience left you fearful?" Lou asked her one day.

"No, Mom," she replied, "If anything, it has made me stronger. I know we can have dogs to protect us. We can have guns too, and take every precaution, but, if we don't have God, we have nothing.

"Someday I may be in a situation where I won't have all the protection the world offers," she continued, "but wherever I am, I know I will never be without God's protection."

Knowing her daughter had emerged victoriously from her fearful situation made Lou realize that God could also use her experience to help others.

Now she explains to anyone who will listen, "It was God who intervened that Valentine's Day. He kept my attacker from harming me."

The stranger never did show up at Lou's church, nor did she ever see him again. But she remains confident that God, through Jesus, can change his life if the man will just give him a chance.

That's why every day, the Carlson family says a prayer for a stranger named John.



Donn and Lou Carlson with Cheri and Dann.

The Third and Fourth Grade Class Gives

by Rachel Carr

"Hey, everybody, we did it! We made our goal," Tim announced excitedly to the third and fourth grade class. Everyone started clapping.

"Congratulations, class! You have done a great job," said Mr. Hanson. "What is the final figure, Tim?"

"We have \$10.75. So that means we went 75 cents over our goal of \$60."

For one year the boys and girls in Mr. Hanson's class had been bringing a missionary offering to Sunday School along with their regular offering. They had made banks out of baby food jars and during the week they put in their nickels, dimes, and quarters. On Sunday they brought their money and put it in the missionary bank, which was a small globe of the world. When \$10 was collected, Mr. Hanson sent it to a missionary. Let's listen in on the class again and see what we can find out about some of their projects.

"I remember the time we sent our money to the clinic in India," said Mary Jane. "Dr. and Mrs. Hoskins wrote and told us they had been needing some extra money for special medicine."

"Yes, and they got our money at just the right time to help that little boy. What was his name?" asked Jim.

"Rajan. I think he was just about our age, too," said Beth.

"That reminds me of the Bible Clubs in England," said Tim. "The Thompsons were really glad to get our money so they could buy Bible story papers to give to the kids."

Jon spoke up. "I have an idea. Maybe we could write to some of the kids in those Bible Clubs in London."

"Hey, that sounds good."

"I've never had a pen pal in another country. That would be fun."

"Did anyone hear if the Martins in Ghana, West Africa, got the money we sent for Bibles?" asked Steve.

Children

and Fourth Grade to Missions

"I'm glad you asked that," said Mr. Hanson. "Just this morning our pastor handed me a letter addressed to our class. Let me read it to you.

"Dear Boys and Girls,

"Thank you so much for the money you sent us for Bibles. We were able to buy five New Testaments and 100 copies of colorful Bible pamphlets for children.

"You should have seen us when we traveled to the village of Jasikan last week. As soon as we drove up in our jeep, the boys and girls came running out of their houses and gathered around us. They knew we always bring Bible literature and they all wanted some. Thanks to you, we had enough for everyone.

"We are glad that you are interested in missionary work and that you are giving your money to help us and others. Perhaps some of you can be missionaries someday.

"Your friends,
"Mr. and Mrs. Martin."

"Now, we need to decide where this \$10 is going. Does anyone have any ideas?" asked Mr. Hanson.

"How about the Richards family in Mexico?" suggested Jon. "I know we've helped them before, but they are special because they are from our very own church."

"I've been writing to Billie Richards and they really do need some things for the orphanage," said Tim.

"What do they need?" asked Beth.

"Well, for one thing, they need another cow. They have gotten 10 new kids at the orphanage since Christmas and they need more milk."

"\$10 wouldn't buy a very big cow."

"It might buy one leg."

Everyone laughed.

"You know," said Mr. Hanson, "sometimes we may think our \$10 offering isn't much. But when six or eight classes



Wonder and Missions Play into the heart of children.

like ours give \$10, it counts up fast. And we know the missionaries are glad for each gift they receive."

"I'll bet they will need more clothes, too, and dishes and blankets if they have 10 new boys and girls," said Mary Jane.

Jim spoke up. "Why don't we just send the money and tell the Richards to use it for whatever they need?"

"That sounds like a good idea."

"Hey, I've got some news," announced Steve. "It's not definite or anything, but we might go down to visit the Richards in Mexico."

"Wow, that would be neat!"

"You're really lucky."

"When are you going?"

"Well, like I said, it's not definite yet. But Mom and Dad did ask Jan and me

if we'd like to go. Of course, we said yes. I'll keep you posted."

"That would be great, Steve," said Mr. Hanson. "You'd be able to see first-hand what it's like to be a missionary. And you could meet the boys and girls in the orphanage."

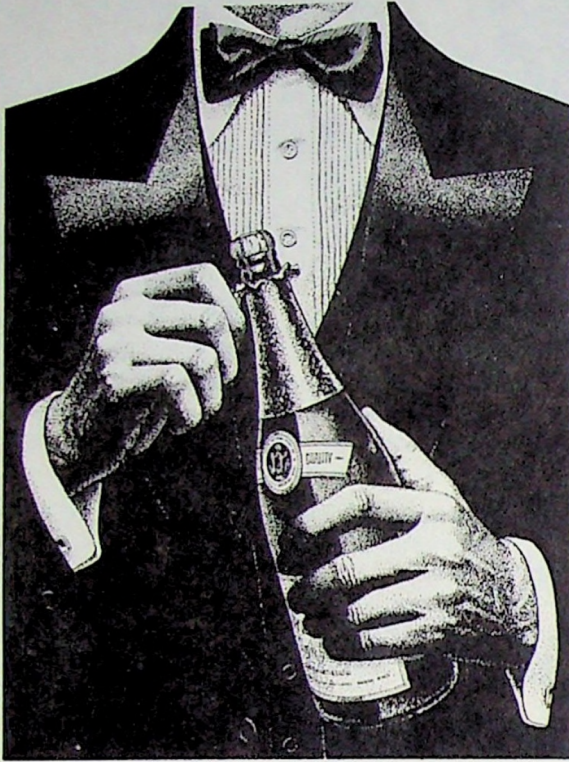
We'll leave the class for now. Perhaps this story has given you an idea for your own Sunday School class. If you are interested in giving a missionary offering, talk to your teacher about it. You can get ideas for missionary projects by writing to the **General Conference, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.**

Later we will tell you about Steve and Jan's trip to Mexico. Be watching for it on this page.

Mexican Missionaries Roberto and Lupe Badillo.



Searching Bible Questions



Temptation comes in many forms.

Question

Please explain the meaning of the petition, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matt. 6:13).

Answer

It is contrary to reason to suppose that a good God would lead his children into temptation. James declares, "God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man" (Jas 1:13). There then must be a suitable explanation as to why Jesus included this petition in his teaching.

The word "temptation" has at least two meanings. It usually is used to

mean trials or griefs which try a believer's faith. At times it is used to convey allurements of evil. We note also that the word "lead" is more accurately translated "bring."

God in his providence brings situations about which cause a Christian's principles and character to be tested. God does not directly lure man to sin as men do, but in his dealings he exposes us to circumstances in which we may be tempted to evil. Whenever we withstand temptation, we are not only strengthened, but proven. Consider the illustrations of Abraham and Job (Gen. 22:1; Job 1:6).

When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil,"

we indicate our weakness. We are requesting that God not *bring* us into situations where our faith will be tried. Aware of Satan's power we don't trust ourselves.

This type of petition must be considered in the same way as a prayer for health, protection, or other personal blessings. It is true we request these things from our heavenly Father but we do so in the realization that he may permit illness, accident, or other misfortune to enter our lives. Nevertheless, whatever comes, we are confident that if he permits such trials, he will also furnish a way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13). Furthermore, we can rejoice as we learn patience (Jas. 1:3).

On three occasions, the Apostle Paul requested that the Lord remove a thorn in his flesh, which he called "a messenger to buffet me." The Lord's answer to Paul's prayer was, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9).

Paul would have chosen to be free from trials and temptations because he had no confidence in his own strength (2 Cor. 12:9b). He was given assurance that the Lord would meet his needs.

Question

What will our physical condition be in the kingdom? (a) Will we have

By Pastor

From YOU

blood? (b) Will the graves be opened when Christ comes or will the decomposed persons be formed without disturbing the graves?

Answer

Those in Christ will have the same physical condition in the kingdom as Jesus had after his resurrection from the dead. Luke records that Jesus was seen on earth for 40 days after his resurrection. There are no less than 11 recorded appearances prior to, and at least six after, his ascension. These appearances proved Jesus had been raised and a TRANSFORMATION had taken place. Paul, writing about this change, declared "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. 15: 42-44). In the kingdom we will have incorruptible, glorified, spiritual bodies.

Jesus' resurrected body was material in composition, though spiritual. Jesus had hands and feet. He was identifiable by the print of the nails. His side, where the spear was thrust, gave further credence to the truth it was he. Though Jesus had flesh and bones, it is speculative to say whether we will or will not have blood in the kingdom. Our mortal (natural) bodies require blood for "blood is the life of all flesh"

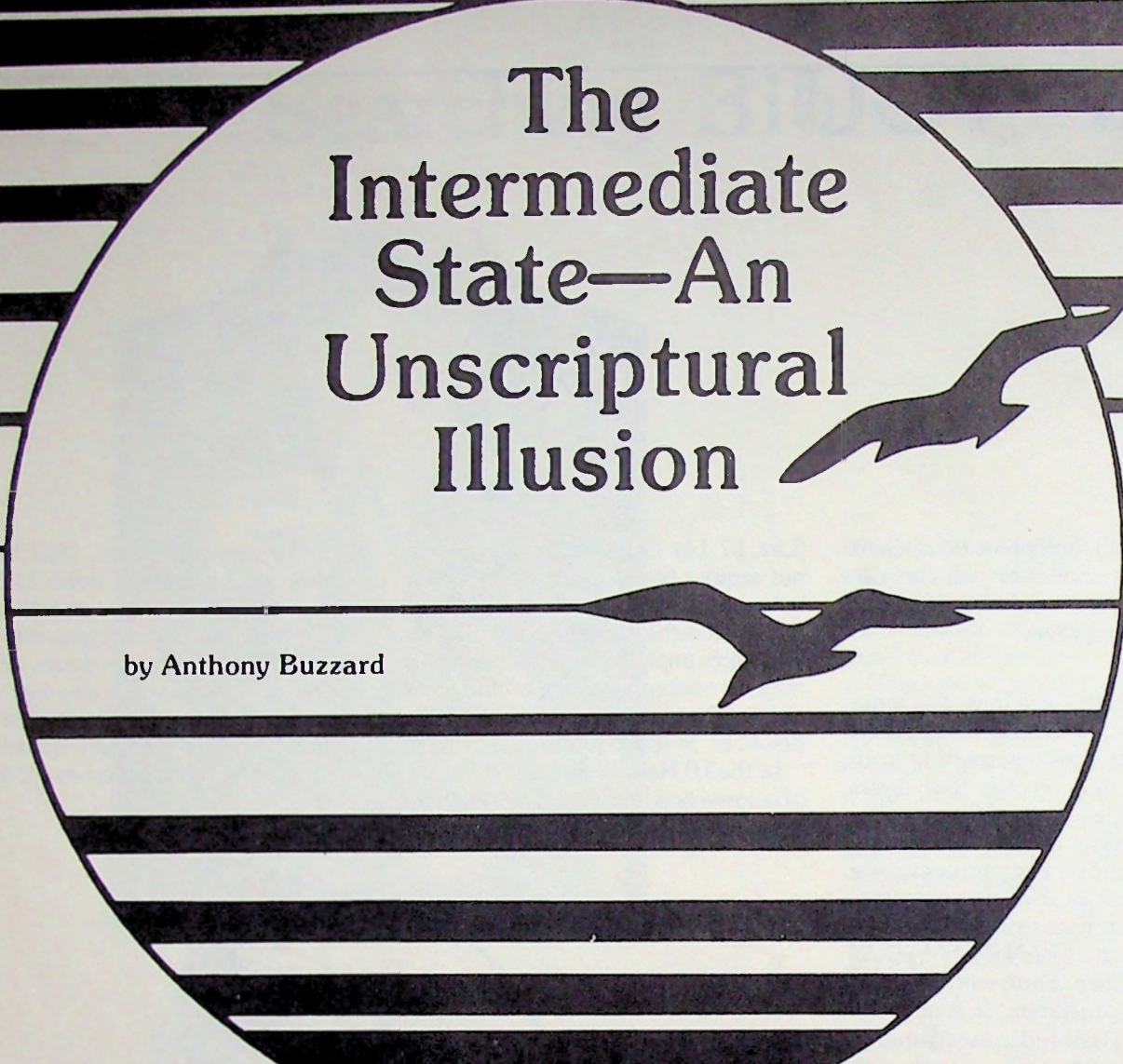
(Lev. 17:14). Our spiritual bodies will not require blood to have life. There is, however, indication that we will eat and drink in the kingdom (Luke 22:16). This might imply the digestive processes may be continued. If so, a fluid such as blood would be necessary. This, however, is speculation on our part.

In the 10 New Testament accounts of resurrection, including Christ's, there is evidence that graves were opened

and gravestones moved. (See Matt. 27:52, 53; Luke 24:2; John 11:38-41). However, whether resurrected bodies will pass through gravestones as Jesus passed through doors, or the graves will be opened, is also speculation. The Bible does not give us clearcut answers to these questions and only the resurrection event itself will.



Will flesh-and-blood activities occupy our time in the Kingdom?



The Intermediate State—An Unscriptural Illusion

by Anthony Buzzard

THE BUSINESS OF TRYING to read the popular system into the New Testament writings involves some very unfair handling of the two or three passages which stand the best chance of being accommodated to the traditional belief. For at all costs our belief must be backed by chapter and verse! To admit that this cannot be done within the laws of sound exegesis places us in the embarrassing position of having to concede that what we have been believing is not Christian. Faced with this dilemma, scholars of the "demythologising" school claim that one eschatological system is as good as another. All are "myths," and

Part II

whether they are found inside or outside the New Testament, they offer no divinely authoritative statement about what actually happens to us after death. However, for those who are convinced that Paul's view owes its origin (as he himself claims) to the Spirit of Jesus, such an escape into agnosticism is not satisfactory at all; and at that point we are left with no recourse but to abandon the traditional view in favor of the original teaching preserved in the New Testament. Church history shows that there has been an earnest minority of many denominational persuasions who have taken this course, while the mainstream has persisted with its traditions. The challenge to choose the Apostolic faith over the later traditions faces each individual believer.

Justification for the almost universally held opinion that Christianity teaches that the dead are conscious with God at the moment of death is commonly based on Philippians 1:23. Paul here finds himself torn between a desire to remain with the believers and his longing "to depart and be with the Lord." Corroboration of this is sought in Second Corinthians 5. Paul there expresses the wish to be "absent from the body and present with the Lord" (v. 8). Isolated from their immediate context and from the wider context of both Old and New Testaments as a whole, no doubt these verses can be made to bolster the popular view. A closer look will show on what shaky ground the whole attempt rests. Firstly it is undeniable, as we have seen, that the New Testament everywhere strains toward the Second Coming of Christ and the resurrection of the faithful, which is consistently placed at that Great Day, as the collective resurrection of all the saints. Paul has a precise and simple system of resurrection: "In Christ shall all be made alive . . . Those who belong to Christ *at his coming*" (1 Cor. 15:22, 23). In First Thessalonians 4, he offers comfort to the believers in connection with those Christians who are said to be "sleeping"—an extraordinary term to use if he thought that they were already fully conscious in bliss with the Lord! There is no need for the surviving Christians to grieve, because all will be reunited at the future resurrection. In a similar situation today, the church would presumably be consoled with claims that the dead were already alive with God. The fact that Paul says nothing like this only goes to show the gulf between the two systems. For the contemporary church-goer the future resurrection can at best be only an after-thought, all that is really decisive having, as he thinks, already taken place at death.

What, then, of Paul's statement in Philippians 1:23 about departing to be with Christ? If this single verse is read without reference to First Corinthians 15, First Thessalonians 4, and his subsequent remarks *in the same letter* (Phil. 3:11-21), it would be possible to gain the impression that Paul expected to be with Christ immediately at death. But this would be to contradict his whole thinking, as we find it explained, much more fully, in the other passages. What Paul was really aiming for is fortunately clarified later in the same epistle: ". . . If by any means I might attain to the resurrection . . . We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus

Christ [from heaven], who shall change our vile body so that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:11, 20). It is beyond question that he here knows of no goal other than the attainment of resurrection at the return of Christ. It would therefore be quite unfair to read his remarks about departing to be with Christ as relating to a quite different aspiration, one *not* involving resurrection, and thus quite distinct from his desire for the last day. The popular belief implies that a Christian can be alive with Christ, *apart from* resurrection. This will mean that death is not really death in any real sense, but the continuation of life in another realm. At that point resurrection *from the dead* becomes meaningless! Paul must therefore imply a departure to be with Christ through death and subsequent resurrection. The exact sequence of time is not detailed in this single verse; it must be supplied from the full account he gives elsewhere.

If we now consider his statement about being "absent from the body and present with the Lord," we shall find that it, too, is set in a context which because of its striking similarity to First Corinthians 15 (written only a year earlier) must refer also to future resurrection, not to any imagined intermediate state following immediately upon death. This can be seen clearly from the general statement with which Paul prefaces his account of the Christian hope of attaining a "spiritual body": ". . . We believe, therefore we speak; knowing that he who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up through Jesus and present us with you . . . Therefore we faint not" (2 Cor. 4:14, 16). These remarks should warn us not to try to read into Paul's following account ideas about a future state divorced from resurrection. There are three clear points of contact between Second Corinthians 5 and First Corinthians 15; and when these are noted it will be quite impossible to maintain that Paul is dealing with two *different* "termini." The first feature common to both passages is the notion of being "clothed with immortality." "For indeed we groan in this tabernacle, longing to be *clothed* with our dwelling which comes to us from heaven . . . We do not wish to be unclothed [i.e., disembodied], but to be *clothed*, so that mortality may be swallowed up in life" (2 Cor. 5:2, 4). We have exactly the same point being made in First Corinthians 15: "For it behoves this corruptible to be *clothed with immortality* . . . then shall come to pass the word that has been written: 'Death was swallowed up in victory'" (1 Cor. 15:54).

Secondly, common to both passages is the appearance of the Lord, or salvation from (*not in!*) heaven:

2 Corinthians 5:2: "We are longing to be clothed with our dwelling which is *from heaven*."

1 Corinthians 15:47: "The second man, Christ, is the Lord [arriving] *from heaven*."

1 Cor. 15:23: "Those belonging to Christ [will be resurrected] *at his coming*."

Thirdly, the idea of mortality being superseded by immortality:

2 Cor. 5:4: "We wish to be clothed, so that mortality may be *swallowed up* by life."

(Please turn to page 18)

(Continued from page 17)

1 Cor. 15:54: "When this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the word that has been written: 'Death was *swallowed up* in victory.'"

These points of contact surely rule out any possibility that Paul has two entirely different events in mind, not least in view of the fact that he is writing to the same people, and within a short space of time. To take Second Corinthians 5 as referring to the moment of death, to mean that each individual receives immortality independently at death is, as J.A.T. Robinson says, to read the passage "in clear opposition to 1 Corinthians 15" (*In the End God*, p. 106). The time has surely come to stop making Paul contradict himself, and to acknowledge the remarkable consistency which extends to all his writings on this central matter of life after death.

We may demonstrate this more fully by collating five relevant passages in a composite version. It will be quite clear that Paul looked for a single goal, that of the resurrection of all the faithful at the coming of Christ. That moment alone is decisive for all the New Testament writers. Paul may be allowed to speak for himself as follows (italics call attention to the unity of his thinking). The fundamental tenet of Paul's hope for the future is stated in Second Corinthians 4:13ff.

"And having the same spirit of faith, as it is written, 'I believed, therefore I spoke'; we also believe and we also therefore speak, knowing that he who resurrected the Lord Jesus will *resurrect us* also and present us with you. Therefore we do not faint . . . We do not consider the visible things but those not visible. For the visible things are temporary, but the invisible pertain to the coming age.¹ We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle is destroyed, we have a house not made with hands, fit for the [coming] age, in the heavens. For indeed we *groan* in this tabernacle, longing to be clothed with our dwelling which comes to us *from heaven*—We are awaiting the Saviour, the *Lord Jesus Christ from heaven* (Phil. 3:20)—The Second Man is the *Lord from heaven* (1 Cor. 15:47)—We *groan* in ourselves, awaiting the redemption of our body . . . The sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory about to be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creation awaits the *revelation* of the sons of God (Rom. 8:18, 19, 23)—If we suffer together, we shall also be glorified together (Rom. 8:17)—When Christ our life is *manifested*, then you also shall be manifested with him in glory (Col. 3:4)—If indeed we shall not be found naked . . . We do not wish to be unclothed, but to be *clothed* so that *mortality may be swallowed up in life* (2 Cor. 5:4)—We shall not all fall asleep, but we shall all be changed, in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15:51)—In Christ shall all be made alive . . . those that are Christ's at his coming (1 Cor. 15:23)—The trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. For it behoves this corruptible to be *clothed with incorruptibility* . . . *then shall come to pass the saying: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory'* (1 Cor. 15:52-54)—Being always confident therefore, and knowing that being at home in the

body we are absent from the Lord . . . We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and *present with the Lord* (2 Cor. 5:6-8)—to die together and to live together (2 Cor. 7:3)—For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout of command, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who remain until the coming of the Lord shall be caught away together in the clouds to meet the Lord; thus shall we always be *with the Lord* (1 Thes. 4:16, 17)—I have a desire to depart and be *with Christ* (Phil. 1:23)—If by any means I may arrive at the *resurrection of the dead* (Phil. 3:11).

The restoration of the biblical scheme will resolve the unwarranted tensions which have been created by our efforts to superimpose the traditional belief upon Scripture. Firstly, resurrection will mean a real transition of dead people from death to life, and that great future event will regain its central position in Christian thinking. Secondly, the individual will be conceived of as an indivisible unity, not as a soul deprived of its body at death. In this way the poison of Greek ideas may be purged from the contemporary Christian outlook. Thirdly, the intensity of the enthusiasm for the return of Christ, shared by all the New Testament writers, will be restored. The traditional emphasis on the moment of death, which is of little consequence to the New Testament writers, has most successfully dissipated that intensity of expectation, so that the Christian view of the future is all but unknown in church circles. Finally, there will be no need to bend isolated verses of the New Testament to make them conform to a nonbiblical tradition.

If it be granted that the simple scheme of "sleep" followed by "awakening" in resurrection, as described above, most satisfactorily accounts for the biblical data (as well as being amply supported by the evidence of early church history), it is fair to ask why Philippians 1:23, taken alone, appears to lend some support to the notion of an immediate presence with Christ. The problem is easily solved, if it is understood that for those who fall asleep in death, the passage of time is of no consequence whatever. The believer who wakes in the resurrection will have had no sense of the interval between death and the resurrection.² But this is very different from saying that no time actually elapses between death and the resurrection. The New Testament is everywhere committed to the belief that eschatological events are firmly rooted in future history, and that time will continue until (and after) the return of Christ and the resurrection of the faithful. The current tendency to remove all the great events of Christianity from the sphere of real history is playing havoc with the original faith of the Apostles. There is therefore all the more reason to guard the simple eschatological teachings of the New Testament against all attack.

¹ See companion paper: *The Life of the Coming Age*.

² Cf. F.F. Bruce (*Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, p. 312, n. 40): "The tension created by the postulated interval between death and resurrection might be relieved today if it were suggested that in the consciousness of the departed believer there is no interval between dissolution and investiture, however long an interval might be measured by the calendar of earth-bound history."



Lifting the Fog Surrounding Life and Death

THE AUTHOR of this new book, a teacher at Berkshire Christian College, is an Advent Christian. As such, he holds in common with most of our readers the doctrines of conditional immortality and the sleep of the dead. He has prepared this work while teaching a course on eschatology for college seniors. His intention, besides providing study material for that course, is "to help pastors and other teachers in Advent Christian churches to understand clearly Advent Christian convictions concerning the intermediate and final states of individuals." He hopes that others outside his denomination will also read it, and has therefore taken a "frankly apologetic" approach. Dr. Barton feels that his book will fill a need, in that most of the older detailed works on this subject have been long out of print.

Unfortunately, the author begins his work with the belief that "neither the intermediate state of man nor the precise delineation of his future condition are among the fundamentals of the faith" (pp. 11, 30). Such a view is far removed from that of the stalwart champions of conditionalism whom he names and from that of our own forefathers in the Abrahamic Faith. The so-called "fundamentals of the faith" are filled with incomprehensible confusion if they do

Heaven, Hell, and Hades

by Freeman Barton

not include a solid appreciation of the true nature of man as a mortal creature whose only exit from death is resurrection and whose eternal destiny is either immortal life in the kingdom of God or absolute destruction and final oblivion in the second death. This reviewer strongly believes that the Bible doctrine of the state of man in death and after the resurrection is an essential component of the "fundamentals of the faith." Without this doctrine, the gospel loses its meaning.

The opening chapter is devoted to the unity of man, with an excellent discussion of the biblical data showing that man is viewed in Scripture as a complete person operating as a unit. The argument is flawed, however, by the author's unwillingness to give up the "orthodox" view that there is somehow an "immaterial part" to man. He confesses his belief that "God himself became incarnate as a man" (p. 15), leading this reviewer to suspect that such trinitarianism forces him to deny the full implications of the fact that man is a material creature, made of dust, and animated by the impersonal breath of life lent him by his Creator (Gen. 2:7). It is impossible to hold that Jesus Christ was "very God of very God" and at the same time believe that he shared the material and completely mortal nature of man. Trinitarians do not make consistent conditionalists.

Chapters two and three deal with the so-called "intermediate state," the popular view of which has well been called "an unscriptural illusion" by Anthony Buzzard. The term is meant to describe man's condition between death and resurrection. Traditional views picture this as a conscious state in bliss or in misery. Dr. Barton does a thorough job of presenting Scriptural and his-

torical evidence for the unconscious sleep of the dead. The Old Testament texts concerning *Sheol* and the New Testament ones dealing with *Hades* are discussed in a fair and balanced manner, together with such controversial passages as the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), Christ's promise to the thief on the cross (Luke 23:43), and Paul's expression, "absent from the body . . . present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). Dr. Barton concludes that "the attitude of New Testament believers is one of intense expectation. . . . The living are to push on with the work; the dead rest."

The last chapter is entitled, "The Final State." The three classic views of eternal destiny are outlined: universalism, with its claim that all human beings will ultimately be restored to life and fellowship with their Creator; the "orthodox view," that since all men are by nature immortal, "believers in Christ will live forever with him and unbelievers will live forever apart from him in conscious torment"; and the conditionalist view, that man is by nature wholly mortal, and the promise of immortality—living forever—is made only to those who fulfill God's conditions of gospel obedience and faithfulness.

The Bible's statements are shown to establish that immortality is promised only to the righteous and that eternal death is reserved for the unrighteous. The author studies the definitions of these terms not only from etymology but also from their usage in context. He concludes that the evidence is clear that they do not allow either the universalist doctrine or the traditional orthodox view of eternal conscious torment. To deal fairly with this evidence, he shows, is to be led to the conviction that conditional immortality is the teaching of Scripture.

The reviewer finds much to commend in this scholarly work. He also finds weaknesses that seem to arise from concessions to the trinitarian and traditional orthodox viewpoints. Presumably this could make it easier for orthodox theologians to give the book an unprejudiced hearing. But the result is an unfortunate inconsistency in regard to the truth as a whole.

Book Review
by
William M. Wachtel



Russell
Magaw

Editor's Viewpoint

Miss National Teen-Ager

Take a peek into the home life of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Wendroth of Richmond, Minnesota, and you will find them excited about what's happening with their teenage daughter, Debbie. She's been accepted as a finalist in the 12th Annual Miss Minnesota National Teen-Ager Pageant which will take place in St. Paul June 17-19, 1983. The titlist will participate in the Miss National Teen-Ager Pageant in August, 1983.

We commend Debbie and her parents as they participate in the quest for Miss National Teen-Ager. Debbie and her family are members of Eden Valley Church of God in Eden Valley, Minnesota. May God enrich this family with special spiritual attitudes as they work through the competition.

Debbie has authored an excellent fiction article for *Challenge* magazine which won first prize in the 1982 Creative Arts Contest sponsored by the Church of God Berean Youth Conference. Her article, "Just This Once?" was published in the March/April, 1982, issue of *Challenge*.

Is America at the Crossroads?

David Jeremiah thinks so. Pastor of prestigious Scott

Memorial Baptist Church in El Cajon, California, and chairman of the board at Christian Heritage College in the same city, Jeremiah, in his book *Before It's Too Late*, discusses 11 crucial questions which reveal 10 crises facing America. He sees the two hallowed institutions of the American home and the American nation as on the verge of extinction unless solutions are found immediately.

In his paperback, published by Thomas Nelson in November, 1982, at \$4.95, Jeremiah chronicles problems ranging from homosexuality and pornography to feminism and the family. Using a plethora of sources common in evangelical circles, Jeremiah strings out his evidence and adds his observations.

Jeremiah does include an antidote to give the reader hope. In his last chapter of 11 pages the author prescribes four pills to cure our ills. Here they are: 1. Americans must become spiritual, following the example of Josiah in doing right in God's sight (2 Kings 22:2). 2. Christians must have a spiritual hunger for revival. 3. Preachers must preach the spiritual message of the Bible. 4. The people must become spiritual if their land is to be healed (2 Chron. 7:14).

Jeremiah wears well with a well-worn and popular theme, but he offers time-worn solutions.

Distinctive Biblical Issues

Four articles in this issue will be used in *Distinctive Biblical Issues*, an adult elective published by the Church of God General Conference. "The Intermediate State—An Unscriptural Illusion, Part II" by Anthony Buzzard, "The Priority of Love, Part II" by Pastor Donald Needham, "Never Too Old" by Patricia Wood, and "Good News Is for Giving" by Pastor Richard Eldred will be incorporated in the curriculum. Pastor Gary Burnham writes the discussion guide and leader's guide for each lesson.

Distinctive Biblical Issues is used by 33 Church of God churches. Pastor Cecil Rademachir of the Dixon, Illinois, church writes: "Here at Dixon we have seen our Sunday evening attendance jump by 40 percent since we began to use *Distinctive Biblical Issues*. But the biggest and most exciting growth has taken place in the individual members of the group. As we have been forced to meet vital issues head-on, the group has grown in awareness and there has been a lot of 'mind-stretching' going on. I have very much appreciated the relevant topics in *THE RESTITUTION HERALD*, the excellent work on DBI, and Gary's work on the guides."

Themes in 1983

Special subjects will be treated in our pages this year. Here's a partial list:

- The Forgotten Jewish Holocaust
- Arms Buildup or Nuclear Freeze?
- Disciples in the Secular Community
- Word Dearth and Moral Decay
- School Prayer and the Supreme Court
- World Currency Crisis in Perspective
- Moral Majority Morality

I hope these relevant topics will give you guidance as you consider them personally in 1983.

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Vol. 72, No. 5

The Restitution Herald

March
1983

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YOU

The Trees Are Fun—

by
Sharon
Magaw

*(This story was written by Sharon
while she was in school.)*



But Not Today

One day when I was playing house in my favorite tree I felt the wind blowing really hard. My hair was blowing in my face. I didn't like that at all.

Pretty soon I looked up in the sky and it turned pink.

All over the sky I saw pink. There was pink above the tree. There was pink over my house. There was pink over my swingset. I looked down the road that we live on and there was pink all over—just like God had colored the sky pink instead of blue.

The wind got stronger and pushed my Teddy off of the tree. My dollies and Teddy were scared stiff, but I wasn't scared at all. I was the mommy and mommies don't get scared. Teddy and the dollies could be scared though, because they are only babies.

The wind got even stronger and a big cloud was twisting around in the sky on the other street far away. I held on tight to the tree. The whole world looked so different. The houses were falling down and falling up. The funny

cloud threw everything around. The cloud was getting closer to me. I saw my friends screaming at me, but they didn't say anything.

I was sitting on a rock by a fence. I hurt all over and I started to cry. I didn't know where I was, and everything looked like a picture Daddy took when he was in the war. My knee hurt really badly and it was bleeding.

Then I saw my friend—and everything was all right.

*"Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.
You are my friends . . ." (the words of Jesus, John 15:13, 14a, RSV).*

Editor's Viewpoint

In Remembrance of Harold Doan

The combined staff of the Church of God General Conference and Oregon Bible College was saddened to hear of the death of Harold Doan earlier this year. He left many memories of his wonderful work for the Lord as a staff member of both institutions.

Brother Doan was appointed editor of THE RESTITUTION HERALD from June 1, 1955 to 1968. He was the sixth editor to serve the magazine since 1911. He established a progressive editorial philosophy which benefited readers during his 13-year tenure.

Just 45 days after accepting his position, Editor Doan spelled out a five-point program of cooperation which would ensure the success of the magazine. Two of his recommendations still hold true today and are reprinted for your action.

"1. We urge each church to adopt the policy of supplying THE HERALD for each church and Sunday school family. Let us help you win the family to the Lord!

"2. We urge each member to be a reader of THE HERALD and to send gift subscriptions of THE HERALD for anniversary occasions. This is not only a thoughtful but a helpful gift that may help in leading some loved one to Christ." (THE RESTITUTION HERALD, July 26, 1955, page 10.)

If you would like to take advantage of the two suggestions made by Bro. Doan, please use the enclosed envelope in this issue. You and I both feel THE HERALD still meets our spiritual needs. No doubt you know of others who could feel the same way once they were made aware of its message. I urge you today to send in at least one gift subscription.

The Winds of War

During mid-February Herman Wouk's epoch novel set in World War Two appeared as a seven-serial miniseries on television. *The Winds of War* recounted, among other things, Nazi atrocities committed against Jewish people. It served to remind another generation of the evils perpetrated against God's people. Perhaps it will also set in perspective the current Israeli struggle against the PLO in southern Lebanon.

On page 4 of this HERALD issue, Hazel Stein takes you on a visit to several scenes of the Jewish Holocaust to see if they are remembered today. Her observations and conclusions will challenge you into action.

Send in the Survey

Your response to the survey form on page 18 of this issue is needed. A postage-paid envelope is included for this purpose.

We must know what you are interested in reading. Please fill out the survey, tear it from the magazine, and send it in today. We will tabulate the results and determine the best course for THE RESTITUTION HERALD to follow in the future as a result of your answers.

Planned Parenthood

What possibilities exist for your church to plan and plant a daughter church nearby? How many people live some 20 miles away from the location of your church who will never hear the gospel of the kingdom because they are outside of the sphere of your influence? How can you build a bridge of witness to them so the lost can be found?

If these questions challenge your thinking, there is something you can do to work out acceptable answers. Ask your missionary chairman to accept you as a member of the church missions committee. Assist him in the study of the possibilities available to your church. Help the church become aware of its responsibility to plant a daughter church. Begin training workers to be used in the area of the new work. Make a "feasibility study" of the area to discover the prospects of presenting the gospel. Help canvass the area to uncover several homes where Bible study groups can be established. Allow for leadership to surface from these study groups. Gradually they will come together into a corporate body, recognizing the need to start a mission fellowship. Soon they will determine a location for the fellowship, using the data from your feasibility study. Eventually they will commit themselves to constitute the new church. Then a building campaign and regular services will be started.

Sound hopeful for your church? Want to get involved in planning a daughter church? Write to the Outreach and Church Development Department of the Church of God General Conference for more details. Director Warren Sorenson will be glad to supply you with more information. The address: Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

May God raise up many Church of God congregations for the purpose of planned parenthood.

The Restitution Herald

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THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a nonprofit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed monthly except January and August.

The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16), the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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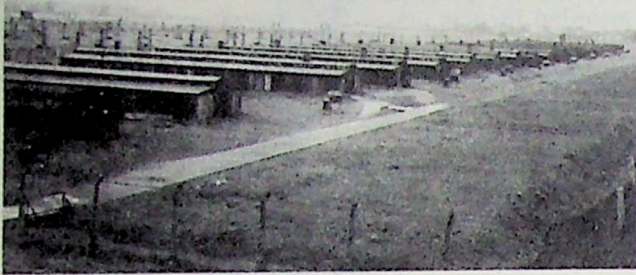
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CREDITS: Cover by Dynamics Graphics, Russell Magaw, page 2; Hazel Stein, pages 4-7; Oregon Bible College, page 8.

THE HOLOCAUST HEL



Birkenau—Men's Camp from sentry gate tower.

ALMOST 40 YEARS after the collapse of the Third Reich in Germany, a traveler in Europe may ask if the Holocaust atrocity sites are still sacred memorial places where Jews are remembered. Using the doggeral funeral verse, we may ask if six million people are "gone but not forgotten"?

Buildings are easily memorialized with a plaque or inscription. In Poppelsdorf, a Bonn suburb, a simple rock stands at the corner of Bennauerstrasse and Jagdweg. The inscription reads, "On this place stood the Poppelsdorf Synagogue. It was built in 1902 and destroyed by National Socialist violence against our Jewish fellow citizens on the ninth of November, 1938." But mere inscriptions do not revive the memory of *people*; a sensitivity to their sufferings and death does.

No Jewish Heroes in Russia

In Russia the Soviet hero replaces the Holocaust Russian Jew as a World War II martyr. An Intourist schedule may not include a visit to Babi Yar, a ravine on the outskirts of Kiev, where Jews were martyred under the machine guns of Nazis in the Soviet Union. Babi Yar, with its monument rising out of the ravine, is now inside the Kiev city limits and accessible by city bus. Since our Intourist guide did not plan to take us to Babi Yar, we had the adventure of going on our own.

As we stumbled through the procedures of taking trolley-bus #16 from downtown Kreshchatik Street, a young Russian woman assisted our search by getting off the bus and personally conducting us to the monument. Such a self-appointed guide is a welcome relief from the propaganda-pushing Intourist guides. Our new friend, who spoke only Russian, indicated by writing in the sand with her forefinger that 12,000 were killed here, many women and children. In her Soviet mind, the victims were Russians, not Jews.

This episode squared with historical information concerning Russian ultranationalism and its attempts to suppress the Jewish martyrdom of 100,000, and with the belated erection of a monument in the late '60's only after the world would no longer erase the carnage

at Babi Yar. No condemnatory evidence remains to remind us of Ukrainian cooperation with SS Sonderkommando units.

The Babi Yar slaughter of Jews is now reinterpreted. The popular guide book to Kiev sold in hotels (H. Levitsky, *Kiev: A Short Guide*, Mistetstvo, 1980) tells visitors that "the Nazi invaders mercilessly exterminated members of the Soviet underground and partisans, captured Soviet soldiers and officers, as well as thousands of civilians, among them many children, women, and old people" (p. 111). Jewish victims are no longer remembered.

The inscription on the Babi Yar monument acknowledges 100,000 citizens of Kiev and prisoners of war. No mention is made of the Jews who stood peering into the ravine until machine guns, aimed at their backs, would fire and their bodies would tumble into the ravine.

Today a new highway crosses the area surrounding the Babi Yar monument and spans what the imagination can see as former open ravines. There was once talk of building a sports stadium in this area.

Only a teen-ager walking down Kreshchatik Avenue with us said he knew who was really buried at Babi Yar. He knew, but he would not articulate the answer. He was more interested in discussing popular American novels and informing us that if he were caught reading certain American authors, he would pay for it with a penalty of five years' imprisonment.

Kiev does not lack for World War II memorials. The heroes are the Soviet soldiers; the villains are the Nazis. At the Park of Eternal Glory young girls take turns marching in an honor guard. With precise arm movements and goose steps, they march past the graves of the dead. This is an act of patriotism centering upon the Soviet unknown soldier.

Soviet defenders of Kiev are the heroes at Goloseyevsky Park, at the Mound of Immortality, and at the Darnitsa Woods Memorial Complex. Soviet soldiers and civilians are memorialized; Jews are not. Defense of the fatherland by valiant Soviets is the theme at the General Vatutin monument, at the monument for tank crews who liberated Kiev, at the Obelisk of Glory, and at the monument to football players of the Kiev Dynamo team. Keeping World War II alive for Soviet nationalism serves its propaganda purpose.

LS: JEWS FORGOTTEN?

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More recently, Soviet soldiers who, according to Russian propaganda, entered Afghanistan to restore law and order on the Soviet borders, are also heroes of nationalism.

Ironic Polish Memorials

In Lvov, formerly in Poland but now inside Russia, the information about the Janowska Road Concentration Camp was scarce. "Yes," said the Intourist guide, "there was a camp there, but it is not worth while to take a look." Only a Jewish cemetery remained. In Lvov, there was a general reluctance on the part of the Soviet officials to acknowledge Polish history and roots—so much so that when we asked to see the Radziwell Palace, in spite of bad timing, we were told we would arrive there just in time to "kiss the lock."

In Poland, the history of Auschwitz Concentration Camp cannot be rubbed out easily. However, the Poles try to relieve the blight by referring to the city as Oswiecim, not Auschwitz. Oswiecim preexisted the Nazis. It was the residence of the Piast dynasty in the twelfth century. During the fifteenth century it was destroyed by the Swedish invasion. Austrian military barracks were built in the Zasole district of Oswiecim. The barracks consisted of a block of over 10 buildings, some wooden and some brick. The vegetable storehouse used by the Polish army until September 1939 was to become Crematorium I after the camp was appropriated by the German Wehrmacht. Then came the Holocaust episode at Auschwitz Concentration Camp. And now, Oswiecim, a town of 50,000 inhabitants, is a center for the chemical industry. In the distance, 37 kilometers away, tourists can look toward Kadowice, birthplace of the pope. Today, Poles would like travelers to know the whole history of Auschwitz or Oswiecim, not merely the bad chapter.

Nevertheless, Oswiecim is bitterly remembered by some for its concentration camp and for its choice, by the Nazis, for extermination of Jews and lesser peoples. Today the tourist is guided through a museum with key exhibits such as piles of shoes, suitcases, eyeglasses, and human hair; to a theatre for a film about Auschwitz; and down the streets of Auschwitz camp to the death block and execution wall. This is the old Auschwitz I, the former army camp.



Double barbed wire electric death trap.

The True Human Condition

Auschwitz II or Birkenau Camp is the true memorial to the human condition. The visitor has to insist on being driven three kilometers from the museum to Birkenau, or his tour will end with museum objects and slide purchases. At Birkenau the true memorial to Jewish existence stands.

Here only one row of women's barracks and one row of men's barracks, in their original state, are being maintained. Here the visitor may walk into a hut and see the triple decker, original bunk beds for sleeping 24 human bodies; see the miserable heating system of two fireplaces connected by a horizontal chimney across the dirt floor; see through the outer wooden walls which offered no protection from winter winds. Here a visitor can imagine underclothed and shaven people suffering from the cold; imagine the infestation of lice in the straw on each pallet bed bunk; and smell the whole unclean, human condition scratching for survival.

From the Birkenau entrance tower, it is possible to
(over)

The Holocaust Hol



Auschwitz main street; only way out of here is up the chimney.

look down the railroad track toward the site of the ramp where selection for immediate death or work took place. Here one also sees crematoria I and II in the distance, a pond where ashes were dumped, and fences which denied freedom. But not the least of these is an area where "Appell" or roll call was taken several times a day and people were condemned to standing hours on end while being counted. A survivor notes that they were counted like gold, but treated like dirt.

Here, at Birkenau grounds, is the true abode of memory for six million Jews of the Holocaust. Not a monument, not a plaque, not a museum effectively marks their memory, but the place where they "camped."

Here the visitor asks, "What is Man? What was Man?"

In contrast, Dachau Concentration Camp outside Munich, Germany, is reconstructed. After the war, the barracks of Dachau were razed because of vermin and disease. For the sake of a memorial, some were recently reconstructed, as were also the crematoria. For impact, Dachau cannot compare with Birkenau. Dachau can easily become a film and museum experience supplemented with a glance at a memorial structure. The structures include a Catholic expiatory chapel, a Protestant commemorative chapel, a Jewish Memorial, and a nearby Carmelite convent. In a park necropolis, tombstones mark places where ashes have been buried outside the perimeter of the camp. Dachau, it is pointed out, is a camp where the gas chamber was never put to use, but it is not told that thousands were shipped from here to other camps for extermination or to Hartheim Castle, near Linz, for gassing.

Ghostly Leitenberg Mountain

Gone and forgotten, however, are those Dachau-dead who were buried on the Leitenberg, a hill hard to find and not accessible on foot from the Dachau grounds. After we inquired the way from a German man on the street, this self-appointed citizen became our guide and offered to get us to the Leitenberg in his car.

We wondered if his efforts were motivated by expiation. Perhaps. As we drove we discovered that he knew of the Leitenberg because of personal involvement. He had been a German Panzer man under General Rommel. As a prisoner of the Allies, he has been assigned to the clean-up operation at Dachau. In the horrible last days, he remembered how his dark Panzer uniform struck terror into the Dachau camp inmates who thought he was an SS man.

Yes, he noted that his relations with the Americans had been good. He said the Americans had meant well in giving their rations to the emaciated camp inmates. Our Panzer man, however, thought the rich American rations caused the death of many who could not tolerate such food after the ravages of dysentery and starvation. And while he told his story, we were tempted to ask how he was wounded, for the end of his nose was missing. However, an opportunity never arose.

When we arrived at the foot of the Leitenberg, we stepped out of the Panzer man's car and started the climb up the Leitenberg mountain. Along the way we passed markers for the stations of the cross. Now the



Babi Yar Ravine, Kiev.

Also Jews Forgotten?

(continued from page 5)

Dachau visit was becoming more than a museum visit. We came to the top of the mountain and stepped into a quiet wooded area. Here, said the Panzer man, lie the 7,500 prisoners whom he personally helped bury as a prisoner of the Americans. The dead here were representatives of all nations. These were the people who almost accomplished "iberleben"—living through the Holocaust. Instead, they died in the very last days. Their graves were trenches, now represented by rows of well-kept ivy and numerical markers. It is on the Leitenberg, far from the madding tourist crowd, that the Holocaust victim of Dachau lives.

There were so many questions to ask our Panzer man about the war as we descended the mountain. He was imbued with a sensible philosophy of life and appreciation of the world. He had lived through severe times. He had been drafted for military service, but, no, he had never been a member of the Nazi party.

We asked him why no one in Dachau village knew of the crimes at the camp. He answered in terms of his wife. She had been required, as a villager, to work as a seamstress in the Dachau camp. She knew nothing of the SS secrets, especially the treatment of prisoners or the "final solution," a euphemism for extermination. She knew nothing because she worked at night, was let in and out the camp under strict security, and never saw the inmates. The SS secrecy was a success.

At the foot of the Leitenberg we crossed a field filled with springs and trickling channels. The dead could not be buried at the foothill because of watery ground. The Leitenberg heights, we thought, were indeed a better memorial than the foothills.

The traveler who seeks to duplicate this experience can find his way easily to Dachau by taking the S-Bahn from Munich to the Dachau stop on the Petershausen line. A bus connection takes the visitor to the memorial site. But the visitor must realize that, although Dachau is famous, its satellite camps are less known. In hundreds of satellite camps, forced labor was exploited until death. The Nazis built a network of camps totaling over one thousand in 1944, and some were located in the most innocent of places. In Bavaria, the winter sports town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen had a forced labor camp.

The Anne Frank/Charlotte Salomon Simile

In Amsterdam, in the Netherlands, a tourist may go to the Anne Frank house. It is indeed a moving experience to visit the "back house" in which the only furnishings left are the kitchen sink, an elaborately designed toilet bowl, and the pin-up movie stars which Anne put on her wall. Only the walls and floors speak to the visitors, and the experience is quiet, stirring, and



Leitenberg Graves.

grim. Anne is remembered as the child of optimism, the would-be writer, and the girl with faith in mankind.

In the same city, the Stedelijk Museum is the repository of the paintings of Charlotte Salomon. Like Anne, Charlotte expressed herself creatively; like Anne, Charlotte suffered adolescence and war at the same time; like Anne, Charlotte was sent to Auschwitz; like Anne, Charlotte died. Anne's father found the diary and published it; Charlotte's father survived the war in Holland and donated Charlotte's pictures to the museum as her diary in art. Anne is still well known; Charlotte less so.

Both Anne Frank and Charlotte Salomon represent young people of the Holocaust. Their diaries, in words or pictures, are their memorials. No others could be better.

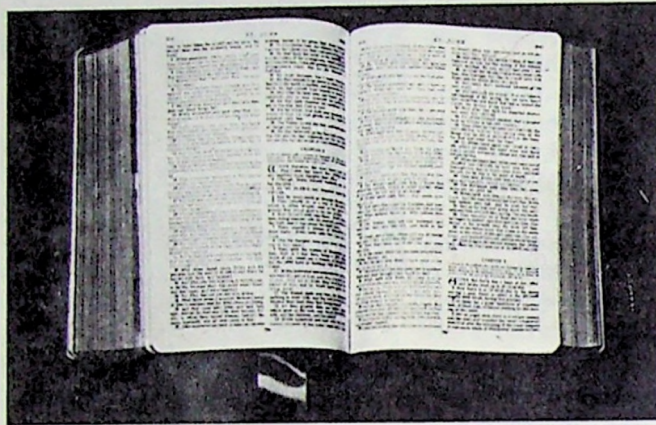
You and the Holocaust

The Jews of the Holocaust continue to live in various ways: in their creative works, in memorials and monuments, in raw concentration camp settings, or submerged under Soviet nationalism. However, the real truth lies in the eye of the beholder-traveler, who can remind himself of the words of Santayana: "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

In seeking the truth about the Holocaust, we find that truth often lies on the other side of irony. Isn't it ironical to be led to a concentration camp by a former German Panzer man under General Rommel's command? Isn't it ironical to remember that Crematorium I at Auschwitz, where the bodies of emaciated people were destroyed, was once a vegetable storehouse? Isn't it ironical to find Garmisch-Partenkirchen listed as a location for a Nazi satellite camp when just over the mountain, in another quaint village called Oberammergau, villagers periodically perform the Passion Play and deny its anti-Semitic content?

The remembrance of things past is indeed important.

The Year Of the Bible



A RESOLUTION adopted by Congress in October, 1982, authorizes President Reagan to designate a biblical year, "In recognition of both the formative influence the Bible has been for our nation, and our national need to study and apply the teachings of the Holy Scriptures."

That speaks well of our congressmen—a good start. However, a federal judge in Madison, Wisconsin, says he will decide whether to stop the President from designating 1983 "The Year of the Bible."

Be that as it may, I'm thankful for the attention that is being turned to God's Word. Our nation was founded on the principles of Holy Scripture. It appears to me that we have drifted far from these principles today. The Psalmist asked: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" That's an appropriate question today.

The Bible Is the Inspired Word of God

"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 [or complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17). The Bible is accurate, authentic, and reliable. Those who talk about its errors either parrot what someone else has said, or are ignorant of what the Bible really teaches.

This Book tells us how we got here and what our destiny is. It tells us how to live life to the fullest. Dietitians can tell us how many calories are in a piece of pie or a slice of bread (which bugs me), but suppose they declare someday that no one baked the bread or pies?

When men make statements about God and the Bible, I want to know who they are. What are their credentials? Have they ever read the Book? I BELIEVE THE BIBLE. It has been my constant companion since 1950 and will be on to the end of the way.

There have been times when it seemed that the educated were the evolutionists and the ignorant were the Bible believers. Not true. Some of the better educated men believe that the Bible is true and genuine.

The Bible Is a Light to Our Feet

In that majestic Book of Psalms we read: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (119:105). This Psalm (the longest, containing 176 verses), focuses on the beauties of God's Word. Each verse, except 7, uses some synonym for the Bible—such as word, law commandments, judgments, statutes, etc.

My dictionary defines a heathen as "one who does not acknowledge the God of the Bible." Without the light of the Bible one is in darkness, but God has called Christians "out of darkness into his

marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9b). D. L. Moody once said, "I know the Bible is inspired because it inspires me."

I'd be afraid to fly on an airplane if the crew knew no more about flying than the average church member knows about Christianity and the Bible. I would not want babies for the crew.

It's one thing to proclaim 1983 as the year of the Bible as the congressmen have done, but it's another to read and study it in detail. It's yet another to put the Scriptures into practice in everyday life. God thinks very highly of his Word. In fact, he has magnified it above his name (Psa. 138:2b).

The Bible Is the Power of God Unto Salvation

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" [Gentile or non-Jew] (Rom. 1:16). "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword" (Heb. 4:12). "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word" (Psa. 119:9). It is through God's Word that we hear of the Christ of the cross through whom we find newness of life and forgiveness of sin. A childlike faith is all that it takes.

After the period of slavery in our country it was hard for the slaves to ac-

cept their freedom. Likewise, we have been slaves to sin so long that it's hard for us to really believe we are free in Christ. Doubts appear and reappear. Sometimes we feel like crying out: "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24). We must surrender ourselves completely to Christ and his transforming power.

A man is not using his common sense if he thinks he can fall asleep in sin and wake up to immortality when Jesus comes. People die like they live. You can't die in sin and wake up in Christ.

Hudson Taylor, the great missionary to China, wrote on the flyleaf of his Bible: "There is a living God. He has spoken in the Bible. What He has said He will do. What He has promised He will fulfill." That in itself is a good sermon.

The Bible is God's blueprint for living. He speaks personally to us in the Bible. It's the world's oldest and most influential Book. It's addressed to you. It has your name on it, and it is being produced in unprecedented numbers.

According to the American Bible Society, 600 translation projects are now going on around the world. Since the turn of the century 78 translations or revisions have appeared in English alone, compared to only a handful in all the years before. One is reminded of the words of our Master: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached [published] in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matt. 24:14).

Annual United States sales of the Bible amount to about 20 million copies. Just about every American home has at least one copy and the average is four. While the world hasn't invented a new sin in 2,000 years, the Bible is as relevant as ever. It speaks to our time. Hurray for the congressmen for proclaiming 1983 as the year of the Bible.

The American Bible Society further estimates that 100,000 groups of lay people meet weekly in homes, shops, and offices across the United States to study the Bible. While I'm not predicting a national revival, I am thankful for all the attention given to God's Word. It's refreshing in contrast to so many other things going on. It's so easy to bemoan the wickedness of our day and fail to praise God for what he is doing on earth. Give that some thought.

The Bible Is God's Eternal Word

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psa. 119:89). Sir Walter Scott once said: "The Bible is *the Book*. All

other books are but leaves." Yes, the Bible is God's *eternal* Word. All other books are books of *now*.

Have a definite time for Bible reading or you probably won't get around to it. Determine to read the Bible through this year. Then, too, begin at the beginning as with any other book—start on chapter one. If we start a novel in the middle, we'll be confused. We cannot understand the New Testament apart from the Old Testament, so begin where God begins. Start with Genesis 1:1 and go to Revelation 22:21, and above all remember that the purpose for studying the Bible is to get to know its Author.

The Bible Is Our Authority

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (2 Pet. 1:19). Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Every so often someone comes along with a new revelation: "God has spoken to me." We don't need a new revelation. We need illumination of the finished revelation in God's Word. "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets" (Amos 3:7). We speak of Amos as one of the Minor Prophets, but we don't have any minor prophets. They all batted in the major league.

The Bible is God speaking to us. Need help in understanding it? "Ask God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him" (Jas. 1:5, NASB). Then, too, get in a small Bible study group—a Sunday school class, midweek Bible study, home Bible study, etc. I've noticed that the ones in these kinds of study are really growing.

There needs to be a concerted effort to understand the great doctrines of the Bible. Doctrine is studying Christ in detail; doctrine is studying the Bible in detail.

Calvin Coolidge once remarked: "People criticize me for harping on the obvious. Yet if all the folks in the United States would do the few simple things they know they ought to, most of our big problems would take care of themselves." This significant principle can be applied to the church. Can you imagine the changes that would take place in your church if this principle were applied across the board? It's not enough to know the

Bible; it must be put into practice. It is our authority and guide throughout life. We must live "by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. 1:23).

The Bible Belongs in the Home as Well as in the Church

David, the shepherd boy, wrote: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. . . . O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:11, 97). Here is the right attitude and response for successful Christian living today. Both can be yours.

