



R E S T I T U T I O N

IN THIS ISSUE ...

AIDS: the deadly silence
Can we have Responsible
Television?

Coming: A New Constitution
Ghostbusters ...

What about the
Kingdom of God?
Are Charismatics
Mission Minded?

October
1987

Marching into Fall

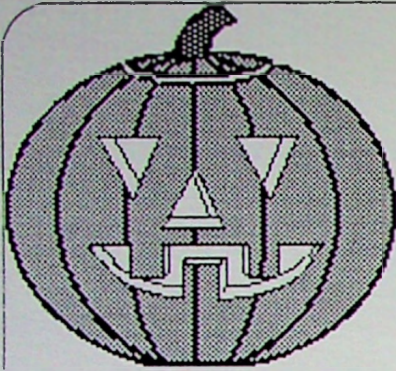


Herald



What to do this
HALLOWEEN

Page 2



What



Get your orange and black greeting cards, costumes, and masks. Spruce up for the annual costume party. Send the kids out as witches, ghosts, and vampires on Beggar's Night. Carve the weirdest pumpkin on your block.

Then there are the pranks: window-soaping, dumping garbage cans, depositing outhouses in the middle of town—or worse. Most unfortunate will be the annual destruction of property.

What brings on this strange behavior every October 31? Where does Halloween get its name? Should Christians participate in such shenanigans? Can something be made out of the great American practice to "Christianize" it? Or is that too much like making Satan sacred?

When we think of ghosts and goblins, it's hard to imagine a hallowed halloween. After all, the big celebration gets its concept from ancient days when the Druids lit bonfires to appease the god of death and drive away ghosts and witches. On October 31 the Romans had festivals in honor of Pomona, goddess of fruits and flowers. We still crack nuts, bob for apples, and tell ghost stories as did the pagans, so how can Halloween be hallowed?

Hallowed Saints

Actually, according to history, Halloween became sacred in the fourth century. As early as 359 A.D. the professing church named May 13 as All Saints' Day. How and why did this come about?

Church officials believed that one who did especially good works or lived an exceptionally good life should be recognized as a saint. A special day was set aside to honor each of the many well-known saints. But of course, there came to be more saints than days in the year, so All Saints' Day was created to solve the problem.

However, somehow the date for the feast to All Saints was changed to November 1. By the twelfth century most professing church members observed All Saints in autumn. Historians can't agree as to how this change took place, but more important were the effects created by the change.

The All Saints' Day veneration of Christian holy persons correlated with certain elements in the Druid religion of the Celts. Since these pre-English cultures celebrated summer's end on October 31, then naturally their customs meshed with All Saints' observances. What were these Druidic-Christian traditions that finally evolved into present-day Halloween hysteria?

Pagan Past

The Druids saw their summer's end celebration as the end of the year. November 1 marked the new year. On October 31 they exalted the Lord of Death, because the sun's power waned, harvest was finished; darkness, dying, and death prevailed in nature, and the strength of the gods of

darkness, winter, and the underworld grew great.

The name of this celebration, Samhain (pronounced *sowin*), denoted both the name of the god (Lord of Death) and the time of the year. During Samhain huge bonfires brightened the fall sky while stories of mysterious sights and sounds were shared. The tales took on the morbid in the spirit of the season. Because nature was dying, many of the yarns around the fire described the deaths of people and what happened to their souls. The souls of good folks entered other human beings, while the souls of the perverted entered the bodies of animals. Cats (especially



black ones) were held as sacred. They were seen as human beings who had been punished for evil deeds.

Another ancient legend illustrates the strange customs of the times. A penny-pinching man named Jack was supposedly barred from heaven because of his

stinginess and barred from hell because he played tricks on the devil. In modern times we burn jack-o'-lanterns as an outgrowth of this fable.

But other practices from Roman influence also contributed to our Halloween besides the Druid-Christian connection.

Roman Rites

Before the professing church added on Celtic celebrations to All Saints' Day, Roman rule in the isles paved the way. The emperor's armies brought their feasts honoring the gods, which were amalgamated with the Samhain celebrations.

In feasting to Pomona, goddess of fruits, bobbing for apples helped drive away evil spirits. In addition, Roman tradition taught that if a girl ate an apple in front of a mirror on Halloween, the mirror would magically show her the facial image of her future mate.

So when professing Christians finally came to the Celtic Isles, they had much rich tradition to work into All Saints' Day. And as if these many features weren't enough, the church itself added a new name to the event.

The Halloween Logo

The name "Halloween" is a contraction of "Hallowed even." It comes from the Eve of All Hallows, which refers to the evening before All Saints' Day. So instead of celebrating this "Christian holy day" under the pagan name of Samhain,

To Do This

now the church had rights to the rite of Halloween. But because so many pagan practices had been incorporated into the observance, Halloween celebrations continued to be characterized by pagan customs. That brings us to the next hallowed addition.

All Souls' Day

In the eleventh century an abbot named Saint Odillo of the Cluny monastery established an All Souls' Day on November 2. In this observance a Mass and special prayers were said for the dead, but especially for souls in purgatory. Soon traditions grew up around this new Halloween celebration.

For instance, during the Middle Ages folks believed that on this day souls could appear as will-o'-the-wisps, witches, toads, etc. Today's "trick-or-treat" custom of going from house to house begging on Halloween came out of "souling," practiced on All Souls' Day. Persons serious about Saint Odillo's addition to Halloween went from house to house begging for cakes in remembrance of the dead.

With this background history into Halloween, how will we celebrate this October 31?

What Can We Do?

First, a Bible faith insulates us against faulty concepts introduced by the

professing church. For instance, Scripture makes it clear that all Christians are saints. The designation is not reserved for "special" believers. In his letters to the churches, Paul called every one of his Christian readers a saint. He saw Christians at Corinth as equal to "all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia" (2 Cor. 1:1, RSV). In God's eyes a saint is simply someone set apart for holy living (Eph. 5:3). So All Saints' Day should have applied to all believers, not just a select few Christians.

Next, All Souls' Day stories of ghosts, goblins, witches, etc., ignores the ramifications of man's makeup according to Scripture. The components of spirit and body combine to make man whole, "a living soul" (Gen. 2:7) instead of a disembodied spirit. The Bible further identifies man's destiny on a renewed, purified earth (Matt. 5:5; Rom. 8:20-23), not in heaven (God's dwelling place alone) or in a burning hell.

So why recycle customs from the dimly lit past during the twentieth century? Why not try something new this Halloween?

For fun and games, hand out treats packaged with a Christian message. Try a costume party at which your guests dress up as Bible characters. Stage a skit that thrills the

audience with the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, God over Satan. Create an atmosphere of love and acceptance with personal testimonies at your Halloween bonfire. Then while roasting corn, wieners, and marshmallows over coals, swap stories that bring joy, peace, hope, and love to all.

Whatever you do, make this Halloween a day for all saints.

By the Editor

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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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Why I Believe in the Kingdom of God

The Lord Jesus taught his disciples to pray: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). No one can avoid the clear connection in those two sentences between "kingdom" and "on earth," though how God's kingdom is to be established on earth is often not considered carefully enough by many people.

It has been suggested—and it is believed by many—that the kingdom of God is (or even ever will be) nothing more than the enthronement of the Lord Jesus as King in the individual hearts of those who accept him as their Savior and commit their whole lives to him.

If we are to even begin to understand the different ways in which the term "kingdom of God" is used in Scripture—and not imagine it only has one meaning—we must start at the beginning, think of each succeeding aspect of the term, and arrive at the climax which is still over a thousand years ahead (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1) and put it into the hands of mankind (1:26). The man and woman he created were in his likeness. They were his representatives on earth, to have dominion over the fish of the sea, the fowl of the air, the cattle, all the earth, and every creeping thing. They were to be

fruitful and multiply, replenish the earth, and subdue it. It had come very good from the hands of its Creator, but mankind had the commission to rule and develop it. The arrangement was pronounced very good (1:31).

God did not abdicate in their favor; he did not withdraw from direct involvement in the affairs of the earth and its tenants. He put it into their hands under his overriding judgment. If they operated within his directions they would inherit glory, honor, and immortality. If in their freedom of action they chose to disobey him, they would inherit consequent evil circumstances and finally extinction in death.

If the earth was not still under the authority of God—his kingly domain—then he would not be concerned how mankind treated it.

The earth was still the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein (Psa. 24:1). He is the King of Glory and he has guaranteed that the whole earth shall be filled with his glory (Num. 14:21) in spite of the unbelief of people who ought to know better (14:22-35).

From Adam and Eve generations of men went farther away from God. They invented their own gods and credited these gods with power and authority to appoint rulers. But they were grossly wrong; the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance

according to his pre-arranged purposes (Deut. 32:8). He arranged situations in which this or that man rose to power to fit in with God's purpose and he replaced them when they had done their work. He paid them wages for their services, but he was still in charge; it was still his domain (Dan. 2:20, 21, 37; 4:17; 5:21).

Few recognized his hand, for he will not force himself on any. Yet it is written for our learning, "He is a great king over all the earth" (Psa. 47:2), and again, "Say among the heathen that the LORD reigneth" (Psa. 96:10). This Psalm was the basis of Paul's address on Mars' Hill in Athens when he proclaimed "The Unknown God" who made the world and is Lord of heaven and earth (Acts 17:23, 24).

Sadly, Israel never accepted this commission. The people enjoyed the blessings but never allowed God into their hearts. While maintaining the outward show of keeping God's Law, in their hearts they envied the kingdoms of the Gentiles (1 Sam. 8:1-22). God was not in all their thoughts, their hearts were far from him. God allowed a series of kings to reign but they exploited the nation just as the Gentile kings did, as Samuel had prophesied. Eventually God "shut it down" (Ezek. 21:25-27) but promised that when he-whose-right-it-is came, the kingdom should be restored (Luke 1:26-33).



on the Earth

We can well understand the impatience of Israel when Jesus of Nazareth appeared, heralded by John the Baptist. "Think again," he cried. Many of them were thinking God had forgotten them, had gone back on his promises, had never intended to re-establish the kingdom, or had been misunderstood. "Think again, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . prepare ye the way of the Lord" (Matt. 3:1-3). No wonder John did not wish to baptize Jesus—how could he baptize the king? Perhaps, like the others, even he had not fully appreciated that before one could inherit the kingdom of God it was necessary to be begotten from above. Even Jesus of Nazareth? Yes, even Jesus of Nazareth. One did not inherit the kingdom of God as Israel did, in Old Testament times, from father to son, irrespective of the character of father and son. A new covenant was to be established (Jer. 31:31-33) which would not be in their hands in tables of stone and scrolls of law, but in their hearts. New wine must be put into new bottles; old garments must be thrown away (Matt. 9:16, 17).

"My son, give me thine heart," God had pleaded from the beginning (Prov. 23:26). How few were willing to commit themselves completely to God. We rather enjoy sinning in the imagination (Matt. 5:27-30) even when, with our

mouths, we confess God.

When the Pharisees demanded of the Lord Jesus when the kingdom of God should come, he told them they were looking in the wrong direction. Until they accepted the law of God in their hearts, they would never enter into the kingdom of God. Don't go running hither and thither after those who say, "It's here," or, "It's there." When the Day of the Son of Man comes, you'll not need to ask, "When is it coming?" Put yourself right with God in Christ first (2 Cor. 5:19), let not sin reign in your mortal body (Rom. 6:12-14, 18), have nothing to do with the darkness of this world (2 Cor. 6:14-18), and worship God in power and truth in the temple of your body (John 5:23; 1 Cor. 6:13-20).

What then? Is there no answer to those who asked him, "Wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6.) Earlier when he entered Jerusalem, they expected that he was going to seize the kingdom (Luke 19:11).

Yes! Yes! Yes! Indeed there is a glorious answer. He did not say in either case: "You are wrong"; he simply said, "Wait and see." He will return in power and great glory to take the kingdoms of men (Dan. 2:44) and the kingdoms of this world will come screaming and protesting to an end, *the end*. It will become the kingdom of our

Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever on a beautified earth, with sin eliminated and death destroyed. That's the Good News. That's the GLAD TIDINGS of the kingdom of God (Luke 8:1). Have faith, friend; base your faith on the knowledge and experience of the Word of God. God is faithful. He wants you in his kingdom. He wants you to work with him in his kingdom.



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Lenoir, North Carolina,
James D. Ritch, pastor*



Do You Believe in . . .

The night is eerie. A full moon is out. The wind is speaking things of horror. The shutters flap, the table falls, and a wolf in the distance howls. The old steps creak. Moans fill the hall. Lightning strikes; rain crashes down on the tin roof. Your dog whimpers and hides. The door is locked . . . you're trapped . . . trapped to face . . .

Trapped to face what?

Today, thousands of ghost cases can be counted. The evidence for and against ghosts is overwhelming. Many have to draw their own conclusions. But the Bible answers all questions without contradicting itself.

In this critical analysis, we will strive to answer the following questions: What really happens at death? What is a ghost? If you don't go anywhere, what hope is there for life after death?

What really is a ghost? A ghost is supposedly someone who stays on earth in a spiritual form after his death because of some curse, failure to complete a deed during life (forced to complete it after life, during death), or someone who, for some unknown reason, cannot rest in peace.

Well, Ecclesiastes 9 tells us to do what we can during life, not because one may have to finish it after life, but because one *cannot* finish a deed after life.

Verse 4: For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion.

Verse 5: For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.

Verse 6: Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in anything that is done under the sun.

Verse 10: Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor



knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, wither thou goest.

The *grave*, wither thou goest. Not heaven, not hell, not a spooky house, but *the grave*, and we all know, I assume, what a grave is. Even if you did go to heaven, or hell, or a house, it wouldn't do any good. What good is being in heaven if you can't do anything, use anything, know anything, or figure out anything?

We could leave it at that, but then this analysis would be incomplete if we did.

In Genesis 49:33 we find that Jacob "gathered up his feet into the bed and yielded up the ghost." At his death, something left his body.

Matthew 27:50 tells us that "Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost."

Mark 15:37 also tells us, "Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost."

Acts 5:5, 10 tells about Ananias and his wife giving up the ghost at death. Ecclesiastes 9 tells us that one rots after death, but dozens of other passages tell us that one has a ghost or soul that leaves at death! For the first time, is the Bible contradicting itself? The answer lies in the translators of



By Mark Mattison

GHOSTS



the King James Bible. Our question shall be: What did they mean by the word ghost? Genesis 2:7 contains the answer.

Genesis 2:7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and *man became a living soul.*"

DUST + BREATH OF LIFE
(GHOST) = MAN (SOUL)
MAN (SOUL) - BREATH OF LIFE
(GHOST) = DUST

The equation is simple. Man is a living soul until the breath of life is taken away. Eventually he turns back into dust.

The breath of life is not a soul, but an energy or power to keep men alive. In every one of the "ghost" scriptures it says they gave up *the* ghost, not *their* ghost. The breath of life does not belong to man, so how can it be man's soul in the first place?

To verify this, Psalm 115:17 states: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."

But if one doesn't go anywhere at death, what hope is there for life after death?

Isaiah 26:19: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead."

1 Corinthians 15:13: "But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen."

Revelation notes of the kingdom on earth being the place of reward (after the old world is destroyed), not heaven (21:1, 2).

Ghosts don't exist. The Bible has never been wrong and never will be. It is perhaps best to sum it all up with Job 14:10: "But man dieth, and wasteth away: Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

COMING:

A NEW CONSTITUTION

Prophecy Page

Part I

By Pastor James Mattison

September 17th marked the 200th anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution—a document showing how our government is supposed to work. It is an outline of perhaps the best form of government that humans have been able to devise. Yet it is far from perfect because humans are far from perfect, and a better form of government is yet to come—from God!

The Need for Better Government

All through man's history, tribes and nations have suffered from unjust and oppressive rulership. In writing the new Constitution, such men as James Madison, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, and the highly respected George Washington took into account the history of human government and determined to find a way to prevent the injustice and repression of the people that had continually characterized these governments.

The result was a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people"—probably the fairest system today by which man is governed. Yet even this effort for good government is beset with the human nature problems of greed, self-interest, corruption, strife, and oppression. As James Madison, father of the U. S. Constitution viewed it, "Human nature makes internal and external controls on government necessary. He pointed out that if obedient angels were to govern men, no such controls would be necessary" (*The Plain Truth*, Sept. 1987, Joseph Tkach, editor).

"Must humans forever be victims of their own inability to fairly and justly govern themselves? Will there always be people on this earth who are downtrodden, mistreated, abused, and oppressed?" (Ibid.)

The truth is that a new government is coming that will forever change the lives of men on earth. The coming government will be a perfect one, ruled by a perfect Head of State who is second only to Almighty God, with a real concern for man's needs of righteousness and peace.

The 13 Colonies' Dilemma

In the 1770's and 1780's, a great crisis and turmoil had arisen among the 13 original states of this new nation called "The United States." Only in name were these states a nation. They were "divided into quarreling factions, along economic lines—rich against the poor, creditor against debtor, merchant against farmer, small state against large state . . . states had actually passed tariff laws against each other. Nine states had their own navies. As far as, say, New Jersey was concerned, New York was a foreign nation. . . . Virginia . . . passed a law that called for the seizure of vessels failing to pay duty in her ports. This law was not aimed at a hostile European nation but at Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Massachusetts . . . the government was actually 13 separate 'nations' darting about their separate ways. John Adams observed that the problem of government among the states was more to be feared than all the fleets and armies of Europe" (*The Plain Truth*, Paul Kroll.)

(Please turn to page 18)

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Modification

During the last few years I have read several articles on the subject of weather modification. Weather modification is man's attempt, for good or ill, to change the climate or weather of a region of the earth.

One of these articles, for example, said that the Soviet Union would like to push its cold Siberian air mass over the North Pole to America! That would increase their growing season, and shorten ours.

I am reminded of Jesus' success in affecting the weather. When he stilled the tempest, the disciples exclaimed, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

"Who, then, is this man?" is their amazed question. "Whatever can he be . . . ?" the Moffatt Bible has.

The answer is, he is the Messiah! His miracles indicate that he will change the world. In this instance, it is the weather.

The age to come will be a "time of refreshing" and "restitution of all things" (Acts 3:19-21). "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose" (Isa. 35:1). Then, as Christ's kingdom extends to all the earth, there will be a new world.

Weather modification has become possible, I understand, through the pioneering discoveries of Nikola Tesla, a Croatian-American scientist. He was working on weather modification when he died in 1943.

The wastes of Siberia will be warm someday. But it will not be because the Soviet Union has succeeded in pushing its cold air over the North Pole onto us! It will be because Christ has returned and "modified" the weather of the world. This is possible, because, as the disciples said, "The wind and the sea obey him."

By Pastor Sidney Hatch

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A NEW BEGINNING

By David Krogh*

The Church of God is a church with a future. God has given our church a unique opportunity for ministry in these closing years of the 20th century. The best days of the Church of God are yet to come. Our optimism in the future is based upon an understanding of two important issues:

1. Why we exist as a distinct body of believers.
2. Our mission in the world today.

Our Reason for Existence

Why did the Church of God come into existence? Why did our forefathers organize churches, State Conferences, and eventually



People come from communities everywhere to hear the preaching of the truth.

the General Conference? Why does the Church of God exist as a body separate from all other religious groups and organizations?

Our reason for coming into existence was our distinctive message. Early members of the Church of God discovered many neglected truths in the Scriptures. They became aware of the error that crept into the church through the centuries of time, as fulfillment of the words of Jesus and other New Testament writers when they warned of false prophets and teachers who would creep into the church unawares and lead many astray (Matt. 7:15; Acts 20:29-31; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2; 1 John 4:1).

The joy of new-found truth was a driving force that sent Church of God evangelists everywhere preaching the oneness of God, the second coming of Jesus Christ, the kingdom of God on earth, conditional immortality, and the restoration of Israel. Our early leaders and members had a strong sense of mission and they boldly proclaimed the Good News. They were filled with optimism as they organized home Bible studies, tent meetings, and churches. They preached a message of salvation that made sense out of the confusion of orthodoxy.

Early members called themselves Bereans because they searched the Scriptures daily as did the believers of Berea (Acts 17:16). They were truth seekers who identified with early martyrs who lost their lives in their fight for truth and righteousness. It is this legacy which you and I have inherited as members of the Church of God. It is a legacy handed down since the days of the first-century church, and more specifically for over 150 years, as we trace our origins to the early 1800's.

What are we going to do with this legacy?

Through no choice of our own, we have heard truth—neglected truth—and because

**Editor's note:* This article, the first of a three-part series, was taken from the keynote message delivered at the 1987 annual meeting of the Church of God General Conference.

we have heard that truth, we are no longer the same. Since we know truth, we are obligated to preach truth. As Paul wrote the church: "It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2, NIV). We have been given a trust of truths that have been neglected by most of the world throughout history.

God has called us is the redemption of the lost. That is the theme of the Bible. The Bible is a redemptive book. The ministry of Jesus was to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). Jesus commissioned the church to preach the Gospel to the whole world (Matt. 28:19, 20). When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were



Lost people find salvation at a church that cares about them as individuals.

James warned, "He that knoweth to do right and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17). Therefore, since we know truth, our failure to preach truth becomes sin for us. We are compelled to preach that which we know is truth.

Our Lord declared: "To whom much is given, much shall be required" (Luke 12:48). You and I today cannot deny our heritage. We cannot turn our back upon the great truths that we have been taught.

Our Mission

Though the separation of the Church of God from other religious groups was based upon our doctrinal distinctives, the mission to which

harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd (Matt. 9:36). When he looked out on the fields, he said that they were ripe for harvest (John 4:35). He appointed believers to bear fruit for him (John 15:16). We have been given the ministry of reconciliation to bring people to God through Christ (2 Cor. 5:18-20).

We must clearly understand the difference between why we exist as a separate body, and our mission. We have at times confused the means with the end. The preaching of truth is not the end to which we are striving. The proclamation of truth is the means to the end. The end is the salvation of the lost.

When Was God

In your mind, what is the greatest accomplishment that God has ever performed?

If you're like me, your first response is: THE CREATION OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1).

In viewing the creation I get a new perspective on God. Like the Psalmist of old I come to understand that God alone is supreme: "Before you created the hills or brought the world into being, you were eternally God, and will be God forever" (Psa. 90:2, GNB).

Thus creation certainly illustrates God at his best. His radiance is seen by what he accomplished on the fourth day alone: "He created two great lights, the greater to rule the day and the lesser to rule the night. *He created the stars also*" (Gen. 1:16).



The stars . . . when was the last time you lay on your back on a clear night to count the stars in the milky way? God took Abraham outside and said, "If you can count the stars, so shall your descendants be" (Gen. 15:5). The patriarch couldn't begin to number those radiant lights, but God "counts the number of the stars and gives names to all of them" (Psa. 147:4).

Yes, God's universe is truly a miracle. Light travels 186,000 miles in one second, 6,000,000,000,000 (trillion) miles in one year. Our galaxy

is 200,000 light years across. The nearest star is 25 trillion miles away.

To get another perspective on the universe's vastness and the earth's minuteness, consider this: Set up a basketball on the sidewalk, then place a BB eight blocks away. That's the representative size and distance of the sun to the earth.

Yet God paid special attention to one planet! As the prophet's poetry pictures God's care: "He measured out the waters in the hollow of his hand, and marked off the heavens by the span, and calculated the dust of the earth by the measure, and weighed the mountains in a balance, and the hills in a pair of scales" (Isa. 40:12, NASB).

When looking at God's creation of the universe, certainly God was AT HIS BEST.

. . . But I think *not*.

* * *

Remember the description of God's creation of man . . . *in his own image!*

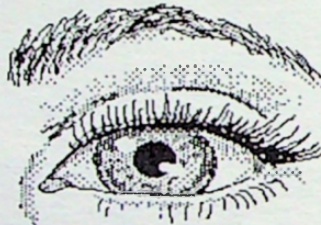
"So God created human beings, making them to be like himself" (Gen. 1:27, GNB).

Out of the dust God formed man, then breathed "into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living creature" (Gen. 2:7). Consider just three aspects of man—the crowning event of God's creation:

The human mind is a fabulous computer. As a matter of fact, no one has been able to design a computer as intricate and efficient as the human

mind. Consider this: your brain is capable of recording 800 memories per second for 75 years without ever getting tired . . . you never really forget anything; you just don't recall it. Everything is on permanent file in your brain. —*Earl Radmacher*.

- No computer can enjoy:
 - The beauty of a flower
 - Smile over the memories of yesterday
 - Plan its own future



The human eye would make the lens of the most expensive Pentax camera look like a Tinkertoy.

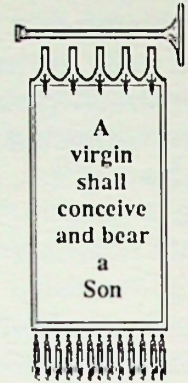
The human heart, a small muscle in the middle of your chest about the size of your fist:

- beats an average of 70 times per minute;
- that's over 4200 times per hour;
- or, over 100,000 times per day.
- At age 70 it will have beaten two and one-half billion times.
- In a lifetime the heart pumps enough blood to fill a string of railroad tank cars *six miles long*.

Certainly, at the creation of man, God was AT HIS BEST!

. . . But I think *not*.

* * *



Return to Luke's Gospel; read again Gabriel's message to Mary a peasant girl in Palestine:

"You will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. . . . The Holy Spirit will come upon you" (Luke 1:31, 35, NASB).

In a stable in Bethlehem the perfect child was born of a virgin. As he grew to maturity, "he increased in wisdom and stature and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

- He walked like no other man walked.
- He talked like no other man talked.
- He taught like no other man taught.
- He healed the blind, the lame, the deaf, and raised the dead to life.
- He did the impossible . . . sent his disciples down to catch a fish with a golden coin in its mouth to pay taxes.
- He knew what people were thinking before they spoke.
- They carried the sick through the streets just to touch him.
- He was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.
- God's own Son, born of a

At His Best?

virgin!
Surely this was GOD AT HIS BEST!

... but I think *not*.

* * *

Thirty-three years after his birth:

- Because he claimed to be the Son of God . . .
- Because he claimed to be the King of the Jews . . .

... this sinless Son of God was hung on Calvary's cross to pay the debt of fallen man, for *all me for all time*.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Hanging on the cross with a heart full of love, this sinless sacrifice said, "Father, forgive them, they don't understand."

By now we have reached the sublime moment when God was AT HIS BEST!

... But I think *not*.

* * *



Three days after his death Christ was raised to never die again. Paul records that the

first apostle to see the risen Lord was . . . Peter! Visualize the scene as Paul records the evidence: "He [Jesus] was buried and . . . was raised to life three days later . . . that he appeared to Peter [first] and then to all twelve apostles" (1 Cor. 15:4, 5, GNB).

Remember Peter, how he denied Christ: "He began to curse and swear, 'I do not know the man!'" (Matt. 26:74, NASB).

- Peter was a failure and a coward.
- Satan had sifted him like wheat (Luke 22:31).

But Jesus didn't leave Peter in a lost condition. He added:

- "I have prayed for you . . .
- " . . . when you once have turned again" (Luke 22:32, NASB).

After his resurrection Jesus sought out Peter first, knowing full well the great guilt the man felt.

What did he say to Peter? We can only speculate, but:

- I don't believe it was a time of scorn—that's what we would have done.
- It was not a time of reprimand.
- Christ did not lay a guilt trip on Peter.

Instead, the Lord reinstated Peter for service. No doubt, he:

- Shed tears with Peter, sharing in his disciple's repentance.
- Hugged him and said, "I forgive you!"

I CAN RELATE TO THAT!

God moved through his Son

to take a failure, forgive him, then fill him with his Spirit.

God then gave him a message filled with so much excitement that THREE THOUSAND were won to Christ through one sermon.

Surely God was AT HIS BEST in the forgiveness and restructuring of Peter!

... But I think *not*.

* * *

A few years ago in Gary, Indiana, a miserable failure got down on his knees and begged God to hear him. His mother was suffering terribly with cancer. That beggar before God promised, "If you will heal my mother, I'll do anything to serve you. I give my life in exchange for my mother."

God performed major surgery in the cab of that truck.



He did a heart transplant for ME, Dick Eldred, the worst sinner I know . . .

Of all God's miracles:

- Hanging billions of stars,
- Creating our world,
- Forming man in his image,
- Causing a virgin to bear his only Son,
- Allowing that Son to die for us,
- Raising him to life for evermore,
- Transforming Peter from a

failure to an apostle,
• Plucking Saul out of the dust on the Damascus road to convert him to a preacher of the kingdom of God . . .

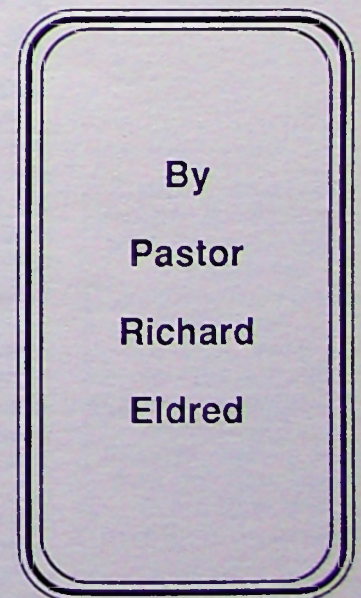
That same power changed me, put a new purpose in my life and promised me a place in the kingdom. That same God called me into his ministry and works through me to bring others into the body of Christ with hope in the same kingdom.

For me, that was GOD AT HIS BEST!

As the song aptly describes:

- It took a miracle to put the stars in place,
- It took a miracle to hang the world in space,
- But when he saved my soul, cleansed and made me whole,
- It took a miracle of LOVE and GRACE!

How about you? When was God at his best in your life?





THE DEADLY SILENCE:

WE ARE AN AMAZING NATION. Almost daily we are blessed with media analysts who fear nothing and will always tell us the unvarnished truth. Nor do we lightly ridicule the media's sacred cows. Defamation awaits anyone who speaks impiously of, for instance, the Nobel Prize, clubbing seals, Black African governments, Planned Parenthood, anti-Fascists, etc.

With such imperial powers, commentators are tempted now and again to don the Emperor's clothes.

Consider one example. *U.S. News & World Report*, no partisan publication, printed (January 12, 1987) a cover story on AIDS. It exposed the fearful statistics. 29,000 Americans infected, with between 1.5 and 4 million carrying the virus at the end of 1986; by 1991, 179,000 will have died, with 91,000 dying. In 20 years, "a significant portion of our nation may be incapacitated." Dying, that is. AIDS is 100 percent lethal.

With all that, the writers in *U.S. News* danced as close as they dared to the unmentionable fact that promiscuous sodomy is the root cause, not of the untraceable virus, but of incubating the virus into a plague.

U.S. News posed the question bravely. "What causes AIDS?" Answer: "AIDS is caused by a virus usually known as human immuno deficiency virus or HIV." No one laughed. The naked Emperor stared us down. No one in the media dares ask the obvious next question: And how did the HIV get into the bloodstreams of homosexuals who in turn sent it via bisexuals, into the bloodstream of heterosexuals on a plague level?

Remember that these writers are the same men and women who will track apartheid into hidden unconscious prejudice; who will track a national policy to a casual remark of Nancy Reagan; who can trace an anti-Sandinista dollar in and out of Switzerland, Zaire, and the Cayman Islands; who pursue the causes of any social horror—discrimination, censorship, anti-Semitism, fascism—right into the ganglia of the miscreants. But our major publications and the networks are satisfied to trace the "cause" of this major death-dealing plague to a dumb, hitherto quiescent virus, not to any human action.

The closest the media come to mentioning real causes is to state that AIDS victims are 65 percent homosexual, 25 percent users of contaminated needles, and 4 percent heterosexual, with 3 percent transfusion victims. The unthinking might conclude that AIDS is a disease that comes, with unfair emphasis, from many sources—two kinds of sex, one needle and one operation. In fact, the virus-turned-plague has only one source—sodomy. Heterosexuals are infected only from homosexuals, or from heterosexuals infected by bisexuals, the latter transmission being impossible without a previous homosexual encounter. Despite the mil-

lions of words that have been written on AIDS this simple fact is rarely stated.

What restrains the pens and stops the tongues of a news industry that otherwise revels in its fearlessness? It is time to speculate. Speculation is forced upon those who see an exception to the strongly stated ideal of intellectual integrity among American newspeople. Why this exception?

The accepted wisdom seems to be this. Talking morals may lead to a renewed popular condemnation of sodomy which, in turn, may become a vicious discrimination against homosexuals. Since the fury of a public facing death for themselves and their children may not be containable, let us never, never raise the question of the morality or ethics of sodomy and its *sequellae*. We may start a train of events leading to a fascism based on public health and on to the lynching of homosexuals.

Two nervous adjuncts strengthen the case. First, everyone can see an awkward parallel in the insouciant exiling of smokers from elevators, restaurants and the like, with little regard for the rights of smokers. Second, religious people, in the secular myth ever ready for more burnings at the stake, may use the terrible consequences of this particular moral failure (sodomy) to reassert faith by sword.

What restrains the pens and stops the tongues of a news industry that otherwise revels in its fearlessness?

The merry fascism of the anti-smoking drive—always for the good of the people, whether or not *they* know what is good for them—needs no comment. Anti-smoking loses its real punch once this parallel becomes clear. Soon anti-tobacco activists will be coming out of the trenches with their hands high.

But the religious factor is real and more complex. The homosexual trust, very powerful indeed, and its libertarian protectors are generally and reasonably angry with institutional religion which condemns sodomy as a serious sin. But the fact is that religion has been anything but aggressive on this question. Overwhelmingly, traditional moralists do not want AIDS victims or high-risk homosexuals to lose their jobs or housing. They support programs to care for the lonely victims and have tolerated demands for research disproportionate to all other health research. Many other religious groups quickly joined in the compassionate care of dying AIDS victims. By and large, the homosexual community has done little for the victims, but that has not decreased religious commitment and generosity.

The reaction of religious persons to AIDS victims is not important to homosexual activist tacti-

By Eugene V. Clark

AIDS and Social Censorship

ians. What bothers them is their suspicion that believers in the Ten Commandments, rattled by the sexual revolution, are now regrouping and saying to themselves, "Ha! We were right all along. Sexual promiscuity *is* wrong, and homosexual practice is heading us toward Sodom and Gomorrah." In dirty talk among themselves, homosexuals say that religious people across the nation rejoice in the extermination of homosexuals as a display of God's anger against sinners. Such a mind exists perhaps among a few fevered fundamentalists and cocktail-party wise guys. But homosexual activists will not relinquish the rhetorical weapon of anticipated persecution.

It may be important to say here that Christians and Jews, in contemplating any sin, do not pass judgment on the guilt of individuals. That is exclusively God's province. The media choose not to understand this. Maybe they cannot.

It is a critical distinction. To equate the objective wrongness of any act with personal guilt is an error that paralyzes moral reflection. Personal guilt is established in the unfathomable relationship between God and a human person. If we accuse anyone of moral guilt, we err. We act *ultra vires*. But we can and should discuss the objective moral meaning of any significant act, in this case the protection of some or exploitation of others in a plague situation. This can be done without pretending to know any individual's guilt.

Annoyance that religious believers may be strengthened in their moral convictions runs deep in many circles today. It revealed itself in the *U.S. News* piece. The only allusion to a moral dimension in the spreading of HIV was this: "As in those (Dark Ages) now there are calls for quarantines—social exile—especially from the religious right, whose members see AIDS as God's rough justice for the sin of homosexuality." In eleven pages, that was the only reference to Christianity's contribution to the question. Nor was there a reference to any moral or ethical question that practicing homosexuals, bisexuals or dying AIDS victims might address in so grave a situation. Remember that this article appeared in one of our three leading news weeklies that handily discuss the ethics and moral stature of political leaders, C.E.O.'s, pressure groups, Sandinistas and *contras*, and many others, as if readers were begging for their moral and ethical judgments.