When the writer first became a Christian he soon found enjoyment in reading the Bible, but if a friend or relative came by he hid the Book. I was ashamed to be seen reading the Bible.

We can all learn by the example of the Bereans, who "searched the Scriptures daily" (Acts 17:11). It requires work to understand the plan of redemption revealed in sacred Scripture. The great truths of God are not gathered by the careless reader. Diamonds are not found on the sidewalks.

Some people say, "I believe the Bible." Great! But what is between the two covers? One can't leave it on the shelf until he has a problem and then turn to it for answers. By regular study the Holy Spirit has something to bring to one's remembrance in time of need, but one can't remember what he has never studied. Only when one is well read in the Bible and filled with God's Spirit can he be victorious over his inherited sinful nature.

Americans have drifted far from the Book they profess. Prison population increased by 12 percent last year. The United States had the highest divorce rate in the civilized world. The reason is as obvious as empty pews—we've forsaken biblical values and substituted humanistic philosophy. There is a real weakness of men being spiritual leaders in the home. If we're going to mend the fence, here is the place to start. It should be obvious to any thinking pastor that it's the women who read books on family living, attend seminars and films, Bible study classes on the family, listen to family radio programs and cassette tapes on marriage and parenthood, etc. Women make up the large majority involved in these kinds of learning experiences—some estimate as many as 80 percent. Come on, fellows; let's even that up!

The Bible is our guide for life. Read it, study it, get to know its Author. Some day you'll stand before him.

by Pastor Hollis Partlowe



A C C E P T A N C E

stick, and why new members rapidly disappear out the back door.

An important second expression of *koinonia* is ACCEPTANCE. It follows right behind love. *Agape* is naturally accepting.

Feeling accepted is vital for one to feel good about himself—and to possess a healthy self-esteem. Charles Swindoll has brought the matter into focus with this statement: “Acceptance means you are valuable just as you are. It allows you to be the real you, you aren’t forced into someone’s idea of who you really are. It means your ideas are taken seriously since they reflect you. It means you can talk about how you feel inside, and why you feel that way and someone really cares. Acceptance means you can try out your ideas without being shot down. No one will pronounce judgment upon you even if they don’t agree with you. It doesn’t mean you will never be corrected or shown to be wrong. It simply means it’s safe to be you, and no one will destroy you out of prejudice.” His words find application both within the visible walls of a home, and the invisible walls of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. Within a body of believers there is no substitute, or synthetic, or replacement—for acceptance.

Two Enemies of Acceptance in the Church: Judging and Showing Partiality

Judging

One need not preside in a courtroom dressed in a black robe, gavel in hand, pronouncing sentence to be a judge. *The judging that goes on in many congregations is ample proof of this.*

Frequently, acceptance in a congregation depends primarily on what one does or does not do. And, more often than not, this “do’s and don’ts” list is comprised of activities not clearly (if at all) addressed in the Bible. It commonly includes extra-scriptural activities, many of which are cultural (right or wrong based on the custom of the day): length of hair, card playing, dancing, movie

LIVING WITHOUT ACCEPTANCE can be disastrous. Ask a guy who gets turned down by beauties he offers rides on his motorcycle . . . or a boy who can’t crack the cliques at a new school . . . or a daughter who only feels her parents’ love when she conforms to their standards . . . or a wife who feels

rejected until she reaches her husband’s expectations.

Better yet, ask a visitor who is in attendance at a church where he doesn’t feel welcome. But you’ll have to inquire quickly, *for he won’t be around long.*

Few reasons surpass “lack of acceptance” in explaining why visitors don’t

—by Pastor Don Needham—

going, use of tobacco. *Nothing is more destructive to unity among Christians than extra-biblical rules and regulations which are used to evaluate a person's relationship with Jesus.* ("Because I obey the list I'm spiritual. Because you don't, you aren't") This rapidly leads to judgmental behavior and false spirituality.

If this all sounds very complicated, that's because it is. Let's take it a bit further, using specific examples.

Is it judging when one Christian confronts another Christian who is involved in an illicit affair? Does it become judging to warn someone that adultery is outside the will of God? Difficult, yes—but judging it is not. The Bible speaks with absolute clarity on the sinfulness of this matter. (Ex. 20:14; Gal. 5:19-21). No one is judging. **THE WORD HAS BEEN APPLIED AND IT IS THE WORD THAT CONDEMNS.**

Unless and until that person changes his behavior and repents, a congregation *should not accept him* into fellowship. Recorded in 1 Corinthians 5 is just such an incident. By his wicked behavior, a man was disgracing Christ and giving the local church a bad name. Paul authorized the congregation to excommunicate him until he got his life straightened out. But after he did clean up his act, he was to be accepted back (See 2 Corinthians 2:7-11). Applying Scripture where it is clear and specific is not judging.

Now a look at the other side. Pornographic movies were not an issue when Paul wrote giving us direction on this matter. Are we then judging a fellow Christian when we refuse to accept him because he attends trashy flicks? He is doing something on the church's "don't list," but a matter Scripture doesn't address. Yes, we are judging.

Romans 14:1-3 is a passage written to explain this dilemma. The problem it handles deals with meat eaters vs. vegetarians. "Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. The man who eats everything

must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him" (NIV). Notice in this matter Paul says to the "faithful" in the congregation, "God has accepted this 'weak' brother, so you do likewise." *There was to be no judgment passed in an area not specified as sin.*

Now is this to assume that a congregation should have no opinions and guidelines on such matters? **ABSOLUTELY NOT!** One should understand that attending such entertainment is "spiritually unhealthy" and detracts from a witness for Christ. **BUT ACCEPTANCE CANNOT BE BASED ON ADHERENCE TO THIS CULTURAL EXTRABIBLICAL LIST. ACCEPTANCE MUST NOT BE RESERVED UNTIL AND ONLY UNTIL THEY MEASURE UP.**

Is this also assuming that these "spiritually unhealthy activities" will never be mentioned for fear that some involved in them will feel they are being judged and not being accepted? **HARDLY!** They should be addressed from the pulpit and in teaching situations. Yet the results of their presentation will be far more effective if one is *challenged in a positive way* to separate himself from worldly habits, than being *negatively condemned* for this involvement.

This is why teaching the Lordship of Jesus is so vital. If a congregation frequently hears about a high and elevated Christ, and members of that congregation are stimulated to conform to his image, most of these carnal activities will take care of themselves. As one works to allow Jesus to be more in control, that person becomes uncomfortable about continuing in such practices. Because of the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, these questionable habits will fall away.

When a congregation determines to legislate righteousness by drawing up its extra-biblical list of sinful and non-acceptable habits, it is very apt to become **LEGALISTIC**. *Any legalism paralyzes a church.* The hardest words Jesus spoke were addressed to the Pharisees

for their hypocrisy and legalism. Legalism flourishes when Christians do not understand grace, and are hung up on a "salvation by works" (or adherence to the "list") mentality.

Showing Partiality

This second adversary of acceptance goes by several names: prejudice, favoritism, discrimination. *Few things are uglier.*

Social discrimination is a fact of life in the world. The government even helps by establishing financial levels to indicate whether one is of upper, middle, or lower class status.

Social discrimination became a problem in the New Testament churches. That's why Paul wrote, "Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position" (Rom. 12:16, NIV), and James wrote, "If you show favoritism, you sin" (Jas. 2:9, NIV).


The solution for this problem has been the same for 20 centuries. Cliques melt away, the poor are not ostracized, *when Christians recognize the equality that comes by being in Christ.* Jesus is our common denominator. We all emerge from the same second womb, and that womb is Calvary. The ground at the foot of the cross is level. No one stands any higher because of the size of his bank account, the newness of his home or car, or the reputation of his family tree.

Neither is racial discrimination a new issue for the church. Conflicts between Jewish and Gentile Christians are peppered throughout the book of Acts.

Gene Getz has said, "*The greatest sin committed by many American Christians is racial prejudice.*" And it matters not from which end of the color spectrum one is looking.

I believe Jesus is color blind. He is not concerned about the pigmentation of a person's skin, but whether the heart is filled with bigotry and prejudice—or love.

In Christ we are all one. Every member is important—rich or poor, young or old, black or white, weak or strong. It is crucial that we be accepting of our Christian brothers and sisters.



The Life of the Age to Come

NOTHING COULD BE of greater importance to the disciple of Christ than to understand the nature of the goal for which he is striving. Yet so imprecise is the prospect offered by traditional teaching that large numbers of would-be Christians now no longer even believe in life after death. That such unbelief can still be described as Christian only adds to the confusion. The simple facts of the New Testament are that Jesus promised his followers "eternal life." Without further explanation, the concept as it is presented to us lacks precision, and this is due to an inadequate rendering of the original Greek into English. The truth is that the term "eternal life" in its original Greek, as written by

Hebrews, contains a wealth of data which unlocks the entire New Testament prospect for the future. This information is well documented, but never, it seems, reaches the average church-goer.

The idea of life for eternity is founded upon the all-important passage in Daniel 12:2, where the resurrection of both the righteous and unrighteous is clearly described: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

It is from this passage that the New Testament derives its fundamental notion of "eternal life," Daniel's writings being accepted as an inspired authority by Jesus and

the apostles. Of primary importance is the fact that "eternal life" is the life to be gained through *resurrection*, i.e., from a condition described as "sleeping in the dust of the earth" to that of "awakening" to everlasting life. That great event is destined to occur at the end of a specified era of history, according to Daniel; this leads us immediately to the crucially important description of the divine program for resurrection as given by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15. There are to be stages in the plan for resurrection; each is to be resurrected in his proper order. "Christ the first-fruits; afterward, those that are Christ's at his coming" (v. 23).

The well-known commentary on Mark, by Vincent Taylor, states that "eternal life" is "no mere immortality, but a gift which a man receives from God in the *resurrection*" (p. 426, emphasis mine). It is important to note that immortality is not an innate possession of man; it must be conferred upon him by a resurrection from death. That resurrection will occur for all the faithful, collectively, at the second coming of Christ. This means, of course, that no one except Jesus has yet been resurrected to immortality!

What is the nature of this "eternal life"? So far we have established only that it is to be gained through a resurrection from the dead. The Hebrew expression in Daniel 12:2 conveys the notion of life of the remote future, as well as life indefinitely prolonged. It might appear, then, that "eternal life" carries this idea with sufficient clarity. This is not quite true; for during the period preceding the times of Jesus, and after the Old Testament canon was complete, the idea of the remote future was gaining precision, based on the hope expressed by the Old Testament prophets that God would ultimately inaugurate a Golden

Age of universal peace and justice on earth. Thus in the time of Jesus the life of the remote age envisaged by Daniel had come to mean "*the Life of the Age to Come*," that Great Age of universal harmony which had been the vision of all the prophets. These facts are well established. In "The Gospel according to St John," by C. K. Barratt, we find the following: "The meaning of 'the Life of Eternity' (Dan. 12:2) was expressed by the Rabbis as 'the Life of the Coming Age'" (p. 179). Vincent Taylor says, "In origin the conception (eternal life) is eschatological: eternal life is 'Life in the Coming Age'" (p. 426). The same point is made by A. H. McNeile in "The Problem of the Future Life": "'Aeonios' (eternal) for all practical purposes, when applied to things of the New Age means 'belonging, or proper to the New Age'" (p. 48).

The translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek in pre-Christian times had already rendered the expression in Daniel as "aeonian life." The Greek adjective used here properly means "pertaining to the age"; it thus exactly defines the "life of the remote future" as "the life pertaining to the (coming) age." This development is crucial for our understanding of the New Testament concept of "eternal life." The matter is clearly outlined by the celebrated Lexicon of the New Testament, by Thayer: "As the Jews distinguished 'this age,' the time before the Messiah, and the 'coming age,' the time after the advent of the Messiah, so most of the New Testament writers distinguish 'this age' (or simply 'the age'—Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:19; 'the present age'—Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 6:17; 2 Tim. 4:10; Titus 2:12), the time before the appointed return or truly Messianic advent of Christ . . . and the *future* age (or 'that age'— Luke 20:35), 'the coming age' (Luke 18:30;

Matt. 12:32), i.e., the age after the return of Christ in majesty, the period of the establishment of the Divine Kingdom with all its blessings" (Thayer's Lexicon, p. 19).

We see then that Jesus and the New Testament writers build upon the current idea of the age to come, putting their stamp of approval upon it since it accurately represents the hope of the prophets that the golden age, in which all the faithful will participate, will one day be established. Christianity is centered therefore on the hope of the coming age, and promises as the supreme reward the life of that coming age. It will be seen at once that this proper understanding of the term originating in the Book of Daniel provides a much more definite idea of the Christian goal. An authoritative confirmation of all this can be found in the writings of one of the most distinguished New Testament theologians of this century:

"What appears in the English versions of the Bible as 'eternal life' or 'life everlasting' really means 'the life of the age to come.' . . . Throughout the New Testament 'eternal life' means the 'life of the age to come.' It is synonymous with the kingdom of God. Thus, in the discussion about the conditions of entry into the reign of God, the rich man in Mark 10:17 asks: 'Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit "eternal life"?' Or again, if we examine the parallelism of Mark 9:43-47, we shall see that to enter 'life' and to enter the kingdom of God are one and the same thing. . . . The chief implication of 'aeonian life' ('eternal life') is not eternal or everlasting life, but *life pertaining to the age to come*" (Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament, by Alan Richardson, pp. 73, 74, 108).

"A most significant additional piece
(Please turn to page 14)

By Anthony Buzzard

The Life of the Age to Come

Continued from page 13

of information emerges here: namely, that the life of the coming age is exactly the same as the life of the kingdom of God. Thus we find the Dictionary of Christ and the Apostles saying that the phrase 'eternal life' is used synonymously and interchangeably with the kingdom of God. . . . The kingdom of heaven and the life eternal are very closely related in the teaching of Jesus: In the picture of the judgment (Matt. 25:31-46), the righteous who go into eternal life are said to inherit the kingdom" (p. 538, 539).

This unquestionable equation of the life of the coming age with the kingdom of God may be further illustrated as follows, based on the passages already referred to: (adding Matt. 7:14, 21).

Mark 9:45: "It is better for thee to enter halt into life."

v. 47: "It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God."

Mark 10:17: "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"

v. 23: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter the kingdom of God!"

Matthew 25:34: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom."

v. 46: "The righteous [go] into life eternal."

Matthew 7:14: "Narrow is the way which leadeth to life."

v. 21: "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."

In the light of the real meaning of "eternal life," the Christian goal assumes a new clarity as being equivalent to entrance into the kingdom of God through a resurrection, for participation in the life of the age to

come. Participation in the kingdom implies being appointed as co-ruler with the Messiah. This is clearly stated by Jesus at the Last Supper when he promised that the apostles would share the dominion which his Father had conferred upon him (Luke 22:28). This appointment to reign was later extended to the church as a whole (1 Cor. 4:8, 6:2, 2 Tim. 2:12); it forms the very essence of the new covenant. The church now becomes what ancient Israel had forfeited through disobedience; the New Israel, appointed as kings and priests (1 Pet. 2:9), and destined to reign as kings on the earth (Rev. 5:10). Under the old covenant this honour had been offered to Israel (Ex. 19:5, 6). Under the new covenant Jesus establishes the church as the new fellowship of the Messianic community. The Last Supper, inaugurating the Eucharist, is a celebration in anticipation of the banquet to be shared by the church in the coming kingdom of the new age:

"I appoint to you dominion, as my Father appointed dominion to me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones governing the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:28, 29).

No wonder that in view of these exhilarating promises, the kingdom of God was the center of interest in the discussions between Jesus and the apostles after he had risen from the dead (Acts 1:3). Their eagerness is betrayed by the all-important question they put to Christ: "Is this the time that you are going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6.)

When these simple New Testament facts are grasped, it will be seen how irreconcilable with the teachings of the New Testament is

the popular notion that the Christian reward is "eternal life" to be gained at the moment of death. The traditional scheme virtually dispense with the need for the future resurrection, since the faithful are already enjoying their reward "in heaven." It completely obscures the fact that "eternity," according to the New Testament, begins, in its fullest sense, with the advent of the age to come. The return of Christ can have little significance if, indeed, the dead have already "returned" to him. Moreover, it replaces the hope of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth with a shadowy realm of disembodied spirits. The belief in such departed spirits of the dead is utterly foreign to the New Testament. The offering of prayers to them is unthinkable.

The proper definition of the Christian goal as the attainment of the life of the coming age through a resurrection from the dead immediately rescues us from the popular misconception and allows us to see that our aim is to attain to the corporate resurrection of all the faithful. The change from a physical to a "spiritual body" will occur "in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:52-54). The new body will equip the resurrected believers for life in the kingdom, the life of the age to come. This goal is firmly rooted in history; it is tied to "that (well-known) age" (Luke 20:35), which is to follow the "present evil age" (Gal. 1:4). It will be no surprise to find that the doctrine of the second coming of Christ is central for all the New Testament writers. It is that great event which ushers in the new age, the coming age of the kingdom of God on earth; it is then that the righteous shall attain to the life of that coming age.

Julie's E A S T E R Morning

"Julie," whispered Mother, "wake up, honey."

"Oh, it's still dark outside," groaned Julie.

"This is a special day, remember?" reminded Mother.

"Oh, the sunrise service," said Julie, as she flung back the covers. "We can't be late for that."

It was Easter Sunday morning and Julie had looked forward to this day for many weeks. This was the first year that Julie was old enough to sing in the youth choir at the sunrise service.

As Julie and her family walked from the parking lot across the street to the beautiful Memorial Gardens Cemetery, they were joined by many others who had come to worship early on

Easter morning. Julie went to meet her friends in the choir while her family found seats.

The service that morning was beautiful. First the adult choir sang "Christ the Lord is Risen Today." Then the pastor of Julie's church was the first speaker. As he told the story of Jesus coming out of the grave, Julie imagined what it would be like to have been there. She could see herself walking to the tomb with the women—all of them so sad because Jesus had died. How surprised they were to find the tomb open and empty. But then, how wonderful it would have been to actually see Jesus and know he was really alive!

Then it was time for the youth choir to sing. As they joyfully sang the words, "Up from the grave he arose," the sun began to rise and the brightness of the new day spread throughout the cemetery. It was truly a wonderful morning for Julie.

Part way through the service Julie noticed a man with a TV camera taking pictures of the crowd. When the youth choir sang he took pictures of them, too. Maybe Julie would be on TV.

When the closing prayer ended, Julie went to find her family. As she crossed the cemetery she saw the TV camera man packing up his gear near the big tree where she was to meet her family.

"Are we going to be on TV?" she asked.

"Well, could be. You watch the Channel 3 news tonight at 6:00. If there's enough time, we might run a little bit of the sunrise service," he answered.



"It's too bad you couldn't have been there with your camera when Jesus came out of the tomb. That would really have been something to get on film," said Julie.

"Do you believe all that about Jesus rising from the dead?"

"Of course I do. The Bible says so. Don't you believe Jesus rose from the dead?"

"Oh, I don't know. It seems kind of far-fetched to me. Things like that don't happen every day."

"But it happened that day. God can do anything. He's the one that raised up Jesus, you know."

"Oh, I see."

"But there's another day coming when you had better have your camera ready."

"Oh, what day is that?"

"That's when Jesus comes back to earth and the graves right here in this cemetery open up."

"What?!"

"Yes, some day—no one knows when—Jesus is coming back. And when

he does, all those who have believed in him will come right up from their graves—just like he did."

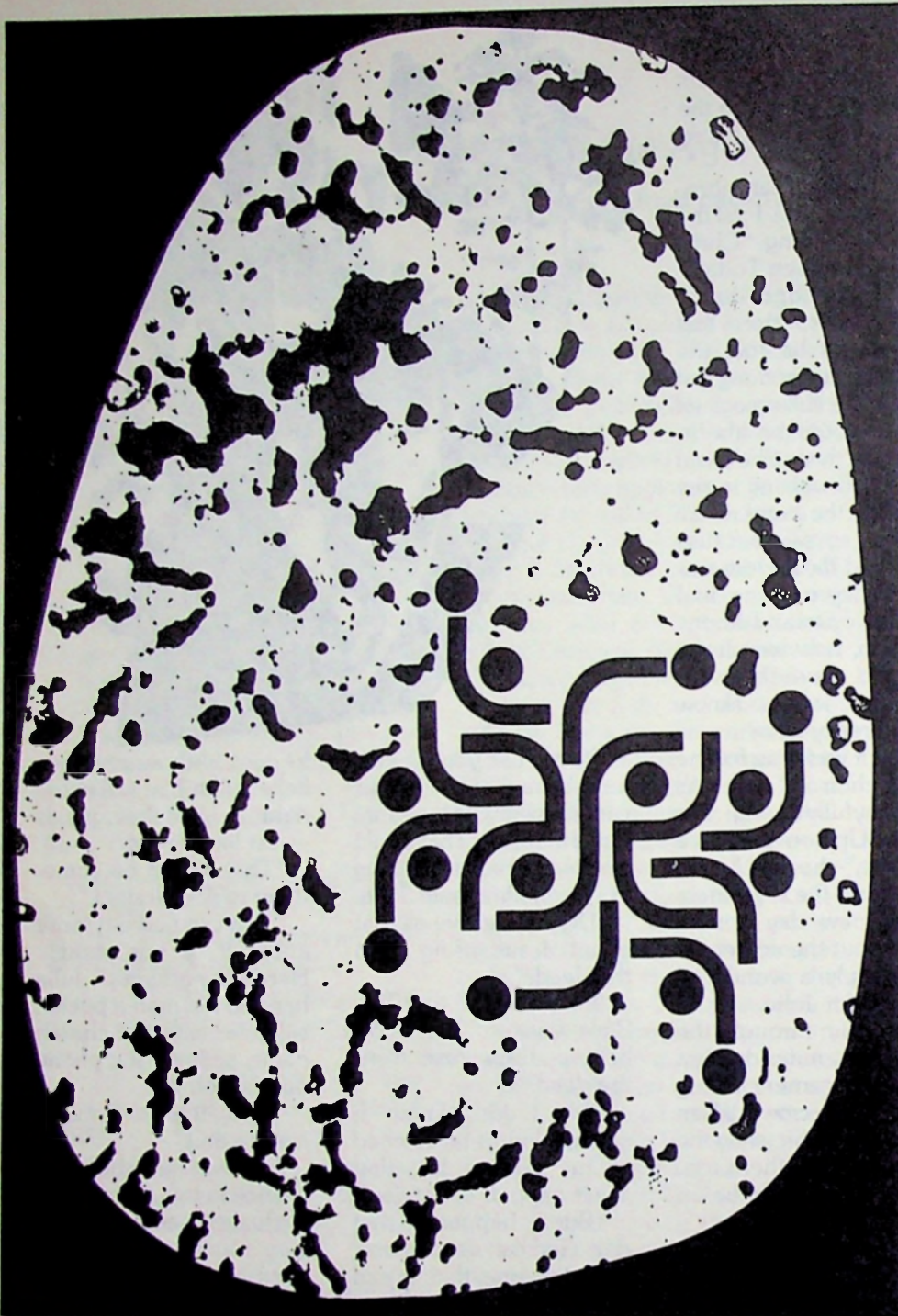
"That would be something to see all right."

"You can find out more about it at our church. Here's the address." Julie handed the man a pocket calendar with the church name, address, and phone number on it.

"Well, thanks. I might just do that."

Julie was glad she had a chance to talk to the man. He hadn't seemed to know very much about Jesus. Maybe he would come to the church to learn more. Julie knew there were lots of other people just like the camera man. They might have heard about Jesus but they didn't know that he had died for them and had risen to life and was coming back again. Julie decided right then that she wanted to keep on telling others about the special true meaning of Easter.

CHILDREN'S
CORNER
Rachel Carr,
Contributing Editor



GIVING THE GIFT OF LIFE

by
Carol
Daniels

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Blood.
People respond to it with varying emotions. Some get sick at the very thought of it. It can mean tragedy.

Disaster. A wound, a stab, trauma.
But this miraculous fluid contains essential elements of life.
Blood. It is life.

One of the fun parts of my job in hospital community relations is heading our quarterly blood drives. I have learned much about the donating

process, and what happens to the blood afterwards.

Blood cannot be manufactured, neither can it be artificially produced. It must be supplied by human beings. They are the only source. From each unit donated, four persons can be helped, each using a different component to meet a specific need.

Blood cannot be stored indefinitely; it must be on hand when the immediate need arises. Supplies are often low, sometimes depleted—and lives are lost because of it.

I have received many different responses from people when asking them to donate. Some are glad—even eager—to help; yet one woman, who worked in a doctor's office no less, spit venomously back at me, "You are a vampire! You're always asking for my blood!"

The first blood drive I coordinated, I did not donate myself. I was afraid. There's something spooky about the process, especially when you don't know anything about it.

But three months later, when I was preparing to make calls for donors again, I knew I wanted to make an appointment to give, for several reasons: 1) I couldn't ask people to do what I wasn't willing to do myself; 2) I couldn't relate to their feelings about donating if I didn't experience those feelings myself; and 3) My nephew Eric had received the blood that some caring person had contributed, and it had sustained his life. He would not have lived the two years that he did without it. I wanted now to do the same for someone's little nephew, or mother, or son.

And so, armed with noblest intentions, I began the donating process. Personnel from Blood Services took my blood pressure and temperature, asked questions about my general health, and pricked my finger to test for anemia. After I assumed the posi-

tion on the couch for donating, the phlebotomist probed for the vein in my elbow and gave me a little bar to squeeze. Then the needle went in—almost painlessly—and I watched as the thin plastic tube sped away my blood into a "unit bag" on the floor.

"There goes my life's blood," I thought, as almost a pint was pumped.

I settled back and closed my eyes, waiting for some pain that never came. I lay there wondering about who might receive my blood, hoping it wouldn't be a drunk knifed in a bar-room brawl. The thought that my blood might go to someone who had gotten himself into such a mess was disgusting. I wanted my blood to help a child, or at least someone "worthy," someone innocent of his circumstances.

I began to feel very Christ-like when I compared the similarities of my blood donating process to the crucifixion of my Savior—sharing your own life's blood, willingly, so that another might live.

"My gracious!" I thought. Even the position was similar—arm extended and pierced, then the flow of blood. Life-giving blood.

I was sharing, albeit in a minute way, the experience of sacrificing precious blood for the life of someone else. What a special time with the

Lord! How much more I appreciated what he went through for me.

Then I was struck with a severe case of the "spinners"—a thought or realization that hits you so strongly that it almost spins you right out of your chair, or bed, or in this case, blood-donating couch.

"Thank goodness Christ didn't give his blood only for someone worthy, someone who hadn't gotten himself into his own troublesome situation." He had willingly shed his life's blood in order for the vilest of sinners to gain eternal life.

The very blood that flowed from his veins, allowing him to die, is the same blood that saves me—in all my self-righteousness and sin—and buys back my life.

I felt ashamed of my previous thinking. The second time I donated blood, three months later, it was a humbling experience to give—just give—without choice of who received. And indeed it was a Christ-like experience.

If you have ever donated blood, I'm proud of you, and hope it was a satisfying, rewarding experience for you. If you have never given blood, please consider it. Giving your own blood to save another's life is a very Christ-like experience.

Blood. It is life.



The RESTITUTION HERALD READERS' SURVEY

You can assist us in maintaining or upgrading the quality of THE RESTITUTION HERALD by participating in this readers' survey. A number of Church of God families have not subscribed in 1983. Your response to this survey will help us meet their needs. We urgently need your response. Please take a couple of minutes to thoughtfully answer the following questions, and use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to return the sheet to the magazine. It is not necessary to sign your name.

1) Why do you read THE RESTITUTION HERALD?

(Check one or more boxes.)

- Inspiration
- Motivation
- Confirm doctrinal position
- Appreciate Biblical scholarship
- Gain insights for personal growth
- Glean ideas for growing churches
- Better understand prophetic truth
- Find help to raise my family

2) Please rate THE HERALD's effectiveness in achieving the purposes of question one:

- 5, Excellent
- 4, Good
- 3, Average
- 2, Substandard
- 1, Poor

3) How often do you read THE HERALD?

- Every issue
- Often

- Seldom
- Almost never

4) How much of a given issue do you read?

- Most or all of it
- A few articles
- One or two articles

5) Please indicate the articles you read in this issue:

- The Trees Are Fun—But Not Today
- The Holocaust Hells: Jews Forgotten?
- The Year of the Bible
- Acceptance, Building up the Body
- The Life of the Age to Come
- Giving the Gift of Life
- Hearing with Spiritual Ears

6) Please indicate the features of each issue you read:

- Editor's Viewpoint
- Searching Bible Questions from YOU
- News and Prophecy
- Meditation Moments
- Children's Corner
- Letters to the Editor

7) Which of the following would you consider an improvement for THE HERALD?

- A Bible exposition page
- A Christian family page
- A Church development page
- Interviews with growing Christians
- Profiles of successful churches
- A prayer and devotions page
- Other _____

8) Please provide the following demographic information in order that we may more effectively evaluate this survey:

- Age: 12-16
 17-24
 25-32
 33-40
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 49-56
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- Church officer
- Youth worker
- Pastor
- Other church professional

9) Additional Comments:



HEARING WITH SPIRITUAL EARS

by Marie Shropshire



A DEAF YOUNG MAN told me that before he became a Christian he often prayed, "Lord, heal my ears so that I may be a normal person." But after he made Christ the Lord of his life, he changed his prayer to, "Lord, open my spiritual ears so that I may hear you more clearly."

Hearing with our physical ears is not nearly as important as hearing with our spiritual ears. Jesus said in his parable of the sower, "Consider carefully what you hear" (Mark 4:24, NIV). Jesus explained that there are different kinds of hearers. Some have no root in themselves, and after hearing the Word, they soon fall away. Others allow the cares and anxieties of the world to choke the Word. Still others "receive and accept and welcome it and bear fruit."

I like the way the Amplified Version translates Mark 4:24. "Be careful what you are hearing. The measure of thought and study you give to the truth you hear will be the measure of virtue and knowledge that comes back to you, and more besides will be given to you who hear."

Hearing His Conditions

The promises of God are ours—the promises made to the Israelites as well as those in the New Testament. However, most of the promises are conditional. (God's *love* is unconditional. That love is so great that he makes his promises conditional—for our well-being.)

Several years ago I discovered Psalm 91. I wanted to claim those beautiful prom-

ises. Sometime later I learned that the conditions for receiving those promises are contained in verses one and two: "He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust'" (NIV).

The promises in the remaining 14 verses are dependent upon our saying that God is our refuge. This saying consists of a confession prompted by the heart, a belief so strong that we dare express it with our lips.

On their journey to the land of Canaan the Israelites were told, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians" (Ex. 15:26, NIV). The condition was "hear and obey."

James has a similar word: "Let every man be quick to hear [a ready listener]. . . . But—obey the message; be doers of the Word, and not merely listeners. . . . he who looks carefully into the faultless law. . . and is faithful to it and perseveres in looking into it, being not a heedless listener who forgets, but an active doer [who obeys], he shall be blessed in his doing—in his life of obedience" (James 1:19, 22, 25, Amp).

Hearing Meditatively

Often when I am reading the Scripture, I realize that the only way the truth can be of lasting value is for me to stop and meditate on it. I may need to read certain passages in

several versions. (The sometimes-criticized "modern" versions often more accurately translate the original languages than the King James Version.)

The Psalmist prayed, "May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD" (Psa. 19:14, NIV). Later he declared, "My mouth shall speak wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be understanding" (Psa. 49:3, Amp). The Psalmist is saying that what he speaks is not a creation of his own mind but the wisdom revealed to his heart. Meditation permits us to go beyond our human resources and tap into the mind of God.

Meditation on the Word helps us unravel life's tangles and see things from God's perspective.

The writer to the Hebrews, after beautifully emphasizing in the first chapter the superiority of Christ over angels, begins chapter two by saying, "We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away" (Heb. 2:1, NIV). How can we pay closer attention? By going over it in our minds, meditating on it, and letting the Holy Spirit show us how the message applies to us.

Through his Word and by his Spirit the Lord of the universe comes to each of us at our level of understanding, on our plane of living, at our point of need. He comes with the answer to every problem. Are we hearing with spiritual ears?



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Know a friend in the office who has been asking about your faith, but he wants "printed evidence" for your convictions?

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Or one of the fellows you drink coffee with downtown?

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The
**Restitution
Herald**

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THE READER'S DIGEST BIBLE

Condensed from the Revised Standard Version

A CONDENSED BIBLE? Heresy of heresies! But wait. Let us not be so hasty. Although the Bible is the standard of faith and God's perfect revelation of himself, tragically few have read the Bible cover to cover. What can be done to remedy this serious problem? Nonreaders must be encouraged to tackle the Word of God in print. Regular readers must be stimulated to read the Bible cover to cover often. Such were the goals of Bruce M. Metzger, noted Bible scholar, and the editors who worked with him for six years on *The Reader's Digest Bible*.

This book is a condensation of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. It is not a paraphrase, nor is it a translation. A condensation is a "reduction principally through line-by-line, word-by-word diminution, as well as through deletion of selected blocks of texts." Semantics may be the core issue when some try to justify the concepts of paraphrase (a man's effort to rewrite the text as he interprets its words) or translation (a man's effort to determine which English words best match Hebrew or Greek verbal concepts) as against a condensation. Indeed all such projects attempt to reduce the size

and complexity of the Bible so that it will reach hearts better.

All 66 books are preserved in *The Reader's Digest Bible*. The overall condensation is about 40 percent of the original material. The Old Testament was reduced by about one half, and the New Testament by about one quarter. The editors' intent was to preserve "every incident, personality, and teaching of substance." I would not want to be the one, however, to determine which passages were to be eliminated to achieve such a notable goal. Each Testament has its own introduction and there also is a brief introduction to each of the books of the Bible. Missing from this Bible are illustrations and chapter/verse indicators. The large print text reads like a continuous book (as the Bible should) with occasional space-breaks to separate blocks of material.

Examples of the condensation process will help to illustrate. Genesis 1:11, 12, a repetition of God's creative command, was reduced to "and it was so and God saw that it was good." Genesis 2:7, fundamental to the nature of man, remains intact. 1 Chronicles 1-9, not atop anyone's top 10 favorite passages list, was reduced to one-third page of key names. Psalms 52-54 were omitted. Psalm 119 was reduced to 40 verses. Obadiah remained untouched. Matthew 5: 3-28, the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount, is word-for-word intact. The first condensation in that important New Testament passage is found in verses 29 and 30.

Among other familiar New Testament scriptures, 1 Corinthians 13 and 15:51-58 were untouched by the condensation process. Ephesians 1:6 and 8 were omitted from Paul's beautiful invocation. In Ephesians 2:19, "sojourners" and "fellow citizens with the saints" were omitted.

The most telling omission, however, casts a shadow over the whole project. Did guilty conscience prompt the deletion of Revelation 22:18, 19 with its warnings against adding to or taking away from the words of the book? Whether the warning relates to Revelation alone or to the entire Word of God makes no difference at this point. Others included it even if its words were directed at them for their work.

It seems the editors spent much time and study in preparing a clear, nonrepetitive, manageable text which, in their opinion, includes all important passages of Scripture. Questions remain, however.

Why the Revised Standard Version? It is an excellent translation, blending King James' beauty with modern research, but why was it selected from the plethora of choices? Who is the audience/buyer of the book? No advertising push seems to be aimed at any group. Also, what will be the preconceptions of the potential readers? Will it be the book that finally breaks down the resistance of the nonreader? Will it "turn off" the faithful Bible readers?

I admit Leviticus and 1 Chronicles are now worn out in my Bibles. How about in yours? I admit many sections perplex me to the point I seldom read them. How about you? I find some texts very difficult to interpret in light of all of God's Word as I understand it. Are we not guilty (if "guilty" is the right word) of condensation? "Not in any way intended to replace the full biblical text, which will always remain available, *The Reader's Digest Bible* offers the general reader a more direct means of becoming intimately acquainted with the whole body of Scriptures." It is the editors' hope that readers, young and old, "will find its quickened pace, its sharper focus, its smoothly flowing narratives an irresistible invitation to draw closer to the spiritual heart of the greatest book mankind possesses."

I pray these goals are reached. In any way possible, I want more people deeply involved with the Word of God. Although the reduction process and the editors' claim of the authority to do so trouble me, I have seen God work through many unusual efforts of mankind. May the God of the universe use this project to reach the hearts of many who need him in this world.

A Review by Robert L. Jones

Editor's Viewpoint

Let's Deal With the Issues

I hope you will notice that THE RESTITUTION HERALD is concerned about the spiritual, moral, and biblical issues with which you battle daily. No longer will our pages echo merely the usual, the bland, the commonplace. We will squarely face with you the questions and confrontations which grip your heart and mind.

Of course what was written in the above paragraph does not discount what is commonly believed in the Church of God. We will constantly publish biblical truth. We shall never deviate from the old paths (Jer. 6:16) which are outlined in the masthead.

But additionally, we must confront the issues of our day. In briefly reviewing some of those issues, I have conveniently divided them into three areas: spiritual, social, and personal.

When we are told, "You've got a spiritual problem," our first reaction is to close our ears. But when our interest in church work wanes, perhaps those words carry a germ of truth. In our pages we want to address such questions as: Why is it that I seem less interested in the things of the Lord? How do I handle the pressures of my work and balance its demands against the responsibilities of my church? What can I do to force myself into more prayer and Bible Study? How can I discover more time in my already busy schedule to do evangelism?

We must also give you help on life's larger issues of a social nature. Some of these problems will touch the political arena. For instance, what is the believer's stance toward prayer in public schools? Should morality be "legislated" into our lives by President Reagan or the congress? How should I react to the viewpoint of the "Moral Majority"? What about the nuclear arms race? Should I favor a U.S. arms buildup as the best response to the nuclear arms question, or does a bilateral and verifiable nuclear freeze offer the best response to the nuclear threat? What about the world currency crisis? How does biblical prophecy and its prediction of a political-economic-religious Big Brother usurping world control affect us?

In the personal realm we have many questions needing answers. Should Christians become united with unbelievers in marriage, community, vocation? How would God view divorce and remarriage? What can I do to insure that my family grows up to become Christian? What are the marks of a Christian lifestyle? You probably are thinking of many more personal questions you want answered.

Two articles in this issue of THE HERALD discuss some of these questions. Pastor Hollis Pastlowe offers his point of view concerning the world currency crisis (pages 4 and 5). On pages 18 and 19 Bro. Richard Worley builds a scriptural case titled "Mar-



riage/Divorce." Future issues of the magazine will feature other articles which handle more problems.

In dealing with the issues of life, our goal is to present help and encouragement. We will refrain from assuming that what we write is the last word on the issue. We will avoid a judgmental attitude in handling sensitive problems. We will use biblical reasoning in coming to conclusions, avoiding argument based on emotion or experience.

Undoubtedly you have many more issues for which you want answers. Write to us. Express your concerns.

Reader's Survey

Response to the reader's survey which appeared in the March HERALD has been encouraging. Many of you have added additional comments which will prove helpful to the future direction of the magazine. If you haven't returned your survey, go back to the March issue, fill in the checkmarks necessary on page 18, cut the entire page out, and send it to us today. In a future issue of THE HERALD we will publish the results of the survey.

Easter Afterglow

Usually Easter is the highlight of the church year, and it should be. But the most fantastic events took place after the resurrection of Christ. Fifty days after Passover the church had its beginning with the coming of the Holy Spirit, the baptisms of 3,000 new believers, the beautiful body life evident in the early chapters of the Book of Acts.

Today life in the church goes on dramatically after Easter. Often new converts have been baptized on that Sunday, so discipleship programs are established to assist their growth. With the coming of spring and summer, the church begins again in outreach. Special meetings, Bible schools, camping programs and other events decorate the calendar. The body of Christ glows all over with the power of the risen Lord moving people to commitment and service.

May God bless you and your fellowship with his people as the joy of Easter blossoms forth to change lives in your community.

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:13); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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World Currency Crisis

TREASURY SECRETARY Donald T. Regan told Congress on December 21, 1982, that we could have a worldwide depression if the United States government and other lenders refuse to help developing nations out of their worst debt crisis since World War II.

He estimated that nonoil exporting Third World countries have total foreign debts of more than \$500 billion, with about one third owed to United-States-owned banks.

Were we not to solve the debt problems, "we could have a worldwide depression through defaults of many nations and the like," Regan conceded in his most somber assessment of the world financial outlook.

"I think it is avoidable, but it is going to take care; it's going to take caution; it's going to take courage in order to get this done."

Fears of a global credit crisis have intensified in recent months because bankers had not anticipated the suddenness or depth of the financial difficulties now gripping such major borrowers as Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina.



Is the Whole World Going Broke?

"We always thought that countries didn't go bankrupt. Or that the world's monetary system was so well supported by postwar props that it could never, ever collapse. Or that Moscow would bail out any ally that owed more than it could pay. Or that inflation and rising oil prices would go on forever.

"Moscow has done nothing to help out East European countries—Poland, Rumania, and Hungary—that can't pay their debts.

"And many countries, led by Mexico and Poland, have gone bankrupt—in effect if not in name. Indeed, bankers and government ministers have begun warning that the whole international monetary system—the complex network of banks, governments, trade, payments, and currencies—could come crashing down.

"If that happens, the word Depression would not begin to describe the results . . .

"While banks were lending on a grand scale to Third World countries, they did the same to companies at home and abroad. International Harvester alone borrowed \$4.2 billion. If it were a country, it would rank about 25th among the world's biggest debtors . . .

"The bank's biggest mistake was to assume that inflation would continue, a World Bank official said. All of us who bought a house bigger than we needed did the same thing.¹

The question facing all of us, it appears to me, is this: will panic take over? There is widespread fear that unless we keep our cool and help is made available, the world's economy could come crashing down.



"Jobs That Went Up in Smoke"

Blue-collar workers, million of them in the United States, are singing the blues. Employment of blue-collar workers has dropped by 10 percent over the past three years to a little under 30 million jobs, while white-collar and service jobs have increased by about five percent.

Blue-collar jobs in the United States have decreased as follows in the last thirty years: steel mill production is down 57% from 1957 to 1982; textile

mills are down 41% from 1952 to 1982; auto making is down 30% from 1978 to 1982; railroads have dropped 68% from 1952 to 1982.²

As if the loss of jobs were not enough, the dollar has lost 60¢ in purchasing power since 1967.



The World View

From the old industrial centers of Europe and North America to the far reaches of Asia and the Southern Hemisphere, the picture is dark and bleak.

A survey of 49 nations by the Institute for Economic Research (Munich) forecasts only hesitant gains to the middle of this year. The organization calls it "the most stubborn global recession since World War II."

Business failures are climbing worldwide. The jobless in the ten-country Common Market hit 10.7 million in July, 1982, up 20.1 percent in a year. The United States, Europe, and Japan quarrel over trade.

Signs of recovery in West Germany have "evaporated." In Britain recovery has not yet appeared, despite hopeful optimism by the government. In France, the socialist government has not succeeded in reviving its economy. Italy drifts toward near catastrophe. Belgium and the Netherlands also harbor hard times with legions of idle workers. Switzerland, too, is feeling pain: bankruptcies are up; profits are down.

In India, harvest prospects wilt. Hungry people plunder food trucks and trains. Japanese industry wades into a quagmire while exports sink. Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan count on the United States to energize their markets.³

World bankers see more hard times

ahead. Says German Banker Pöhl: "There is only one locomotive now to pull the Western World out of its recession—the United States."



What the Bible Says

Scripture predicts that the closing days of this age will be stormy. What we are experiencing could be the perilous, stressful, troublous times predicted for the close of this age.

"You must fact the fact: the final age of this world is to be a time of troubles. Men will love nothing but money and self; they will be arrogant, boastful, and abusive; with no respect for parents, no gratitude, no piety, no natural affection; they will be implacable in their hatreds, scandal-mongers, intemperate and fierce, strangers to all goodness, traitors, adventurers, swollen with self-importance. They will be men who put pleasure in the place of God, men who preserve the outward form of religion, but are a standing denial of its reality. Keep clear of men like these" (2 Tim. 3:1-5, NEB).

This is Paul the Apostle's description of the closing hours of history. In relation to the subject at hand, "Men will love nothing but money and self" has significance. The greed and lust of men for money and power have brought us to our present condition. They have not consulted God who owns the world and all things therein.

Our Lord predicted that because of distress of nations—nations with no solutions and no answers—men's hearts would fail them for fear as they looked at the things coming upon earth (Luke 21:25, 26). It's quite probable that Jesus was looking at our day.

The Rider on the Black Horse

One of the four horsemen of Revelation 6 rides a black horse: "I looked, and behold, a black horse; and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard as it were a voice in the center of the four living creatures saying, A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine" (NASB). Most premillennial expositors interpret "black" as meaning famine and pestilence. Their thinking is based on Jeremiah 14:1-3, where it is said of dearth and drought: "They are black." Moreover, the pair of scales is a symbol of scarcity.

The measure of wheat (a quart) was a man's daily provision and this he got for a denarius, a day's wage of eighteen cents in silver. He got three day's provision of barley for one day's work. In my opinion, this famine begins after the church is caught up to meet Christ in the air (1 Thes. 4:16, 17), and runs parallel with the other seals on through the time of the great tribulation. If this be accepted, and if it be accepted that the trend we are discussing indicates the end time, think how close Jesus' coming could be.

At any rate, severe shortage of food makes necessary a strict rationing program. Famine upon earth causes food prices to go sky high, and buying power is greatly reduced because of inflation. Lack of food has always brought out the worst in men.

According to Revelation 8:7-12, John saw a terrible hailstorm with fire and blood which destroyed one third of earth's vegetation. Then he described a great burning mountain that will plummet into the sea, destroying one third of the ships, perhaps many of them carrying foodstuffs. One third of

the fish, basic protein in many diets, will perish.

John then saw a great star fall which caused one third of earth's fresh water to become bitter. Some kind of celestial disturbance caused one third of the sun, one third of the stars, and one third of the moon to be darkened. This diminished light would mean a smaller harvest. This is a picture of things that follow the conquests of the Roman Prince, the antichrist.

Many advocates of the historical and preterist interpretations of the Revelation have attempted to identify the various plagues with historical events and persons of the past. The speculations have been endless and the interpretations as numerous as the interpreters, all alike becoming less plausible with the passing of time. The plagues belong, not to history past, but to the end time, to the latter half of the seventieth week of Daniel.



The Beast Emerges

The beast that John saw rise out of the sea is the ruler of the revived Roman Empire in its period of worldwide dominion (Rev. 13:1-10). It is during his reign that the events depicted in Revelation 4 through 18 are to be fulfilled. The world is approaching readiness for such a man that appears to have solutions to the world's problems. He is a deceiver, an imposter, a counterfeit, but "all the world wondered after the beast" (Rev. 13:3).

The world is almost ripe for an authoritative leader, about ready to submit to his rule—even worship him if he can
(Continued on page 6)

WORLD CURRENCY CRISIS IN PERSPECTIVE

(Continued from page 5)

offer deliverance from distress and peril which now engulf the world. Shortly before his death, British historian Arnold Toynbee said: "Technology has brought mankind to such a degree of distress that we are ripe for the deifying of any new Caesar who might succeed in giving the world unity and peace."

The final leader of the times of the Gentiles will be such a man. The admiration of the world, kindled by his brilliant achievement in resolving the land dispute of the Middle East and saving the world from the threat of global holocaust, will be escalated to the point of worship.

The implications are, according to the trends in our world, that one-world government and one-world religion, both of which are predicted in Scripture, could come about very rapidly.

A great deal of prophetic Scripture is focused on the "great tribulation," a time of unprecedented trouble for this old earth. Jesus said: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matt. 24:21, 22). Daniel, the Hebrew prophet, expressed the same thing: "There shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people [Daniel's people Israel] shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (Dan. 12:1, 2). It seems clear that this time period is just before the kingdom is set up inasmuch as the resurrection of the dead is mentioned in verse 2.

Another intriguing prophecy familiar to most readers of THE RESTITUTION HERALD is Ezekiel 38 and 39. The prophecy describes a Russian invasion of the Middle East and especially Israel in the end time. This raises a question about the new Soviet leader Yuri Andropov. Could the former KGB chief

be the Gog of this prophecy? It has been reported that documented evidence was found during the Israeli invasion into Lebanon which indicated the Soviets are planning a military thrust against Israel as early as the summer of 1983.

When Jesus comes, all fear and anxiety will be gone; but until then we must continue to serve him and plan to survive whatever comes our way as we trust in him.



Surviving the Coming Crash

Robert L. Preston suggests that we convert our paper currency into a ready reserve of silver coins, since paper currency can be worthless if governments collapse. "Do not keep money in a savings account in either a savings and loan or bank. Leave only enough money in your checking account to pay your bills each month and that is all. When panic strikes, no bank will be safe."⁴

As for United States bonds, Preston says: "Avoid them like the plague. The government is already broke; putting your hard-earned dollars in would be like throwing gasoline on the fire." . . .

"Do not be deceived. Silver is your best money protection in the coming crash."⁵



The Christian and His Money

The Christian knows that all the gold and silver, and the cattle upon a thousand hills, are God's, and that it is he who gives us power to get wealth (Deut. 8:18). Consequently, a Christian becomes a steward of whatever money and material possessions he may have, and "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2). "God's principles of finance are no longer on trial; they have held true over the years. They are not dependent

on the economy, or how much money we do or do not have. God's principles depend simply on obedience to His will and turning those areas over to him.

"Throughout our society, particularly in secular business circles, discussions center around the economy and the prospect of future collapse. Most economists believe that although there will be some temporary ups and downs, on the whole our economy is suffering from an incurable malady. . . . One fact is clear: we are facing dire financial and social crises. Data from every segment of society support this, and it is clear that Christians living outside God's plan are going to suffer needlessly."⁶

Without God the future certainly looks scary and uncertain at best. Some are looking for a system without cash. "The cashless system may seem far-fetched to those unacquainted with monetary trends, but . . . they are now being tested throughout the United States and Europe in contemplation of a totally 'cashless' banking system. Virtually no one in major banking circles will deny either the necessity of such a system or its future certainty. In fact, the world bank has already begun work on a massive computer system that will be used to catalog and categorize every individual in the world."

"How does this relate to Christian finances? This is the kind of system that must exist prior to the last days."⁷

As Christians walking by faith through this world we don't know all about the future, but we know the One who does. Jesus said: "So don't be anxious about tomorrow. God will take care of your tomorrow too. Live one day at a time" (Matt. 6:34, LB).



¹The Minneapolis Star and Chicago Tribune.

²Source: U.S. News and World Report.

³Ibid.

⁴How to Prepare for the Coming Crash, by Robert L. Preston, Hawkes Publications.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Your Finances in Changing Times, by Larry Burkett, World Wide Publishers.

⁷Ibid.

Rachel
Carr,
Contributing
Editor



by
Maxine
Herr

The Good Sport

The front door slammed as Danny came stomping into the living room.

"I'm never going to play with Jimmy again!" he said as he flung himself into a chair in front of the TV.

His sister Janice, who was curled up in the corner of the couch reading, looked up. "Oh, oh! Didn't Jimmy let you have your own way for once?"

Danny glared at her. "What do you mean by that? Are you saying I'm selfish?"

"Well, what happened?" said Janice as their mother walked into the room.

"Yes, did I hear you say you aren't ever going to play with Jimmy again? Why, he is your best friend. I'm sure that whatever has happened can be straightened out if you will just think about it for awhile," said Mother.

Danny slid down in the chair and looked down at his muddy shoes, knowing he should not have come into the house with such dirty shoes.

"I hit the ball a good one, ran for first base, and then on for second. The

fielder got the ball and threw it to Jimmy. He said he caught it and tagged me before I touched base. But I don't think he did."

Mother asked, "What did the other boys say? Did they say you were out or safe?"

"I don't care what they said. I know I was safe!"

"You're always so sure you are right, aren't you?", Janice blurted.

"Children," said Mother, "I will not have you quarreling with each other. Danny, go to your room, clean yourself and your shoes, and do some thinking about what you have been saying."

As Danny started slowly up the stairs, the doorbell rang. Mother opened it and there stood Jimmy.

"I had to come to talk to Danny. He's my best friend, and I know he's angry with me. But Mrs. Brown, Danny was out. He slid in the mud and fell just before he reached the base. It was in the last inning and Danny's team would have won if he had made the score. So

I can see how disappointed he is."

Danny stood very still with his back turned to Jimmy.

Mother said, "Danny, won't you come and talk with Jimmy?"

He turned slowly and came back down the stairs. There were tears on his face.

"I'm awfully sorry, Jimmy. I guess I did act pretty bad. I just forgot what our Sunday School teacher told us. You know—about treating others like we want to be treated, and that we should be good sports and learn to lose sometimes, too. If someone wins, then someone has to lose. Will you play with me again, Jimmy?"

"Sure," said Jimmy. "After all, you are my very best friend. And I suppose we all feel like you did, sometimes."

"Hey, Mom, can Jimmy stay for supper?"

Mother smiled, happy that the friends had made up. And especially happy that her son had, after all, remembered the lessons he had learned in Sunday School.

Children's Page

Incarnation: Biblical Truth or Later Tradition?

by Anthony Buzzard

"I do not think it can be reasonably gainsaid that Christianity has meant historically, faith in the person of Jesus Christ, considered as very God incarnate."

Few would deny the truth of Bishop Gore's statement.¹ A leading British evangelical, John Stott, recently remarked that any who do not subscribe to the doctrine of incarnation are "not Christian in any meaningful historical sense."² If we take this to mean that incarnation has been widely held for nearly 2,000 years as a central teaching about Jesus, few would dispute John Stott's claim.

It may be something of a shock for the reader, therefore, to learn that a number of leading biblical scholars now question whether the traditional doctrine of incarnation can be found in the Bible. The following samples reflect that current thinking: "God's Son is not a second co-equal person, alongside God the Father, but simply man 'filled' with God, united with God."³ "In the New Testament Jesus was the embodiment of all God's promises brought to fruition... such a characterization represents New Testament Christology better than the idea of incarnation."⁴ "Incarnation, in the full and proper sense, is not something directly presented in Scripture."⁵

It would be unfair to turn a deaf ear to such statements, coming as they do from the pens of men who devote themselves full-time to analyzing the biblical data. Interestingly enough, the very same conclusions have often been reached by ordinary men and women studying the Bible without formal training. Their findings have been the result of a sincere desire to know what Scripture says about Jesus, as distinct from what has been received as "orthodox" tradition. It is a phenomenon of the late 20th century that "sectarian"⁶ and scholar are now in agreement that the notion that Jesus is God-become-man, meaning that Jesus himself existed as God before becoming human, may not be easily reconcilable with original Christianity as contained in the biblical writings.

The matter is one of utmost importance. Far from being only an academic question, it will involve our whole perception of God and Jesus Christ. It is essential for intelligent "worship in spirit and truth" that we grasp from Scripture a correct understanding of Jesus of Nazareth. A false picture of him will encourage the worship of "another Jesus," a threatening possibility against which Paul warned so vigorously in 2 Corinthians 11:4ff. "If he who comes pro-

claims another Jesus whom we did not proclaim..."

The term "incarnation" is so central to Christianity as many have been taught to understand it that it is virtually a synonym for the faith itself. This being so, it would not be unreasonable to expect this teaching to feature "loud and clear" throughout the New Testament, if not the whole Bible. But what are the facts? A recent study by the British scholar James Dunn,⁷ whose work was described as "magisterial,"⁸ set out to examine the biblical documents for evidence of belief in incarnation. His conclusion was that in the book of John alone, and then only in a handful of passages, could one speak of incarnation as it later became established in Christian teaching.

If one accepts Dr. Dunn's analysis, it is clear that incarnation is far from being a central New Testament concept, since it is absent from 26 of the 27 books of the New Testament and presumably from 65 of the 66 Books of our English Bible! The point may be made as follows: if one hands a man the Gospel of Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or the book of Acts in which the foundations of the Christian church were laid, or the writings of Peter, or Jude, or James, and indeed most of Paul's writings, no evidence at all can be found that any of these authors believed that Jesus was alive before his birth in Nazareth. These facts are freely admitted by Arthur Wainwright in his detailed study of the Trinity. After examining Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, he concludes: "In none of these passages which have been examined does Jesus say that he existed before his birth or that he assisted in the creation of the world" (*The Trinity in the New Testament*, SCM Press, p. 141).