The terror of any editor today seems to be that through a careless phrase, he or she might appear to consider a religious view of AIDS as less dangerous than AIDS itself. To be safe, writers must avoid anything like a moral or ethical approach to AIDS. If the dread subject must be raised, let someone else handle it. And try not to think of how one deals with smoking.

Is this censorship? No, it would be said, only the condition for survival in the world of publishing.

But of course it *is* censorship, however voluntarily submitted to.

This raises another question for religious believers. Why is it that people who do care about morality and who are mandated to love homosexuals (and probably do) do not speak more precisely about AIDS as a moral and ethical problem? The question invites reflection on the plight of religious spokesmen in our time.

Mainline Christians, accustomed to a marginal role in public life, do not often enter the major debates. There are two unhappy results of this. First, the debates engage the views of only half the nation. For example, the exchange between rationalist evolutionists and fundamentalist creationists should have been joined by intellectual Christians with informed views on both evolution and the meaning of the Bible. As it took place, the debate was perfect for the media, but the fault for that lies in good measure with thoughtful Christians who were lethargic about addressing a tired question.

A second and more disturbing result of this marginality is the dilution of moral commentary in general. Today Christians and Jews of traditional conviction often fall silent on moral issues that affect individuals. They speak volubly enough on community morals, but rarely speak at all of individual morality. The reason is clear. Moral norms for individuals suggest moral authority and discipline, both unacceptable to many.

Consider the weak Judeo-Christian response to the reality of AIDS and the anger of homosexuals.

Has any minority reaction ever silenced logical discussion as effectively as the current fury of the

Sodomy is not a birthright. Like adultery and running a red light, it is a voluntary act. And like them it has consequences.

homosexual community? If, conscious of that anger, most media commentators have said everything they can about AIDS except to mention its cause, mainline religious commentators have not said much more. Writers in the religious press and spokesmen for the Church have concentrated on good works toward the dying victims. But that sympathetic response cannot excuse religious writers if they too bury the truth.

It is a classic red herring and harmful to homosexuals to speak of the plague of death-dealing AIDS as if it were equally a problem of heterosexuals or even drug users. This is the rhetoric of the media and of public health officials. Surely, they know this is not the case. They know that there would be no AIDS threat in this nation if it were not for homosexual acts performed voluntarily and promiscuously by so many. Who has spoken or written this central fact? Have our mor-



We want to enjoy living without paying the price of lifestyle . . .

Eugene V. Clark holds the John A. Flynn Chair at St. John's University.

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(Please turn to page 14)

The Deadly Silence (Continued from page 13)

al theologians and bishops? Homosexuals did not, of course, invent the deadly *viri* that are normally kept at bay by the wonderful balance of created life. But the imbalance that led to AIDS in this country (and soon in the world) was not caused by mysterious developments in Africa and Haiti. The plague (not the virus) was caused by the promiscuous performance of an essentially unsanitary sexual act. I use the words carefully. Such activity continues to be the source of the plague. Does any thoughtful religious person think that homosexuals are helped by clouding that fact?

In recent decades, many homosexuals quietly dismissed the cautions of nearly every culture and the strictures of the Judeo-Christian revelation against the homosexual act. Homosexuals dealt with morality in their own way. Then nature reacted to the violation of its ageless requirement that healthy organisms be protected from noxious elements. Research has not yet pinpointed the chemistry of AIDS, but it is glaringly clear what activity brought about and daily expands the base of the plague. It is the act of sodomy. Without promiscuous sodomy, the plague would cease to be fueled and would die back, slowly and perhaps painfully, but it would die back.

A similar paragraph can be written about heterosexual promiscuity. Forbidden by Judeo-Christian morality, sleeping around is now also proscribed by diseases that emerged after the wisdom of nature and her Creator were dismissed by many.

After reading the escalating projections of death among homosexuals, among the innocent wives of promiscuous bisexual men, and among babies born deformed and dying, why are Jews and Christians reluctant to ask the homosexual community to rethink its destructive practice? Does homosexual preference stand irresistible against their own group suicide? And where are the moralists? Persistent sodomy kills friends, wives, babies, and pathetic prostitutes. Does this not involve objective moral questions homosexuals must deal with? Do thoughtful Christians and Jews serve them well in not urging these thoughts upon them?

There is a body of Judeo-Christian thought regarding homosexuality. Sodomy is not a birth-right. Like adultery and running a red light, it is a voluntary act. And like them it has consequences.

The obscurantism of homosexual activists and the relative silence of Christians and Jews are not made worse by the number of victims. But it is important to know that we are just at the beginning of a plague that could become genocidal. We know that the killer *viri* have entered our society through and because of promiscuous sodomy; they are transmitted only by sexual contact or dirty needles or contaminated blood. All heterosexual victims can trace their illness back to a homosexual source. But—and this is the latest horror—these facts do not mean that the *viri*, multiplying geometrically, will continue to confine them-

selves to a sexual transmission belt. Public health officials are well aware of this hideous potential.

With determination and some gusto we told alcoholics, drug-abusers, air and water polluters, and smokers that only abstinence from their health-destroying habits would allow nature to restore health. We gave them honest sympathy, but we did not deceive them. It is unlikely that expensive research will cure AIDS any more than it did venereal disease, of which there is a richer variety today than before penicillin. The manufacturers of condoms will now add to the lies, despite the fact that the protection they market provides much the same odds as Russian roulette. An active homosexual will be infected in August instead of July. Predictably, the facts are not deterring manufacturers, advertisers or publishers.

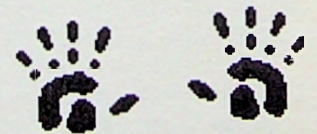
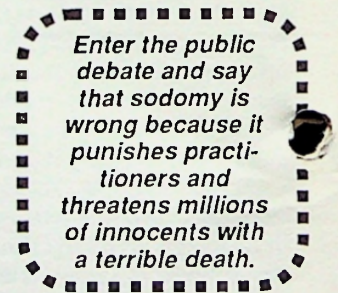
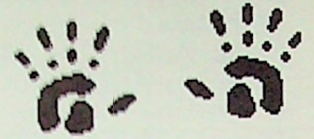
The truth is writ large. *Every AIDS victim diagnosed in 1982 and 1983 is now dead.* Soon those of 1984 will be dead—all of them. The only way to protect the next class of potential victims, of whatever year, is homosexual abstinence. Only sodomy is the primary cause of AIDS. Was a moral imperative for abstinence ever clearer? Neither accusations against others nor "promising research," any more than "safe sex," will save thousands, perhaps hundreds of thousands, in the next class. Only homosexual abstinence in 1987 will save them.

Other sticky moral questions arise and need careful reflection. Since AIDS kills 100 percent of its victims, does a known HIV carrier have a right to marry? A right to sexual acts with another person, knowing it is more than probable that he or she will transmit the lethal virus? We forbid marriage of first cousins for the safety and health of progeny. But we have yet even to ask the question: May a known AIDS carrier be allowed to acquire a right to sexual intercourse with a non-infected person or sire an infected baby? Will the AIDS carrier enjoy the protection of civil rights in bringing about the death of spouse and child? Perhaps of contributing to genocide? If so, why do we still ban marriage of first cousins?

Denouncing the heterosexual community, hospitals, Congress and Mother Teresa are ways for homosexuals and their protectors to run away from the truth, away from the law of God that thou shalt not kill—not even for sex. Christians and Jews must enter the public debate and say that sodomy, even for unbelievers, is wrong, profoundly wrong, because it ineluctably punishes practitioners and threatens millions of innocents with a terrible death.

If we do not say this, who will?

Homosexuals deserve the nation's sympathy and the love of those who believe in the Gospel and all the help they need in this exceedingly difficult decision. But we will not help them by cooperating in the burial of the truth.



Christian Leaders for Responsible Television



Statement of Concern

The quality of life enjoyed by each individual is of deep concern to us as Christian leaders. We have this concern because our faith is focused in the ministry and teaching of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord teaches us compassion, love, and care for one another. He emphasizes loving concern for those around us. He charges us to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick and lonely, and minister to those in prison (Matt. 25). As part of that compassion, He also teaches faithfulness, kindness and honesty.

Not everyone in the United States is Christian. Nor do Christians have a monopoly on virtue. Many in other religions embrace the values of faithfulness, kindness and honesty. People of all beliefs desire a quality of life that lifts and strengthens the individual.

Television is one of the forces that directly affects the quality of life in our nation. It has great potential for good. Through television, people in all areas of our nation can be apprised of important events almost instantaneously. As the educator Mary Megee said, "Television is the supreme combination of all art forms." Television, as seen by its pioneer founders, has potential "as a university of the airwaves, a window on the world, and incredible opportunity to share the best drama, art and culture." It also has the potential to promote values and morals which make a better society.

Television not only is a force affecting the quality of our lives, it also shapes our lives by defining what that quality might be. The power to shape lives and to influence the minds of our citizens carries with it the responsibility to enhance and improve the quality of life, not destroy or corrupt human values.

While much of television programming fulfills the dreams of its pioneers, and while we do enjoy that "window on the world," there is a growing concern that television has actually begun to destroy the fabric of society, and reduce the quality of life, not enhance it. More and more, television is seen as a purveyor of gratuitous sex and violence, undermining moral values and reflecting a perverted, corrupted caricature of human existence.

For example, in a long range study, Professor Michael Warren, of St. John's University, Jamaica, New York, found that acts of violence occur on an average of six times per hour in prime-time television.

The U.S. Attorney General's Task Force on Family Violence has documented the great harm in this violence. The Task Force stated that "evidence is becoming overwhelming" that television and movie violence play an important role in causing violence in the American home and society. It says that the television industry "should voluntarily set limits on the amount and kind of

violence allowed on television." Networks, broadcasters and cable TV bear "major responsibility" for reducing violence on television. It suggests that television executives

and advertisers meet, "perhaps under the leadership of the Surgeon General," to discuss the issue and ways of dealing with it. It suggests broadcast standards be set and recommends that the motion picture industry re-evaluate its rating standards to make ratings more specific and informative.

The report came after the 1982 Surgeon General's National Institute of Mental Health report which also found overwhelming evidence of the harmful effects of television violence and the 1983 U.S. Department of Justice report noting that "virtually 100% of aggression researchers agree that there is a cause-effect relationship between the consumption of violent entertainment and an increased tendency towards anger and violence in normal viewers."

As to gratuitous sex and profanity, television monitoring by the National Federation for Decency (NFD) is most revealing.

NFD monitoring over a seven-year period shows that approximately 80% of all allusions to sexual intercourse are between people not married to each other. The NFD reported that during their Spring 1985 monitoring period, the sex incidents were 9.82 per hour, or a total of 4,096 during the 24-week period of prime-time programming.

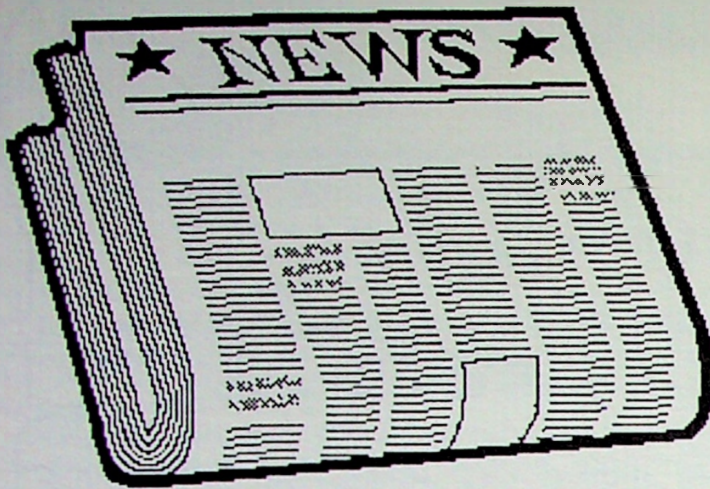
Instead of using television to communicate wholesome moral values and promoting sexual commitment in marriage, which according to a recent Roper poll is endorsed by 72 percent of the adult population, television tends to endorse sexual permissiveness both before and during marriage.

NFD monitoring shows that the use of profanity during prime-time television increased more than 100% from the Fall of 1978 (1,005 incidents of profanity) to the Fall of 1984 (2,071 incidents of profanity).

Acts of adultery and sexual deviance, profanity, and violence against persons or property are considered immoral by Christianity and virtually every other organized religion in the world; some of these acts are also considered criminal in a number of our states. To depict as normal and acceptable acts which are immoral and criminal, and which surely undermine society, corrupting the quality of life of all citizens, is itself reprehensible. But to do it in the name of "entertainment" and for the primary purpose of monetary profit is to demonstrate moral weakness, utter disregard for the rights of others, and a selfishness that is unworthy of humanity.

We acknowledge that this situation did not occur overnight. We also acknowledge that no one person or group of persons is solely responsible. The television networks must share a large portion of the blame, as must the sponsors. Some spon-

(Please turn to page 18)



"Pentecostals and Charismatics Are More Interested in Spreading the Gifts of the Spirit than Evangelizing the World," says World Missions Researcher, Dr. David B. Barrett

By Dan Wooding, USA Correspondent

NEW ORLEANS, LA (NS2000)—There are now 277 million people around the world who are Pentecostal or Charismatic, yet they give only an average of 16 cents (US) a week for global world missions, states a world missions expert.

Dr. David B. Barrett, editor of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, who announced these figures during the North American Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization, held in New Orleans from July 22-26, says it appears that these church members are more concerned with spreading the charismatic message than fulfilling the Great Commission.

"The personal income of these 256 million professing Pentecostals/Charismatics is \$693 billion (US) per year," said British-born Barrett. "You don't have to go around saying there are reasons why we can't evangelize because of lack of money, or lack of workers. There are nearly one million people who are full-time workers within this movement."

Barrett, himself a Charismatic Anglican, was asked during a news conference, why Pentecostals/Charismatics do not give to missions. "Certainly I've never noticed any official Charismatic emphasis on giving

to missions in my Anglican Charismatic situation," he said. "The Church of England Charismatics have always been concerned primarily with the Gifts of the Spirit, initially for me, my family, then for my home church, my home denomination, then finally, rather grudgingly, for the rest of the people in England.

"But, beyond the boundaries of the country, most of us have no interest at all. There is, I would say, no specifically Pentecostal/Charismatic interest in foreign missions."

Dr. Barrett has been a missionary of the Church Missionary Society since 1956 and research officer for the Anglican Consultative Council and the Lambeth Conference since 1970. He is currently Research Consultant to the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond, VA.

He says he gathered his data from churches, Gallup International and government statistics, and declared, "We feel it can stand up next to the usual kinds of investigation."

Barrett said that the 277 million people who are Pentecostal or Charismatic represent 17.55 percent of global Christendom.

Barrett said beyond the overall size of the movement, he had been impressed by the size of the Pentecostal participation in the non-western world. Some 77,000,000 people in non-western nations, he said, have been responding to waves of Pentecostal influence for more than a century.

Although Barrett says that he is often challenged by those who say that "God doesn't keep stats," data on the Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal movement is vital for the evangelization movement. Data is crucial to planning outreach efforts by Christian churches, he declared.

The Pentecostal movement, he added, seemed to be the most active evangelizing movement to be seen in a long time. "You won't find any parallel (movements) to it, in size and power," he said.

Despite the size and potential of the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement, the numbers of people who need to be evangelized is also staggering. Barrett stated that 1,335,212,000 people are "Unevangelized" or completely unaware of Jesus Christ or the message of Christianity. This, he said, is some 26.7 percent of the world's population of 5 billion people.

Soviet Official Claims Conditions for Church Members to Improve, Prisoners Will be Freed

SANTA ANA, CA (ODNS)—

The chairman of the Soviet Council for Religious Affairs, Konstantin Kharchev, has stated that present laws excessively restricting religious freedom need to be changed and that an amnesty program is in effect which will grant freedom to all prisoners of faith by November of this year. Kharchev said the Soviet Union's 70-year history included many difficult pages, saying, "... we committed mistakes in our relations with religion. Many problems we are trying to correct." He affirmed that the Russian Orthodox Church will be allowed to print 100,000 Bibles this year and that the Evangelical Baptists will import another 100,000 Bibles given to them by the Baptist World Alliance and the United Bible Societies.

Mexican Press Claims "Holy War" Against Religious Sects has Begun

MEXICO CITY (ODNS)—

Recent reports in the Mexican press have stated that the Catholic Church has undertaken a "Holy War" in its new campaign to "combat the sects."

Those targeted include not only the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, but the Bible Society, the Salvation Army, and other evangelical and Protestant denominations, according to a list published on the front page of *Ovaciones*, a Mexico City daily newspaper. According to the reports, Roman Catholics are being taught special courses in house-to-house outreach, with the "obligation" of winning back a minimum of 10 ex-Catholics who have been converted into Protestantism by the sects.

Gorbachev's Crackdown on Black Market Makes Bibles Scarce

AMSTERDAM, Holland (ODNS)—Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's crackdown on corruption and black marketeering has not only limited the availability of quality goods but also that of Bibles and other religious items. According to well-informed sources, the flow of goods to the black market has almost ceased entirely and the threshold of fear in dealing with illegal traders has soared in recent months. Bibles which could be bought for around 200 rubles several years ago are now priced at no less than 800 rubles. The price for Russian New Testaments has increased from 12 rubles to 50 rubles.

Language Study a Missionary's Most Difficult Task

UPPER DARBY, PA—Hard choices daily face the missionary, but his most pressing need is language study. Yet he constantly makes new friends, with which he must also spend time. As one mission worker writes concerning the friends/study dichotomy: "one of our greatest difficulties is determining how much time we can spend with our new-found friends; we must be task-oriented in regard to our language study or we will never master it."

Values the Major Reason Kids Avoid Drugs

LOS ANGELES, CA—UCLA psychologist Rod Skager found that 30 percent of teens surveyed steer clear of drugs because of moral values, not scare tactics.

The First Sunday School

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



"Ragged school, that's what I calls 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

Children's Page

Rachel Carr,
Contributing Editor

By Dorothy Williams

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 everthing Maggie Hall said about the cur-

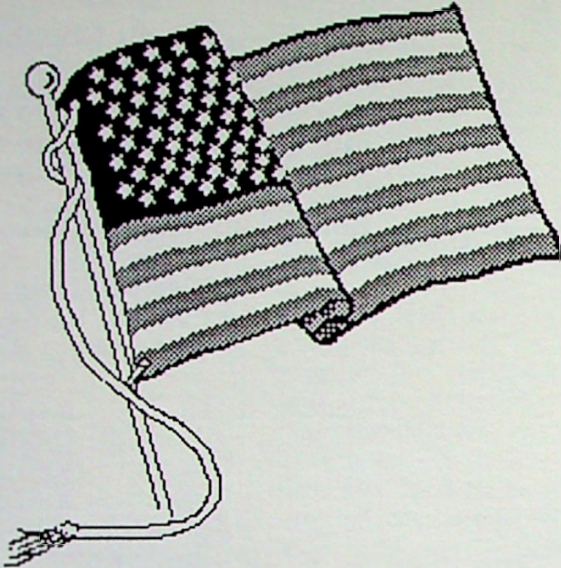


ious goings on at the Raikes' house. "You'd think a man of his station—publisher and all—wouldn't want such a troop of ragamuffins in his house at all, let alone going out and asking them to come in. Why, I saw him up at the mill just yesterday, talking to some of the children. Bet he was telling them all to come. Like as not he's got some scheme going to put them to work on Sunday's 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.

Coming: A New Constitution

(Continued from page 7)



The country was supposed to be governed by the Articles of Confederation, adopted November 15, 1777. But the states did not give up their sovereignty. There was no Chief Executive to look to for direction. The Continental Congress had no power to tax, regulate commerce, or raise an army. By 1786 this beginning nation was in deep trouble, economically and politically. Each state did what it pleased.

These were the conditions existing when "the Father of the Constitution," James Madison, convinced the Virginia legislature that they should invite the 13 states to a September 1786 trade conference in Annapolis, Maryland. The idea was to iron out trade problems between the states.

Twelve men, representing five states, showed up. This poor showing was the reason Madison, Hamilton, and others used to persuade Congress to call for a new convention. The object was to discover ways of strengthening the Articles of Confederation. This idea of strengthening government was in the minds of many at this time, for many feared the states would become involved in open warfare against each other.

It was no surprise, then, when Congress granted the request. George Washington was asked to preside at that Philadelphia meeting May 25, 1787. Fifty-five delegates representing 12 states then met for the next four months

(Rhode Island boycotted the convention). From the start, however, it was clear that at least some of the attending delegates had in mind, rather than revising the existing Articles, the writing of a new form of government. Washington, Madison, and Hamilton were certain that a strong central government was absolutely necessary if the feeble states were to survive as a nation. They, and others, came to the meeting armed with certain ideas of government "to form a more perfect union."

Congress had authorized the delegates only to revise the Articles of Confederation. But the delegates, behind locked doors, proceeded with their plan for a brand new constitution, a brand new form of government, and even inserted into it that it would go into effect when ratified by nine states.

To be sure, the convention did not plot to overthrow the existing government. But they did take matters into their own hands. Yet the seriousness of the condition of the states, and the character of the men assembled, caused the final effort to be accepted by a powerless Congress. All people believed that these men assembled were working for the good of the nation. For example, George Washington, war hero, was one whom all trusted. He had once been asked to take control of the nation by a military dictatorship. He refused.

To be continued next month.

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television

(Continued from page 15)

sors are so interested in selling their products that they are willing to provoke any emotion, use any gimmick, or shock any conscience to make a dollar. The viewing public has too long remained silent as the pollution of television continues to grow. Government, charged with the responsibility of protecting the health and welfare of society, has been slow to respond. Church leaders also have failed to act.

Now, however, it is our duty to take positive steps to reverse the pollution that is slowly poisoning our land. We call upon the television networks and advertisers to take immediate steps to reduce incidents of sex and violence and profanity by at least 35 percent in the fall of 1987. A consistent reduction of incidents depicting immoral, illegal acts as acceptable behavior is imperative.

Furthermore, we call for an immediate end to the anti-Christian stereotyping presented in network programming. The Christian religion, and persons depicted as Christians, should be treated in a fair and unbiased manner, as should all other religions.

We pledge ourselves to monitor the situation, and to engage in serious dialogue with sponsors to encourage them to join in the reduction of this moral pollution.

We are hopeful that men and women of good will who are a part of television—network officials, program producers and advertisers—will welcome the opportunity to join us in this campaign.

However, should the networks and advertisers refuse to take appropriate steps to stem the tide of filth that is now evident, then we will seek other means of combating the forces of corruption that are engulfing us.

Let it be clearly understood that we are serious about our concerns and intent. We are organized and we will not go away. We pledge to continue our efforts for as long as it takes to reverse this unhealthy trend that is destroying the quality of life in our country. To do less would be to betray our own convictions as Christians.

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(Transfer to line 2, page 19)

THE

RESTITUTION HERALD

November, 1987

In this Issue . . .

How to be a risk taker

Things of which memories
are made . . .

Building the Church of God

How to manage the harvest

Special Advent Pullout



Editor's Viewpoint

In this issue . . .

Here's hoping that you noticed from the front cover that our theme is HARVEST. In most areas of the country the fall harvest is over; now farmers are figuring what to do with all the grain . . .

Managing the harvest will remain big in the minds of all of us, but what about harvesting the lost for Christ? Your editor explores harvest principles on pages 6 and 7.

What ingredients will it take to build the Church of God? David Krogh, President of the General Conference/Oregon Bible College, examines five in his challenging article—pages 10 and 11.

One special personal characteristic necessary to bring in the harvest is boldness—taking a risk—to put it another way. Such daring-do drove the early church to witness of its faith; what about today's church? Where is our sense of risk taking for the gospel?

Pastor Scott Ross demands a response to his article: "Dare to Risk," pages 8 and 9.

Where do you stand before the Almighty? He knows all about you, of course. What does it mean to be in his providential

care? Pastor Tim Trammell answers these and other questions in "Our Providential God," pages 4 and 5.

Do you love nostalgia? Like those pieces from the past which stir up fond old memories?

Myrna Rankin's "Thanks for the Memories" is just for you. Recently she returned to Oregon Bible College . . . well, I'll let her continue the tale; see pages 12-14.

President Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Thanksgiving Proclamation is reproduced on page 15. In a world that flows from crisis to crisis, you will be refreshed by his sincere concern for the country.

One time in the history of the church there were no believers in heaven-going at death. How does that grab you?

Read more about it from Anthony Buzzard's pen; see page 16.

Pastor James Mattison continues his fine piece on the new constitution on page 17.

Another looking-back-to-the-constitution features Rachel Carr's story on the Children's Page; page 18.

May God bless you in your reading of this issue. May you be challenged to get involved in the harvest.

Advent pullout

Be sure to make use of the advent celebration material and calendar in your family this Christmas



holy day. Pastor David Wilsterman has done another excellent job on this material.

The material is especially suited to family worship. Simply detach the four inside pages of this issue. Keep them in the place for your family altar. Refer to them as you do your daily devotions and light the weekly candles.

God's Wonderful people

Recently we've had the privilege to worship in several of our churches. At

this summer's annual Iowa Conference we met the faithful, participated in the program, and rejoiced with the brethren of the possibilities for the state work.

This fall we've participated in worship with the brethren in Springfield, Missouri. While there we got acquainted with brethren from Cross Timbers, Jerico Springs, and Arcola.

Of course, time and space do not permit reports of the conversations we enjoyed with brethren at the annual meeting of the Church of God General Conference at Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the dedication of the North Kent Church of God the weekend prior to Conference.

Perhaps the photos included will help . . .



Iowa sextet singing "Those Beautiful Days," written by Bro. Eychaner, revered Iowa minister.



Iris Burnett helped create the banner.



Iowa Conference Duet

The

Restitution Herald

Vol. 77 November/1987 No. 2

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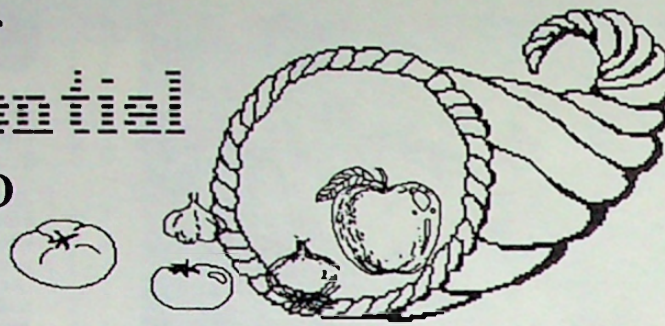
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PHOTOS: Cover by Robert Ennis, a post-harvest scene near North Platte, NE; Gayle Guthrie, pages 12, 13; Russ Magaw, pages 2, 3, 11, 17.

Our PROVIDENTIAL GOD



By Pastor Tim Trammell

GOD IS ALIVE and helping his children as any loving parent would help his child. Of course God will not give his children all they desire, but neither would you as parents.

Naturally we ask, "Why did God let this or that happen?" Man had a choice in the beginning to enjoy a perfect world; sadly man chose differently. Unfortunately we must live with that choice as best we possibly can and call upon God for assistance. Unless like Adam and Eve we feel we can go it alone.

But Deists are wrong! God, our loving Father, has not stepped back and allowed fate and chance to govern the world.

Paul writes, "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom. 8:28, 29, NIV).

We can make the best of any given situation and be the "Light of the World" to a person or group of people.

Since my arrival in Gatesville, Texas, over two years ago I have learned much related to parents and their children. The love shown children by their parents can be evident in a countless number of ways. Every parent is different and philosophies of rearing children are as varied as we can imagine. However

the one common denominator of parents is as follows: Parents, in most cases, created the children. So I ask you, "Will the parents abandon their child and not be available to help if their child cries out? Will parents stand by idly and allow a disaster to possibly hurt their child?" Each parent assuredly answers both questions correctly. Of course there are exceptions to most situations, but as a whole parents sacrifice as much as possible to help their children.

Our Father Which Art in Heaven

As often as we pray the Lord's prayer do we fully realize that by saying "OUR FATHER" we are acknowledging the universal fatherhood of God? This prayer, given by Jesus, tells us that the only true God is the father of mankind.

Paul also states this same fact of Scripture. "One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:6, NIV). "Yet for us there is but one God the Father, from whom all things come and for whom we live" (1 Cor. 8:6, NIV).

Also we clearly see the universal fatherhood of God as Luke records Paul's speech to the "Men of Athens" on Mars' Hill. "Therefore since we are God's offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by man's design and skill" (Acts 17:29, NIV).

Deism

"Deism is the philosophy that denies God's providence or government of the universe. Deists believe that God created the universe sometime in antiquity but since then has had nothing to do with it. They explain that the universe, like a clock, was "wound up" by the Creator and has been left to itself. Deism denies the inspiration of the Bible, miracles, answer to prayer, and God's presence in the world." (Huffer, Alva G., *Systematic Theology*, THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 1976, p. 41).

Providence

"As used historically the theological term 'providence' means nothing short of the universal sovereign rule of God." (Tenney, Merrill C., *The Zondervan Pictorial Dictionary*, Zondervan Publishing House, 1981, p. 692).

"The continuous activity of God in His creation by which He preserves and governs. The doctrine of providence affirms God's absolute lordship over His creation and confirms the dependence of all creation on the Creator. It is the denial of the idea that

the universe is governed by chance or fate." (Lockyer, Herbert, Sr., *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Guideposts, 1986, p. 883).

At this time I feel we must realize that providence can be classified into two categories. (1) "General Providence" encompasses the government of the entire universe and mankind as a whole. Here are some Scriptures to prove the definition of "General Providence."

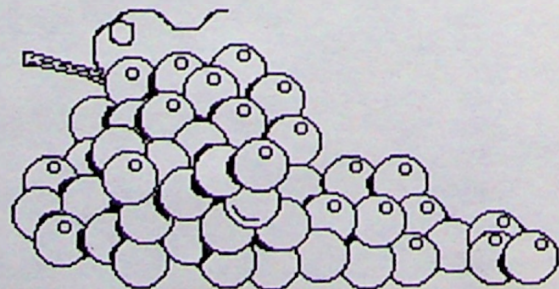
"To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it" (Deut. 10:14, NIV).

"The earth is the LORD's and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it" (Psa. 24:1, NIV).

"For every animal of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are mine" (Psa. 50:10, 11, NIV).

"How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures" (Psa. 104:24, NIV).

"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of



Blessings, calamities, and circumstances of all kinds teach us the security we find in the hands of God.

them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:29, 30, NIV).

"When the Most High gave the nations their inheritance, when he divided all mankind, he set up boundaries for the people according to the number of the sons of Israel" (Deut. 32:8, NIV).

"You alone are the LORD. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship you" (Neh. 9:6, NIV).

We can certainly see why Moses wrote in Genesis these words, "In the beginning God . . ." God clearly created and controls nature, but we say to ourselves, "Are we mere robots or pawns to be used and/or controlled by God?" Before we answer this question I want to examine further the Scriptures which show God's control over nature.

"Seven days from now I will send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights and I will wipe from the face of the earth every living creature I have made" (Gen. 7:4, NIV).

"When he thunders, the waters in the heavens roar; he makes clouds rise from the ends of the earth. He sends lightning with the rain and brings out the wind from his storehouses" (Jer. 10:13, NIV).

I could go on but I believe your mind is searching the Scriptures as you recall the

parting of the Red Sea (Ex. 14:21) and the crossing of the Jordan River (Josh. 3:15-17). I could belabor my line of thought of "General Providence" but I believe you understand that God controls/governs nature as a whole. So where does that leave us who live upon the earth? To answer this question let us learn about "Divine Providence."

"Divine Providence" is more specific than "General Providence" because it deals directly with us as God's children. Before looking at Scriptures related to "Divine Providence" we must realize that men as a whole are all equal in the sight of God. All have sinned and fall short of what God expects (Rom. 3:23). What makes Christians different? We have forgiveness! We have God's power working in our lives! We have other spiritual blessings not always evident by unbelievers. If Christians were removed from the evil as a whole after conversion then our churches would be packed each and every Sunday. However we know that this will not happen until the New Heavens and New Earth are part of our existence.

Believers and unbelievers live together and God, in his love, treats everyone equally.

Jesus said: "That you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous" (Matt. 5:45, NIV).

"Then Peter began to speak: 'I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts men

from every nation who fear him and do what is right" (Acts 10:34, 35, NIV).

"For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him" (Rom. 10:12, NIV).

Christians do not reside on Fantasy Island, instead we live in a world that is full of evil. God will help them who call upon him, and his help given to those who do his

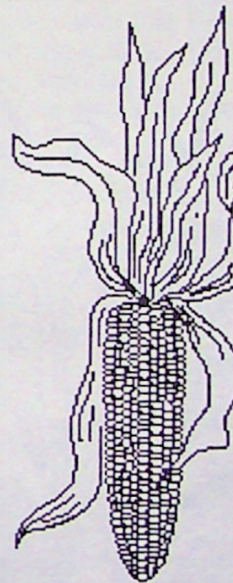
the scales the Christian's way through the sacrificial work of Jesus who died on the cross and removed, in part, one aspect of the curse—that is the permanency of death. The remaining parts of the curse will be removed when Jesus returns to this earth.

Why are we not mere robots or pawns to be used by God? Because we have been given the ability to reason and choose.

"But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living" (Josh. 24:15, NIV).

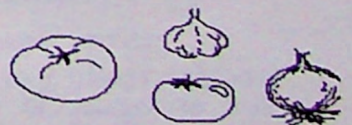
Joshua has hit the nail right on the head by saying we can choose to serve God or go our own way and serve gods. We clearly have a choice to make. Our strength can introduce Christ to others. As God, in the beginning chose Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4, 5), Paul (Gal. 1:15), and Jesus (Rev. 13:8); he may also fit you into his perfect plan (1 Cor. 2:7; Titus 1:2).

The plan is set and now choose for yourself to serve God with the assurance of eternal life or choose to fight against God. But remember this; making no choice is like choosing not to accept God's gift of Jesus Christ and Jesus will on the day of judgment say, "I know you not." Our destiny is in our own hands!



will. His help is not always as we think best, but who is better equipped to meet our needs than an all-knowing God?

Rain, sunshine, and calamities are part of every person's existence. Why? Because we all live under the curse as recorded in Genesis 3 and hard times may come any Christian's way. Not really fair, but as Paul says in Romans 5, God has tipped



How to manage the harvest ...



Gleanings from the harvest that will transform your view of evangelism . . .

By the editor

THE NORTH AMERICAN farmer finds himself in the middle of another fall harvest. Commodity prices continue at record lows. Grain storage remains stockpiled—often under tarps in temporary shelter. There's little call for the farmer's crop, yet another bumper harvest expands across the vastness of the fertile plains.

All that remains for the farmer is to manage the harvest—squeezing every dime out of it for years to come. Governments and taxpayers have been burdened with this management problem for almost 30 years with no end in sight.

How to manage the harvest? If anyone has answers . . .

Another harvest problem

Facing a harvest problem is nothing new to North Americans. In fact, what to do with the corn harvest touches the tip of the iceberg when confronted by many other "harvest" problems.

A brief glance at sliding morals, alarming sociological trends, the mismanagement of huge public and private deficits, educational difficulties—all tell a woeful tale of sowing and reaping. The Apostle Paul identified the problem as a harvest problem. Read again his words: "Do not deceive yourselves; no one makes a fool of God. A person will reap exactly what he plants. If he plants in the field of his natural desires, from it he will gather the harvest of death" (Gal. 6:7, 8a, GNB).

But Paul didn't stop with the bad news about the harvest. He pointed to another harvest—that of sowing and reaping good seed: "If [a person] plants in the field of the Spirit, from the Spirit he will gather the harvest of eternal life. So let us not become tired of doing good; for if we do not give up, the time will come

when we will reap the harvest" (Gal. 6:8b, 9, GNB).