We are concerned to trace the origin of Jesus of Nazareth. This is presented to us quite distinctly by the New Testament's opening writer. Matthew introduces his account by showing that Jesus is a descendant of Abraham through David (Matt. 1:1). This information was essential as proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, since the Old Testament had predicted that the Messiah would be born to a descendant of Abraham and David. Matthew of course describes the conception of Jesus by Mary as miraculous, but he clearly has no idea that Jesus had been in existence prior to his birth in Bethlehem. To present a "preexistent" Messiah would have raised enormous theo-

logical questions about a "second divine person" in the Godhead. It would have threatened the fundamental monotheism of the Old Testament. It should be remembered that Matthew's Gospel was written about 65 A.D. and represents his own mature understanding of the faith. Incarnation is simply absent from Matthew's statement about the "origin" (Matt. 1:1) of Jesus Christ. The same may be said of Mark's Gospel and of Luke's, the latter agreeing with Matthew that Jesus was supernaturally conceived, and yet descended from Joseph and Mary, and from Adam himself. It should be carefully noticed that Luke sees Jesus as Son of God both by virgin birth and by descent from Adam who himself was son of God (Luke 3:38); not, however, by arrival from a previous existence in heaven. Such is the orthodox view of the faith presented by Luke to Theophilus, in about 70 A.D. (Luke 1:3). Nothing at all is said of incarnation.

The presentations of Jesus to the Jewish community in Acts 2 and later to the Gentiles (Acts 10) contain no hint of incarnation. Jesus is described as having been born as the promised Messiah of the family of David, and as the long-awaited prophet like Moses (Acts 3:22; 7:37). There is nothing at all in the Book of Acts to suggest that Luke or the apostles thought of Jesus as other than a man, specially commissioned by God, a divinely and uniquely appointed servant, the promised Messiah. This assessment of Jesus is exactly what the Old Testament had expected and predicted. Nothing in the picture presented by Messianic prophecy had suggested that the Messiah was existing as God in heaven prior to his birth (though he was foreseen in Dan. 7:13, 14 as exalted to heaven prior to his second coming). To present this radically new idea about a Messiah who preexisted his birth would have contradicted the New Testament's insistence that the Old Testament had provided a full and clear picture of the promised Savior, for purposes of identification when he arrived on the scene. A Messiah who had been God in heaven before his birth would not have corresponded to the description of the Messiah given in advance by the prophets.

Facts such as these prompted Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch in Syria in 260 A.D., to protest against the quite different picture of Jesus then being presented by "orthodoxy" as it had developed over the 200 years since the writings of the New Testament documents. For Paul of Samosata,

the idea of the preexistence of the Son was incomprehensible. Jesus was uniquely inspired man.

The noted British church historian, Henry Chadwick (*The Early Church*, p. 114) makes a most revealing observation about Paul of Samosata's understanding of the person of Jesus. It is "akin to the primitive Jewish-Christian idea of the person of Christ. But to the contemporary Church his doctrine seemed plain heresy." A world of instructive information is to be found in these innocent statements. The Jewish Christian writers of the New Testament (including, we shall argue, John) did not believe that Jesus was a "preexistent God" who had visited the earth as a man born of a virgin, at the same time being the descendant of King David, the long-promised Savior and Messiah predicted by the Old Testament prophets. For the writers of the Bible the idea of a God who becomes man belonged rather to the world of Greek paganism. It was at Lystra in Asia Minor that the Greeks misunderstood the role of Paul and Barnabas and described them as "gods made like men, who have come down to us" (Acts 14:11).

It is remarkable that the idea of a God-become-man fits more easily into this Greek thought-world. Nothing in the Hebrew Scriptures had suggested that the promised King of Israel would be other than man, albeit a divine man, uniquely commissioned by God, reflecting the Spirit of God, and representing God in a way unprecedented in the history of Israel (Isa. 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2-4).⁹ It is this picture of Jesus which will account coherently for the biblical data; the later post-New Testament traditional picture of a being who is fully God and man, having been God before becoming man, can only be forced from the New Testament, by first assuming that it is there.

The traditional doctrine of incarnation can be "found" by relying heavily on certain verses in John's Gospel, a handful of passages in Paul, and ignoring the absence of any evidence in Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, Peter, James, and Jude, and the entire picture of the coming Messiah and Ruler of Israel. Sooner or later churches must face the hard fact that they have inherited from post-biblical times a view of Jesus which cannot be traced to the Bible. It is commonplace in theological circles to recognize that a marked shift in thinking about Jesus occurred from the 2nd century A.D. onwards. In the Bible he is known first and foremost as the Lord's Messiah, the promised ruler of Israel. Under the influence of Gentile thinking, however, Jesus was later seen no longer primarily as the Son of God (a New Testament equivalent for Messiah) but as God the Son, who had existed from eternity with the Father. It is that image of Jesus which churches in general have inherited with astonishingly little questioning, and few realize that not

even in the book of John is anything at all said about Jesus being the *Son of God before his birth at Nazareth*.¹⁰

Critics of the Athanasian Creed, the 4th century document which solidified the view of Jesus as "eternally begotten Son," have often pointed out that Athanasius went far beyond the biblical data in one important respect. He read the opening verses of John as "In the beginning was the Son and the Son was with the Father . . ." Had he given due weight to Matthew, Mark, and Luke's accounts of Jesus' origin, he might well have avoided the blunder which contemporary scholarship is beginning to detect—for it is in no way evident that the Word which was in the beginning is to be identified, one to one, with the baby born to Mary. John's readers would not immediately have assumed that the "Word" of John 1 meant a "second divine person" existing from eternity. From the Old Testament scriptures it was clear that the "Word of God" referred to divine communication ("the Word of God came to Isaiah" [Isa. 1:1]), the creative activity of God (by the Word of God were the heavens made [Psa. 33:6]), a manifestation of the mind and purpose of the one God. That Word, however, was not manifested as a second person with independent will ("not my will but your will be done") until the event described in John 1:14: "The word became flesh," i.e., a human being. It was then that Jesus began to be, and the self-revealing activity of God—His Word—appeared for the first time as a human being.

Read this way, John is not describing a God-become-man, but a man reflecting and embodying the eternal purpose and mind of the one God. Jesus would have been conscious of being a unique vehicle for God's revelation, but he would not have thought of himself as having been actually alive before his birth. (He is, of course, presented by the New Testament as very much alive *after* his death.)

If we read the book of John in this light, we shall understand Jesus to have been "preexistent" not actually, but in the purpose of God from the beginning. The historical Jesus who comes to be around 3 B.C. will be the embodiment of God's plan from the beginning. This is exactly the view expressed by Peter (1 Peter 1:20) that Jesus was "foreordained from the foundation of the world, but manifest in these last days." A similar view of preexistence is found in Revelation 13:8 (A.V.).

The writer to the Hebrews expresses the same thought in his opening statement: "God who in past times spoke to the Fathers through the prophets has now in these last days spoken to us by a Son (Heb. 1:1). The clear implication is that he first began to speak through his Son "in these last days." This text alone will dispose of any attempts to suggest that Jesus was a spokesman in Old Testament times or that

he was the angel of the Lord before his birth. The identification of Jesus with an (or *the*) angel of the Lord is one which Stephen in Acts 7 very carefully does *not* make; the writer to the Hebrews likewise denies the identification of Jesus with angels, taking most of Hebrews 1 and 2 to do so. If he had thought of Jesus as "coequal God," why did he not say so, and dispense with his elaborate argument to show Jesus' superiority to angels, to Moses, and to the Levitical Priesthood?

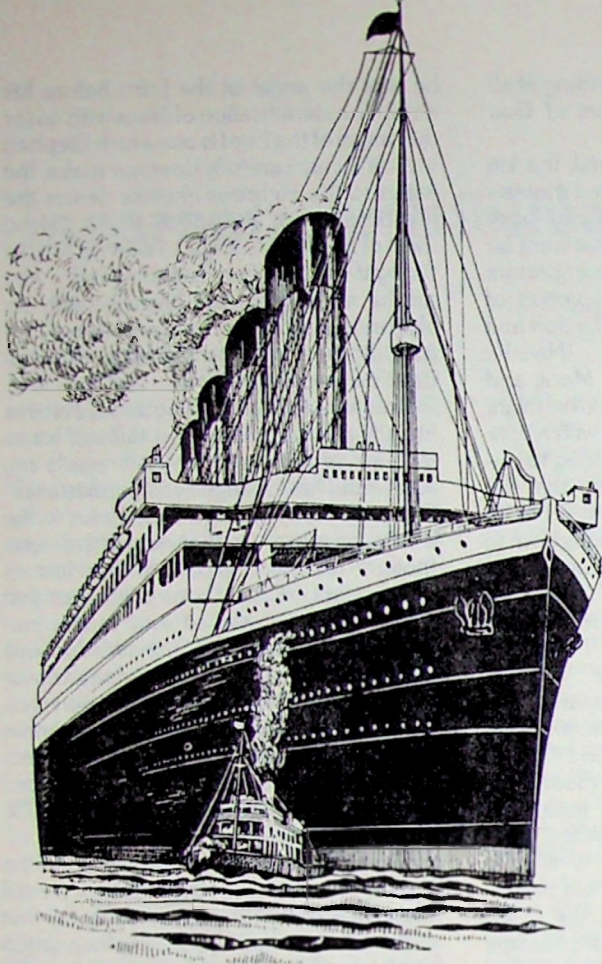
Habitual ways of thinking about Jesus as literally preexistent make it difficult for us to think of the "preexistence" which any Jew would have recognized, "preexistence" implying the highest possible status in the divine purpose. In that sense the Jews thought of the Messiah or the law as "preexistent." C. B. Caird points out that "the Jews had believed only in the preexistence of a *personification*. Wisdom was a personification either of a divine attribute or of a divine purpose but never a person. . . . Neither the fourth Gospel nor Hebrews ever speaks of the eternal word or wisdom of God in terms which compel us to regard it as a *person*." (*Christ for Us Today*, p. 79, emphasis mine.)

Once the book of John is viewed in the light of this concept of preexistence we will understand how John can so easily say that Jesus was crucified "before the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8), and how he hoped for the glory which he was destined to receive, because his Father "loved him before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24). Historically, that love was expressed to the person of Jesus from his birth. Similarly, the crucifixion occurred around 30 A.D., though it had "happened" before the foundation of the world (Rev. 13:8).

Traditional theology has based its doctrine of the incarnation on a very small portion of the New Testament evidence. To make such judgments without a full consideration of all the facts is hardly fair.¹¹ A much sounder approach would be to view the biblical data as a whole, beginning with the extensive Old Testament predictions of the Messiah, and reckoning seriously with the material presented to us by Matthew, Mark, and Luke as well as the picture of Jesus conveyed by Peter and Paul in the Book of Acts. Careful examination of all these witnesses will lead to the conclusion that the Bible speaks with one voice (although with variety of emphasis). Isolated texts about all things being created by Jesus carry a significantly different implication when correctly translated from the Greek, "created *through* Jesus" or "*in* Jesus" (Col. 1:15, 16).

Jesus himself makes no claim to have been alive at the creation (Mark 10:6, 13:19). Nor do the apostles ascribe the creation to Jesus (Acts 4:24). All things came into being at the hands of the Father
(Please turn to page 20)

REMEMBER THE TITANIC



abundance of his possessions" (RSV). Beware, Jesus says, of desiring something like someone else. It was a competitive society at the turn of the century. The quest for material goods was on and it hasn't stopped since.

I love how basic the Bible is. No skirting the issues, no double-talk! Our lives must never be wrapped up in money, goods, or investments. The Titanic presented a titanic effort to lure the rich and fill the owners' coffers with grandiose profits. But their dreams sank in mid-ocean, two miles down in fact, as if to seal the vulgar truth. "A man's life does not consist . . ." in stocks, bonds, or shares. Jesus calls those who lay up treasures for themselves "fools," especially if "he is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:21).

The Ship

It had a 66,000-ton displacement, was 882.5 feet long, and was triple screw and could make 24-25 knots. It could carry 3000 passengers but had only enough lifeboats for a fraction of the number aboard. The Titanic was 11 stories high from the waterline. She had 16 watertight bulkheads. It included a gymnasium, swimming pool, regulation racket court, palm verandas, turkish baths, and cooling rooms with masseuses. It had a complete hospital with operating room, barber shops, dark-rooms for photographers, not to mention saloons, banquet rooms, solid oak furniture, oak paneling, chandeliers, and a winding staircase in the ballroom that was the center of attention. When this behemoth pulled out into the channel and engaged its three huge propellers, the suction drew the ship New Yorker from its moorings and snapped its steel hawsers. The New Yorker was almost sucked into the Titanic. It was later learned that a sunken barge on the harbor floor had been dragged 800 yards across the bottom in the wake of the huge ship. She was called "the ship that God himself could not sink."

Our Second Lesson

In Genesis 11:1-9 is the fascinating story of the tower of Babel. After pondering over that notable incident, one discovers it was designed to unite people around one com-

THE TITANIC commands a mystique second only to Noah's ark.

It was 71 years ago this month that one of the world's greatest single tragedies occurred on the high seas at 41 degrees north longitude, and 50 degrees west latitude.

Many lessons were learned from it. Here are a few.

The late 1800's and very early 1900's comprised an age of opulence and luxury both in England and the United States. It was the time of the industrial revolution. By 1840, the steam engine alone had transformed England into sprawling industries. The age saw the invention of the telephone, electric refrigerators, Faraday's dynamo, and Marconi's wireless radio. Also, Edison's electric light permitted industries to run 24 hours a day.

In 1851, England opened the Crystal Palace. Within its spacious caverns was displayed all the latest inventions—the pride of the growing industrial world. Not to be outdone, in 1907 the U.S. conspired to produce the Great Exhibition. It was a colossal showplace featuring "all that is beautiful in nature or in art." No money was spared. The only difference between our "exhibition" and England's was that ours was designed to float. Furthermore, a crucial difference between the new and old projects was that the old of 1851 had united the civilized nations in resplendent triumph; the new one was to unite the world in appalling tragedy.

The mood and momentum of the late Victorian era could not be tempered. By the end of the century the Golden Age had become, in Mark Twain's famous epithet, The Gilded Age—a period of pronounced money-grubbing and ludicrous ostentation, when "excess" and "success" became interchangeable.

One survivor of the Titanic wrote this:

There was peace, and the world had an even tenor to its ways. True enough, from time to time there were events—catastrophies—like the Johnstown Flood, the San Francisco earthquake, or floods in China . . . which stirred the sleeping world, but not enough to keep it from resuming its slumber. It seems to me that the disaster about to occur was the event, which not only made the world rub its eyes and awake, but woke it with a start, keeping it moving at a rapidly accelerating pace ever since, with less and less peace, satisfaction and happiness . . . To my mind the world of today awoke April 15, 1912. (*The Titanic, End of a Dream*, by Wyn Craig Wade, p. 9.)

The epitomy of self-indulgent luxury, of pride, of excessive opulence, of what the turn-of-the-century conglomerate-money could provide (not to mention the profit motive) sat like a castle in the Southampton, England harbor on April 10, 1912.

Our First Lesson

There is absolutely no mistaking Jesus' words in Luke 12:15: "Beware of all covetousness; for a man's life does not consist in the

“The Ship That God Himself Could Not Sink”

mon object and to consolidate their selfish power. It was not designed to exalt God in any sense of the word. God clearly understood the spirit, the motive, and the selfish plans of the rebellious people. God directly intervened and confused their language—the very thing they had hoped to avoid by building the tower. Their pride was humbled.

The Titanic was built (as some said) to flaunt the latest genius in man, but never to forget also the constant profit motive. It represented all the finest in the technology and skill of the time. “God himself could not sink it.” Alas, they learned differently, as their predecessors did at the tower of Babel. God will not be mocked! Paul wrote: “Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life” (Gal. 6:7, RSV).

The pride of America and England sailed on its maiden voyage April 11, 1912, carrying some of the wealthiest people in the world. Three days later in the middle of the Atlantic, their pride took a two-mile nose dive to the bottom of the ocean. The world was shocked. Hopefully, many turned to God when they realized they were not invincible. Unfortunately, tragedy sometimes is the only thing that will jar some to recognize and admit their mortality and their need for God.

The Disaster

The Titanic had been warned five times of massive ice floes at 40 degrees North longitude and 50 degrees West latitude—about 1500 miles due east of New York City. As was later learned in the heated debates of the Senate investigations, instead of slowing down or stopping for the night (as other ships in the same area had done), the captain ordered two more boilers to be fired. A False sense of invincibility permeated the air—the “unsinkable” ship could defy the ice.

On Sunday, April 14, 1912, at 11:40 p.m., the Titanic collided with an iceberg. The ice ripped through six bulkheads on the starboard side. The ship could have stayed afloat with two bulkheads flooded, but certainly not six. The engineers had never dreamed that six bulkheads could be destroyed all at once! Two hours and twenty minutes later, the ship sank out of sight in 31-degree water. It stood straight up and down in the water—perfectly vertical at the end. People in the lifeboats testified that when the bow went under, 250 feet of the stern rose straight up in the air—25 stories high. Survivors testified that it looked like swarms of bees clinging to the railings. But those swarms were the 1,522 people who either drowned or froze to death in the

frigid waters. Wyn Wade in his book, *The Titanic*, wrote:

On Sunday, the churches of the American nation were filled to capacity. No event in clergymen’s recollections had ever inspired such mass church attendance . . . certainly no Christmas ever had. People had come looking for answers, and the answer they most sought was God’s explanation for His latest intervention in human affairs (p. 63).

On the Sunday following the disaster, Pastor Parkhurst of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church of New York said:

The picture which presents itself before my eyes is that of the glassy, glaring eyes of the victims, staring meaninglessly at the gilded furnishings of this sunken palace of the sea; dead helplessness wrapt in priceless luxury . . . everything for existence, nothing for life. Grand glittering splendor of a \$10,000,000 casket! . . .

The two sore spots which really run into one another and which constitute the disease that is gnawing into our civilization are love of money and passion for luxury. These two combined are what sunk the Titanic and sent 1,500 souls prematurely to their final account (Ibid., p. 65).

Our Third Lesson

“The name of the LORD is a strong tower, the righteous man runs into it and is safe. A rich man’s wealth is his strong city, and like a high wall protecting him. Before destruction a man’s heart is haughty, but humility goes before honor” (Prov. 18:10-12, RSV). Isaiah wrote: “The haughty looks of man shall be brought low, and the pride of men shall be humbled; and the LORD alone will be exalted in that day. For the LORD of hosts has a day against all that is proud and lofty, against all that is lifted up and high” (2:11, 12, RSV).

Whether God directly guided the iceberg on a collision course with the Titanic to teach a lesson is presumptuous to say, yet the lesson remains whether it was fate or foreordained of God.

To charge full-steam ahead in massive ice floes was foolhardy and tempting fate. There are many living today on the sea of life who haughtily plunge ahead disregarding all the warnings of disaster if this foolhardy course is persisted in. They laugh . . . fire up the boilers, and pursue destruction! They have a rendezvous with destiny.

The Lifeboats

On this maiden voyage to the U.S., the Titanic was carrying 2,207 passengers. They had enough lifeboats—and what we today would call inflatables—if filled to capacity to save 1,178 . . . about half the number on board! As it turned out, only 713 people out of over 2000 were saved. In the 18 lifeboats near the ship, several

demanding they return to the people crying out for help in the frigid waters. However, they were shouted down by other passengers not to return for fear of being swamped themselves. It took about an hour after the ship went under for the cries of those in the water to fade away. Because nearly everyone had on a lifebelt, their bodies remained afloat and would be spotted and picked up by ships 20 to 50 miles from the scene of the tragedy for weeks to follow.

One cannot help but be filled with mixed emotions about this situation. Who knows what one of us would have done in the same dilemma? Had we rowed into the mass of terrified people, quite possibly we would have caused those in the lifeboats to drown as well. Based on the Senate investigations, however, those in charge of the lifeboats were generally labeled cowards and sternly rebuked. This is a delicate situation and a classic “what-would-you-have-done? problem” that may have easy answers in a classroom, but it was another matter that night in the middle of the Atlantic. I won’t presume to judge this, or to suggest what I might have done. I don’t think any of us could.

Our Fourth Lesson

We learn from John 10:17, 18 that Jesus laid down his life for the world. Jesus over and over taught us that we are not to compromise our belief in God in order to save our own lives. We note that all the disciples willingly endured martyrdom (except John) rather than save their own skins by recanting their beliefs. This says nothing of the prophets of old who gave their lives as well.

The Scriptures teach that we are to count others greater than ourselves. We are to risk abuse to accomplish the right, like the good Samaritan. We are told our devotion to God will cause men to hate us, but Jesus set us the example and was hated too.

This text in John 10 tells us that Jesus “willingly laid down his life,” for he chose to obey God—knowing that the horrible cross lay before him. While giving our lives for God cannot be compared exactly to the lifeboat dilemma, yet there is this question we can ask: What should a Christian have done had he been in charge of one of those lifeboats? One boat had only five people in it; its capacity was 70. I will leave that for you to struggle with. The point I’ll make is this. We are taught by word and example in Scripture to sacrifice ourselves before we would compromise God, his Word, or his Son in any fashion. It was this kind of conviction of obeying God before obeying man or before saving himself that Paul declared to those who were trying to save

(Continued on p. 12)

Remember the Titanic

(Continued from p. 11)

him from sure death in Jerusalem: "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13, RSV).

The Californian

This was a ship that could be seen with the naked eye on that clear night just above the horizon from the Titanic. Many testified they saw it while in the water. The ship had shut down for the night and was dead in the water because of the icebergs in the area. It was estimated they were from 10 to 15 miles apart.

For one hour, the Titanic fired off eight rockets—all of which were seen and counted by the crewmen on the Californian. Twice they went to their sleeping captain and told him about the flares on the horizon. Twice he told them to Morse them (signal by flashing lights) and twice he went back to sleep, taking no further action.

The Californian, it was later concluded, could easily have gone to their aid and saved virtually all 2200 passengers! The captain of this nearby ship was later publicly humiliated for his unconcern, lack of seamanship, and blatant disregard of (at the time) unwritten sea laws which stated that any rockets fired from a ship always is a distress signal.

Our Fifth Lesson

You and I see distress signals every day. They are called obituaries. They are listed in the newspapers without fail. Death is all around us. How are we responding?

We have a "ship" that could save those who are drowning in the sea of life, but do we just roll over and go back to sleep? Flares are going off all around us: suicides, alcohol, drugs, indifference, anger, and a fatalistic philosophy to life. Hopelessness and despair lay heavy in the air. Often we're within easy range of helping, but we prefer to sleep, and at the most, to get somebody else to make a half-hearted effort to help them. Jesus said, "The fields are white to harvest, but the laborers are few." Have we thrown out a lifeline at all?

How They Met Death

From the Senate records:

The submerged forecastle was now beginning to shudder, "shaking very much" as the sea poured into A and B decks and flooded the first-class quarters, the lounges, and the saloons. The impending crisis jolted everyone still aboard the ship. Far astern, Father Thomas Byles and a German priest became the focal point of a frantic crowd of emigrants. "Prepare to meet God," exclaimed Father Byles. While many fell to their knees and began chanting the rosary, others dashed to the companionways and ladders.

The gentlemen's lounge on A deck continued to be a bastion of aplomb. Men in evening clothes were still playing cards on grotesquely slanting tables. Liquor was "on the house" and available to all classes. Fireman Paddy Dillon stuffed a bottle of brandy into his jacket, careened out onto deck and fell overboard (*Ibid.*, p. 208).

The band which was aboard played ragtime for nearly two hours while people were running about trying to figure out what to do. At the end, they played "Autumn," an Episcopalian hymn. Some of the words are:

God of mercy and compassion,
Look with pity on my pain;
Hold me up in mighty waters,
Keep my eyes on things above—
Righteousness, divine atonement,
Peace and everlasting love.
(*Ibid.*, p. 210.)

The band played until they couldn't sit on their chairs and then it was every man for himself.

Our Sixth Lesson

I don't know how you will face death. I don't know how I will face it. But one thing I've heard, no one every apologized or asked forgiveness on their deathbed for being a Christian. As distasteful as the subject is, we nevertheless are confronted with death on every page of Scripture. The world doesn't want to face it—Christians are forced to if they know their Bibles. God does this for a reason: We're not going to escape it, so accept it and most of all, prepare for it. This is to our advantage. That's the purpose of the Bible! Though the Bible is constantly reminding us of death, it has also shown us the victory over death and the grave. Jesus' own resurrection is proof-positive that we shall also have a body like his. In thinking on the Titanic tragedy, this text comes to mind: "And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done" (Rev. 20:13, RSV). God is well aware of the 1,522 who drowned, and they are yet to be raised and judged. That's a promise, and as Paul indicated, what God has promised, he is able also to fulfill (Rom. 4:21). Are you prepared for death?

In Summary

William Alden Smith of Grand Rapids, Michigan, was the chief Senate investigator for this disaster. After all the investigations were over, he said in part in summing up:

From the builders' hands, she was plunged straightway to her fate . . . and christening salvos acclaimed at once her birth and death. Builders of renown had launched her on the billows with confident assurance of her strength . . . So confident were they that both owner and builder were eager to go upon the trial trip.

No sufficient tests were made of boilers

or bulkheads or gearing or equipment, and no lifesaving or signal devices were reviewed. Officers and crew were strangers to one another . . . neither was familiar with the vessel or its implements or tools. No drill or station practice or helpful discipline disturbed the tranquility of that voyage; and when the crisis came, a state of ABSOLUTE UNPREPAREDNESS stupefied both passengers and crew. And in their despair, the ship went down carrying as needless a sacrifice of noble women and brave men as ever clustered about the Judgment Seat in any single moment of passing time (*Ibid.*, p. 265).

"Unpreparedness" in one word is the major cause of so great a tragedy. Many new laws were enacted on the heel of this investigation for the safety of passengers on liners. No one could be held accountable—no one could be sued for negligence—because there were no laws at the time regarding radio transmissions, obedience to rocket flares, lifeboat procedures, and the like. It was just a horrible tragedy, as Senator Smith said, of "absolute unpreparedness."

Our Seventh Lesson

I think it's obvious. If we go down to eternal death, it's not because there were no "laws" governing us while we were alive. The Bible is the law, and if we live by these rules, we shall be saved from the wrath to come. Disregard them, and there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Remember the story about the man who kept building bigger barns for all his produce? (Luke 12:15-20.) The man died right in the middle of construction! He was "absolutely unprepared" for death. Jesus called him a "fool" for being so naive and so unprepared for what he *knew* was coming.

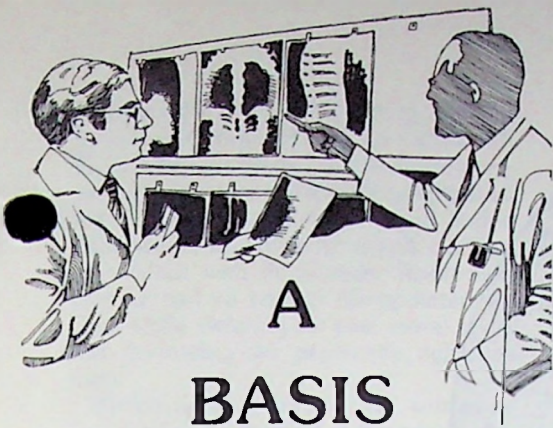
When John Jacob Astor (a famous millionaire at the time) was scooped from the water several days later, he was identified by his large diamond ring set in platinum, and he had \$4000 stuffed in his pockets. Money, possessions, the "good life," can never save us from the final accounting. Jesus said it: "Fool! This night your soul is required of you; and the things you have prepared, whose will they be? So is he who laid up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

Are you rich toward God? Are you ready for any eventuality? At your birth, you were cast upon the sea of life. Are you prepared and ready for any iceberg that might cross your path?

Our prayer and our daily desire should be, as the hymn puts it so beautifully:

"Jesus, Savior, pilot me over life's tempestuous sea; Unknown waves before me roll, hiding rocks and treacherous shoal; Chart and compass came from Thee, Jesus, Savior, pilot me."

Sources: *The Titanic—End of a Dream*, by Wyn Craig Wade, 1979.
A Night to Remember, by Walter Lord, 1955.



A BASIS FOR HEALING

by
Marie
Shropshire

WHILE all of God's gifts are free, we have to put ourselves in proper alignment with him before we can receive his gifts. Whether our needs are spiritual, emotional, or physical, God is more willing to give than we are to receive. Then why aren't all our needs met? someone asks. No person has all the answers, but the Bible offers some keys.

Desire

The first requirement for receiving anything is desire. It seems that anyone with a need would want that need met, but sometimes what we call desire is only temporary thirst. When Jesus said, "What things soever you desire when you pray, believe that you receive them and ye shall have them," he wasn't talking about a passing fancy. Real desire is a longing you can't shake off. It doesn't go away with a change of circumstances.

Why wouldn't any emotionally or physically ill person yearn to be healed? Some are not willing to pay the price. Jesus said, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required" (Luke 12:48). Jesus asked a man paralyzed 38 years, "Do you want to be healed?" He asked a blind man a question with an obvious answer. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus requires us to examine ourselves as well to be specific in our requests.

Being healed puts upon us the responsibility of standing on our own feet. We're expected to move from demanding attention to developing spiritual maturity. "Do you want to be healed?" might be interpreted, "Are you ready to be perfected?" or, "Are you ready to become a channel of healing to others?"

Trust

The prophet Jeremiah was told to give up his mistaken tone of distrust and despair and

cleanse his heart "from unworthy suspicions concerning God's faithfulness" (Jer. 15:19, Amp.). In our piety we say, "Oh, I'd never doubt God." But we don't know our own hearts. Peter thought he would never deny Jesus, but he did. We do well to be honest with ourselves and recognize our human frailties.

As the Israelites had to be reminded hundreds of times, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Egypt," so we must remind ourselves often of his faithfulness to us. We can erase doubts by seeking a more vital union with him. He declares, "I the LORD do not change" (Mal. 3:6, NIV). Again he says, "I will not take my love from him, nor will I ever betray my faithfulness. I will not violate my covenant or alter what my lips have uttered" (Psa. 89:33, 34, NIV).

The Lord made a covenant with the Israelites that if they would trust and obey him, he would supply all their needs, physically and materially. The writer to the Hebrews said Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant founded on better promises. Everything God did for the early Israelites he is willing to do for you and me.

Right Thinking

It is not enough to know God's faithfulness unless we enter into a faith relationship with him. That means we'll have to think differently from the world's way of thinking. When Moses led the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, he gave them rules to live by. Among other things, they had to change their way of thinking. When we come out of spiritual bondage, we need to change our thought patterns.

Recognizing this need for right thinking, Paul wrote, "Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good" (Rom. 12:2, Phillips).

The Lord told Isaiah not to follow the way of the people. He said, "Do not fear what they fear, and do not dread it" (Isa. 8:12, NIV). We have to refuse negative thoughts and develop a new way of thinking. This takes place by an act of the will. Meditation and prayer are necessary, but we must move on to action.

We're not at the mercy of every thought that comes to our minds. We have the power to choose what our minds dwell on. The Psalmist declared that he meditated on the law of God night and day. Constantly renewing and reprogramming our minds according to God's way of thinking develops faith for healing. We can "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" A mind yielded to God and fixed on him becomes a mind of faith.

Forgiveness

One of the most important conditions for receiving healing is maintaining an attitude

of forgiveness. An unforgiving heart is a door closed against healing. Paul exhorts us to be "tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32). The apostle of love writes, "If our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him" (1 John 3:21, 22, NIV). Unforgiveness is displeasing to him. James reminds us, "Confess your faults [including unforgiveness] one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed" (Jas. 5:16).

Regardless of how unjust an offense may have been, we have power to forgive. Jesus said, "Freely you have received, freely give." One of the greatest gifts we can give to ourselves or to each other is forgiveness. "If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20:23, NIV). The one who readily forgives all sin enables us to forgive. If you do not feel like forgiving your offender, determine to *will* to forgive and let feelings follow.

The Word

The Word of God is a treasure chest of promises waiting to be unlocked. The Psalmist told God, "I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil" (Psa. 119:162, NIV). His Words are "life unto those that find them and health to all their flesh" (Prov. 4:22).

For three months before the Lord touched me in 1969, healing me of a 10-year ailment, I spent several hours a day immersing myself in the Scriptures, especially the Gospels. During those weeks of neglecting everything except Bible reading and meditation, my faith accelerated to the point of knowing beyond knowing that Jesus still heals. Hearing present-day healing testimonies is thrilling, but nothing builds faith like God's Word. "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17, NIV).

Referring to the healing covenant God made with the Israelites, the Psalmist said, "He sent forth his word and healed them" (Psa. 107:20). That covenant hasn't been annulled. He still heals.

God can do only what we allow him to do in us and for us. Without realizing it, we often block the flow of his healing power. Our walk with the Lord is a spiritual walk. Genuine spiritual insight into his abundant love brings with it the knowledge of his compassion and grace.

However, having stated all the foregoing truth, I believe it only fair to concede that not everyone is healed, either divinely or by natural means. I have no doubt that God wants wholeness for us all. But he brings it about in his own way and in his own time. While we wait, we can only trust in his goodness and mercy, allowing him to accomplish his purpose in us as he chooses.

THE CIRCLE OF FORGIVENESS

by
Pastor
Don
Needham

The town of Centralia, Pennsylvania, has been on fire for years. But it is not the kind of blaze a local fire department can be called to douse. It's a subterranean fire.

Unfortunately, this village sits above an abandoned coal mine where a smoldering combustion inches along, eating its way slowly through veins of coal. Smoke and steam constantly belch from mine shafts; there is a continual fear of cave-ins, and little hope that it will be extinguished unless it burns itself out.

Does that news account bring a number of "slowly simmering" people to mind? Does it remind you of individuals possessing an internal fire—smoldering with resentment—even hatred? Gradually this burning creeps along, nibbling away at their joy and vitality. Invariably, in most conversations, they find a way to bring up the object of their malice. They dwell upon their hurt or an injustice—and frequently devise ways to inflict pain upon the one who has hurt them.

The reasons these infernos rage can be many: it may blaze from an ugly separation and divorce...one may smolder for years beyond childhood against parents who were too strict or abusive...it can be a religious or racial hatred...sometimes it

exists between neighbors or relatives who've had words...and more often than not, it flames up in churches—incinerating relationships; destroying unity; and restricting progress for the cause of Christ.

Forgiveness

Let the term roll slowly through your mind. Few words are more powerful than "forgiveness." It is mighty because of the freedom, liberation, and peace it brings to the one who experiences it.

While reading about the difficulty of translating the Bible into different languages, I came across a strange but explicit definition of forgiveness. Translators could find no parallel word in the New Guinea dialect. They eventually used an expression that makes absolutely no sense to us—"God does not hang up jawbones." But to a native of New Guinea—people who have practiced head-hunting for centuries—it says everything. In that barbaric culture, a man could not get married until he had killed an enemy. After the killing, he would take the scalp or skullcap to verify his deed. The family of the victim would reclaim the body, cut out and clean up the jawbone, and hang it on a doorpost. *This jawbone was a constant, visual reminder of a score to be settled—a death to be avenged.*

When these people became Christians, one of their first acts was to take down and "bury their jawbones." It was an announcement of forgiveness; they were no longer seeking revenge. Such an unusual but revealing illustration! *God doesn't "hang up jawbones"—and neither should we!*

The process of forgiveness is multi-dimensional. Let's consider it from several perspectives.

God Forgives Me

Wax buildup: any homemaker worth her salt has battled this sneaky enemy responsible for that yellow residue. Unchallenged, it grows thicker in corners and low-traffic areas. But while wax builds up by millimeters on kitchen floors, *GUILT accumulates by ounces, pounds, and tons on the shoulders of those who don't know God's forgiveness!*

Guilt feelings are experienced by everyone who recognizes the existence of God. For in that acknowledgment, one also accepts that God has expectations for his creation. And when he finds himself outside the fence of God's will (sinning), or not living up to God's expectations, the natural result is *GUILT*.

But God in his genius has provided a means for us to be relieved of that guilt.

BUILDING UP THE BODY

PART VI

Consider the story of David to see forgiveness at its best. After his illicit affair with Bathsheba, knowledge that she was pregnant with his child and that he had planned the murder of her husband Uriah buried David under an avalanche of guilt. His days were black with depression. Realization that he had so terribly disappointed his God, while violating his own moral code, was destroying this previously righteous man.

Reflect upon Psalm 51 (NIV), written by David after the prophet Nathan had confronted him about his sins.

First, look at his "recognition" and "repentance" of sin (verses 1-4a):

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. *For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.* Against you, you only, *have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.*

Then, at his desire for "wholeness" again (verses 7-12):

Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. *Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.* Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Devastated by his moral failures, David throws himself upon the mercy of God. The sunshine has gone out in his life; he feels as though he is falling into a bottomless pit. He must find help and release.

The *desperation* he expressed in Psalm 51 is replaced by a *peace* in Psalm 103—written by David many years later. Notice the guilt has been lifted:

Praise the LORD, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. *He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases; he redeems my life from the pit and crowns me with love and compassion (verses 1-4).*

He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; *as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us (verses 10-12).*

At last David was liberated. The joy had returned. Finally he could get a good night's sleep—face himself in a mirror.

Here's good news for anyone crushed beneath a load of guilt—**God is still in the "forgiving business."** He wants his children

to be unshackled. If you're not letting God forgive you, you're not letting him do what he does best. If you are embarrassed to confess your sins, or think they're too big for him to handle, you're limiting God.

The Apostle John confirms David's experience with these words:

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9, NIV).

That's DIVINE FORGIVENESS!

Next Step: I Forgive Me

For some this second step may not sound too difficult—hardly worth thinking about. They're able to forgive themselves as easily as they might step into a shower and rinse off external dirt. Others cannot find release so readily. The shame of their sin binds them, eventually crippling them emotionally. Let's analyze this problem.

Many people take a sin to God, confess it, and intellectually accept his forgiveness. They reason, "The Bible says he will, so he must, so I am forgiven." *But then they won't forgive themselves!* There is an inner mechanism that says, "You really can't be forgiven or cleansed until you've been properly punished. You've done a rotten thing; you can't just say 'I'm sorry' to God, and get off that easily." So they set up their own judicial system—their own judge and jury—to punish themselves. They impose a strange kind of self-torture—self-punishment they sense is deserved for their sin. Being far harder on themselves than is God, their sentence is often never completed.

A person caught in this web doesn't grasp the dimensions of God's forgiveness. *One only totally experiences his forgiveness when he is then merciful enough to turn and forgive himself!* When one says, "God has, but I won't," he's saying, "I know better than God does about this matter of forgiveness."

Here is a clue to determine if you have this problem: Do you repeatedly find yourself seeking forgiveness for a particular sin of your past? Again and again do you petition God to take the stain of it from your life? That's probably an indication that your judicial system is telling you, "You have more time to serve." Remember the mercy of God—"as far as the east is from the west." Be as merciful to yourself!

Before we leave this section, one more consideration. *To forgive oneself, it is necessary to first set things right.* It's not enough to just keep sweeping down spider webs—we need to *kill the spider.*

A marvelous example of people setting things right, and in the process clearing their consciences, can be seen in the constant flow of money that comes in anonymously to the government. People who've been less than honest when filing income

taxes and government employees who have pilfered from their jobs are squaring things up with those unsolicited contributions.

The applications are obvious. Something stolen should be returned. A damaging lie should be corrected. When past wrongs are made right, then the channels are open for total self-forgiveness.

The Biggest Step: I Forgive the One who Has Hurt Me

An atrocious crime was committed in Denver in 1969. A widowed mother, Mrs. Hanna, in her late fifties, and her daughter Pat, who was 35, shared a home together. Pat was going to Bible College preparing to be a missionary while working part time. One Saturday night after leaving work she was abducted, raped, and murdered. Next morning her knife-punctured body was found by two boys rabbit hunting. After striking on two more occasions, eight months later her murderer was apprehended. Found guilty, he was sentenced to life imprisonment instead of executed as the mother had hoped.

Mrs. Hanna, though a committed Christian, later revealed that a fire raged inside her. She lived to hate. She became obsessed with hatred for this man who had brutally killed her daughter. For two years she remained bitter, sour, and angry—cutting herself off from social contact. Finally, while sitting in a Sunday School class listening to a Gideon speaker talk about sending memorial Bibles, she felt as though Jesus spoke to her with these words, "My life, too, had a brutal ending. Yet my Father did not turn away from his lost children. Set yourself free by forgiving. Set yourself free from your prison of hate." After his presentation, she asked the Gideon speaker, "Will you take the man who murdered my daughter a Bible?" Please tell him, "Because Jesus forgives you, Mrs. Hanna forgives you, and because Jesus loves you, I love you."

For the first time in two years this hatred-filled mother was free. The fire was doused. Nine months later she got word that this killer had accepted Christ. He wrote, "Tell Mrs. Hanna that she has given me a gift such as I have never before had. I believe that if she could show me such forgiveness, I have hope and faith that God could do the same for me." This "forgiven murderer" then began to minister to fellow prisoners, conducted Bible studies, and led others to Christ.

This is an extraordinary example of forgiveness. *Yet until we get to the point where we can forgive those who've hurt us, the circle of forgiveness is incomplete.*

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you" (Eph. 4:32, NIV). Did you catch that last phrase, "just as in Christ God forgave you"? That's what the

(Continued on p. 16)

The
Circle of
Forgiveness

(Continued)

parable of the unmerciful servant was given to illustrate. (See Matt. 18:23, 24.) Because a man had seen his \$10 million debt cancelled, he should have been merciful to forget the \$17 another owed him. But he didn't. He couldn't. *When we can't find it in ourselves to forgive others, God can't forgive us* ("Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors," Matt. 6:12). **Forgiveness from God hinges upon our forgiveness of others.**

A reminder again of 1 Corinthians 13:6, "Love [agape] keeps no score of wrongs" (NEB). Forgiveness requires destroying the debit ledger.

And finally, there is the matter of FORGETFULNESS. How often it can be heard, "I'll forgive, but I'll never forget." Frequently it has been debated, "Is it possible to forgive unless we also forget?" But can our minds actually allow us to forget? The way God has made us—with that internal filing system we call "memory"—*it is doubtful we can fully forget even the things we want to forget.* Truly a dilemma!

Accepting that "total obliteration" of a painful incident from one's consciousness may not be possible, still the very essence of the act of forgiveness implies that we immediately begin to *work on forgetting.* This is not to say that the instant one forgives his mind is wiped clean of the happening. But it does imply that from the time of release, recall becomes more difficult. Thoughts of it become hazier, more obscure, until in time it becomes just a faint light at the end of a very long tunnel.

There is a valid test to see if you have forgiven and are in the process of forgetting. Even though an incident occurred several years past, at the mention of it do you have total recall? Can you give a blow-by-blow account of everything that was done—every word that was said? Do you like to throw gasoline on the smoldering coals of a memory to keep it fresh and vivid? *Then you are only fooling yourself if you believe you've forgiven!*

Forgiveness is not complete until it goes full circle: **God Forgives Me. I Forgive Me. I Forgive the One Who Has Hurt Me.**

THE CHRIST IS

"The world has had enough . . . of hunger, injustice, war. In answer to our call for help, as world teacher for all humanity THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE."

These words appeared at the top of a large ad which circulated in a number of major newspapers around the world on Sunday, April 25, 1982. The advertisement proceeded to tell us that we would be able to recognize the Christ as being a "modern man concerned with modern problems—political, economic, and social. Since July, 1977, the Christ has been emerging as a spokesman for a group or community in a well-known modern country. He is not a religious leader, but an educator in the broadest sense of the word—pointing the way out of our present crisis. We will recognize him by his extraordinary spiritual potency, the universality of his viewpoint, and his love for all humanity. He comes not to judge, but to aid and inspire."

Furthermore, the article identified this "Christ" by calling him Lord Maitreya. The ad said that this world teacher is known by Christians as the Christ, by Jews as the Messiah, to the Buddhists he is the 5th Buddha, Moslems call him the Imam Mahdi, and the Hindus call him Krishna. The item goes on to say that these are all names for one individual.

At the end of the ad the question was asked, "When will we see him?" The ad answers by saying, "Soon the Christ will acknowledge his identity and within the next two months will speak to humanity through a worldwide television and radio broadcast. His message will be heard inwardly, telepathically, by all people in their own language."

This ad, to say the least, is startling. Who is this "Christ" who has been emerging since July, 1977? What is his plan for aiding and inspiring mankind? Why didn't he appear in June, 1982, as the ad predicted?

It is only natural that Christians who know Bible prophecy regarding the appearance of a future antichrist would have many questions about this "modern man concerned with modern problems."

Though I do not claim to be an expert in answering these questions, I have read several articles which may help to shed light on this matter. And perhaps this article will encourage you to keep your eyes open and your ears alert to possible fulfillment of Bible prophecy.

There are an increasing number of people and organizations throughout the world that are involved in what is called a New Age Movement. Many persons involved in the movement are participating in great sincerity and with an enormous desire to help solve the problems of the world. They believe that a one-world government, headed by a powerful man, could help reduce the threat of nuclear holocaust, substantially reduce the need for multibillion-dollar defense budgets, and reallocate wealth so that starvation, disease, and poverty could be virtually eliminated.

Many persons in the world are frustrated with the failure of national governments and the United Nations to deal with world problems. They have concluded that there needs to be a sweeping change in the way the world's affairs are run, and thus they propose to usher in the New Age.

The New Age would be nothing less than the creation of a new world order. And the proponents of the movement are very open to what they intend to do. Marilyn Ferguson has written a book entitled "The Aquarian Conspiracy." The message of her book is that the movement is getting ready to take over the world. But you don't need to worry. You'll love it. She says that this movement has infected practically everything from medicine to religion, including politics and government.

NOW HERE

by David Krogh

Some of the fundamental tenets of the movement are:

1. Belief in evolution and the perfectability of man.
2. Salvation by works.
3. That Jesus and Christ are two different persons. Jesus was an ordinary man who studied hard under a variety of pagan masters and by doing that he equipped himself to receive the Christ consciousness. In the ages to come man will attain to greater heights, and lights still more intense will come. (I.e., a light more intense than Jesus will come.) "And then at last a mighty soul will come to light the way up to the throne of perfect man."
—Chapter 14 of the Aquarian Gospel.
4. Belief in occultism.
5. Belief in reincarnation.

This is only a short list of some of the teachings of the New Age Movement, but the list is representative and gives you a good clue as to the direction the movement is taking.

Why did the Christ not appear in June of last year? Some propose that the New Agers were shocked at the large number of Americans who know Bible prophecy and identified this person as the/an antichrist. The leaders can't seem to understand why Bible-believing Christians won't fall in line and cooperate with the New Age Movement. Their plan seems so "reasonable" that they were unprepared for any opposition.

Since the Christ did not appear, some Christians have concluded that the ads were merely a hoax, which can now be ignored. However, it would appear that the evidence cannot be ignored. Rather than expecting the collapse of the New Age Movement, it appears that its proponents are prepared to lay more groundwork before revealing their Christ.

In the October, 1982, *Reader's Digest*, on page 203, there is a full-

page color ad entitled "The Great Invocation." At the top is a flower with a jewel or white light coming from the center. The Great Invocation is as follows:

"From the point of Light within the
the Mind of God

Let light stream forth into the
minds of men.

Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the
Heart of God

Let love stream forth into the
hearts of men.

May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of
God is known

Let purpose guide the little
wills of men—

The purpose which the Masters
know and serve.

From the centre which we call the
race of men

Let the Plan of Love and Light
work out

And may it seal the door where
evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power
restore the Plan on Earth.

The Great Invocation belongs to all humanity. Will you join the millions who daily use this prayer to invoke peace on earth? Become a co-worker in God's Plan, for only through humanity can the Plan work out.

Card Copies (without charge) from:
Lucis Trust, 866 United Nations Plaza,
Suite 566/7, New York, NY 10017-
1888 Tel. (212) 421-1577

Is "God's Plan" which is mentioned here the plan which is clearly laid out in the Bible? Is the Christ mentioned as returning to earth, Jesus the Son of God? Who are the Masters mentioned in the prayer?

Most people, including me, skimmed this prayer and concluded that it was a nice thing for the Lucis Trust to make available to the 31 million readers of the *Reader's Digest*. But

who is the Lucis Trust and why would it spend thousands of dollars to print this Great Invocation?

I am told that the Lucis Trust was incorporated in 1922 as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Before it was incorporated it was known as Lucifer's Trust or the Lucifer Publishing Company. Because it could not be accepted widely as Lucifer's Trust, the name was changed to Lucis Trust.

It appears that the Lucis Trust, with offices in New York and London, is at the very center of The New Age Movement. It is working with some 10,000 organizations around the world which are committed to ushering in the new age.

By reading other material published by the New Agers, it seems that the innocent-sounding words of the Great Invocation really have reference to the revealing of the Maitreya as the Christ. The Plan referred to is their plan to take over the world. The Masters are the leaders of the Movement, and the phrase "may it seal the door where evil dwells" may have reference to doing away with all who would be in opposition to their plan.

In his ministry Jesus warned, "Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. . . . Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; inasmuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not; for as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:4, 5, 23-27).

We would do well to heed the
(Please turn to page 20)

MARRIAGE

DIVORCE

by
Richard
Worley



MARRIAGE is an institution established by the Lord God and governed by his laws. The Jewish concept of marriage was twofold: 1) for posterity, and 2) for companionship. In Judaism, if there was no posterity after 10 years the relationship could be terminated; also, if the companionship was less than hoped for the marriage could be terminated. However, there is no indication that this was acceptable with God. Abraham and Sarah, though barren for many years, did not choose to end their relationship and they, as well as the whole world, were blest for it in later years.

Jesus offered his interpretation of this complex problem in Matthew 19:3-12. Let's consider the statements of Jesus and Paul on this vital issue. In the passage in Matthew 19 Jesus said concerning divorce, "But from the beginning it was not so" (verse 8). What God had established in the beginning was that a man shall "leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they shall be one flesh." And this has never changed. After Jesus stated God's original intent the Pharisees asked why Moses gave the option of divorce.

The answer to this question is vitally

important. Jesus said Moses allowed divorce "because of the hardness of your hearts." (Matt. 19:8). The implication of this is serious. Because of the hardness of Israel's heart God changed his mind and allowed divorce? God changed his thinking rather than expecting man to change his? This is not rational! Besides, Jesus did not say that God allowed divorce, but that Moses made provision for the divorce, and I am not sure that he did it with the blessing of God any more than he had God's blessing when he broke the tablets of stone or smote the rock rather than speaking to it. If God will change his rules and laws because of the hardness of men's hearts, then we have no absolutes of righteousness to build upon. With the popularity of homosexuality today, it might be acceptable with God, if he changes his rules to agree with the hardness of man's heart. I do not believe this to be the case. God does not annul his laws to fit the desires of mankind, but he expects men to conform to his stated will.

Jesus said that the only reason God allowed a divorce was in the case of immorality. Jesus quoted this verse as

the only reason for divorce and then added the meaning of violating this law. "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except if be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery" (Matt. 19:9). No extenuating circumstances, no alterations, but a simple law that Jesus expected people to follow! This statement is clear and concise, but many fail to grasp the implication of what Jesus said. The basic question is, "When do they commit adultery?" Is it only on the first occasion of a sexual encounter, or is it something that happens every time the couple comes together? I believe it is evident that the last interpretation is the necessary one. It is not popular to use the phrase "living in sin" anymore, but that seems to be what Jesus is saying. They are committing adultery.

But what about forgiveness? Is this an unforgivable sin? Can't cleansing take place? If it is true that adultery becomes a part of marriage after a divorce as Jesus said in Matthew 19, then Paul adds this statement to the problem before us: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God

forbid" (Rom. 6:1, 2a). Look at the formula for forgiveness as found in

1 John 1:9.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." When John said "confess," he had much more in mind than our concept of just admitting our sins to God. The word that John used means to "say the same thing as the other," or "to agree with another." Confession of sin, then, is not only admitting the sin but also "includes the saint's hatred of that sin, his sense of guilt because of it, his contrition because of it, the determination to put it out of his life and never do that thing again" (Wuest, *Word Studies in the New Testament*). Forgiveness takes place, then, when we come to hate the sin as God does. This being the case, there is no way we could live in a marital state where adultery is committed on a regular basis. For forgiveness we must first of all have God's attitude about that sin.

There are some things that do not change when we accept Christ. If we were a veteran before baptism, we are a veteran after baptism; if we are a college graduate before baptism, we are a college graduate after baptism; if we are divorced before baptism, we are divorced after baptism. The disciples evidently understood the statement of Jesus in Matthew 19 because their response was, "It is good not to marry." Jesus did not disagree with them, but went ahead to explain that there were three kinds of eunuchs in the world: 1) Those from their mother's womb; 2) those who were made so by men; 3) those who are eunuchs for the kingdom of God. Some people, understanding God's laws of marriage, will not be married after a divorce that is contrary to the standards of Deuteronomy 24:1, choosing rather to be a "spiritual eunuch for the sake of the kingdom of God." This is a difficult saying and one that may not seem fair, but it is God's way and it is biblical.

Paul

In 1 Corinthians 7 Paul gives a brief lecture on the marriage institution and the reasons for and against divorce. Briefly stated, Paul says that the unmarried and widows would be better to stay single, but it is acceptable for them to marry. He does not include a divorced person up to this point. If a marriage should be dissolved, there should be no remarriage unless the two decide to reconcile. He then speaks of a marriage between believer and unbeliever. If the unbeliever desires the divorce, the believer should allow the divorce and is no longer "under bondage" in such an instance. This seems to be where the confusion starts. In verse 39 Paul uses similar language concerning the wife whose husband has died. She is no longer under bondage and is free to remarry. Wouldn't it be reasonable to assume that if both are not "under bondage," then both would have the right to remarry, whether the marriage ended by death or by divorce? The answer is "No." Paul used two different words with two different meanings in these two verses. In the first instance (verse 15), the word "bondage" has the meaning of a slave or servant. After a divorce in this instance with an unbeliever, then the believer is no longer obligated to be obedient unto that person. In Acts 7:6 Stephen uses the same word about the people of Israel and their bondage or servitude in Egypt. However, in verse 39, Paul uses a word for the person who has lost a mate in death that illustrates a different kind of bondage. Of this person he uses a word which carries the thought of actually being bound or tied up in knots. This is probably where we get the saying that a couple "tied the knot" when they were married. Scripturally, the only way this knot is loosed is by death or by divorce when there has been fornication. In other places in the Scripture where the word is used it is in connection with a binding with cords. (John 18:12; Matt. 14:3; Acts 21:11.)

Conclusion

To draw a conclusion in this matter is relatively simple and at the same time very difficult. Jesus said there was a reason for divorce—fornication—and this alone, other than death of a mate, allows a person to remarry. In contrast to remarriage, Jesus said that being a eunuch for the kingdom of God is the right path to follow. Paul concurs with this and allows remarriage only in the case of the death of a mate and then only to someone "in the Lord." This is difficult for someone in a divorce situation, but I believe it is biblical.

The next problem is handling the issue of divorced and remarried persons who are now in the Lord's church. The church has to take a stand somewhere in order to make divorce and remarriage look as bad as it is—a situation condemned in the Scriptures. There is a need for classes to be taught on a regular basis throughout our Sunday Schools on the value and sacred relationship of the marriage institution. Lessons on the Christian home should be emphasized as well. We have a greater problem today because the church has not exercised proper discipline in the past. We have lost much of our strong teaching on this subject because people refuse to look at the problem from a biblical standpoint alone. Often their decisions are made and opinions formed because a good friend or a member of the family is in this situation, and being objective becomes very difficult.

If what has been said in this article is biblical then it is a very dangerous situation because among those who will not be admitted into the kingdom are adulterers. (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 5:9-12.) It is a situation we need to resolve apart from personalities and emotions and from the standpoint of Scripture. May God direct us in finding an answer to these perplexing questions and a course of action that will benefit his church in this age and in the age to come.