Yes, there is a bright picture mirrored in this fall's harvest.

A harvest urgency

Paul's illustration of the harvest comes from his Lord's use of the same imagery.

Like today's farmer feels an urgency about his situation, Jesus expressed an urgency about the harvest. As he surveyed the masses crowding around him "worried and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd," he turned to his disciples with this statement: "The harvest is large, but there are few workers to gather it in. Pray to the owner of the harvest that he will send out workers to gather in his harvest" (Matt. 9:36, 37, GNB).

Just one statistic reveals how huge is the harvest in the United States alone. Look at the *decline* in the number of churches for every 10,000 Americans:

1900 — 27 churches
1950 — 17 churches
1987 — 12 churches

Countless numbers of Americans are wandering helplessly through week after week with no spiritual nourishment. The number of present churches could **double** without overchurching America. To gather in such a potential harvest, a tremendous number will need to hear the call and prepare to be harvesters—now!

But how are we to manage the work of harvesting? What steps must be taken to bring lost people to the Lord?

Test the soil

Jesus gave an important harvest principle in the parable of the soils (Matt. 13). According to the story, several types of soil are in or near the field. What

happens as the word of the kingdom is sown in the field depends on the makeup of the soil. "The seeds sown in the good soil stand for those who hear the message and understand it: they bear fruit, some as much as one hundred, others sixty, and others thirty" (v. 33, GNB).

Obviously, the better prepared the hearts of the hearer, the better response to the word. Thus, wise management of the principle of sowing and reaping is needed. Persons best prepared to receive the message of the kingdom should be approached first.

How can those lost persons best prepared to hear be found? Is there a way to discover such needy persons?

Probably the best way to answer those questions is the old axiom: "Start where you are with what you have; do what you can."

Where you are . . .

Look around you. There are at least 24 persons—your friends and neighbors—that you know personally. At least half of them need to know Jesus. Statistics show that as high as 85 percent of church members initially responded to the invitation of a friend or relative to come to Christ. You already know the people in your mission field!

What you have . . .

Become transparent with your friends. Let the real you become noticeable. Show concern and care for their needs. Be positive and open in your witness of Jesus. Expect that God will use you to touch lives.

Do what you can . . .

Invite your friends into your life; give of yourself to their needs. God will assist you in bringing in the harvest!

Risk-takers are on the ride of their lives—and they never look back with regret . . .

A man traveling through rural America stopped to visit with an old farmer he spotted rocking on the porch of a run-down farm house.

"How's the corn?" the traveler asked.

"Don't know," the farmer replied.

"didn't plant no corn."

"How's the beans?"

"Don't know, didn't plant no beans," came the reply.

"Well then, how's the cotton?"

"Don't know, didn't plant no cotton."

Finally in exasperation the traveler asked: "What did you plant?"

"Nothing," the old farmer replied, "I'm just playing it safe."

* * *



You can go through life "just playing it safe," but you will never have much of a harvest. We've got to learn to take some risks if we want to accomplish anything of meaning or substance in our lives.

People of impact are people who take risks. Probably the single most influential event in my life while I was growing up was when my father decided to leave the security of his home, his vocation, his brothers and sisters, and travel some 400 miles away to enter the ministry. Even at the age of 15 I realized my father was taking a risk. He was risking the security of a known for an unknown. But it said to me, "He really takes his faith ser-

iously!—so seriously he is willing to risk something for what he believes!" And that changed my life.

Biblical Risk Takers

The most influential characters of Scripture were risk takers. "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to a place which he was to receive as an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was to go" (Heb. 11:8). Imagine that! Leaving everything to follow where God was leading while not even knowing where that was. What a risk!

The Bible speaks of 12 spies sent out to look over the promised land, but chances are you can remember the

names of only two of them, Joshua and Caleb. The other 10 were cautious, saying, "We dare not go into the promised land, for there are giants there." Joshua and Caleb were the risk takers. They said, "Let us go up and conquer the land, for God will be with us!" The men of caution we forget, the risk takers we remember.

There were many men in the army of Israel when Goliath challenged them, but only David took the risk of facing the giant. Elijah, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, Nehemiah, and Queen Esther were all risk takers.

Peter took the risk and stepped out of the boat and walked on the water. He

risked casting forth the nets even when his fisherman mind told him they would catch no fish. And he risked his life to stand boldly for his Lord Jesus Christ before thousands on Pentecost and before his enemies on the council. When Paul was converted and went to Jerusalem everyone was afraid of him except Barnabas, who took a risk and befriended him. And how much richer the world is because Barnabas took the risk!

The ultimate risk taker was Jesus. He risked shaking up the establishment of his day with revolutionary teachings that challenged their rituals and traditions and demanded total commitment. He risked

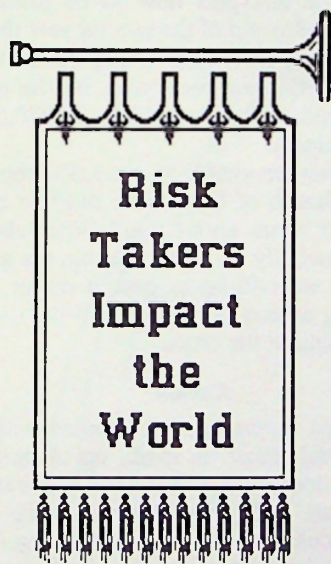
Dare to Risk

his very life on the cross for our sake. He risked everything for us!

Risk Takers Impact the World

Great things are seldom accomplished by those who play it safe. The world is impacted by those who dare take a risk. We must be willing to take a risk.

We need to risk living instead of just existing. A 70-



year-old man lived all his life at the foot of a mountain. One day a neighbor took him for a jeep ride to the top of the mountain. For the first time ever this old man saw the breath-taking panoramic view from the top, and he began to weep. "What's wrong?" the neighbor asked. "To think I nearly lived all my life without seeing this," the old man replied.

Too many of us are going through an ordinary existence while at our fingertips is real life. Jesus said, "I've come for you to have life, and to have it abundantly!" Solomon also urged us to enjoy life and live

it fully. (Eccl. 9:9, 10.) We need to really live life, to laugh more, to try more, to risk more. Don't wrap yourself in a little cocoon, isolating yourself. Live life fully and richly and abundantly. Enjoy this special gift.

Risks You Need To Take

Transparency

We need to risk taking off our masks and being real, being ourselves, being transparent. Sometimes we are afraid to be ourselves because we fear others may not like the "real" me. That's the risk! So we try to be what we think others want us to be, but that makes us miserable. Risk being yourself. The church must be a place where we can be real and still be loved and accepted. It is an environment of love and acceptance that we can become all that God wants us to become.

Caring

Risk caring. One way to guarantee that you will never be hurt is to never risk caring.

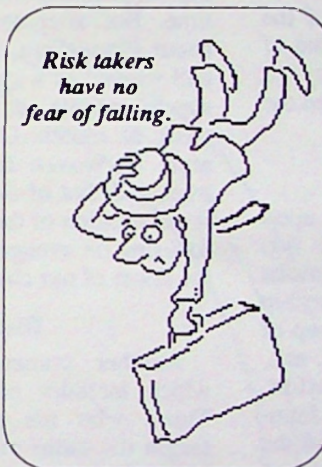


But what an empty life that is! To care is to risk, to risk rejection and hurt. We can close our eyes to hurting peo-

ple, but we cannot do that and really be the Lord's disciples. Jesus looked at the multitudes and wept, because he cared for them. Risk the hurt that comes from really caring. Because unless we really care we cannot help the hurting.

Loving

Risk loving, even loving the unlovely. Anyone can love the lovely. Risk reaching out in love to those who don't



deserve it, to those who are hard to love. They may very well reject your attempts to share God's love. That is the risk. But Jesus risked loving us so much, when we did not deserve it, that he died for us. Involved in this risk-taking love is real forgiveness. Risk forgiving others.

Dreaming

Risk dreaming big dreams and acting upon them. A poor black Baptist preacher named Martin Luther King dreamed a big dream and changed the world. Dare to dream big dreams, knowing full well there will be those who will delight in telling you it will never work, it costs too much, or we've never done it that way before. Possible ridicule

By Pastor
Scott Ross

and rejection is the risk. But we desperately need big, Holy-Spirit-inspired dreams. Dare to dream. Take the risk.

Commitment

And risk real commitment, real discipleship. It is easy to be a church member, to sit and occupy a pew. But Jesus didn't challenge us to sit in a padded pew. He challenged us to take up a cross and follow him. Real servanthood, real discipleship, real commitment involves a risk. But every Christian is called to take that risk of real service. The world is not changed by the cautious, but by the risk takers.

In Retrospect

Anthony Campolo in his book, *Who Switched the Price Tags?* tells of a survey where 50 people over the age of 95 were asked: "If you could live your life over again, what would you do differently?" One of the answers that appeared most often was, "If I had it to do over again, I would risk more." It is significant that people did not say, "I'd play it safer." Instead, they said they wished they had taken more risks.

Don't just play it safe; take a risk. Don't just exist; really live, enjoy life, live it fully! Don't just plod through life; run through it with laughter and excitement and adventure! Don't just be with others; love them and care enough to even hurt if necessary! Don't just be a member; be a disciple! Don't just play it safe; be a risk taker!

BUILDING THE CHURCH OF GOD—

By David Krogh

This is the second article in a series of three; adapted from his Keynote Address at this summer's General Conference.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of hades will not overcome it." As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are the instruments through which Jesus is building the church today. It is important for us as members of the Church of God to focus upon the kind of building that we are erecting today. It seems imperative for us to understand the basic parts of our building.

Foundation of Truth

The Church of God must be built upon the distinctive truths that caused this church to be organized. The great truths regarding the oneness of God, the sonship of Jesus, the second coming, the sleep of the dead, the kingdom on the earth, etc., must provide the foundation of our effort. We must continue to strengthen our foundation by broadening our definition of the word "truth." Truth does not just refer to the distinctive doctrines of the Church of God. All of God's Word is truth! It is all "profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). There is a need in 1987 for us to be truthseekers, just as our forefathers were.

Unfortunately, some have closed the door on learning more truth. They have closed their minds to listening to new thoughts and to new ideas. They become defensive when ideas different from their own are introduced.

We must be willing to listen to new or different ideas by the Scriptures. We have nothing to fear if new ideas stand the test of Scripture. We must be willing to set aside our traditions, prejudices, and preconceived ideas if the Scriptural evidence so dictates. If new ideas fail the test, they must be rejected.

Evangelism

As we build the Church of God upon

the foundation of truth, one of the cornerposts is effective evangelism. What is effective evangelism? It includes not only proclamation of the gospel, but also persuasion, with the goal of making disciples of Christ and responsible church members. It includes discovering the lost, building bridges of friendship to them, sharing the message of salvation with them, and leading them to a commitment.

Now it is true that the Church of God has emphasized evangelism for a long time. But after many years of talking about evangelism, in most churches it is still viewed as a special project, done by special people, at special times of the week or month. Our evangelism efforts must be woven into the fabric of our lives and that of the church. Evangelism is the mission of the church. If we are not focusing on evangelism we'd better close the doors of our churches.

Discipling

Another corner post is discipling, which includes education and nurture. Those who are evangelized must be taught the truths of Scripture. They must be taught how to have a close walk with the Lord. They must be taught to practice the daily disciplines of prayer, Bible reading, and Scripture memorization. There must be an emphasis upon making Jesus Christ Lord of their lives. All of this must be *our* experience before we can teach others. Evangelism and discipling are equally essential. Once people have been evangelized they must be disciplined.

We need to learn much more about how to make disciples. We need to study the example of Jesus. His method was to select a small number of men in whom he invested his life. Spending quality time with these men produced a movement that turned the world upside down. The process of making disciples who will make other disciples is the process of multiplication. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul told Timothy that the things that had been taught to Timothy by Paul must be entrusted to reliable men who would in turn teach others. The Scriptures teach that each believer must be involved in

making other disciples. Each believer must pass along to other people everything he has learned and everything that he has experienced in the Christian life. And those who are discipled must be taught how to disciple others.

This process of multiplication has tremendous power in reaching a world that is lost in sin. If 5,000 people in the Church of God made one disciple during the next 12 months, we would double our number to 10,000. If we taught those 5,000 new disciples how to be disciple makers, at the end of the second year there would be 20,000 total disciples. If this process continued each year, by the turn of the century there would be 81,920,000 total disciples.

We may be unable to get 5,000 people in the Church of God to be disciple makers. But what about you? What about me? Somebody told you and me the gospel. Are we willing to pass it on, or are we going to stop the process? Will you be the last link in the chain?

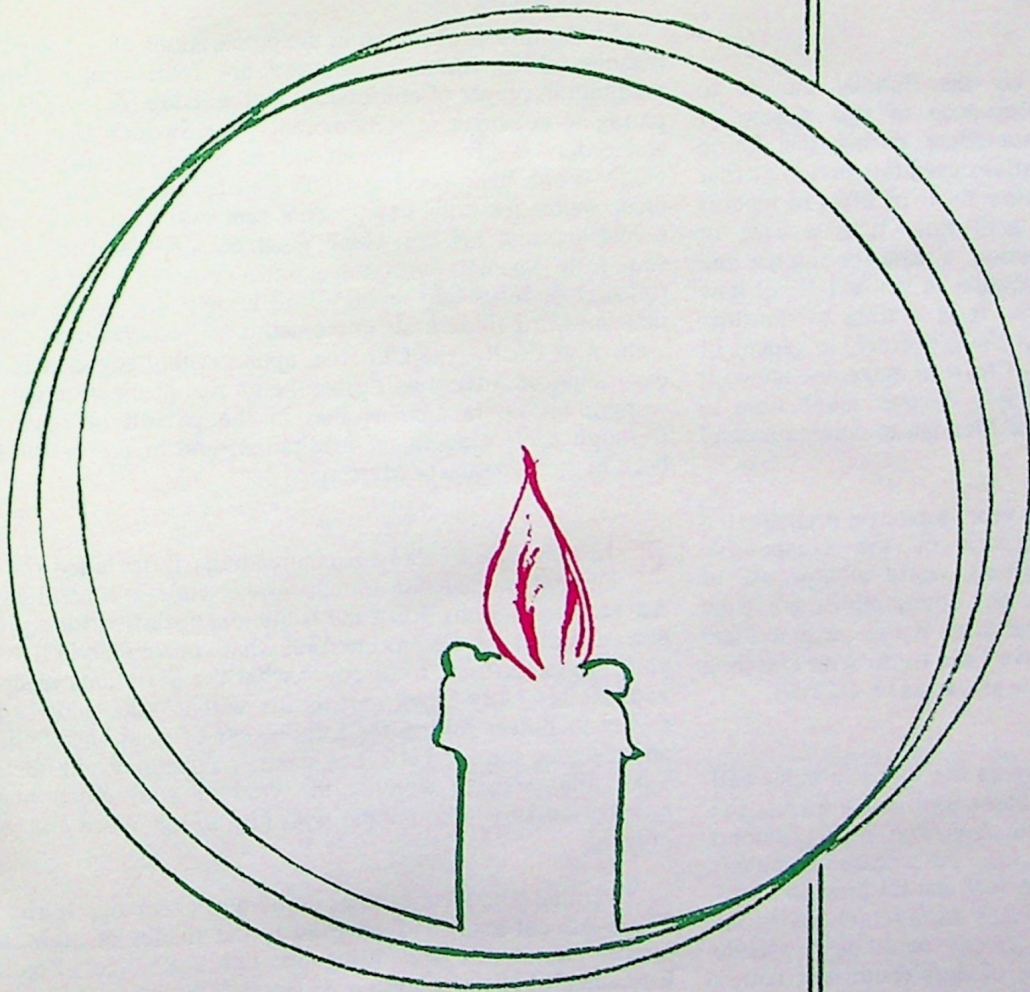
Action

A third corner post is labeled action. The church must be made up of people who are doers of the Word and not hearers only. (Jas. 1:22-25.) Sometimes we put more focus upon hearing than doing. We have Sunday School classes, morning and evening worship, midweek Bible studies, State Conferences, seminars, and camps. The main emphasis is on hearing. What do we do with the message when we get home?

What do we do with the message when we walk out the door on Sunday morning? I am convinced that there is too much emphasis upon a performance that takes place on Sunday morning. Elton Trueblood, in his book entitled "Company of the Committed," says, "The company of Jesus is not people streaming to a shrine, and it is not people making up an audience for a speaker; it is laborers engaged in the harvesting task of reaching their perplexed and seeking brethren with something so vital that, if it is received, it will change their lives."

"In many contemporary congregations,

*Family
Advent
Devotions*



"In him was life; and the
life was the light of men"
(John 1:4).



come,
O come,
Emmanuel

This is the petition of the faithful of all ages, for God to fulfill his promise to redeem and restore fallen humanity. Mankind has anticipated this consummation since Adam and Eve left the safety and security of the garden; and, since then too, God himself has been preparing (Gal. 4:4). Advent is the season of the church year during which our preparations in hope are emphasized and we who have confidence in God's fidelity ready our lives to receive the salvation which Christ brings with him.

"Advent" is actually a melding of two Latin words: *ad* and *venire*, meaning "to come to." The resounding message of the season is that God, through his own Son Jesus, has re-established a relationship with humanity for the purpose of saving us from the consequences of our own sins. Jesus has come to us on God's behalf to free us from the curse of death and separation from the Almighty.

This year Advent begins on the Sunday closest to November 29. Formal observance of this season of preparation began in France sometime during the fourth century A.D. In early times Christians used this period of four weeks to prepare their lives—every facet of life—to receive Jesus, the deliverer of divine providing. It is a time of reflection and prayerful introspection, a time for solemn and sober thought about one's participation in sin and about how that one will deal with his sins. It is a time to consider abandoning one's participation in the old order, to repent of one's transgressions, and to allow Christ to make one anew. It is a season during which a disciple devotes much time to watching, waiting, and praying for Messiah to come a second time.

Of all the seasons of the church year, Advent is probably the most difficult to observe because of the competitive distraction provided by the business world and people of sentimental commerce. Most in our communities are busy "celebrating Christmas"—whatever those words mean to them (and to the vast majority they have little to do with extolling the birth of the Christ-child and the salvation he affords).

Even Christians get caught up in the Norman Rockwell-like remembering of Christmases past, party-going, gift-buying and the superficial cosmetic *agape* the world promotes, as fit expressions of seasonal joy. Like the world's inhabitants, many believers are uncomfortable with the business of readying their lives in anticipation for Jesus' soon return, and would rather put it off altogether and simply recall with pseudo-assurance the coming of the Babe of Bethlehem. But Advent admonishes us to remember that Jesus himself has given his word to return to us, to judge our faithfulness as his disciples, and to redeem us—ultimately, infinitely, and eternally.

As disciples prepare to celebrate Christ's birth at Christmas, as they ready their lives for his soon return, they become

conscious of the "timelessness" of the advent season. The message of the weeks preceding Christmas puts the follower of Jesus in touch with a past experience that in the Birth at Bethlehem God's promise of a Messiah and the prophet's consequent prophecies found fulfillment and are consequential for all who believe.

One also is confronted by the present experience of Messiah coming to the human family each time a man or woman's heart is opened to welcome him. Here, too, is confirmation of promises being fulfilled for all who believe.

Finally, the disciple of Jesus observing the disciplines of Advent becomes aware of his or her participation in a future experience as he or she begins to live confidently in the assurance of God's promise to send Christ Jesus once again. Christians are a people of eternity (Eph. 1:13, 14) and Advent is a season of the church year providing us practical experience in our promised habitation.

The disciplines observed in the preparations of Advent for a meaningful Christmas celebration are four: Bible reading; meditation; prayer of confession; and worship. A disciple preparing to celebrate in remembrance the Savior's first advent and order his life for the second advent will spend time in God's Word, daily seeking God's will for his life, finding his prescription for holy living. That one will then ask God to reveal areas of his life which must be re-ordered to receive Christ. In keeping with the somber mood of Advent, the follower of Jesus will repent of all known sin, asking further that the Lord forgive all unpremeditated, unscheduled sin as well. And finally, the Christian appropriately engaged in the disciplines of Advent will extol the glories of the Almighty in worship as he recognizes that in the pursuit of readiness (through Bible reading, in meditation, and in prayer) he has been in the presence of Majesty.

The schedule of daily Bible readings is included on the December calendar to encourage your involvement in Advent preparations. Read the Bible text specified for a given date, and then ask God to interpret what you've read in light of your life experience, to discover what the Scriptures mean to you. As his Holy Spirit reveals his will to you, address the Father in prayer asking for forgiveness of your shortcomings and pledging renewed effort to maintain constancy and fidelity. Take time, too, to worship the God of your creation and redemption as you commune with him in his Word and your prayers.

"O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by Thine Advent here; and drive away the shades of night, and pierce the clouds and bring us light! Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!"

This is the joyous promise of Christmas—the fulfillment of promises of salvation to those who have used the weeks of Advent wisely by making preparations for Messiah's divine invasion. May God give you peace and light as you ready your life for such an advent!

ADVENT WREATH

One of the most meaningful traditions of the season of Advent, the season of light, is the lighting of candles on the Advent wreath during a weekly family devotion throughout the month of December. A wreath of styrofoam, decorated with evergreen trimmings, holly, berries, or glass balls serves as a holder for three white candles (representing prophetic fulfillment), and one pink candle (representing joyous anticipation) spaced evenly around the unbroken circle.

Each Sunday evening of the Advent season the entire family gathers around the wreath to remember yet another facet of Christ's coming, or "advent." Each Sunday, in sequence, yet another candle is lighted, remembering another aspect of his coming, this "light" into a dark world. Then, on Christmas day, a special regal purple candle is placed conspicuously in the center of the wreath and lighted in honor of the King's birth.

Below is a suggested schedule of devotions for your family. You are encouraged to construct your Advent wreath as best suits your family and its tastes.

November 29—Remembering the Messiah's Commission.

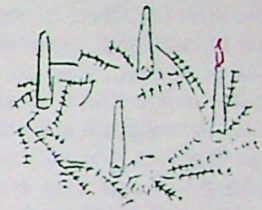
Scripture text—Isaiah 49:5-7

Father: Open and close with prayer.

Mother: Read Scripture text.

Youngest child: Light first white candle beginning devotions.

Song—"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."



December 6—His Advent Is a Gospel of Light.

Scripture text: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

Father: Read Scripture text.

Mother: Open and close with prayer.

Oldest child: Light two white candles beginning devotions.

Song—"Gentle Mary Laid Her Child."



December 13—This Light Foretold in Scripture.

Scripture text: Psalm 119:105; 130

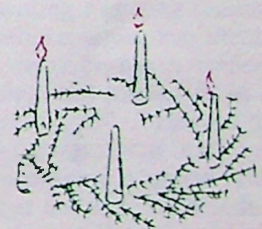
Father: Light three white candles beginning devotions.

Mother: Read Scripture text.

Oldest child: Open with prayer.

Youngest child: Close with prayer.

Song—"The First Noel."



December 20—A Light in a Life.

Scripture text: Luke 8:16-18.

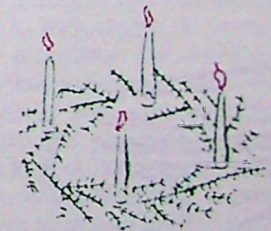
Mother: Light three white candles and the pink candle beginning devotions.

Oldest child: Read Scripture text.

Youngest child: Open with prayer.

Father: Close with prayer.

Song—"What Child Is This, Who, Laid to Rest."

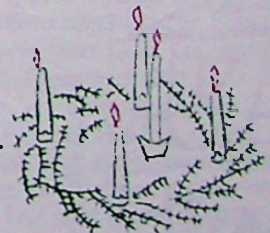


Christmas Day—The Light Is Really Here!

Scripture text: Luke 2:1-20.

Father: Lead entire devotion, and light three white, one pink, and one purple candle.

Song—"Away in a Manger."



December 1987



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
29 Advent Begins Isa. 49:5-7	30 Isa. 7:14	1 Psa. 97	2 John 3:19-21	3 2 Cor. 6:14 - 7:1	4 Gen. 3:3-5	5 John 8:12-20
6 2 Cor. 4:1-6	7 Mic. 7:8, 9	8 Acts 22:6-11	9 Psa. 139:7-12	10 Jer. 31:35-37	11 Rom. 13:11-14	12 Rev. 21:22-24
13 Psa. 119:105, 130	14 Dan. 2:20-23	15 Matt. 5:14-16	16 Prov. 13:9	17 Acts 12:6-11	18 Hab. 3:3, 4, 11	19 Psa. 56:12, 13
20 Luke 8:16-18	21 Luke 11:33-36	22 1 John 1:5-7	23 Zech. 14:4-6	24 Psa. 43	25 CHRISTMAS Luke 2:1-20	26 Luke 1:68-79
27 Matt. 2:1-12	28 Rev. 22:1-5	29 Phil. 2:14-18	30 John 9:1-11	31 Luke 2:21-38		

ADVENT

A New Beginning

the entire church operation points to a climax on Sunday morning, a conception which would have seemed strange indeed to the early Christians. Often the major effort during the week is promotion of Sunday. Sunday morning, then, when it finally comes, has something of a mood of a much advertised athletic contest, for which the team has prepared and to which it has been pointed all week. Finally, at 12:00 on Sunday the whistle blows, the climactic event is over for another week, and the spectators go home to relax. This is a complete reversal of the Christian pattern and something which finds no support whatever in the New Testament. The Christian pattern, if taken seriously, means exactly the opposite—namely, that what happens on Sunday is defensible only as a preparation for the daily ministry for the week which follows."

Our churches are all geared up for the work that God has called us to do, but we often never get around to doing the actual work of reaching the lost.

Commitment

A fourth corner post of the church must be commitment. I am talking about a commitment to be involved in ministry. If the Church of God is to become all that God wants it to be, there is a tremendous price that we will have to pay as individuals, as churches, as State Conferences, and as a General Conference. We must not underestimate the cost of being obedient. Paul serves as our model when he said in 1 Corinthians 9:22, 23, "To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (NIV).

What is the price that we will have to pay? We will have to:

1. Open our friendship circles to include new people—with an attitude of love, acceptance, and forgiveness.
2. Invest our life in the lives of others—share the gospel—nurture and train.
3. Step aside in leadership to permit new people to assume responsibility.
4. Create new ministries to meet new needs.
5. Accept the additional financial costs of new buildings, new staff, new minis-

tries.

6. Put forth greater time and effort in our personal ministries.

7. Have a willingness to learn new things.

As you look at your local church, how many are involved in sharing their faith with those who are lost? How many are investing their life in the life of others to nurture and strengthen them? How many are men and women of action who are doers of the Word and not hearers only? Or sitting on the sidelines watching to see what is happening? How many are ready to criticize any mistakes that are made? How many sit on the sidelines and say "I've got to see it to believe it"? How many dash cold water on the new ideas and ministries?

What we need are people who will say, "You can count on me to do whatever it takes to make the Church of God obedient



Loving people is a pure motivator for building the church.

to what God wants to have accomplished in the world today." We need people who will say, "I'm willing to pay any price and I'm willing to make any sacrifice for the cause of the gospel."

We need people who will stop focusing upon self. We need people who have made Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives and who are spiritually renewed and have God's Spirit working in them.

There are people today who want glory without sacrifice. There are those who want success without hard work. There are those who are looking for a quick and easy formula which will change the

Church of God overnight. There are no quick and easy formulas. There are no risk-free plans which are guaranteed to be successful.

Love

Finally, the roof of our building is love.

Jesus said that the two great commandments are to love God with all our heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is love that will cause us to be fervent in evangelism. It is love that will cause us to be involved in disciple-making ministries. It is love that will motivate us to action. And, it is love that will generate in our hearts a deep commitment to get the job done.

The theme of our summer Conference was: "Who Will Love Them?" The God who loves the Muslim, the Chinaman, the prostitute, the mentally handicapped; the God who loves you and me calls us, as his people, to a life of love for him and for all people. It is hard to love people, especially those who are unlovable.

It is also hard sometimes to balance our love for the truth with our love for people. In writing to young seminarians, Helmut Thielicke, a German theologian, warns that theology has a tendency to make us vain, "and kindles in us something like gnostic pride." He says that the chief reason for this is that "truth and love are seldom combined in human beings."

This is true because "truth seduces us very easily into a joy of possession: 'I have comprehended this and that, learned it, understood it. Knowledge is power. I am, therefore, more than the other man who does not know this and that.' . . . Anyone who deals with truth succumbs all too easily to the psychology of the possessor. But love is the opposite of the will to possess. It is self-giving; it boasteth not itself, but humbleth itself."

Though Thielicke indicates truth and love are seldom combined in human beings, I believe that God has called the people of the Church of God to be unique persons by committing themselves to these two virtues. He has called us to uphold truths that have been neglected, while at the same time reaching out in love to the lost who know nothing about the Bible.

Thanks for the Memories

A nostalgic return to Oregon Bible College . . .

By Myrna Rankin

I stood at the top of the stairs and peeked timidly to my right over the threshold into the empty room beyond. The door was wide open, no one was near me, and yet I had the feeling of intruding.

* * *

"Thank you for the beautiful tie, Myrna."

"You're welcome, Brother Doan. Happy Birthday." I noticed again how handsome he was and what a beautiful, genuine smile he had. His slightly silvery hair caught the sunshine streaming through the window, as he finished unwrapping his small gift.

I realized I was still awkwardly standing there with nothing to say, lost in my thoughts. Harold Doan had generously offered me a job at college, one of the very few available, and one in which I had the opportunity to use secretarial skills that came easily to me. He had been an outstanding employer who never complained, was quick to praise, and appreciated a job well done.

His wife gave many of us piano lessons in a style I can only characterize as patient beyond understanding. As college freshmen—most of us on our own for the first time—we were forgetful of lesson times at best; and sometimes, at worst, too busy to even remember to pay her. She was a wonderful lady, blessed with the gift to transfer the knowledge of music to others. Though I had had many years of lessons before, she opened up a whole new world to me.

I wanted somehow to repay them both, but never knew how to express myself. Smiling shyly instead, I excused myself and fled back to the dorm, embarrassed as only an 18-year-old can be.

* * *

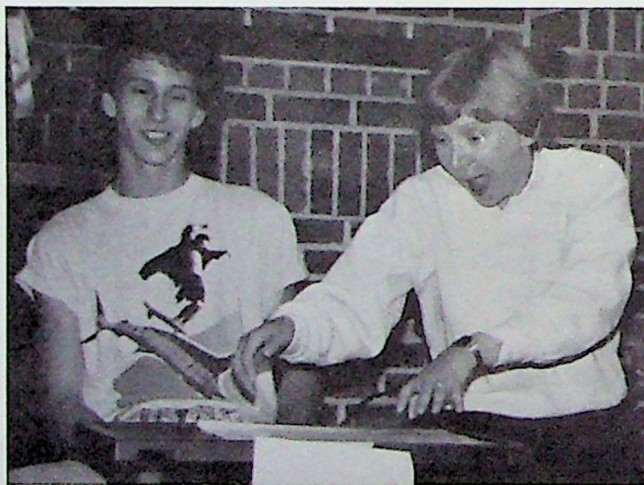
I remembered all of it now, 20 years later, as I stood looking into what had been his office. This was OBC Parents' Weekend, and I was there to visit my son Paul, who was now himself a freshman.

Where we had gone to classes was now

the General Conference building and half rented to a printing company. While my husband Russ talked to Russell Magaw about a possible article for THE HERALD, I continued my "tour." The rest of the upper floor was almost entirely as I remembered: Bill Wachtel's office (he was President then), the classrooms, and then I came to the Chapel. It was a recreation room now, I could see.

It was so long ago, and yet I remembered every detail playing back on the screen of my mind of the way it had been. I walked to the other side of the room to where the upright piano had stood.

* * *



The author and son Paul at Oregon Bible College Parents' Weekend.

"Let's open our hymnals this morning to song number 111 and really sing out."

My fingers were trembling as I reached up and opened the Songs of Truth resting on the piano in front of me. I was hoping they'd "sing out," too, so they wouldn't be able to hear me play. I knew everyone could hear my heart bumping in my chest as Roger Cupp, on the organ, began the introduction. It was my first turn at playing for chapel services and I was *scared*.

"Please, God, just help me through this, and I'll do anything you want," I thought. After the hymn I stole a quick glance over my right shoulder at my friend Karen

McPherson, across the room. She was smiling encouragement. I knew then I'd make it through the service, especially since everyone else seemed to be absorbed in the song leader, seemingly oblivious to my musical mistakes.

All those faces! I could still picture each one sitting there in the wooden pews, elbow to elbow, smiling, laughing quietly, and singing—so beautifully! A parade of faces walked through my mind, those young men and women who had preached in chapel services, just learning to communicate God's Word from the pulpit. We had been so young, so eager, so intent.

From the moment we pulled up in front of the boys' dorm, memories I never knew I had stored away had come cascading from my subconscious mind.

"Oh, Russ, look how big the trees are! They've made part of the steps into a ramp! Remember, that used to be the lounge over there. Wasn't the carpet a different color?"

So many things had changed, yet many had not. The cafeteria was exactly as we remembered it, even the evening serving line, trays, and tile on the floor. The cooks'

faces were new, and so was the food, but when we chose tables to sit down, it felt like home.

As I bowed my head in silent prayer for the food, as did others around me, I remembered the "Day of the New Bible."

* * *

Since Russ and I had been going together I had been appalled at the shabby condition of his Bible. The cover was completely loose, and the binding was threatening to discharge substantial chunks of Scripture. As his birthday ap-

proached, I knew what I must do. He would be thrilled with a new Bible.

I saved up my money, purchased a beautiful new black leather-bound King James edition, and sat back anxiously until after lunch and surprised him with it while we were still sitting at the table. His brother Darrell and his girlfriend Loretta were sitting with us. We were all smiles when I handed it to him, and he opened it expectantly.

I don't think I can adequately describe the frozen smile and small kiss that accompanied his quiet, "Thank you," but I must say his lack of enthusiasm was a real puzzle to me. It was not until several months later that I pinned him down and was able to get him to admit that he was terrified of trying to change Bibles because of all the notations, scribbles, and cross-referencing he had done in the old one. He knew where everything was in it, on which side of the page to look for what verse, and knew he could never adequately transfer that information to the new one.

He has since gone through three more Bibles, but I am much slower now to buy him a new one, and that first college-student Bible still resides in a place of honor on his shelf at home.

We were given an opportunity to attend classes with our students one morning, and heard them receiving excellent, choice material about Genesis (Kent Ross) and our Abrahamic Faith (Anthony Buzzard). As we were sitting there, it suddenly occurred to me that Anthony Buzzard was standing in about the exact spot that my dresser would have been 20 years ago when this building had been the girls' dorm.

I could hear the voices and the giggling as we went from room to room, as we traded the latest in information on boys and hairdos. Once in a while we had even actually done some serious studying. The names of the girls marched back across the years: Kathy New, Sue Harbison, Margaret Holley, Joyce Railton, Cindy and Sandy Ford, Janet Heiser, Sue Alcumbrack, many more. I tried to picture each room and where it had been on that floor.

* * *

Later, in the afternoon, we met with the instructors for a sharing session about any concerns or questions we might have. As we talked, the question was raised by one instructor why we thought our children

had chosen OBC.

At first I thought I didn't really know, but as I contemplated it there—and then throughout the afternoon—it suddenly became crystal clear. Our son had talked about OBC since about age 10, and had never really considered going anywhere else, at least for the first year after high school.

Why? It was really very simple. Through the intervening years, the joyous times of our lives had been when we had renewed friendships with those with whom we had gone to school at OBC. Paul had observed this over and over.

We had shared stories, laughs, and many incidents about our time spent there. He knew OBC had shaped our lives, and we had never been the same people after that. We had found, many of us, Christian partners to marry and share the rest of our lives with. We had watched each other's courtship rituals, at-



The author visiting with Barbara and Anthony Buzzard.

tended our respective showers and weddings, and many of us had chosen the same obstetrician to deliver our first children. We had lived together, eaten together, prayed together, studied together, done dishes and chores together, laughed together, and cried together.

Oh, yes, there were lots of tears, too. It wasn't all love and sunshine. There were many times when we were lonely, homesick, afraid, unhappy, and downright mad. But we helped each other through it, and each experience shaped our personalities and character to be ready to

work better in our life's ministry, whatever that might be.

That's what it was all about. It certainly wasn't the most prestigious place to go to college, not even *accredited*, for goodness' sake, and some of the facilities were lacking in cosmetic beauty, to say the least.

But where else could we hear God's Word presented so well, and receive so much individual attention for the learning process? Where else, on a college level, could we study the truth?

There is nowhere else, as far as we know, even today. That's what we had passed on to our son.

The last few years we have had the privilege of becoming acquainted with Anthony Buzzard and his family. Many of you know the story of his search for the truth and a place where he could find it taught. He has given up a great deal to become an instructor at OBC, where he is able to inspire a zeal for knowledge that

those of us who have grown up in the church would find difficult to match. Some of us are complacent about our faith; he's still on fire about it, and wants to share it with any one who will listen. This is a unique opportunity for our young people.

* * *

Where are all of those college students of 20 years ago today? Many of us are lay-people who work actively in the church; some of us are ministers or ministers' (please turn to page 14)

Thanks for the Memories

(Continued from page 13)

wives, some went on to other colleges for degrees in other fields; some have died; some have, sadly, left the church completely. But none of us I'm sure—none of us—have ever been the same, whether we realize it or not.

As I see my piano students troop in and out of my home now, year after year, I can't help remembering to be patient, as Jean Doan was back then. I have been very successful as a piano teacher because of that.

I still remember my Bible verses from Bible Introduction class, drilled into my head to remain for all time like signposts of my faith. I'm sure they will never fade.

The heritage continues with my 15-year-old, Aimee, and her brother, Paul, and the beautiful Church of God young people they have come to know over the years from all over the country. Each year as they meet at camps they renew their faith and friendship.

These are the young people who will



A recent staff retreat.

be the Church of God in the years to come. As Kent Ross said to us recently, "It seems imperative that each new generation re-discover the truth." We must instill in our young people the desire for Biblical excellence, so that our cherished faith will continue and our individual commission from Jesus Christ will not fail.

Could your young person benefit from a year at OBC? The only answer must be an emphatic "Yes!"

Before Russ and I left the campus we made sure we did one more thing. We went back to the spot where we had shared our first tender kiss. Then it was the entry to the girl's dorm; now it's the college vestibule. We giggled, kissed again guiltily for fear we'd be seen, like those two young college kids had so long ago, and made another memory.

Then I thanked God for all the circumstances that came together to bring me to that place at that time in my life 20 years ago.

SEEING THE INVISIBLE ONE

By Pastor Stephen Bolhous

As this is being written, a dramatic climatic change is occurring. I'm not speaking about the diminishing ozone layer, but the annual fading of summer's deep leafy green into the bright colors of autumn. All along the roadways tinges of color are becoming more prominent. It seems as though the Master Artist with palette and brush is gradually changing his entire canvas. The field grasses are now amber colored, punctuated by the mustard yellow clumps of goldenrod dancing in the breeze. Our back yard is littered with brown-green acorns dropped by the ancient oaks. Even the air has a different quality—gone is the stifling humidity of a couple of months ago; now there's a crispness which is particularly pleasant when accompanied by the warm afternoon sun. Those who live in year-round warm climates, in lands between the tropic of cancer and the tropic of capricorn, cannot fully appreciate the daily wonder of the changing of the seasons.

The changing seasons are a gift to us from God, who is Lord of the seasons. "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22, NASB). God has promised us the annual sequence of the seasons. That's a very assuring promise because the seasons serve some important purposes. The change is beneficial to many trees and plants; winter provides a necessary rest to trees. Also the ongoing rotation of the seasons provides an ever-changing scene for our viewing and heightens man's enjoyment of life.

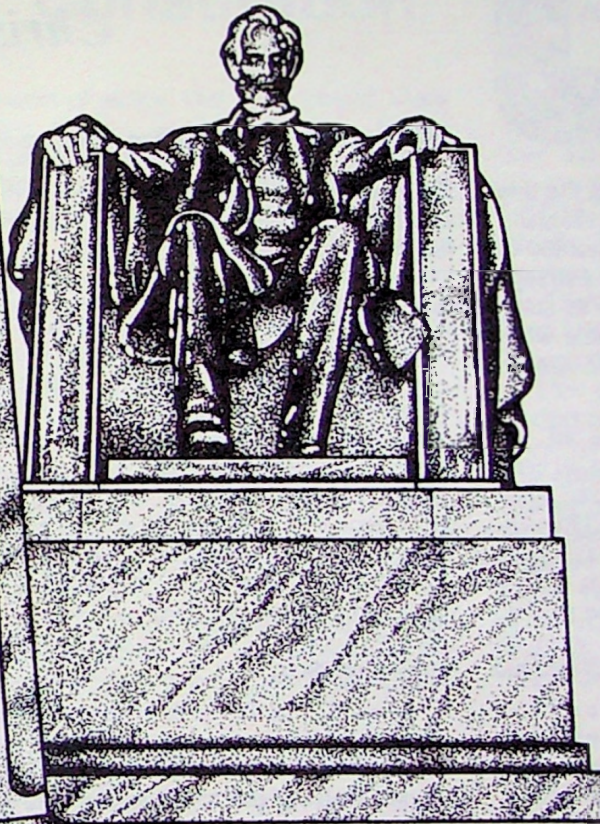
The greatest purpose of the seasons is their role as a witness. To the citizens of Lystra, Paul said, "He did not leave Himself without witness, in that he did good and gave you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons" (Acts 14:17, NASB). To the Romans he wrote, "Since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made" (Rom. 1:20, NASB). Nature in its changing courses is visible evidence of him who is invisible.

The lyrics to one of the songs by Ray Stevens include the phrase, "There is none so blind as he who will not see." It would be a terrible waste to possess two functioning eyes and then live in darkness; it is equally tragic to be surrounded by evidence but fail to grasp its significance. Don't be blind to the evidence of God that can be found just by looking out the window. In Romans, chapter one, Paul spoke of those who failed to acknowledge God from the evidence by saying, "Even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools" (vv. 21, 22, NASB). He who sees but does not comprehend is foolishly shortchanging his own life by excluding God!

This autumn as you look at all the colors, see also the invisible One of whom they testify!



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?

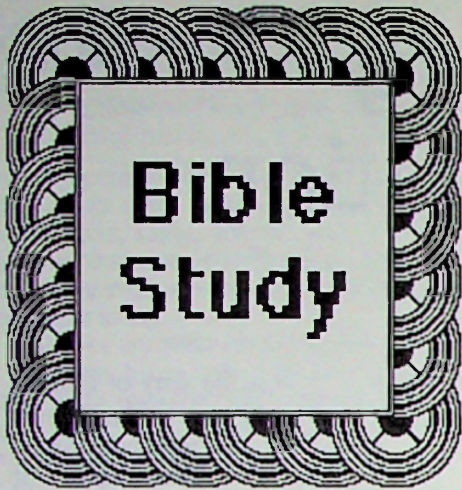
We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown.

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.



"If You Meet Some Who Say That Their Souls Go To Heaven When They Die, *Do Not Believe That They Are Christians!*"

The remarkable words forming the title of this article come from a theologian.¹ Writing in about 150 A.D., he wanted to warn his fellow Christians about a strange new idea which was beginning to creep into Christianity. The idea was that when Christians die they go at once to heaven to be with the Lord.

But isn't that exactly what all the churches tell us now? Haven't we all been taught that the faithful go to heaven when they die? We certainly have—and for centuries. In fact, the churches have been promising heaven at death from a time very shortly after our theologian tried to warn against the intrusion of what he thought was a dangerous, misleading, and very unbiblical idea.

Unbiblical? Misleading? But surely the very point of being a Christian is to go to heaven at death?

Amazingly, not according to the Bible. It all depends from where you want to get your beliefs. If you trust the traditions, then rest assured that for centuries "heaven at death" has been the standard view. If, however, you want to enquire further you will be surprised to know that there was a time when Christians did not believe that the dead go to heaven.

Our theologian provides proof that heaven-going was a brand-new idea for Christians about 100 years after the death of the apostles. Until that time Christians were taught that they went nowhere at death—except into the grave. Into the grave to sleep in blessed unconsciousness until . . .

. . . The Resurrection. And the Resurrection was to be the great event of the future associated with the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST. This, if you will examine the Bible candidly, is the view of Jesus and the apostles. How important is

their teaching to you? Surely worth the sacrifice of a piece of tradition based on Greek philosophy and not on the Bible.

That's where the problem lies. The Greek philosophers taught that man has a separable soul which can be—so to speak—detached from the body at death and survive as a conscious person. But the Hebrew writers of the Bible disagreed violently. They maintained that man is a unit who dies—the whole of him dies. His only hope is to be resurrected—the whole man—at the Resurrection when Jesus comes back. That hasn't happened yet. And so none of the dead are alive yet, except of course Jesus who was dead for only three days.

After all, the Bible does say that "the dead do not know anything at all"² (Is that what you have been teaching your children?) It also predicts that "many who are sleeping in the dust of the ground will awake, some to everlasting life."³ That tells us what the dead are now doing. Sleeping. And where they are doing it. In the ground. Such verses are for the honest believer, hungry for simple truth.

We should add that Jesus himself looked forward to the day when the dead in their tombs would "hear the voice of the Lord and come forth [in the resurrection], some to life."⁴ So Jesus did not teach that the dead had gone to heaven. Nor did Peter. He said that "David has not gone to heaven."⁵

Would you believe it? In another verse Jesus said that "*no one has gone to heaven.*"⁶

Look these verses up for yourself. You will then see why the theologian we quoted from the second century was so worried about this strange unchristian idea that the dead go to heaven when they die.

We can all be victims of wrong information. The Bible is designed to rescue us from mistaken ideas. "Heaven in the Bible is nowhere the destination of the dying."⁷ That's what a contemporary theologian says. He is right. And so was our second-century theologian who warned against the non-Christian teaching that the dead go to heaven at death.

We all have to choose: careless acceptance of the comfortable status quo, or a search for the priceless treasure of Truth. Perhaps we have alerted you to the fact that all is not well with popular tradition.

Join us in the search for real Christian beliefs.

Note: What about the thief on the cross? At death he was with Jesus who promised that he would be "in the heart of the earth" for three days (Matt. 12:40). *In the future* the thief will be resurrected to life in the Paradise of God's kingdom on earth (Rev. 2:7). So Jesus told him with solemn emphasis: "Truly I say to you *today*, you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Neither Jesus nor the thief could have gone to heaven the day they died. Jesus had not yet gone there three days later! (John 20:17.) Placing the comma *after* "today" in Luke 23:43 prevents it from contradicting every other text about death.

FOOTNOTES

¹Justyn Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, ch. 80.

²Ecclesiastes 9:5.

³Daniel 12:2.

⁴John 5:27, 28.

⁵Acts 2:34.

⁶John 3:13.

⁷J. A. T. Robinson, *In the End God*, p. 104.

By Anthony Buzzard

Coming:

By
Pastor
James Mattison

A New Constitution

Part II
(Continued from
the October
Prophecy Page)

The Main Problem and its Solution

The abuse of power was the main problem these delegates faced. They set out to curb this abuse of power "by a constitutional arrangement setting interest against interest, ambition against ambition, power against power" (Alpheus Mason, constitutional scholar). Therefore "the Constitution created a 'federalism' of adversaries with often opposing interests" (*The Plain Truth*). These thoughts came down from the idea of the French political philosopher, Montesquieu, that "Every man invested with power is apt to abuse it. . . . There can be no liberty where the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person or body of magistrates." They wrote the Constitution with this thought everpresent in their minds.

Yet even after their work was finished, the delegates were unsure this new government concept would work because of the inherent evils of human nature. Their idea was that human power must be controlled if liberty is to have a chance. Their problem was to balance strong central power against human liberty and the common good. They needed to create a government strong enough to control the governed, yet in turn, this same controlling government would have to itself be controlled. To these men there were two evils: absolute monarchy and unlimited democracy, which, in turn could lead to despotism or mob rule.

Would the States Ratify?

After their work was done, the worry of the delegates was, would the states ratify this new Constitution? It was, as Washington put it, a miracle that it was finally ratified June 21, 1788, by nine states. Rhode Island was the last to ratify, and not until George Washington was installed as our first president.

The Bill of Rights

The original writers of the Constitution had opted against a Bill of Rights. But the

storm of protest that arose caused Madison to rise up in the newly formed House of Representatives and ask that a Bill of Rights be proposed and either adopted or rejected. September 25, 1789, final drafts of 12 amendments were passed by Congress and presented to the states for ratification. Ten of them were ratified at that time and since then, new amendments have been ratified.

Through the years, the U. S. Constitution has been hailed as a stroke of genius. "The influence of the U. S. Constitution can be seen in nearly all of the 162 national constitutions in existence today" (Tkach). Other nations have copied many of the checks and balances in our Constitution.

Yet the truth remains that man's best form of government cannot serve man's needs because man's needs must be taken care of spiritually.

The Need for God in Government

The reason our nation has been blessed so much even though immoral many times is that we acknowledge God in our government. In general, mankind has rejected the God of heaven, who only can cause governments to succeed.

"Understand this: The world's problems are essentially *spiritual* in nature. . . . They cannot be solved through the use of mere physical knowledge alone. In rejecting the knowledge of God, man has had to rely on his own philosophies—on humanly devised approaches that seem right to him" (Keith Stump, *The Plain Truth*, Sept., 1987). Remember Proverbs 14:12: "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

A New Government Coming

Few people understand that Jesus' message of the kingdom of God is a message about government—about a literal, world-ruling government, soon to be established here on earth.

Jesus' gospel announces that the imperfect, humanly devised governments of men will pass into history, to be replaced by the world-ruling perfect government of God. Revelation 11:15 brings this out clearly: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (God speaking of things to come as though they were already here.)

This coming government will be the perfect one. It will be ruled by the perfect Head of State, Jesus Christ, Son of God. His concern for righteousness and peace among men will be backed by the power to implement every change necessary to improve the quality of life—"from toxic waste cleanup to safe streets, from fair distribution of land to complete job training, from fair judges to safe borders" (Tkach).

Peace and stability will be universal. "Many nations will come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion the law shall go forth" (Mic. 4:2, New King James).

Yes, it is true. Jesus Christ will return to earth to rule the nations, and he will present a new Constitution with a better Bill of Rights. "Behold, the days are coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. . . . I will put My law in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people" (Jer. 31:31, 33).

Oppression will cease on earth. Separation of powers will no longer be needed in government—because the Prime Minister of this world government will be the King, the perfect and just Prince of Peace, the Messiah, Jesus Christ!

Are you ready for that new government to come? Will you be a priest and a king in it? You can be.

"Grandpa, What's the Constitution?"

Children's Page

By Rachel Carr

"Grandpa, tell us a story."

"So, you young 'uns want a story, do you?"

"Please, Grandpa. You're the best storyteller ever."

"Well, set yourselves down here and get comfortable and we'll see what we can do about a story."

So Mary and Edward settled down by Grandpa's rocker on that rainy November Saturday in 1845. There was nothing they liked better than to hear the tales Grandpa told about his own childhood.

Grandpa's Story

It was a bright sunny day near the end of May. I was setting the table for mother, which was quite a chore. You see, we had boarders. Those were people who paid us to sleep in some of our extra bedrooms and to eat with us. My father had been injured in the war when we won our country's independence from England. So he was unable to work full days. The money the boarders paid helped us to make ends meet.

Rap, rap, rap sounded the big brass knocker on our front door. I was glad to escape my job for a moment to answer it. A tall stranger was there. He asked if he could talk with my mother.

"Mother, there's a man to see you," I called. As I returned to my job in the dining room, I kept an ear cocked toward the front door.

"Good afternoon, sir. May I help you?"

"Good afternoon, ma'am. I certainly hope you can. I have just arrived to represent my state at the Constitutional Convention. Someone said that you take in boarders. I am hoping that you might have room for me."

"Yes, we do take boarders. And right now we have just one room vacant. We would be glad to have you stay with us during the Convention."

"You are most kind. I will have my bags brought here immediately."

So that is how it came about that Mr. King, one of the delegates from Massachusetts, spent nearly four months in our Philadelphia home.

Back then in 1787 our country was very young—just 11 years old.

"That's as old as I am right now, Grandpa," said Edward.

"Are you 11 already, Edward? My, it seems just yesterday that I held you in my arms."



Those early years were rather difficult for our young country. We were free from England, but we hadn't yet learned how to be a nation on our own. So each state sent representatives to Philadelphia to work out the problems. The main thing they needed to do was to invent a new set of rules for the country.

"You mean countries need rules, too?" asked seven-year-old Mary.

They sure do. You remember how God gave Moses the 10 Commandments? God knew his people needed rules to help them live the right way. Those wise men who got together so long ago knew our people needed rules to guide the government of their new country.

All through the summer

our delegates spent long days at the old State House. There the delegates discussed and debated ideas about how our country should be run.

"Grandpa, did you get to visit with your delegate in the evenings? Did he tell you what he did all day?"

Well, Edward, I surely did want to talk with him. I wondered what important things those men discussed. But there was a rule of secrecy—delegates were not allowed to talk with anyone about their work. So all of us in the family just tried to remember

knew things were going well in the State House.

Then summer drew to a close, and the work of the Constitutional Convention also came to an end. On Monday, September 17, 1787, the delegates voted on the completed Constitution and signed their names. Their work was finished.

"I imagine they had a big celebration then," said Edward.

As a matter of fact, they didn't. That came later. The delegates ate their last meal together, shook hands, and soberly said good-bye to each other.

"Well, Grandpa, when did they celebrate?" asked Mary.

When the Constitution was actually adopted and went into effect—that's when we celebrated. You see, after the Constitution was written, the states needed to ratify it, or approve it. It took months for that to happen. It's been so long that I have forgotten the exact date now. But I'll never forget the celebration. There was a huge parade in Philadelphia. I remember the big brass bands and the soldiers in their uniforms marching proudly down the streets. Everyone was so happy that now our country could go forward with a good set of rules to guide us.

This year our county is celebrating the 200th birthday of the Constitution. At this Thanksgiving season when you thank God for the things he has given us, remember to include these:

1. Our country.
2. The freedom we enjoy.
3. The wise men who established our country.
4. The Constitution which has served us so well for so long.



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(Transfer to line 2, page 19)

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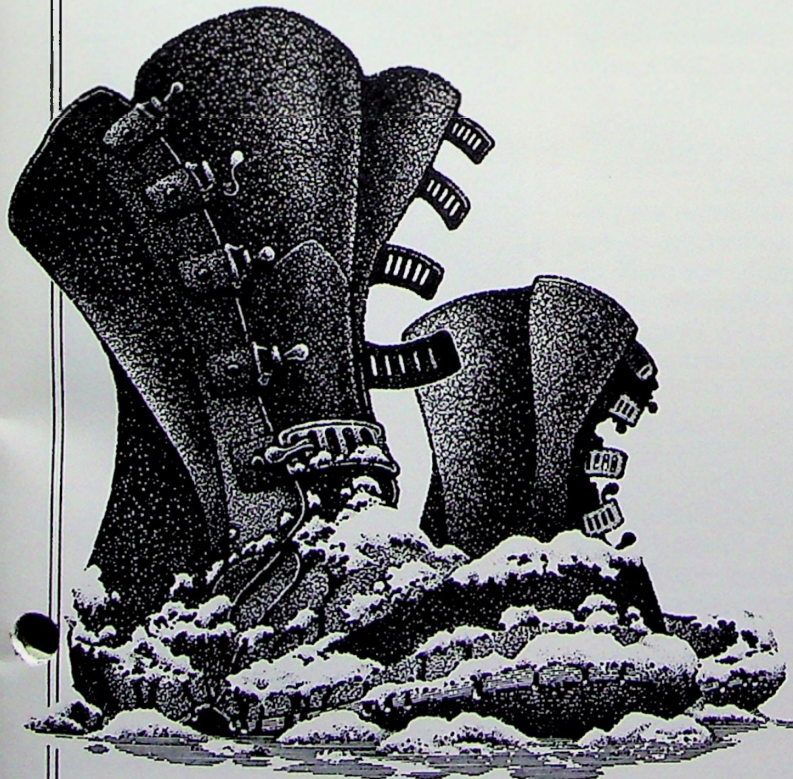
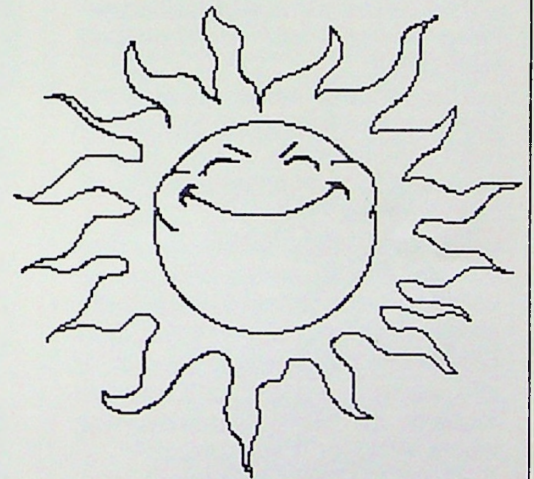
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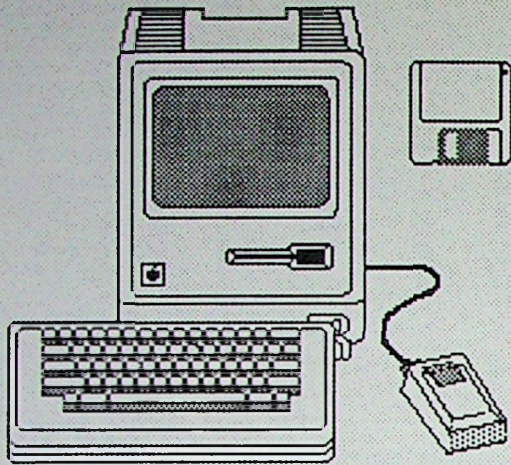
December, 1987/January, 1988

Step out of winter!
Get into the
sunny climate
of God's Word!



In this issue . . .

Building the Church of God with a Future
Taking the Gospel to England
Aaron's Star-Spangled Night
Why Some Churches Close . . .
Pollution
Solid Rock Reminders
What you can learn from the Holy War



Editor's Viewpoint

Great Holiday Giving

Now is the time to buy gifts for everyone on your list.

That's the message of your advertising council—and your nearest retail outlet.

The holidays mean more to the businessman than to anyone else—even well-meaning clergy take a back seat to the impact of commercial spending.

Without Christmas there would be no increase in consumerism, the economy, wages, salaries, and the gross national product. Even after Christmas, sales which extend far into January bring much needed income to North America—the whole world for that matter.

Thank God for Christmas.

Well, hard-boiled business types probably thank admen, pitchmen, workers in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and China. After all, without their contributions . . .

Then, of course, don't forget to mention the faithful holiday shopper, gladly nibbling on the bait.

But, of course, the best holiday giving comes from dedicated believers who first received God's gift of salvation and the hope of eternal life through the death of his Son. In response to all they have received, Christians demonstrate their care for others by giving of their time, talents, and treasure to bring them love and hope.

May you experience the true gifts.

Good Holiday Attendance

Reports printed in church bulletins indicate the attendance of new people in several of our churches. Two congregations in California experienced an increase of new Bible students. The Simi Valley church enjoyed the attendance and special home Bible studies of several new families. The Pomona church has also done special study with new families attending worship with the congregation.

The holidays are an excellent time for the church to reach out. May God be praised for the increase.

The holidays are an excellent time for the church to reach out. May God be praised for the increase.

Telephone Evangelism

Recently Warren Sorenson, Kent Ross, and your editor attended "The Phone's for You" seminar which guaranteed the premise: *Make 20,000 dialups, place 2,000 names on your prospect list, expect 200 new people in worship on 'Celebration Sunday' nine weeks later.*

Sound preposterous?

Maybe so, but the three who attended became convinced of the value of this program. For more information, merely write one of the attendants at Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061. We'll be glad to arrange time to share the details.

Recently your editor received a mailing from Specialty Software advertising their "Prospect Finder System." According to the brochure, the PFS makes use of a telephone and a computer to find prospects for your church. By using the system you are:

- Able to call 500 homes a day
- Able to find people interested in your church

- Able to find new move-ins in your community who are prospects for your church

- Able to advertise special meetings or services of your church
- Able to communicate your church and its ministry to hundreds of households every day

How does the system operate? Scripts are written and recorded to meet the particular need of your church and stored in computer memory. Phone numbers are generated by the system and it begins to dial these numbers at a pre-set time of your choice, reading the script in your voice to the one answering and recording his/her response.

For more information on the Prospect Finder System, contact Specialty Software, Box 5494, Evansville, IN 47715, phone 217/234/3531. Cost is \$1,495.



Virginia Conference leaders in session at the Seminar.

Church-Growth/Church-Planting Workshop

Staff members David Krogh, Warren Sorenson, Kent Ross, and your editor have presented this growth and planting seminar for churches in Louisiana and Virginia



Restitution Herald

Vol. 77 Dec./1987/Jan./1988 No. 3

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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PHOTOS: Russ Magaw, page 2; LeAnn Cline, page 3.

during November. Plans include taking the seminar to Minnesota in January and Indiana in March.

The seminar is an outgrowth of the state caucuses held last summer at General Conference. Important concepts include why and how to plant new churches, how to assist present churches in their growth, how to establish discipleship and evangelism training and programs in your church.

For more information write to the Church of God General Conference Outreach and Church Development Department, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

1988: the Acceptable Year of Lord

When Jesus was asked to participate in worship services at a synagogue in his home town, he read from the prophet Isaiah the prediction of freedom for all those in the prison of sin. The prophet referred to such a time as "the year of the LORD'S favor" (Isa. 61:2, RSV). Luke records that Jesus closed the book and began to tell those gathered in the synagogue: "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21, RSV).

God-fearing Jews reacted violently to his words. They bodily removed him from the worship place, intending to throw him over a cliff. But the Lord merely walked through them as one who conquers all; they were powerless to stop him.

How will we respond to the ministry of the Son of God in our lives

during 1988? Shall we allow him to free us from the sins that bind us, quenching our spirituality and actions of faith? Will we reject his leadership because we refuse his lordship over us? Can we find in him the power to make this year the best year of our lives? Will his cause be first in 1988, because we have allowed him to make this the acceptable year of the Lord?

'Tis the Basketball Season

As a youthful Lance Cline demonstrates, the slam dunk is the only way to



play the game! But it's teamwork that makes the dunk, and/or scoring of any kind, possible. For Christians,



the most important score took place on Calvary when Christ died for our sins. With sin slammed

in the face, believers then are dunked in the waters of baptism to seal their faith in what Christ has accomplished.

Letters

Halloween "Refreshingly Different"

Your opening article on Halloween in the October issue was good. I must admit I read it warily, having heard this issue of Halloween so many times before. But I enjoyed your article and found the conclusion to be refreshingly different. You came to a conclusion that includes a witness to God and allows us to enjoy some of the events associated with Halloween. (You could almost parallel this with Paul's teachings on meat sacrificed to idols.) I liked the fact that you brought our own biblical understanding into the picture. I don't believe

I've ever heard that done.

—Blanchard, MI.

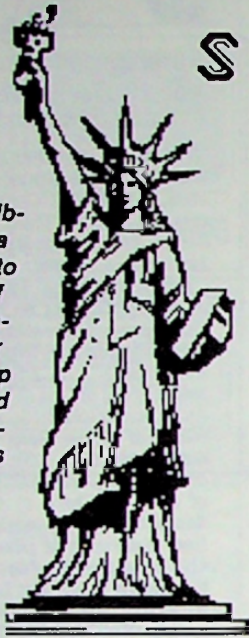
I Want Something Inspiring . . .

I would like an issue or two or more without articles on AIDS, abortion, or current "issues and topics of the day." Such subjects have been pretty well covered. I want to read some inspiring news, like the item I read recently telling of a doctor admitting that positive attitudes and love help in curing. So why don't we Christians spread more cheer and love?

—Phoenix, AZ.

SOLID ROCK REMINDERS

By Pastor Rex Cain



The Statue of Liberty provides a rock reminder to immigrants of America's freedoms. Similar reminders keep the church and its Christ foremost in minds today...

The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped in Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal. And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty; that you may fear the LORD your God for ever" (Josh. 4:19-24, RSV).

The one thing that is *permanent* in our lives is the fact that there is constant *change*.

Our lives are in a continual *flux*. Nothing remains *stable*.

This is why there is much to be said for ritual and ceremony. It has been observed in many charismatic organizations that the health and vitality of the group rises and falls based on the leadership at the time. If a strong and dynamic personality is in control, things go well. If they have a weak leader, things go downhill.

This is the reason the Catholic Church and many other heavy liturgical churches remain relatively strong and constant. The people in those groups lean not so much on the dynamics of a man, but lean more on the security and stability of ritual. The leader may even be unqualified in such churches, but it still has little effect. The people depend upon ceremony and liturgy to provide their basic needs for permanence, ritual, and the eternal perspective—that which remains the same.

I heard recently about a Jewish college student who was talking with his professor. Jews, as you know, depend heavily upon traditions. The Jewish student told his professor that he was going to one of the many Jewish celebrations the coming weekend at his synagogue. The professor asked why, reminding the student he was a professed atheist.

The Jewish boy replied, "Oh, that doesn't matter. I'm Jewish and this feast is a tradition."

You see, ritual and tradition have their place. They provide balance when all the world is unbalanced. They give meaning, it seems, when the world has gone mad.

When we reach a point in our lives

We need to return to the stone altar. This altar was designed as a permanent fixture to stimulate questions from the youth of the nation. When they asked, WHAT MEAN THESE STONES? the adults were to reply with a history lesson in the dynamics of the supernatural.

where we've concluded the world is insane, we want to escape and find purpose. Fortunately, God has provided some ritual in our lives that gives us a constant whereby we can regularly return to our spiritual roots and regain and maintain our spiritual composure... to say nothing of our emotional composure.

The 12 stones on the West bank of the Jordan river were designed as something permanent—a constant. In a real sense, it was the beginning of many traditions for the Jews which acted as a cohesive to keep the people's mind as one, and to focus it upon the important issues of life. Traditions, no doubt, have been a major force in keeping the nation of Israel unique and eternal in this world, in spite of the many who have tried to destroy it.

Any Christian today who takes the time to ponder the fact realizes we are in a desperate need for a return to things solid and basic. Today, there are so many cults, isms, and religions people find it like a rat maze; there seems no way to escape. They can't seem to cope with the various pressures along with the guilt they feel. Finally, in desperation, they throw up their hands and declare, "I've had it with religion! Why continue?"

Regrettably, many of their complaints are legitimate. It IS confusing. Standards are forever changing. No one is certain as to what is right and what is wrong.

The key to this problem, in my view, is that most people depend too heavily on the words and deeds of men and too little on reading, in private, and in the spirit of prayer, the Word of God. Here, one can find quiet pillars of stone-strength—peace in that which has not changed in 6000 years, and never will.

Looking for extraordinary meaning in ordinary lives . . .

We need to return to the stone altar, so to speak. This altar was designed as a permanent fixture to stimulate questions from the youth of the nation. When they asked, WHAT MEAN THESE STONES? the adults were to reply with a history lesson in the dynamics of the supernatural.

Simply, they were to tell the true story of how Israel twice passed through bodies of water on dry riverbeds by the miracle of Israel's living God.

In doing that, it was to "MAKE ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH KNOW THAT THE HAND OF THE LORD IS MIGHTY; THAT YOU MAY FEAR THE LORD YOUR GOD FOREVER" (v. 24).

Our "stone altar" on the side of moral insanity is the communion table. It is in the church—a constant, like the stone altar.

Our "stone altar" on the west side of moral insanity is the communion table. It is in the church—a constant, like the stone altar.

Its purpose, designed by the Lord God himself, is to be a permanent reminder of the basic issues of life and death, things we'd likely force to the back of our minds and forget unless we faithfully executed the command to observe this ritual, this ceremony, this spiritual tradition.

Its purpose is to bring us back to the river—as it were—to make us recall our deliverance, to force us to think on the wonder of a living God who has brought us out of bondage and into a spiritual land of plenty.

It reminds us that the river didn't part,



nor did the riverbed dry up by their own power, but by the graciousness and will of the true God.

The uninformed asked, "WHAT MEAN THESE STONES?" Today our children should be asking, "WHAT MEANS THIS TABLE?" The answer will forever be the same.

The table means we have been delivered from the bondage of slavery to sin, and set free on the other side of Christ's river of blood in a land of spiritual plenty.

As Israel enjoyed the houses and produce of the land which they did not build or plant, so we enjoy the salvation—hope of eternal life—for which we never toiled or worked. As Paul wrote, "IT IS A GIFT OF GOD."

This ritual—this tradition of communion—is good for us. In a world filled with change and threatening forces on every side, it is good . . . it is right . . . it is God's will that we come regularly to this "stone altar" and say, "WHAT MEANS THIS TABLE?"



HOLY WAR

By John Stewart, Fireside Publishing, 1987, hb, \$16.95.

One afternoon in 1985 John Stewart was shown a transcript of Jessica Hahn's testimony regarding a 1980 sexual encounter involving television evangelist Jim Bakker. Her story told of being pressured into the encounter, and described later attempts by officials of the PTL organization to ensure her silence about the matter.

Stewart assisted in confronting PTL with her charges, which finally resulted in PTL agreeing to a confidential settlement to compensate her.

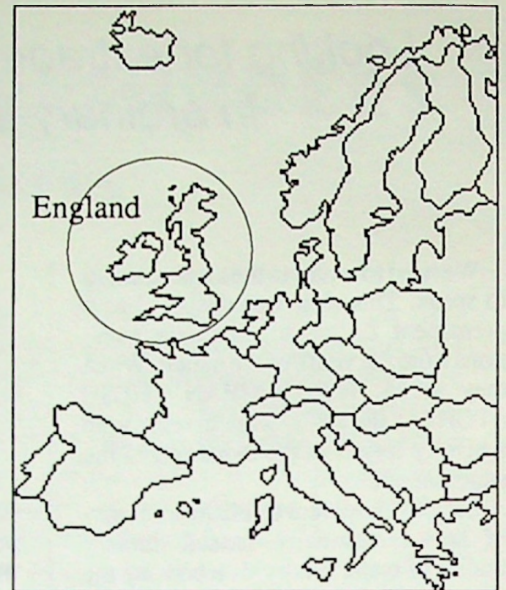
Word of Bakker's immorality reached evangelists Jimmy Swaggart, John Ankerberg, and Jerry Falwell. John Stewart worked with these men in an attempt to confront Bakker about his actions. Bakker later used this attempted confrontation as evidence of a hostile takeover plot, beginning a series of accusations among leading TV evangelists which the press dubbed the "Holy War."

This book is Stewart's evidence regarding Bakker's shady character and the apparent honest attempt by Swaggart and Ankerberg to urge confrontation and find peace so television evangelism can carry on unhindered by Bakker's sins. The reader will not find specific charges from Hahn, nor will he uncover the truth about homosexual charges against Bakker. The author merely gives assent to these as facts.