Pastor Richard Worley's article presents his examination of Scripture which sheds light on the problem of divorce and remarriage. In publishing his treatise *THE RESTITUTION HERALD* is adhering to a publishing policy which makes available to our readership writing that casts new light upon truth or leads to better understanding of the Word of God.

While Worley's article should not be taken as official Church

of God policy on the issue, his opinions should be weighed in a biblical and scholarly fashion by our readers. *THE RESTITUTION HERALD* has no desire to open this issue up to heated debate in its pages. Thoughts based on emotions and situations cannot be permitted on any issue. But we are open to scholarly overviews of Scripture similar to the Worley article.

Russell Magaw, Editor.

INCARNATION: BIBLICAL TRUTH OR LATER TRADITION?

(Continued from page 9)

(or rather him who became the Father of Jesus at his birth); yet it was with Jesus in mind that the universe came to be (Col. 1:16).¹² A biblical view of preexistence will do nothing to lower the stupendous status conferred upon the Son of God. It will do much to identify Jesus with the human race, as the mediator, the *man* Jesus Christ (1 Tim. 2:5). It will put an end to irresolvable arguments about how anyone can be God and man at the same time.

Searchers for the truth about the person of Jesus Christ should take careful note of the remarks of leading New Testament scholars who point out that the classic formulation of doctrine about Jesus, in the 5th century, "was determined neither by Scripture nor by experience but by the Arian controversy on the doctrine of the Trinity..." (J.A.T. Robinson, *The Human*

abroad. If one is prepared to test a hypothesis, other than that of the traditional incarnation, a very different and refreshingly coherent view of Christ can emerge. The biblical picture of Jesus—the Messiah of Israel and the Savior of the world, in whom all the fullness of the deity was manifested (Col. 2:9), the man who perfectly represents his Father and fulfills the role of the second Adam—needs no explanation in terms of the Greek philosophical speculations which dominated the discussion in post-biblical times. Indeed, Jesus appeared in a strange new and unbiblical garb when "theology" began to present him as "God the Son" and second member of a coequal, coeternal Trinity. Those who search for the Jesus of the Bible will find him where he belongs—in his Hebrew setting, his native environment. In that context his universal significance shines out all the more clearly, and his glory as the "express image of the Father" remains undiminished.

THE CHRIST IS NOW HERE

(Continued from page 17)

words of Jesus. Probably each generation of believers has been confronted with an antichrist who attempted to lead men astray. But in the last days, there will be a great culmination of apostasy and the final antichrist will be revealed. Antichrists will be so appealing and so deceptive that "if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The fulfillment of many Bible prophecies indicates we are living in the last days before the return of Jesus, the Son of God. Our friends and neighbors need to be informed of John's warning: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son" (1 John 2:22). The leaders of the New Age Movement deny that Jesus is the Christ. They insist that Maitreya is the Christ and Jesus is his disciple. This is heresy, and yet the gullible and ignorant can be misled.

Though we may become frightened by the uncertainty of the end times, Isaiah speaks clearly to us today when he promises:

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; and the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence; he will come and save you" (Isa. 35:1-4).

Yes, this is our job: to strengthen the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees, and tell people God's true plans. We need not fear, because God's plan will certainly come to pass. And we can rejoice that events predicted years ago are being fulfilled before our eyes. It is indeed a great privilege to watch the grand finale of human history, as God's New Age is ushered in with the establishment of the kingdom of God here upon the earth. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

Church of God General Conference
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061



Address Correction Requested

Face of God, p. 102). Maurice Wiles observes that the church has "not usually in practice (whatever it may have claimed to be doing in theory) based its Christology exclusively on the witness of the New Testament" (*The Remaking of Christian Doctrine*, p. 54). In the same vein a distinguished Harvard theologian noted that "Fourth century Trinitarianism did not reflect accurately early Christian teaching regarding the nature of God; it was, on the contrary, a deviation from this teaching. It developed against constant unitarian opposition and was never wholly victorious. The dogma of the Trinity owes its existence to abstract speculation on the part of a small minority of scholars." (F. Auer, *Lowell Institute Lectures*, Boston, 1933).

Any Christology or other teaching claiming a Christian origin must base itself squarely on the evidence of the Hebrew Scriptures as well as the New Testament. Church history shows how dogmatic assumptions, gained from post-New Testament times and enshrined in traditional creeds, have so often blocked a free reading of Scripture. Yet a new spirit of enquiry seems to be

¹C. Gore, *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, 1891, p. 17.

²Radio interview, U.S.A., 1982.

³Don Cupitt, *The Debate About Christ*, SCM Press, 1979.

⁴F. W. Young, *Incarnation and Myth. The Debate Continued*, SCM Press, 1979, pp. 174, 179.

⁵M. Wiles, *The Myth of God Incarnate*, SCM Press, p. 3.

⁶For example, a number of Churches of God in the U.S.A., and small fellowships in England.

⁷*Christology in the Making*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia.

⁸Barnabas Lindars, *Christ and Salvation*, Bulletin of John Rylands, University of Manchester, Vol. 64, No. 2, p. 481.

⁹The term "mighty God" predicated of Messiah in Isaiah 9:6 read in its Old Testament context can well mean "divine hero" (Brown, Driver, Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 42). The predicted King would bear a divine title as representing the one God.

¹⁰Statements about a preexistent "Son of man" in John's Gospel, if they are taken as evidence of Christ being alive before his birth, would prove no more than that he was a man in heaven before being born!

¹¹Though it is freely admitted that there are other texts in John which have not been dealt with in this brief study.

¹²See the excellent exegesis of this passage and Philipians 2 in James Dunn's *Christology in the Making*.



The

Restitution Herald

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A Proclamation

NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER

By the President of the United States of America

Prayer is the mainspring of the American spirit, a fundamental tenet of our people since before the Republic was founded. A year before the Declaration of Independence in 1775, the Continental Congress proclaimed the first National Day of Prayer as the initial positive action they asked of every colonist.

Two hundred years ago in 1783, the Treaty of Paris officially ended the long, weary Revolutionary War during which a National Day of Prayer had been proclaimed every spring for eight years. When peace came the National Day of Prayer was forgotten. For almost half a century, as the Nation grew in power and wealth, we put aside this deepest expression of American belief—our national dependence on the Providence of God.

It took the tragedy of the Civil War to restore a National Day of Prayer. As Abraham Lincoln said, "Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

Revived as an annual observance by Congress in 1952, the National Day of Prayer has become a great unifying force for our citizens who come from all the great religions of the world. Prayer unites people. This common expression of reverence heals and brings us together as a Nation and we pray it may one day bring renewed respect for God to all the peoples of the world.

From General Washington's struggle at Valley Forge to the present, this Nation has fervently sought and received divine guidance as it pursued the course of history. This occasion provides our Nation with an opportunity to further recognize the source of our blessings, and to seek His help for the challenges we face today and in the future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim Thursday, May 5, 1983, National Day of Prayer. I call upon every citizen of this great Nation to gather together on that day in homes and places of worship to pray, each after his or her own manner, for unity of the hearts of all mankind.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 27th day of January in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh.

RONALD REAGAN

THE RESTITUTION HERALD

Letters to the Editor

Comments Showered on the April HERALD

Thank you for printing Bro. Worley's article on Marriage and Divorce (page 18). I agree. I think the church should stand firm on the Scriptural points brought out. The early church did. I'm writing to him to commend him.

The article, "The Christ Is Now Here"—shouldn't there have been a question mark at the end of the title? It was shocking, but not surprising.

—Westerville, OH.

Hollis Partlowe gave us the best clear summary of the economical and prophetic situation anyone could possibly give (page 4). David Krogh did a great job on clueing the membership in on the subtle (but strong) influence and activities of the "New Age Movement." I already had an introduction to this worldwide cult from two other sources (page 16).

The use of the English language and style of writing by Marie Shropshire is superb and gets right to the kernel of the healing question (page 13). I can't say I've experienced instant healings, but in many of my accidents there were two choices—instant death or not death. The fact that I'm still alive proves to me that one or more of God's angels acted very fast to keep me three to six inches away from fatality.

The "Remember the Titanic" article was wonderful, but why the omission of the byline? I'm still digesting Richard Worley's article.

I haven't finished Anthony Buzzard's article yet ("Incarnation: Biblical Truth or Later Tradition?" page 8). He is generally right, but he doesn't need so many words and involved clauses and phrases to convince me. He would have had a hard time in English at the University of Minnesota the time I was taking it. Any compo that was initially 5000 words would have been returned with the request to cut it in half. Then after turning it in the second time, sentences, clauses, and sometimes paragraphs would be cut out, or all combined into one or two sentences. I ended up with A's but it was exhausting and frustrating.

—Minneapolis, MN.

The author of "Remember the Titanic" was Pastor Rex Cain.

—Editor.

Don't Look Back

One of the last things that I remember Bro. Harold Doan saying in one of his last sermons here was: "Don't look back and let something of the past worry you. Just say, 'I am what I am, and with God's help I will go on and do my best.'" His sermons were always inspiring and gave us food for thought.

—San Jose, CA.

Charting Spiritual History

I'd like to see a chart of the history of the Church of God. I think it would be real interesting to see some historical chart on the Church printed in THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

—Niles, MI.

March's Readers' Survey Additional Comments

I don't like so much black used. April issue is excellent.

The holocaust and the Dark Ages all came as a result of sin. This also is true of the rejection of Christ. The world today is headed for destruction; Christ is our only hope.

THE HERALD has improved the past year; we are thankful for the writers who consistently submit good doctrinal messages.

I love to read THE HERALD, but, using the March issue as an example, do you think that the very people we are trying to reach would get any good base for their thinking? The articles were excellent for my reading, but too involved, tedious, and all-inclusive for someone to read who knew nothing about his Creator, his Son, or his salvation. Aren't the nontheological people the very ones whom we are trying to reach and eventually convert?

I've always felt THE RESTITUTION HERALD published a good variety of topics.

Only a very conservative view is presented in articles dealing with contemporary issues. This includes such things as an extremely conservative view on abortion, separation of church and state, apparent endorsement of ultra-conservative politicians (i. e., Reagan), and an apparent attempt to justify Israel's activities in Lebanon and the West Bank. I can understand these articles being published, but I am upset that they are presented as representing the view of the Church of God and no other viewpoints are presented.

The Restitution Herald

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53, 54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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FORTY YEARS

BEN'S expression was sincere as he looked up at me. "When I get big, Mom, I'll take you and the children to church and then come and get you when it's over."

At first glance that may seem like a sweet, generous thing for a little boy of 10 to say, offering to provide transportation for me and the younger children on Sunday mornings. But that wasn't what he was really saying at all.

Ben planned to *drop us off* and *pick us up later*, just as his father did. Frank didn't think it was necessary to stay for church himself and this philosophy had been transferred to our first-born son.

Later I repeated Ben's offer to Frank. He laughed; he thought it was really quite hilarious that Ben was a "chip off the block," in fact.

They were quite a team, Ben and his father. I believed in discipline; Frank believed in being a pal. I stuck to my convictions but it was difficult.

For example, we were at the store one day and Ben wanted a toy. I don't recall what it was, but he had plenty of toys at home, so I told him no.

"My daddy will get it for me!" he announced defiantly.

He was right, too. Frank bought his "pal" just about anything he wanted. That was Frank, though. If Ben or the other children needed punishing, I was the one who administered it. He just couldn't be bothered; besides, it would spoil his "pal" image.



Frank gave his "pal" just about anything he wanted.

Of course Ben grew up, as little boys are prone to do, and all was not sweetness and light between father and son. In fact, strangely enough, Ben became closer to me—the disciplinarian—in later years. He and his father had terrible rows, usually over areas of responsibility (Ben didn't always get the car home when he said he would, among other things), even though it was Frank who had

taught Ben that a man should do what he wants to do, regardless of how it affects others.

Ben stopped going to church as soon as he could get away with it, again following his father's example. Naturally I prayed that he would return, but he never did while living at home.

Eventually Ben married a lovely local girl. They knew each other for

FROM NOW

quite some time before setting the date and it was a beautiful wedding. All was not serene in that marriage, however, and it nearly ended before it really began. Ben, although in his mid-twenties by then, was still a child in many ways, as demanding and unreasonable as his father had always been.

I remember going to that small first apartment where they lived after the honeymoon and helping them patch up a major conflict. Frank did not offer to accompany me, of course. It was only Jean's tremendous love for Ben that kept that marriage together. Perhaps my prayers helped some, too; I like to think so anyway.

Unfortunately Jean had little interest in church. Sundays were for sleeping, shopping, yardwork, and just relaxing. Ben made no effort to change her thinking. His father hadn't gone to church, after all; why should he?

Strangely enough, Frank started attending services with me after Ben was grown. We had a dynamic young pastor at the time whose messages were easy to listen to and often rather humorous. Of course it was much too late to influence Ben at that point, but I was pleased with Frank's sudden interest in spiritual things.

Ben and Jean gave us four healthy, handsome grandchildren as the years rolled by and I tried everything possible to get those children in our fine Sunday School. My pleas fell on

deaf ears. Oh, they allowed their children to attend a Sunday School near their home briefly, but with no encouragement from their parents the children soon dropped out.

Even though Ben is married and raising a family of his own, he still returns home from time to time—usually to borrow money. Frank didn't mind giving him \$20 or so, but that wasn't always enough. Ben couldn't work church into his schedule, but he found time for gambling, running up such debts at one point that Jean threw him out of their house. He slept on the couch in our living room for several nights. Again we had to "loan" him money, money which he has never repaid.

A few years ago he was arrested for drunk driving. Frank and I put out \$500 that time, and prayed that our friends wouldn't see Ben's name in the newspaper with all the others convicted of a similar offense that day. Apparently no one did.

Forty years have passed since that sweet-faced little boy offered to take me and the other children to church and then pick us up when it was over. Ben is past 50 now, but nothing has really changed. No, I take that back. Now it is Frank who refuses to give into Ben's demands, and the father of the boy—who is no longer a boy—can't figure out why Ben turned out the way he has!

Ben's most recent request for financial assistance was not for \$20, or \$500, but for \$5000! He had gotten involved in some shaky busi-

ness venture—without Jean's knowledge, of course—and needed to be bailed out. He seemed desperate for money, even spoke of "sticking up a liquor store," so I loaned it to him. Frank would have no part of it. Only this time I made Ben sign a receipt, promising to repay the loan. There was another stipulation as well.

"I want you to promise to attend church every Sunday for the next six weeks," I told him before handing over the check.

"Okay," he agreed.

I don't know if he is sticking by the agreement or not, although he has mentioned attending services at some church in his area (he couldn't recall the name, though).

Maybe it was wrong to give him the money; I don't know. Perhaps I'll never know. I'm not sure it was right to bribe him into attending services, but I had tried everything else.

My marriage to Frank hasn't been all that God intended such unions to be, and I'm sure that's partly my fault. At the same time, I do blame Frank for the way Ben has turned out. I've forgiven him, but I blame him nonetheless. He and Ben were so close when Ben was small; Frank had every opportunity to set a good example for his son. But he did not.

If it were possible to turn back the clock, I would, but it just isn't possible, of course. Children do grow up. You really only get one chance to raise them. I wonder what yours will be like, forty years from now.

By Angela Keith Benedict

What Makes

A Mother



HAPPY?

THE BIBLE SAYS of Mary, the mother of Jesus, that she "pondered all these things in her heart." What are the things that mothers ponder?

I remember happenings in our children's lives, like holding them on my lap as they went to sleep, or times they were sick and I was up all night with them, their first steps, or words, or special things they did. Are these the only things mothers remember?

Now they are older and I think of what they will become. There are special things they do that make parents so proud and happy. Their letters which end in "I really miss you guys," or "I love you all very much" thrill us. These are special to a mother. The times a daughter comes up and says, "Just wanted to hug and kiss you" are moments that make a mother happy.

I heard of a little boy who said to his mother, "Mom!" She answered, "What?" And he said, "I've gone just about as long as I can go without a hug and a kiss." I'm sure this will be one of the things this mother ponders in her heart.

I'm so grateful we taught our children to express their love. Sometimes mothers get busy and neglect to show love, but teen-agers can take the initiative with a peck on the cheek or just an "I love you." A son kissing Mom in front of all his friends, in spite of ridicule, gives her a special blessing to remember.

One evening we sat around the kitchen table and our son asked his father questions which had come out of theology class. Never could his father have been more proud than for his son to have confidence enough to share with him. As his mother, this was a special time to me—to listen to their sharing as two adults.

The birthday when he remembered his sister for the first time without prodding from his parents, and got her something special that he was sure she would want . . . the time he reached out and hugged her for the first time as a teen-ager—these are times a mother never forgets.

I know our children may not take our advice always, but we have appreciated the times they had enough confidence in us to ask and to share their hopes and dreams for the future . . . the times they remembered to say thanks and express appreciation for an ordinary dinner or snack prepared for them . . . the times they became concerned about their room and whether their clothes were neat and how they looked in public . . . the times we talked over a decision that had to be made, like Dad's changing jobs or moving from one area to another, and they shared their fears as well as their excitement about what God could do in their lives. All these things a mother ponders in her heart.

While reading about Joseph in the Old Testament I concluded that he should have turned out to be a juvenile delinquent. He lost his mother at a very young age, he was a favorite of his father and shown partiality, he was hated by his brothers, and he was jailed unjustly. In his young life he bragged about his gift of interpreting dreams, but when sold into Egypt he took his trials and temptations and used them for growth. He did not bear grudges against his brothers, but helped them in their time of need and allowed God to use him.

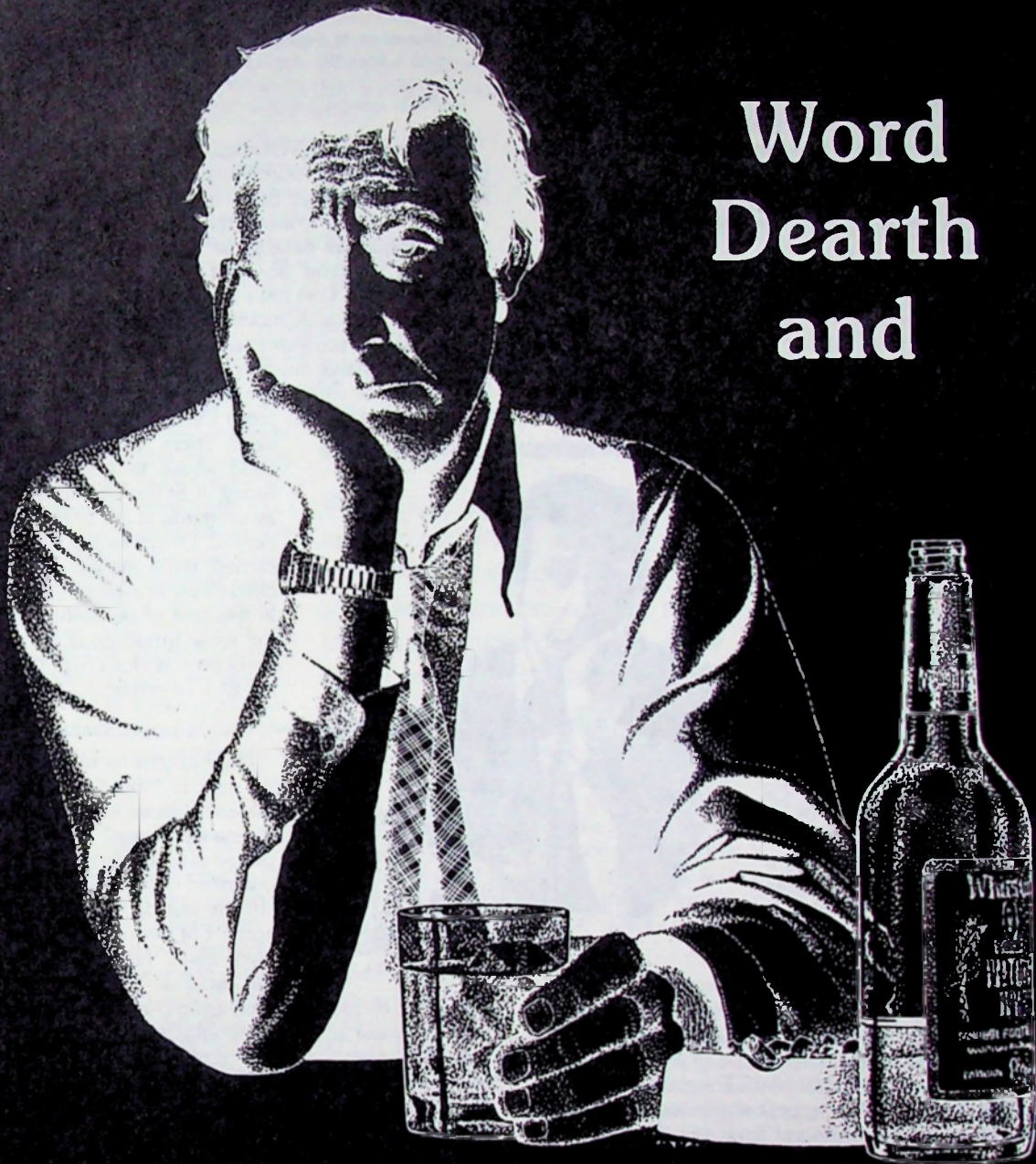
Today we often tell what a poor childhood we had and how we were not loved and blame everything on our parents. There are no perfect parents, but we can use these experiences in life to help us become what Christ wants us to become. There comes a time in everyone's life when he must take responsibility for his actions. My husband has often told young people that if they wanted to make their parents happy, they should turn out well.

Jessie Selmon, mother of three famous football players from Oklahoma, said, "Lucius and I have received many fine things from our children; wonderful grandchildren, a color TV set, a trip to Florida to see Dewey and LeRoy play professional football for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, our first car. For all those expressions of love, we'll be eternally grateful, but our biggest reward as parents has been our children's constant love of God."

Children, we appreciate your love, your gifts, your letters, your remembrances on our birthdays, anniversaries and special days, but we are happiest when we know you are doing what God wants you to do. You are including him in your plans for the future as you choose a vocation, a mate, recreation, etc. This is the most important thing you can do to make Mom happy. Turn out well by letting God guide your life.

—by Patricia L. Wood—

Word Dearth and



MORAL DECAY

A general feeling prevails within the Christian community, as well as on some nonchristian fronts, that there is a decline in our society to accept many of the moral principles upon which our nation was founded. We tend to believe that our youth—and even we ourselves—have not maintained and fostered some of the

(Continued on following page)

—by Pastor Joe Martin—

moral standards that were prevalent in our forefathers. In the area of religiosity, our belief in God, praying, and church attendance; in the area of sexuality, premarital sex, extramarital sex, and homosexuality, and in other moral areas, especially in relation to major crime, we ask the question, "Is our lack of teaching and understanding the Word of God a major influence in a decline in morality?"

The purpose of this article is to assess the question of whether there is a correlation between a lack of teaching of the Word of God ("Word Dearth") and a decline in the moral attitude and action of members of a particular society ("Moral Decay"). We will define terms, examine "decay," ask why, and discuss what now?

Correlation

First, what do we mean when we say "correlation"? It is a term that expresses interdependence of two things or variables. For instance there is, in most people's minds, a correlation between drunk drivers and deaths on the highway. It is stated in terms of a positive correlation, "When we have all these drunks on the road, people are going to die!" The two variables—drunk drivers and deaths—are interrelated in that when there is an increase in one, there is an increase in the other. Since X increases, then Y increases—a positive correlation. If Y decreases as X increases, one assumes a negative correlation.

From a Christian perspective, we define morality in terms of the rightness and wrongness of an action based on the Word of God. "It is wrong to steal" is a moral judgment. A Christian would say that stealing is wrong because the Word says it is wrong. A humanist would say that stealing is wrong because, if everyone stole, it would bring chaos to humanity. While the latter may be true, the believer stands primarily on the revelation of God. Francis Schaeffer in *A Christian Manifesto* (1981, p. 17f) believes that there has been a major shift in determining morality. The shift involves moving away from a world view that is somewhat Christian to a world view more in line with what may be termed "humanistic philosophy." The most important factor is that the latter does not accept absolutes. Therefore, when one says there is "moral decay," from a Christian standpoint he means that our actions are more and more wrong, more sinful. Some examples are more murders, more premarital sex (a humanist would not necessarily classify this as moral decay) or more divorces.

A good way to further define the question that we are asking is through the verse, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6). We define the Word of God as the way an individual should go. "Not departing" means that the person is not experiencing "moral decay," but good moral judgment. Hence, there may be a correlation between morality and training, especially in the Word of God. At least that is what Solomon may say; we have not made that conclusion in terms of moral decay in our society—yet.

Historical Decadence

In examining "moral decay," there is reason to believe there is no such thing. Just because your Uncle Bob is robbed does not necessarily mean there is moral decay. People have been

robbed since the beginning of time. Similarly people have stolen, murdered, etc., for a long time. In *Morality and Youth*, F. Philip Rice gives this quote:

Our earth is degenerate these days; there are signs that the world is speedily coming to an end; bribery and corruption are common; children no longer obey their parents; and the end of the world is evidently approaching (1980, p. 15).

Oh, yes, you say, YOU must have read that in the morning paper, it sounds familiar. Wrong! It is from 2800 B.C. from an Assyrian stone tablet. Some of the hysteria, if that is the case, of moral decay or "crime in the streets" may not be legitimate. As Christians, we need to be honest about the issue. Some talk of the "rampant" abuse of children in our society as a sign of moral decay. One has to question the hysteria going on in some circles while acknowledging the fact of child abuse. Dr. John Johnson, professor at Arizona State University, stated at a public forum that much public opinion concerning "rampant" child abuse or wife abuse may be attributed more to media exploitation and also more efficient reporting. His point is valid. There may have been as much child abuse in frontier America as today; it is just in vogue among the avant-garde at the present to be concerned. Of course we should be concerned, but is there a vast increase in child abuse to indicate "moral decay"? In the area of sexuality, one may ask the same question, Is an adult today more promiscuous than the people of the Old Testament?

Current Decadence

On the other hand, in examining what we feel is "moral decay," there is reason to believe, aside from any hysteria or media "hype," that we are in a period of moral decline. For a believer, one need only to turn to 2 Timothy 3, "In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves" (read verses 1-7 for the full picture). The evidence of moral

decay can be found in increasing crime, actual real increases that the most liberal criminologists cannot overlook. The "prison" homes that many of our elderly live in because they are afraid to get out on the streets is evidence. In *The Sociology of Social Problems*, Horton and Leslie discuss all the issues of better reporting or lack of reporting, the media, etc., and reach an honest conclusion: "All things considered, it is likely that the amount of crime has been increasing for at least several decades" (1970, p. 123). They are not willing to commit themselves to the fact of moral decay, but from a Christian standpoint there is no doubt. With the increases in divorce, the increase in promiscuity (cf. Kinsey reports), we, who believe sin is sin, are very safe in saying we are in a period of moral decay, possibly a drastic one. In the area of sexuality Frank Scarpitti in *Social Problems* says, "Although statistics may vary on the actual extent of premarital sexual activity, they agree on the direction of the trend" (1977, p. 548). One could go on with similar statements on murder rates and other felony statistics. We do not now act as morally as we did.

Reason for Decadence

The BIG question is why? Why are we experiencing the present moral decay? Scarpitti also says, "Obviously, the trend toward city living and the decline in religious influence



have to some extent been related" (p. 548). If he can make such a statement from the standpoint of a social scientist and not a believer, surely the believer, with the prophecies regarding the end of time, is able to make a similar, much more burdened statement. Notice the two variables that he introduces, city living and religious influence! He says, then, that there is a correlation between the trends, which we choose to call moral decay, and the variables, city living and religion.

Examining the first, one may recall many recent rat experiments to begin to answer the question why. Rats—yes, even rats—when provided with a nice environment will act a particular way. Their maternal and paternal characteristics develop. They care for their young. There is sharing, caring, and loving. However, when reared in a crowded environment, the rats become cannibalistic, selfish, and tend often to be homosexual, and generally experience moral decay! Isaiah 5:8 expresses the problem, "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they may be placed alone in the midst of the earth!" The context is in regards to hoarding of property, but it seems appropriate. There is a correlation between environment and morality. With more crowded cities, more apartments, more condominiums which require constant "rubbing of shoulders," we can expect more friction and more inability to make sound moral decisions. The constant stress, irritation, and forced contact does contribute to wrong decisions. When the people above, below, and to both sides keep you up all night with the latest in Japanese technology, alias the "stereo," and then you come home and your one parking space for your apartment is taken, how will you react? That's when we pray, "Lord, give me strength!"

Spiritual Decadence

This brings us to another variable that may be correlated to moral decay: our particular concern, "Word Dearth." Scarpitti commits himself to the point in saying "religious experience," or shall we say the lack of it, does contribute to the trends that we now call moral decay. McKee and Robertson in their *Social Problems* suggest a similar venue in the discussion of divorce, "But the more religious the partners, the less likely they are to become divorced" (1975, p. 400). They cite a study by Robert Udry. Since most believers consider divorce to be a sin (allowing for the fornication exception, Matt. 5:32; 19:9) and indicative of moral decay if more couples are getting divorces, then there is moral decay in this area due to the variable, "lack of religious experience." We then can conclude that lack of hearing the Word of God contributes to moral decay.

We can commit ourselves to saying that if people come into contact with the plan of God, then they are less likely to follow current trends. Other variables have been considered, such as "social imbalance" and poverty and wealth mixing, yet "religiosity" keeps coming out strong. It seems that if we train ourselves and our children in the Word of God and encourage our drawing closer to God, we are more capable of making moral decisions.

How to Avoid Decadence

Of course, for the believer studies showing the correlation may not be as important as the very Word of God. God instructs us to be very conscientious in teaching his Word. In Deuteronomy 6:7 we are told, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou

sittest . . . walkest . . . liest . . . and . . . risest up." God knows that if we continually have his precepts before us we will be more inclined to believe and do them. Therefore, we do conclude that the recent trends of certain behavior in our society, indicating moral decay, are the result of Word dearth. Evidently we fail to teach our children and ourselves in religious settings, allowing for what social scientists call "religious experience," causing moral decay. There is a correlation!

Do Something

What now? Having belabored the point, trying to establish a correlation between Word dearth and moral decay from both a social and theological perspective, where do we go from here? The path is obvious. TEACH, train up, and encourage each other in the Word of God. Our "do nothing" or "do little" approach IS NOT WORKING! Neither we nor our youth can make Christian decisions unless we are trained to make them, unless we are exposed to them. The "do nothing" or "do little" way ("I'm going to let my children decide when they're older"; "The church teaches my child one hour a week; that's good enough") is a farce! When parents decide to "do nothing," they are actually "doing something." (Rice, p. 55.) Rice, in his chapter, "The Process of Moral Development," continues, "They are contributing to moral confusion in their children by failing to provide any guidance for moral choices." (p. 55.)

Even we who are religious are extremely naive. Are two hours of religious training in Sunday School and church going to offset the 15 to 20 hours of immoral teaching the average child receives on television? Our youth are being taught by peers, by television, by bathroom walls, and we sit piously by hoping all will go well when they need to make moral decisions. We are being taught! We need to choose the teaching. We need to challenge our young people and ourselves to a commitment to the Word of God in preparation for the kingdom of God and the present "evil age" (Paul's words, not mine).

Change Necessary

The traditional church is failing. We are not honest enough to say that our traditional way of interpreting and teaching moral value, the Word of God, is not enough. We fail to begin early enough; we use antiquated methods where our children must learn two vocabularies and then learn it all in church; and we fail to make church exciting, generally speaking. Not only this, but also we fail to make the church a force in the community as it should be. Again, Schaeffer in his *Christian Manifesto* has a good point, saying:

"There is no New Testament basis for a linking of church and state until Christ, the King, returns. . . . We must not confuse the Kingdom of God with our country. To say it another way: 'We should not wrap Christianity in our national flag'" (p. 121).

However, he says this in the context of "The State must be made to feel the presence of the Christian community" (p. 120). If we will prevent moral decay, the church will make moral decisions, the family will make moral decisions, and the individual believer will make moral decisions. We will base those decisions on the Word. When there is dearth in the Word, there is moral decay.

"In conclusion, my brothers, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honorable. Put into practice what you learned and received from me, both from my words and from my actions. And the God who gives us peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8, 9, Good News).

DO YOU FEEL uncomfortable when someone pays you a compliment? And do you frequently squirm or blush, or belittle your achievements with, "Oh, it was nothing"? If someone remarks about your attractive new suit, do you find yourself apologetically informing him that a flaw caused it to be marked down, or that you found it on the clearance rack? If you fidget or alibi when being praised, then you're in good company. Many people react that way because "it just seems to be the way a humble person should respond."

A second question: Do you have trouble receiving an encouragement? If you've worked hard to drop a few pounds, and someone comments, "I can tell you're getting thinner; keep up the good work"—isn't your reaction radically different? "Sure have!" "Thanks!" Encouragements do go down easier.

Perhaps responses vary because in a compliment we hear flattery; while encouraging words build up self-confidence and give support to hang in there.

Another vital plank within the KOINONIA relationship of a congregation is ENCOURAGEMENT. Writings of the New Testament are filled with comforting, strengthening, restoring, fortifying words.

Four distinct forms on encouragement can be found:

Collective Encouragement

There is no mystery as to why organizations like Alcoholics Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, or Gamblers Anonymous meet regularly. Certainly those involved benefit from the opportunity to talk through their problems—but they also desperately need the motivation that comes from hearing, "Don't give up; you can make it."

Christians, within the fellowship of a congregation, need the same kind of supportiveness. College students, who have their faith taken on a roller coaster ride by a steady diet of atheism, humanism, and evolution at secular universities, *need a safe harbor where they are reassured that a faith in Jesus still makes sense.* Adults working in a world that constantly attacks their biblical morals and values *need the bolstering that comes from interaction with others who cherish similar*

beliefs. Teens, wrestling with the tentacles of peer pressure, *must find refuge to reassure them that they're not alone in standing for Jesus.*

Hebrews 10:24, 25 is all about "collective encouragement": "Let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us **encourage** one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching (NIV)." Being with a large body of fellow Christians, who are deeply committed is impressive. There is strength in numbers. It's inspiring to discuss with others our "blessed hope"—the second coming of Jesus! No wonder we're told to be regular in attendance at meetings of a congregation.

Corrective Encouragement

To Timothy, a young pastor, Paul wrote these words: "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, **rebuke and encourage**—with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Tim. 4:1, 2, NIV).

Corrective encouragement is much like taking bad-tasting medicine. "It isn't any fun to take, but in time it will make one well!"

Early in my ministry, a concerned elder visited me with just such a tonic. Being new at preaching and green at leading a congregation, I was prone to being very negative—"Can't do this; shouldn't do that." Now it is well and good to point out the limits of God's will—but it must be balanced with the positive freedoms God also gives us. Because this man came gently and with love, I listened to him, evaluated his advice, and changed my methods. I'll be forever grateful that he cared!

Corrective encouragement is not always that painless. On occasion it can mean confrontation: talking to someone about a stinking attitude or sin problem. This will be developed further in the study on Admonishment.

The key to effectiveness is to show a spirit of genuine compassion and caring for the one being corrected.



Support and encouragement come thro

Comfort Encouragement

There is no time when encouragement is more vital than when one is going through the trauma caused by losing someone to death.

It is not by coincidence but by divine inspiration that Paul concludes the details of the second coming of Christ and the Christians' resurrection with, "Therefore **encourage** each other with these words" (1 Thes. 4:18, NIV).

Encouragement in this usage means "to come alongside." As a paramedic comes alongside the victim of a cardiac arrest to give assistance, Christians are to come beside and give encouragement to those who are grieving. And if the victim was a Christian, there is no greater assurance than reading and talking of the resurrection!

AGEMENT

on Needham



ugh interaction within the body of Christ.

Medic Publishing Company has produced a pamphlet with practical guidelines for helping the bereaved entitled, "Is There Anything I Can Do to Help?" One can be of great service to those sorrowing by following these suggestions:

- (1) GET IN TOUCH. (Visit, telephone—it's never too late to express concern.)
- (2) SAY LITTLE ON AN EARLY VISIT. (A brief embrace and a few words of affection may be all that is needed.)
- (3) AVOID CLICHES AND EASY ANSWERS. ("He had a good life." "He is out of pain." Do not attempt to minimize the loss.)
- (4) BE YOURSELF.
- (5) KEEP IN TOUCH. (Don't just say, "Call if I can help." *Take the initiative!*)
- (6) ATTEND TO PRACTICAL MATTERS. (Fix meals, clean house, care for children.)

(7) ACCEPT SILENCE. (Don't force conversation.)

(8) BE A GOOD LISTENER. (Accept tears and anger. Do not rebuke. Be as understanding as possible.)

(9) DO NOT ATTEMPT TO TELL THE BEREAVED HOW HE FEELS. (To say, for example, "You must feel relieved now that he is out of pain," is presumptuous. Everyone resents attempts to describe feelings.)

(10) DO NOT PROBE FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE DEATH.

(1) COMFORT CHILDREN IN THE FAMILY.

(12) AVOID TALKING TO OTHERS ABOUT TRIVIA IN THE PRESENCE OF THE RECENTLY BEREAVED.

(13) ALLOW THE "WORKING THROUGH" OF GRIEF.

(14) IN TIME, GENTLY DRAW THE MOURNERS INTO QUIET, OUTSIDE ACTIVITY. TREAT THEM NORMALLY.

Affirmation Encouragement

Oh, those cold-water committees! Those folks who believe their spiritual gift is a bucket of ice water to be poured over any idea that isn't theirs.

This world is full of discouragers: negative people who are quick to squash any idea that is new, or different, or unusual. A few with that gift sneak into local churches too! Inevitably they find their way onto church boards and into key leadership positions where they can throw up a blockade against everything positive and progressive.

But the church is the last place in the world that should be passing out frozen shards. People licking their wounds from the beating given by the world *should be able to find sanctuary within the circle of Christian fellowship. They should find encouragers, supporters.*

"Therefore **encourage** one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (1 Thes. 5:11, NIV). Three good results follow in a congregation where this "building up" is happening:

(1) *First*, it builds self-confidence in the person that receives it. Since almost everyone is a bit fragile in this area, it's always appropriate to reassure someone that he is doing a job well. "Don't give up teaching our Sunday School class; you do such a

good job" may be just the boost someone needs to stay at it. Or, "It is so exciting to sing along with your lively piano playing" may be just the words a seemingly unappreciated pianist needs to hear. Many venture out to try what they've never done before, because someone expressed faith in them.

(2) *Second*, encouraging someone builds a stronger relationship between the giver and the receiver. Can you dislike someone who is constantly building you up with positive, supportive statements about your worth? Giving you warm fuzzies? You are unusual if you can't!

This a great practice for improving a poor connection or strengthening an existing bond. It can work anywhere—even in marriage. When people are mutually encouraging, ice melts, walls tumble down, and people view one another differently.

(3) *Third*, it builds up the Body (the church).

People get excited about being a part in a fellowship that is supportive and appreciative. They'll have trouble staying away from a gathering where they are constantly being affirmed.

No doubt numbers will grow, but the atmosphere will also become more attractive. Love will get deeper. The ropes of friendship will grow thicker.

Everyone a Barnabas

Every group has them—those people who pick up a nickname that describes their personality: Joe the joker, Jane the grouch; Kevin the klutz.

The New Testament Church had a member with an unusual handle. He was known as "Barnabas the encourager" (See Acts 4:36, 37).

This was not a hard fellow to have around. I can imagine that after a musical special his "amen" could be heard and later a remark to the singers about how it "enriched the service." Likely Barnabas told many a preacher how much a sermon "had fed him." What a congregation if "everyone was a Barnabas!"

WAITING WITHIN MOST PEOPLE (AND CONGREGATIONS) IS A RESERVOIR OF UNTAPPED POTENTIAL THAT ENCOURAGEMENT CAN DRAW OUT.

Thrice in biblical history elegant penmanship, calligraphy, has performed a key role. One inspired message was written on stone, another in the plaster of a wall by an armless hand, and the third was written on the ground.

God Writes on Stone

During Israel's 40-year wandering through the wilderness God met them on Mount Sinai. His glory was covered by a cloud lest the people be consumed by the radiance of his presence. He could have written on sheets of gold and silver, but he chose two pieces of stone such as were lying on the mountain side.

God's handwriting recorded what we know as the 10 commandments, found in Exodus 20:1-17. This law is a reflection of God's holy character. The first four reveal man's duty to God, while the last six reveal man's duty to man. The 10 commandment law is also restated in Deuteronomy 5. Only in these two chapters, Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, is this law given in its entirety. However, it should also be pointed out that all the commandments are restated in the New Testament except the fourth one, which deals with keeping the Sabbath day—our Saturday. The Jewish rest day in the dispensation of the law (from Mount Sinai to Calvary), was from sunset Friday to sunset Saturday.

The sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13, KJV), really means, "You shall not murder." It has nothing to do with capital punishment or battle casualties.

The 10 commandments were spoken out from Mount Sinai amidst thunder, earthquakes, and trumpet blasts (Ex. 19:16-18). They were engraved on both sides of the tablets with the finger of God. (31:18; 32:15, 16).

The 10 commandments, basis of the Hebrew law, were kept in the ark of the covenant, the most sacred piece of furniture in all the tabernacle and later the temple. The purpose of the law, moreover, was to reveal sin, to show us how far we

have missed the mark. As Paul the apostle confessed, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7).

There was no written law from Adam to Moses. "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come" (Rom. 5:13, 14). The claim by Sabbath keepers that Adam and Abraham kept the Sabbath is totally without basis, for the law which revealed the Sabbath was not given until centuries later in the time of Moses, about 1500 B.C.

When you walk into the Book of Romans you walk into a court of law. You are condemned. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (3:23). The question that naturally arises is, How can I be justified? The answer jumps out at you: "The just shall live by faith" (1:17b). All the law can do is condemn; it shows us our sin. Like a mirror it shows us the dirt on our faces as well as other imperfections, but it cannot remove them. Likewise the law reveals our true condition spiritually and points us further down the road to another mountain, Mount Calvary, for cleansing.

Furthermore, "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" (Gal. 3:24, 25). The law had and still has a useful purpose as a part of God's revelation, but it was never meant to be a means of salvation. Jesus Christ alone is the way of salvation. It was he who condensed the 10 commandments into the two master commandments. A lawyer once asked him, "Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour



as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:36-40). Observe that Jesus condensed the first four of the 10, the ones that speak of man's duty to God, into the first and great commandment. He then condensed the other six, the ones that deal with

man's duty to man, into the second.

Calligraphy and Crisis

The night Babylon fell, Daniel's God used an armless hand to reveal a crisis (Dan. 5:1-6, 25-31). Daniel was now an old man; he had been in Babylon 70 years. A feast was held in the banquet room. A thousand leaders of Babylon were present for the revelry. In their midst sat Belshazzar, their proud idolatrous king. They were drinking from the sacred vessels from the Jewish temple in Jerusalem which Nebuchadnezzar had brought to Babylon at the time of the Jewish captivity. At the height of the party a detached hand wrote on the plaster of the wall, gripping everyone's attention.

The cryptic message contained only four words: "MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN" (Dan 5:25), which, made no sense, but the king was seized by deadly fear. He suspected that those words were a message of doom. How right he was! Small wonder that his knees knocked against each other.

Because the soothsayers and astrologers were unable to interpret the message, the king called for Daniel, the Hebrew prophet who had been a prominent figure in Babylon during the reign of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel deciphered the fearful words. His interpretation is recorded in verses 26-28. "This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." The meaning of this short message was clear and unmistakable.

MENE—numbered

TEKEL—weighed

PERES—divided; this is merely another form for UPHARSIN (as in verse 25) having the "u"—which is equivalent to the English "and"—with PHARSIN being the plural of PERES.

Time had run out. "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (v. 30). Even while Daniel was

interpreting the writing on the wall the prophecy was being fulfilled as the Medes and Persians poured into the city. Actually the only value of these words was to get the king's attention so Daniel could talk to him.

John 8:1-11: Jesus Writes on the Ground

This writing was on neither stone nor plaster but on the earth itself, the dust. The setting is outside the temple, early in the morning when Jesus was teaching the people. Suddenly there was an interruption. The scribes and Pharisees came dragging a weeping woman and accused her of having broken the seventh commandment. Actually they were trying to put Jesus in a dilemma. They said, "Moses in the law commanded that she should be stoned, but what do you say?" Jesus, the reader of hearts, knew their real concern was neither for the broken law nor for the woman who had transgressed it. He knew their assumed piety was a mask for the poison in their hearts directed at him. They were trying to find a pretext for his arrest; they felt he was trapped; they came testing him, accusing him (v.6). Either way he was going to face Roman or Mosaic law so he said nothing, but wrote in silence on the ground. He stooped and wrote in the dust a message for a group of religious hypocrites as they clamored for a verdict. "Now we have him," they thought! But instead of trapping him, they trapped themselves. Jesus stooped down again and wrote on the ground. He then stood up long enough to say, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." (v. 7). The Bible doesn't say what he wrote, but it was most effective. Her accusers trembled and stole away one by one.

Jesus said to the woman: "Where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more" (10, 11).

All accusations were forgotten, The stones that might have been thrown were

left untouched. From this passage we get the cliché, "Do you want to throw the first stone?" meaning, do you want to be the first one to condemn? Do you want to confront the person being talked about? The implication is do that or KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT.

Notice the gang in this passage. They always had a stone in their hand ready to throw at anyone they thought unfit to live. This woman may have belonged to the oldest profession. I don't know, but Jesus neither condemned her nor condoned her. HE FORGAVE HER! Neither do we know her name, but I feel we'll meet her in the kingdom in the future age. Let's be slow to condemn, but quick to forgive. That's the beauty of this passage.

This woman went home comforted, forgiven, restored to God. Jesus was so gentle, tender, and understanding through the whole thing. This is all the more significant when we realize that her accusers were really after him. Jesus stated his mission succinctly: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He is the man for sinners, for thieves, for murderers, for prostitutes, etc. He rescued Mary Magdalene seven times. Out of her he cast seven devils (Mark 16:9; Luke 8:2). This is another way of saying he restored her seven times.

Jesus was more concerned with salvation of the sinner than with seeing that the law was meticulously satisfied. His words, "He that is without sin . . . let him cast a stone at her," shifted attention from himself and the woman to the accusers. After the dust settled, so to speak, only two remained, the sinner and the Friend of sinners.

One other kind of writing should be mentioned. God wants to write his message of love on our hearts (Heb. 8:10). The writer trusts that you will let him do that.

The law came from Sinai. Centuries later Jesus walked up another mountain to redeem us from sin which the law revealed. Our salvation doesn't come from Mount Sinai but from Mount Calvary.

Shall we ask Jews to believe t
says (John 20:31, TEV),

My Dialogue With A Jew

by
Pastor
Sidney
Hatch

IN 1960 I was engaged in graduate studies at the University of Southern California. While there I became acquainted with a Jewish young man, a fellow student in one of my classes. Our acquaintanceship developed into a friendship, and occasionally we had lunch together in the school cafeteria.

My friend had been in the business world and I had been in the ministry. As we shared past experiences, our conversations soon turned to religion, and this man, a Jew, manifested a very real interest in the Christian faith.

As his interest grew, and his questions became more incisive, I felt constrained to loan him a book from my library. This book not only presented Christ as Messiah and Savior, it also outlined Israel's national election and future glory. "What better way," I thought, "could he find the answers to his many questions?" It was with a measure of excitement, therefore, that I awaited his response.

In time my book was returned. But a polite note tucked between its pages indicated that it would be best to discontinue the religious discussions. My friend had taken exception to one chapter which purported to prove the doctrine of the Trinity from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

This chapter presumed to correct Jewish mistakes in other areas too. But as I pondered the note from my friend, I realized it was Trinitarianism that had proven to be a stumblingblock to him. I remembered, then, a remark he had made in our earlier conversations: Many Jewish people feel that the doctrine of the Trinity may be all right for the Gentiles, but it is not all right for the Jews.

At the time, I was keenly disappointed, and thought often of my lost opportunity with a Jew. But, as time went on, I began to reflect on my experience and to re-evaluate it in the light of Scripture. As I studied my Bible, certain passages took on a new significance, not the least of them being the Gospel accounts of Peter's great confession.

Mark 8:29 gives us Peter's statement in its most concise form: "And He [Jesus] saith unto them, But whom



What Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of God," as Scripture or that he is "God of God," as the Nicene Creed says?

say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ."

"The Christ," of course, means "the Anointed One." It is equivalent to "the Messiah." Christians are familiar with this and we need not elaborate here.

Luke amplifies Peter's confession somewhat by saying, "The Christ of God" (Luke 9:20). And Matthew expands it more: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). But these additions in no way alter the simplicity of Mark's account. The Messiah is the Son of God, simply because God was his Father. He was conceived or created in the womb of Mary by a miracle, by "Holy Spirit" or power from on high (Matt. 1:18; Luke 1:35).

Peter, then, in his great confession, acknowledged that Jesus was the Messiah. Matthew tells us that our Lord commended him for his simple faith: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17).

To some people, Peter's confession, especially as recorded in Mark's Gospel, may sound simplistic or inadequate. But for Peter it evoked a personal blessing from the lips of the Savior.

Now, as I contemplate Peter's great confession, I realize that I deserved the implied rebuke from my Jewish friend of years ago. The book I loaned him demanded more from a Jew than the Son of God asked from his own disciples. Our Lord never required from them a "Trinitarian" or Athanasian definition of the Godhead. He asked only that they recognize him, Jesus of Nazareth, as the Messiah.

I realize now, also, that theology, not Scripture, had proven to be a stumblingblock to my friend. Had we stayed with the simpler terms and issues of the New Testament, things might have been different.

In 1 Corinthians 8:11-13, Paul establishes a principle which would apply to my dialogue with a Jew. I paraphrase the thought here: Through thy theology, shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? Wherefore, if theology offends my brother, I will "eat" no theology while the world standeth!

We hear a great deal today about Jewish-Christian dialogue. But Christians must ask themselves, Will these dialogues take place on the basis of the Old and New Testaments, or on the basis of somebody's theology? In short, shall we ask Jews to believe that Jesus is "the Messiah, the Son of God," as Scripture says (John 20:31, TEV), or that he is "God of God" and "Light of Light," as the Nicene Creed says?

In this regard, it is interesting that Thomas Jefferson once described Athanasius and Calvin as "impious dogmatists," the "false shepherds" foretold in Scripture who would enter, not by the door into the sheepfold, but would climb up some other way. He then goes on to say that their "blasphemies" have driven thinking men into infidelity (Letter to Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse, physician, pioneer in vaccination, and professor of medicine at Harvard, 6/22/1822).

In the seventeenth century, the great English philosopher John Locke, in his work *Reasonableness of Christianity*, pointed out that Jesus and the apostles demanded of their followers nothing more than faith in him as the Messiah. In the eighteenth century, Joseph Priestley, the English clergyman who discovered oxygen, took essentially the same position: That Christ is the Messiah is the one belief essential to a Christian.

I have learned, as the years have gone by, to thank God for my Jewish friend. He rejected one aspect of Gentile theology. But did he reject Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah? Of that I am not sure. Of one thing, however, I am sure. He helped me to come to a simpler New Testament faith regarding God and his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Also, from my experience recounted above, I have learned to thank God for the faithfulness and courage of the Jewish people. I am a Christian, because I believe that Jesus is the Messiah. But I realize now that while Greco-Roman theologians were corrupting Christianity with their philosophy, Jews were dying by the millions to preserve for us what Jesus himself called the most important commandment of all: "Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord" (Mark 12:29).

By Faith You Stand

By Pastor
Francis E.
Burnett

A phrase that has been used much in the last 10 years is, *Keep the Faith*. It is said when endeavoring to maintain a certain position or status in life. Certainly it has a particular place in Christianity. Dedicated followers of Jesus must face those who would discourage—even destroy—that for which Christians stand. The Apostle Paul wrote much the same idea to the Corinthian church. “Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Christ Jesus is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?” (2 Cor. 13:5, NASB).

How often one must be involved with the word *unless*. Attainment to a goal can be erased by *unless*. Reaching out to one in need of help is too often slowed down by *unless*. However, the positive is found in Paul’s words: “Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm” (2 Cor. 1:24, NASB). To take a firm *stand* takes conviction. Conviction is a firm or fixed belief. Yet conviction is not always affirmative toward one’s Christianity. Take, for example, the story of the adulterous woman. “They which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst” (John 8:9). Such a conviction is what leads one to know that Jesus Christ is the “way, the truth, and the life.”

David, the king and psalmist, wrote, “My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise” (Psa. 57:7). This is what is needed to be **firm by faith**. From the Hebrew letter, one can see how important being firm is in regard to faith. “But Christ was faithful as a Son over His house whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end” (Heb. 3:6, NASB). One need not spend much time in analyzing the previous words to know that it is **by faith you stand**.

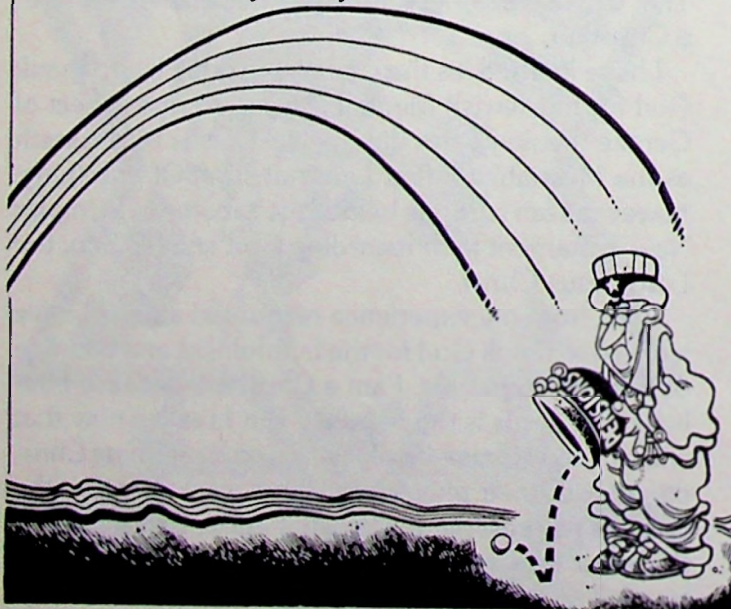
FAITH! Why is it so important? The American College Dictionary defines it, “Confidence or trust in a person or trust. Belief which is not based on proof.” And, of course, most of Christianity is just that. Not one of the “believers” since 33 A.D. has seen Jesus. Yet millions have chosen to believe on him. Paul wrote, “For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Gal. 5:5, 6). The gospel is for anyone who will believe. The church is to be composed of men and women who can come from any color or race.

To continue, let us evaluate these words. “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints . . . and to know the love of Christ . . . that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Eph. 3:17-19). Paul further emphasized faith’s priority in these words: “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6:16). Such a *fixed* basis is found in Paul’s message to the brethren in Rome. “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” (Rom. 1:17).

A synagogue ruler named Jairus “fell at his feet” and begged Jesus to “come and lay thy hands on her” (Mark 5:22, 23). Jairus’ daughter was sick. Before Jesus could get to the home, the daughter died. Servants came and told Jairus to trouble Jesus no longer. BUT Jesus said to Jairus, “Be not afraid, only believe” (Mark 5:36). Only believe! That is the same plea made today by our Heavenly Father and his Son Jesus. The Bible contains all the information one needs. Many refuse to read God’s Word, let alone accept it. Where do you fit into this? Is your heart fixed? Is your faith such that by it you stand?

Again, we turn to the writing of Paul. “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus; and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:8-10). The words, “believe” and “faith,” come from the same Greek word which make them mean the same. Therefore, in confessing Jesus as Savior, one shows his faith and by that he stands.

Reader, do you believe? Have you taken Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? If you have not, see your pastor and make arrangements to let Jesus become your way of life. Make provisions to let your heart be *fixed* for the way of salvation that God has made possible through his Son Jesus. Inform yourself in the Word of God so **by faith you stand**.



GOD'S FAMILY

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . . and all the host of them" (Gen. 1:1-2:1). He provided water and dry land, sunlight and darkness, plants and animals—all of these for the benefit of the family he planned. For mankind—the highest form of life—was the final part of his creation.