Stewart concludes by urging the reader to answer five questions about mass media evangelism: (1) Is the ministry financially accountable? (2) Is the ministry morally accountable? (3) Is the ministry accountable for its teaching? (4) Does the ministry use biblical principles of fundraising? (5) Is the ministry balanced?

TAKING THE GOSPEL TO ENGLAND

By Warren Sorenson



THE CHURCH OF GOD General Conference proposes that a church-planting project be launched in England. Considerable prayer and study have preceded this proposal. It is our conviction that the time has come to become more global with the witness of Christ. The opportunity in England is viewed as a beginning point for extending the ministry of the Church of God. This article contains some of the factors which resulted in selecting England for a church-planting project.

England is a mission field. The consensus of many who have been in Christian service in England and who have first-hand knowledge of the religious atmosphere of the people is that England must be considered a mission field. Several factors indicate that faith is declining and involvement in Christianity is waning in the nation—which marks it as a mission field.

For example, less than 20 percent of the population has church involvement or believes in the Bible as the Word of God. Only three percent of Britons are strong spiritual believers; 17 percent of the population are nominal believers, and 97 percent are in need of mission endeavor.

Contributing factors leading to the present spiritual condition in England is the fact that the Church of England has lost touch with the vast majority of people. What has resulted is a "Cath-

edral Religion" of ornate buildings housing a handful of people who cling to a weak message. Of course sociological aspects contributed to the present condition, but here we note only that a church with a more vibrant ministry in touch with the population would have diminished other factors.

With this dismal picture of the state of the church in England and the attitudes of the people, upon what grounds can we move into this mission field with a church-planting project?

1. Resident dedicated believers. John Cunningham and Ken Newman, residents of England in the town of St. Albans, are dedicated believers who share the same doctrinal views as the Church of God. They have attended ministerial conference in Oregon, Illinois, on more than one occasion; they are eager for fellowship with persons who share a kindred faith.

John and Ken are supportive of a church-planting project. For a couple years they have conducted Bible studies with various people. They also contacted individuals who responded to our literature-distribution campaign.

2. Favorable evaluation. Warren and Irene Sorenson's March trip to England resulted in a favorable evaluation of planting a church there. They

observed that some churches in England are growing and young families are responding to their ministry. Such churches have returned to a more basic Bible orientation with home Bible studies during the week and a relevant message from Scripture which reaches people on Sunday.

The Sorensons attended one such church, conversing with members with young families. They responded to the church because of its Bible message. Warren and Irene also talked with people on the street and in their homes. The receptivity of these people supported the conclusion that planting a church in England is a possibility.

3. Hunger for a Bible message. Because the state church has failed to effectively reach people, when a church presents a basic Bible message people respond and that church grows. The conclusion is inescapable: there is a hunger in England for a valid Biblical church. The Church of God, with a Bible study ministry, can reach many of those who are looking for a Bible-based church.

4. Conclusions confirmed. Warren Sorenson conducted a personal interview with Mr. Eddie Gibbs at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. Mr. Gibbs has extensive experience in church planting in England;

he is referred to as Mr. Church Growth of England. During this interview Mr. Gibbs confirmed the conclusions which have already been expressed in this article. He added helpful information in the development of a strategy to launch the church-planting project in England. This information will be included in the outline which follows.

THE STRATEGY FOR PLANTING A CHURCH IN ENGLAND

The strategy for planting the church is based on methods tested in England, considers the attitudes of the people, and takes into account the cultural and religious atmosphere.

1. The pastor. Pastor Jeff Fletcher will move to England, locating in the North London area by September, 1988. Jeff is a graduate of Oregon Bible College and is presently pastoring the East Oregon Church of God. Jeff's father, formerly from Fonthill, Ontario, Canada, is also a graduate of Oregon Bible College. Some of the characteristics of the people of Canada are similar to those of the people of England. Jeff's roots will assist him in working with English people.

Jeff is married to the former Karen Burnham; they have an infant son. The selection of Jeff as the candidate for the church-planting pastor was made after much prayer. Personal interviews were conducted with Jeff and Karen involving President David Krogh, Vice-President Warren Sorenson, and Missions Coordinator Judy Myers. A written questionnaire was also submitted on which Jeff and Karen expressed their philosophy of missions regarding this specific project.

2. Preparation. Jeff and Karen will be involved in reading, research, and training during the coming months. The reading list will include books recommended by Eddie Gibbs. The training will include sessions with Warren Sorenson covering principles of church planting and church growth. A personal interview with Eddie Gibbs is also recommended.

3. Exploratory trip. This spring Warren Sorenson will take Jeff and Karen to England to discover a specific target area. This will be done by investigating various areas for potential in the development of a church. This investigation will be based upon factors which help to gauge the receptivity of people in relation to the gospel.

Housing will also be sought for the Fletchers during this trip. Since rental property is scarce, it will be necessary for the Fletchers to purchase a home. However, if temporary rental is available, we propose that this be done as a means of allowing more time in the selection of a home.

4. Specific strategy. The Fletchers will move to England in late August and begin to develop the church using the following strategy.

a. Meet and develop relationships with people. It will be necessary to gain the trust of new people to open the opportunity of sharing the Bible with them.



b. Involve people in Bible study. The popularity of home Bible studies will be helpful in implementing this stage of the strategy. These studies will include teaching the Bible for the value of what it says even though some of those in the group may not accept it as the Word of God. Many people in Eng-

land will study the Bible for the practical advice it provides, even if they don't believe it is inspired. As the value of Bible content is recognized, a greater confidence will be established in its credibility. As people are exposed to the Word of God and the person of Jesus Christ, spiritual changes can be expected. As trust and interest grow, a greater emphasis will be placed on a personal response to Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of man.

c. Evangelism time factor. It is recognized that evangelism in England requires more time than in the U.S., or in some other countries. It may take two years from the time of the first contact to bring a person to the acceptance of Jesus Christ as personal Savior. Because of the time it takes for effective evangelism, a commitment of five years will be necessary for the church planting project.

d. House churches are popular in England. Because of this factor the Bible studies will be developed with this in mind. We are not intending to construct a church building in the immediate future, but intend to meet in homes or in a rented facility. There may be a time in the distant future when a building would seem advisable. That will be left to future consideration.

e. Beginning in homes. The Bible study groups will meet in homes. The various groups will be brought together at the appropriate time for a public worship service. The formation of the church will follow this public meeting of the various home Bible-study groups.

FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT

We are presently involved in a fund-raising effort to raise \$60,000 as the initial cost to launch the England church-planting project. All funding for this project initially will need to come from contributions. The Church of God General Conference is sponsoring the project and will receive all contributions and disburse them according to the expenses incurred.

BUILDING THE CHURCH OF GOD—

BY DAVID KROGH

Editor's note: This is the final article of three parts, excerpting Bro. Krogh's address at last summer's General Conference at Calvin College.

THE CHURCH OF GOD of the Abrahamic Faith is being called to a vision that is so big that if God does not help us, it will surely fail.

This is a twofold vision that includes the revitalization of our existing churches and the planting of 75 new churches between now and the turn of the century. This vision is imperative as the outgrowth of our desire to be obedient.

Matthew 28:19, 20 commands us to disciple, baptize, and teach the lost. In Luke 15, Jesus tells about the lost sheep, coin, and son. Twice in this chapter, Jesus says that there is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents (vv. 7, 10). Bringing sinners to repentance brings joy to God. That is God's desire. And, therefore, in obedience we must pursue our vision. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should be brought to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9).

As our vision is pursued, several changes will be implemented:

1. Beginning this fall there will be a new focus in Oregon Bible College ministry courses, which will include greater emphasis on church planting and ministering to new people. Our educational program at Oregon Bible College will provide a balance between ministry to existing churches and ministry to new churches, between ministry to existing members and ministry to new members.

2. At Oregon Bible College there will be a renewed emphasis upon practical ministry. Learning from textbooks and learning theory will be balanced with on-the-job training and learning by doing. Students and staff, beginning this fall, are going to be much more involved in actual ministry.

3. As a part of our increasing involvement of students and staff in ministry, the Board of Directors has given approval for Warren and Irene Sorenson to move to Colorado Springs in the fall of 1988 to plant a second church. This will become a laboratory site and an extension branch of Oregon Bible College where several students will actually be involved in planting a new church under the direction of staff. This church-planting project will apply all of the principles of church planting and church growth that have been learned over the years through the experiences of others and the experiences that we have had in the Church of God. The new congregation will become a model for the entire church to see what can happen when God's Spirit is at work through the use of proven principles.

As plans continue to unfold in the use of students and staff in planting new churches, the Board of Directors is giving prayerful and careful consideration to the eventual relocation of the Conference and College. We believe that it is essential for our College and for our headquarters to be located in a place that represents the best opportunity for outreach to the society in which we live. There is a world shift of population to urban and suburban areas. We need the best possible environment for the education of future leaders of the church. Our goal is to keep our church on the cutting edge of ministry. Please be assured that

CHALLENGE OF THE FUTURE

no precipitous action will be taken without delegate approval and adequate information.

A New Beginning

What is it that will mark 1987 as a transition period in our church?

There are several new beginnings that we are making:

1. We are beginning to have a better understanding of the relationship between the means and the end, i.e., a better understanding of our mission of the redemption of the lost, accomplished by teaching the distinctive message which has caused the Church of God to be a separate body of believers.
2. New behavior patterns which will demonstrate balance between our love for truth and our love for people.
3. A new commitment to incorporate evangelism and disciple-making ministries into the life of the church.
4. New action in reaching out in love to the lost.
5. New zeal, unparalleled in the history of our movement, as we strengthen existing churches and plant new ones.

Conclusion

As members of the Church of God we need to make a specific response—an indication of willingness to do three things:

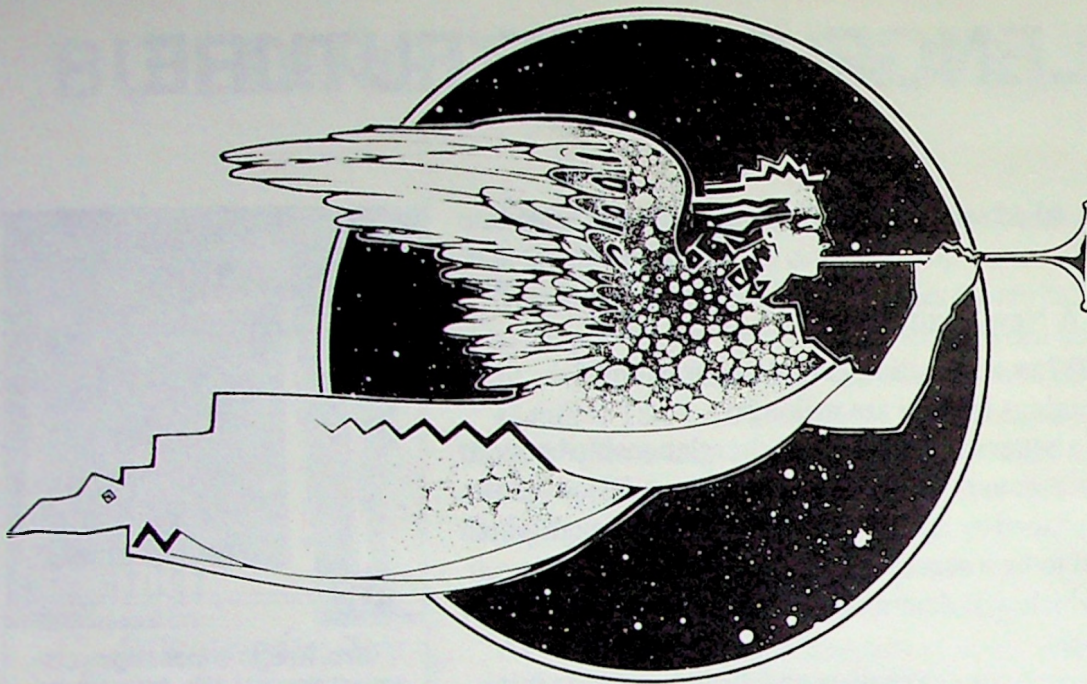
1. To affirm the dream and the vision of planting new churches and strengthening existing churches. Are we committed to building our church on a foundation of truth, constructed of evangelism, disciple making, action, commitment, and love? Are we ready to strengthen our local churches and help plant new ones?
2. To make a commitment to carry this dream and vision to our local churches, and to challenge others to join with others to move ahead.
3. To pray that God will create a deeper love for people in our hearts, and that he will show us some specific action which we can take to be involved in evangelism and discipling ministries.

We do not minimize the effort that many have put forth over the years to bring the church to where it is today. But we need many more to catch the vision and commit themselves to the task.

The Bible message of redemption and truth proclaimed by the Church of God is the message for the whole world. This is the message that all men need to hear. This is the message men want to hear. They want to become members of the Bible Church of God. They want to become a part of this great movement in the concluding days before the Lord returns. May God help us to move forward with boldness.



Bro. Krogh's message centered around the four posts holding the roof over the solid foundation. Gospel truth must be presented lovingly in such a way as to cause a four-fold response: action, evangelism, commitment, and discipling.



Aaron's Star- Spangled Night

IT WAS A STILL NIGHT. No breeze stirred the air. Aaron watched the fire burn low within the circle of stones. Then he lay back on the ground and considered the stars that filled the sky . . . *so many stars!* He remembered that God had promised Abraham that his descendants would number as many as the stars in the sky. He didn't *know* that many people. The sky was filled with stars.

Aaron was the youngest of the shepherds. His father was a shepherd as was his father before him. He did not mind being a shepherd. It gave him time to daydream—a thing his father said he did too much of the time. “One day you will be daydreaming, and you’ll let some of the sheep stray off, or a wild animal will come in and kill a few!” his father had warned him.

But this was a perfect night. The sheep were all quiet. Amos, his shaggy brown dog, had come to stretch out beside him, pressing closely for warmth, for the night air had a chill in it and the fire was dying down. He should get up and put more wood on it, he thought, but was reluctant to move from his comfortable position.

Suddenly, the sky started to lighten as if it were dawn—no, brighter than dawn! He started to his feet to look about him. The dog pressed closer against his leg, trembling with fear. The other shepherds, including his father, had roused and were talking in frightened voices. Then they were still—Aaron could hear his own heart

beating—for now there was a voice starting to speak. He turned quickly to his right and then fell to his knees, for there suspended in the air was a creature that could only be an angel from God! The angel was saying, “Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” Then there were many angels singing a beautiful chorus:

“Glory to God, Glory to God in the highest;
And on earth, peace, good will to men.”

And then they were gone—as quickly as they had come. The shepherds, voices pitched high with excitement, agreed, “We must go into Bethlehem to see this baby!” and began to gather their heavy mantles and staffs.

Before he even asked his father, Aaron knew who would be staying on the hillside. The sheep could not be left alone. He was the youngest. He did not bother to gather up his staff, but busied himself putting more wood on the coals. Before they turned to walk hurriedly away toward the little town, his father laid a hand on Aaron’s shoulder. “I’m sorry, Aaron,” he said, and turned quickly to follow the others.

Several months have passed since that night. Aaron thought about it sometimes during the long nights. Tonight he is alone except for the dog Amos. Two of the men

have small sons and spend the dark hours keeping watch over them while their fearful wives try to sleep. His own grandmother is gravely ill and his father feels his presence necessary in a house already full of relatives speaking in hushed tones to one another. Aaron is glad he is not there.

Early in the evening the wind had changed directions and, with the change, had suddenly turned chilly. He had quickly walked the hillsides picking up extra firewood for the night. When he had finished, foraging as far as he dared from the sheep, he decided with some of the longer pieces he would make a shelter, with its back to the wind, facing the fire. When he had positioned the last stick, he surveyed it critically. It would meet his needs, he decided. But he also determined that he would dismantle it early in the morning before anyone else could see it. When the fire was burning brightly, he spread his heavy cloak on the ground inside the shelter. Then he crawled into the space and lay facing the fire. It was a very cozy little nest.

As darkness came, the sheep settled in a low area not far from the circle of fire light. Aaron ate the food his mother had sent, sharing scraps with the dog. Then he lay back and drew a section of the cloak about him. He was alone. Well, almost alone. He reached a hand and rested it on Amos’ thick fur. Then he heard a low growl deep in the dog’s throat. Not moving, Aaron quickly scanned the hillside for signs of the wild

animals that could silently slink into a flock of sheep. He could see no menacing shadows. Men? Even as he reached for his sturdy staff he knew that he and the dog could never defend the sheep against the marauding gangs of men who on occasion roamed the hills at night. Better to hide, he thought. But no! His father had chosen these hills because of the smooth pasture. There was not even an outcropping of stones to hide among.

The dog was still growling softly. The sheep lay quietly, unaware of any danger. Then Aaron heard what the dog must have heard a few minutes earlier. He listened intently. There it was again. On the rough road that ran not far away something or someone was coming nearer. Then he saw him in the bright moonlight—a man leading a heavily loaded ass. Aaron watched as he left the road, pulling the animal behind him. Soon he stepped into the firelight. Without preliminaries he said, "I saw your fire and would like to spend the night here. We had planned to travel all night, but it is too cold for her and the child." Then Aaron saw that a woman was sitting on the animal and that she cradled a child in her arms. "Yes, of course," he stammered, "and they may sleep in my shelter," he indicated the little nest of sticks.

The man helped the woman from the donkey's back and she sank gratefully down on the mantle within the little structure still cradling the child against her. The man drew a section of the mantle over them, then turned to Aaron. "Thank you. We are grateful for your kindness." He lifted other packs from the animal, then wrapped himself in a heavy robe. He lay down near the fire. Aaron, no longer fearful, sat down. "As I said," the man continued, "we'd planned to travel all night, on our way to Egypt, but it's much colder than we'd expected. Too cold and hard for them." He

looked again at the woman and child. She slept already. "He must be protected. He is a very special child." Aaron smiled to himself. Every father thought his firstborn son "special." Weren't two of the shepherds home tonight protecting their "special" sons? The man repeated softly, "A very special child." Aaron caught a strange note in the man's voice and turned to stare at him and then at the sleeping child. "Surely not," he thought. "He looks like any other child." But his mind did swift calculations. Yes. The time would be right. He stared again at the man, his eyes questioning. The nameless man read his thoughts, and his mouth formed the single word "yes." Aaron lay back on the ground. The stars were blurred before his eyes. That *he* should after all see the child; that he should be sheltered in his poor little hut! Now he wished that he had found straighter sticks, had worked more carefully! "I must tell Father and the others." A hundred thoughts whirled in his mind.

Aaron looked now and saw that the man slept, the lines of fatigue gone from his face. Aaron slept in the warm glow of the

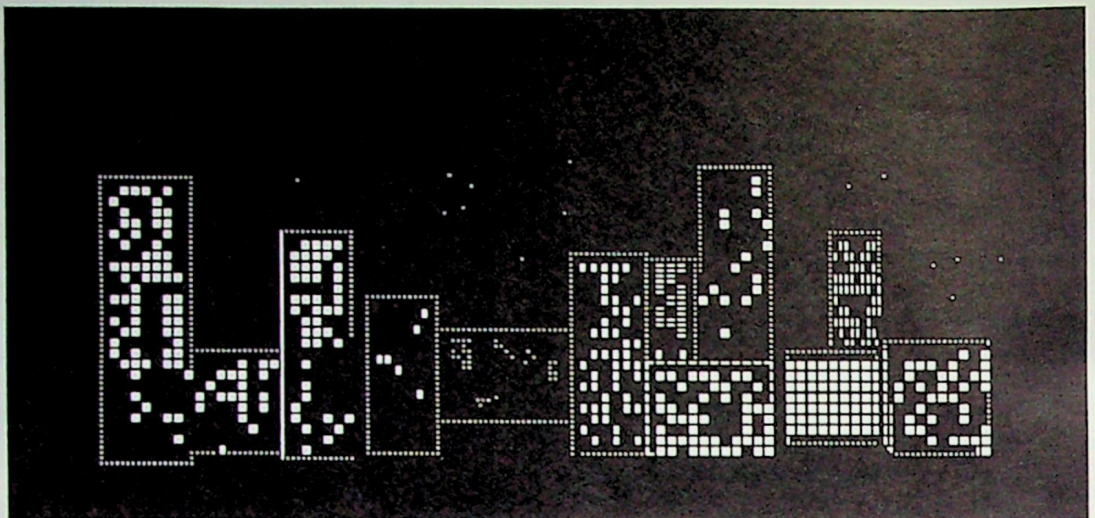


By Lois
Worley

fire. He roused several times during the night to add wood to the fire. Each time he gazed at the sleeping woman and child.

The coming of dawn woke Aaron. He saw the sheep starting to move about. The dog sat near them with watchful eyes. Then Aaron remembered and looked quickly toward the shelter. *Gone!* The mantle was neatly folded. No signs of any visitors. Perhaps he had dreamed it! But "No," he shook his head. "It had been real." He stood hastily and looked about him. Then he saw it—the patch of grass where the little donkey had stood was worn and tracked, the grass closely cropped. Aaron stared at the spot for several minutes. Then he pulled away one of the sticks which supported the shelter. He moved the rough piece several times over the area until all signs were forever obliterated. He dismantled the little hut, piling the sticks beside the low fire. He looked about him. It was as if it had not happened. There had been no visitors. He and the dog had spent a quiet uneventful night on this lonely hillside. Perhaps someday he would tell another. But not now; it would be cherished in his memory for as long as he lived. He, a poor shepherd boy, had after all seen the Lord's Messiah.

POLLUTION



A NEWSLETTER in the September 14, 1987, *U.S. News and World Report* on the great problem of asbestos pollution brings to mind once again Isaiah's prophecy that before Christ returns, men will have polluted the earth. This will be one reason Christ will return: to *restore* the earth to Edenic conditions (Acts 3:19-21).

Here are the words of Isaiah, in chapter 24, verses 5 and 6: "The earth also is *defiled* under the inhabitants thereof Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth."

The word "defiled" in this verse, Strong explains, means to soil, especially in a moral sense, and is translated corrupt, defile, defile greatly, pollute, and profane.

Isaiah followed this prediction of men soiling God's good earth by then announcing God's *judgment* on wicked men. Notice: "It shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth" (v. 21).

Isaiah then announces, after that judgment, the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth. Notice verse 23: "Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously."

Certainly this country and others have *soiled* the earth morally during this last generation, but it is to the physical polluting of the earth we turn in this article.

Asbestos—Cause of Cancer
"Though the dangers of

exposure to *cancer-causing asbestos* are widely known, efforts to remove the now banned insulating material from hundreds of thousands of public buildings throughout the country—including schools—are *mired in bureaucratic foot-dragging*. Experts say it will take years, and billions of dollars, to get rid of it all.

"Why the delay? It's a massive job. An estimated *750 million tons* of the fireproof substance sits in attics, walls, and ceilings of the nation's public facilities—*especially in 23 states* where buildings were constructed for cold weather. Asbestos becomes dangerous when it begins flaking or is disturbed by construction or vandals. Once airborne, it can be inhaled into the lungs, where the fibers can lead to asbestosis and cancer." (Ibid, p. 33.)

Cost of Removal So High

To remove asbestos from one school district in Florida will cost \$10 million dollars. In Colorado, a small school district has in hand a bill for cleaning one small building: \$2.5 million dollars. How can it pay such a bill?

Congress has authorized \$900 million to help local governments clean up the hazard, but this is just a drop in the

bucket. Some wonder why Congress does not do more. Some wonder how we can raise enough money to clean up the hazard.

It is estimated that 15 million children and 1.4 million school workers are potentially exposed.

The Dilemma

Schools have until October, 1988, to inspect for asbestos and show plans for its removal. Yet inspections must be made by certified asbestos inspectors. At present there are none. So what are the schools to do?

Just One More

This is just one more example of men's pollution of the earth. Acid rain is still a great threat to wildlife. Runoff from factories is still a threat. Nuclear dust from Chernobyl still pollutes Lapland reindeer. Smog is still a serious threat to human health in many cities. And the list goes on. Many things that mankind has made pollute: cars, for example, and there are millions of them on earth.

Have you ever noticed that in God's forests there is nothing that pollutes? Vegetation goes back to the ground from whence it came, yet the air is sweet and clean in God's mountains. The woods and the

Prophecy Page

By Pastor James Mattison

mountains in many places still are "good, and very good." That is because man has not yet arrived with his programs for building, machining, and "progress."

Wonderful Day Ahead

What a great day it will be when Jesus returns with healing in his wings (Mal. 4:2)! And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick (Isa. 33:24). And Christ restores all things God has promised back to Edenic conditions (Acts 3:21).

Christ will have a thousand years to clean up the earth. How? We don't know exactly, but some cleansing will be done by fire, according to many verses.

When all enemies are destroyed, the earth will once again be pure and sweet.

Unrest Among the Nations

Jesus said, "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth DISTRESS OF NATIONS, WITH PERPLEXITY: THE SEA AND THE WAVES ROARING" (Luke 21:25).

By "the sea and the waves roaring" we understand Jesus meant the peoples of earth, as Revelation explains: "The waters which thou sawest . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" (17:15).

Are there people on earth in unrest today? Notice the Philippine Islands, where President Corazon Aquino has just weathered a military mutiny. A few thousand well-organized troops very nearly toppled her new democracy.

Notice, too, the doubts and

divisions in Nicaragua. The Sandinistas are trying to sell the people on their present published policy of "moderation," but it is hard for the people to believe. "Prove it," they are saying.

One of the greatest unrests today lies in South Africa, where black gold miners receive far less pay than whites. The National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) buckled in the recent test of strength with the white mine owners, but showed the mine owners that the union will be a force in the future that must be reckoned with. NUM General Secretary Ramaphosa plans to try to raise union numbers from the present 350,000 to 500,000 so as to be able to close down every gold mine in South Africa when another strike comes. The reason for this unrest? The blacks want equal pay and living conditions with the whites. Is this unreasonable? Still, an explosive condition exists there.

And elsewhere, all over the globe, minorities and majorities have their great problems of working with one another in peace and happiness.

The Prince of Peace

One of Christ's greatest coming titles will be "PRINCE OF PEACE." A prince has authority. Peace is a need of all men. Putting the two together, we see a coming person of authority who will bring peace to earth. What an improvement that will be.

"And he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth" (Zech. 9:10).

How Great is Jesus' Love for Children?

IS AT ON THE couch in the doctor's office waiting for my turn to be waited on. This was always the most discouraging time for me—the hour-long wait at the doctor's. I never understood why they did not just make my appointment an hour later so that I would not have to waste any of my time.

Anyway, there was a little girl across the room. Her mother's stone-cold face told me that this was one of many visits for her. The little girl was wobbling back and forth across the room. Her face was almost cheerful in spite of her "handicap." I watched as she scurried around the room, limping continually with a metal and plastic contraption which began at her feet and went all the way up her side and back to just below her neck. Tears came to my eyes. I have never understood why problems like these attacked innocent children.

"Why, God?" I cried.

The girl and her mother were called in right before me, but I still made it out before they did. Even though I was in a hurry to get somewhere I decided to wait outside on a bench until this little girl would walk out. I wanted to ask God "why" again, and to see the strength and courage of a little girl.

I waited for 30 minutes before the girl finally limped out of the doctor's office. Her mother was still stonefaced—a depressing picture of a lost and bewildered parent. The little girl was holding her mother's hand and smiling as she walked along. I felt compassion build in me until I finally began to sob silently for her. I sat on the bench not 20 feet away from the girl and her mother; my head was in my hands for I had to hide my eyes.

Then I heard the clicking of the little girl's metal knocking against itself. She was coming near me. I looked up and she was looking at me from only three feet away.

"Why are you crying, mister?" she asked.

I did not know what to say.

"Don't you know that Jesus loves you?" she asked.

I was shocked. This little girl who had suffered so much, who hadn't known what it was like to live without extra equipment to help her to walk—this girl was ministering to me!

"Yes, little girl," I replied, "I do know that Jesus loves me."

I looked towards the girl's mother, now smiling proudly at her little girl. She nodded towards me, as if to say, "Go ahead." I reached my arms out to the little girl, gently pulled her close to me and whispered a blessing to her, "God bless you, little girl, for your childlike faith in an almighty and loving God."

I held her for a moment and let her go.

"Thank you, sir," she said.

The little girl said goodbye and walked away with her mother. I sat there amazed at a little tortured girl's love and faith in an all-knowing and loving God.

"How dare I question you, Father?" I asked, and walked on.



By Mark Cheatwood



WHY

DO

CHURCHES

CLOSE

?



By
Brenda
Wessell

ELDER TODD* listened patiently as Mrs. Smith shouted at him through one of Ma Bell's finest, "What do you mean you're closing the doors on MY church? It's been my church for over 30 years. My family was raised in that church. Who gave you the authority to make this decision?" When there was a lull in the tirade, the Elder answered, "Mrs. Smith, I understand how you feel. This has been my church for many years also. The decision to close the doors was not mine alone, but a consensus of the few faithful attenders left. We hadn't seen you for several years, so we assumed you would be in agreement with our actions." With that, Mrs. Smith hung up the phone.

Elder Todd shook his head in disbelief. This was the third call in two days from members of his Church of God, Abrahamic Faith, that had not darkened the church doors for several months, and in Mrs. Smith's case, several years. Where were they when the church was struggling to stay alive, to support Pastor Al and his family and to support the work of the General Conference and the Bible College, not to mention the Mission programs and this new thing they called "church-planting?" Two of the three callers had asked what they could do to keep things running. Couldn't they see it was too late? Pastor Al had finally become so discouraged that he left not only the local church, but left the ministry entirely. What a tragedy! Pastor Al had so much promise. He was young and energetic with a real zeal for the Lord's work—and now, he's gone too, just like so may other ministers who have left the pulpit for whatever reason.

Plopping down in his favorite chair, Elder Todd tried to read the evening paper, but his mind kept wandering back to the last congregational meeting when the decision to close the church was made.

Old Mr. Jones who had been around almost since the church doors opened had crowed, "I just don't understand what happened. We've been doing things the same way ever since I came and it's always worked." Ms. Petty chimed in with, "We did try an evangelism program once but it didn't seem to work so we filed it away in our 'things to try again when we've tried everything else' file." Young Sue Ann had then jumped to her feet with her quivering voice slightly raised and scolded the group. "You kept sending Mary Lou and me to conferences and women's retreats and seminars and when we came back with new things to try, you gave us your famous 'cold water treatment,' and believe me, after a few doses of

that, it's hard to care. You were all so ho-hum and content with current programs. No one wanted to exert the effort it would take to do some new things. Don't you care that there are people out there who don't know Jesus? Do you want them to die without salvation because we didn't have the time or the desire to carry the gospel message to them? We've lost nearly all our youth because we have no programs to offer them. And, by the way, why have we waited so long to look at these problems? We have no pastor! We have no people!

"Look at all the people this will affect. We can no longer support the General Conference or the Bible College; another pastor has left the ministry; Our CHURCH is dead! WE are dead!

"We have been so quick to lay the blame on our members who don't attend, and surely some of the blame is theirs, but what about those of us who were here! What about our lack of commitment to the very task that Jesus assigned! I, for one, am filled with guilt."

As Sue Ann sat down, a hush fell over the room. Heads were hung in shame. Nothing could be heard except the quiet sobs of old Mrs. Lane who softly added, "This church has been like my home. I have raised my children here and seen them married here. My husband's funeral was conducted here. There are so many memories. It's like losing your closest friend. Oh, I know that I don't need this building, that God will be with me and hear my prayers wherever I am, but this is where I have assembled myself together with those of like faith. Sue Ann is right, you know. What good is truth to those who do not know? God forgive us for our selfishness."

Tears filled Elder Todd's eyes as he laid the paper aside and bowed his head.

"Lord, please forgive me of my sins of omission. In your great wisdom, you must have seen what was happening to your church. We became selfish, uncaring people with no burden for those lost in sin around us. We did not even encourage one another. We took our eyes off you and off the salvation message that we were commanded to share with your world. We were satisfied to know the truth but embarrassed to share it—or maybe we were just too lazy.

"My prayer, Lord, is that if other congregations are following in our footsteps, they will recognize what we have seen too late. Please stir up their minds and hearts Lord, I ask in Jesus' name. Amen."

*All names in this story are fictitious.

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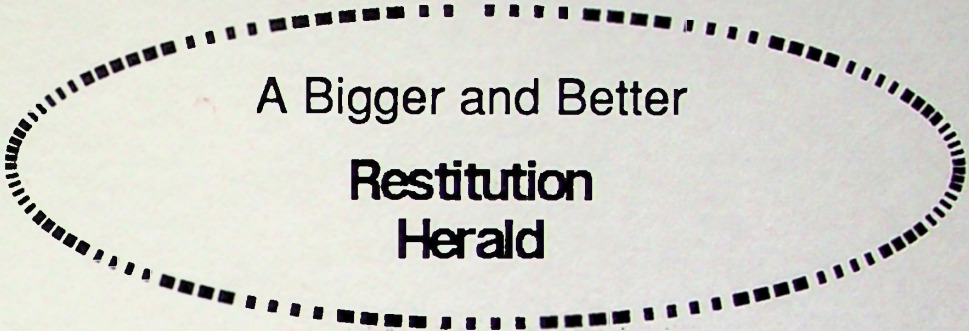
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December/1986/January/1987

Holiday Stories

Pages 4-7,
10-13, 20



Prophecy
Page 8

Frustration Over the Lost
Page 14

African Persecution
Page 15

Sanctity of Human Life Sunday
Page 15

God Doesn't Need More Believers
Page 16

Was Jesus Christ Creator?
Page 18

Present-Day Theological Trends, Page 19

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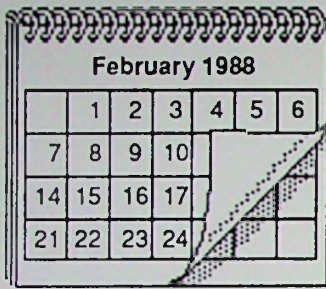


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Editor's Viewpoint



U.S./Russian Christmas Summit

Did the United States lose nuclear capability through the agreement? Will Russia now take over all of Europe, since the agreement removes U. S. defense there? Will the Soviets halt their aggressive military goals because of the accord? Can Bible students now point to this period of "peace" as the time just before Christ's return as foretold by Paul (See 2 Thes. 5:1-11.)?

More realistically, the summit became a political victory for both Reagan and Gorbachev. The President needed something to brighten the lame-duck days of his administration. Already, too many things have been bungled, creating the dark cloud of distrust by many in America. For his part, Gorbachev can point to the treaty as a means of focusing attention on Soviet economic woes at home instead of the military.

In all actuality, the summit involves only four percent of the two nations' nuclear arsenals. It will eliminate all short- and mid-range missiles, but real destructive power is concentrated in the large intercontinental missiles and bombers. Genuine reductions will be much more difficult to achieve. Balancing the differences between the two superpowers will take years—long beyond Reagan's term and that of Gorbachev's successor.

Computer Reveals Unnecessary Hospital Deaths

MediQual Systems Inc. in Westborough, MA, has developed a data system used by hospitals around the country which reveals costly, inadequate, or inappropriate medical practices.

In some instances the system has uncovered needless deaths—all

because of slow treatment by some physicians.

One study revealed that in one hospital 41 percent of one physician's patients became sicker in the hospital versus 23 percent for other doctors. Moreover, 10 percent of the one physician's patients died versus four percent among his colleagues.

When the physician was shown the data, he began to alter his practices, sharply reducing deaths.

Too bad it takes a computer to straighten out foul-ups that involve areas of morality. A person's conscience should speak to the problem first.

Changes in the Family

Did you know that today's households are drastically different than they were in the 1950's?

How are they different?

Well, only 13 percent of today's families have . . .

- One working parent.
- Wife as a career "housewife."

What does this say for the way we approach family needs today?

Basically, we cannot use the same approach as in 1950. If only 13 percent of today's households have a single breadwinner with a career wife and mother, we need to change our methodology in reaching a family's spiritual needs.