Adam was created by the Lord God (his father) from earth (his mother). From Adam, Eve was created. Then came God's command, "Multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it" (Gen. 1:28). This was earth's first family of which we have record. Well, man has certainly filled the earth, but in spite of his ever-increasing family there is evidence that he has failed to subdue it, but is bringing it to ruin—just as Adam and Eve failed to conquer their desires for fame and power and fortune as promised by satan.

To them were born Cain and Abel who suffered the consequences of disobedient parents. In a fit of jealousy Cain slew his righteous brother. It was 557 years later that it was first said of a man (Enoch) that "he walked with God". And Enoch kept it that way for over 300 years.

God worked through prophets, priests, judges, and kings, asking that family relationships be kept clean morally, physically, and spiritually. Deuteronomy 6:1-9 admonishes Israelites to obey all of God's laws and teach them to their children.

But such corruption entered in that he finally started what may be called a new creation.

Jesus, Son of God, was born of an earthly mother, Mary. Thus he was on the same plane as Adam, having the characteristics of both. But what a difference! Jesus, called the second Adam, was an inspiration to all who believed on him. More than an inspiration, he was the giver of eternal life.

He chose not to marry, for the church is his bride. And he said, "Whosoever

shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and my mother" (Mark 3:35).

What an opportunity for every individual on earth! It would be a blessing indeed to be called his sister or his brother. But how may we qualify?

"Do the will of my Father," said Jesus. His living example showed a



desire for love in the family or community. He showed love for children, consideration for the sad, mercy toward the sinner, and aid for the sick. He gave his apostles a concentrated course in teaching and, in teaching them, he taught others. He enjoyed family-life as in the home in Bethany. He showed hospitality, inviting men to his home (John 1:35-39); and also feeding thousands of people (John 6:1-13). His life was spent in serving and teaching others, and one of his last acts was the washing of the feet of the twelve including his betrayer. That was to teach them humility, for, said he, "The servant is not greater than his Lord." He sent these men into

"all the world" to teach and preach, and baptize so that the church became established.

The Apostle Paul referred to the church as the family of God. (Eph. 2:19.) And every Christian is a member of that family. Paul makes that clear, saying that Christians are the eyes, ears, hands, and feet, looking for direction to the Head, which is Christ. It takes a special sort of person to be fully representative of that family. There are things to be cultivated and things to be avoided.

Notice these quotations from Paul's epistles from various translations.

"Finish, then, with lying, and tell your neighbor the truth" (Phillips).

"The thief must give up stealing, and instead work hard and honestly with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with the needy" (NEB).

"Do everything without arguing or complaining" (GNB).

In his Colossian letter he has advice for the whole *Christian* family. Colossians 3:18 through 4:2 says specifically:

"Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, for that is what you should do as Christians.

"Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children it is your Christian duty to obey your parents always. Parents, do not irritate your children.

"Slaves, obey your human masters . . . because of your reverence for the Lord . . . For Christ is the real Master you serve.

"Masters, be fair and just in the way you treat your slaves. . . Be persistent in prayer" (GNB).

Perhaps it is said best in Philippians 4:8, 9 in our time-honored King James Version: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

by Grace Marsh

by Rachel Carr



"I can't believe we're really in Mexico," exclaimed Jan.

"Me either," replied Steve. "The time really dragged waiting for school to get out."

Steve and Jan Wilson and their parents had just that morning crossed over the border from Texas into Mexico. The Mexican officials had looked through their suitcases, peered into their station wagon, and stamped their tourist cards before sending them on their way.

Now they were headed for San Luis Potosí to visit their friends, the Richards. Mr. and Mrs. Richards and their children used to attend the Wilson church before they became missionaries. Now they run an orphanage for Mexican children. Steve's third and fourth grade Sunday School class sent part of their missionary offerings to help the Richards and the boys and girls. Steve was especially excited about his trip because Billie Richards was his best friend, and he hadn't seen him for a long time.

"Hey," called Dad. "Look at that!"

Everyone looked to where he was pointing. "What is it?" asked Jan.

"I think it's a well. Let's stop and look."

It was a well all right, but not like any they had ever seen. There was a big wheel, part of which went down into the ground where the water was. Buckets were fastened all around the wheel. But the most unusual thing was the donkeys. Two long poles stuck out from the wheel and the two donkeys were tied to the poles. As they walked around in

a circle, the wheel moved and the buckets filled with water which was then dumped into a holding tank.

"How would you like to get all your water that way?" asked Dad.

"What a lot of work it would be to carry water from that tank back to the house," said Mother.

"I'm glad for our water faucets at home," added Jan.

Soon it was time for lunch and they began looking for a place by the side of the road where they could stop. They pulled off where there were several nice trees for shade, right outside a small town. While they were spreading their lunch out on the hood of the car, two little boys appeared. They wore big smiles and greeted them with, "Buenas tardes." Jan and Steve went over to them and Steve said, "Hi. We're Jan and Steve. What are your names?" But the boys didn't understand and just kept smiling.

Jan got each of the boys an apple and some cookies from their lunch, and they eagerly took them, smiling again and saying, "Gracias." Steve remembered the Spanish pamphlets they had brought with them. He picked out two colorful ones especially for children and handed them to the boys. After tucking their apples and cookies in their pockets, they started looking at the pamphlets which told about Jesus blessing the children. The smiles on the boys' faces told Steve that they liked them.

"Adios," said the boys, waving their hands as they started toward the town.

The Mexico Trip

"I wish we knew Spanish so we could talk with them" said Jan.

"Me, too. I want to take Spanish when I get in high school," replied Steve.

The Wilsons took two days to get to the orphanage. As they traveled they saw that Mexico is a land of contrasts. They passed through large modern cities and also drove through miles of desert where all they could see were mountains and cactus. They saw tall skyscrapers and small houses made of adobe bricks. And for transportation people used cars and buses in the cities, but donkeys, horses, and ox carts out in the country.

As they neared San Luis Potosí, Mr. Wilson got out the map Mr. Richards had drawn to show how to get to the orphanage. It was not hard to follow and before long, they pulled up to a large white building with a red tile roof.

Before they could get out of the car, Billie Richards and his older brother Bob burst out of the door of the building, followed by their parents. It was a grand reunion for the two families.

(To be continued next month)

Algeny

When Jeremy Rifkin's bound galley of ALGENY arrived in my office for review, I shuttled everything else aside for a cursory reading of a controversial work about biotechnology's implications. Rifkin's volume, scheduled for publication by Viking Press in April, 1983, is a critique of the changing way in which man views nature. The author's observations and final suggestions both frighten and frustrate the reader.

Rifkin's expose of the scientific community's aim to transform the way we traditionally view life by manipulating the DNA of cells to reorganize living tissue into new forms and shapes frightens us because the world of the 1980's and 1990's may take on unwanted qualities. But the worst emotion we feel is frustration. Few of our contemporaries truly understand the implications of the coming biological revolution. How can we get the message of ALGENY across to our peers? The process, begun in the early 1970's and running full speed ahead, will utterly change the world our children inherit, Rifkin says.

"What is this word ALGENY?" you're probably wondering. Simply stated,



Algeny is the process of change of a living thing by transforming it from one state to another. It is the upgrading of existing organisms and the design of wholly new ones with the intent of "perfecting" their performance. It is humanity's attempt to give metaphysical meaning to its emerging technological relationship with nature. The word was first coined by Dr. Joshua Lederberg, Nobel Laureate biologist and now president of the Rockefeller Institute.

If you've concluded that ALGENY paints a picture of man playing God and you're about ready to quit reading

Editor's Viewpoint

in disgust, let me encourage you to go on. Why? Because scientists, including practitioners in the medical arts, have been for the past 20 years constructing the ultimate living machine. The process has been ongoing; more needs to be known. Put down the temptation to remain ignorant of the biological revolution already in progress.

Rifkin begins by contrasting alchemy with algeny. For two centuries since the inception of the Industrial Revolution, man has been manipulating matter to better his lifestyle. We've survived on the death of previous civilizations and organisms. But the end of the oil age has signalled the end of the Industrial Revolution. Now we move on to the manipulation of living things for survival—algeny.

Next, Rifkin maintains that philosophical underpinnings have given moral grounds for man's view of nature and his use of it. How man views himself in relation to the natural world dictates his morality and his operation in the cosmos. That viewpoint allows man to "properly" use his world to create goods and services fitting for the acceptable lifestyle.

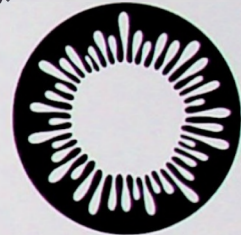
With that said, Rifkin proceeded to illustrate how Darwin's theory of evolution was used to legitimize the Industrial Age.

We are informed that the world out there is a jungle, menacing and hostile. We are taught that it's a "dog eat dog" world and that our very existence depends on our being more fit than our peers in the struggle for survival. We are made to believe that a modicum of greed is natural and that by advancing our own self-interest we are adding to the common good. We are warned that change is inevitable, but that it should come in small, tempered doses, not suddenly and unexpectedly. We are told that while chance enters into all things, success comes to those who are able to take advantage of opportunities as they arise. If there be any temptation whatsoever to challenge these basic Darwinian tenets, we are quickly admonished with all but conclusive dictum that, try as we will, we can't fight "human nature." (Page 49.)

Then Rifkin declares the Industrial Age dead and along with it the death of Darwinism. To be sure, he writes two chapters which correlate Darwin's thinking with the economic happenings of his time in England, proving that evolution was "invented" to support the wishes of the industrialist elite. By

quoting many social scientists on the significance of the correlation, Rifkin then shows how in the 1980's many have debunked Darwinism. He then dismantles the theory for scientific purposes and declares it no more than a belief.

Since evolution can no more support a cosmology and give men purpose for lifestyle, and since the Industrial Age is dead, then a new search for theory must take place. In his next two chapters Rifkin discusses ALGENY as the new "temporal" theory of nature, and reflects on how it will be used as a "natural" excuse for the New World Epoch. But Rifkin argues that the new approach is merely a reworking of the old using similar lines of reasoning and ideology.



The author then concludes with a final chapter on "Choices." In just eight short pages he repeats warnings implied throughout his book. Algeny justification is merely another attempt at self-deception to satisfy a philosophy of acceptance for what we allow in the new world. All the old dodges around morality and immortality and that about life which is sacred are performed again.

Then Rifkin supplies a startling conclusion. He calls for the sacrifice of our selfishness, and cries for humanity to accept the gift of life by living thankfully.

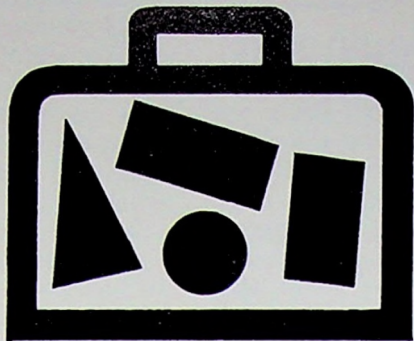
But he questions man's ability to live sacrificially and thankfully. If we cannot live the new lifestyle of giving of ourselves, then there is no hope, Rifkin concludes.

* * *

Rifkin leaves open-ended the question of immortality as Christians know it. It's almost as if he invites real hope for mankind outside of his own self-searching. If only there could be a God to rescue mankind . . .

Thankfully, that God is alive and well. He has secured immortality to all who believe. The record of that immortality is found in his Son (1 John 5:11-13). Praise God there is life beyond the throes of Algeny.

Going And Coming



by Michael Mattison

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful" (John 14:27, NASB).

Tonight my mother-in-law needs these words. Her heart is troubled and fearful because she had open-heart surgery four days ago. She's still afraid. I pray for Jesus to give her peace.

"You heard what I said to you, 'I go away, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28, NASB).

Tonight I need these words. When her mother called, my wife went back to the hospital all night. Being selfish, I didn't rejoice. It's been a long time since we had any time alone. If I loved her, I would rejoice that she goes to her mother when

they need each other. When she goes away, she always comes back closer to me.

If the disciples had loved Jesus, they would have thought of the benefits of his departure for him instead of the loneliness for them. Let us rejoice that the everlasting Father and the only begotten Son are enjoying each other's company right now. Realize too that when he returns to earth Jesus will be even closer to us than he could have been if he had never left.



Eternal Victory

by Richard Worley

Death! You're dark, forboding, and ominous.

You cause anger, frustration, and resentment to well up within me.

I guess I'll never get used to you or be able to accept you . . .

You separate me from lifelong friends and relatives that I've had such enjoyable times with, From people in the Church that I have grown to love as much as if not more than blood relatives.

But death, I'll have the last laugh because I know of one that's going to conquer you.

He's going to take those away from you that you have taken away from me.

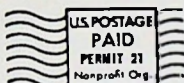
Yes, I'll have to let you win for a while but before long the taunt will be reality:

"O death, where is your sting?" The victory of death and the grave will be over,

but the victory that I will feel will be eternal. Then I will fully understand the song, "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE RESTITUTION HERALD

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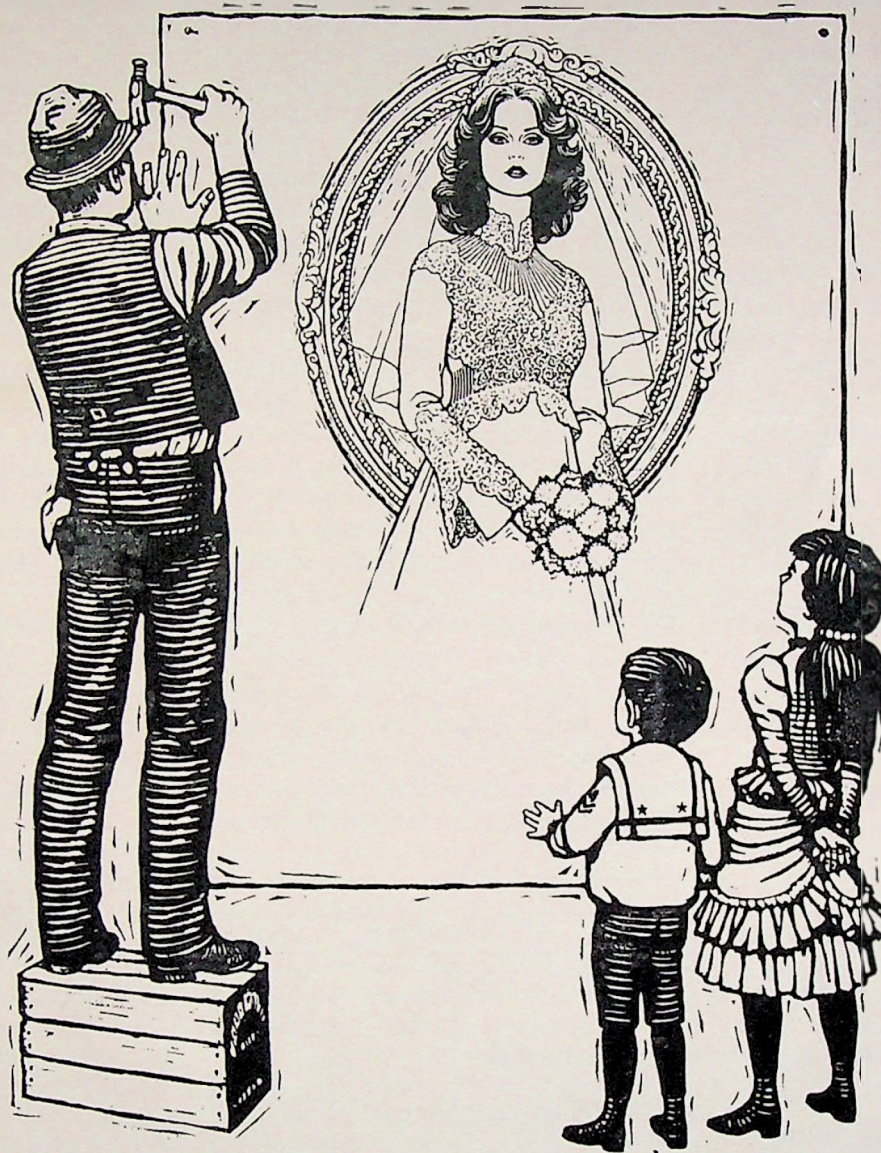
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President Reagan Proclaims 1983 The Year of the Bible

PRESIDENT Ronald Reagan took the occasion of the National Prayer Breakfast in Washington, D.C. on February 3, 1983, to proclaim 1983 as "The Year of the Bible" in the United States.

"Inside the Bible's pages lie all the answers to all the problems man has ever known," Reagan told more than 3,000 leaders from across the nation attending the annual event.

The President's action implemented Public Law 97-280, a joint resolution of Congress which passed each of the two houses in 1982 and was signed into law by Reagan on October 4, 1982.

The resolution authorized and requested the President to "designate

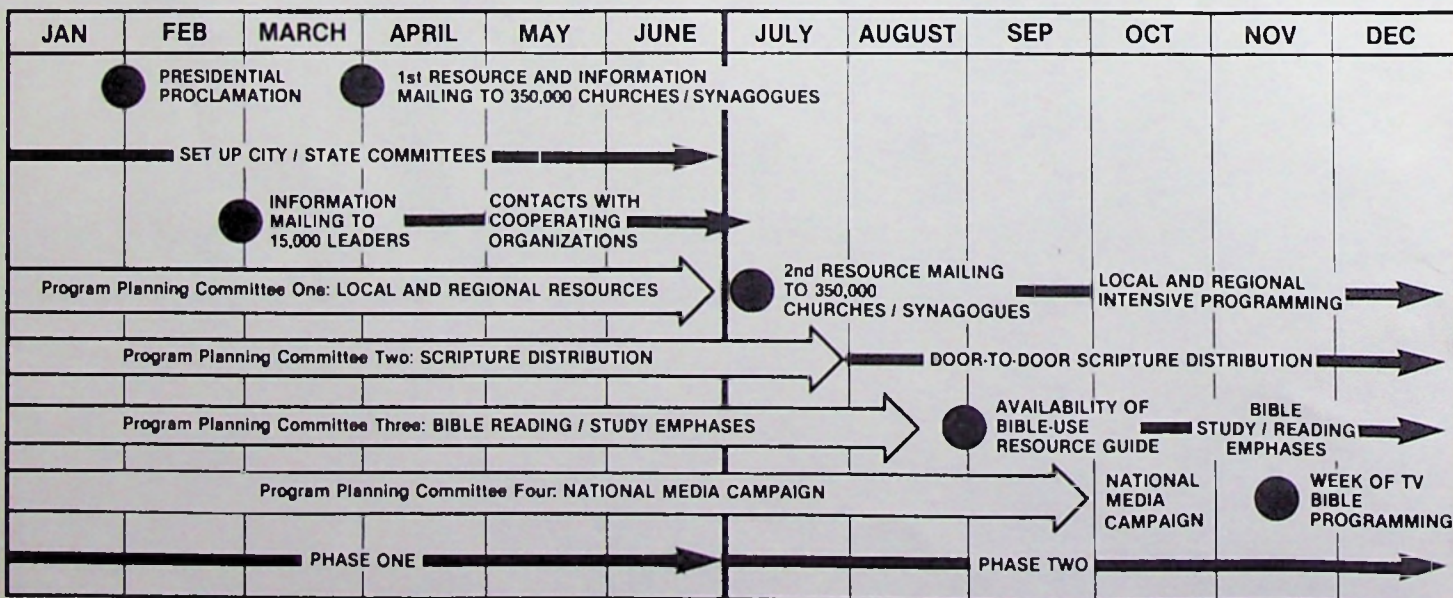
1983 as a national 'Year of the Bible' in recognition of both the formative influence the Bible has been for our Nation, and our national need to study and apply the teachings of the Holy Scriptures."

The President's lengthy proclamation naming 1983 as the Year of the Bible pointed to the formative influence of the Bible in American history, its ongoing contribution to the development of both public and private benevolent institutions, and its impact on the development of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It quotes President Andrew Jackson's description of the Bible as "the rock on which our Republic rests" and President Abraham Lincoln's identification of it as "the best gift God has ever given to

man . . . But for it, we could not know right from wrong."

The proclamation concluded with, "Now, therefore, I, Ronald Reagan, President of the United States of America, in recognition of the contributions and influence of the Bible on our Republic and our people, do hereby proclaim 1983 as the Year of the Bible in the United States. I encourage all citizens, each in his or her own way to reexamine and rediscover its priceless and timeless message.

"In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this third day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and seventh. Ronald Reagan."



The national program for the Year of the Bible is divided into two phases. The first phase is aimed at developing a national awareness by informing everyone in America that 1983 is the Year of the Bible. For the second half of the year, program planning is under the direc-

tion of four national inter-faith Program Committees and is aimed at encouraging every American to read, study, and apply the teachings of Holy Scripture.

Letters to the Editor

March's Readers' Survey Additional Comments

Much valuable paper wasted on illustrations. Most of feature writing belongs in Guidepost (too much ME). "Trees are Fun—": Editorial privilege? Its meaning? Stop "Letters to Editor" telling how great you are. With each issue reach back into past issues for fine articles by the old great leaders like G. E. Marsh, etc.

We have lost touch with the nearness of the Second Advent. In the 1800's we were into the Second Advent Movement which was an exciting thing. Most of our people now do not even know of this. Periodic articles pertaining to our historical heritage and acquaintance with other religions in the 1800's are valuable and interesting to me. Our older publications were filled with spiritual meat. These can be our example now.

Response to Marriage/Divorce Article in April, 1983, HERALD

Concerning Pastor Worley's reasoning on things which do not change when we accept Christ, since when has being a veteran or college graduate had any bearing on the forgiveness of sin? Are we to believe that a murderer is still a murderer after conversion? Is a rapist still a rapist? Why can one be guilty of committing any sin known to man and be forgiven, but let a person go through the trauma, tragedy, and yes, sin of divorce and there is no means of cleansing or starting over? How would Pastor Worley explain King David's life with Bathsheba? Not only did David commit adultery, but he murdered in order to marry his adulterous lover. And adultery was just as much adultery in the Old Testament as it is in the New Testament. Would we be willing to be so bold to proclaim King David a life-long adulterer having no chance of the Kingdom of God? The writer of Hebrews 11:32 was not so bold; and surely we have not forgotten through whose line Christ was born! If the conversion experience does not allow for a new beginning then truly we are not totally "new creatures in Christ." "Old things have not all passed away!" Such shallow reasoning by the author only serves to discredit the positive comments found in his article.

—Tempe, AZ.

I appreciated your printing of the Marriage/Divorce article by Richard Worley. It is time that we begin to address controversial subjects openly and aggressively.

I do take exception to some conclusions drawn by the writer. The implication drawn in reference to Matthew 19 that Moses' allowance for divorce apart from God is revealing as to the author's prejudice in the divorce matter. We are not given any information as to this; in fact we know that God did "allow" Moses' allowance law to become part of accepted and practiced Levitical law (Deut. 24). While I agree it is dangerous to think of God "changing" his mind to condone man's thinking, it is also dangerous to "interpret" the Bible to endorse our desires.

Also we must not overlook the fact that Jesus (like Moses) was giving an allowance from the "But from the beginning" concept of marriage. Mosaic allowance was for the hardness of hearts and Christ's allowance was for fornication.

Secondly, if we are to come to a conclusion on such a weighty concept as, "when do they commit adultery?" it is essential that evidence be weighed. "It is evident" reveals personal opinion and not the needed biblical study. This is a serious conclusion, which if true would place forgiveness outside the grasp. It should not be expressed unless we can "rightly divide."

I am also at a loss to follow the logic in the author's disallowance of Paul's allowance for divorce/remarriage (1 Cor. 7). While two different Greek words are used in verses 15 and 39 for bondage, can this be used to prove two different interpretations for bondage? The "no longer under bondage" was a result of a divorce by a deserting unbelieving mate and in verse 39 by death—two different causes; hence the different words. If a slave is freed he is no longer bound to his master. To deduce that freedom is partial is to annul the "bond of relinquishing" that gave the slave total freedom. A mate "not under bondage" is free and "allowed" to remarry.

I urge you to continue this open forum so that I may learn from Pastor Worley and he from me.

—Paradise Valley, AZ.

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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- **Pro-Life**
- **Pro-Traditional Family**
- **Pro-Moral**
- **Pro-American**

The Moral Majority. After reading those three words your mind probably races with thoughts. You have heard and read the news media reports. You have heard the jokes (and maybe told some yourself). You no doubt know one name in particular closely associated with the Moral Majority—Jerry Falwell.

Four years ago in June of 1979, Falwell founded an organization known as Moral Majority. Falwell and his organization have impacted the entire country. He and Moral Majority have been highly criticized by both political and religious groups. It seems that anyone even remotely connected with political, moral, ethical, or social realms has been affected by the Moral Majority and many have spoken harshly against it. Far fewer speak out boldly in favor of the aims of the Moral Majority. I desire to be one of those few.

I believe the bulk of criticism put forward stems from misconceptions and a basic misunderstanding of what the Moral Majority is. So I will examine

Moral Majority

Morality

in some detail the purpose of the Moral Majority, its founder, the four-point platform it adheres to, and also some of the criticisms most often voiced by its opponents. Let's begin with an overview of the organization.

What is Moral Majority?

The greatest problem Moral Majority faces is getting people to realize just what it is and what it is not. It is a political organization. It is registered as a nonprofit, nonexempt corporation, so donations are not tax deductible. It operates in political circles trying to accomplish its goals through political action, such as lobbying for new laws. The heart of the Moral Majority message is that the country is forsaking its Judeo-Christian roots that nourished its moral, spiritual, and political vitality. These roots must be made to grow back if the country is to survive. Moral Majority wishes to awaken the conscience of America to begin growing those roots. Moral Majority says its message is not Christianity, and that people can proclaim the message without accepting Jerry Falwell's Baptist fundamentalism. I will return to that thought in a moment.

The crucial question is whether or not the country can survive without its moral roots. Critics of Falwell rarely deal with that issue. However, the evidence is strongly in Falwell's favor. Harold Berman, a Harvard Law School professor, writes: "It is supposed by some, especially intellectuals, that fundamental legal principles . . . can

survive without any religious or quasi-religious foundations on the basis of the proper political and economic controls and philosophy of humanism. History, however, including current history, testifies otherwise. People will not give their allegiance to a political and economic system, and even less to a philosophy, unless it represents for them a higher, sacred truth."¹

Through political action Moral Majority desires to awaken within Americans a sensitivity to the morality of our Judeo-Christian roots. Those roots are firmly based on Christian principles. Falwell believes America is great because up until recently the principle of moral decency and many other biblical principles have been honored in this country, so God has honored the United States. Falwell says God has not honored the U.S. because it is a Christian nation, for it is not, never has been, and never will be a Christian nation. Falwell says we are a nation under God in which there has been for 200 years the absolute freedom to preach whatever religious conviction one might have. He says America has become great because the principle of Proverbs 14:34 has been adhered to. "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (NIV). His paraphrase of the verse is, "Living by God's principles promotes a nation to greatness; violating God's principles brings a nation to shame."²

A question often asked is this: If a person accepts the positions of Moral

Majority, must he then accept Falwell's theology? Will he be condemned if he doesn't accept that theology? This is a basic misconception about Moral Majority. It is a political organization, not a religious movement. There is absolutely no theological agreement in Moral Majority. Moral Majority addresses four moral issues which have all become very volatile political issues. There are over 70,000 ministers, representing dozens of denominations, as members of Moral Majority unified around those four moral issues. If any doctrine were introduced by Falwell he would immediately offend and lose the support of thousands of Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and many others that work as private citizens within a political organization. There can be such unity because it is a political cause and not religious. At this point it would be beneficial to write about Jerry Falwell himself to better understand Moral Majority. Then I will return to discuss the platform and goals of Moral Majority

The Founder of Moral Majority

Jerry Falwell is a fundamentalist Baptist preacher. His affiliation is with the Baptist Bible Fellowship, which has headquarters in Springfield, Illinois. It has some 35,000 churches in the U. S. Falwell preaches at the Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. In 1981 he had 62 assistants to help with the 18,000-member church. He has also

(Continued, page 6)

by Pastor Michael Hoffman

started a Bible college and is seen each week on the "Old Time Gospel Hour" television broadcast. With his Baptist background Falwell has a very strong separatist attitude. He defines separation as "separation in the world from the rock music culture, separation from immorality, separation from the Hollywood culture." Additionally, Baptists have had strong separatist attitudes from other denominations. Falwell is seen each week by millions in that role as a Baptist preacher. But as the founder of the Moral Majority he wishes to be known as Falwell the concerned citizen, who is seeking to restore the country's moral roots but not asking that all its citizens become Baptist.³ With such high visibility it is easy to see why there is such confusion between Falwell the preacher and Falwell the founder of Moral Majority.

The news media in our country is quick to accuse Falwell of trying to push his doctrine upon everyone. But that is precisely what the Moral Majority is not trying to do. It cannot do that and survive, as has already been pointed out. Falwell has spoken to dozens of different denominations about Moral Majority. He does that as a concerned citizen, not as a preacher. He does not talk about the gospel message on such occasions. At home in his pulpit he makes it a practice not to mention Moral Majority. He says he probably has not mentioned it 10 times. He also says the two are really not related and the church has not given a dollar to the Moral Majority movement.⁴ When Falwell is involved, a differentiation must be made between the Baptist preacher and the concerned citizen working in political areas. Recognition of that difference is crucial in order to not unduly criticize Moral Majority.

The Four-Point Platform

After five years of meetings with many denominations Falwell and three or four others worked out the four-point position of the Moral Majority in June of 1979, and it has not changed since then. Falwell insists that it can-

not change without the agreement of the four million people involved in Moral Majority. The Moral Majority is:

1) *PRO-LIFE*. A definite stand is taken against the widespread and indiscriminate practice of abortion in this country. A major political goal in this area is the passage of a human life amendment to the Constitution.

2) *PRO-TRADITIONAL FAMILY*. Believing that the breakdown of the family is causing serious problems in our society, Moral Majority is calling for a return of "whole" households—families with both parents, where parental authority is exercised and traditional morals and values are taught.

If a person accepts the positions of Moral Majority, must he then accept Falwell's theology? Will he be condemned if he doesn't accept that theology?

This has become a popular area through the work of Dr. James Dobson and many others. Moral Majority worked hard against E.R.A., saying it undermines the family. It also works hard against gay rights, seeing that issue as a threat to the family.

3) *PRO-MORAL*. This covers a large area, but two main issues are hit hard. Illegal drugs and pornography are highly opposed. It can be controversial, though, as to what drugs are opposed and what constitutes pornography. Falwell himself opposes both alcohol and smoking but cannot push that as policy. The influence of television sex is also seen as a large problem. Falwell would also like to push more on the effect of TV violence but many in the organization don't recognize it, so it isn't pushed.

4) *PRO-AMERICAN*. This means strong national defense and very strong support for Israel. This may be the area of greatest controversy. Falwell is super-patriotic. He very much

agrees with the military build-up President Reagan is seeking. He staunchly denounces the SALT II treaty and does not support disarmament. He and Moral Majority are greatly criticized on this point. Their policies are seen as "narrow, chauvinistic, nationalism."⁵ Falwell remains undaunted, though. Moral Majority is also highly supportive of Israel. Taking the Abrahamic covenant literally, it proclaims that the U. S. has prospered because it has been a strong ally of Israel.

Very briefly, then, those four areas are the platform of the Moral Majority. A big problem it must deal with is having many other issues quoted as policy when they are not. Falwell insists that from the beginning Moral Majority has dealt with only the four areas mentioned. It could not bring in such issues as gun control, the Panama Canal, or domestic policies and expect to proliferate across the country. A problem arises because Falwell cannot control everything said by the hundreds of leaders of Moral Majority on state and local levels (nor does he desire such control). People might speak as individuals on a topic and be quoted as stating Moral Majority policy. That often happens with Falwell; he speaks on many issues, giving his opinion but not intending it to be taken as Moral Majority policy. Confusion easily occurs in the press.

The Basic Goal

There is one major goal of Moral Majority. That goal is to mobilize two million people to work for government policies based on traditional moral and biblical principles.⁶ One possibility is a constant bombardment of Congress with millions of letters every time an issue vital to Moral Majority is at stake. Falwell stated several of his personal goals for Moral Majority as: 1) in this decade to bring the nation back to an appreciation of the traditional values and moral principles that have been the American way for 200 years; 2) to see the family become prominent in our

society again—including seeing television featuring united families rather than broken and distorted ones; 3) to see Moral Majority create a sensitivity to the needs of the poor and unfortunate; 4) for Moral Majority to remain nonpartisan in the two-party system; 5) never to have any of the principal leadership of Moral Majority, including Falwell himself, run for public office at any level.⁷

Criticisms

It is easy to imagine that as Moral Majority works in such volatile areas criticisms would come from many directions. Here are five of the most common criticisms:

1) With the recent uproar over nuclear disarmament, the defense policies of Moral Majority are greatly criticized. It is popular now to call for peace, disarmament, and passivism, not military strength.

2) Critics nearly always bring up the issue of violation of the separation of church and state. That issue is far more misunderstood than Moral Majority itself. It really has no basis since Moral Majority is a political and not a religious organization. Falwell is a very strong supporter of the separation of church and state.⁸

3) Critics also say Moral Majority confronts problems with a sledgehammer approach rather than being sensitive to any compromise. Solutions are said to be seen as oversimplified and threatening to other values, especially in the area of women's rights.

4) Moral Majority's, hard line against humanist philosophies is said to be overblown. Critics claim humanists are given far too much credit or blame for the problems of our society.⁹

5) A favorite area to criticize in this age of mass media and the "electronic church" is fund raising. Falwell's church and school have been in constant financial difficulty and efforts are nonstop to raise funds for them and Moral Majority. Some of Falwell's fund-raising letters have been greatly criticized for the "crisis of the week" approach that is used.¹⁰ The

confusion over the difference between Falwell's church work and his involvement in Moral Majority, coupled with the millions of dollars he brings in weekly, makes the situation ripe for criticism.

My Appreciation

Although my support of Moral Majority is not without some questions and reservations, I do very much appreciate its goal and what it has accomplished. I detect a complacent and lax attitude about morals and moral issues sweeping over Christians and churches. It is part of the apathy of the 80's. Moral Majority has pricked the conscience of America and refuses to allow a Christian voice to go unheard. Moral Majority has sparked

Moral Majority has pricked the conscience of America and refuses to allow a Christian voice to go unheard.

many people to take action who would not act otherwise or who had no means of taking appropriate action.

I read a great deal in God's Word about the moral conditions of the world today. Romans 1:18-32 and 2 Timothy 3:1-9, 13 are both major passages that warn about the decay of morals. Although it is highly apparent that morality in this country will grow worse and worse, as Christians we need not throw up our hands and resign ourselves to that fact; after all, we are empowered by the Holy Spirit. Is it not giving silent approval of moral breakdown to remain in apathetic paralysis? James asks one of his commonly tough questions: "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God" (4:4, NIV). I submit that by saying or doing nothing we silently befriend the world's standards. James' statement is startling.

I believe Christ gave us very specific direction on this matter. "You are the

salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:13-16, NIV). You are salt. You are light. Our response of obedience to Christ is to help men one by one turn from immorality to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. By doing that we will effectively fight the moral breakdown of this country.

I appreciate Jerry Falwell's work in establishing Moral Majority because I believe it has given the country a very practical means of implementing Matthew 5:13-16. "Those who disagree with the Moral Majority people should attack the substance of their commitments rather than their right to be political."¹¹ Moral Majority is far from a perfect organization. I do not agree with Falwell's theology. But I do commend his courage in letting his light shine and letting it be very well known that he is not a friend of the world's system or standards. Rather than being so critical and fault finding, I believe God would appreciate our putting forth a more concerted effort to follow Falwell's example.

NOTES

¹Tim Minnery, "The Man Behind the Mask: Bandit or Crusader," *Christianity Today*, Sept. 4, 1981, p. 28.

²"An Interview With The Lone Ranger of American Fundamentalism," *Christianity Today*, Sept. 4, 1981, p. 24.

³Minnery, p. 28.

⁴Interview, p. 23.

⁵John C. Bennet, "Assessing the Concerns of the Religious Right," *Christian Century*, Oct. 14, 1981, p. 1021.

⁶Edward E. Plowman, "Is Morality All Right?" *Christianity Today*, Nov. 2, 1979, p. 78.

⁷Interview, p. 23.

⁸Minnery, p. 28.

⁹Bennet, p. 1020.

¹⁰Minnery, p. 29.

¹¹Bennet, p. 1019.



What

Are

You

Doing

Here?

IMAGINE SITTING on a public bench near the curb minding your own business, when a uniformed individual looking very official comes up to you and barks, "What are you doing here?" Immediately you feel put on the spot and shift into a defensive gear. You know now that you must be out of place and don't belong, but you won't admit it. Instead, you make up some excuse to justify yourself in the eyes of the uniformed official.

The Old Testament prophet Elijah was asked the same question after he had run away from Jezebel's threats and was hiding on Mt. Horeb. "What doest thou here?" God said. Just as we might, he offered an excuse. He knew it wouldn't work but he still tried to justify himself. James tells us, "Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are." In other words, Elijah had the same types of human failings we do. We can all identify with Elijah and benefit from his experience at Mt. Horeb. Here was a man who in one moment was a towering giant for the Lord and the next moment was a withered shell filled with apprehension and fear, making high-sounding excuses to justify his behavior.

Elijah's Self-Justification

Elijah's four-part excuse of self-justification seems quite acceptable on the surface: "I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts:

for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10).

He first points to his faithful service to God. Elijah had truly been "jealous for the Lord." He had delivered God's message to Ahab that there would be no rain and then went into underground hiding for three and a half years, first at the brook of Cherith and later with a widow and her son at Zarephath. At the end of the divinely ordered drought he had been victorious over the prophets of Baal in a spectacular contest on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:30-40). Now as he hides out he rests on past laurels. Like we have done at times, he pointed to his previous victories and in an attitude of self-justification says, "Look at all the good works I have done."

His second point of justification was to show how bad the other guy was: "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant." This was a true statement. Israel had rejected Jehovah for the idolatrous worship of Baal. God's prophets had been forced into hiding, and holy places of worship had been desecrated. On Mt. Carmel that situation had temporarily been corrected, but Elijah, aware of their fickle ways, probably knew they would again revert

by Pastor Stephen Bolhous

to sinful worship. Distressing as this was, the point that Elijah failed to see (sometimes we fail to see it as well) was that the behavior of errant Israel did not excuse him. Righteousness does not consist of being less sinful than our neighbor.

"I only am left" was his third line of excuse. He was discouraged. The branches of evil had been cut off, but Jezebel, the root, still flourished. It was God's will for Ahab's dynasty to be destroyed but that had not yet happened. Elijah, not understanding God's timetable, felt totally alone in his ministry. With marred judgement he thinks, "I'm the only one who cares enough to work for the Lord. There's no one else left." Sound familiar?

Finally Elijah answers God by saying, "They seek my life." Jezebel had said she would make him like one of her slain prophets so Elijah fled into the wilderness, sat under a juniper tree and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life" (1 Kings 19:4). Elijah didn't want to die, but he had given up on life. It seemed pointless to go on anymore with all that animosity directed against him.

What a contrast—from victory and flying high on Mt. Carmel to the pits of depression on Mt. Horeb. When viewed honestly, in Elijah we see a mirrored image of our own weak selves. In the course of our lives we have all had our Mt. Horebs, and we have tried to justify in our minds our presence there, knowing all the while we were not in the right.

God Deals With Elijah

God did not reason with Elijah's

excuses; he simply showed Elijah what he was capable of doing. "And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:11, 12). A wind that broke rocks; cataclysmic forces that made the ground tremble—yet God did not speak to Elijah from these.

Following the violence of nature there was a still small voice, the sound of a gentle stillness. In a soft whisper God called, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" God speaks, not always through might and power, but with a voice of quiet understanding, the call of the inner consciousness, the conviction of the heart. The wind, earthquake, and fire did not make Elijah cover his face in shame—but the quiet voice did. He knew he was where he was supposed to be; he was not working for the Lord as he should have been.

Elijah still persisted in his attempt to justify himself. God had asked the question a second time, and again Elijah repeated his excuse (v. 14). The Lord ignored Elijah's remarks and gave him work to do: anoint the next king of Israel, anoint the next king of Syria, and anoint Elisha to succeed him (vv. 15, 16). God's dealings with Elijah tell us something very special. God understands human frailty but will not

bow down to it. "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Psa. 103:14). God is aware of our weaknesses, but instead of allowing them to control us he enables us to become overcomers. When we make excuses for ourselves God's calm quiet voice whispers to us, "What doest thou here? . . . My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness" (1 Kings 19:9; 2 Cor. 12:9).

Along with the assignment, God gave Elijah some encouraging news: the house of Ahab would be replaced by Jehu, and there were 7,000 left in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal (v. 18). God was not inactive; Elijah's eyes were. He was so filled with fear, depression, and excuses that he failed to see God working. Through this encounter with the Lord his eyes were opened. God is working at the present moment. His promise is not just something to read, but something to see and feel right now. When we recognize and accept that God is in control the reasons for fears and hiding from life seem to vanish.

We all have our ups and downs in life—our Mt. Carmels of victory and our Mt. Horebs of depression. In those low times God whispers to us, "What doest thou here?" Then we know we're not where we're supposed to be; not doing what we're supposed to do. It is then, if we listen rather than make excuses, that God gives us a fresh assurance of his promise and new strength and energy to serve him as we should.

Listen! Do you hear him just now? "What doest . . .?"



UNITY

by Pastor Don Needham

FOR THOSE WHO TIRE of my frequent references to the world of sports, I beg you—bear with me. There are just so many happenings to observe in athletics that can be applied within the structure of a congregation. Here is a case in point:

In any team sport competition (more than one participant), teamwork is vital. On a track relay team, there must be smooth transfer of the baton. A football team depends on unity in the line to open holes, or protect the quarterback. Likely no team sport demands more cohesiveness than basketball. Put five talented unselfish players on a court, get them playing together and hitting the open man, and chances are good that they will produce a winner. On the other hand, put

out five equally talented selfish players who are most concerned about their personal statistics—and victories will come rarely. Over the years the NBA Boston Celtics have confirmed this principle. Though their roster is consistently loaded with individuals who are superstars—men capable of exceptional points-per-game averages—they unselfishly put on a clinic of teamwork whenever they play. It's their trademark. Their unmatched number of championship banners attests that teamwork produces a winner.

A Church Must be a Team

Now transfer this concept from the world of sports to the confines of a church. *What teamwork is to a ballteam, unity is to a church.* A precision team

operates as though it has a single mind. An effective congregation also functions as though it has one mind—the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5).

Unity, another dimension of *Koinonia*, is one of the most inviting qualities a church has to offer people as they come in weary from a bruising and battering world. The contentment felt in the quiet, peaceful, supportive atmosphere of a body of unified Christians is like the satisfaction of coming in from a winter storm to drop into a comfortable chair. But if there are windows broken out and holes in the roof, little storm shelter comes from a chair. Likewise one finds no sanctuary from the tensions of the world in a separated, fighting church. If a congregation is just "Sunday morning at the

fighters," it has no appeal. *Why would people who live in a divided world want to get involved in a divided church?*

A split congregation is like a cornered rattlesnake. In a rage, a frenzied rattler will strike anything—even itself! Its lethal poison, once safely concealed in sacs behind its fangs, can be poisonous even to itself when loosed into its system. *A fighting church is "a body poisoning itself!"*

Oneness: A Thread Through the Word

How many times do you count the adjective "one" in this four-verse passage?

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is *one* body and *one* Spirit—just as you were called to *one* hope when you were called—*one* Lord, *one* faith, *one* baptism, *one* God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all (Eph. 4:3-6, NIV).

You should have found it no less than seven times. What is Paul saying about the master design of God's church? Explicitly, there is to be a oneness about it: a unity in it.

Did you also notice that we don't create unity ("make every effort to keep the unity")? But it is our job to maintain it. The origin of unity is much like the origin of fire. God created them both. As we can only sustain a fire by feeding it logs—we can only maintain unity by striving for oneness. That often means putting a personal preference aside for the good of the whole.

The longest recorded prayer of Jesus is found in John 17. It was prayed at a crucial time in his life—the night of his trial and subsequent execution. At such a decisive hour one would expect his words to be selected carefully. Notice the statement which is the heart of his prayer: "Holy Father, protect them [the disciples] by the power of your name—the name you gave me—*so that they may be one as we are one*" (John 17:11b, NIV). Jesus knew that if each disciple went out playing his own game of one-on-one—the plans for this church that was to change the world would unravel like threads on a feed sack. It was vital that they *pull together*, not apart.

Things are no different today. If the atmosphere of a congregation is a squabbling, bickering, battling war-field with casualties

lying everywhere—and enemy troops planning their next offensive—we have nothing to offer a world that is wounded and scarred from battles elsewhere. *A church must be at peace with itself.*

Jesus: the Common Denominator

The New Testament clearly and unequivocally states that Christians are "members" of one another." All New Testament authors recognized this truth. But it was Paul who developed this concept extensively in his correspondence with certain churches. It was also Paul who exclusively used a unique illustration to get his point across—the human body. In his letters to the Romans, the Corinthians, the Ephesians, and the Colossians, he penned the word "body" (*soma*) more than 30 times to illustrate the functioning church. Approximately half of the times he used the word, he was referring to the human, physical body with its many parts and members. In the other half, he applied the term to the Church—the body of Christ. Here's an example:

For Christ is like a single *body* with its many limbs and organs, which, many as they are, together make up one *body*. For indeed we were all brought into one *body* by baptism, in the one Spirit, whether we are Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free men, and that one Holy Spirit was poured out for all of us to drink. (1 Cor. 12:12, 13, NEB).

A congregation should view itself as a *living organism*—one body, diversified but unified—cooperating for the good of the whole. Fellow members should think of each other in this way: **I AM PART OF YOU AND YOU ARE PART OF ME—BECAUSE WE ARE BOTH A PART OF JESUS CHRIST.**

The Practical Side of Unity

When does a congregation achieve singleness of mind? Is it only after total unanimity is reached on all issues? Is there not unity until everyone breathes, thinks, nods, walks and talks exactly the same? Hardly! A church can hold vastly differing positions and still be unified.

Unity is realized as people continue to show kindness even when there are opposing ideas. It is evident when people disagree without attacking the worth of another who holds a contrasting opinion. Of course "deep agape" is the lubricant

that keeps disagreeers from becoming enemies, and the epoxy that prevents fissures from growing into full-scale canyons.

An automobile transmission is a valuable church teacher. Its design and function hold vital lessons for every congregation. Though it has a powerful motor, a car will only propel itself forward when those toothed gears are meshed and pulling together. A many-gear church *must be synchronized*, too, if it desires to advance for Christ.

And speaking of teeth, do you know that as many as 30,000 microscopic teeth can be counted on the tongue of a snail? His tongue remains in a roll until it is needed to lash out for cutting a stem or leaf. How vivid an analogy for what frequently happens within a church group! Disputes and discord can often be traced to people lashing out with "teeth on their tongues." *Gossips and those with judgmental, vindictive, hypercritical spirits are directly responsible for most dissension and disunity.* There is no "dirt shovel" bigger than the tongue. It is unfortunate that the damage is usually beyond repair when people with sharp tongues cut their own throats, and gossips get caught in their mouthtraps!

We're All in This Together

Your congregation can be likened to a rowboat loaded and drifting on a vast ocean. This boat is sitting low in the water, with only a couple of inches between the level of the water and the top of the boat. It's to a group's advantage to cooperate and work together. Who is hurt when someone decides to drill a hole in the bottom—or two people get into a slugfest which tips the boat and lets water in? The whole thing can sink! It takes years (if ever) for a congregation to get over the bloody fight that precedes a split. The odor of it hangs on like the fragrance of a skunk.

In Summary

A united church is a dynamic witness of the Christian gospel. When non-Christians see true unity and oneness—their hearts cry out to be a part of that kind of love.

Unity creates a reciprocal effect: a cycle. Unity creates effective body function, effective body function creates more unity. This leads to people getting closer—and deeper in love in Jesus.

True Marriage

By Pastor David W. Cheatwood



HOW can you make your marriage last? What can you do to make it better? What kind of commitment is needed to share a happy and productive marriage? Have you ever asked yourself these questions? I wish more people would. It is very distressing to see marriages fail because one or both of the partners were unwilling to work at it.

In Hebrews 13:4 are these words: "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

Many people today live with each other without any commitment. They refuse to take the vows and declare that they are serious about their relationship. Then they wonder why it doesn't work out. Lust is no replacement for commitment. You cannot trust someone who is unwilling to give to the marriage.

The text in Hebrews speaks of being faithful to your partner. Without that faithfulness and the commitment to stay faithful a marriage will soon fold. Not only will there be no trust, but any hopes of building a future together are as good as washed down the drain.

God had a reason for his plan. He knew and we should know that marriage is a lasting relationship only for those willing to work out their differences. If you think marriage always goes smoothly you have watched too many Hollywood movies. Couples that survive have had many disagreements and many rough spots in their relationship. It is because they desire to make it work that they have stayed together. Their commitment to God and their fellow men and to each other was a serious commitment.

The time we give to each other

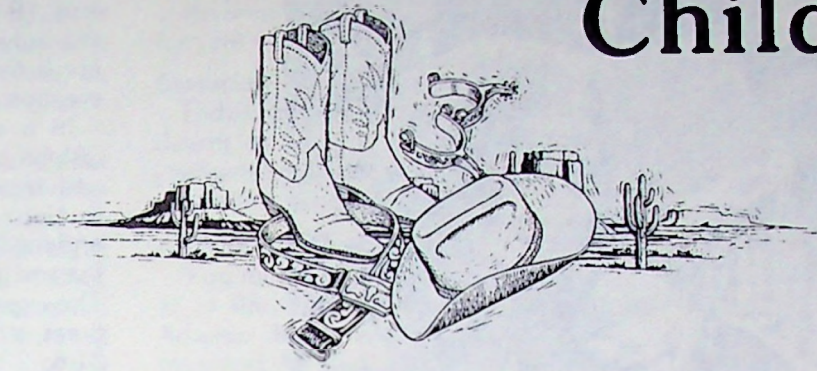
pays rather high dividends. As our love and trust towards each other grows, so does the intimacy of the relationship. Your best friend is your mate. You can share your ups and downs and find an understanding ear—the results of which only draw you even closer.

Long marriages happen because the couple NEVER entertain the idea of divorce. They think in terms of how they can work things out, what must be done to right this disagreement, etc.

If you want to bail out the first time you have an argument, you had better take a closer look at yourself and your motives. The grass is not as green on the other side of the fence as you might think. If you can't work things out with your present spouse, you will probably not work them out with your next. Without commitment and determination to make it work, you are destined to fail. Make up your mind to succeed and you will. Seek outside help if you need to, but keep after the building of your relationship.

True marriage is needed in today's society. If you are a real man or a real woman, think about your commitment to each other. If it is weak, get it together. If it is strong, keep building. Let love, friendship, and commitment lead you to a happy marriage that lasts all your life.

by Rachel Carr



Part 2

Steve Wilson took a notebook to Mexico with him so he could write down all the interesting things that happened. Here are a couple of pages from his journal.

SATURDAY

I sure had a strange alarm clock to wake me up this morning. Just as the sun was coming up I heard the most unusual noise. Couldn't imagine what it was, but it was coming from outside. Well, it wouldn't quit so I jumped out of bed and looked out the window. There in the corral by the barn stood a donkey, hee-hawing away. Quite a way to wake up.

We all gathered in the big dining room for breakfast. After prayer, we passed by the serving window to pick up our food and then sat down at long tables. We had scrambled eggs with green chiles and cheese, orange juice, and tortillas. (These are thin round cornmeal cakes which the Mexicans use as bread.)

After breakfast the Richards family and our family climbed into the Richards' van and headed for town. We were anxious to see the big market.

When we walked into the huge building we didn't know where to look first. There sure was a variety of things for sale. I wanted to buy a hand-tooled leather wallet so I kept an eye out for a leather-goods stall. Jan had noticed some girls wearing pretty embroidered blouses, and she wanted one of those. Of course, the Richards needed to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, cheese, and tortillas for the orphanage. All of these things, plus many more, could

be bought in this great market—all under one roof. There were kites, sweets, shoes, baskets, toys, brooms, even meat hanging from big hooks in the walls. It was fun just to walk down the aisles to look at all the goods and to watch the people.

SUNDAY

We went to two Sunday Schools today. First we met in the chapel at the orphanage. Mr. Moreno, one of the workers here, led choruses, and some of them were familiar—at least the tunes. But the words were in Spanish, of course. Some of the boys and girls said Bible verses they had learned, but I didn't recognize any of those. Then Mrs. Richards used the flannel-graph board to tell the story of Jesus feeding the 5000.

After a quick lunch our family and the Richards family jumped into the van and headed for the mountain village of Bisnaga. When we pulled into the little town, boys and girls came running out of their houses and gathered around us. You could tell they looked forward to their Sunday School every week.

After Sunday School there was a surprise. Since it was Dia del Nino (Children's Day), the Richards had brought a piñata. A piñata is a papier mâché figure that has inside it a clay pot filled with goodies. This one was a clown that was decorated with all colors of crepe paper. Dad and Mr. Richards strung it up on a rope and then both stood on chairs to make it high. As they moved the clown in the air, the children (who were blindfolded) took turns trying to hit it with a stick. When it was my

The Mexico Trip

turn I managed to hit it twice, but didn't break it. Finally one of the boys gave it a big whack and all the sweets fell out. We all scrambled to pick up all the candy we could. It was fun!

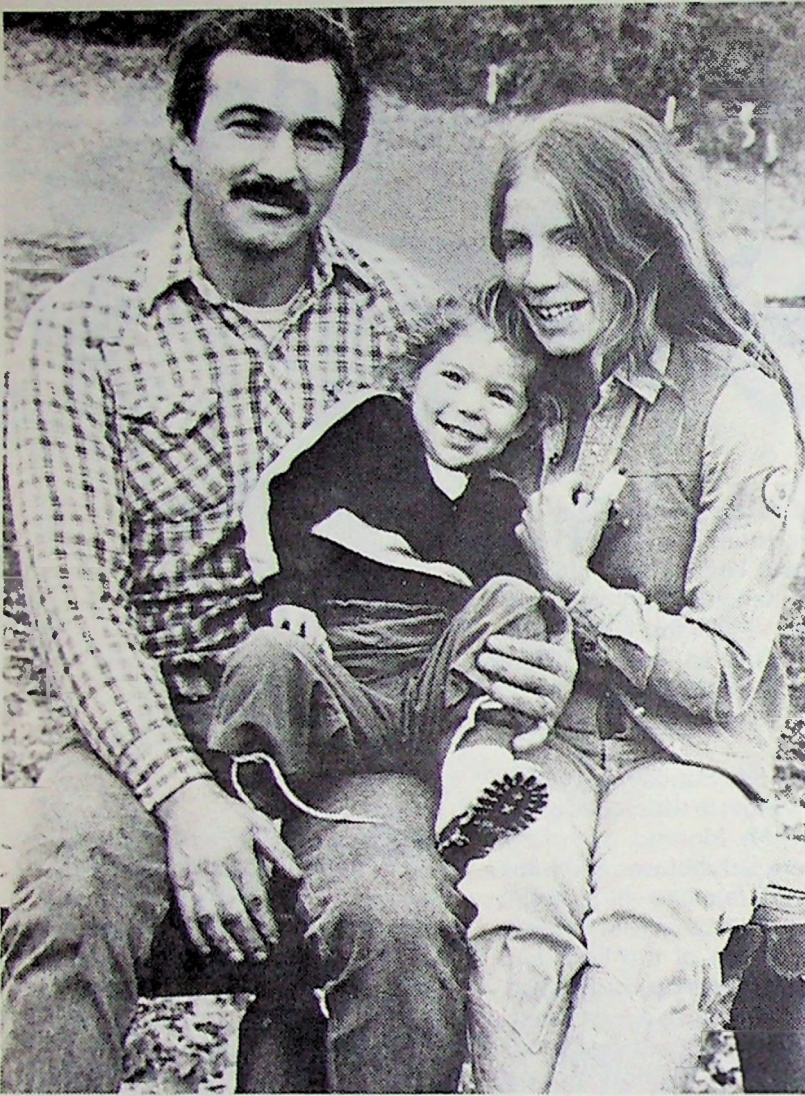
MONDAY

Today I got to know one of the boys at the orphanage a little better. His father knew English so Pedro had learned some from him and we were able to talk to each other. Pedro took me out to the barn and showed me their cow, and I also got close enough to pet that donkey that woke me up on Saturday. I'm learning some Spanish words from Pedro, too. I can say, "Buenos dias. ¿Cómo está?" (Good morning. How are you?)

Pedro has a sad story. He used to have a nice family—a mother, father, and two sisters. But three years ago there was an earthquake in his town and he lost his whole family. He still thinks about it a lot and it's real hard for him. I wish there was some way we could help him. . . .

Oh, there's the dinner bell. Have to run. I hear we've having enchiladas!

(To be concluded next month)



was, and which is to come, the Almighty" (Rev. 1:8) and "the beginning and the end" (Rev. 21:6). God alone created the universe (Isa. 44:24; 45:12, 18). He is the first and last cause of this creation and its sovereign ruler.

In a consideration of the phrase "Alpha and Omega," it is understood as the rendering of the Greek expression, *to Alpha kai to o*. It constitutes the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet and indicates the totality of a thing. The expression correctly occurs three times in the New Testament (Rev. 1:8; 21:6; 22:13). Some translators have erroneously inserted it in Rev. 1:11. This is not a part of the original manuscript and consequently does not appear in some of the better translations. The NASB translation considers this fact based on the current availability of ancient manuscripts and does not continue this error.

The phrase "first and last" occurs three times in the New Testament (Rev. 1:17; 2:8; 22:13) and in each reference it refers to the Son of God. In the first two references it concerns the resurrection of Jesus and the third occurrence groups it with other phrases and suggests the supremacy of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the central figure of the opening verses of the book of "The Revelation of Jesus Christ." 1) It is the revelation of Jesus Christ (1:1). 2) It is the testimony of Jesus Christ (1:2). 3)

Searching Bible Qu

Question

In Rev. 1:8 the Lord God says he is the Alpha and Omega. In Rev. 22:13 Jesus says he is the Alpha and Omega. How can two persons be the first and last?

By Pastor Edward H. Goit, Sr.

Answer

God's Word never contradicts itself. In fact, it explains itself in this apparent problem to one who believes that the great weight of Scriptural teaching supports God's proclamation, "I am the LORD, and there is none else" (Isa. 45:5, 18). The UNITY of GOD is fundamental to Bible doctrine. It is clearly taught in the description of God, "The Lord, which is, and which

Reading its message, hearing it, and keeping the things written therein assure one a blessing (1:3; 22:7). 4) It is from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth (1:5).

The key which unlocks our considerations is in this last declaration concerning Jesus Christ, "the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth." *Scripturally, Jesus is the*

"first and the last" in the sense that he is the "first begotten of the dead." God has no beginning and no ending. Jesus had a beginning when he was born in Bethlehem. Jesus had a beginning as head of the new creation when he was raised from the dead.

Jesus is the "first and the last" in that he is the "beginning of this new creation"—the first to live, die, and to receive life for evermore (Col. 1:18; Rev. 3:14). Jesus is the BEGINNING, the work of God Almighty. God created Jesus the Son; Jesus is the work of God as surely as are the heavens and the earth.

It is written that Jesus, in tender compassion, "laid his right hand" upon the Apostle John and reassured him, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death" (Rev. 1:17, 18). Christ, the Messiah, is the beginning and the end of the new creation. He is the firstfruits of them who slept (1 Cor. 15:20). He is the "firstborn" (Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18; Heb. 1:6). Jesus poured forth his soul (life) unto death (Isa. 53:12; Luke 23:46; John 19:30-34). He was raised from the dead and his life will be without end. As the possessor of the keys of hell and of death, Jesus will summon the dead in Christ and translate (change) those of us which are alive at his coming (1 Thes. 4:16, 17; 1 Cor. 15:51-

will unlock the grave, loose the dead in resurrection, and establish the theocratic kingdom of God on earth, that all families of the earth may be blessed.

Question

Did Jesus die the *first death* (Adamic death) or was his the *second death* (redeeming death) which pays for the sins of his people? (Matthew 1:21.)

Answer

You mention the two deaths referred to in the Bible. The *first death*, the Adamic death, is the destiny of all mankind. All men, young and old, rich and poor, small and great, righteous and wicked must pay the wages of sin—the Adamic death. (Job 3:13-19; Eccl. 8:9; Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27.) Man, being mortal, must die the first death as the seed of the first Adam (Rom. 5:12). Mankind dies the first death because of Adam's sin, not their own personal sins.

Christians, even though forgiven of sins, must die the Adamic death to satisfy the curse placed upon Adam and his posterity. If the first death were the wages for man's personal sins, Christians would not die the first death, since their sins are covered by the blood sacrifice of Christ. Thus forgiven, they stand justified by faith in Christ, without condemnation (Rom. 8:1). This fact demonstrates a need for a second death, in which the wicked will pay the wages for personal sins.

death (Rev. 20:14, 15)! This lake of fire is the place of final judgment for unbelievers and the wicked. It is not a place of punishing everlastingly, but a place of everlasting punishment (Psa. 37:10; Obadiah 16; Mal. 4:1-3).

Isaiah predicted the suffering servant, Jesus, would pour out his soul (life) unto death. Jesus did this in that he literally died (Matt. 27:35, 50; Luke 23:46; John 19:30-34). It is our contention that Jesus Christ, as the second Adam, had the same quality of life the first Adam had before the transgression. The writer of Hebrews, in writing about Jesus, stated, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14).

Christ's death serves a two-fold purpose. Jesus died to pay the price for Adam's sin to justify all men unto life, that is, resurrection. At the same time his death served as a blood-covering sacrifice for all obedient believers' personal sins. When one's personal sins are forgiven, the *second* and *permanent* death has no power over him (Rev. 20:6).

Based on the foregoing, we conclude that Jesus died the Adamic death to redeem mankind. His death could not have been the *second death* which would have resulted in his complete annihilation. Jesus was raised from the

Questions From YOU

54). Christ in his resurrection won the VICTORY over Satan and has obtained the victory for all who believe (1 Thes. 4:14; Heb. 2:14, 15).

Jesus Christ is the one who broke the barriers of the grave. Everything that pertains to the covenants of promise and the world's restitution converge in Jesus. He is the Alpha and Omega in God's Plan, the beginning and the end. He holds the key of David, the key that

The *second death* is reserved for the wicked and unbelievers, whose sins are unforgiven. The wicked are not punished at the first death. Their judgment will take place when they are raised in the last resurrection (Rev. 20:11-13). The second death results in their total destruction, even their annihilation. Those whose names are not written in the book of life will be cast into the lake of fire. This is the *second*

dead and is alive forevermore (1 Cor. 15:1-8; Rev. 1:18)! Furthermore, the Scriptures teach that the second death, the lake of fire, does not occur until after the 1000 years of the Messianic kingdom (Rev. 20:7-15).

Note: Do you have a question for Mr. Goit? Please send it to him at R.R.3, Box 47, Williamsport, IN 47993.

Recognizing The Voice of God

A Daily Quiet Time

Of course, God frequently speaks to us through his written Word. Haven't you been reading the Bible when suddenly a verse leapt at you and you knew that verse was peculiarly for you? God is speaking, making his Word personal to you.

Have you felt like saying, "God, stop the world! I want to get off"? Your real self is crying out for a time to be silent with the Lord. A daily quiet time when you are conscious of his presence can go a long way toward healing your need to get off the spinning world.

One of my friends was "too busy" for a daily quiet time until she had a heart attack. Now she's grateful for the illness because it led her into a deeper walk with the Lord. She's making rapid progress and says, "I know when I'm totally healed in spirit. I will be whole in body." She is learning to rest in the Lord, hearing him speak.

Meditative Prayer

Those who have fallen into the transcendental meditation trap are seeking to fill a void in life. We have a God-sized space within and we are miserable until we let him fill it.

Everyone can have an encounter with God. Christian meditation is not for a select few, but it does take persistence. It is a matter of learning to respond to the love and presence of God. We must take God at his Word, believing he loves us and that he never will leave us.

Meditative prayer begins with the assurance that God not only hears us when we speak but that he also speaks to us through our thoughts. This practice requires childlikeness. A little child hasn't taken on the cynicism of the world. His intellect doesn't get in the way of his simple trust. We need childlike faith to believe God is speaking.

If Jesus forgives, purifies, and sets us free, we are his sheep. He declares, "I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me. . . . My sheep hear my voice" (John 10:14, 27, RSV).

by

Marie Shropshire



"How can I recognize the voice of God?" is a question I frequently hear.

The voice of God is always loving, gentle, and full of compassion. It is always consistent with his Word. God cannot contradict himself.

A friend came to me in confusion. After relating her story, she said, "I was sure the Lord told me that these things should happen, but I've been disturbed ever since. Did I hear wrong?"

"Yes," I replied, "if you are disturbed by the 'guidance' you received, you heard the wrong voice. God's Word clearly teaches that he is a God of peace."

Colossians 3:15 says, "Let the peace . . . from Christ rule [act as umpire continually] in your hearts—deciding and settling with finality all questions that arise in your minds . . ." (Amp.). When my friend applied this verse to her situation, she knew she'd heard the wrong voice.

"How can I be sure of not hearing the enemy voice again?" she asked.

"When you sit down to meditate, it's a good practice to begin by reading Scripture," I told her. "Then ask the Lord to help you to be sensitive to his voice and to his alone. Sincerely desire

only his will, knowing that his will is always and only good."

Worthy to Hear

Distinguishing God's voice from my own thoughts has been the most difficult for me. Most of us have been programmed to self-doubt. Having a negative background, we feel unworthy to hear the Lord speak to us, so we pass it off, saying, "That was just myself." We forget that Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice," and, "The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me."

Several years ago at a camp meeting, I was privileged to hear a speaker give a teaching on hearing God's voice. She asked, "How many of you hear God consistently?"

Out of an audience of hundreds, only a few hands went up. She led us in a brief prayer and then said, "Ask God a question and listen for his answer."

I silently asked, "Lord, why don't I hear you more clearly?" Distinctly I heard within, "It's your feeling of unworthiness." I knew that was right.

The Lord wants us to know that through Christ we have been made worthy.



GOD'S TIMING

by Judy Hively

More than 40 years ago, Hope Chapel Church of God, South Bend, Indiana, split into two churches over some unfortunate disagreements. For many years, Morning Star and Hope Chapel were separated by the whole city of South Bend as well as by the reasons for the original split.

Some eight to 10 years ago, some talk was bantered about concerning a merger. But the time was not right.

Then a few years later, Morning Star found itself without a pastor for a year. Neither church was growing at this point and both were located in areas that would not grow. The Elders of both groups began meeting and discussing possibilities. Then God began moving us. The Morning Star board wrote to Hope Chapel requesting formal consideration of a merger and this reconciliation took place less than a year later. We are one again!

We began looking for land in the spring of 1980. Finally, after a year of searching, we found five acres on a prime intersection—but the owner wouldn't sell. We prayed and fasted—but the owner wouldn't sell. But didn't God bring us together to build? We really wanted that land. We asked God to change this owner's mind—but the owner wouldn't sell. And we had an extra church building to sell—how were we going to do that?

Then one day—out of the blue—a businesswoman just showed up at

Hope Chapel and in a discussion with Pastor John Railton asked if he knew of a church building for sale. Yes, he did! She took care of that for us and then later called with land to show. However, in the area she was showing, the land was selling at 80 to 100 thousand dollars for $\frac{1}{4}$ and even $\frac{1}{8}$ acre. But a parcel of a little over three acres in the middle of this prime real estate became available. Through a plan developed by our contact, we were able to purchase a \$200,000 parcel for \$67,500—located on a major highway across from a large mall—in an area with unlimited growth potential.

Oddly, in attempting to locate the businesswoman shortly thereafter, we found that she was no longer with the agency and had, in fact, been there only a very short time. But during that time she helped us to sell a building and found land we could afford in a perfect location.

God's planning? Sure, it was.

And it also just so happened that the architectural firm which we hired has, as a recent addition one of our own members, who, coincidentally, just graduated in time to help with our project.

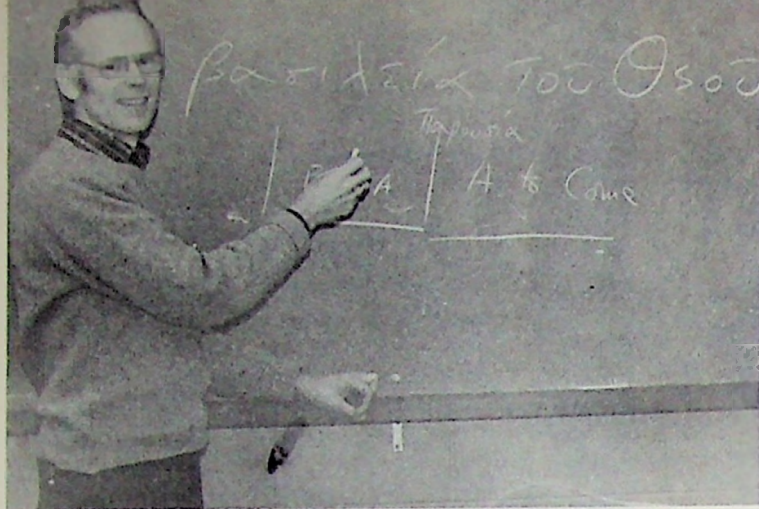
We are at the point to finalize preliminary plans and our projected construction start is March, 1984. Our building fund is growing by at least \$2,000 a month—and this is an area that has been financially depressed. Yet we were able to

budget enough to pay half the cost for 1983 Christian Workers' Seminar for the 21 people who attended.

However, if God does not provide the financing we need, we will be coming to you for help. So you'd better pray for us.

Since our reconciliation, God's spirit has been moving us in exciting ways. There is a new spirit of love, growth, and cooperation among us. New people are becoming members and are getting actively involved. A teacher training team has been activated to present a seminar to encourage new people to become teachers and to train present teachers to become better equipped. Many small prayer and Bible study groups have been and are being formed. A children's church was founded and through the efforts of several people ministers to about 22 children every Sunday. A junior church is in the planning stages. Our music ministry is expanding with the use of new music, new methods of using music, and new musical groups. This is an extremely important part of growth. We have seen the hand of God in each step of the way—and although there were times we felt impatient, God's timing has been perfect.

We have grown tremendously in love and unity and, very importantly, we are no longer a family church but we are at last—praise God—a church family!



Mr. Buzzard explains a Greek phrase at Oregon Bible College.

By
Anthony Buzzard

Can Anyone Fit the Trinity Into John 17:3?

AT THE CENTER of Christianity, in the Gospel of John, is a confessional statement which deserves our attention. In a solemn prayer, Jesus addresses his Father and defines in the precise language of a credal formula the essence of the Christian faith.

"Father... Life eternal consists in this: that they should know you, the Only True God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus the Messiah" (John 17:3).

In Jesus' mind the Father is the Only True God; in recognizing that fact and acknowledging Jesus as Messiah, eternal life is to be found. How many 20th-century church-goers are able to concur wholeheartedly in Jesus' own definition of the Godhead and the faith? Could it be that traditional creeds have led to a belief which is subtly yet radically different?

Two fundamentally important truths emerge from Jesus' words. Firstly, it is the Father alone who is "the Only True God." Secondly, Jesus is the Messiah and he is distinct from the Only True God, though clearly in the closest association with him. In John 5:44 Jesus had spoken again of him "who alone is God"¹ (NEB). In our text, John 17:3, Jesus bestows upon believers a definition of the Godhead which any Jew will recognize as strictly monotheistic, confining absolute deity to one person only, the Father. Jesus is to be regarded as the Messiah, but his Father is "the Only True God."

It will be clear to the thoughtful reader that the terms of this confession are scarcely compatible with a definition of Jesus as "true God of true God," by which the Son is held to be as fully the "One True God" as the Father. Submit John 17:3 to the ordinary reader, lawyer, logician, or language

specialist and the obvious distinction between the "one person in One God" of this verse, and the "three persons in One God" of the post-biblical creeds will be upheld. The message of the Johannine creed can be seen in even sharper relief when we consider the problems which John 17:3 caused post-New Testament commentators, who had by that time inherited a Nicean and Chalcedonian definition of the Godhead as "three persons in One God."

The fifth-century church father, Augustine of Hippo, clearly did not think that John 17:3 could be reconciled with his understanding of the Godhead as three coequal, coeternal persons in One God. He therefore felt compelled to restructure the Greek text of this verse to accommodate his views. He rewrote John 17:3 to read: "This is eternal life: that they might know you and Jesus Christ as the only true God."

The reworked version of the biblical text—bearing, as it obviously does, a quite different sense—has been in turn an embarrassment to later commentators. The minute exegesis of the British nineteenth-century expositor Henry Alford has won the highest acclaim. In his celebrated *Greek Testament* he describes the Augustinian version of John 17:3 as "of course inadmissible," and refers to two other commentators Chrysostom and Euthymius, who also regarded Jesus Christ as included in the "Only True God" of John 17:3. Alford continues: "But all such violences to the text are unnecessary" (the present writer would have used a stronger word!). Alford himself does not, however, "scruple to preach on the verse as a plain proof of the coequality of the Lord Jesus Christ in the Godhead." It is difficult to understand how he can reject Augustine's violence to

the text but arrive nevertheless at Augustine's duality in the Godhead. Jesus Christ does not allow the sacred precinct of the Father, "the Only True God," to be invaded by anyone, even the Son himself. John 17:3 must be taken as a master-key to the New Testament definition of the Godhead. It is Jesus' own creed.

A distinguished German scholar of the nineteenth century, Heinrich Meyer, author of a celebrated commentary on the New Testament, notes also that six well-known commentators² were driven to rearrange the words of John 17:3, under the strain of having to include Jesus Christ in "the One True God." Meyer describes this as a "perversion of the passage and running counter to the strict monotheism of John." While attempting to uphold the traditional creed, Meyer admits that "only one, the Father, can absolutely be termed the only true God, although Jesus, in unity with the Father, works as his commissioner and is his representative" (comm. on John 17:3, emphasis added). Meyer also states that John 17:3 is a summary of faith in opposition to all forms of polytheism. This will serve to underline the crucial importance of Jesus' statement to seekers after the Christianity of the Bible. One can only agree with this part of Meyer's plain comments on John 17:3, and remain baffled that so few seem willing to admit that this text is devastating to popular notions about a Godhead consisting of three coequal, coeternal persons. The "Only True God" according to Jesus is one person, the Father—not three persons. Are students of the Bible ready to acknowledge with John and Jesus that only one, the Father, can be termed absolutely "the Only True God"? If this sounds heretical, it may well be time for all of us to become

"heretics" with Jesus and John (to say nothing of Paul who equally defines the "One God" as the Father, as distinct from Jesus the Lord, 1 Cor. 8:4-6).

A contemporary Roman Catholic scholar, Raymond E. Brown, S.S., grapples with the question as to whether the Bible ever calls Jesus God, and admits that in Roman Catholic treatments of our subject a number of texts are "often somewhat neglected" (*Jesus, God and Man*, p. 6). He refers to many verses which show clearly that "while Jesus was associated with God and was called Lord and Mediator, there was a strong tendency to reserve the title God to the Father who is the one true God" (*ibid.*, p. 9, emphasis added). It is only fair to ask whether contemporary Christianity continues to reflect faithfully this "strong tendency" apparent in its source book, the Bible; and why we are so often told that the church has always believed that Jesus is as fully "the Only True God" as his Father. Does the average church-goer know that in over 1300 instances the Father is called God as distinct from Jesus, his Son?

In a refreshingly candid examination of the biblical evidence, Raymond Brown points out that Jesus was, according to Peter in the book of Acts, "a man attested by God" (Acts 2:22). God preached to Israel through him (Acts 10:36). He was the prophet destined to be born amongst the people of Israel, as foretold by Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (Acts 3:22, 7:37). Jesus answers the man who addresses him as "good teacher" by asking, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but the One God" (Mark 10:18, Luke 18:19). In Ephesians 1:17 the Father is called "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," a phrase which Brown concedes "makes it difficult to think that the author designated Jesus as God" (*op. cit.*, p. 8). Brown goes on to deal with a handful of texts, some of which definitely use the term "god" to refer to Jesus. In only one case (1 John 5:20) does Brown reach conclusions which would be contested by a mass of expert commentators. His frank study leaves us wondering how the very few verses which may or may not call Jesus God, and the two which definitely do, could possibly provide a solid basis for the later doctrine of the Trinity. In the Roman Catholic tradition, Brown is careful to note that Jesus' status as coequal God with the Father was in any case settled for the church by the Council of Nicea and is for that reason not open to question (*op. cit.*, p. 1). What, however, if the Council of Nicea settled the matter against the evidence of the Bible?

The absolute and unique deity of the Father alone is established unequivocally in Scripture in a number of fundamentally important New Testament texts (as also by the Old Testament). First Corinthians 8:4-6 provides us with a clear Christian creed, and, like John 17:3, does not include Jesus

within the term "One God": "There is no God except one. . . . To us [Christians] there is One God, the Father [as opposed to the multiple gods of paganism] . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ." Similarly Ephesians 4:4-6 distinguishes the one Lord Jesus from the "One God and Father of us all, who is above all." Finally in 1 Timothy 2:5, where we may expect Paul's most developed Christology, Paul seems to be working deliberately against the belief that Jesus is to be reckoned as the One God. He says: "There is One God, and one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, Himself man." It is the same Christ who after reigning in the kingdom of God will ultimately "deliver up the kingdom to God, the Father" and be "subjected to Him who put all things under Him, so that God may be everything to everyone" (1 Cor. 15: 24, 28).

In the face of this overwhelming evidence drawn from passages which plainly represent the New Testament's own creed, we may well agree with Arthur Wainwright that according to the texts we have cited "God was regarded as one, and that the One God was believed to be the Father." He adds that texts of this nature—he assembles 15 such verses—"hardly seem to provide fruitful ground for the growth of a doctrine of the Trinity" (*The Trinity in the New Testament*, p. 42).³ His conclusion is a striking example of British understatement. As a basis for the Trinity these verses must be seen as barren soil. They positively exclude the possibility of adding a second person to the unique Godhead of the Father. The "problem of the Trinity"—to use Wainwright's phrase—is created only when John 17:3 and its companion credal

statements are set aside and attempts are made to speak of the divine *function* of Jesus as Messiah as though this means that Jesus possessed coequal and coeternal deity with the Father. Such reasoning contradicts the New Testament creed (John 17:3; 5:44; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5; 1:17; Jude 25; Jas. 2:19; 4:12). These verses carefully preserve the attribute of supreme deity for the Father alone. It is only by eliminating the witness of these texts that a Trinitarian "problem" can be raised.

None of this is to deny for one moment that Jesus does not perfectly represent his Father, the One God. Our contention is that the churches have inherited a creed grown in the soil of post-biblical Greek speculation about Jesus' relationship to God. Had close attention been paid to John 17:3, the Trinitarian "problem" could have been nipped in the bud. Some theologians seem determined to picture the apostles as struggling to become Trinitarians; others, happily, are abandoning the fight, content to see Jesus in the light of the Bible as the perfect vehicle for the activity of the One God, the Father. It is reasonable that we allow Christianity's founder the right to formulate the Christian confession: that we acknowledge the Father as "the only true God" (John 17:3), "the one who alone is God" (John 5:44) and Jesus as Messiah (John 17:3; 20:31).

¹ This text is strongly reminiscent of such Old Testament monotheistic statements as Isaiah 45:5.

² Augustine, Ambrose, Hilary, Bede, Thomas, Aretius.

³ He goes on to try to build a case for the Trinity in the New Testament.



Serious discussion with a student at 1983 Christian Workers' Seminar, Gatlinburg, TN.

A PSALM OF PRAISE

Oh Lord, my God, how blessed be Thy name.
My heart overflows with joy,
My song is one of gladness.
How wondrous is Thy gentle kindness;
Thy goodness fills my soul with delight,
My being is enraptured by Thy love.
Thy glory, Thy beauty, Thy tenderheartedness
Capture the soul of me.
Thou fountain of all gladness, strength and hope,
Thy steadfast love comforts and quickens my soul.
All praise, honor and love be to Thee,
Let Thy name be praised in all corners of the earth
Forever and ever. Amen.

—Marizetta Kenney.

GOD'S PRESENCE

By the grace of God I face each day
And by his strength I find my way
Through troubled hours and whispered thoughts
That fill my soul with fear and dread.
In the midst of turmoil, grief, and pain,
I pause to hear the Master's voice,
And the peace that holds me safe within
Sounds joy through every hour.

—Marizetta Kenney.

JOY

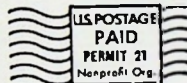
If reason there be for joy,
Then let the joy ring out,
Tolling the death of sorrow
And caroling in new birth.
If joy there be, then grief
Is worth all living,
And pain is stilled at last
But for the stab of joy.

What color, then, is joy,
And how do I measure it?
How does it taste and what is its sound
Or yet can I touch and hold it?
Nay, then, I reach it not;
But its color is gold and its taste
Is surfeit, and again its sound
Is the trumpet—call of a quest.

Joy have I found at last,
And hold it lightly in cupped hands—
Not graspingly, lest it fly away.
It is laughter bubbling deep within,
Love distilled and crystal clear.
Soon it will leave me for a time,
With emptiness in its place.
But if I hold it gently now,
It will return again.

—Marizetta Kenney.

Church of God General Conference
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061



Address Correction Requested

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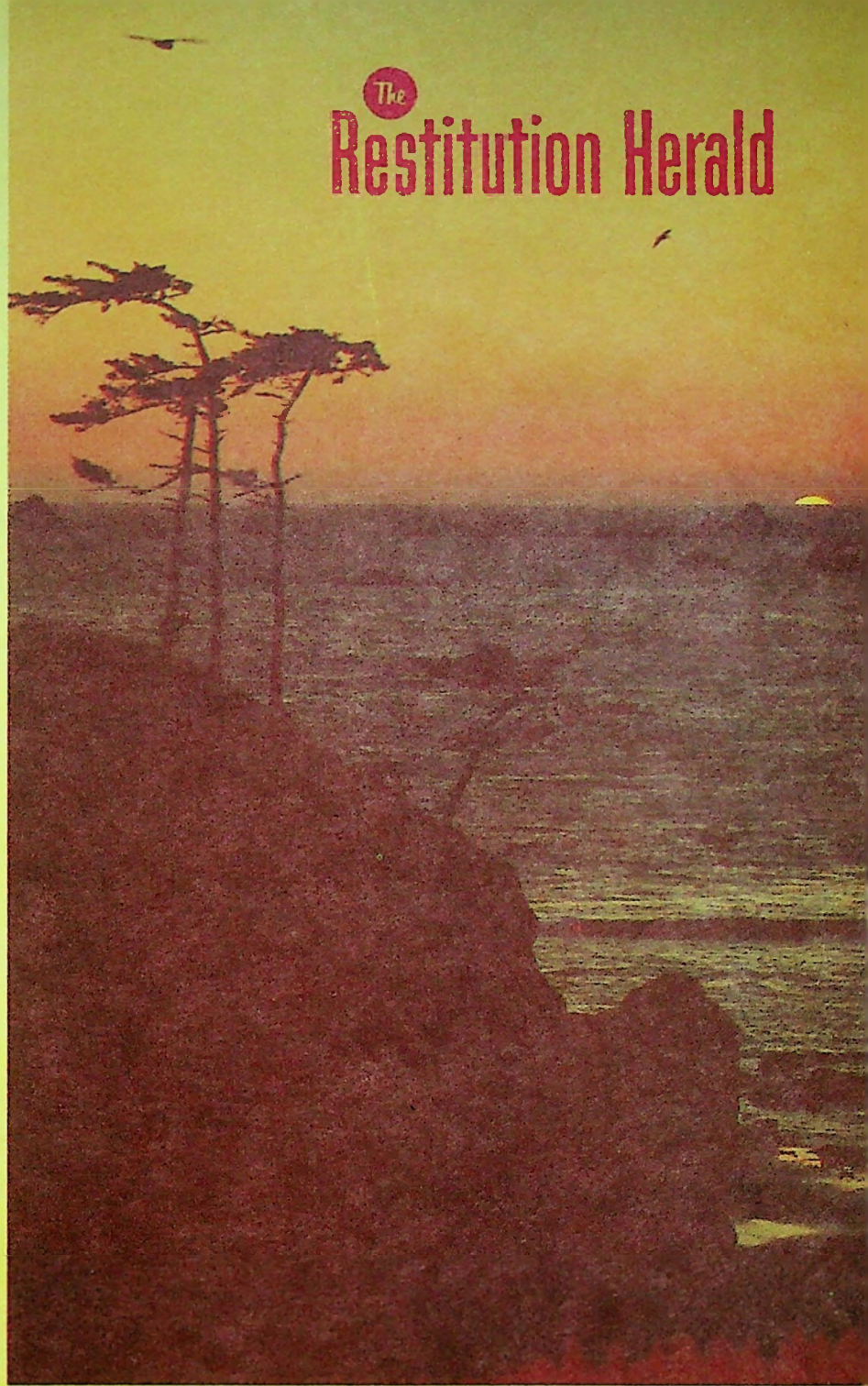
The
Restitution Herald

Superstar or Servant?

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Implications from Megatrends
send man's imagination soaring.

Megatrends

Megatrends. What is it?

For some, it's a code word which legitimizes another way to make megabucks. At least there will be critics who accuse author John Naisbitt of such a motive after they read his *Megatrends*, published by Warner Communications in 1982.

But what does Naisbitt say in his book?

In *Megatrends* Naisbitt analyzes the worlds of business, economics, politics, etc., and discovers 10 areas in which American society is being restructured. He labels these restructurings as megatrends.

What are the 10 megatrends?

Naisbitt observes that (1) we have moved from the industrial society to the information age with an economy based on the creating and distributing of information. (2) High technology helps advance the information age, but it must be done so humans can respond meaningfully to their environment. Given those facts, we must realize that (3) America is no longer self-sufficient—the world's economic leader. We are merely a part of the larger global economy. It's necessary to (4) restructure society by taking the longer view of things, but we are plagued by short-term considerations and rewards. In cities, states, subdivisions, and small organizations, we have discovered that (5) fast and innovative action comes best from the bottom up—not from the top down. (6) Self-reliance is more important to our lifestyle than institutions. (7) Because information can be shared instantaneously, slow-moving democracy is obsolete. (8) Informal networks have become more useful than hierarchical structures. Since more Americans live in the South and West, (9) the old industrial cities of the North are left behind. We now live in a (10) multiple-option society, implying that a limited range of either/personal choices are no longer viable.

If Naisbitt is right, what do these trends mean to members of the Church of God? We must learn several things from his findings.

First, while the church is already in the information business, it must package its product (the gospel) in such a way that it will appeal to the variety of cultures present in America. Next, we must realize that high technology can be used as a teaching tool, yet response to what is taught takes place only as we become personally involved with the students.

Thirdly, the church must take the long view of its work. It must ask and answer continuously the question, "What is the business we are in?" It must constantly change its methods to be successful in its business.

Fourth, the church must allow innovative ideas to come up from the bottom—the person in the pew—rather than to legislate programs from the top. When this happens, meaningful action for the cause of the gospel takes place.

Fifth, the church must plant new congregations in the South and West. Texas, Florida, and California are three of the states in which the 10 most promising cities exist.

Sixth, the church must offer concepts, worship opportunities, and educational and fellowship structures which are multi-optional. The more choices open to a community by the church, the more chances are available for people to respond to the gospel.

All this is in keeping with the inspired record of Paul's methodology of gospel work: "I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Cor. 9:22, 23, RSV).

In the fall an article will appear in THE HERALD regarding more implications of megatrends.

Press Conference on Genetic Engineering

On Wednesday, June 8, at 9:30 a.m., the nation's religious leaders called upon Congress to prohibit genetic engineering of the human germline cells at a press conference at the Warwick Hotel in New York City.

The opposition to genetic tampering of the human sex cells was led by the Foundation on Economic Trends, an organization directed by author Jeremy Rifkin, writer of *ALGENY*, the controversial expose of the biological revolution. In the May, 1983, issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD I gave a review of Rifkin's position (see page 19).

At the press conference a resolution was presented which expressed moral opposition to specific types of human genetic engineering because it is believed that the long-term detrimental moral and ecological consequences outweigh any perceived short-term bene-

fits. The signers of the resolution represent every major Christian community including fundamentalists, evangelicals, charismatics, main-line liberal, and radical church leaders.

The press has been sent a theological letter which outlines the key arguments in support of the resolution. In the fall, important excerpts from this letter will be quoted in a HERALD issue.

Aids

The medical community is warning the country through television broadcasts and news releases of a new and deadly disease—acquired immune deficiency syndrome (Aids). The condition renders useless the body's natural immunity system, leaving the victim vulnerable to disease of any kind. Some deadly and rare forms of cancer have killed several Aids-infected individuals.

This disease first attacked homosexuals, and because gays habitually donate blood for humanitarian purposes, those who need regular blood transfusions have contracted the disease. Aids is terminal to at least 80 percent of its victims.

Understandably, areas of dense homosexual populations are taking extreme measures against the disease and its carriers. Police in San Francisco use special masks and gloves when dealing with suspected AIDS patients.

God warned against the practice of homosexuality (see Rom. 1; 1 Cor. 6; Lev. 18). He even forecast instant consequences of this sin by saying "men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error (Rom. 1:27, RSV). I pray that many innocent people will be spared the AIDS malady.

Matthew's Ending Questioned

If you've had a question about Matthew's baptismal formula ("baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost"), you have joined a select group of respected theologians. Scholars from America and Sweden think the formula was tampered with after the Council of Nicea (325 A.D.) to include the trinitarian-sounding phrase.

These theologians generally agree that the ending of Matthew should read: "Go forth and make all nations disciples in my name, teaching them to hold to everything which I have commanded you." David Flusser has written an article on this more exact translation of Matthew 28:19 for the *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 5 (1967), pages 110-120. The article's title: "The Conclusion of Matthew in a New Jewish-Christian Source."

In a later issue of THE HERALD we hope to have more information on the theological reasoning behind this new ending to Matthew.

Letters to the Editor

March's Readers' Survey Additional Comments

We need more articles written by lay persons which emphasize everyday understanding of issues for daily living.

Your choice of pictures and art work needs improvement. Often they fail to correspond to the articles.

I would like articles on the millennium—who will be in it, the station of Christians in it, and at judgment.

Hollis Partlowe's articles are the best. They give me more food for thought.

I like the question and answer page.

Write a fiction story to present a truth; like a Sunday School paper.

I try to read at least most of THE HERALD because it is the only magazine of my faith. But my interest really lies in "people" stories—what God is doing in real lives—how he has helped people to deal with crisis—how he has strengthened their family or their faith.

Keep the Church of God up front. We are different.

I feel that articles and comments on controversial social issues have no place in a church publication. Some members almost canceled their subscriptions after articles on capital punishment and abortion.

I am one of the isolated members whose only contact with the teaching of my youth is THE HERALD. I do look forward to its arrival every month, for it sometimes challenges my thinking and encourages my continued reading of the Scriptures. My family often reads THE HERALD and various issues are then discussed and studied. I hope THE HERALD continues to grow in content and circulation.

Less personal testimonies.

I appreciate articles which challenge me to take some type of action—in any area of life of church work.

Although I'm a member of another denomination, I find your magazine very interesting. After all, we all worship the same God.

THE HERALD needs articles which give insight on trends in modern Christian music and literature.

One Voice for the Truth

I had a rather bad bout with our ladies' Bible study group last week. It seems that all of the women are under the impression that every religious leader teaches the truth. They keep singing the praises of several prominent leaders in Christendom. This idea was also expressed in the May issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD under "Letters to the Editor." "Aren't the nontheological people the very ones whom we are trying to reach and eventually convert?" I can't help wondering how anyone can hold this idea when 99.9 percent of the world religious population is under the sway of false religious teachings and leaders. This leaves the field wide open for those who hold the truth to spread the truth. Truly the harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few (Matt. 9:37). —*Minneapolis, MN*

From our Tract Distributor

Last Sunday afternoon I went to a nearby mall where a craft show was set up. I took packs of tracts, including the red eye-catching "No Fear in Your Future," one on "The Kingdom of God," "One God," and "Steps Toward Salvation."

I packaged them in an attractive packet and gave away 20 packs easily. I put them into the hands of the people selling crafts.

I would say, "May I leave some Christian literature with you?" hand them the pack, smile, and go on. I got no bad response and everyone thanked me. They looked at the eye-catching tract on the outside and kept the pack.

—*Columbus, OH*

The Age-to-Come

My "Who Are the Age-to-Come Theologians?" [see pages 16 and 17 in this issue] article is a tiny segment of many historical documents which help understand a history of the Church of God. I hope this article and future papers covering Age-to-Come theologians will be read by those who care to discuss my findings. I hope this short article will raise a few influential eyebrows.

David R. Graham
—*Chicago, IL*

The Restitution Herald

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The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32), the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:13); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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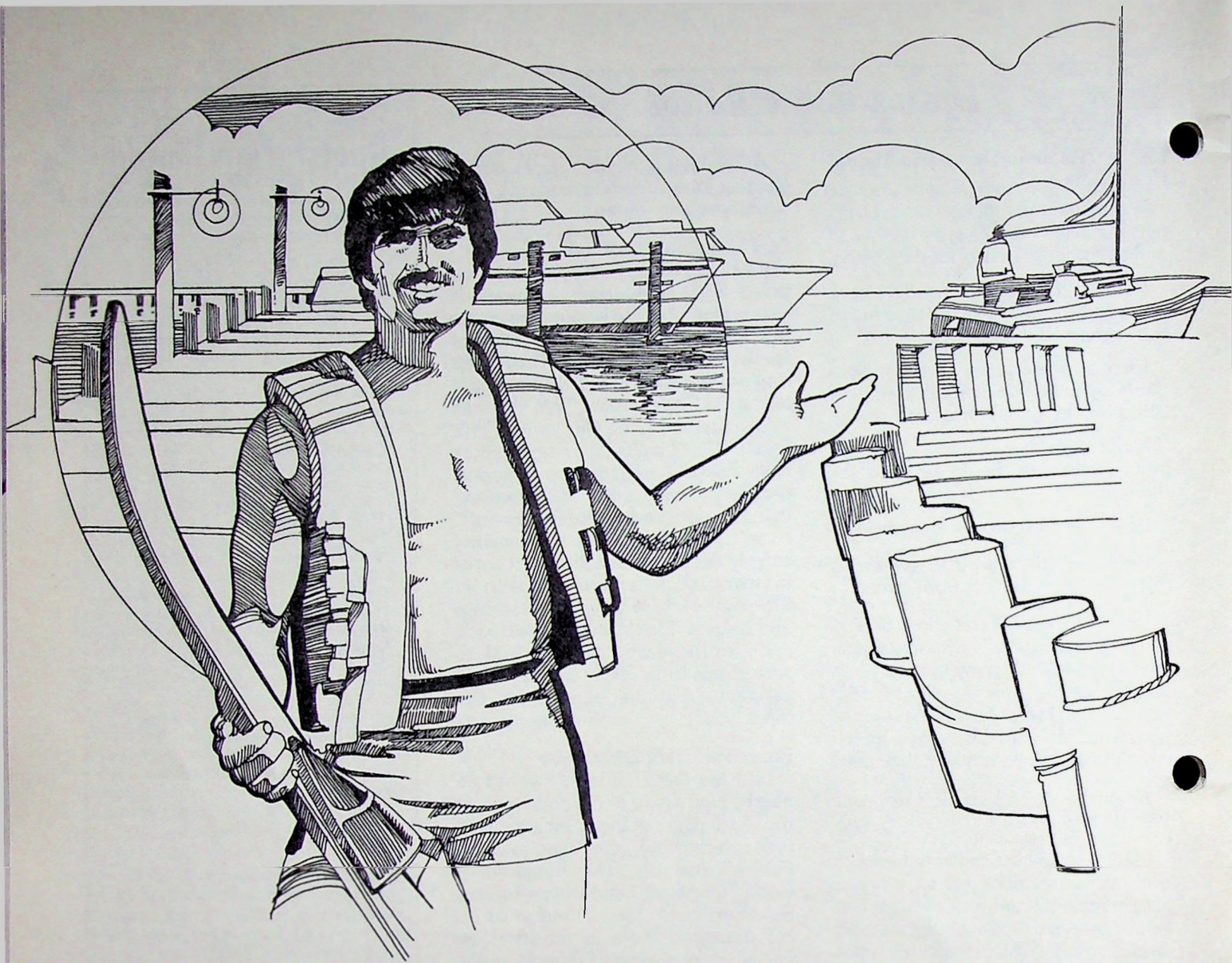
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SUPERSTAR



ONE OF THE GREAT paradoxes in Scripture can be found in these words of Jesus:

Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant.
MATTHEW 20:26. NIV.

Most of us do not think of "greatness" and "servanthood" as synonymous. Greatness we associate with power, prestige, and celebrity status. Ruling countries, setting records, making money, carving history—such achieve-

ments make persons great in the eyes of the world . . . while servants carry out menial tasks. They clean houses, dump garbage, and wait on the privileged; in places some even remain in the shackles of slavery. They labor in obscurity at unimportant, insignificant chores. You find them at the bottom of both the respect and money-making ladders. The world rates them as nobodies!

Yet Jesus said, "If you want to be great, become a servant."

What Did He Mean?

Was Jesus mistaken? Did he not realize how success is really measured? Hardly! This mystery can be unraveled by determining that Jesus was talking about *greatness in his Father's eyes*—which can be far different from attaining greatness by the world's definition.

Society uses a different yardstick for measuring prominence. To be important in today's culture, one sits at the top being served. Pecking orders

by Pastor Don Needham

abound. Generals sit at the top barking commands to colonels who give them to majors, who forward them on to captains, who drop them on lieutenants, who pass them on to sergeants, who scream them at corporals, who assign privates to carry them out. In business the structure is similar. The chain of command filters downward from the president or chairman through lower ranks.

But significance in God's church is calculated by different standards. *To be important is not to sit at the top being served, but to sit at the bottom serving others!* Such reasoning runs headfirst into the superstar syndrome of our day. But to possess a servant mentality—the head and heart of a servant—is to be most like Christ.

Best Chairs Around the Throne

Let's consider what brought on Christ's statement about servanthood.

If you've ever thought the disciples hung around Jesus like angelic choir boys in complete harmony, note the undercurrent in this account from Matthew 20:20-24, NIV:

Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. "What is it you want?" he asked. She said, "Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom." "You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said to them. "Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will indeed drink from my cup, but

to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father." When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers.

When "thunder and lightning" (likely nicknames for James and John who were also Jesus' cousins) brought mother along to ask for kingdom chairs "one" and "two," a tempest broke loose. Ten other disciples were steaming—and with good reason. First, the request smacked of nepotism, as Mamma tried to take advantage of kinfolk status to get her boys the privileged places. One would suspect this plot was hatched with James and John's full approval—they may have even devised the scheme. (Looking back years later, this must not have been remembered as one of their finer moments.) Second, their petition showed they were both filled with worldly ambition and lacked an accurate understanding of the kingdom over which Jesus would reign. No doubt this storm took awhile to blow itself out.

My Way

It's worth noting here that James and John and Mamma all had the same congenital disease: SELFISHNESS. *It was unadulterated selfishness that brought them to Jesus with such an egotistical request. It was selfishness that never considered how the other ten might feel. It was selfishness that was looking out for ole number one.* And lest we get a bit cocky and conceited, let's not forget

enthusiasm or 'second' french horn or 'second' flute, now that's a problem. And yet if no one plays second, we have no harmony."

What a commentary on human nature! Also, what a nugget of wisdom for the church to consider. In this era when hoarding and flaunting have replaced sharing and caring—often even within the fellowship of a congregation—it's time to reexamine the model of unselfish living that Jesus showed and taught us.

The Maximum Church: One Great Body of Servants

Would your congregation be different if this were everyone's goal?

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

PHILIPPIANS 2:3, 4, NIV.

What would happen if Christians really got serious about being servants instead of celebrities and top dogs?

Do "selfish ambition" and "vain conceit" ever surface to impede the flow of God's Spirit? Only when some refuse to turn loose of "coveted" positions . . . or when others pout unless they have control and votes are going their way . . . and when some choose to be offended for being asked to do a task they feel is "below" them.

There is no one this pastor appreciates and admires more than several "servant-hearted" people I have known

OR SERVANT?

we're born with the same self-centered illness. With the exception of Jesus Christ, a person has yet to live who was not inherently selfish.

AND SELFISHNESS IS THE ANTI-THESIS OF SERVANTHOOD.

Few Second-Fiddlers

Charles Swindoll tells of watching Leonard Bernstein, the famous orchestra conductor, perform one evening on television. During an informal discussion one person asked: "Mr. Bernstein, what is the most difficult instrument to play?" He responded: "Second Fiddle. I can get plenty of first violinists, but to find one who plays 'second' violin with as much

over the years. *It is their unselfishness that makes them so beautiful!* With sincere motives, they truly put others before themselves. They can be called in a pinch to teach a class, take in a meal, cut someone a load of wood, sit and talk to someone with a problem, take care of children, haul someone to the doctor, open a snow-blocked driveway, go to a hospital emergency room in the middle of the night. *They always have time! They don't consider helping others an inconvenience—but a privilege.* Blessed is the pastor who has a congregation filled with such individuals!

Such unselfishness was exemplified
(Continued, page 6)



Superstar or Servant? (Continued)

in both the life and words of John the Baptist, who said of Jesus: "He must become greater, I must become less" (John 3:30, NIV). What a testimony he was to unselfish living! He repeatedly took himself from the spotlight and focused it upon Jesus. John could never be accused of breaking an arm while patting himself on the back. His life is an ideal servant model.

Four Characteristics of a Servant

(1) A SERVANT GIVES ANONYMOUSLY

Consider these words of writer Ruth Harms Calkins in her poem, "I Wonder:"

You know, Lord, how I serve You
With great emotional fervor
In the limelight.
You know how eagerly I speak for
You

At a women's club.
You know my genuine enthusiasm
At a Bible Study.

But how would I react, I wonder,
If You pointed to a basin of water
And asked me to wash the callused
feet

Of a bent and wrinkled old woman
Day after day
Month after month
In a room where nobody saw
And nobody knew.

With penetrating insight she drills to the heart of the issue. Motives again. If one serves others for the praise, recognition, and applause of men—it has a thin disguise that soon wears through. It's also a bit hypocritical.

The real servant does most of his work unacknowledged. He's mature enough to realize that it matters not if he gets the credit—as long as someone is being helped—and God gets the glory. So he frequently labors unnoticed and unappreciated. There is a joy and delight that comes from giving without notice . . . neither does he suffer from sore lips caused by blowing his own horn!

(2) A SERVANT GIVES GENEROUSLY

Have you observed the effects of a plant that has become root bound? When the root system expands to fill the space in a flower pot, and it is not transplanted—it will lose vitality and cease to do little more than exist.


The same is true of those who clutch themselves and their money with white knuckles. In their selfishness they become "possession-bound" and the joy of life ebbs away. But those who spend their lives giving themselves away unconditionally find

their happiness constantly renewed. Notice these thoughts from Paul:


Remember: sparse sowing, sparse reaping; sow bountifully, and you will reap bountifully. . . . And it is in God's power to provide you richly with every good gift; thus you will have ample means in yourselves to meet each and every situation, with enough and to spare for every good cause. . . . You will always be rich enough to be generous.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:6, 8, 11, NEB.

A person with a servant's heart knows who is "restocking his warehouse." He has come to realize that one cannot outgive God. What he gives away is constantly being replenished.



The Best Chairs Around the Throne Belong to Servants



(3) A SERVANT GIVES VOLUNTARILY

The distance between those who give because they "have to" and those who give because they "want to" is great.

Have you been the recipient of a gift someone was forced to give you? Or only gotten someone to say "I love you" after threats or pleadings? If so, you know the lack of satisfaction that comes from something given under compulsion or out of obligation.

The Christian with a servant's heart doesn't give only when he is backed into a corner. He gives anytime he can—and he gives freely. Generously.

(4) A SERVANT GIVES PERSONALLY

Words are easy to say. Actions take effort. That is precisely why Jesus didn't just talk about servanthood—he demonstrated it.

On no occasion did he exhibit it better than when he washed the disciples' feet.

So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. . . . When he [Jesus] had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have

done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you" JOHN 13:4, 5, 12-15.

In the Palestine of biblical days, paved roads were few—but dusty, dirty, sometimes muddy, sandal-clad feet were many. It was a custom for a wealthier host to provide a slave at the door of his home to wash the feet of dinner guests as they arrived. On this occasion no slave was provided—and no disciple volunteered—so the room was filled with proud hearts and dirty feet (likely not too many days had passed since James and John's infamous request—so a few of the disciples were probably still simmering). Just prior to eating the "Lord's Supper" with the 12—to impress them with an indelible picture of servanthood—Jesus individually washed each disciple's feet. This was as unthinkable as our President telling a maid to take a break while he cleaned White House toilets!

No one present could miss the point of his words ("You do this, too") or his example. He was saying, "BE A SERVANT." *Christian ministry is not sitting on a throne being catered to and pampered—it's serving and waiting on others.* THE MOST SUCCESSFUL LEADERS—THE MOST WONDERFUL CHRISTIANS—ARE ALSO THE BEST SERVANTS. Check that out.

One cannot claim to be a servant and not be personally involved. It is impossible to wash feet without getting wet! One cannot be a servant from the sidelines, or by proxy. He must throw a towel over his shoulder, pick up his basin, and look for hurting people.

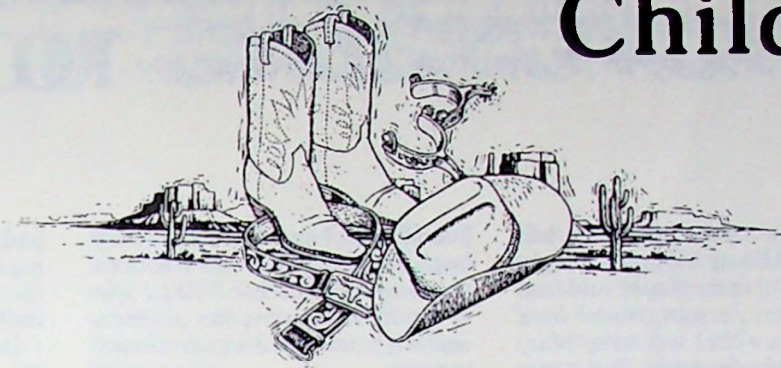
The Call to Greatness

Those who will be great in the kingdom of God are not today's superstars. Those who will be accorded the positions of highest rank will have labored as obscure, frequently unappreciated, usually unacknowledged servants.

If you're having trouble being a servant, it's because you haven't yet turned your selfishness and self-centeredness over to God. You likely think of the position as degrading—which also reveals a pride problem.

Whoever wants to be great among you must be your servant. MATTHEW 20:26, NIV.

by Rachel Carr



Conclusion

"Welcome home, Steve," Mr. Hanson put his hand on Steve's shoulder and gave it a squeeze.

"Thanks. I really liked Mexico, but it's good to be home."

"Say, I know the boys and girls in class are anxious to hear all about your trip. When would you like to tell us about it?"

"Well, Jan and I were talking about that on the way home. We want to have a party at our house for our two Sunday School classes. It would be a 'show and tell' party about Mexico."

"Hey, that sounds great. Let's go tell the kids."

The following Saturday the boys and girls from Steve's and Jan's classes gathered at the Wilson home. The family room was decorated with crepe paper streamers and big bright paper flowers direct from Mexico. Delicious smells were coming from the kitchen where Mrs. Wilson was preparing Mexican food. Everyone knew they were in for a good time.

Steve started things off with a game. Then he and Jan took turns telling about the interesting things they did in Mexico. (You read about them in the last two issues.) Of course, Steve showed his new leather wallet and Jan wore her Mexican blouse.

There was a table where Steve and Jan had laid out all their picture post cards as well as the color prints their dad had taken with his camera.

Everyone wanted to know all about Billy and his family since the Richards were from their church. Steve told about their work at the children's home. Then he remembered that he

wanted to tell his friends about Pedro. That was the boy who had lost his family in the earthquake.

"I felt so sad for Pedro. Many of the boys and girls at the home still have some member of their family who writes to them or comes to see them. But Pedro has no one. I wish there was some way we could help him."

Jim spoke up. "I was going to say we could write to him, but I guess none of us know Spanish."

"Oh," Steve responded, "Pedro knows some English that his dad taught him. And the Richards could help him with anything he didn't understand."

"We could take turns writing," suggested Mary Jane, "and work it out so he gets at least one letter a month."

"I'm sure he'd like that," said Steve.

"Do you know when his birthday is?" asked Jon. "We could do something special for him then."

"The Richards would tell us when it is," said Steve. "We could send cards and some money for a piñata."

"A what?" asked Beth.

"A piñata. You'll find out what that is after a while," said Steve mysteriously. "These are all good ideas. Let's start with the letters. Who wants to write first?"

Everyone was anxious to help encourage Pedro and a schedule for letter writing was made.

Then it was time to eat. Mrs. Wilson had dishes of ground beef, onions, grated cheese, chopped tomatoes, lettuce, and sauce. Each one picked up a taco shell and put in whatever he wanted. At each place

The Mexico Trip

at the table there was a tiny sombrero (Mexican hat) that the boys and girls took home as a souvenir. For desert there were ice cream balls rolled in colored coconut and buñuelos, a delicious fried pastry.

"Boy, if this is how they eat in Mexico, I'm ready to move," announced Joyce.

"I'll go with you, said Tim.

"Well, not everyone eats this well," said Jan. "Many of the people are poor and really don't have very good diets."

"But at the children's home they grow a lot of their own food. And since people here send money to help, they can buy other things they need at the market," added Steve.

Then it was time for the piñata. The Wilsons had brought two of them back from Mexico. One was in the shape of a burro (for the boys) and the other was a flower (for the girls). Most of the children had not seen a piñata before. They all thought it was great fun to try to break them to spill out all the goodies inside.

Too soon the party was over. As the children said their good-byes they all agreed they had learned a lot about Mexico and had a lot of fun at the same time.

TO THE GLO

by Pastor

FROM the very beginning last August until Easter this year, I thought—because of faith, prayer, and fasting, and our unceasing search for a cancer cure—that my wife, Mary Helen, would be cured. But it was not God's will this time to extend her life, as he had done before. There is a time to be born and a time to die, and who knows the evil from which she is spared by her present sleep in the grave (Isa. 57:1)? I must bow to God's good will, for do not all things work together for good to them that love God? I will miss her sorely, and I weep as I write this, but God knows best. There are new areas now in which I must develop, and this will make me more useful to God.

I was able to "nourish and cherish" her these past few months because of the love and kindness of our Burr Oak Church brethren, who gave us an indefinite leave of absence. Asking God's direction all the time, we sought any help there might be on earth for her life, eventually trying six different cancer treatments, each of which has caused many to recover. I found out cancer is not incurable. The average cure rate of these various therapies seemed to be three out of four. Yet none of them worked for Mary Helen. Though we prayed hundreds of prayers and hundreds of you were praying and many were fasting, it just was not God's will. I wrote 85 letters to all the churches twice: one six weeks before she died, asking for prayer, and the other the day she died, April 16, 1983, thanking all for everything and giving honor to God for being with us through it all.

These things I write, not to glorify any human, but as background to explain the goodness of God and Christ to us in this time of need. It is not what we have done for Christ,

but what he has done for us. Only because of his help was I able to stand up before those 300 people at the funeral and speak of God's work with us in our 38-year ministry together.

What did God do for Mary Helen those last eight months? He gave her that which she needed to continue to be an example of a Christian to the end: strength of will, patience, courage, acceptance, thankfulness, dignity, and the sweet uncomplaining attitude that she always had.