More importantly, how should you change your approach to today's family in an evangelistic situation?

"Pistol" Pete Dies

Pete Maravich died at the prime of his life, age 40, but in perfect health. A 10-year veteran of the National Basketball Association where he led the league in scoring many of those years, Maravich kept in good health

after retirement with continued exercise, a vegetarian diet, and perfect weight.

In spite of the foregoing, Maravich collapsed while playing a pick-up basketball game in Pasadena in January.

How can a perfectly healthy person die? The medical world can only surmise unusual heart stress which was unknown to the victim. But that's little comfort to health watchers all over North America.

What can be learned from this tragedy?

The best way to spend a lifetime is in close contact with our Maker. While everyday living often gives little place to the Almighty, we must learn to commit more of ourselves to knowing God. We can spend eternity in his presence.

As Paul urged Timothy: "Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is valuable in every way, because it promises life both for the present and for the future" (1 Tim. 4:8, GNB).

The 90's are here

That's the report of newsmagazines, specialty publications, and information gatherers of all stripes recently. While we remain in the late 80's, such decade characteristics as me-ism, life in the fast lane, and creature-comforts are already gone in many lifestyles.

A new way of looking at existence has overcome many North Americans. Folks no longer seem eager to live in the fast lane; they prefer staying at home and becoming "couch potatoes." It's now "in" to care about the needy instead of money-grubbing. People want to know more about spiritual values than they did just six weeks ago.

Such trend-changing attitudes have elicited response by the media. They've transferred us into the next decade because of the tremendous impact the new lifestyle has brought on North America.

All this is good news for you. Almost in any situation you can expect response to the Gospel. People will want to hear you out—greed is out and caring is "in."

Letter

Dear Editor,

After reading "The Deadly Silence: AIDS and Social Censorship" in the October, 1987, issue, I was angered, saddened, and ashamed. I was angered by what I perceive as many inaccuracies that were written about AIDS in the article and the resulting faltering conclusions. I was saddened by the lack of focus on what I feel is one of the most pressing moral issues for God's church which calls us to be instruments of peace, love, and healing. I was ashamed to be a member of an organization that in my opinion has published articles on AIDS relating to judgment, condemnation, and self-righteousness while neglecting the true calling of the *Church of God*—to be a community of love and healing.

Perhaps it is easy to make assumptions and judgments about persons with AIDS if one has never really met a dying person with AIDS face to face. I, however, work with people with AIDS and find it difficult to feel anything but remorse and compassion. I do not like to use terms like "innocent victims" which implies that there are guilty victims. If innocence or guilt were the only criteria to having a terminal illness, I venture to say that we would all be victims. Every person who has AIDS is a tragedy. To watch life waste away, to go from 190 pounds to 70 pounds, to become demented due to neurological effects, to be rejected by loved ones and scorned by those who usurp the authority to judge—this is all a very painful tragedy.

AIDS does raise many issues. However, few, if any, are new issues. Issues relating to sexuality, sex education, home-care costs, and dealing with untimely death have been with us for many years. These are also issues to which the church has historically failed to be a light. Unlike the author of the article, I feel that "the plague of death-dealing AIDS" is "equally a problem for heterosexuals." AIDS is a disease of the human family of which we are all members. To declare one group of people as "guilty sinners" is to miss the point of the gospel and degrades us all.

The statement that "the homosexual community has done little for the victims . . ." is totally inaccurate. Many of the main resources across the country

providing housing, food, visitation, and transportation services for persons with AIDS have been initiated and maintained by the homosexual community, while other social agencies and the church have failed to address these needs.

The statement that "the protection they (manufacturers of condoms) market provides much the same odds as Russian roulette" is again inaccurate. The Surgeon General of the United States, who is by the way a Christian man, has advocated the use of condoms as a way to reduce the risk of transmitting AIDS.

The statements that sodomy is the root cause of the "virus-turned-plague" and that "there would be no AIDS threat in this nation if it were not for homosexual acts performed voluntarily and promiscuously by so many" are in my opinion a gross oversimplification and not accurate. If sodomy were to end today, AIDS would not go away magically. AIDS is a disease that *is here* and according to expert epidemiologists, *will be here* regardless of any changes that could take place in sexual practices.

In stressing the need to "talk morals," I suggest we focus on the moral issue of what God has told us to do. What is the responsibility of *the Church of God* to the staggering numbers of people infected with a deadly disease?

It is far easier, safer, and less spiritually challenging to see our role as Christians to speak out against sodomy from the comfort of our homes (which we erroneously think are safe from this tragedy) than to provide rides to the hospital for persons with AIDS, to go into their home and touch them with the love of God, to cook meals, clean their bathrooms, do shopping and assist in alleviating the extreme loneliness that precedes their painful death. I look around and see people crying, but see few to answer their cries.

We need to be dealing with people with AIDS as people deserving of God's love. Our moral and spiritual responsibility to a God who has shown us all mercy, is to be the Church of God and to share the message of the gospel that Christ shares in our pain and sorrow.

Sincerely,

Debbie Mattison, MSM, ACSW.



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HEY, LET'S GO TO CHRISTIAN

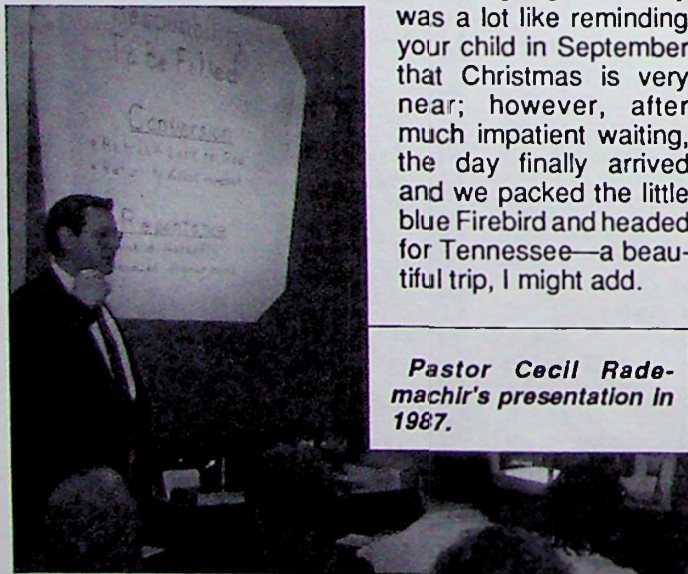
By Brenda Wessel



Seminarists in session at Pigeon Forge in 1987. Be sure to plan Christian Workers' Seminar in your schedule March 13-18. If you act today you can still send in your registration.

THAT'S HOW IT ALL STARTED in November or December, 1986. Vicki Pulling and I were carrying on a highly intellectual telephone conversation when she said, "Hey, let's go to Christian Workers' Seminar." It didn't take much talking for me to agree since I had always wanted to go, but somehow had never been able to. Deciding to go that early

was a lot like reminding your child in September that Christmas is very near; however, after much impatient waiting, the day finally arrived and we packed the little blue Firebird and headed for Tennessee—a beautiful trip, I might add.



Pastor Cecil Rademacher's presentation in 1987.

We arrived at the Holiday Inn mid-afternoon with great anticipation of the week to come. After checking in and un-

packing our 17 suitcases, we went downstairs to mingle. After wandering around for an hour or two and finding still very little going on, we wondered if this trip had been a mistake. We weren't exactly sure what we had expected, but somehow this didn't seem to be it.

When the Sunday evening session started, we were still a little bit confused as to our reason for being there. Then, when it was announced that there would be a mixer and that at the end of the mixer, those in your group would be your "family" for the remainder of the week, I was ready to pack. Even though I'm quite a talker and love people, I guess I'm guilty of wanting to choose my own "people situations" instead of being forced into them.

BUT, WHAT A BLESSING!!! Those six people who were to be my "family" for the next few days became much more than just new acquaintances that had been forced on me.



Pastor Chuck Jones conducting his class.

We shared thoughts and feelings on the scriptures given to us for study and meditation. We shared in the regular "family" prayer times, but even more than that, we shared personal prayer needs and prayed individually for those needs. The bonds that grew are now among my most treasured memories of that week. What an uplifting time this became for me in spite of my initial feelings of dread.

The evening services under the able direction of Carol Ring who, by the way, is one of the most creative persons I know, included "fun times," times full of warm fuzzies, and times so full of inspiration that I could feel the arms of God wrapped tightly around me.

Classes were varied and very informative. You could learn about everything from Church of God background, to creative teaching for all ages, to how the Holy Spirit could work in your life, to using your own spiritual gifts. Then you could learn how to put those things together and practice

WORKERS' SEMINAR!



Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick II fielding questions during his class session.

the evangelism that is so important to the work of the church today in our quest to take the gospel to the whole world and bring the lost to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. I only wish that time would have allowed for enrolling in each and every class offered.

The seminar was located in an area where sightseeing and shopping could be included in the week and free time was provided for those activities. The food was great—more so because I didn't have to cook or clean up the dishes. Ice cream after church was

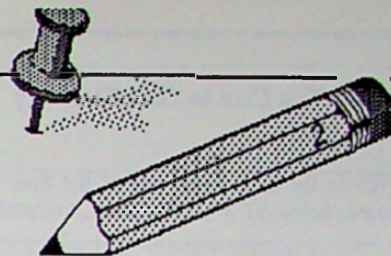
one great way to wind up the day—OR just visiting with your Christian brothers and sisters in review of the day or getting to know one another better.

The days were full of so many good things that Vickie and I spent a good portion of the nights discussing them: things like how to apply what we were learning; why it had taken us so long to decide to come to seminar; how we could convey to everyone we know the closeness we felt with those who were there and the blessings we received so that we could convince them all to attend next year.

I could go on and on about all the advantages of Christian Workers' Seminar, but, better yet, why don't you just come along with me to Lake of the Ozarks March 13-18, 1988, and you can see for yourself! I promise you that it will be a very rewarding experience.



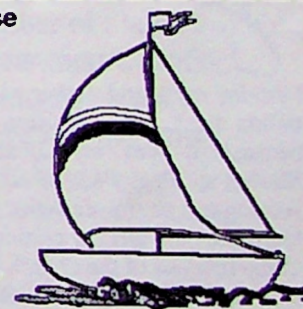
Carol Ring demonstrating Sunday School opening ideas.



Calendar of Events

- March 13-18 — Christian Workers' Seminar, Osage Beach, MO.
- April 25-29 — Ministers' Conference, Oregon, IL.
- April 29, 30 — Meeting of Board of Directors, Oregon, IL.
- May 13 — Oregon Bible College Graduation, Oregon, IL.
- May 15-21 — Adulthostel, OBC, Oregon, IL
- July ?? — Youth Congress
- August 1-5 — General Conference, Harrisonburg, VA.
- August 17-21 — Iowa State Conf.
- November 3-5 — Oregon Bible College Parents' Weekend, Oregon, IL.
- November 11, 12 — Men's Retreat at Camp Mack, Milford, IN.

Please enroll me in the Grand Glaize Christian Workers' Seminar, March 13-18, 1988.



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When You Care to Give The Very Best, Give

(Fill in the blank with one of the four words below.)



TRASH: When I was a very young girl we lived across the street from a row of houses where the back yards were separated from a very large cemetery by a fence. I, like the other children in the neighborhood, grew old enough to venture forth into the cemetery to play in it as though it were a park. One of the first discoveries to be made in our section of the cemetery was a trash heap upon which were thrown old and withered funeral bouquets. As one scrutinized this trash pile, it became apparent there were some very pretty fresh-looking flowers amid the withered ones. My mother dearly loved flowers and I recall the heady sensation I felt at being able to give her a love gift that no one else had prompted me to do or had helped me to obtain. Even though my mother expressed words of gratitude for those trash funeral flowers, I had the distinct feeling she was not totally pleased with them. I eventually figured out why.



LEFT-OVERS: For my seventh birthday my grandmother gave me a plaid taffeta dress. I can envision it to this day because it was *my* dress, not Iris's, Martha's, Peggy's, or Doris's dress. Among our church families I was a loner, being the only girl my particular age. Most of the families of the church had daughters that were just enough older than me to make it practical for them to pass along gifts of outgrown clothes to me. I never lacked for clothing during hard financial times. I was truly blessed, but the dress my grandmother gave me and her words of love, "this is a Joyce dress" will always be to me the best birthday gift I received as a child.

SPARINGLY: Have you ever felt let down when you have thanked someone for something and he has responded with, "Oh, that's all right; it's the least I could do"? I have. Have you ever experienced a lack of genuine love and thankfulness when the gift you received was given according to a predetermined cost figure (better known as gift exchange)? I have also felt as though I had short-changed the other person when I was the giver in these situations.



SACRIFICIALLY: You know what "sacrificially" means—giving up something cherished for the sake of something or someone else and for which you expect no personal gain. All my life I have heard people express in profound terms how wonderful it is that God sacrificed his Son, and Jesus in turn sacrificed himself for our salvation. Still I had to learn the hard way what responsibility I own in sacrificial giving. One vivid lesson I recall seems minor in size but major in my learning about giving. A request for money for a missionary project was made from the pulpit. I was married, pregnant, and living on an exceedingly tight budget at the time. I did have a five dollar bill in my purse that had been set aside for required vitamins. God's prompting caused me to place the five dollar bill in the missionary collection. What a wonderful sense of true giving came over me. A week later the weather cooled and I put on a coat I had not worn for several months. I put my hand in my pocket, felt something unusual, and brought it out to discover it was a five dollar bill. Since that time God has continued to teach me greater lessons in giving, but the general principle is found in 2 Corinthians 9:6-11. What joy has been added to my life through sacrificial giving! Sacrifice to me now is merely a temporary state, for God continues to supply my needs and more often than not gives to me beyond my needs with his loving bounty.

My desire for the Church of God would be for us to add to our "Distinctive Doctrines" the 2 Corinthians 9 doctrine of sacrificial giving. The early church soon discovered it took money to get the good news out to the masses of unsaved people. That need for money has never changed. The Church of God has finally come of age in recognizing sacrificial giving as an absolute requirement to accomplish the goal of the Great Commission we have preached for so long.

I am so thankful for God's enlightenment to me about sacrificial giving. I am thankful to our church leaders who continue to provide me and you with a diversity of opportunities for giving that allows each of us to respond to God's prompting in a personal way. Do not despair at the number of opportunities we have been afforded for giving, but praise God that he has found us worthy to prove his promises to us. After we cheerfully and sacrificially give, God always bountifully supplies our needs.

Caring Enough to Give the Best

By
Joyce
Knapp

CREATING A SPARKLING CHURCH



During the Christmas season, it was easy to remember that the shepherds and wise men were drawn by the sparkling star that shown above and led them to Bethlehem where "they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him" (Matt. 2:11). Today people still come to worship him in large numbers at what we call sparkling churches.

For our purpose, a sparkling church means one that is alive, exciting, animated, vivid, fresh, topical, and filled with love and the Holy Spirit; exuding an air and feeling of what's going to happen next and have something continually going on.

Such a church doesn't just happen. It takes work by the pastor, elders, and all concerned . . . *lots of work*. And if that labor isn't for the love of God . . . rather than a continuing sparkle, the chances are that the church will sparkle only briefly.

There are several thousand items which can be included in a list of things to help make a church sparkle. However, you as a member of the church are the most obvious and important sparkler. For when you are alive, excited, animated, vivid, fresh, topical, and filled with love and the Holy Spirit, then you will sparkle and shine as a guiding star for others who seek what you have found through the Lord.

Then, as a church filled with sparklers, you will exude an air and feeling of what's going to happen next, and something wonderful will continually be going on. *And that's when others will be led to this sparkling church.*

What a wonderful opportunity we have.

May God fill you with his Holy Spirit,

Richard L. Cooper
Development Coordinator,
Church of God General Conference



Day of Accountability

*Where
will
I
be
in
that
great
judgment
day
?*

Here I am in a lot of about 50 people. Never in my wildest of dreams had I expected this awesome event. Yet, this is the day I had heard of all my Christian life. Many of us are quite fearful as we wait for our turns before the judge.

I read about this day of days, but this is not what I was prepared for at all. This day was to be for dispensation of rewards for those of us who were baptized, but here we are actually being judged and held accountable. It wasn't supposed to be like this, was it?

Frantically I search the recesses of my mind to see if indeed there is something that will prevent me from passing this, my own personal judgment. I expect I'll be okay.

Yes, God promised to forgive my sins. All I had to do was pray and believe in Jesus and I will in no way be cast out! I am certainly glad that I tried to be good. Let's see! I did give tithes. Well, most of the time. This was not even a requirement in the New Testament, was it? I wish now I had been a little more faithful. I attended church faithfully my whole life through. Actually, there were a few offices I held.

It won't be long now until my turn. To tell the truth, I'm terrified of King Jesus! He is so different from my image of him. I expected him to be so merciful, and loving, and gentle, but he isn't like that at all. He glows so brightly. I can hardly stand to look at him. The power and majesty his presence radiates makes me tremble.

The dead in Christ are the only ones who have been raised to immortality. We hear that there are many others being cast into a lake of fire.

Abraham was given all the land between the Euphrates River and the Nile. David is king over Israel under the King of Kings—Jesus himself. The apostles are set up to judge the 12 tribes of Israel.

Oh! It's my turn!

"Yes, Lord, I'm ready." I answer his call. It looks as if I am going to be

questioned. Surely not! I don't want a high position like David, or Abraham, or Paul—just as long as I get in *some-where*. I do want to serve somewhere.

"What is the whole duty of man?" he asks.

"Fear God and keep his commandments." I answer confidently.

"In your opinion, what does that mean?"

"Well," I falter a little. "Love him and keep his commandments."

"Did you do that during your probation period?"

"Yes, oh, yes! I taught Sunday School; I gave to foreign missions; I took in some homeless people; I gave to the poor."

"What did you tell these people?" he asks. "Do they belong to me? Did you tell them the words that convert the soul? Did you help them find the truth that makes one free from condemnation and death?"

"What did you teach them, Petsy?"

"To love each other, to go to church, to be worthy citizens."

"What about your children? Did you read the Bible with them daily?"

"Daily? Well, no, not daily. That wasn't always possible. There were so many schedules to meet. I had a job. I had to work so that we could eat and have shelter and clothing."

"Did you not have faith that my Father would provide those things?"

"I always thought God helps those who help themselves."

"Petsy, what did I tell my servants to do?"

"Preach the gospel, be instant in season and out of season. Make disciples." I more or less answer.

"Did you fear God enough to take time to prove all things? To hold fast that which was good?"

"I was told that it didn't matter what you believed as long as you loved the Father and believed in you. Other people interpreted the Bible differently than I did."

By Petsy Rudacille

"Then you didn't really believe the words that told you you were to be judged by the Word and held accountable by the same Word of Truth?"

"I didn't expect to go through judgment. I expected a dispensation of rewards. I must have overlooked that I was to be held accountable for the deeds I committed whether they were good or evil."

"Petsy, do you remember the Sunday School class you taught and I willed you to tell what you knew to be the truth? You were afraid of offending the guests because they came from a different denomination."

"Yes, Lord, I remember. I wanted to speak, but I was afraid that if I offended them the other members would be irritated with me. I might have scared them away from you forever."

"If you had spoken that day you would have fed Sam the spiritual food he was seeking. He would have been saved. Not only Sam, but his children also. They are all dead because you did not speak out. I am holding you accountable for their blood, Petsy."

I fall on my knees. I am hearing words that I did not want to hear.

"You believed, Petsy, so you will not lose the gift of eternal life, but your works are being burned. You were not a faithful steward of the truth you were given to know and searched out for yourself. Your talent will be given to one who was faithful and spoke out and was persecuted for my sake; to one who took the time to daily train his children; to one who spoke out the Word at work; to one who was not afraid or ashamed of me. You would not have been casting your pearls before swine. It was not a true judgment of yours to call them swine."

Well, my judgment is over. I lost my reward, but God has been merciful and given me life. How can I complain? I only aimed to just get in. Why oh why did I not work harder for this wonderful King?



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How would you describe Jesus of Nazareth? If he called himself the Son of God, would he not allow himself to be called "good"?

“WHY DO YOU CALL ME GOOD?”

There are many incidents in the life of Christ which, at first glance, perplex. The Master uttered many things which puzzled both his disciples and his opponents. He did it deliberately. Jesus wanted his followers to think. He did not want them to follow him blindly, but to exercise their minds on what they were doing.

In speaking to the Pharisees the Master had observed, “If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit” (Matt. 15:14). They saw the remark as directed against themselves and were naturally offended. They could not accept that they were blind. Many who follow leaders like to have it this way. The leader thinks for them; he controls

them, directing their actions. It seems that those who follow prefer to have it so; it saves them the responsibility of making decisions. We have seen this in world politics. Hitler was the prime example in the 20th Century, and men such as Mao Tse-tung rank on a similar level. Such leaders try to capture the allegiance of young impressionable minds. Their strength is founded on those who will blindly follow their dictates. They do not want followers who think for themselves.

Sadly the same pattern is observable in religious circles. It is one of the patterns of evidence showing whether an organization is man-made or God-made. But Jesus was different. It is only by studying the Gospels closely that we come to realize how different! We see many “hard sayings,” all designed to make his listeners think for themselves.

If we study these hard sayings we will discover some surprising truths that challenge our thinking and lead us on to deeper perceptions of all that Christ came to reveal to thinking men and women.

First, let us look at the responses of the Master to the man who asked him, “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (Mark 10:18; Luke 18:19.) The teacher gave an astonishing answer: “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone.” What did he mean? What lesson was he teaching? What did the word “good” mean? Is this a word we have lowered in general usage like so many others in our language?

Jesus uses “good” as the opposite to “evil” and “wicked.” He teaches the wonder of the resurrection when he will call forth from their graves all those dead who have known him, “Those who



Surely a baby can be called at least "good" . . .

Jesus never gave “yes” or “no” answers. Often he would answer a question with a question to make the inquirer think.

have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:29). Yet we know that the “good” are only

If Jesus refused the title "Good," just what can be termed in such a category?

raised by virtue of God's grace and mercy—no man or woman will deserve eternal life; no one will have earned it by his works (Eph. 2:8-10). We strive to do good works to demonstrate our appreciation of the love of Christ toward us. Any other motive for "good works" will prove to be for the praise of men or to ease an uneasy conscience.

When the Master says that none is "good" except God, he means that God is the source of total goodness, "O taste and see that the LORD is good" (Psa. 34:8). "The LORD is good, for his steadfast love endures forever" (Jer. 33:11), quoting the words which were to be sung by those bringing offerings into the house of the Lord.

The word "good" takes on an exalted meaning when applied to God. The rich truth places the Almighty above all else, including even the Lord Jesus Christ, his Son. The Master recognized this, for he could say, "My Father is greater than I" (John 14:28).

The Apostle Paul recognized this. He revealed that when Jesus has accomplished the next stage of God's purpose in reigning over the earth and bringing all things into subjection to him—in the end even abolishing death—he will then be subject to God, for it is only through God's power that he will accomplish everything (1 Cor. 15:24-28).

How great is God! Jesus could say to his followers before he left the earth: "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (John 20:17). The Almighty is not only the Father of our Master—he is also his God! Jesus is great—but how much greater is God, the source of all goodness!

What did the man actually say to provoke this reaction from our Lord? He called him "Good Teacher." Jesus may have perceived a lack of sincerity in the epithet "Good." Did Jesus see a form of flattering praise in this style of greeting?

Jesus recognized that all human leaders love to praise one another.

Instead of praising one another with empty phrases, let us give glory continually to God. Yet our service to God is not just a matter of words and worship. It is a matter of actions, and the word "good" in the Scripture more frequently applies to actions. The Apostle Paul could write, "Do not be overcome by evil, but over-

**Where are
the
inherently
"good"
people?**

come evil with good (Rom. 12:21)." Hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good. Since the Almighty is the source of all goodness—and the example of goodness in action—it is clear that we must learn at the feet of Jesus and the apostles how we must put God's "goodness" into action in our lives.

Some do not see God as the example of all goodness; they are perplexed at the evil that comes on man, apparently from God. Our God is a just God. He acts with justice toward all men. If men continue to be evil they cannot expect to always enjoy God's goodness. "As a man sows, so shall he reap." The world today, and indeed in all generations, but especially today, has little time for God. People should not complain, then, if God has little time for them.

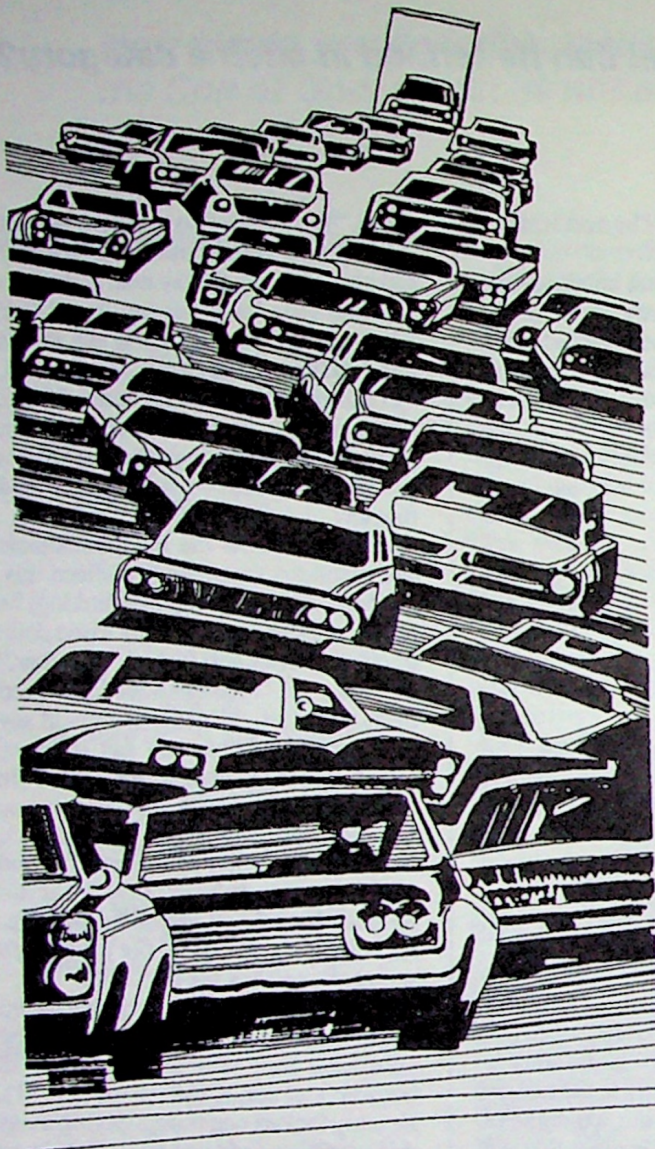
Did Jesus answer the question he was

asked, "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" It was asked with some urgency and commitment, for the man had run to him and then knelt before him (Mark 10:17). Jesus not only knew the man's mind, he knew his way of life. He said, "You know the commandments: Do not kill; Do not commit adultery; Do not steal; Do not bear false witness; Do not defraud; Honour your father and mother."

The man knew the commandments and practiced them. Jesus realized this. He drew the man out in his thinking; he did not want to come straight to the point of what the man still lacked. "Teacher," the man said, "all these have I observed from my youth." How many could say this today? Did the man say it boastfully? It does not appear that he did. He had knelt before Jesus and then Jesus, "looking upon him loved him" (v. 21), which would hardly be the case if he had made the remark boastfully. What did he lack? He must have sensed some insufficiency in his way of life to have run so urgently to ask the question.

Jesus told him, "You lack one thing; go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (v. 21). He only lacked one thing! Giving away this world's goods and following Jesus go hand in hand together: You can't do one without the other. This man had "great possessions" and, because they were great possessions and they were evidently a source of strength to him, "his countenance fell, and he went away sorrowful" (v. 22).

He evidently trusted entirely in his riches; they were a barrier between himself and God. This barrier had to be removed. We must recognize the need to search our consciences as to whether there are material things we trust in and love to have that are a barrier to our total commitment to Christ. If there are, we must thrust them out of our lives.



Bible

HONK—BUT IT WON'T DO ANY GOOD

WHEN THE PROPHET DANIEL spoke of the coming resurrection to eternal life, he made the comment by the Spirit that just before that time "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased" (Dan. 12:1-4).

In the September 7, 1987, *U.S. News and World Report*, there is a sobering article about traffic congestion around our cities and suburbs to which we all can relate. And it will get worse, according to the report.

The formula for a traffic mess is, according to the article: 1) Cars are multiplying twice as fast as people, 2) More people are commuting, 3) Highway spending has slipped, and 4) Highway traffic is booming. The result: More traffic jams.

Listen to these two traffic announcers: "Out of the Ventura Freeway eastbound before Buena Vista, accident with injuries, one fatality. Number 2 and 3 lanes are closed. Traffic is packed in solid, speeds down to about 5 to 10 miles an hour all the way back to San Diego. For KABC traffic watch, I'm Paul Johnson."

"Big trouble for motorists trying to get out of town on 290. We had a truck lose a load of glass bottles. They shattered in the right two lanes. That's causing a 6-mile backup on the west loop, also affecting traffic on the Katy Freeway. I'm John Winder, Traffic Control, Houston."

Traffic Frustrating

If you have ever been in a traffic jam where you creep along for an hour (if you move at all) and traffic is backed up for 5 or 10 miles, you know how frustrating, harrowing, and blood boiling it can get. "It is the single most unpleasant and unavoidable fact of daily life for most Americans" (ibid).

If getting back and forth to work were the only problem, we might learn to live with that. But as Audrey Moore of Fairfax County, Virginia, puts it: "When you can't even get to the grocery store or a soccer game on Saturday afternoon, we've got a problem." Now traffic is becoming increasingly heavy in the suburbs also.

Reason for Suburb Congestion

"What really set off today's traffic explosion was the largely unforeseen flight of jobs to the suburbs. Two-thirds of all jobs created from 1960 to 1980 were in the suburbs, and the trend has accelerated in this decade. In 1986, 70 new jobs were added in the suburbs of Washington, D. C., for every 10 added in the city" (ibid).

One reason for this migration is because office space costs less in the suburbs—by half. "San Francisco employers who moved to the suburbs in 1984 saved \$3,850 per worker yearly, according to the Office Network of Houston" (ibid).

Rather than everything being concentrated in the city, all of us have seen shopping centers and all kinds of stores moving to the suburbs. And cars are the only way to travel in today's complex society. Here is a typical daily pattern: One drops off a child at the day care center, drives to the job, then picks up something at the shopping center on the way home. "Twice as many employee trips go from suburb to suburb as from suburb to city, and their destinations are all over the map" (ibid).

10 Worst Traffic Cities

Today's 10 worst urban traffic choke points are 1) Houston,

Prophecy

Pastor James
Mattison, Editor

2) New Orleans, 3) New York, 4) Detroit, 5) San Francisco, 6) Seattle, 7) Los Angeles, 8) Boston, 9) Charlotte, and 10) Atlanta. A forecast for the year 2005 shows Charlotte Number 1, 2) Houston, 3) Detroit, 4) San Antonio, 5) Dallas, 6) Miami, 7) New Orleans, 8) Seattle, 9) Boston, 10) San Francisco.

Think of the waste of time and gas because of traffic pileups today. If a worker is tied up in traffic 20 minutes a day and works for 45 years, that worker will spend almost 2 years tied up in traffic. In 1984, the nation wasted an estimated 1.38 billion gallons of gas in traffic congestion. The worst part of the traffic problem is loss of life. Not only are thousands killed in accidents each year: now motorists are taking out their frustrations by shooting one another. Several people have already been killed.

Comedian Jay Leno puts it this way: "It's bumper to bumper. You get angry. You kill the guy in front of you. You're still stuck in traffic, aren't you? Except now you've got to wait for a tow truck."

"Bring along something to read," is advice given us. [Take your Bible with you.]

Conclusion

The conclusion is, we're all going to have to put up with traffic, and as Christians we must maintain that sweet Spirit of God. So why get upset? Accept what cannot be changed. Use the time to talk to the Lord, to memorize great Bible verses, to think of how you may better serve the Lord, etc. Think of all the praying that could be done during traffic jams. Wouldn't all that sincere earnest prayer work a great change in thousands and bring great peace?

Many ARE running to and fro today, including each of us. We have to learn to live with it in a Christian way. How wonderful it is to see someone allow another vehicle to get in the line, and to practice other courtesies of the road.

When Christ comes, will we be frustrated with traffic jams? Will we need cars then? I think these will be small problems for our Lord to take care of. After all, he has been given all power in heaven and earth. May his name be forever praised! May he come soon!

IRAN ALLIED WITH RUSSIA—HOW?

The prophet Ezekiel said that in the last days Iran, or Persia, would be allied with the nation from the north that will invade Israel (38:5). That nation most people believe is Russia. Here is another possible reason for that alliance, besides oil: Russia has always wanted a warm-weather port on the ocean.

Our thanks to Betty Ackels of Peculiar, Missouri, for sending us an article from the August 20, 1987, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* concerning this. It is titled, "Iranian Accord," and is written by Milan Hauner and John Roberts.

"While the United States has been taunting Ayatollah

Ruhollah Khomeini in the Persian Gulf, the Soviet Union has begun a diplomatic opening to Iran that could change the balance of power in the region.

"Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, according to one Iranian report, is due to visit Tehran this month [August, 87] to sign a treaty of friendship with revolutionary Iran. Other Iranian accounts predict such a visit by year's end.

"A new accord could give the Soviets what they have wanted since the days of the czars, when Iran was Persia: a strategic corridor to the warm waters of the Indian Ocean and closer economic and political links with Iran.

"The implications of a Soviet-Iranian rapprochement are considerable, the unanswered questions many.

"What is clear is that a process of dialogue has begun. The Soviets and Iranians agreed earlier this month, probably only in principle, to establish a rail link between Soviet Central Asia and the Gulf—a move that puts the Soviet Union closer to achieving its goal of a warm-water port.

"They also confirmed plans for Iran to export oil to the Soviet Union, initially at least by conversion of an existing gas pipeline.

"The signing of a treaty of friendship would be a stunning development. . . . This month, the Iranians have been passing the word—in Tokyo, Bonn, Paris, Islamabad, and other capitals—that their contacts with the Soviets are serious. The message they're sending is that America's aggressive show of force in the Persian Gulf is forcing them into the arms of the Russian bear.

"Much of this Iranian talk is undoubtedly propaganda, intending to pressure the United States to ease its current anti-Iranian stance. The Iranians want the United States to know that they have a Soviet card and that they are prepared to play it.

"As for the Soviets, they seem eager to position themselves for maximum influence in post-Khomeini Iran.

"Should the Soviets succeed in getting a treaty under which the railroad and pipeline projects were to be carried out—particularly if the railroad were to be built to the Indian Ocean coast—the end of the centuries-old 'Great Game' to secure a dominant influence in Persian affairs would clearly be in sight."

Perhaps this will be the way Russia will get a foothold to finally control Iran, as Ezekiel points out.

When Russia finally does control Iran, and then invades Israel, we can know that the end of this age is near.

About the authors of this article: Milan Hauner is an associate scholar at the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia and John Roberts is the Washington correspondent for Middle East Economic Digest.



BRIGHT LIGHTS, CITY NIGHTS

WALKING INTO THE SMOKE-FILLED room, lights flashed and the sound of vibrant music roared. In one corner, two attractive blondes glared at passing men. Not more than five feet away, another cluster of ladies was hastily flirting with three businessmen.

The music became louder and the smoke grew thicker. The dance floor was packed to the sounds of George Michael's *Don't you want my sex?*

My eyes began to water. Seeing that I was getting nowhere with the women, (like most of the 100 or so other guys in the nightclub) I headed for the door. But where to? It was Saturday night. Where else could a single male in a big city go? The lights were flashing—Satan's trap—in the heart of the city.