Also, rather than going inward to her brain as the surgeon thought it would, the cancer grew outward, and her mind was clear. Another blessing God granted—Mary Helen had no "pain" as such until the last week and a half. This was a wonderful blessing. When the pain did come, one of the doctors our daughter Rebekah works for voluntarily came and made her comfortable. He also made it possible for us to use an electric hospital bed, which was a tremendous help. May God remember him for his compassion. As the end approached and I watched my wife, I could not help but marvel at her Christian dignity. I wondered if I could meet such a terrible ordeal with the grace with which she was meeting it.

As for God's blessings on me, he gave me peace so many times. When I was afraid and anxious and turned always to him, HE gave me PEACE. It was such a relief, such a comfort. There was such support from so many of you brethren. You don't know how much your love and encouragement and concern meant to us. You are the ones who sent the thousands of dollars needed to pay all the bills. How we appreciated being free from that financial strain. And I have prayed that if God will move his people to give

\$10,000 in her memory (I am hoping for \$50,000), it will be used in the new Colorado Springs effort for God.

Besides this, in this three-week absence our kind church granted me after the funeral (I did not know how I might react, going back to work immediately), God has spared me twice from serious wrecks. I know it was he. The last time, I went to sleep at 62 miles per hour on a long stretch of desert interstate in Utah. When God woke me up—and I think he did—the car had drifted onto the shoulder and right before me was a parked car. I swerved, and was spared. (No one was in the other car.)

In addition, three times God helped me with car problems. Way out in the middle of nowhere I stopped for gas. Afterwards, half a mile down the road two front tires went bad. At that very point where the car stopped, there was a black-topped access to the other side of the freeway, the only one I saw in hundreds of miles of traveling. I went back and got new tires. The next time, about 50 miles out of Salt Lake City, suddenly the car filled with steam. A heater hose had broken—three blocks from a garage! Lastly, leaving Montrose, Colorado, I noticed the car missing. The fuel pump was bad—just a mile from town! That problem was immediately fixed. I could not have climbed all those mountains and crossed the continental divide without the new fuel pump. I believe God was behind it all.

What tremendous awe I felt for God all the way from California through Nevada, a corner of Oregon, Idaho, Utah, and Colorado as I continually saw his snow-capped mountains, multicolored rock cliffs and canyons, the deep gorges, and the animals he made:

ROY OF GOD

James Mattison

mule deer, elk, and rocky mountain sheep. No nonbeliever traveling with me could have remained an atheist. This closeness I felt to God is helping me accept Mary Helen's death and is giving courage and zeal to continue my work for God. Her race is run. Her course was finished in faithfulness. Now I must finish mine. This trip and God, and the comfort from people visited along the way, have brought tremendous heavenly comfort.

The lesson from all this that I would share with you is: there is A CLOSENESS TO GOD WE CAN ALL EXPERIENCE, which is the most tremendous thing that can happen to us in this life.

God is so faithful to those who seek him. He said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, so that we may boldly say, I will not fear" (Heb. 13:5, 6). He said again, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isa. 41:10).

Again, God has said, "They that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles: they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). Then God said, in Isaiah 41:13, "I the LORD thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee."

This is exactly what God does for his people as they seek him in their agony. He comforts us, he helps us, he strengthens us, he gives us peace. I believe our greatest enemy is fear, and our greatest blessing now is peace.

Jesus pondered on what to leave us when he ascended. Do you know what he finally decided would be the best thing he could give us?

It is recorded in John 14:27. "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. . . . Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Is there any personal blessing greater than peace?

Isaiah spoke of this when he was talking to God. He said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (26:3). If we are seeking God with all our hearts he will keep us in peace and relaxation. This is not to say fear and anxiety will not come. It did for me, hundreds of times, but each time as I sought God, PEACE AND RELAXING CAME. What a God we have!

Jesus spoke another great truth. "In the world ye shall have tribulation . . . in me ye might have peace" (John 16:33). Yes, there is tremendous strain and pressure out there in the world as decisions must be made, difficult people met, and a time schedule with too little time. When that stress on the job or wherever becomes too great, just go into your "secret chamber," speak of it to God, ask his help, and HE WILL GIVE HELP. There needs to be no fear for the Christian. God and Christ are our help.

Since our God and our Lord give us such blessing, what, therefore, should our attitude be? Here are some verses I remind myself of constantly.

"This is the day that the Lord hath made. I will rejoice and be glad in it."

"Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice." We have every reason to rejoice. See what the Lord hath done for us!

"In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." How pleasant is a thankful attitude!

"All things work together for good to them that love God." This is true.

Though Mary Helen died, it will all work together for good for all concerned. We will know more about "how" as time goes on.

Paraphrasing God's encouragement to Joshua, God said, "Be strong, and of good courage, and read the Book."

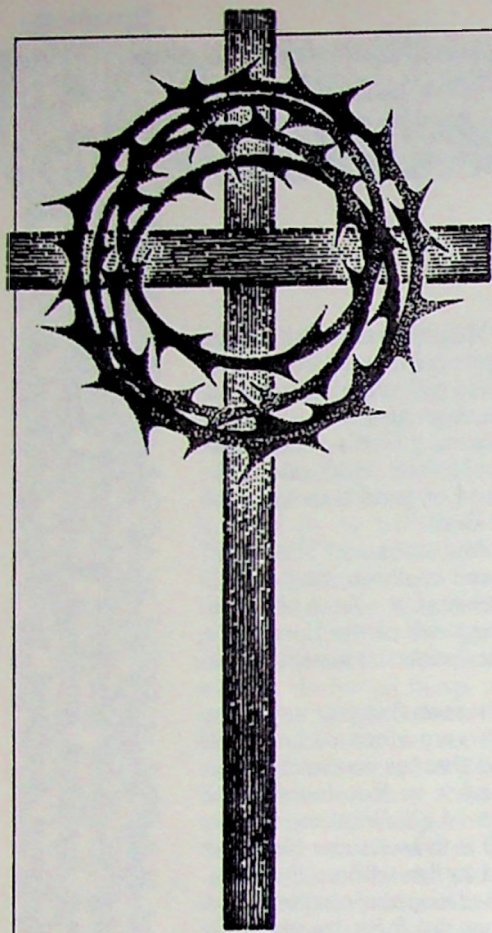
It was Paul who said, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord." We know our work is not in vain for the Lord.

There is something we can do to have this very close communion with God that we so need. Jesus mentioned it in Revelation 3:20 and John 14:23. What we can do each day is to invite our God and our Lord to live with us that day, and that we may abide in them. But Jesus does not force his way into our life. He stands and knocks. We must open our lives to him and invite him into all our circumstances—whether it be cancer, stress, financial worry, or what.

It is safe to put our lives in his hands. When we yield our lives in every area to God we can be optimistic, outgoing, cheerful, loving, and serving. This is the only way to live. It is the way Mary Helen lived.

We need the peace of God. But first we must have peace with God. The peace of God is the greatest blessing Jesus left us. It is a practical thing. The future blessings of Jesus' coming, the resurrection of our loved ones, and a place in that great kingdom coming to earth are tremendous, but inner peace is for today.

Like Abel, Mary Helen may be dead, but she lives on in the lives of those she loved and those who loved her. May this whole circumstance she and I have shared bring a blessing to you and glory to our God.



Sacred vs. The Dilemma Chris

by Pastor Mic

IF analyzed, most of us 20th century Christians would probably be diagnosed as having split personalities. Psychologists have been fascinated with studying "Eve" who had three personalities, "Sybil" who had 16, and just recently a Florida man who exhibited 24 separate and distinct personalities. Each of these people had several identities within one body, separate and complete from the others. During passing weeks, time was split between these various persons as they manifested their distinct lifestyles and characteristics.

You might think it strange to compare Christians to this phenomenon but, if we examine our lifestyles more closely, we would discover that our days and weeks are divided between our two different "worlds"—those worlds being the sacred and the secular. The distinctions between the two are at times quite plain and distinct. We have our personal lives and our "church" lives. Six days a week we involve ourselves in our daily routines such as work, recreation, family time, household chores, and social events. Our "church" life enters the scene on Sunday, Wednesday evenings, and an

occasional extra day here or there that we manage to stick in for good measure. Instead of viewing our entire life as "spiritual," we have compartmentalized the various aspects of our daily existence.

Theonomos Vs. Autonomous

History reveals that things were not always so. If we examine the life and times in the 13th century, for example, we would see that they were in what could be termed as an "age of faith" where the divine presence of God was seen in all of life. Theologian Paul Tillich called it a "theonomos" society, "Theo" meaning God and "nomos" being what is meaningful in life. God was evident in every aspect of their society—the marketplace and the court were filled with the idea of God, the economic system was based on religion, and the church was in control of the government.

This is not the case today, however. We are living in an "autonomous" society, meaning that we rule ourselves. God has become separated from the rest of our culture. No longer does his presence fill all aspects of life. Our society is characterized by the separa-

tion of church and state, the economy is controlled by stock market fluctuations, and the government is not influenced in large ways by religious bodies.

We can take two views of our world; we can view it from a religious perspective or from a rational perspective, or is it possible to incorporate the two? In the 13th century, it was easy to see the world from a religious perspective since all of life was permeated with the idea that God was ever present in all aspects of the day's activities.

Today, however, we tend to rationalize life in that we dissect it to pieces in order to arrange it, understand it, and dominate it. This is the way of western civilization and it is a way on which we pride ourselves. It is our scientific approach to problems that fosters progress and we therefore tend to fit all of life into that approach. The danger in this is that we begin to believe that what cannot be rationalized cannot be true. The world has seen faith as irrational and therefore unbelievable, separate, and distinct from secular issues.

Who's Responsible?

We see this "rationalization" and ex-

Secular: of the Modern Christian

hele Millard

clusion of God from the world as something that was done to us from an external force. We view ourselves as innocent victims who would abhor such ideas. However, history reveals that we ourselves might be slightly responsible for this perpetration in our sincere efforts to be faithful. Historically, the Protestants have used an approach to life that was originally used by the Hebrews. God had declared to them that he was a jealous God and wanted no other gods. The Hebrews, being surrounded by cultures which saw God in anything and everything, emphasized the unity of God and saw all of human life taking on a nondivine character. There was only one God and everything else was separate and distinct from him.

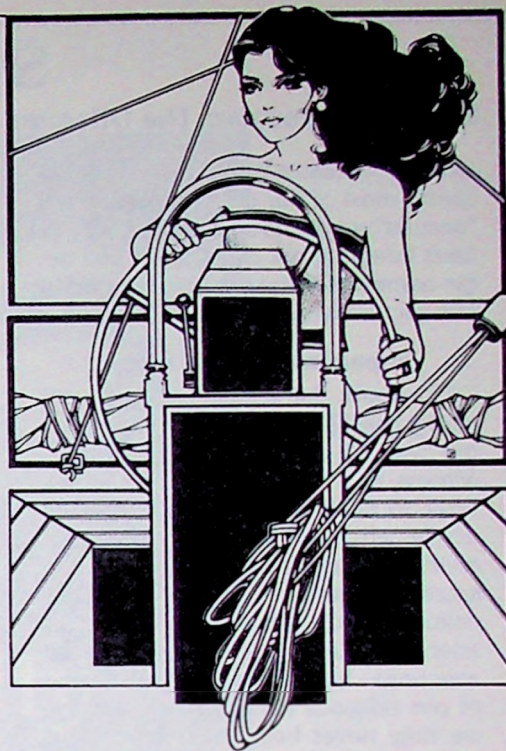
In this same tradition, we have excluded God from the world. He has been eliminated from our politics, our economics, our education, and our social lives. He has, in essence, been imprisoned in a tomb—more commonly known as the church—and we have become his gatekeepers, only allowing him out on occasion and even then as a figurehead with limited capacity to work

In eliminating God from these domains of our lives, we have become fragmented Christians. Life is not seen as an integrated “whole” but only in parts which sometimes do not fit together very well, nor even complement each other well. There is no continuity between the sacred parts of our lives and the secular aspects of our existence.

In a well-meaning way, we have perpetuated the separation of the “religious” and “the world” with our zealous following of John 17:14-16, where Christ is explaining how his disciples were not part of the world and were separated from the things of the world. As that biblical explanation comes to us, we somehow begin to think that everything connected with the “world” is evil, thus widening the chasm between the secular and the sacred.

Colored Marbles

In the world of mathematics, a term “mutually exclusive subsets” is used. In laymen’s terms, it can be explained by the following: if you had a group (or universe) of 10 marbles, 5 of which were red and 5 of which were green and you wished to divide these marbles



according to color, you would create two mutually exclusive subsets of your universe. In other words, there would be two groups that would be separate and distinct. A red marble could not be part of the green group and vice versa. No marble could be in both groups at the same time. There would be no overlap between the groups and they would have nothing in common. Unfortunately, that is the way our world has become. The sacred and the secular have become “mutually exclusive” groups, separate and distinct, with neither one having anything in common with the other.

That brings us to some rather important questions. If it is true that our sacred and secular worlds are separate and distinct, how does that affect our Christianity? What does a god that is kept in a box say to our secular world? How has our secular world affected our Christian perspective? How is our religious faith determined by education, economic conditioning, and social pressures that are seen as secular and therefore “evil”? What happens to religious affirmations in a secular
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Sacred vs. Secular: The Dilemma of the Modern Christian (Cont'd)

world? How can a faith survive when we spend most of our days immersed in a "secular" world? How can we as Christians integrate our two worlds, and begin communicating our sacred world to our secular world?

Impacting Secularization

No doubt the secularization of our world has had a profound impact on our lives. It is difficult to have a "sacred" witness in a "secular" world. It is difficult to think of life as an integrated whole, when our time and activity are divided between the secular and the sacred. It is certain that the forces of our culture or our secular world—such as science, education, politics, and the economy—have influenced the shaping of our religious faith in complex ways we may never begin to unravel. Our culture inevitably has an effect on us and the faith we exhibit.

The pendulum has swung from the integrated world of sacred and secular to a world where they are divided. However, Christians can start to bring that pendulum back. It is time we start making the secular sacred instead of the world turning the sacred secular. We need to integrate our two divided worlds into one whole. Referring again to theologian Paul Tillich, he states that our world is still Theonomous (suffused with God), that we are only closed to his presence. Tillich tried to discover the sacred underneath the secular, such as science, the arts, psychology, education, etc. He saw the possibilities of God in each area and how God can speak to us through them even in indirect and subtle ways.

The religious book market is flooded today with books citing all the evils of modern academic disciplines and movements, new technological advances, and scientific achievements. Certainly there are problems in each of these areas. Ideas, techniques, and methods are not always true, pure, and ethical, but neither are they *never* true, pure, or ethical. When we turn our backs on the world because of the evils, we also turn our backs on all the good that it offers.

We are called to be modern people in a modern world by a God that never changes, but neither does he become

antiquated. Being a modern Christian places before us a vast reservoir of knowledge and technology. Never before has man comprehended so much of the world. We understand more of the forces of nature, the personality of people, how our social structure works, and have attained new communication skills as well as technology which enhances our communication networks. What lies at our disposal is almost overwhelming.

Updating Christianity

Unfortunately, Christians have been known to turn their backs on such advances as part of the secular world and being separate from God. Somewhere

Christianity needs some humanism with the idea that commitment to Christ makes man truly human, a real person.

we have gotten the notion that God is anti-knowledge and anti-progress. That is far from the truth. Progress and knowledge are not always or necessarily "anti-God." The two are not "mutually exclusive." God calls us to be modern people, communicating his love to a modern world.

Rather than being at the forefront of social progress, the church in recent years has been the bulwark of outmoded criticism—theologically, socially, and politically. At times we become aware of social concerns years after society has begun to struggle with them. At times we wait years to incorporate new advances into our religious systems. At times we turn our backs on knowledge that could only help communicate the gospel in ways we hadn't dreamed of previously. At times we have missed the boat, and this has hurt us and the message we have to share. It may be through our fear of corruption from the world, fear of change, our insecurities in confronting issues, or the ease we find in complacency and lack of action that we have removed ourselves so far from the world. This attitude has caused people such as Karl Marx to re-

ject us and has prompted attacks by those within as well as those without the church.

We Christians have perhaps put too much concern into the "other world," i.e., the future kingdom of God, and have neglected "this world," or the here and now. We have looked forward to what is to come, and have closed our eyes to vital Christian living and relationships in which we can share Christ's love.

The New Testament revealed Christ's concern with the present as he became intimately involved with the world. Being intimately involved with the world does not mean conforming in accepting standards and norms, or merging with the secular. It means, in a sense, to become like an amphibian, living in both sacred and secular at the same time, and seeing how the two are bound together and have commonalities. Christ integrated the two. He had his standards. He had his relationship with the Father, but he also ate with the sinners. Hans Jurgen Schultz describes the process that Christians need to go through as a double conversion—converted first to God and then back to the world. It is not conforming to the world, but an identification and personal solidarity with the world.

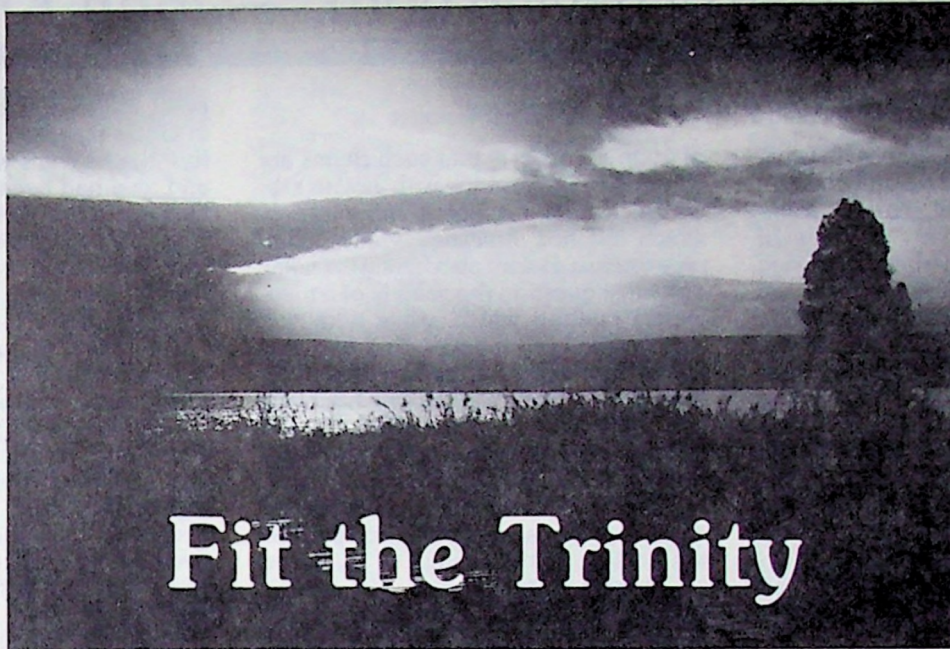
Integration

Christianity needs some humanism with the idea that commitment to Christ makes man truly human, a real person; that being a Christian is to be on the way to man as God intended man to be. We share our secular world with those around us, yet we have a manifested difference in the love and service that emanates from us.

Our two worlds of sacred and secular need to be integrated. If we look at the world with our spiritual eyes, we can see God in all things and all things can be used as a vehicle for God. To do anything less would be tragedy, for we would lose much in the quality of our Christian lives if we denied the existence of the sacred in the secular.

This perhaps is our greatest challenge: in a world that has chosen to separate itself from God, we are called to find God in and through this world and to reveal God to the world. It is the task of bringing the sacred to that which is secular.

Can Anyone



Part 2

Fit the Trinity

Dogma darkens humanity's path like a clouded sun.

Once the New Testament's simple credal statements are allowed to stand as testimonies to the truth that the Father alone is "the Only True God" (John 17:3), there will be no need at all for speculation about the supreme God being more than one person.

The Jesus of our New Testament documents is always a distinct person from God, his Father, and he is first and foremost the prophesied Messiah of Old Testament expectation. The first principle in understanding his identity is laid

him.'"

Both Peter (Acts 3:22) and Stephen (Acts 7:37) are careful to establish the crucial link between Moses' prediction and its fulfillment in Jesus of Nazareth. (It will be obvious from these texts that any system of theology which rules out predictive prophecy cannot reflect the spirit of the early church).

We should observe most carefully that the promised Messiah, whom the New Testament identifies with "that [promised] prophet" (John 1:21, KJV) is not at

the influence of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:35). To speak of the promised Messiah and Prophet as himself "co-equal, coeternal God" is, however, to present a picture of him quite alien to the description given by Moses and the Old Testament in general. A Messiah who has himself existed as "God" from eternity does not share the characteristics of the one destined to be the Savior of Israel and the world.

Contrary to what post-biblical tradition asserted of Jesus, he himself makes

Into John 17:3?

down for us by Moses who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, wrote in Deuteronomy 18:15-18 (NIV):

"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses] from among your own brothers. You must listen to him. For this is what you asked of the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: 'Let us not hear the voice of the LORD our God nor see this great fire anymore, or we will die.' The LORD said to me, 'What they say is good. I will raise up for them a prophet like you [Moses] from among their brothers; I will put my words into his mouth and he will tell them everything I command

his first coming to be "preexistent god" arriving on earth by supernatural entry from heaven. Such a person would not have the credentials of the promised Messiah. The real Messiah arises by being born an Israelite amongst Israelites, "like Moses," and he is quite distinct from God who spoke at Sinai (Deut. 18:16, 17), though as the prophet and divine representative par excellence he speaks God's words with unprecedented authority (Deut. 18:18) and can bear divine titles (Isa. 9:6). As it later turns out, the conception of the Messiah is marked by a unique act of divine power (foreseen by Isa. 7:14), a miraculous generation under

no claim whatever, according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, to have been present at or to have assisted in the creation of the world. The truth of this statement is confirmed by Arthur Wainwright's minute examination of the biblical data (*The Trinity in the New Testament*, SCM Press, London). In the synoptic gospels "Jesus accepted the belief that God was the creator who had made the human race both male and female and clothed the grass of the field. The sayings of Jesus show that he had an intense interest in the world of nature and a reverence for everything which God had brought into

(Continued, page 14)

by Anthony Buzzard

“You can have a human Jesus without pre-existence absolutely no way of having both.”—John Knox.

Can Anyone Fit the Trinity Into John 17:3? (Continued)

existence. In none of his sayings however does he claim to be God's agent in creating the world" (p. 136). Arthur Wainwright concludes further: "In none of these passages which have been examined (in the synoptic gospels) does Jesus say that he existed before his birth or that he assisted in the creation of the world" (p. 141). "The Acts of the Apostles have nothing to say about Jesus' part in the creation of the world" (p. 141). The facts are that the Apostles presented to the world a Jesus who was not the Creator of heaven and earth in Genesis 1. The Father is seen as sole Creator of the universe, in harmony with Jesus' own statement (Mark 10:6) that God had "made them male and female" at the beginning.

Traditional theology must claim Jesus as active assistant at creation against the evidence of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts. Peter, like the synoptic writers, sees Jesus not as preexisting his birth but "foreknown before the foundation of the world and made manifest in this last period of time" (1 Pet. 1:20). Although foreknowledge implies "existence" in the purposes of God, it does not mean actual existence as a "second divine person" alive before his birth. In the same way David foresaw the Messiah (Acts 2:25) and rejoiced at the prospect of Messiah's resurrection (Acts 2:31), while Abraham looked forward to Messiah's day (John 8:56). None of these texts can support the idea that the Messiah was actually in existence when Abraham and David lived. This would undermine the whole principle of faith in the promises of God for the future for which the patriarchs are everywhere so highly commended. They knew nothing of a Messiah who was already alive in heaven waiting to make his descent to the earth and be born in Bethlehem. A Messiah who claimed to be literally alive before he was born would not have corresponded to the Messiah promised to Israel.

Our traditional view of Jesus as pre-existing his birth ignores the negative evidence of Matthew, Mark, Luke, Acts, Peter, James, and Jude, and claims a real preexistence for Jesus on the basis, mainly, of a few texts in John's Gospel (and a handful of verses in Paul's epistles.) John the Baptist speaks of Jesus as being "before him" (John 1:30), and Jesus says, "Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). What is not known to the ordinary reader

of John's Gospel is that such claims are completely in harmony with Jewish rabbinical statements about the Messiah, which *did not, however, imply actual preexistence*. Before elaborating the point, one must question the validity of a theological method which, while admitting that the Jesus of the synoptics and Acts comes into being for the first time at his birth, finds in John a Jesus who has really been alive from eternity, as God. The difference in these two views of the Savior is nothing short of staggering. Orthodoxy has chosen to fasten its hopes on (its view of) John's Jesus, and seems to set aside the totally different picture of him given by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and by the apostles in Acts. But is not this to charge these authorities with glaring inconsistency? Were the apostles so hopelessly divided in their understanding of Christ?

To claim "before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58) is to echo the statements of the Rabbis that "Messiah existed 'before *tohu*,'" that is, before the chaos of Genesis 1:2. In Jewish thinking anything or anyone of supreme significance in the divine plan "existed" "before the foundation of the world." Thus Moses, the law, the throne of God, and the Messiah were all said to have "existed" before creation. This was a profound and striking way of saying that something or someone was an essential part of the divine purpose from the beginning. It is chiefly in John's writings that we find this kind of language about the "preexistent" Messiah, and it is Jewish religious experts with whom Jesus is often found in conversation in this Gospel. The same kind of thinking is found also in Revelation 13:8 (KJV) where Jesus is described as having been crucified "from the foundation of the world." On that basis he could well have said to the Jews: "Before Abraham was, I am already crucified." No one, however, would have concluded that the events of around 30 A.D. were literally historical happenings in eternity.

Similarly, the glory which he hoped to gain from the Father was glory bestowed upon him in the divine plan from eternity (John 17:5). The Father had loved him from before the foundation of the world (17:24). On the assumption that the Son had actually been with the Father from eternity, there is no special point in saying that the Father had expressed his love to the Son before creation (why then, rather than after the creation?); the

point, however, is that the role of the Son in God's plan had been in prospect before the heavens were made, and glory and love had been prepared for him in God's purpose. Glory had been bestowed in the divine foreknowledge, just as Jesus says that he had *already* given glory to the disciples, when their actual glory still lay in the future (John 17:22).

This distinctive Johannine way of thinking of preexistence and predestination is a reflection of the divine mind which "knows the end from the beginning" and thinks and "speaks of things which are not, as though they are" (Rom. 4:17). Significantly, John does not say that the Son loved the Father before creation. Indeed, where does the Bible *ever* say that Jesus was the Son of God *before his birth*?

When the Jewish (and biblical) mode of speaking about preexistence is understood (an examination of the Jewish Encyclopedia's article on preexistence provides helpful data), there will be no need to make John's Gospel the record of a Jesus who differs so radically from the Jesus of the synoptics and Acts. The latter tell us that Jesus came into existence at his birth as the prophesied Son of David, the promised Messiah, Son of God. John is more than ever insistent that Jesus is the Messiah—his whole book is written to prove that very point (John 20:21).

He also speaks of Jesus as a *man* more frequently by far than any other writer, and the process of his "coming to be" is described by John as no different from the birth of John the Baptist. Both were "sent from God." The same Greek verb *egeneto* describes the arrival on the human scene of Jesus and John alike (John 1:6, 14). Jesus' uniqueness lies in the fact that he expresses God's creative purpose which had existed from the beginning (John 1:1). The "problem" of John 1 lies simply in the fact that we have for so long "retranslated" the first verse to read "In the beginning Jesus was alive and with God; and Jesus created all things" (compare the extravagant paraphrase of John 1:1-3 in the Living Bible!).

It would be much wiser to understand the *logos* of John 1 as the self-revealing activity of the One God, the Father (this is what *logos* always meant in the Old Testament). We will then grasp more fully the stupendous event described in John 1:14, where the creative purpose of the one God is expressed for the first time in the form of a fully human being. Jesus

or a non-human Jesus with pre-existence. There is

is God's last Word to the world (cp. Heb. 1:1). Where the first Adam "fell" under the influence of Satan, the second Adam "steps down" willingly, humbling himself by undergoing death on the cross and waiving his right to the honor due to one who reflected the glory of his Father (Phil. 2:5-8; Col. 2:9).

We pointed out earlier that a successful case for Jesus' Messiahship must show that Jesus corresponded to the Messiah predicted by the Old Testament. But the Old Testament nowhere saw the Messiah as literally preexisting his birth. He was however, seen as pre-existing, quite literally, his Second Coming in glory. The vision in Daniel 7 had pictured the Messiah at the right hand of God prior to the future inauguration of the Messianic kingdom. This prophecy is described by the New Testament as a prediction of Jesus' status in heaven *after his resurrection* and ascension, when, as Psalm 110 also stated, he was to be with the Father.

It is significant that in John's Gospel it is as Son of Man (never as Son of God) that Jesus has preexisted. Any claim therefore to have been alive before birth is a claim to have been a human being in heaven (Son of Man means human being)! Jesus equates himself with the ideal man, the archetypal man, who was seen in heaven by Daniel in vision (Dan. 7). He does not, however, suggest that as Son of Man he is "coequal, coeternal God." Such a concept would have been meaningless to the Hebrew writers of the New Testament.

It is clear that the Jewish and biblical concept of preexistence was soon after New Testament times misunderstood, and a Christology was developed which sets John at variance with Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, making Jesus in some theological quarters the Creator in Genesis 1:1 and even the "Lord" of the Old Testament. A variation of this theory is that Jesus was the Angel of the Lord in Old Testament times. If Jesus had been alive from eternity, so the argument went, it must be possible to find him in the Old Testament. Then surely he must have been Melchizedek (Gen. 14) or the angel at the burning bush (Ex. 3). But such identification will not square with Stephen's account of the history of Israel in Acts 7.

Not for one moment does Stephen suggest that the angel who spoke to Moses was the Messiah whom the Jews had crucified (Acts 7:30, 35)! Stephen, however, does see Jesus as the prophet

promised by Deuteronomy 18:18 (Acts 7:37). That prophet had never been an angel! The very idea would contradict the writer to the Hebrews' whole argument (Heb., chapters 1 and 2). Nor can it be proved that the being who speaks to Daniel (Dan. 10) is Jesus. Though this angel resembles the glorified Christ (Rev. 1:13-15), he is clearly no higher in status than Gabriel or Michael, whose assistance he requires to resist the angel in charge of the affairs of Persia (Dan. 10:13). In short, an "Arian" view of Jesus as a pre-existing angelic being is no less disturbing to the genuine humanity of Jesus than a Trinitarian view which sees him as fully God and man.

A Christology which harmonizes the four Gospels and Acts, permitting God the Father to be seen as Creator of the universe (as clearly stated by Acts 4:24; 7:50; 17:24; Rev. 10:6; 14:7; 1 Pet. 4:19), may at first appear radical and shocking. But as time is allowed for reflection and a synthesis of all the various strands of the biblical data, a coherent picture of Jesus will emerge.

John Knox is right when he says that "you can have a human Jesus without pre-existence or a non-human Jesus with pre-existence. There is absolutely no way of having both" (*The Humanity and Divinity of Christ*, p. 106). In traditional Christology the full implication of John 1:14 has not been grasped. The Word became flesh, that is, a member of the human race, a genuinely human person. When the post-New-Testament church tried to resolve the impossible problem of how Jesus could have been fully God and man at the same time, the meaning of John 1:1 was subtly overlooked. This verse tells us what the Word was ontologically—a human being, God's declaration to man expressed in a man.

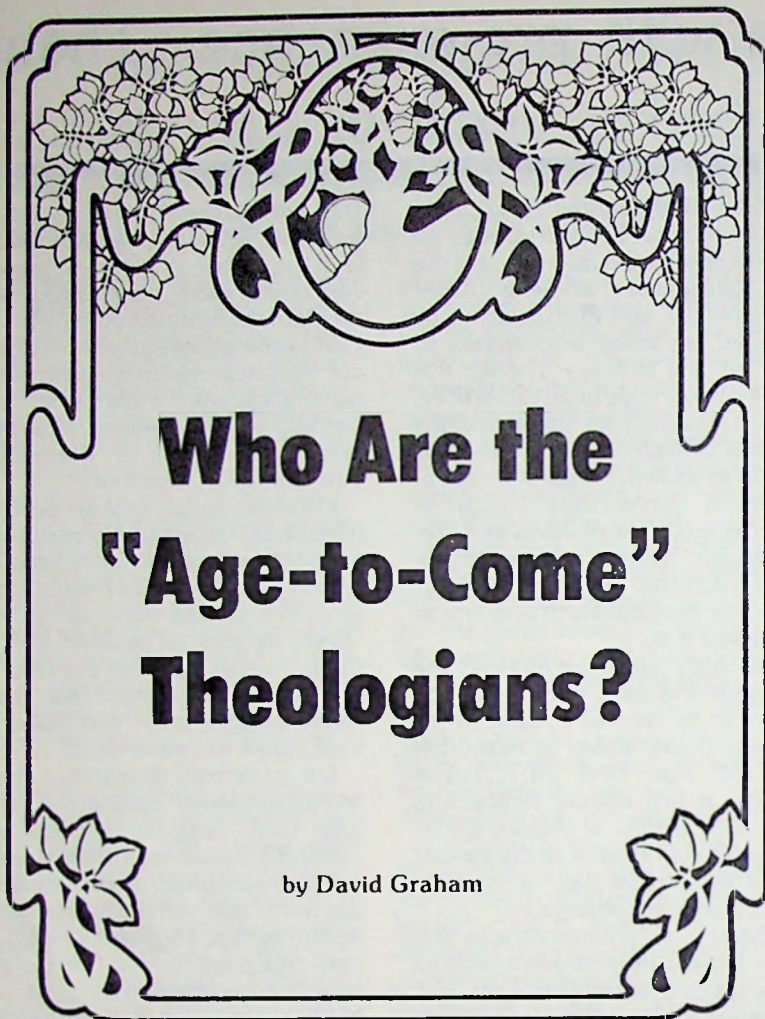
By a strange irony the same text has been used to undermine the truth that Jesus was fully man. While the church of the second century claimed to be rejecting any doctrine which obscured the full humanity of Jesus, it was all the while promoting a view of him which made it impossible for him to be genuinely human! This misunderstanding was made plausible by speaking of the preexistent *logos* as a separate divine personality who, becoming man, could not cease to be God. The event described in John 1:14 was thought of as the transition of a personality in one form to the same personality in another form (God becoming man). The process described by John

1:14 can be seen instead as a transition from the divine self-revealing activity of God the Father to a human personality, Jesus, who exists consciously, as we all do, from the moment of birth. In this way God becomes the Father of his Son at the conception and birth of Jesus. (The Bible nowhere speaks of this Father-Son relationship existing before Jesus was conceived. The notion of "eternal generation" has been invented.)

In this way Jesus can share our humanity (Heb. 4:15). A being who brings with him a fully conscious existence from eternity cannot be described as human and therefore does not fall within the category of "flesh" demanded by John 1:14. When the full implications of the term "flesh" are grasped, the notion that Jesus constantly claimed to be "coequal, coeternal God" must be reexamined.

It is customary to maintain that Jesus invited the Jewish accusation that he was fully God. Support is found in John 10:30-33. But the next three verses should not be overlooked. Jesus explained that the term "god" can properly be used of mortal beings. He quotes Psalm 82:6 to make his point. In that text the rulers of Israel were addressed as "gods." On that basis it is more than reasonable, Jesus argued, that he, as God's unique agent, should claim to be "Son of God" (John 10:36). That is the title he actually applied to himself, so he says, contrary to the accusation of the Jews. In view of this "putting the record straight," it is hardly fair to read his claim to have been "before Abraham," made on an earlier occasion (John 8:58), to mean that after all he *did* claim to be God! Sound exegesis must reckon with John 8:58 in the light of John 10:36. And every text must be controlled by Jesus' and John's fundamental assertion about the unique Godhead of the Father—the only one, the Father, is "the Only True God" (John 5:44, 17:3).

Neither Jesus nor any New Testament writer ever abandoned the strict monotheism they inherited from the faith of Israel. Contrary to what many have been taught to believe, the monotheistic statements of the New Testament are reserved for the Father alone, as distinct from his Son, the Messiah (Mark 10:18; John 5:44; 17:3; 1 Cor. 8:4-6; Eph. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:5). John 17:3 remains an immovable barrier to any other view. Its reinstatement as the cardinal tenet of the faith would represent a great step towards the recovery of New Testament Christianity.



Who Are the "Age-to-Come" Theologians?

by David Graham

THE AGE-TO-COME is a system of theology which found its earliest expression in the United States through the Millerite Movement of 1840.¹ But it was not until April of 1851 that Joseph F. Marsh of Rochester, New York (1802-1863) became the first American authority to publish in this country the Age-to-Come Millenarian doctrine.²

Age-to-Come Adventism is predominantly a premillennarian system that leans heavily upon Bible literalism, especially seen when methods of future events are analyzed. It is fundamentally based upon the tenets of Arminianism (Conditional Principles), Socinianism, and Annihilationism. This well-reasoned, orderly, arranged harmony of scriptures widely differs from most other millenarian systems in that it sustains the following points: 1) The return of the unconverted Jews to Palestine prior to Christ's coming; 2) The personal literal return of Christ; 3) Resurrection of the deceased saints; 4) Simultaneous change of the living saints; 5) Commencement of Christ's reign prior to the restoration of Mt. Zion; 6) Heathen conversions during the millennium; 7) Government of the immortal saints over the unconverted

heathen during the millennium; 8) General resurrection immediately following the millennium; 9) The little season; 10) Judgment, or destruction of the wicked and conflagration of the whole world; 11) Restoration of the earth (new heavens and new earth); 12) The New Jerusalem—in that order. A series of events took place (briefly mentioned below) somewhere between 1850 and 1851 that greatly bolstered the influence of the Age-to-Come persuasion.

The Debate

During the month of August, 1850, a recommendation to debate the Age-to-Come brethren was announced in a periodical entitled *Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate*, published and edited by Joseph Marsh.³ The proposal was explained by L. D. Mansfield:

"The subject (Age to Come) demands a fuller examination, and I would suggest that a series of propositions be presented (through the *Harbinger*) for discussion by some two brethren which shall cover the whole ground."

Elder J. B. Cook, associated with Marsh, responded favorably to the recommendation, saying:

"Having an interview with L. D. Mansfield, I accede to his proposal to present the evidence. . . . I am conscious of no feeling or desire that would make the word subserve any personal or secular end."⁴

The Conference

The reaction near the end of the debate by those who opposed the doctrine culminated in a conference at Auburn, New York, in the winter of 1851. Joshua V. Himes (1805-1895) had given notification of the conference early in December, that the time appointed would be scheduled for January 15, 1851. Meanwhile, this man had masterminded a plan of division which, if proved successful, could potentially split apart the structure of Adventism. Joseph Marsh was the quarry of his plan, which was aimed at destroying the relative unity.

The conference, which was meeting in the hall above a drugstore, commenced on the morning of the fifteenth and burst into various extremes. Emotions of anger echoed through the corridor while one could imagine hearing the vibrant, melodious voice of Brother Marsh above the clamour appealing for discussion of L. D. Mansfield's loaded address. Throughout the next one and one-half days of conference they endured the bitter strife of arbitrary and illegal proceedings. The Age-to-Come brethren were suddenly the object of Himes' malevolent persecution.

The conference address delivered by L. D. Mansfield comprised not less than 40 to 50 letter-sized pages. The vast majority of it, as reported by Bro. Marsh, prominently sustained William Miller's original position on the Second Advent and opposed the Age-to-Come.

Twenty-five of the 51 delegates represented were Age-to-Come supporters or sympathizers. All were able public speakers and well acquainted with parliamentary procedure. But soon a motion was made suing for the publication of Mansfield's lopsided address. As soon as the motion was carried, the moderator immediately called for the vote. It was only after an extensive and angry outcry that he finally conceded to allow discussion of the motion in question. The decision was lost after all, 26 to 25, giving Himes his first of many victories in the series of skirmishes that followed.

The gag tactics employed as part of the overall scheme to stifle the proceedings in the Auburn Conference were observed by Joseph Marsh who was there:

"In harmony with this plan of division were the first sermons of Elder Himes and Turner and a prayer of the latter that if they (Age-to-Come) could not be united, they might agree to separate . . . who can longer doubt that a final disruption of our once united and

love-bound brotherhood is planned and threatened—if not already in process of accomplishment?⁵

What happened at Auburn in 1851 should not have come as a surprise, inasmuch that the Age-to-Come had retrospectively “come of age.” There is little to doubt but that a new denomination could have been formed at this time, had the Age-to-Come brethren and Joseph Marsh simply been able to formalize it. Marsh, however, representing several in the party who sternly opposed sectarianism, scorned the very mention of it. Consequently, the lines of distinction between Adventists were never clearly drawn until after Marsh’s death, despite the encouraging conduct of Joshua V. Himes. A timely confession came from the pen of Brother George Needham through the *Harbinger* shortly after the Auburn conflict

“A circumstance took place in connection with (Joshua Himes’) visit to Oswego in the spring of 1847, which impaired my confidence in him very much.⁶ For a year from that time, I was reserved with him and very careful. When he told me in New York in the fall of 1847, that he should go for a division—I answered him that I should oppose him. He said it already existed, and that all that was necessary to consummate it, was to make the move. I told him that the body of brethren were united, and I should regret to see anything different. He said, “Marsh is trying to create division, and to lead off a party—but New England has always been with me and stood by me and will now . . . to which I replied, that I would have nothing to do with it, and if a division must come, I would join neither party.”⁷

Two Important Conferences

On April 9, 1851, a conference convened in Rochester, New York, in direct consequence of the proceedings at Auburn, New York.⁸ It was a call for union proposed to restore harmony and confidence between brethren. Here they unanimously resolved to adopt the Boston Resolutions drawn up at the first Conference of Adventists, October 10, 1840.

Then, on April 23, 1851, only two weeks later, the first Second Advent Union Convention convened in New York City at College Hall, which included brethren from as far away as Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio.⁹ Perhaps nothing more was achieved at this convention than to reaffirm the love and unification among the brotherhood, which was demonstrated by prayer and fasting; and reminding one another of their duty to watch and pray always.

The historical importance of these conferences is hard to emphasize in an

article of this size. First, we must realize that the Age-to-Come brethren were closely identified with the main body of Adventists. To suggest that they could have been easily segregated from the main body is irrational. The process of segregation, though terminally inevitable, was yet ever so gradual. In fact, some of the ministers present at the first Second Advent Union Convention are not found supporting the central leadership of the Advent Christian Church until several years later. And secondly, the seriousness of the crisis in the near division rested on the responsible brethren including Joseph Marsh. They were under pressure to either reunite the body, or suffer them to spin off into separate factions.

From this time forward, the fate of the Age-to-Come rested in the hands of the Advent Christians. Joseph Marsh was cognizant of the fact that what just happened at Auburn could easily happen again. Too soon they would be forced to stand alone or forever wear the yoke of submission.

Publications

During this time of spiritual unrest, Joseph Marsh unfurled two very important publications. The first was his all new hymnal *Millennial Harp* (not to be construed with Joshua Himes’ hymnal of the same name).¹⁰ Within weeks of the *Harp’s* appearance, Marsh released another timely pamphlet, reaffirming his position in the Age-to-Come doctrine, and proclaiming the Second Advent as far away as Wisconsin where his agents were preaching the message of Christ’s coming. The title, *Age to Come*, was changed from *Restitution* just weeks before it went to press, hinting that the last and final title was much more catching than the former. It may even be reasonable to surmise that either of these publications was intro-

duced at one or the other of the conferences in April. It is hard to measure the excitement among the Age-to-Come brethren in those days brought on by the publication of these two important works.

Finally

The Age-to-Come is indeed grateful to Father Miller (as he was often called) for the inspiration and joy he brought to our late friend, Joseph Marsh. We know that Joseph found his place, for better or worse, alongside all those who were not ashamed of being called “Millerite.” Furthermore, we take great pleasure in reading the “acts” of these good and sometimes great Christian leaders of the Nineteenth Century who fought against great odds in defense of the Faith they redeemed and dared to call their own. The torch they lit and passed on to later generations we now humbly receive in commemoration to them, for all they contributed.

¹This was a movement which promoted William Miller’s (1782-1849) Chronological timetable calculating Christ’s Second Return in A.D. 1843.

²See Volume 2, number 41, pages 325ff (*Advent Harbinger & Bible Advocate*).

³This publisher addressed the ideals of true literalism and was strongly opposed by Joshua Himes and William Miller, especially on the doctrine of the literal return of the Jews to Palestine.

⁴*Ibid.* Volume 2, number 6, page 46, (the debate began in the 8th number of Volume 2—August 10, 1850). It ended with a final exposure in number 29 of Volume 2, page 225 (January 4, 1851).

⁵*Ibid.* Volume 2, number 31(?), page 252.

⁶See *Advent Herald*, March 24, 1847, “Our Western Tour.”

⁷*Advent Harbinger and Bible Advocate*, Volume 2, number 37, page 293. (March 1, 1851).

⁸*Ibid.* Volume 2, number 38, page 302.

⁹*Ibid.* Volume 2, number 47, page 373 (May 10, 1851).

¹⁰*Ibid.* Volume 2, number 38, (March 8, 1851).



Church of God ministers in 1913
O. J. Allard, Siple, A. J. Eychaner, Reed, Mapple, F. L. Austin, G. E. Marsh

Why I Believe in Answered Prayer

(Continued from page 19)

just before I entered the operating room, and I noticed that his chin quivered. I knew that he was fighting hard to keep back tears. I smiled at him, and assured him that I'd be all right.

What I didn't know was that I had already been taken into the operating room the second time because of severe hemorrhaging, and the doctors had performed major surgery. So this was my third time for surgery that day, but this third operation gave no clue as to what the trouble was. So far I had been given twelve pints of blood. I was to have seventeen before the ordeal was over.

Jim had called the elders of the church, and they had prayed for me. The doctors (two of the best specialists in Louisiana) had done all they knew to do. Then the Lord took charge. My blood pressure and blood count came up to normal when the transfusion was stopped. There is no doubt in the minds of the doctors or anyone con-

cerned but that the prayers that ascended to God were answered.

In the next few days I was given two more transfusions and many shots. When the baby was 10 days old, I was allowed to go home. I had been in the hospital 30 days.

The Lord truly provided for our every need. Five churches and many individuals helped us financially. The doctor and hospital bills were completely paid. The church ladies brought in supper every week night for nine weeks. So many helped in so many ways. How thankful I am to be home with my family again! How thankful I am to be alive! May God forgive me if ever again I take life and his blessings for granted.

When you never care to refer to yourself in conversation, or to record your own good words, or itch after commendation, when you can truly love to be unknown, THAT IS DYING TO SELF.

THEY TOOK A STAND

By Sidney A. Hatch

"Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension . . . with them" (Acts 15:2).

THese are the days of the "love ethic." To take a stand on some issue may not always be the astute thing to do. Such an individual may be labeled divisive or pestilential.

It is interesting, therefore, to read about the reaction of Paul and Barnabas to those teachers who came to Antioch and taught the brethren: "Except ye be circumcised . . . ye cannot be saved." The apostles responded with "no small dissension and disputation."

The Greek word translated "dissension" is *stasis*. Its basic sense is "standing." Elsewhere in the New Testament it is translated "insurrection," "sedition," "uproar." At the risk of all these things, Paul and Barnabas resisted the legalists.

Circumcision for salvation is no longer an issue. But legalism still appears in various forms. Today, we are confronted by the charismatic movement which tells us that a phenomenal experience should follow conversion. Those who resist this form of experientialism are often branded as "divisive."

Paul and Barnabas might have reasoned, "Let's just love these legalistic brethren. We must maintain the spirit of church growth and revival which prevails here in Antioch." But the two apostles knew that love is not really love unless it conforms to truth and holiness.

So Paul and Barnabas chose the other route. They took a stand. Paul lived to see the day when a prosecuting attorney publicly branded him "a pestilent fellow" and "a mover of sedition" (Acts 24:5). But because he was the kind of man who could stand firm, he preserved God's truth for generations to come.

Beer Commerical for the 1984 Olympics

The California State Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control has quietly changed its long-standing rule prohibiting any alcoholic beverages from being designated the official product of a sporting event so that Anheuser Busch can be the official beer of the 1984 Olympics.

It is difficult to understand this decision since the Olympics, from its inception, has been dedicated to the development, physically and mentally, of our young people. But then, it's not so difficult to understand when monetary profit (\$10 million) is considered. This (as usual) takes precedence over consideration for the welfare of our athletes . . . and our nation! It's just another step down for "the love of money" (1 Timothy 6:10).

—Macomb, IL Church of God Newsletter.

Church of God General Conference
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061



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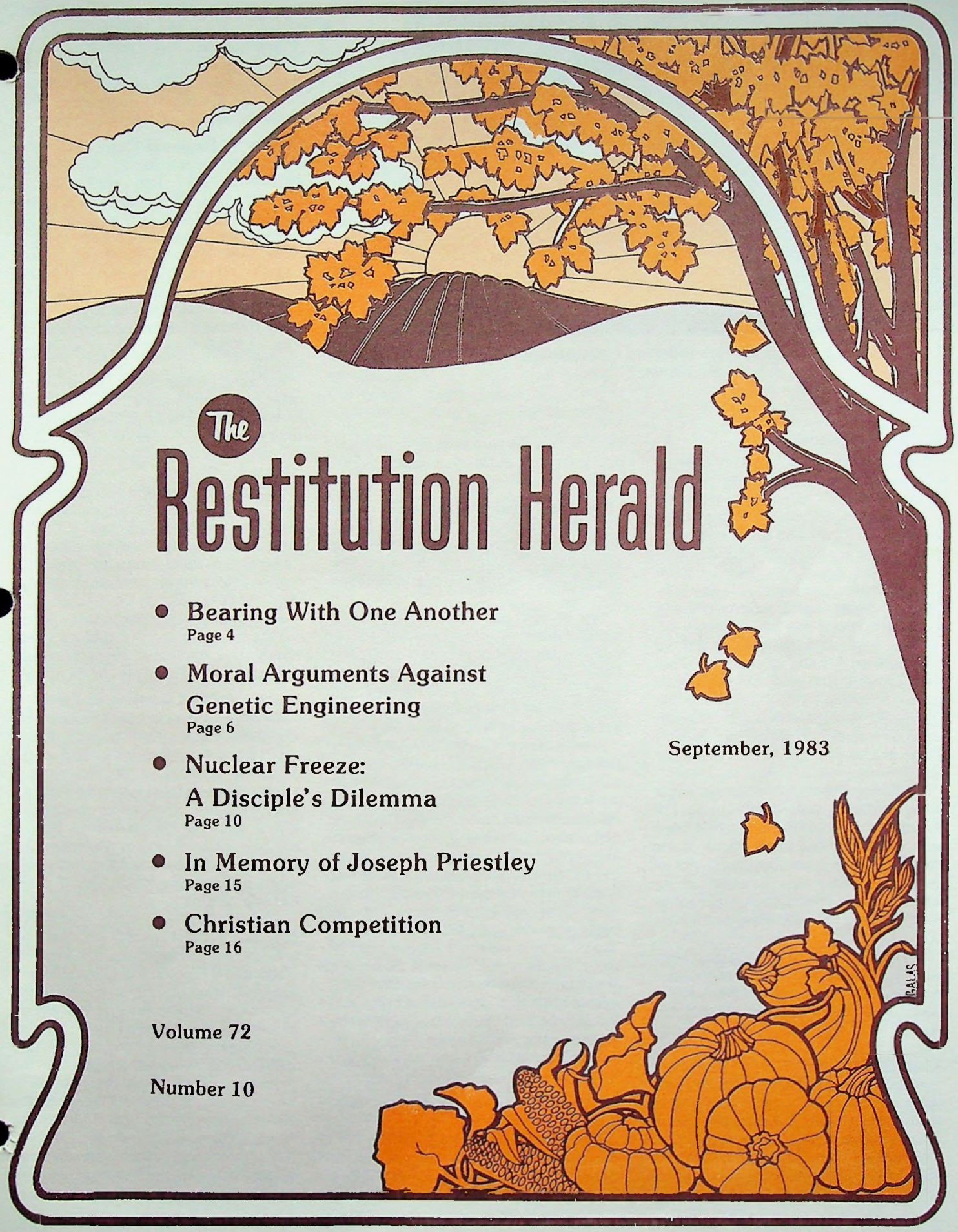
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THE RESTITUTION HERALD



The
Restitution Herald

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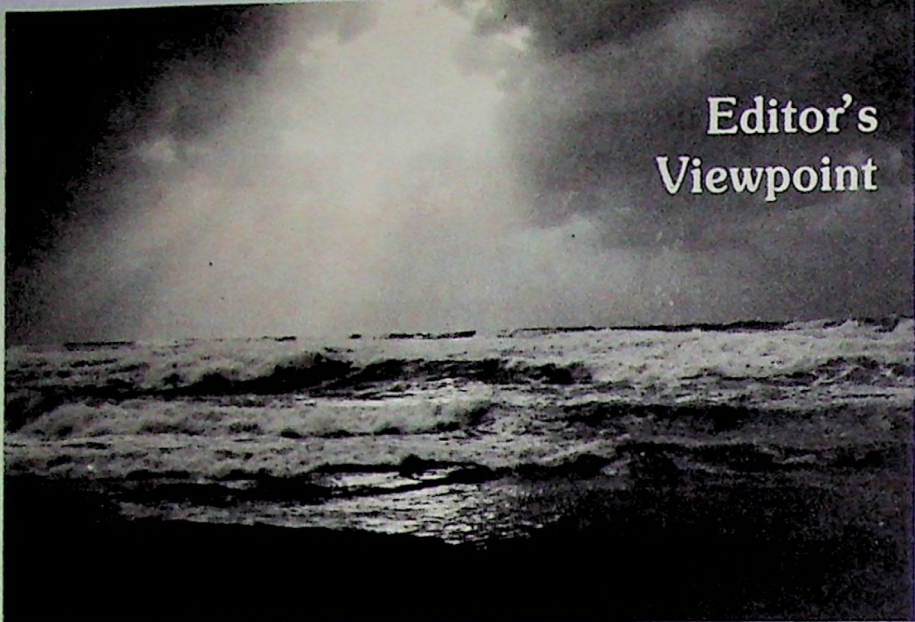
September, 1983

Volume 72

Number 10

BALAS

Editor's Viewpoint



Nature's vestige mirrors mankind's struggles to subdue the planet.

Last Issue of Publishing Year

Note some changes in this last issue of volume 72. The supplies order form has been updated to reflect more accurate costs of printing and mailing of published material. You may also use the form on page 20 to renew your HERALD subscription for either one, two, or three years at an increased rate. This new subscription figure again reflects printing and mailing costs more accurately.

In the July/August issue we promised an article on genetic engineering. That piece appears on page 6. Originally written as a position paper to encourage Congress to forbid technological tampering with human germline cells, Rifkin's article argues persuasively for that viewpoint.

The Nuclear Freeze movement generates huge headlines in the news media. For that reason we urged Pastor David Wilsterman to look at the implications of the freeze position from the standpoint of Scripture. Wilsterman presents an interesting case which should challenge your thinking. His article begins on page 10.

We look forward to hearing your reactions to Wilsterman's conclusions. If a reader would like to develop an article from the opposite opinion, we'd like to read it.

Visa/Master Card

As you will note on page 20, there are several ways by which you may secure your RESTITUTION HERALD subscription. One of those methods is charging your subscription on either your Visa or MasterCard account. If this convenience is helpful to you, we are happy to accom-

modate you. Be sure to include your account number, expiration date, and signature with your order.

"That's the Mark of the Beast"

Perhaps your reaction to the Visa/MasterCard announcement caused you alarm—the HERALD has followed the mark. Let me assure you that such is not the case.

We do not and will not experience worldly pressure to buy and sell everything by using a charge card. You are not being coerced to make all transactions with a card from an evil power. No satanic influence motivates us or you to live life under its thumb of wrong.

A brief examination of the meaning of Revelation 13—where the beast, his mark, and number are discussed—reveals that *evil* is the intent, something lacking in the credit-card system. Originally the mark of the beast had reference to a certificate-like designation given by the Roman government to citizens who performed their annual worship of Caesar, something Christians refused to do. No way could the emperor be referred to as "Lord," a title reserved for the Lord of glory. The most evil Caesar of all, Nero, is singled out in the number 666. Obviously a tyrant similar to him will be revived in the last days, demanding similar markings for economic reasons.