Well, I could go home, drown my sorrows in a few more beers and forget about it. I was lonely. I wanted to be around people. Yet, I was confused. Satan was playing mind games with me.

He had gotten me into a nightclub like he does with millions of singles throughout the world today, but this time God intervened and I left. I went home, read some scriptures from the Bible, tried to pray and cried myself to sleep.

The next morning I arose early and went to church. The presence of Christian brothers and sisters was so much more real than those plastic people I had come into contact with the night before. I felt better, but still I felt ashamed. Satan was twisting my thoughts again. No wonder there are so many lost and confused people out there in the world today!

I went home from church de-

jected. "God," I cried, "why am I feeling this way? I went to church for you today. I should feel good now."

But I didn't. This had been an ongoing thing for me the last few months—hit the night life on Saturday night and play Christian on Sunday morning. I now see why it says in the Bible not to be a lukewarm Christian. I could not find that happy medium. I had to decide who to serve: God or Satan.

Well, the bubble almost burst. I had been living on the edge. My life



Just five feet away several women hastily flirted with three businessmen.

was in turmoil. Everything seemed to be going well for my Christian friends around me; but for me, failure. There was nowhere else to run. I couldn't drink like I used to, to escape my loneliness. (This was something I couldn't figure out. Later I would come to find out it was the result of many answered prayers from my Christian brothers and sisters I associated with at church.)

This frustrated me. My body rejected alcohol. This was my last means of escape. The end had come, I thought. I contemplated suicide, my will, and a farewell letter to my parents. But that was as far as I

got.

Something led me to call my cousin, a person who had put up with my longsufferings and given me encouragement in times when I knew she needed it more than I.

She told me about a special Christmas service at the church I had been attending irregularly. I went there and God spoke to my heart. The burdens and guilt I had been carrying for years were lifted. It was as if a new light shone upon me. By the grace of God, I could be saved. God sent his Son for me, to die for my sins.

I was given new life, but there are millions of others out there who are going through similar things I've experienced and may not find that hope or see the light I did. They have been blinded by Satan's light and the pleasures and temptations that the world offers. Satan dwells on singles. They are more susceptible to him. They are lonely and looking for someone or something. They have more freedom to do things and no family or obligations to hold them down.

I came from a small town and was raised up in the Church of God.

Get involved in church activities, or anything that puts God first.

When I was young and lived at home under my parents' rule, I was active in the church. But like many others, upon completion of my education,

my job moved me to a city and away from the church. Being a small denomination as we are, there were no churches to attend nearby, so I found myself reveling in the nightlife that the city offered on Saturday nights and many times not getting out of bed on Sunday mornings until noon. This carried on until about four months ago when I was invited to a charismatic church by my cousin.

I began attending services and the members were very receptive to me. Being brought up in what I call a conservative Church of God with a distinctive doctrine, I found this new church to be liberal, but on the other hand its enthusiasm and joy for the Lord were overwhelming. I began to see how good the Lord is to them that love him and discovered a new meaning for what praise really is.

Despite this, conflict continued to stir in me. Satan was at war with my inner thoughts. While seeing how

I'm 30 now and need to start living my life to its fullest, but without God I know that's not possible.

good the Lord is, at the same time I felt disillusioned that I wasn't a Christian or like the others around me. I became jealous and envied others to a point that I began blaming God and rebelling back to my worldly ways. This is one of the biggest traps I feel that many singles like me fall into today. We are blinded by the bright lights of worldly illusions.

This was about the time I began to realize that I couldn't turn to alcohol like I used to. It felt like World War III inside of me. God seemed to be farther and farther down the road, yet he was standing behind the door

knocking, but I couldn't hear him over the loud music nor see him because of the bright city lights.

As I said earlier, I finally found him, praise God!

While this may be my testimony and may be astounding to some who know me, I believe that there are many others out there in the world who are experiencing the same frustrations and struggles I have gone through . . . loneliness, despair, and confusion. In order to reach out and help these people, we have to understand what they are going through and provide the encourage-



The dance floor was packed to the sounds of George Michael's *Don't you want my sex?*

ment and uplifting that the Bible gives.

The new church I've started attending provides services, home groups or activities practically every night of the week. I realize with most Churches of God this isn't possible due to size, but you would be surprised what a blessing it is. I attend a home group every Friday night, leaving me one less weekend night to stay away from worldly snares.

I'm 30 now and need to start living my life to its fullest—spiritually that is, but without God I know that's not possible. I have come to learn that God is everything in my life and putting him first needs to be my utmost goal. Though I may fall, I now understand that I must pick myself up and start again.

As for all the singles out there that have been finding their lives going around in circles for the past few years or maybe longer than that, it's not too late. Get involved in church activities, or anything that puts God first. The more you do that, the better

you're going to shun Satan out of your life.

That's the key. Know who is going to control your life and take charge. You just can't sit back and say, "I want to enjoy life to its fullest for a few more years, then I'll become a devoted Christian." Believe me, you'll never walk in the steps of the Lord with that type of an attitude. I almost didn't. You're lost right then and there.

The city lights shine brightly, but God's light shines everlastingly. Choose you this day who you are going to follow, but for me, I'm going to follow the steps of my Savior, Jesus Christ, into everlasting life.

Want to write the author?

If the bright city lights bother your lifestyle and Satan seems too strong, please write us at Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061. We will forward your letter to this author. Kindred spirits have a way of learning from and leaning on each other.



San Francisco Nights

By David Krogh

Focus on

IN MATTHEW 28:19, 20, WE HAVE RECORDED what is commonly referred to as the "Great Commission." Jesus said, "Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (NIV).

The commission which Jesus gave is indeed a "great" commission! It is a mission that involves touching the lives of people. The command of this passage is to "make disciples." The method of making disciples is found in the further instruction to "go, baptize, and teach."

It would be well if we could gain the vision of discipling-making as the focus of our church effort today.

The process of making a disciple includes leading a person to conversion through belief, repentance, and baptism. But it means more than leading a person to make a decision. It includes what happens after the decision, and for the rest of that person's life.

Effective evangelism has been defined as proclamation of good news, and persuasion, directed toward the goal of making disciples and responsible church members.

What is a Disciple?

There are many key Scripture texts that speak about disciples.

A disciple is a follower. "Then Jesus said to his disciples, If any one would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matt. 16:24, NIV).

A disciple is one who upholds the teachings of Jesus. "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples" (John 8:31, NIV).

A disciple is a reproducer. "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples" (John 15:8, NIV).

A disciple is characterized by love. "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:35, NIV).

As we read these and other Scripture texts, we may be challenged to ask ourselves if we are indeed disciples. Are we followers? upholders of Jesus' words? are we reproduc-

ers? are we characterized by love for others?

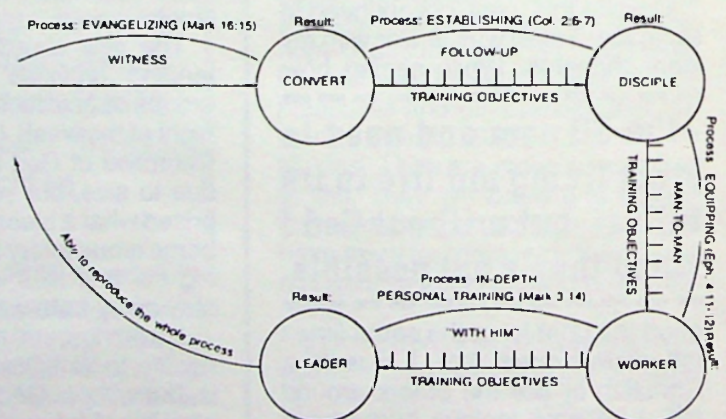
The Process of Discipling

I have been challenged by one of the textbooks used in an Oregon Bible College class. The title of the book is, "The Lost Art of Discipling," by Leroy Eims. The author encourages us to look at the ministry of Jesus as he took 12 men from various walks of life and turned them into an army of dedicated disciples who "turned the world upside down."

He challenges us to consider the fact that in the early church "the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly" (Acts 6:7).

He causes us to consider whether perhaps the church today has lost sight of its vision of making disciples.

Mr. Eims shares a chart in his book which lays out the process and the results which we should be attempting to follow in the church today. Our initial effort in dealing with the lost is to bring them to the point of conversion.



After they have been evangelized and have made a decision, we must establish the converts by helping them to become disciples. Then we must equip each one to become a worker. And out of our pool of workers, our goal is to produce leaders through in-depth personal training. It is only as we move individuals through this entire process that the work of the church can be successful.

• Disciplemaking

It seems apparent in the church today that success depends not so much on better techniques and better technology, but rather on the development of dedicated disciples. It has been said that programs don't work; people work. Unless we have developed spiritually mature individuals to do the work of Christ, no matter how many programs and methods we have, God's work will not be achieved.

Obviously we need effective methods and certainly dedicated disciples will use the best methods, but clever programs will come to naught without disciples whose hearts are right with God.

There is no clearer text on disciplemaking than the words of Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses, entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others" (NIV). Paul instructed Timothy to pass the message along to reliable men who would be qualified to each others. And the process does not end at that point. The purpose of Paul teaching Timothy was so that Timothy could teach reliable men. And the reason reliable men were to be taught was so that they could teach others. And the reason others were to be taught was so that they could teach others in turn. This is the process of multiplication which is so vividly demonstrated for us in the book of Acts in the early church. And it is a process that I believe God intends for us to use in the work of our churches today.

If each convert in the church today were to see himself as a disciplemaker, we would see our world turned upside down with the Gospel in a relatively short time. It has been calculated that if 5,000 members in the Church of God were to take their disciplemaking responsibilities seriously, at the end of one year, there could be a potential number of 10,000 disciples. And if this process were continued each year between now and the turn of the century, by the year 2000 there would be a total of 81,920,000 disciples!

Is it possible for us to take lightly the command of Jesus to "make disciples"?

How to Get Started

The most important place to begin in the disciplemaking process is to first make sure that you are a disciple. I believe that it is perfectly possible for a person to have been in the

church many years and yet not fully be a disciple of Christ. It is very possible to have made a decision to accept Christ and to be baptized, but to have failed to grow spiritually and in obedience to the Scriptures.

If you and I are to be disciples of Christ, one of the most important ways to grow spiritually is to have a daily quiet time, consisting of Bible reading, scripture memorization, prayer, and meditation. Many Christians have not come to the place in their spiritual lives where they are receiving the blessings of a quiet time with the Lord. God is able to do some rather amazing things in a person's life when he takes time to feed upon the Word. It is difficult for God to change a person's life when that person does not remain in constant communication with the Father.

A growing number of people in the Church of God have benefited from a spiritual-growth program developed by the Navigators. It is called the 2:7 series. It is based upon Paul's words in Colossians 2:7, where he says, "Rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness" (NIV). The purpose of the 2:7 material is to help us become more firmly rooted in Christ and to be strengthened in our faith so that we will overflow with thankfulness. It is only when we are overflowing with thankfulness that we have a testimony to share with those who are unconverted. If our heart is cold and barren, and if we have no assurance of salvation, it is very difficult to share a message of love and hope with others. That is why it is so essential for us to deal with our own spiritual life as a prelude to making disciples of others.

As a part of the 2:7 instruction, enrollees are taught how to prepare a testimony and how to share the basics of salvation with the unconverted. The sharing of a testimony and leading a person to conversion is, of course, the first step in making a disciple of him. So, if your goal is indeed to make disciples, you must first learn how to make converts. Once a person has become a convert, the process of making a disciple is accomplished by sharing our knowledge of God's Word with him, and sharing our spiritual experiences. Jesus said that a student, when he is fully taught, will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40). Our goal should be to reproduce ourselves in the lives of others.

For more information on the 2:7 series, please contact me at Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP: THE CRUCIAL ISSUE

By Warren Sorenson



One of the most crucial issues in the Church of God is the need for pastors who are trained and prepared to be leaders. Leadership is essential to achieve the objectives of improving the internal working of our existing churches, expanding the local church through effective evangelism, and for starting new Churches of God. All three of these objectives are vital for the Church of God to be an effective faithful witness of the truth which God has delivered to us.

Everything rises and falls on leadership. Ministry cannot rise above the leadership. If the ministry of the Church of God is going to exhibit faithfulness to God we will need to have pastors equipped to lead. The question arises then, **What kind of pastors do we need?**

1. We need pastors who through a close relationship with God are able to sense God's leadership for his church and then take the necessary steps to follow God's leadership. This will necessitate a quality of faith that is willing to trust God, even in the face of risks—a risk that means the goal is achievable only if God makes it happen.

2. We need a pastor who is willing to walk his talk—

one who is willing to do what he asks his people to do. The pastor is out in front of his people, not only in vision but also in doing what needs to be done.

3. A pastor who has the kind and quality of faith that will motivate others to follow. The pastor needs to be able to see where the church is going and be able to see how to get there and at the same time motivate his people to share the vision and the ministry.

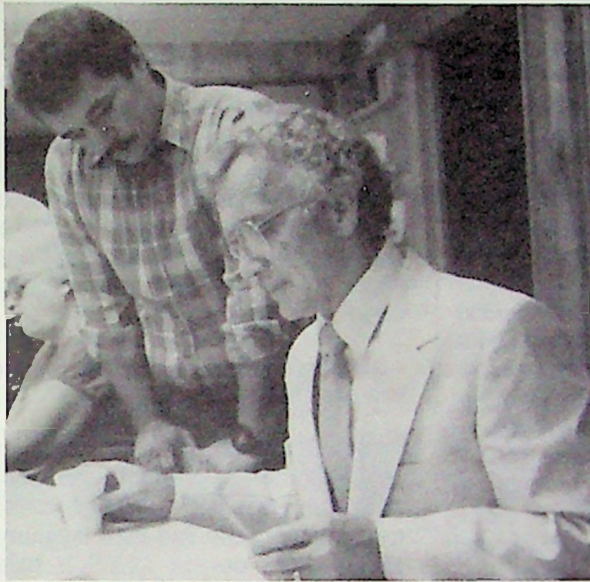
4. A pastor who puts a strong emphasis on reproduction. Evangelism is given a high priority in the gospel; it must be given this same priority in the ministry of the church. Leadership which is obedient to God's purpose of the salvation of the lost is essential for the Church of God.

5. A pastor who is organized for growth. Most pastors want to see the church grow. If this is to take place the church needs to be organized toward that end. The first step toward this is to examine God's purpose and structure for the church.

6. Four types of leaders have been categorized. One is a **Catalyst**, one who can make something out of nothing. This type of leader is a self starter; he easily recognizes what needs to be done, and is out in front getting the job done. A second is an **Organizer**, the type of leader skilled in taking something that is already in existence and organizing it to be more efficient. A third type is an **Operator**. The operator maintains what is already there without making any significant changes. The fourth is a **Redeveloper**. This person can take what may be declining and perhaps dying and turn it around, remaking it into a growing congregation. All four types have an important role. The most important consideration is that the leadership type be matched with the task.

Another important question looms before us: **Where are our future leaders going to come from?** It is easier to state where than it is to make it happen. Our future leaders are going to come from local churches. The attitudes within a local church have a lot to do with the development of leaders. Members of every congregation need to think in terms of preparing for ministry. As ministry becomes a part of congregational life, individuals catch the vision of ministry.

Pastoral leadership in the Church of God must provide redemptive spiritual direction to the whole community.



Raymore Church of God Pastor Don Ward lending leadership to a member in his congregation.

There are some specific things each of us can do to help find and develop pastoral leadership. The first and foremost is to follow the instruction which Jesus gave, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest" (Matt. 9:38). An active prayer process which puts focus on this crucial need is a first step toward a solution to the problem. When we place this need before God and trust him for the answer, we have taken a giant spiritual step in committing our work to him. The church is God's church; that is why we call it the Church of God; certainly he is gravely concerned about the welfare of his church. He is also concerned that we realize the seriousness of the work of his church and the commitment required for it to be effective.

Another thing that we can do is to share the vision of the growth and development of the Church of God. At present we reach a limited number of people with the gospel of truth—the same gospel that is the basis of salvation. It is essential that we grasp the significance of a ministry that is based upon God's love for the lost. It is imperative that we think in terms broader than just the families who are now members of the Church of God.

A third thing each of us can do to meet our leadership needs is to help in recruiting students for Oregon Bible College. The reason is obvious; the number of students in

preparation at OBC has a direct bearing on the number of pastors available. If we are going to increase the number of active pastors, it is essential that we increase the number of those preparing and training for pastoral ministry.

A fourth thing that can be done is to develop financial support programs that will give assistance to those who have a desire to prepare for pastoral ministry but lack the finances. With financial-assistance programs available, these students would be able to attend OBC and thus enter the field in which they are so sorely needed.

I have one more suggestion for consideration: be on the lookout for persons in your congregation who have the qualities needed for pastoral leadership. When you spot a person like this, encourage him, work with him; help him find outlets which will develop his abilities and his desire for ministry; help him choose the path of training leading to the pastoral ministry.

The Church of God shares a rich heritage of gospel truth. Many people in the past have given of themselves to lay the foundations upon which the church of today has been built. Their efforts have given us a church in which we can worship God according to the truths we hold dear. It behooves each of us to put forth our all in upholding these truths and doing all we can to promote the growth and development of the church so that they can continue to be preached. **Remember, everything rises and falls on leadership.**



The author participating in leadership during a Missouri State Conference planning session.

Does Your Heart Beat with the Heart-beat of God?

(This message was delivered at the 1987 General Conference held at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.)

As we are gathered here together tonight, we have a question before us: "Does our heart beat with the heart of God?" We need to personally come to terms with this as we consider that for ourselves and the church.

Several years ago Brother David Wilsterman presented a message at the General Conference held at Rockford College. I was so impressed with that message that I still remember his main question, "If we believe we have the truth, why are those whom we consider not of the truth doing so much better than we are?" That question still haunts us. However, tonight's message and that one are related. They are connected because one answers the other.

Do We Love God's Enemy?

To consider whether or not our heart beats with the heart of God, we must first see where God's heart beats the strongest. When we discover this, we will then find three basic reasons why a heart doesn't beat with the heart of God.

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passes away, and the lust thereof: but he that does the will of God will remain forever" (1 John 2:15-17).

Here John is directing our attention to the antithesis that exists between the world's system and God's. Notice how he does this by pointing out three factors of the world.

1. The cravings, longings, or the desires of the present world's offerings. Included in this we find wealth, prestige, reputation, honor, position, health, and the list goes on. The world has a lot to offer in terms of short-term gratification. The

prizes and rewards that we can gain from this world are not God's (lust of the flesh).

2. Looking at what is forbidden. People say, "It's okay to look; just don't touch." The two cannot be separated. We must gain control of our eyes. We cannot visually wander over forbidden ground without reaping serious consequences. Not having a "single-vision eye" is the basis for discontentment and divorce in marriage because people look at others as replacements for spouses (lust of the eyes).

3. The puffing up of self-confidence. The world gives a small measure of confidence in self-reliance. We are instructed from "self-help" books. The truth needs to be remembered that you cannot trust, nor exercise faith in God, when you are counting on yourself (pride of life). It just doesn't work.

These three things come from this world's system. This present evil age is not what God desires for his children. In fact, if you were able to replace all the unbelievers in the senate and congress in the state and national level with born-again, Bible-believing people, that still would fall woefully short of God's idea of good government! What God has in mind is setting up his Son to be King. Nothing else is going to please God.

When we see this world system for what it really is, then our hearts will begin to draw close to God.

This world is evil, wicked, sinful, and controlled by Satan, and I will not be happy until my Lord Jesus Christ comes back and makes it right. If our churches (and personal lives) are becoming too comfortable in this present age, the love of the Father is not in them!

Why does it seem as though the Church of God is failing, churches and church leaders alike?

The number-one reason our hearts won't beat with God's is: We are having a love affair with God's enemy!

That love affair has characteristics

which appear subtly, not so much as drunkenness, fornication, murder, etc. No, this is how Satan wants us to think, so that we attack the "big" sins always and let the other sins slip by to destroy the church and keep us from God.

Carnality Within

"And I, brothers, couldn't speak to you as spiritual, but rather as carnal, just like babies in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not meat: because up until now you were not able to bear it, and you still aren't able, because you are carnal. I say this because there is between you envyings and strife and divisions. Are you saying you aren't carnal, even though you live according to men?" (1 Cor. 3:1-3.)

Here in Paul's words we see three major headings as John saw:

1. **Envyings.** Jealousy; being zealous against someone; being in opposition with a passion; striving to do hurt, usually at every opportunity and then laughing and saying, "It's only a joke." It happens, doesn't it? You have done it yourself, haven't you?

2. **Strife.** Simply put, this is quarreling and fighting between people trying to gain superiority. It comes from taking our eye off the Lord of the church and putting it on ourselves; not being single minded.

3. **Divisions.** It follows that, when we are envious and fighting, we won't fellowship with others. We become self-reliant; we don't need those trouble makers. We enjoy living in division rather than reconciliation.

To these things Paul says, "You are carnal!" Yes, you are! Jealousy, quarrels, and disunion are among you. You are living just like the world. Don't tell me you aren't carnal!

Why does it seem like the Church of God is failing, with churches closing and a shortage of pastors?

The number-two reason a heart won't beat with the heart of God is carnality.

The hearts of the people are stone cold, selfish, carnal. A carnal heart can't beat with God's.

Right now you are thinking, "Preacher, those are harsh words. Do you need to talk to us that way?" They *are* harsh words, I will agree, but serious times take serious words. We must take decisive action.

I know of a boy who is 11 years old now, a good boy. When he was six a lump was discovered on his leg. In order to save his life, the leg had to be removed. Now, who would want to go to a healthy boy and say, "We have to take off your leg!" You wouldn't, but his parents came to a point where they hated their son's leg because they loved his life more and they were able to permit the operation.

These are serious times! We must also come to the point where we hate this world because we love the kingdom more. You see, we can get caught up in our own worlds of needs, wants, expectations, and goals so much that we cannot be used by the Father to bring him his greatest joy.

Joy in Heaven

"I say to you, that likewise joy shall be in

heaven over one sinner that repents, more than over ninety-nine just people which do not need to repent. . . . Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repents" (Luke 15:7, 10).

Do you understand the implications of what Jesus reveals to us? He tells us there is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, than over ninety-nine people at prayer meeting. Ninety-nine for prayer meeting would be nice, but Jesus says that if we put more effort into having large attendance than we do bringing a sinner to repentance, then we are not bringing the Father the proper level of joy.

The love affair we have with God's enemy, our carnal heart, keeps us from bringing God real joy. If anything gives us

greater joy than seeing a sinner repent, our heart is carnal and it does not thrive on the same joy God's does.

Consider this situation—when an invitation is given at the conclusion of a service and people are more concerned about how long the line will be at the luncheon buffet than they are about those under conviction, or who may respond to God's Spirit in the service, it is because of carnality!

Turn off the television on Saturday night, pray for the teachers, the pastor, and those in need of salvation. Now, consider the excuses you are making as to why you can't do this. It's because the focus of your life is not on things above, but on the things of this world.

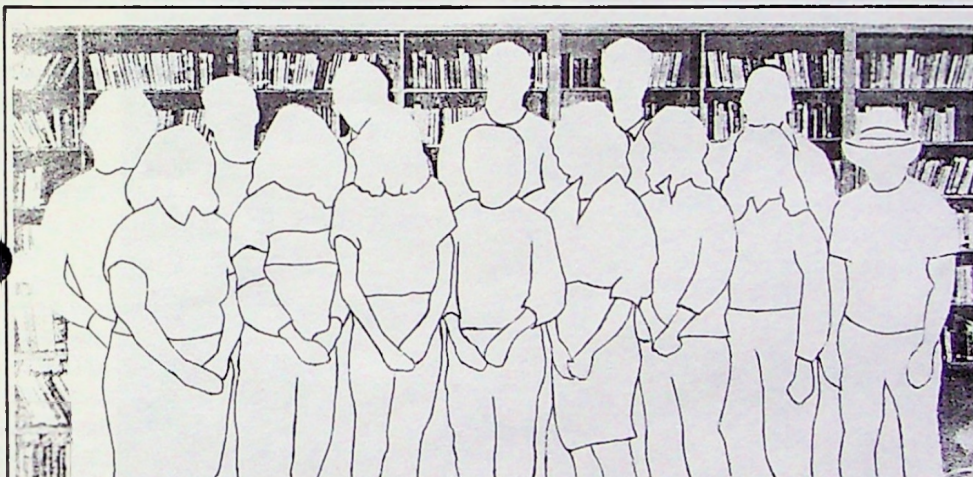
Why does it seem the Church of God is on the brink of despair? Why is the membership remaining constant (if that) and not growing?

The number-three reason hearts don't beat with the heart of God is: We seek joy in the wrong things and fail to bring joy to heaven.

I will conclude this message by allowing you to answer the question for yourself, "Does your heart beat with the heart of God?" You have the evidence before you.

Are you appalled at this world's system, or are you rather comfortable with it and striving for its rewards? Are you reduced to tears in earnest effort to save souls, or is it a bother for you to see a service extended as the pastor prays with these? Are you seeking to be separate from the world and truly be Christ-like in life?

Is your desire for your neighbor the same desire that God has? Are you available for God to use, or are you too wrapped up in your own plans? Consider all these, then decide for yourself, "Does your heart beat with the heart of God?"



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- Evangelism in Mexico
- Support for Oregon Bible College Students
- Discipleship Training

We would love for you to join our team as we help to provide financial support for

these and other ministry projects carried out in the name of the Lord our God.

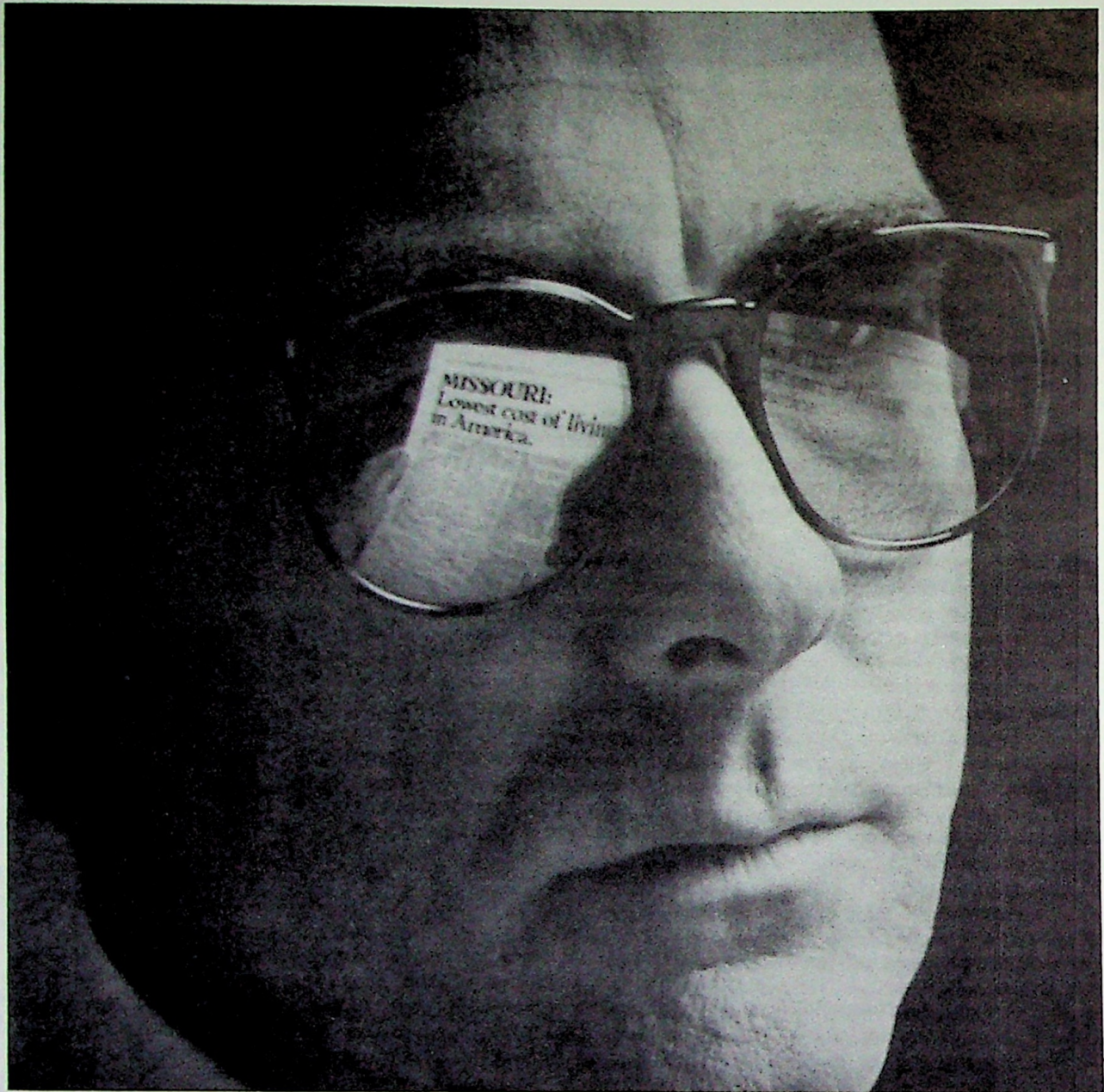
You can share in this wonderful opportunity to be involved in vital ministry by contacting Rick Cooper at the Church of God General Conference Headquarters in Oregon, Illinois.

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By Pastor
Chuck
Jones



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THIS LEGISLATION NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

This legislation updates Federal laws regarding new technologies regarding pornography, and removes loopholes in the present law.

What you can do: You are strongly urged to write your Senators and Congressman and encourage support for the *Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1987*. Also, publicize the legislation in your newsletters, bulletins, magazines, etc., and encourage others to write in behalf of the bill.

The address for your Congressman is: Congressman _____, House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. For your Senators: Senator _____, U.S. Senate, Washington, DC 20510.

The pornography industry will strongly oppose the legislation. It needs the full support of concerned people. Please write or call your Congressman and Senators on this matter.

The President recently announced that he is sending to the Congress for its prompt consideration a major legislative proposal to combat child pornography and obscenity in the United States. This draft bill is entitled the "Child Protection and Obscenity Enforcement Act of 1987."

In May, 1984, President Reagan, during the signing of the Child Protection Act of 1984, announced the creation of a national commission to study the scope and nature of pornography in the United States. After 14 months of extensive examination, the Attorney General's Commission on Pornography released its Final Report in July, 1986, that contained numerous recommendations for changes in federal law. In a press conference held in October, 1986, Attorney General Edwin Meese III announced a seven-point initiative to combat obscenity and child pornography. One of the major points of his initiative was to take a thorough and careful look at the recommendations of the Commission and submit a comprehensive set of proposals to the Congress before the end of this session. The legislation that the President sent to the Congress constitutes that set of proposals.

As the President noted in his transmittal message, the purposes of the bill are two-fold: first, to update Federal law to take into account new technologies and ways of doing business employed by the pornography industry; and second, to remove loopholes and weaknesses in the law, which have given criminals in this area the upper hand for far too long. This legislation consists of numerous proposals in three basic areas, each of which is here summarized briefly.

Sexual exploitation of children through child pornography

Use of computers in child pornography. The draft bill would add clarifying language to the existing sexual exploitation of children statutes to prohibit the use of computers to advertise, distribute, or receive child pornography and related information.

Buying or selling of children to produce child pornography. The bill would prohibit a parent, legal guardian, or other similarly situated person having custody or control of a minor from selling or otherwise transferring custody or control of a minor where the person has knowledge that the minor would be used for the production of pornography.

Protection of minors from use in sexually explicit materials through new record-keeping requirements. The bill would require producers and certain distributors of sexually explicit materials to create and maintain verifiable records with respect to the age and identity of each performer appearing in depictions of "actual sexually explicit conduct."

Child pornography and organized crime. Child pornography violations would be made a predicate offense under the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization (RICO) statute, which, among other things, would allow the seizure and forfeiture of profits derived from the offense.

Obscenity Provisions

Receipt or possession of obscene matter for sale or distribution. A new crim-

inal offense would be established that would prohibit the receipt or possession of obscene material with intent to sell or distribute.

"Syndicate buster" amendments. Current law generally prohibits the interstate transportation of obscene matter for commercial purposes. The draft bill would expand the scope of current law to include a prohibition on the use of a "facility or means" of interstate commerce to transport material of this sort. (Thus, a prosecutor would need to prove only that a defendant used a facility or means of interstate commerce, e.g., a truck, and not that the defendant actually transported the material in question across State lines.)

Obscenity forfeitures. The draft bill would permit both criminal and civil forfeitures to permit the government to obtain assets attributable to profits obtained through violations of the obscenity laws, similar to existing authority in the drugs and racketeering areas.

Possession and sale of obscene material and child pornography on Federal properties. The draft bill would make it a criminal offense to possess or sell obscene visual depictions or child pornography on Federal property.

Adding obscenity as an underlying offense to the wiretap statute. Felony obscenity offenses would be added to the list of offenses for which the government would be authorized to seek court orders authorizing wiretaps.

Child Protection Amendments

Cable porn. The draft bill would make it a criminal offense to utter obscene language or distribute obscene matter by cable television or other subscription services.

Dial-a-porn. The draft bill would prohibit the making of obscene telephone calls, for commercial purposes, to any person, regardless of age, regardless of whether the maker of the communication placed the call, and regardless of whether the communication was made directly or by recording device.



HAS HELL CHANGED?

Is "hell" for real?

We were taught that there was a hell. It was a place somewhere deep down in the earth where fire burned continually and where all sinners would be burned forever when they died. When I was a child I heard evangelists shout of the wrath of God and the lake of fire where all who disobeyed the Word would be cast into eternal torment. These messages were so frightening that I wanted to be a Christian just to escape going to that awful place.

With maturity and study of God's Word I came to know that hell was not eternal punishing. It is and always will be the place of utter destruction of the wicked of all ages, at the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ. Sermons have changed, but not hell.

The pendulum has swung over to the other side where we feel comfortable only with sermons with positive themes like love, spiritual fulfillment, discipleship, social refinement, and Christian fellowship. Our modern brand of Christianity has little room for the wretchedness of sin, everlasting judgment, and weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Another reason for our neglect of preaching and teaching on the wrath of God is our desire to make converts. We tell them all the good things about being a Christian, for we want numbers on our roll. Later we will try to answer their questions and explain about the bad

stuff. Is this bearing fruit? Or are we opening the back door for the new converts to walk out confused and disappointed?

We reason that all Christians are essentially good. They would never let a human being suffer. And since God is better than man, he would not allow any of his creatures to be destroyed in hell. Are we wiser than God? Is our reasoning better than God's Word? How can there ever be a perfect kingdom on the earth without the destruction of the wicked?

We dare not sidestep or distort passages that conflict with contemporary thought. We can try to turn under, go over, or steer around references that offend our human sensitivities. We can ignore, pretend, or even cast aside all thought of hell. But that does not change anything. The Word of God remains true. Hell is for real.

Our calling is not to judge and distort the Word. It is to believe it and to declare it in its entirety to a crooked and perverse generation. Even the part about (*gehenna*) hell.

Jesus believed in hell. He talked more about hell than about heaven. (Matt. 5:22; 8:12; 13:42.)

We sentence ourselves to hell by going against God's plan for our salvation. God does not wish for any to perish. (2 Pet. 3:9.)

Destruction in hell will be horrible, but is necessary to remove all sin from the earth so there will be a place for a

perfect kingdom. (Matt. 13:43.)

The way man uses the word "hell" today only dilutes our understanding of its actual purpose and condition. The teaching of everlasting punishing is untrue. Jesus clearly states that hell is final and forever. Malachi 4:3 tells us that the wicked will be burned to ashes.