Visa/MasterCard is not such a vicious tyrant.

Doctors Plan Disease-Free Test-Tube Baby

The above head designated a brief Associated Press news item released to newspapers July 7, 1983, which told of British doctors who will attempt to pro-

duce test-tube babies (from donated eggs) free of genetic defects.

On the surface such a project seems to merit support, but the long-range implications discussed in Rifkin's article (see page 7) cast it in suspicion. The whole development bears watching.

Volume 73 Begins in October

The three keys unlocking the door of publishing for THE RESTITUTION HERALD in our 73rd year of service are subscriptions, Scripture, and spirituality. Already you can resubscribe to THE HERALD for 1984 by using the form on page 20. You may also subscribe for your friends and relatives, sharing with them the magazine which proclaims your faith. More subscriptions are needed now for THE HERALD than at any time in her history.

Pertinent portions of Scripture will receive heavy emphasis in 1984. Specific texts will be assigned to Bible students for their exegesis and exposition. Each issue will contain at least one of these textual studies.

Encouraging your spiritual growth will be a key aim in HERALD pages for 1984. Important topics which will aid your spiritual development will be discussed. The goal is to build your faith, hope, and love as Paul admonished the Thessalonians (1 Thes. 1:3).

If you know persons who are starving for the true meaning of Scripture which builds their spirituality, be sure to subscribe to THE HERALD for them today.

Pre-marital Sex a Disappointment

When a 19-year old girl told her story under this heading in a June 23, 1983, Ann Landers' column, it touched a cord of pathos in my heart. Why?

She found out that losing her virginity wasn't the fun promised by magazines, the movies, and TV advertising. Sex for the sake of sex hurt her physically and emotionally. She wished she could have enjoyed sex in the framework of a lifetime commitment.

That's the part that stings. God knows that sex is the beautiful physical and spiritual expression of married love. He intended for humans to enjoy that bliss as long as the pair shall live. But this young woman cannot now bring back to her experience the promise of God. She has spent "a long time" getting over the guilt and feelings of worthlessness.

Of course, now she knows she can be forgiven. She knows that there can be a life of love and happiness. But her pre-marital experiment with sex has burdened her with a "knowledge" she can never forget. I pray for God's comfort upon her as she picks up the pieces.



Letters to the Editor

I Reject Moral Majority's Morality

I wish to express my objection to the article "Moral Majority Morality" in the June, 1983, issue. The article itself should be a basis for not being in THE RESTITUTION HERALD. The author several times made the point that the Moral Majority is a political organization. Anyone who follows Jerry Falwell knows he is a right-wing conservative and by his own admission he and his organization are out to defeat any liberal Democrat in national elections.

As a postman I deliver his mail constantly in which he attacks liberals by calling them baby killers, left wingers, pro-communists, etc. I take issue with anyone who suggests that the conservatives have a lock on morality, pro-family, pro-American, etc. Mr. Falwell's organization said on national TV that it is virtually impossible for a liberal Democrat to be a Christian. I find this offensive and strange to read an article praising this man and his organization in THE RESTITUTION HERALD. Our church paper should not be involved in partisan politics.

In view of this article and past articles praising the present President and deriding the past President and administration, I ask that my subscription for two years for THE RESTITUTION HERALD be canceled and a refund be made.

Enclosed are copies of telegrams and articles from a national newspaper concerning Jerry Falwell and dirty tricks. —Raymore, MO.

From Cover to Cover

I read THE RESTITUTION HERALD, every copy, from cover to cover and enjoy it very much. Thank you so much. It has done so much for me in finding the Lord. —Royersford, PA.

Likes Letters, Illustrations

Contrary to what some have written, I appreciate the letters to the editor that you print in THE HERALD. I usually read that page first. I also appreciate the illustrations. When I see pages of solid printing (and we have had newsletters and other publications come to our house just like that), I put it aside and think I might read it later, but I hardly ever get to it. —Phoenix, AZ.

More April Kudos

I think the April, 1983, issue was the best that I have read in a long while. I sure enjoyed it. I'm an old-time reader. —Cincinnati, OH.

Changing with the Times

I appreciate the work you are doing with THE RESTITUTION HERALD. I have heard criticism that one could not tell by reading it that it differed from a Methodist, Presbyterian, or any other denominational publication. In other words, the feeling was that our distinctive doctrines were not being presented, but that the articles were appealing to the "itching ears" of a modern generation. Times change. God's truth does not change, but it may be that we have to find new ways of presenting it. I personally feel that there has been great improvement in the subject matter in the last year or so. I just hope we never minimize the need for keeping God's basic truths before the people. These never grow old or unnecessary. —Grand Rapids, MI.

Appreciate Diversity

I appreciate the diversity of articles in THE HERALD. Shelly Millard's article was outstanding. The kingdom and prophecy are very important, but so is how we live right now—before we get to the kingdom. Her paragraph on page 12, "We Christians have perhaps put too much concern into . . . the future kingdom of God, and have neglected . . . the here and now . . ." could be the epitaph of too many churches. —Tipp City, OH.

The Restitution Herald

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THE RESTITUTION HERALD is owned and published by the Church of God General Conference, a nonprofit Christian corporation located at 131 N. Third St., Oregon, Illinois 61061. THE HERALD is mailed monthly except January and August.

The Restitution Herald advocates: the oneness of God (1 Cor. 8:6); the Holy Spirit is God's power (Acts 1:8); Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son (Matt. 16:16), and is our Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5), the Bible is the inspired Word of God (2 Tim. 3:16); the mortality of man (Job 4:17; Psa. 146:4); the near return of Christ (Acts 1:11), and life only through him (Col. 3:3); the literal resurrection of the dead (John 5:28); the immortalization of those in Christ (1 Cor. 15:53,54); the destruction of the wicked (Rev. 21:8); the final restoration of Israel as the Kingdom of God under the Kingship of Christ (Luke 1:32); the church to be joint heirs with him (Rom. 8:17), and Israel to be made head over Gentile nations (Isa. 60:1-3); the "restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (Acts 3:21). It also firmly advocates repentance and immersion in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), and a consecrated life as essential to salvation.

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I know there's a pen in here somewhere . . .

fications (unless one has access to a Siberian salt mine), then **toleration** becomes the logical solution. Sometimes kind suggestions will bring about minor changes, but often just "putting up with it" is required. But forced changes infrequently produce positive results.

Some years ago I heard of students at a Bible College who decided to face up to their character flaws and make desirable changes. Believing themselves to be mature and capable of handling constructive criticism, they decided to anonymously inform one another of annoying traits. Notes began appearing suggesting alterations in behavior, attitudes, and pointing out obnoxious idiosyncrasies.

But suddenly what had started with good intentions turned sour! Feelings got hurt. Tempers flared. These students

BEARING WITH

EVERYONE has some. Those grating tendencies—annoying idiosyncrasies—that do a number on other people's nerves.

To name a few:

- knuckle cracking and gum popping
- amplified sneezing and throat clearing
- loud talking
- those with tendencies to "take over and run everything"—pouting and becoming unbearable unless they get their way
- Mr. Self-Centered
- Mrs. Self-Righteous
- those who have "all the answers" without the foggiest idea of what is being discussed
- people who never say "I'm wrong" or "I'm sorry"
- self-pity
- poor losers or poor winners
- those chronically late
- those ridiculously early
- vacillating
- conversation dominating
- door bursting without knocking

- complaining
- pig-trough eating
- bullhorn nose blowing
- nit-picking
- spitting
- belching
- bragging
- frowning
- correcting
- fidgeting
- ad infinitum

And let's face it. In the same way that quirks of others disturb us—we *must* have peculiarities that irritate them. (Not being able to see our own imperfections may head the list!)

What is the answer? Do we avoid people with habits that are upsetting? If so, there go the mate, kids, neighbors, fellow employees, even church friends—and it's going to get mighty lonesome being alone on this planet!

Tolerance

Since it is not usually possible to modify others' annoying habits to meet our speci-

were unable to handle honest criticism and face up to their own weaknesses. Getting vindictive, some began probing for the identity of certain note writers. Typewriter print was examined as clues were sought. Certainly the ambition of this group was good, but their objective was too great. Some were incapable of handling suggested changes which cut right to the heart of their personality. Neither was it possible to remake a student body into a utopian organization free of undesirable habits.

Some character traits simply must be endured! "BEARING WITH ONE ANOTHER" is a practical dimension of KOINONIA designed to address those nagging, pestering human tendencies that must be suffered through.

Patience Is the Key

Two New Testament passages specifically instruct Christians to "bear with" one another.

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love (Eph. 4:2, NIV).

The key phrase in this text is "be patient." **Patience** is the soothing ointment which helps us to "put up with" others' annoying weaknesses. It gives us the endurance to love someone in spite of his habit of rattling pocket change; regardless of his persistence in including "you know" in every eighth word of conversation; despite his negligence in applying *Tegrin* to his dandruff problem.

Not one of us is perfect. All fail, particularly in areas of human relationships. How easy it is to *expect more from others than we expect from ourselves*. Just imagine how many people must be demonstrating patience with you right now!

Motivation for having forbearance with others can come from realizing how patient God must be with us. Imagine your



We might as well have a laugh while we wait . . .

ONE ANOTHER

shortcomings which he tolerates. Yet his unconditional love does not quit flowing your way. His acceptance does not cease. This was the motivator of the Apostle Paul. Seeing himself as the worst of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15, 16), and experiencing God's love and patience in saving him, caused Paul to respond to others with the love and patience of Jesus Christ.

Regarding New Christians

A lot of "congregational" intolerance I've noticed has come from older Christians not giving "baby Christians" time to grow and mature. It is unthinkable that a three year old would be expected to act like an adult—but sometimes those who have been a Christian but a few days, weeks, or months are expected to immediately act spiritually "grown up." Instant maturity and nothing less is demanded. They are required to already have hair on their chin when they are barely moving from the crawling into the walking stage. Infant Christians need growing time.

Forgiveness Too

The second "bearing with" text is from Colossians 3:12, 13:

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and *patience*. *Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another (NIV).*

First, did you notice that magic word again? *Patience*. But Paul goes a step further in saying—"You may also need to do some *forgiving*." We won't develop this extensively as it was covered in an earlier article: *The Circle of Forgiveness*. But let's consider some examples of "bearing with forgiveness": Someone is talking with me when another person enters the room. Suddenly I am dropped as he caters to the other individual. Are my feelings hurt? Do I hold a grudge? . . . Or I get slighted when others are being recognized for efforts put forth. Do I pout and sulk because I was not acknowledged? "Bearing with" frequently requires being the "bigger person." That doesn't mean that rude-

ness and negligence will never trouble us—but it does mean that *we shouldn't let insensitivity affect us to carry hard feelings or even hatred*. Many times one must shake his head and think, "I'll not allow myself to get bent out of shape over something so insignificant."

A Practical Conclusion

Take a good look at yourself. With ruthless honesty make a list of your weaknesses and idiosyncrasies. Include being late, procrastinating, never being wrong, gum popping or whatever tendency you usually just laugh off. (Perhaps consult a trusted confidant for his opinion.)

Now that you have recognized some of your weaknesses, evaluate them in light of your attitudes and actions toward the annoying traits of others. Do you expect more from them than you do from yourself? Do you criticize others in the very areas of your own weaknesses?

Such an exercise may help you "bear with" a little better. It may also give you incentive to work on your own "rough edges."



The Moral Arguments Against

GENETIC ENGINEERING

WHILE THE UNITED STATES has begun to turn its attention to the dangers of nuclear war, little or no debate has taken place over the emergence of an entirely new technology which in time could very well pose as serious a threat to the existence of the human species as the bomb itself. We are referring to human genetic engineering. On July 22, 1982, the *New York Times* published a major editorial entitled "Whether to Make Perfect Humans." It will soon be possible, says the *Times*, to fundamentally alter the human species by engineering the genetic traits of the sex cells—the sperm and egg. Humanity's newfound ability to engineer genetic traits could well lead to the creation of a new species, as different from homo-sapiens as we are to the higher apes. So grave is the threat of human genetic engineering that the *Times* suggests that we consider "the question of whether the human germline should be declared inviolable."

From Human Being to Industrial Product

The wholesale design of human life, in accordance with technological prerequisites, design specifications, and quality controls, raises a fundamental question.

Nobel laureate biologist Dr. Salvador Luria puts the question in its most succinct context when he asks, "When does a repaired or manufactured man stop being a man . . . and become a robot, an object, an industrial product?"

Proponents of human genetic engineering argue that the benefits outweigh the risks and that it would be irresponsible not to use this powerful new technology to eliminate serious "genetic disorders." The *New York Times* editorial board correctly addressed this conventional scientific argument by concluding in its editorial that once the scientists are able to repair genetic defects "it will become much harder to argue against adding genes that confer desired qualities, like better health, looks, or brains." According to the *Times*, "There is no discernible line to be drawn between making inheritable repairs of genetic defects, and improving the species."

As knowledge about the genes increases, the bioengineers will inevitably gain new insights into the functioning of more complex characteristics, such as those associated with behavior and thoughts. Many scientists are already contending that schizophrenia and other "abnormal"

psychological states result from genetic disorders or defects. Others now argue that "antisocial" behavior, such as criminality and social protest, are also examples of malfunctioning genetic information. One prominent neurophysiologist has gone so far as to say, "There can be no twisted thought without a twisted molecule." Many sociobiologists contend that virtually all human activity is in some way determined by our genetic make-up and that if we wish to change this situation, we must change our genes.

Whenever we begin to discuss the idea of genetic defects, there is no way to limit the discussion to one or two or even a dozen so called disorders because of a hidden assumption that lies behind the very notion of "defective." Ethicist Daniel Callahan penetrates to the core of the problem when he observes that "behind the human horror at genetic defectiveness lurks . . . an image of the perfect human being. The very language of 'defect,' 'abnormality,' 'disease,' and 'risk,' presupposes such an image, a kind of prototype of perfection."

The question, then, is whether or not humanity should "begin" the process of en-

*A Theological Letter
by the Foundation on Economic Trends
Jeremy Rifkin, Director
Used with permission*

ENGINEERING

engineering future generations of human beings by technological design in the laboratory.

The Price of Perfection

What is the price we pay for embarking on a course whose final goal is the "perfection" of the human species?

Human Extinction

First there is the ecological price to consider. It is very likely that in attempting to "perfect" the human species we will succeed in engineering our own extinction. Eliminating so called "bad genes" will lead to a dangerous narrowing of diversity in the gene pool. Since part of the strength of our gene pool consists in its very diversity, including defective genes, tampering with it might ultimately lead to extinction of the human race. It should be recalled that, in the 1950's, genetic modifications were made in wheat strains to create bumper crops of "super wheat." When a new strain of disease hit the fields, farmers found that their wheat was too delicate to resist. Within two years, virtually the entire crop was destroyed.

We have no doubt that a similar effort to

"perfect" the human species by eliminating the so-called bad genes would prove equally destructive. This simple biological fact is so patently obvious that one begins to wonder why it is so conveniently ignored by so many of the "experts" in the scientific community. Even Dr. Thomas Wagner, the scientist at Ohio University who is responsible for the first successful transfer of a gene trait from one mammalian species to the embryo of another mammalian species, has gone on record as being opposed to genetic engineering of the human germline cells because of the potentially devastating effect that such narrowing of genetic diversity might have on the ability of the human species to survive in the future. Dr. Wagner says,

It is a terrible mistake to make a permanent, heritable change, even if it appears to be for the better, in a human being's genetic makeup. We don't know what the future brings, and we don't understand fully the process of evolution. Any species of animal needs a certain degree of diversity, some of which appears negative, in order for it to survive into the future. I don't think we should be manipulating the genetic material beyond the individual generation of the human involved.

Eugenics Enigma

Then there is the question of eugenics to carefully consider. Eugenics is the inseparable ethical wing of the Age of Biotechnology. First coined by Charles Darwin's cousin, Sir Francis Galton, eugenics is generally categorized into two types, negative and positive. Negative eugenics involves the systematic elimination of so-called biologically undesirable characteristics. Positive eugenics is concerned with the use of genetic manipulation to "improve" the characteristics of an organism or species.

Eugenics is not a new phenomenon. At the turn of the century the U.S. sported a massive eugenics movement. Politicians, celebrities, academicians, and prominent business leaders joined together in support of a eugenics program for the country. The frenzy over eugenics reached a fever pitch with many states passing sterilization statutes and the U.S. Congress passing a new immigration law in the 1920's based on eugenics considerations. As a consequence of the new legislation, thousands of American citizens were sterilized so they could not pass on their
(continued, page 8)



GENETIC ENGINEERING (continued from page 7)

"inferior" traits and the federal government locked its doors to certain emigrant groups deemed biologically unfit by then existing eugenics standards.

While the Americans flirted with eugenics for the first 30 years of the twentieth century, their escapades were of minor historical account when compared with the eugenics program orchestrated by the Nazis in the 1930's and 40's. Millions of Jews and other religious and ethnic groups were gassed in the German crematoriums to advance the Third Reich's dream of eliminating all but the "Aryan" race from the globe. The Nazis also embarked on a "positive" eugenics program in which thousands of S.S. officers and German women were carefully selected for their "superior" genes and mated under the auspices of the state. Impregnated women were cared for in state facilities and their offspring were donated to the Third Reich as the vanguard for the new super race that would rule the world for the next millennium.

Eugenics Reborn

Eugenics lay dormant for nearly a quarter of a century after World War II. Then the spectacular breakthroughs in molecular biology in the 1960's raised the spectre of a eugenics revival once again. By the mid 1970's, many scientists were beginning to worry out loud that the potential for genetic engineering might lead to a return to the kind of eugenics hysteria that swept over America and Europe earlier in the century. Speaking at a National Academy of Science forum on recombinant DNA, Ethan Signer, a biologist at MIT, warned his colleagues that

this research is going to bring us one more step closer to genetic engineering of people. That's where they figure out how to have us produce children with ideal characteristics. ... Last time around, the ideal children had blonde hair, blue eyes, and Aryan genes.

The concern over a reemergence of eugenics is well founded but misplaced.

While professional ethicists watch out the front door for telltale signs of a resurrection of the Nazi nightmare, eugenics doctrine has quietly slipped in the back door. The new eugenics is commercial, not social. In place of the shrill eugenic cries for racial purity, the new commercial eugenics talk in pragmatic terms of medical benefits and improvement in the quality of life. The old eugenics was steeped in political ideology and motivated by fear and hate. The new eugenics is grounded in medical advance and the spectre of extending the human life span.

Danger of the Genetic "Gift"

Genetic engineering, then, is coming to us not as a threat, but as a promise; not as a punishment, but as a gift. And here is where the true danger lies. If the Brave New World comes, it will not be forced on us by an evil cabal of self-serving scientists and Machiavellian politicians. On the contrary, what makes opposition to the Brave New World so difficult is the seductive path that leads to it. Every new advance in human genetic engineering is likely to be heralded as a great stride forward, a boon for humankind. Everyone of the breakthroughs in genetic engineering will be of benefit to someone, under some circumstance, somewhere in society. And step by step, advance by advance, we human beings might well choose to trade away the spontaneity of natural life for the predictability of technological design until the human species as we know it is transformed into a product of our own creation; a product that bears only a faint resemblance to the original.

How important is it that we eliminate all the imperfections, all the defects? What price are we willing to pay to extend our lives, to insure our own health, to do away with all of the inconveniences, the irritations, the nuisances, the infirmities, and the suffering that are so much a part of the human experience? Are we so enamored with the idea of physical perpetuation at all costs that we are even willing to subject the human species to rigid architectural design? Is guaranteeing our health worth trading away our humanity?

What is the price we pay for medical advance, for securing our own physical well being? If it means accepting the idea of reducing the human species to a technologically designed product, then it is too dear a price.

Who Plays God With Genetics?

In deciding whether or not to go ahead with human genetic engineering we must all ask ourselves the following question: Who should we entrust with the authority to design the blueprints for the future of the human species? In the words of the Nobel laureate biologist George Wald, "Who is going to set those specifications?"

Human genetic engineering presents the human race with the most important political question it has ever had to contend with. Who do we entrust with the ultimate authority to decide which are the good genes that should be engineered into the human gene pool and which are the bad genes that should be eliminated?

Today the ultimate exercise of political power is within our grasp; the ability to control the future lives of human beings by engineering their characteristics in advance; making them a hostage of their own architecturally designed blueprints. Genetic engineering represents the power of authorship. Never before in history has such complete power over life been a possibility. The idea of imprisoning the life span of a human being by simply engineering its genetic blueprint at conception is truly awesome.

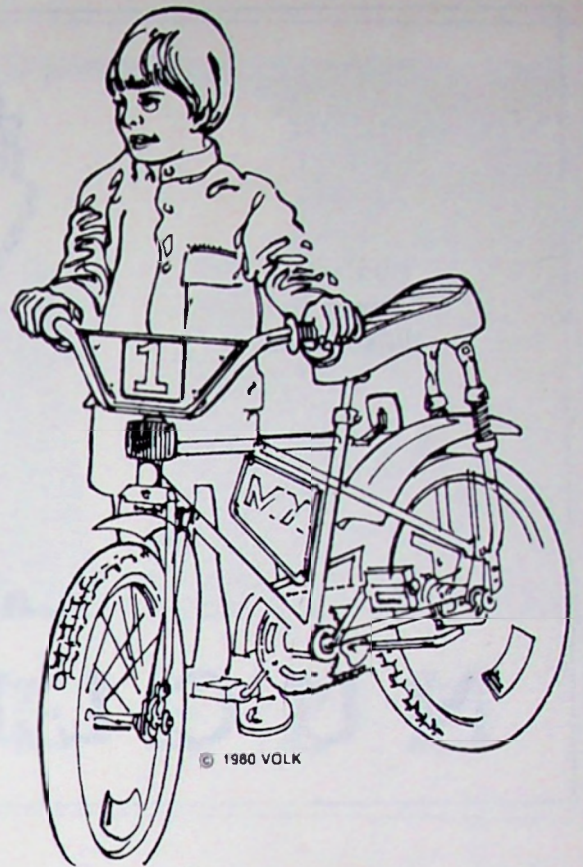
Aldous Huxley's spectre of a biologically designed caste system with its alphas, betas, gammas, and deltas looms on the horizon. Our society must now ponder whether to give sanction to this fundamental departure in how human life is formed. In examining this issue, we would ask everyone to consider one simple question. Would we trust the Congress of the U.S. with the ultimate authority to decide which genes should be engineered into the human gene pool and which should be eliminated? Would we entrust the executive or judicial branch with such authority? Or the corporations and the marketplace? Or the scientists and the medical community?

Who do we designate to play God? The fact is, no individual, group, or set of institutions can legitimately claim the right or authority to make such decisions on behalf of the rest of the species alive today or for future generations.

Genetic engineering of the human germ-line cells represents a fundamental threat to the preservation of the human species as we know it, and should be opposed with courage and conviction.

Children's Page

The Cheerful Giver



by Linda Gordon

"Mom, Mom!" yelled Joey as he jumped off his bike and ran into the house. "Mom, everything went just like I'd hoped it would. The kids at school loved my new bike! They all wanted a turn to ride it!"

"That's great, Joey," said Mother. "I'm glad you had such a good day. But before you go out to play again, I need to talk to you for a minute."

"Sure. What's up?" Joey asked.

"Well, while you were around the bikes at school today, did you notice anyone disturbing any of them?" Mother asked. "You see, Tommy's mother just called and said Tommy's bike was stolen today from school. I thought if you saw anyone you might be able to help."

"Stolen?" gasped Joey. "That's awful! I wish I could help, Mom, but I don't remember seeing anyone. I guess I was so busy showing off my new bike that I didn't notice anything else. It's terrible for anyone's bike to get stolen, but it's even worse for Tommy," Joey wailed.

"Why's that?" asked Mother.

"Because Tommy really needs his bike for his newspaper route. His family doesn't have very much money, so Tommy helps out by delivering newspapers," explained Joey.

"Oh, dear," Mother sighed. "I see what you mean. But maybe you can still help."

"How?" asked Joey.

"How would you feel about lending your bike to Tommy for a week or two?" suggested Mother. "It would just be until his own bike was found or other arrangements could be made."

"Oh, Mom, I don't know. I just got that bike. I've hardly even had a chance to ride it!" Joey exclaimed.

"I know it would be very hard," said Mother. "But I can't help but think about our family devotions the other night. Do you remember? The text was taken from Second Corinthians, chapter nine. It said that God loves a cheerful giver. When we give someone something, whether it be a bike for a couple of weeks or just a kind word when someone feels sad, we'll always be rewarded by our God."

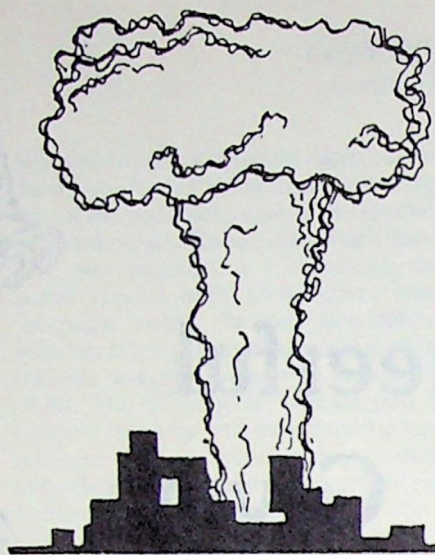
"I guess you're right," said Joey. "I can get along without my bike for a while. I think I'll take my bike over to Tommy right now."

"I'm very proud of you, Joey," Mother said. "Remember that God won't forget the kindness you're showing to Tommy."

"O.K.," Joey hollered over his shoulder. "See you later!"

Joey jumped on his bike feeling remarkably happy. "Maybe this good feeling is God's reward that Mom was talking about," he thought. The wind blew through Joey's hair as he pedaled his way to Tommy's house.

By Pastor
David L.
Wilsterman



NUCLEAR

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God"
(Matt. 5:9, NIV).

THOSE ARE THE WORDS of our Savior, Jesus Christ. At first glance they may be interpreted by the average American patriot as sacred encouragement to continue practicing the brand of big-brother adventurism for which the United States of America has become famous. Making peace has become the basis for much of what the United States has done in the past on the global stage.

It cannot be argued that even this counterfeit of Millennial tranquility is preferable to the on-going border disputes, civil wars, and all-out invasions involving whole nations which have taken place throughout recorded human history. However, the disciple of the Prince of Peace must know that such peace is, after all, only a pretense, and we are called to a ministry of authentic peace sowing. The counterfeit commodities of this world are manufactured and distributed

by those who heed not the literal meaning of Jesus' words.

The variety of peace afforded to this world by its leaders is nothing other than forced capitulation—domination of one party by a stronger agency. Being most optimistic, one could only estimate this peace to be temporary. Being very pessimistic, one must assume that this peace affords a time of veiled preparation for yet another seizure of open hostility.

Jesus, on the other hand, spoke of a variety of peace which, he said, this world cannot provide mankind (John 14:27). He was speaking during a period of time most esteemed by historians as being peaceful in nature. It was the time of the Pax Romana. But, it was a peace insured by strength of force—the only kind of peace this world can afford its citizenry. His brand of peace was awarded to all, victor and vanquished alike, and was not maintained by armaments. Christ's peace did not seek any advantage of Jesus' enemies. Rather, by means of exercising love through suffering, the Savior annihilated the evil which motivated his

enemies and feeds wars. But some, even among Messiah's closest followers, could not comprehend his peace ethic; neither could they understand the kind of love which was its genius. And so it is today.

The Peace Issue

Disciples of Jesus Christ living in the last two decades of the twentieth century have to deal honestly, faithfully, and Scripturally with the peace issue, especially as it concerns the proliferation of nuclear armaments. Some churchmen today proclaim that the only sure means of achieving and maintaining peace is to assure the existence of an equal or greater force of deterrent, which is often interpreted to mean a nuclear arsenal. But are these churchmen sowers of peace, or are they merely minions of a counterfeiter?

It was Albert Einstein who wrote, "The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our ways of thinking. Thus, we are drifting toward a catastrophe beyond comparison. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if mankind is to survive." The whole of Jesus' mortal life, as well as the 1,956 years of his immortal ministry (years approximate from A.D. 27), have been invested in establishing that new philosophy, the "new manner of thinking" which the "father of the atomic age" thought necessary for our survival.

Poet-philosopher George Santayana observed, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." On August 6, 1945, at 8:15 in the morning, the United States dropped the first nuclear weapon on Hiroshima, Japan. That one bomb, small by modern comparison, killed more than 75,000 and injured nearly another 100,000 of the city's 245,000 residents. In the August, 1982, issue of the *Common Cause* magazine (2030 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036), contributor Jonathan Schell described the consequences of the detonation of a small, one megaton bomb, which possesses 80 times the lethal power of the Hiroshima device. Lest we be condemned to repeat so great an atrocity, let us ponder the effects of these awesomely destructive weapons. Have you ever stopped to consider the natural outworkings of your philosophy of maintaining peace?

A One-Megaton Blast

Detonated some 8,500 feet above the city of New York, specifically above the

A Disciple'

Empire State Building, a one-megaton bomb would gut or flatten almost every building within a radius of four and four-tenths miles (an area of about 200 square miles).

Blastwave

A conventional explosive weapon delivers a swift shock to whatever it hits, but the blast wave of a sizeable nuclear weapon can endure for several seconds and can destroy whole buildings. People would literally become debris and be hurled away from the blast along with other rubbish. Within 61 square miles, walls, roofs, and floors of any buildings that had not been flattened would collapse. Technically, this zone would be hit by various overpressures of at least five pounds per square inch. (Overpressure is defined as the pressure in excess of normal atmospheric pressure.)

As far away as 10 miles from ground zero, pieces of glass and other sharp objects would be hurled about by the blast wave at lethal velocities.

Fireball

At a distance of two miles or so from ground zero, winds would reach 400 miles an hour, and another two miles away they would reach 180 miles an hour. Meanwhile, the now-familiar fireball would be growing, until it was more than a mile wide, and reaching upward to a height of over six miles. For 10 seconds it would broil everything below. Anyone caught in the open within nine miles of ground zero would receive third-degree burns and would probably be killed; closer to the explosion, people would be charred and killed instantly. Within a radius of several miles, the heat would be great enough to melt metal and glass. Readily inflammable materials, such as paper, wood, and leaves would ignite within a radius of about nine and a half miles from ground zero, thereby creating an area of more than 280 square miles in which mass fires would likely break out.

Two Miles from Ground Zero

If it were possible for someone to stand about two miles from ground zero and observe the blast (and it would not be possible), here is what he would see. A dazzling white light from the fireball would illuminate everything, continuing for about 30 seconds. At the same instant, searing heat would ignite everything flammable and start to melt windows, cars, buses,



F R E E Z E:

lampposts, and everything else made of metal or glass. People in the street would simply catch fire immediately.

About five seconds after the light appeared, the blast would strike, laden with the debris of everything at ground zero. Some buildings might be crushed, and others might be picked up off their foundations to be propelled with the other debris. The 400-mile-an-hour wind would blast its destruction for only a few seconds in one direction, and then bluster in the reverse direction with diminished intensity. While these things were happening, the fireball would be burning in the sky for 10 seconds of thermal pulse. Soon huge, thick clouds of dust and smoke would envelop the scene, and as the mushroom cloud rushed overhead, having a diameter of about 12 miles, the light from the sun would be blotted out.

Within minutes, fires ignited both by the thermal pulse and by broken gas mains, tanks of gas and oil, and the like, would begin to spread in the darkness of the cloud, and a strong, steady wind would

begin to blow in the direction of the blast. At Hiroshima a whirlwind was produced which swept through the ruins. This, too, might very well occur at any blast location. Radioactive rain, generated under the meteorological conditions created by the blast, might pelt the dismal scene.

Firestorm

Before long the individual fires would coalesce into a mass fire, and depending largely on the winds, would become either a conflagration or a firestorm. In a conflagration, prevailing winds spread a wall of fire as far as there is any combustible material to sustain it; in a firestorm, a vertical updraft caused by the fire itself sucks the surrounding air in toward a central point, and the fires therefore converge into a single holocaust of extreme heat. A mass fire of either kind renders shelters useless by burning up all the oxygen in the air and creating toxic gases, so that anyone inside the shelters is asphyxiated. Also, by heating the ground to such high

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s. Dilemma

NUCLEAR FREEZE:

temperatures that the shelters turn, in effect, into ovens, the people inside are cremated.

Targeted Cities

It is hard to imagine this kind of destructive force. Hiroshima and Nagasaki cannot serve as adequate comparisons. Right now, in a population-targeted attack, every community in the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, and Europe with a population over 25,000 or more might be destroyed. There are now so many warheads available that there is a shortage of targets. It has recently been estimated that the total strength of all nuclear weapons in the world equals four tons of TNT for every man, woman, and child on this same planet—enough for one million Hiroshima-strength bombs.

It is difficult to calculate the effects of a nuclear strike in general, for the only known property is the destructive force of the bomb. The thermonuclear blast alone creates a temperature of 27 million degrees Fahrenheit. To establish what a strike might provide in the way of debilitating the enemy, one must also have knowledge of the target area, the nature of the attack (ground or air burst), the nature of the terrain, the time of year, the day of the week and time of day, and the prevailing weather conditions, especially the wind direction and velocity.

Survivors

"Survivors" would suffer third-degree burns; crushing injuries to the skull, chest, abdomen and limbs; spinal chord injuries; lacerations; hemorrhages; and shock. Many would suffer acute radiation sickness. A number would have ruptured lungs and eardrums from blast pressures. Many would be blind, because a single reflex glance at the fireball would produce severe retinal burns, as far away as 35 miles from ground zero. Deaths would occur everywhere—not just in the target areas—as radioactive contamination spread and as epidemic disease and starvation followed. (Radiation does not last for all time but decays naturally, at a progressively slower rate. Half of the radioactivity of iodine-131 will have decayed after eight days, half of the strontium-90 and caesium-137 after about 30 years, and half of the plutonium-239 after 24,000 years. All of this radiation is devastating in its effects on human life). The "survivors" would have "survived" in the social sense only, in all probability, having merely postponed their deaths. Life in the interim

would bear no resemblance to life before the nuclear attack

Conflict of Peace Ideology

Yet, in spite of the evidence to indicate the destructive nature of nuclear weaponry, some will maintain that to talk of putting away such instruments of horror is to talk of weakness, to talk of faithfulness; of the abandonment of the American and "Christian" principles which made our nation great. Indeed, some even accuse those who espouse a philosophy of peace through nuclear freeze and disarmament of betraying the Christian ethic, and of being idyllic in their understanding of the affairs of this world.

Nothing could be further from the truth. If any are lost in a spiritual fog, it is those who plan on fighting a war for peace in this world's terms—according to this world's pattern of logic and reason—with this world's weapons. God, via the Apostle Paul, contended with our ancient counterparts in Corinth concerning the matter of operating in this world arena as his agents, employing his power, and yet conforming to this world's methods for getting things done. Paul informed them that God's ways are not the ways of this world, and that a godly appreciation of things as they are is not necessarily as human reason and wisdom will perceive them to be. He states that if the ways of the world were identical to the ways of God, "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (1 Cor. 2:8). The apostle also writes that everyone is not going to be able to comprehend this concept of God's wisdom being incomparable to the wisdom of men, because this is a spiritual truth and will be discerned by those who possess the Holy Spirit.

Everything about God's ways is contrary to the ways of man. The modern Christian cannot depend on the "logical" or the "reasonable" if he is to serve the Lord of heaven faithfully. This is nowhere better illustrated than by comparing the words of Jesus with the philosophy of stockpiling nuclear arms for the purpose of preserving our own lives ("a matter of self-defense"). The Master taught, "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28, NIV). Fear for one's natural life—or faithlessness, in the words of the Savior—is surely what motivates the accumulation of such terrible weaponry. But Jesus was not doubtful. He stated unreservedly that we

are not to fear for the life which we are now living.

Lose Life to Find It

By this point in Christ's public ministry, he had already shared with his chosen 12 his philosophy concerning mortal life. He had said that one must risk even the loss of this present life as he invests his mortality in eternity. Jesus further stated, "Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" (Mark 8:35). In other words, if you want to taste eternity, invest what you have right now. Invest in terms of life, in things eternal, not in the fruitless pursuit of hoarding away this corruptible existence. It is ludicrous for us to profess, on the one hand, a confidence and trust in God's power to deliver us from perilous situations and preserve us throughout eternity while, on the other hand, massing awesome arsenals of nuclear weapons—arguing all the while that we are doing so only to protect ourselves. Harriet Bicksler, the Brethren in Christ Revision Editor for the Foundation Series and a peace-worker in the Brethren in Christ Church, has remarked, "If we are serious about following Jesus and doing what he would do, it seems foolish even to consider relying on our country's military superiority to bring us security." Either we will do what Jesus taught unreservedly, doing him honor as faithful disciples, or we will be disobedient to Messiah's teachings, honoring him only by observing those commandments and admonitions which do not cause us discomfort.

It would serve us well to remember that this present life is but a prelude of the glorious life to be lived in the presence of God, and that this body is but a seed sown now to be harvested in the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:35-49). In an age of "instant" everything, it is difficult for us to appreciate the ancient eastern concept of investing and waiting. This is especially hard for modern disciples in the United States of America to understand, as we have been conditioned by over two centuries of religious freedom, which has often been interpreted as freedom from religion at times other than when that religion serves our national purposes.

We must consider that the peace Jesus has secured for us, for both our immediate pacification and eternal salvation, was bought with his very life. Our Lord said that this was exactly the modus for peace-sowing which his disciples were to mimic. He advised that

● A Disciple's Dilemma

continued

one must first deny his own wants and ambitions in order to accomplish what God wills (Luke 9:23). This was his personal dilemma the last night of his mortal life as, in the Garden of Gethsemane, he struggled with his own desires for survival while at the same time wanting to do the will of the Father.

For Jesus, doing the will of his Father meant exercising love through suffering and dying. And, lest we miss the point that he is the Rabbi and we are the disciples, this is our lesson: his action of self-sacrifice. We have a long-range interest as sons of God in all of mankind rather than only those of our family, or our nation, or our race. We who shall be known as God's own sons are interested in everyone's individual personal peace with God—not just the absence of warring conflict. We must be ready to lay down our lives to secure that peace: but never, never at the expense of other human lives (Luke 9:51-56).

Christianity Vs. Patriotic Religion

Christians of this era are facing a dilemma. Shall we exist apart from, or succumb to, a dangerous brand of nationalized Christianity, a patriotic religion which preaches the doctrine of peacemaking while at the same time advocating a self-protection dogma which may cost millions upon millions of people their lives? Jesus said, "A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Luke 6:40). Is it reasonable to assume that when we Christians are fully disciplined we are expected to be just like Jesus? This writer believes so. Christ Jesus is the standard of God against which the perfection of creature-man will be appraised. He is the best example of what it is to be human as God intended humans to be; living a godly, peaceable life in a world that does not understand and is subject to fits of violence against anything it does not comprehend and cannot control.

And yet Jesus instructs, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27, 28). These are not the words of a man who would stockpile an arsenal of nuclear weapons for the purpose of frightening his enemies or threatening and pressuring his adversaries into a peace-posture, nor would he obliterate those who sought him harm with those same horrible devices. To maintain an arsenal of nuclear armaments for the purpose of *intimidating* one's foe is as wrong

for the authentic disciple of Jesus Christ as is *using* the weapon. Ask yourself, "Would our Savior build such weaponry to employ as a deterrent?" The answer is NO. He would not even call upon available angels to rescue him from the torture of the cross. He knew that genuine peace could only be secured for humankind by investing himself in a sacrifice of love. It meant his mortal life.

If Scripture calls us to love our enemies as Jesus loved his enemies at the cross, we must either accept the way of nonviolence or abandon our affirmation of scriptural authority. This writer is not ready yet to abandon his confidence in the Bible's authority; are you?

Futility of Man's Might

The "new manner of thinking" which Albert Einstein thought necessary for our survival in the nuclear age is not really new at all. The whole concept of the futility of depending upon man's might to insure security was expressed by God through his prophet Isaiah nearly three millenia ago. "Woe to those who go down to Egypt for help, who rely on horses, who trust in the multitude of their chariots and in the great strength of their horsemen, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. Yet he too is wise and can bring disaster; he does not take back his words. He will rise up against the house of the wicked, against those who help evildoers. But the Egyptians are men and not God; their horses are flesh and not spirit. When the LORD stretches out his hand, he who helps will stumble, he who is helped will fall; both will perish together" (Isa. 31:1-3).

Today, in an updated version, God might declare, "Woe to those who go to the United States for help, who rely on nuclear warheads, who trust in the multitude of Tridents, MIRV's, MX's, and Cruise missiles, and in the great strength of multimegaton weaponry, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel, or seek help from the Lord. . . . But the Americans are men and not God; their weapons of nuclear might are merely mineral components of this small planet and not spirit."

In-the-World-Not-of-the-World Dilemma

The dilemma is real, and it involves more than the mere issues of either escalation or freeze and disarmament. The dilemma is, rather, one of our being in this world and not like the world.

Our Lord prayed this for his disciples: "I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the

world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:14-17). These words are for modern followers of Jesus too.

It is an ordeal for one to be a disciple of the Master—the one encouraging us to prepare for another world and its order—and yet be residents of this world and its order. The truth is, a disciple of our Lord is no more a part of this world—with its own dreams and aspirations, goals and objectives, ways of thinking and getting things accomplished—than is Jesus. Much of contemporary Christendom has greatly downplayed this truth, and whole generations have sold out, compromising tough, raw Christian faith for a luxurious, self-satisfying, sacra-humanistic Sunday experience. The truth, according to God's Holy Word, is that we are not of this world: we do not reason as does the world; we do not react to hostility as does this world's citizenry; we do not depend upon our own strength for personal security as does this world; and we do not wage war in the same manner as does this world. We are of another order, even as Christ Jesus is himself (Col. 3:1-3).

Buy A Sword

It would be unjust to leave untreated that passage of Scripture which many believe to be Jesus' encouragement to armed violence. Jesus, having just told his disciples that he will soon be leaving them and will no longer be present to afford them personal protection by his authority, tells them to sell their cloaks and buy a sword. The disciples report that they already have two (Luke 22:36-38). What was his real message to his anxious followers? In very plain language, he was simply telling them that throughout his public ministry they had had the advantage of his personal presence to assure their safety, but now that was to come to an end. In a very short time they were going to be left to their own wiles and resourcefulness. How, then, were they going to survive? He knew, as they would soon learn, that they would have to struggle for their very existence.

Jesus' words were not meant to incite his followers to arms; rather, his words illustrated for them the fact that their lives would soon be in peril. It is unthinkable that the one who said, "All who draw the sword

(Continued, page 14)



NUCLEAR FREEZE: A Disciple's Dilemma

(Continued from page 13)

will die by the sword" (Matt. 26:52), would then advise his students to buy a weapon for the purpose of inflicting injury on another in the interest of self-protection. It is equally impossible to imagine this same Jesus encouraging those he has chosen to be peace sowers by means of exercising love through suffering, to arm themselves for the purpose of taking another's life. He had taught a wealthy young man that, among other qualifications for entry into God's eternal kingdom, one must not kill (Matt. 19:18). To interpret the sword passage to mean that Jesus advocated the accumulating of arms by Christians for the purpose of intimidating their enemies—or even for self-defense—is to do great disservice to God by poorly interpreting his Holy Word. As we have been reminded by Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith scholars for generations, faithful interpretation is accomplished when Scripture is allowed to interpret Scripture, and when we avoid using "proof" texts.

Frightening Nuclear Threat

The threat of nuclear war is frightening. Now, in the 1980's, both sides are beginning a completely new nuclear arms race. The new vocabulary includes phrases like: "launch on warning," "first strike," and "counterforce" weapons that will pull the nuclear noose tighter around this world's neck, thereby greatly increasing the chance of a

suicidal nuclear exchange. It is estimated that if a full-scale nuclear war occurs, a minimum of 140 million Americans would die, as would a similar number of Soviet citizens. This estimate is from our own U.S. National Security Council. Millions more would die from burns, radiation poisoning, disease, or starvation. In the event even a fraction of the existing nuclear armaments were employed in war, our nation and much of the rest of the world would be transformed into a vast burning graveyard, and civilization as it is now known could no longer exist. The scientific and medical communities of the world have warned that in the event of a nuclear war: death and disease and injury would be on a scale that has no precedent in human history; there would be no possibility of medical response; effective civil defense facilities do not exist; and recovery from a nuclear holocaust would be impossible—there can be no winners.

It is no longer a science-fiction fantasy scenario to be played out on the Saturday afternoon television screen. Allegedly responsible United States government leaders now refer to a nuclear confrontation as being "limitable," and even "winnable," and they rave on about the neutron bomb because it kills only people and leaves real and personal property intact. They now talk of emerging from a "protracted" nuclear war—in which only a few hundred million people are killed on both sides—to rebuild from the ashes and begin again the business of life in just a few short years.

The truly frightening, sobering reality is that it is not just "talk." Geniuses and madmen are devising plans to evacuate our cities in time of nuclear crisis, calculating first-strike and retaliatory capabilities, and formulating procedures for putting the world back together again after the desolation is wrought. It is no wonder that the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*' "Doomsday Clock"—stands closer to midnight than at any time since 1963 when, after 10 years of cold war, during which time the clock had been frozen at two minutes, the signing of the Partial Test Ban Treaty signaled the beginning of a decade of "detente."

All agree that to continue to escalate the stockpiling of nuclear weaponry poses a very real threat to nothing less than humanity and civilization as we know it. Pope John Paul II, in a 1982 appeal for a nuclear weapons freeze, said, "It is the survival of the whole human race that is at stake." Echoing those sentiments, former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown said, "Neither they, nor we, could survive a thermonuclear war; that's the nature of thermonuclear war, the devastation is so great that even good defenses don't suffice." The former Commander of the Allied Forces for NATO in the Mediterranean, the late Lord Louis Mountbatten, said of these weapons, "In the event of a nuclear war there will be no

chances; there will be no survivors—all will be obliterated." Even the Soviets, in a 1979 issue of the Soviet Medical Gazette, stated, "In the case of nuclear war, a complete breakdown of the social structure would occur. Society would be reduced to ruins, to primordial chaos." And finally, almost prophetically, George Kennan—former U.S. Ambassador to the Soviet Union—observed in 1981, "We have gone on piling weapon upon weapon, missile upon missile, new levels of destruction upon old ones. We have done this hopelessly, almost involuntarily, like the victims of some sort of hypnotism... like lemmings heading for the sea."

Time for Sowing Peace

Now is the time for authentic disciples of the Savior to settle this issue in their hearts, and step forward as sowers of genuine peace, stating that enough is indeed enough. We must now declare, once and for all time, our opposition to the fear and potential for lethal violence which nuclear armaments afford the maniacal leaders of this world. Believers must now proclaim their loyalty to Scripture—all Scripture—and to the God of its inspiration, and be doers of all his Word instead of knowers only. There are two sides to this issue, but for the disciples of the Prince of Peace there can be only one conclusion.

"Christ suffered on our behalf, and thereby left you an example; it is for you to follow in his steps. He committed no sin, he was convicted of no falsehood; when he was abused he did not retort with abuse, when he suffered he uttered no threats, but committed his cause to the One who judges justly" (1 Pet. 2:21-23). It is a sad commentary on the quality of Christianity in our age, to be sure, for so many followers of the King of the peaceable kingdom to be placing their trust in such arsenals of horrible weapons which will only abuse, threaten, and destroy those whom Jesus loves. By so doing, many are quietly consenting to the unthinkable—the death and annihilation of the world: the multitudes to whom our Lord has called us to preach the message of salvation and the things concerning the kingdom of God Almighty. This planet would also be in jeopardy, where we believe we are to enjoy eternal bliss with the Creator himself.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God." This special recognition cannot be achieved by trusting in the intellect of men bound by allegiance to this world, or by indulging fleshly desires in this present circumstance, or by employing even the most terrible might known to mortal man—nuclear weaponry. Achieving the title "son of God" is done as a disciple of the risen one determines to make peace even as Jesus did, by investing his life in others, even if it might mean suffering. Let the counterfeiter sow his own seeds.

In Memory Of Joseph Priestley

THIS YEAR, 1983, is the 250th anniversary of the birth of Joseph Priestley, English scientist and non-conformist minister. He was born March 13, 1733, at Fieldhead, a hamlet in Yorkshire, and died February 6, 1804, at Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

Joseph Priestley is known to the world primarily for his pioneer work in chemistry. This included, among other things, the discovery of oxygen. (He also invented soda water. The next time we enjoy a cool drink on a warm day, we should think of Joseph Priestley!)

But this man's scientific experiments were only his hobby. He was first of all a Christian minister and a lover of the truth, a man who suffered much for his convictions.

Joseph Priestley was an ardent believer in the second coming of Christ. As a result of writing his four-volume *Notes on All the Books of Scripture*, he changed from postmillennialism to premillennialism. He believed in the return of the Jews "to their own country," and that, during the Millennium age, our Lord would reign

over a restored Israel and all the world.

Joseph Priestley was also an ardent conditionalist. Man's only hope of immortality was through a resurrection from the dead. He rejected immortal-soulism, or any idea of a distinction between soul and body. The latter was, to him, "oriental philosophy." Man, he said, was a "homogeneous being," the powers of sensation and thought belonging to the brain. Death was a time of "absolute insensibility" or "sleep." Because of his views in this area, he was bitterly attacked as a "materialist." Some even called him a "deist" or an "atheist."

Joseph Priestley believed that the most essential articles of a pure Christianity were the unity of God and the humanity of Christ. Our Lord was the Messiah. This was proven by his miracles and his resurrection from the dead. Faith in him as the Messiah was the only essential to being a Christian.

Priestley is numbered among those who wrote replies to Tom Paine's *Age of Reason*. Also, he defended

the Christian faith against Edward Gibbon, author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. He admonished Gibbon for not distinguishing between true Christianity and the corruptions which had overtaken it.

However, his defense of the biblical faith was little appreciated by the "orthodox." He was bitterly hated and assailed for his views, and, on the night of July 14, 1791, a rioting mob drove him and his family from Birmingham, the city in which he ministered. His home, library, laboratory, and papers, were all burned, as well as the chapel in which he ministered.

In April, 1794, Joseph Priestley sailed for America where he would spend the last 10 years of his life. It was during this time, in 1801, that Thomas Jefferson, America's third president, wrote to him the now famous tribute in which he told Priestley that his life was one of the few "precious to mankind." In the two centuries since his day, Joseph Priestley has come to be appreciated as one of the great men of modern times.

By Pastor Sydney Hatch

Reprinted from *Brief Bible Studies*
Vol. 14, No. 1

by
Patricia
Wood

CHRISTIAN COMPETITION



IF THERE WAS a scale on which the competitiveness of a person could be measured, I would be at the bottom of that scale. I am probably the most noncompetitive person that ever lived. I hate conflict of any kind, whether it be on a basketball court or in a table game.

On the other side, I have raised the most competitive children that ever lived. They have been in competition in physical sports such as basketball, volleyball, and soccer, as well as in music, drama, essay writing, and many other contests.

What makes a person competitive or noncompetitive? Is competition good or harmful to our growing children? Should it be a part of the church? Should we as parents encourage competition for our children?

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary says, "Competition implies a struggle or contest between two or more persons for the same object." A synonym of competition is emulation—an ardent ambition or desire to equal or excel.

What happens to a child who continues competing and yet loses each time? Will he or she get discouraged and give up? Will they make this their life goal and let ambition overtake all other areas of life? Will it affect their health? Will it affect the atmosphere in the home? Will it help or hinder the family? The competition between Jacob and Esau and that of Joseph and his brothers of the Old Testament shows what hurts can come from competition within the family (Gen. 26 - 36).

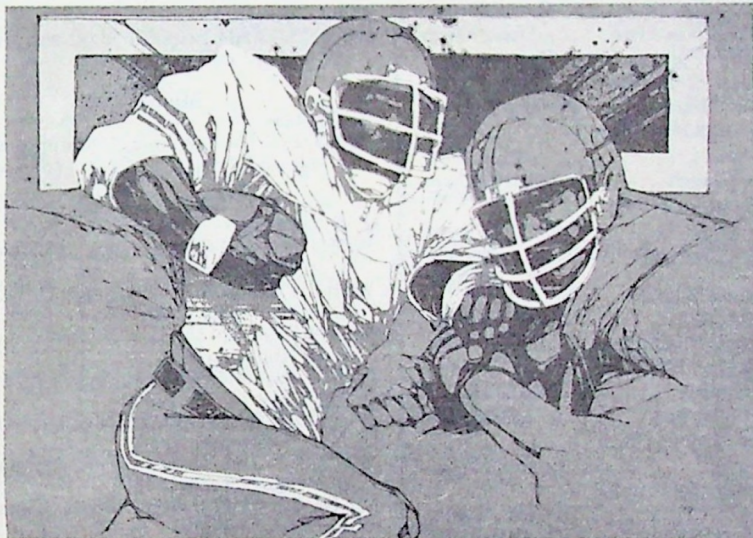
How much emphasis should the church put into competition? How about the church basketball and baseball games that end in hurt feelings and bursts of anger? One church was so competitive that at every game, the members' tempers flared. Their testimony was vitally diminished in the community because of their attitudes. Possibly we need to ask ourselves, "Can we handle competition?" Maybe it is not for everyone.

The teens and talent competition of our local church encourages competition in the fields of music, drama, preaching, etc. The handbook suggests this is a way of discovering our talents as young people, learning how to share them with other people and to use what God has given us in the world where he has placed us. It helps us to learn to perform in front of audiences. A person can have much talent, but if he does not learn to be at ease in front of people he will never get the message across. We learn to lose and fail when competing. It also can teach us to strive for perfection. There seems to be a good and bad side to competition.

Dr. Rubin, a renowned psychologist, said recently on a Phil Donahue show, "Competition is harmful. A person always compares himself to others and does not accept himself for what he is."

My children compete in basketball, volleyball, soccer, music, drama, essay writing, as well as many other contests.

I read recently that families are breaking up at a higher rate than marriages are taking place. Lonely women was given as a factor. There is not the closeness of friends because we are always competing with each other. Husbands and wives compete with one another to earn the most money and to have more education, etc.



We have seen pastors and their wives miss the blessings of close fellowship because they competed within their churches.

Another family counselor said that often in competition we look at perfection instead of the talent the Lord has given us. We are never quite satisfied with our talent and therefore do not use it as unto the

Lord. He went on to add that there is nothing worse for a child's self-esteem.

One of the things we must learn about competition is that the final winner is just the judge's opinion. Several years ago our son was competing in a Sunday School contest. He had won on the local level, the county level, and was now in the

district level. In the final competition a trumpet player was competing against an organist. Upon the announcement that the organist had taken first place, it was announced that the judge was a locally renowned organist. In that judge's opinion, the organist was the best.

Another factor to consider about competition is that no one is an ex-

pert in anything. There are varying degrees of talent.

It is hard for children to understand these facts. When soloists are competing, some people prefer sopranos to baritones. When groups compete, some prefer the choir and others prefer a duet or quartet. Too often they are in competition together. The preferences of the judges cannot be completely dismissed.

One evening as I thought about and prayed for some young people who would be taking part in a nationwide competition in different categories, I knew some would not win top honors. Would they give up and not use the talent God had given them? They were talented in their own specific ways. Maybe they would never place first in the nation, but God uses a lot of people who have never placed first in anything. I felt urged to express to these young people that God does not judge them by whether or not they place first in the competition. He only judges by their willingness to use the talent he has given them.

I read recently this phrase, "I'm just right for God to use." If we could only get this message across to our children. Psalm 139 indicates that we should accept ourselves as creations of God. He has a purpose for each of us. It may not be the role he has chosen for the man next door. However, it is our role and he only requires that we do our best.

"Competition is harmful. A person always compares himself to others and does not accept himself for what he is."

—Dr. Rubin, psychologist.

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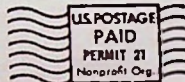
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