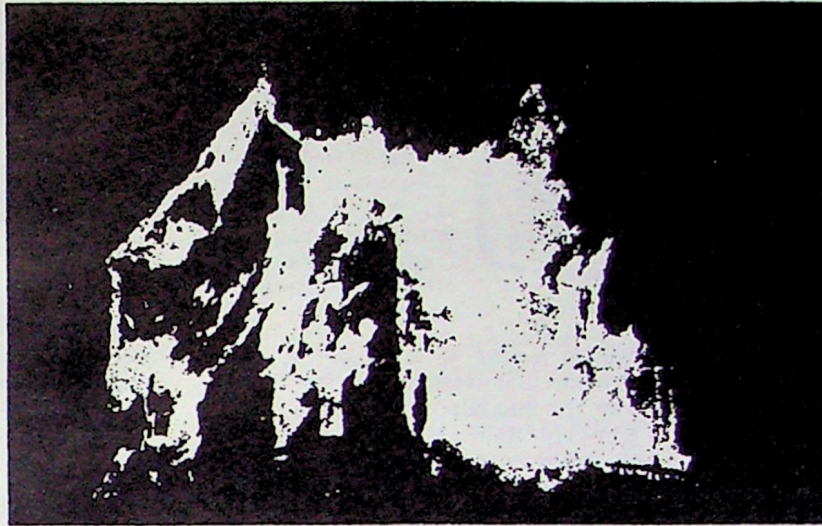
We would not like to return to the days when preachers dangled the listener over the fiery lake of hell. Nor should we stop teaching and preaching of God's love. We need the balance of the whole picture, which includes the wrath of God and destruction of all that is evil. How else could the world be perfected?

When the church takes seriously the Bible teaching of hell, a soberness fills our thinking, praying, and teaching. A sense of urgency grips us. Recognizing the holy and just nature of God, we are spurred to a greater concern for righteous living and fleeing from all appearance of evil. We desire to be led by the Holy Spirit, and thus be spared from destruction in hell.

Our hope is to endure to the end and receive a place in God's eternal and glorious kingdom.

By Eunice Pearson

AIDS and the Great Fire of London



"The heavens and the earth, which are now . . . are kept in store, reserved unto fire" (2 Pet. 3:7).

FROM THE LATTER PART of the Middle Ages through the seventeenth century, Europe was ravaged by occasional outbreaks of bubonic plague or the so-called Black Death. In the great cycle of epidemics in the fourteenth century, *Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us that the mortality rate was enormous. In the first outbreak of that century, in some parts of Europe two-thirds or three-fourths of the people died.

The World Book Encyclopedia tells us that a terrible epidemic of bubonic plague attacked London in 1665. The dead and dying lay crowded in the streets. Thousands perished within a few months.

Then, the next year, another tragedy struck London. It is known to this day as "the Great Fire." When it was over, four-fifths of the city lay in ashes.

But, what about the plague? As far as London was concerned, it was gone! Its disappearance, *Britannica* says, was attributed to the Great Fire.

As I read these historical accounts, I thought of 2 Peter 3:7, "The heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

The Greek word here for "judgment" is *krisis*. It reminds us of our word "crisis." The word for "perdition" is *apoleia*. *Apoleia* means "destruction."

A great crisis or judgment is coming on the world someday. This present earth and its atmosphere will be purged by fire. This, necessarily, must involve the destruction of ungodly men.

Today's plague of AIDS and its gradual spread throughout the world has prompted me to re-think the future judgment of fire mentioned in 2 Peter 3:7. Will this be God's way of cleansing the earth of the terrible AIDS virus and the life-style that has brought

it about?

Often in our thinking we relegate 2 Peter 3:7 to a remote time in the future. But Paul tells us that the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels; "in flaming fire" he will take vengeance "on them that know not God" (2 Thes. 1:7, 8). And, in the same aforementioned context, Peter says that the day of the Lord will come "as a thief in the night." The heavens will pass away with a "great noise" or "rushing sound," the elements will melt with "fervent heat," and the earth and its works will be burned up (2 Pet. 3:10).

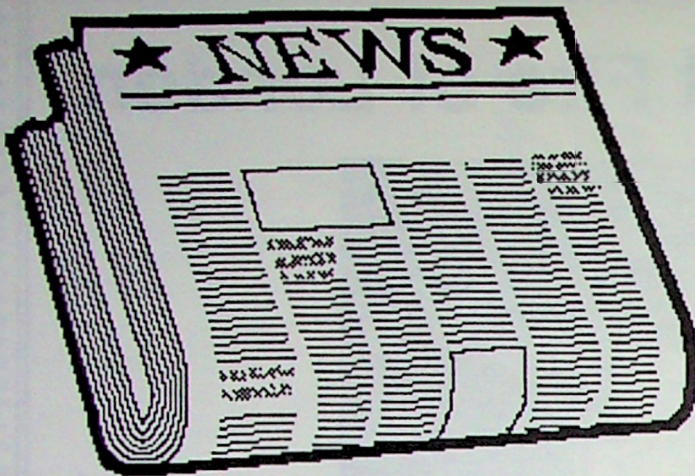
Obviously, all this is in connection with our Lord's return, not some later period.

As far as the bubonic plague was concerned, the Great Fire of London was unique. No such cause existed in other cities, *Britannica* says, for the disappearance of the plague. Yet the Fire of London is illustrative of the great fire to come which will be a part of Christ's judging work.

Sodom was destroyed by fire from heaven. It, too, is an example of the fire to come. Is it possible that there was a terrible virus or disease in Sodom that had to be purged from the land?

World Book, in its article "London," tells us that it was Sir Christopher Wren who made the plans to rebuild the City of London. This included broad avenues, wide squares, and many churches. So I like to think that out of the ashes of this old world, Christ, assisted by the saints, will build a new world, to be presented to the Father when his regency is complete (1 Cor. 15:24).

By Pastor Sidney Hatch
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Vietnam convicts twenty-three priests in mass trial

SANTA ANA, California (ODNS)—A November 5 broadcast on Hanoi Radio has revealed that 23 members of a Catholic religious group were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment following a four-day trial in Ho Chi Minh City. Sentences ranged from four to 20 years' imprisonment and stemmed from May arrests in which security forces overran the motherhouse of the Congregation of the Redemption in Tam-Phu, near Ho Chi Minh City. The government alleged that the monastery had been used for printing and storing anti-government literature and hoarding rice for speculation. They claim weapons were also being stored in readiness for a counterrevolutionary uprising comprised of over 1,600 men.

Soviet Churches doubt new Bible imports will be accessible or affordable

AMSTERDAM, Holland (ODNS)—Researchers polling Russian Orthodox and Baptist believers in the Soviet Union claim their followers have little expectation that new Bible imports will be affordable and available to the membership at large. The 1988 shipment of 100,000 Bibles to the Moscow headquarters of the Baptist Church and the printing of the same amount in the Soviet Union for the Russian Orthodox Church are expected to take place but the estimate is that a single Bible will cost between one-third and one-half month's salary. Orthodox priest Fr. Gleb Yakunin has appealed to the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury confirming the need for Bibles, asking in an August letter for a joint effort with the United Bible Societies in making more Bibles available.

Congressman Introduces legislation urging Soviets to return Vilnius Cathedral

WASHINGTON, DC (ODNS)—A member of Congress has submitted a resolution asking the Soviet government to return a cathedral it seized from the Catholic Church in Lithuania 37 years ago. House Resolution 300, introduced by Representative

Robert A. Borski (D-PA), notes that 1988 marks the 600th anniversary of the cathedral's construction on the site of a pagan temple, in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius. The cathedral, converted into an art gallery in 1956, is regarded as an important religious national shrine and often referred to by Lithuanian Catholics as "the cradle of Lithuanian Christianity."

Anglican leader stirs up controversy with claim that petro-dollars are buying Christians into Islam

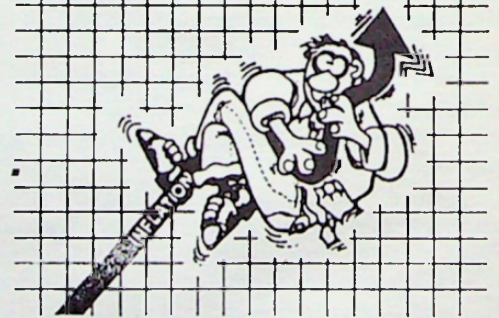
NAIROBI, Kenya (ODNS)—A claim by the head of the Anglican church in Kenya that Muslims are spending millions of "petro-dollars" in Africa to lure Christians into the Islamic faith has stirred up a controversy in the East African nation. Archbishop Manasses Kuria has described the move by Muslims as ungodly, saying it was wrong for a Christian to be brought into another faith. In a statement to the *All Africa Press Ser-*

vice, Kenyan Muslims denied the accusation and said "Islam does not need to use material incentives for its propagation." The recent influx of capital to construct Islamic schools and colleges is thought to have instigated the public outburst by the archbishop.

1987 marks year of activism for Soviet church members

AMSTERDAM, Holland (ODNS)—With the advent of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, members of the Lutheran, Ukrainian Catholic, and Russian Orthodox churches attracted worldwide attention to their causes by publicly pressuring Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to clarify whether announced reforms would also include changes in the Soviet Union's religious policy. The March release of 100 prisoners of conscience sparked renewed hope that *glasnost* would lead to changes in religious legislation. Publicly read proposals, the formation of a religious rights defense organization, and an appeal to Mother Teresa for changes in Soviet law giving Christians the right to participate in charity work organized by the church were considered to be landmark achievements made possible by the new atmosphere of *glasnost*, or openness, in the Soviet Union.

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When Elizabeth Saw President Lincoln

by
Rachel
Carr

The year was 1945. My sister and I had just taken some of Mother's freshly baked cookies over to Grandma Perkins. She wasn't really our grandmother, but everyone called her Grandma. Her little white house was a favorite gathering place for all the children. You see, Grandma Perkins was our neighborhood storyteller.

When Mother had asked Susan and me to take the cookies, we were glad for the chance to see Grandma Perkins. As we walked the block to her house that snowy February morning, we tried to guess what story she would tell us.

"Hello, girls. Come in and get warm by the fire," said Grandma when we arrived. "What delicious looking cookies. Be sure to thank your mother for me."

"Grandma Perkins, do you have a story for us today?" we asked.

"Why, I was just thinking about one of my favorites. Sit down, girls, and make yourselves comfortable."

Here is the story that Grandma Perkins told us that day.

Elizabeth was an excited little girl. Today was the day she was going to see President Lincoln! She had heard so much about the President and now he was actually coming to her town!

As she was getting dressed, Elizabeth thought of how this special visit had come about. It was a sad time for the United States of America. The northern and southern states were fighting each other over the

question of slavery. There had been many battles and thousands of soldiers had died.

Elizabeth shuddered a bit as she remembered those three awful days back in July when the soldiers had fought on Cemetery Ridge right here in her own town of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. She had heard the marching of soldiers' feet and the rumble of the artillery being hauled through the streets. The sound of exploding cannon and the rattle of musket fire still rang in her ears. She had been so glad when the battle had ended and the armies had left.

Many people had gone to see the battlefield. Shallow graves where the soldiers lay were scattered over the area. What a sad sight that had been.

The citizens of the town decided to do something to honor the men who had fallen in battle. They would make a new cemetery just for the soldiers who died in the Battle of Gettysburg.

It was a lovely cemetery and now the day for its dedication had come. Elizabeth rushed downstairs where Mother and Father were waiting. They all walked together to the center of town where the parade was forming.

It seemed as if the whole town had turned out for the parade and the special speeches that would be given at the cemetery. Elizabeth watched as the important people passed by. She liked the crisp clear sounds of the brass bands. She admired the military units as they smartly marched along in full uniform.

Then came President Lincoln—riding on a handsome horse. He was dressed in a black suit and he wore his tall black hat. The people cheered and the president waved or nodded. Elizabeth waved, too, and she was sure Mr. Lincoln was looking right at her when he waved.

Elizabeth and her parents joined the others as they followed the parade to the cemetery. There they saw that a platform had been built for the speakers. It was decorated in red, white, and blue. Elizabeth's father led her mother and her up near the front so they could see and hear everything.

CHILDREN'S

CORNER



The ceremony began with band music and a prayer, and then several important men spoke. One of them talked for almost two hours. When he had finished, a choir sang a hymn written for the occasion. Finally it was President Lincoln's turn to speak.

His speech was short and he didn't think it would be remembered. But President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address became the most famous speech in the history of our country.

"Oh, yes, I know," said Susan. "Our whole class memorized it last year."

I had been wondering about something. "Grandma, I've been thinking. You seem to know a lot about what happened that day. Did you know Elizabeth?"

"Well, girls," Grandma answered, "I have a little secret to tell you. I am Elizabeth."

"You are?" we both gasped. That was a surprise!

"That's right," said Grandma. "I was seven years old when I saw President Lincoln and I'll never forget every detail of that day. Mr. Lincoln was one of our finest presidents. He was a humble man and honest. He did his very best to lead our country in the right way, calling on God for help. Yes, I'll always remember the day I saw President Lincoln."

WHO CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH?



By
Anthony
F.
Buzzard

Normally the question titling this article requires just a singular answer similar to that supplied by the prophet Isaiah:

"Thus says the LORD [*Yahweh*], your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: 'I am the LORD, who made all things, who stretched out the heavens *alone*, who spread out the earth—*Who was with me?*'" (Isa. 44:24, RSV.)

The answer is, of course, that no one was present with the One Lord at the creation. *Yahweh* stretched out the heavens *alone*. The Hebrew word rendered "alone" means "in a state of separation, by one's self" (Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon of the Old Testament*, p. 94). No one was with God, the Father at the creation: "Have we not all one Father? has not one God created us?" (Mal. 2:10.)

Elsewhere in the Old Testament it is said: "Thou, God, even Thou alone, Thou hast made the heaven . . . the earth and all things" (2 Kings 19:15). "Thou art the LORD, even Thou alone; Thou hast made the heaven . . . the earth, and all things" (Neh. 9:6).

It is commonly believed that the One who speaks as the Creator of all things in Isaiah 44 and 45 is a triune God consisting of three persons, but clearly the language of Isaiah 44:24 cannot possibly be reconciled with the popular idea.

This simple information should prevent us from ever believing that Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, was present with the Father when the latter created the heavens and earth. The idea that Jesus actually created the heavens and earth of Genesis 1:1 has been promoted by the Worldwide Church of God (Headquarters, Pasadena, CA). Its teaching is that there are *two* members in the one "God-family." Isaiah 44:24 (cited earlier) clearly states that ONE person alone created the heavens and the earth. Language has no way of expressing this more distinctly.

Trinitarians hold that the second member of the triune God was instrumental in the creation of Genesis 1:1. This, however, contradicts the statement that the One Creator was the Father. (See again Mal. 2:10.)

When Jesus came into being at his birth he enjoyed a unique communion with his

Father. Thus he says: "*I am not alone*, because the Father is with me" (John 16:33). Jesus always speaks as a person distinct from his Father, exactly as every father is an individual separate from his father. The personal "I" of the New Testament *never* refers to the Father and Son together.

Jesus prays that the disciples may be "one even as we [the Father and I] are one" (John 17:11). He addresses the Father and prays that the disciples "may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21).

It is obvious from these texts that the Father and Son use the ordinary personal pronouns to distinguish themselves as any father and son would. It is thus beyond question that Jesus was not with the Father when the latter described his act of creation:

"Thus says the Lord [*Yahweh*], your Redeemer . . . I am the LORD who made all things, who stretched out the heavens by myself. . . . *Who was with me?*" (Isa. 44:24).

Jesus did not exist as a person when the Lord God created all things. God, the Father, was alone at the creation. (The "us" of Genesis 1:26, in connection with the creation of man, may refer to attendant angels, cp. Job 38:7.)

Jesus came into being as the Son of God when Mary conceived him supernaturally. Luke is careful to tell us that it was *because* of the miraculous conception in Mary's womb that Jesus was the Son of God:

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you [Mary] and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the child conceived will be holy, the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

If God, the Father [the Lord—*Yahweh*—of the Old Testament] was alone in creating the universe, why does the belief that Jesus was an active agent in the creation persist?

The answer is that two creations have become confused in the minds of Bible-readers. Jesus is indeed the Mediator of the New Creation (Col. 1:15-18). But he is not the creator of the universe. That creation is the work of the One God, the Father who was alone when he stretched forth the heav-

ens and the earth (Isa. 44:24).

Unfortunately, one or two verses in the New Testament have been translated to give the impression that all things were made "by" Jesus. In fact, the original states that all things were made "through" Jesus (see the margin of Col. 1:16—"through him and for him").

Jesus was indeed the reason for God's creation. The Father "foreknew" him from the beginning (1 Pet. 1:20). In God's great purpose Jesus was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). But he came into existence as the Son of God at his conception (Luke 1:35). There is no biblical text to support the idea that the Son of God was alive before his conception.

When Jesus prayed to receive the glory which he had with the Father before the foundation of the world, he was asking for the glory which had been *reserved* for him and which he would receive after his resurrection (John 17:5). Peter speaks of an inheritance which is "reserved in heaven for you" (1 Pet. 1:4). That inheritance is, of course, the earth which Jesus has promised to the meek (Matt. 5:5) and which he will give them when he returns to establish the kingdom of God. The same glory which was planned for Jesus from the beginning had also **been given already** (John 17:22) to the disciples, even those not yet born! (John 17:20.) This glory is a glory which all disciples "have" even though they have not yet received it.

Isaiah 44:24 should settle forever the question about who created the universe, and Hebrews 1:10 should be read with careful attention to the fact that the writer says he is speaking of the inhabited earth to come (i.e., of the future):

"God did not subject to angels the world to come, of which we are speaking" (Heb. 2:5).

There is no contradiction between the two Testaments on this issue. Jesus will indeed be instrumental in laying the foundations of the coming new heavens and earth (Isa. 51:16). But the original creation is the work of the One God, the Father *alone* (Isa. 44:24).



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We've added 12 pages to each issue of the magazine. We've also included design concepts in each issue. We think, and we hope you agree, that it looks cleaner and that the new graphics make the stories easier to read. The extra pages allow you to absorb 40 percent more content than before. Now we can give you more of what you read THE RESTITUTION HERALD for: rich Bible doctrine and true accounts of the lives of Church of God people.

The changes in your publication go deeper than that, though. THE RESTITUTION HERALD will now come to you once every other month—six times a year—alternating with the months the *Progress Journal* is published. While that seems like you will be getting less of THE RESTITUTION HERALD, the fact remains that you will still receive as many pages as before.

This is your last issue!
If your magazine has a postage-paid envelope inserted, your subscription has expired and this is your last issue! Use the envelope to renew today!

Subscription Expirations

The three-digit number in the lower right-hand corner of your address label identifies the renewal date of your subscription. If the number is 89.0, it expires January, 1989. An 89.5 number means a June, 1989, expiration. This method will assist the subscriber in keeping tabs on his expiration date and serve as a reminder for renewal.

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Another fact: you will help in seeing THE RESTITUTION HERALD change right before your eyes. Your ideas and suggestions will be heard and put into practice. That way, you will read on every page what you want to read in your official Church of God publication. Bible teaching, true-to-life testimonies, current events in the light of prophecy, and many other helpful concepts and spiritual ideas will come into your home for your enrichment.

The months ahead will bring still more change. We'll be fine-tuning the many pages of the magazine and including more inspiring ideas—all part of our plan to provide more of the information vital to you.

Sincerely,

Russ Magaw

Editor

P.S.: We think the changes we've made will help us better serve our readers. We'd appreciate it if you took a few moments to fill out and mail in the questionnaire on the back of this letter—page 31 of the magazine.

THE

RESTITUTION HERALD

Christianity in Your Community

MASTERING YOUR LIFE

Is There a Killer Loose in Your Town?

Page 4

Giving Your Child the Best

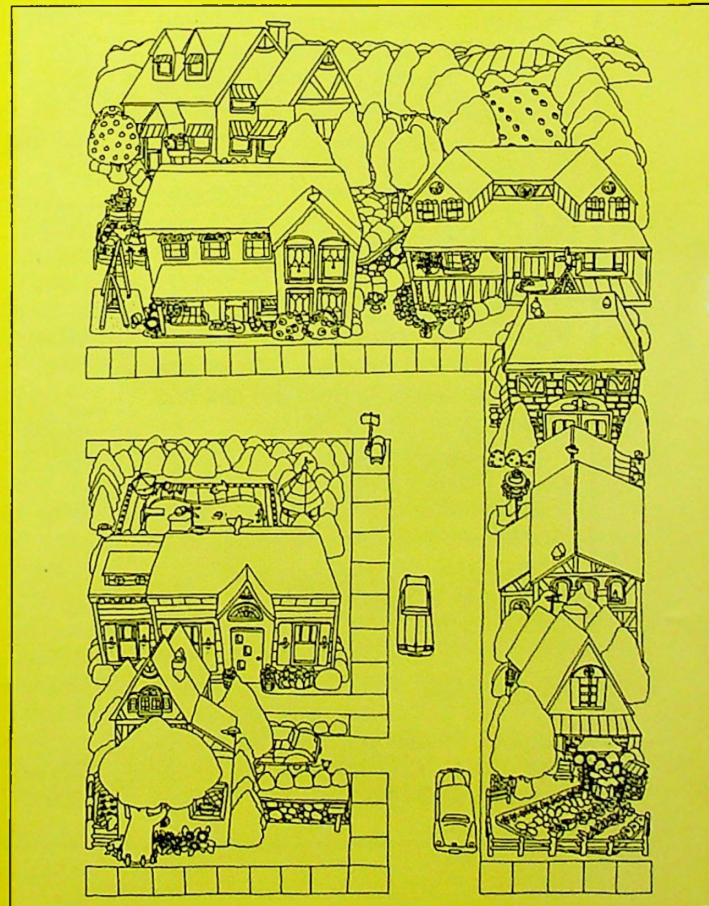
Page 7

Ending Hunger in Your Church

Page 16

Sharing Your Family Time

Page 32





What's wrong with "cocooning"?

By the Editor

Nothing is more appealing after a rather stressful day at work than to come home, put the car in the garage for the night at 5:30, help my wife with dinner and dishes, then enjoy her company until it's time to return to work the next day for more hurry, rush, and madness associated with the job.

Don't attempt to get me out to an evening of meetings with the school board or the city council. Forget socializing with another family at the local Dairy Treet. Toss the invitation to a social occasion with friends. Give up getting me out to a church meeting . . .

I'd rather spend time at home with my mate and the variety of home entertainment gadgets at hand.

Better yet, we just enjoy winding down—we've both had a stressful day.

Actually, I can hardly wait for the weekend. That's *my* time—nobody, but nobody, takes it away from me. We can kick back, relax, and truly e-n-j-o-y.

If phone calls bother, my answering machine screens them. If someone stops in uninvited, I never ask him to sit down; he gets the hint and leaves us in peace.

Like the proverbial ostrich, when I come home I bury my head in the sand—oblivious to social, economic, materialistic, spiritual, and educational demands.

Maybe we'll just curl up on the couch to watch TV—not real television, mind you. We're up to "here" with network programming. Maybe we'll see something on cable or the satellite. Better yet, there are cabinets full of VCR tapes to watch. Or maybe we'll pop in our favorite

homemade tape shot with our camcorder . . .

Really, it doesn't matter what we watch. The main thing is to r-e-l-a-x. Refresh our worn-down batteries. Unwind frazzled nerves. Retreat from life's cares.

How Cocooning Impacts You

If the foregoing scenario sounds familiar, don't let that unnerve you. Most Americans practice "cocooning"—a withdrawal from social and community activities.

When did the phenomenon start? Why do we retreat? How will it affect individuals, families, institutions (like the church), and society?

The term, which derives its name from insect larva forms in the pupal stage, came into sociological use in 1986, when consumer spending in the United States suddenly took a dive.

The plunge came after a strong growth of home technology purchasing; from VCRs to televisions, personal computers, microwaves, compact-disk players, and the like. When consumers finally got all these toys, they simply stopped buying because there was nothing new left to purchase—and began staying at home.

Folks didn't run out of money; they merely ran out of interest. It was now time to use the toys.

Cocooning and Institutions

The problem runs so deep that institutions which depend on volunteerism are hard-pressed to continue offering vital services.

In one California private school, parents of students are required to spend 20 hours per year helping out

—or they can opt out by paying \$10 per hour.

Much to the dismay of school administrators, that option quickly became their biggest fund-raiser. But what the school really needs and wants is time more than money.

Cocooning and the Family

North Americans have removed the traditional family situation of a single breadwinner circa 1957 to a two-job situation—only 13 percent of today's families cling to the 31-year-old model.

In the process, the two-breadwinner family has a geometric impact on time and stress. Errands, laundry, and all the never-ending crumbings that plague households must be crammed into evenings and weekends. Since grocery and department stores are jammed during these times, it's no wonder folks again seek refuge in the home.

If little is done to reverse the retreat mindset, what's going to happen to social contacts, community necessities, political needs, religious functions, and a whole myriad of other interactive functions?

Many folks are truly concerned, perhaps rightly so.

Cocooning and the Church

My concern: how can the Church of God either make creative use of the latest sociological trend, or impact cocooners with the gospel? What changes need to be made in our practices of ministry? How will this trend alter our approach toward evangelism and disciplinmaking?

For openers, we need to demand the best from our practices of ministry. Each activity must meet a felt

need. The gospel must be packaged in such a way that it will attract and hold attention, then answer need.

It may no longer be necessary to focus attention on the church building for all activity. Many ministry activities can be carried to the home for gospel impact.

Activity at the church building during the week can have the impact to draw more persons than the number who worship on Sunday. This will transpire because of the many conflicting schedules of parishioners and other persons in the community.

It may also be wise to increase the use of multimedia presentations for home use. Care must be taken to remember the "couch potato" syn-

drome of the viewer; avoid heavy material or the viewer will turn it off.

As always when faced with new trends in North America, the Church of God must remember to major in the most important need—love. Regardless of the circumstances, folks will want to know that you have their best interests at heart—or they'll turn you off anyway.

This newest trend offers the Church of God a rare opportunity to discover ministry for people who will find loneliness and apathy as by-products of retreating. We need to create new ministry opportunities that answer these prolonged empty feelings in a noisy world clamoring for unneeded attention.



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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 "resitution 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.

Letters

I wanted to write and commend you on your fine article: "If You Meet Some Who Say That Their Souls Go to Heaven When They Die, Do Not Believe That They Are Christians!" in the November issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

It's refreshing to read an article that states our beliefs so firmly. One has a tendency to forget why the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith is so different from the churches of the world.

My ancestors were responsible for the faith being brought to this area and they were ridiculed for their beliefs, but they stayed firm. God grant that this faith will still be alive when Jesus comes. So many are absorbed into other faiths and seem not to realize how important Bible truths are.

—Royal, AR.

"Bright Lights, City Nights" in the February/March issue made a good statement about getting involved with some other church when a Church of God is not close.

—Fredericktown, MO.

The argument now is that THE HERALD is not being read by enough persons. I personally feel the reason is because THE HERALD material is too scholarly. Only those who want to read and study now take THE HERALD. We need to have more short—one page—simple articles.

—Belle Plaine, IA.

We are not selling THE RESTITUTION HERALD because it has become TOO EDUCATED. Our Lord Jesus did not try to win college grads, nor the rich. He appealed to

the down-trodden, sick, needy, uneducated, etc. I haven't been able to place it in the homes that should be appealed to because they know very little about the Bible and therefore are unable to understand what is written there. I believe that if you chose some good writer, with some humor, to compose simpler articles, it would greatly enhance our publication. Then add several more writers who could explain and enlarge upon just one verse, in 100 to 200 words, we could soon enlarge our circulation.

—Springfield, OH.

The February/March/1988 issue was well done. I enjoyed the article by Petsy Rudacille most—one which cuts to the heart of those of us who are struggling in our Christianity.

I noticed that there were photographs in this issue also. I really enjoy seeing photographs there—much more than clip art from computer screens. Does the cost of printing the issues increase when you use photographs instead of clip art? Photographs give a much more professional look to a journal. I am sure that there are many good photographers in the Church of God who would enjoy seeing their photographs in issues of THE HERALD. Why not ask for photos?

—Oregon, IL.

Good idea. Please submit regular-size, glossy, black-and-white prints. Color prints are more difficult for the printer to work with. A publication without photos is always cheaper, but not very eye appealing. We prefer to use photos whenever possible.

—Editor.

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Most subscriptions begin with the February or October issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

PHOTOS: Cover graphic: Dynamic Graphics; Becky Hall, page 8; Russ Magaw, page 10; line drawings: Vickie Cooper, pages 2, 31.



C R A C K

WARNING! THERE MAY BE A KILLER LOOSE IN YOUR TOWN! Killer Crack may move quietly into your neighborhood and make friends with your children. He will stalk the corridors of their schools and move unnoticed through their playgrounds. Crack has been known to invade the homes and workplaces of America. You see, Crack is an "equal-opportunity destroyer." He attacks young and old; male and female; blacks, whites, and Hispanics; city dwellers as well as suburbanites. A large percentage of Crack users are young males ages 20 to 30, but the number of adolescent Crack users is increasing at an alarming rate. At present, Crack is most prevalent in New York, Miami, and Los Angeles, but it is on the move. Your town or city could be next.

What Is It?

Crack, or "Rock," as it is sometimes called, is an extremely potent form of freebase cocaine which can be smoked without losing its potency as street-sold cocaine does. It is probably one of the most addictive drugs around with a risk of death in even small doses. Crack begins as cocaine, a powder produced from the leaves of a cocoa plant. A simple chemical procedure requiring only baking soda, household bleach, and water is used to produce Crack. Crack is sold in the form of creamy-colored chunks or chips resembling rock salt or bits of fallen plaster. The name "Crack" refers to the crackling sound heard when the mixture is smoked.

Who Uses It?

Cocaine use has gone in and out of style in our culture. It was used extensively in the 19th century and again in the Roaring '20's. The 1970's brought a new wave of cocaine use. The refining process for Crack was developed around 1982, born of the users' continuing search for the ultimate "high." Crack was not readily available until approximately 1984 when it was imported from the Bahamas. It is estimated that 30 million Americans use cocaine or Crack, five million of them regularly.

Crack is popular among the poor and middle classes as well as the very rich. It is sold in small plastic bags or vials containing one to three "rocks" of freebase cocaine ranging in price from \$5 to \$20.

Why Use It?

When smoked, the particles enter the bloodstream within seconds, reaching the brain and producing an intense "high." The potent, rapid high lasts only three to five minutes since the liver rapidly breaks down the drug. During the period of this high the user often claims a feeling of self-confidence, energy, and clear-mindedness. Unfortunately, the high is followed by an equally unpleasant crash, leaving the user in a state of agitation, depression, inadequacy, and fear. The user craves additional dosages to avoid the crash and ensuing depression even though continued use of the same dosage fails to give that same high. The drug becomes a cure for its own negative effects. Despite the effects of the drug, the body tries to adapt and work normally. As the need for larger dosages of crack occurs, the danger of overdoses also occurs.

Crack users suffer both physical and psychological addictions. The brain develops a biologically based hunger for the drug. Laboratory animals given the choice of food or cocaine will invariably choose the cocaine and starve to death. An acquired addiction to Killer Crack can take up to six months, but sometimes happens within just a few days. Drug dealers make almost five times the profit from Crack as from equivalent amounts of cocaine because the drug can be manufactured quickly and is relatively inexpensive to produce. When users have expended all their resources, they often resort to stealing or dealing to support their habit which may cost them up to \$1,500 or more per day.

What Are Its Effects?

The effects of Crack are many and varied, but all are bad. Crack disrupts the communication network within the brain, making your brain and body think you are under stress, and causes such radical changes in behavior and personality as depression, irritability, social withdrawal, and loss of sexual desire. Because Crack is a stimulant, its use often leads to violent and/or suicidal behavior. Drug psychosis, which is a temporary loss of touch with reality resulting in paranoia and hallucinations, is what usually brings people to emergency rooms.

The high blood levels produced by freebase smoking can cause such reactions as potentially fatal brain seizures, serious respiratory problems, heart damage or congestive heart failure, strokes, birth defects or miscarriages, and oftentimes death. Since users have no control over the amount of Crack absorbed through the lungs, effects often come too rapidly for even prompt medical care to be effective. No one knows what a dangerous dosage of Crack is, thus making all dosages dangerous. In addition, the danger level differs from

person to person and from usage to usage.

Why then is the use of drugs so attractive? For some it is a means of coping or a struggle for independence. For others it is peer pressure or a means of escape from reality or pain. Whatever the reason, the habit can ruin your life and drastically affect the lives of those who love you. Even though the drug is not yet prevalent in Illinois, State legislators want a law imposing a six-year prison term on anyone caught with any amount of Crack.

How Can It Be Treated?

Treatment for Crack addiction can be very successful. The drug Bromocriptine, which is used for Parkinson's patients, can relieve cocaine withdrawal symptoms. Some doctors prescribe antidepressants although it takes weeks for them to help, if they help at all. Other doctors insist their patients check into the hospital and give up the drug "cold turkey." The best treatment is accomplished without drugs. The user is taught ways to live drug free. Group counseling, individual therapy, and other therapies have also been successful. Even when users successfully give up the drug, however, the desire for it can return even after being drug free for several months or several years.

Preventing drug abuse before it becomes a problem is an even better solution. Family members, schools, and community and government agencies must all be involved in preventing drug abuse. Families and educators can help individuals learn such abilities and attitudes as self-confidence, self-esteem, social skills, trust, and the ability to develop goals that are realistic and reachable. Individuals should make it a point to educate themselves and their families to be able to detect drug-abuse cases.

What Can You Do?

What does all this mean to you—today's Christian? Maybe nothing. But, if the Lord tarries, the chances are that one day someone you know will be touched by Crack or its effects. If this should happen, here are some steps you may want to consider:

IDENTIFICATION. If you suspect that a friend or family member is a drug abuser, don't just ignore the fact hoping it will go away. Drug addiction rarely does a disappearing act. Denial of the fact that someone in your family might be involved with drugs will only complicate matters and bring on additional problems. *Your immediate attention could save a life.*

CONFRONTATION. Confrontation, although scary, is a necessary step in breaking the drug-abuse cycle. Be firm, not angry or judgmental. Realize you run the risk of rejection by that person, but *let him know you*

care and want to help.

INTERVENTION. Intervention may be necessary if the abuser denies that there is a problem. If you are not trained in this area, contact an intervention specialist under whose supervision you might work. The purpose of intervention is to *break down the wall of resistance* in order to get the abuser the needed help.

TREATMENT. Cocaine abuse is considered to be a compulsive disease much like alcoholism and has no actual cure. It must be controlled. *Total abstinence* from the drug is the only truly effective treatment.

CONTINUED SUPPORT. Whether the abuser/user is a member of your family or someone you are close to, that person will need continued support, not just during the time he is striving to give up the drug, but for months and years to come.

Treatment programs for cocaine can be identified all over the United States by dialing toll free: 1-8-COCAINE or 1-800-662-HELP.

Other resources are:

NATIONAL FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER
1-800-241-7946 to locate a drug-treatment facility
in your area

STUDENTS TO OFFSET PEER PRESSURE
(STOPP)
Dept. S, PO Bx 103
Hudson, NH 03051-0103
1-609-889-8163

JUST SAY NO FOUNDATION
1777 North California Boulevard
Walnut Creek, California 94596
1-800-258-2766

AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR DRUG EDUCATION
Department S
5820 Hubbard Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20852
(request their pamphlet on Crack)

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR DRUG-
ABUSE INFORMATION
Box 416
Kensington, Maryland 20795

PARENTS' RESOURCE INSTITUTE FOR DRUG
EDUCATION (PRIDE)
100 Edgewood Avenue, Suite 1002
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

By Brenda Wessel

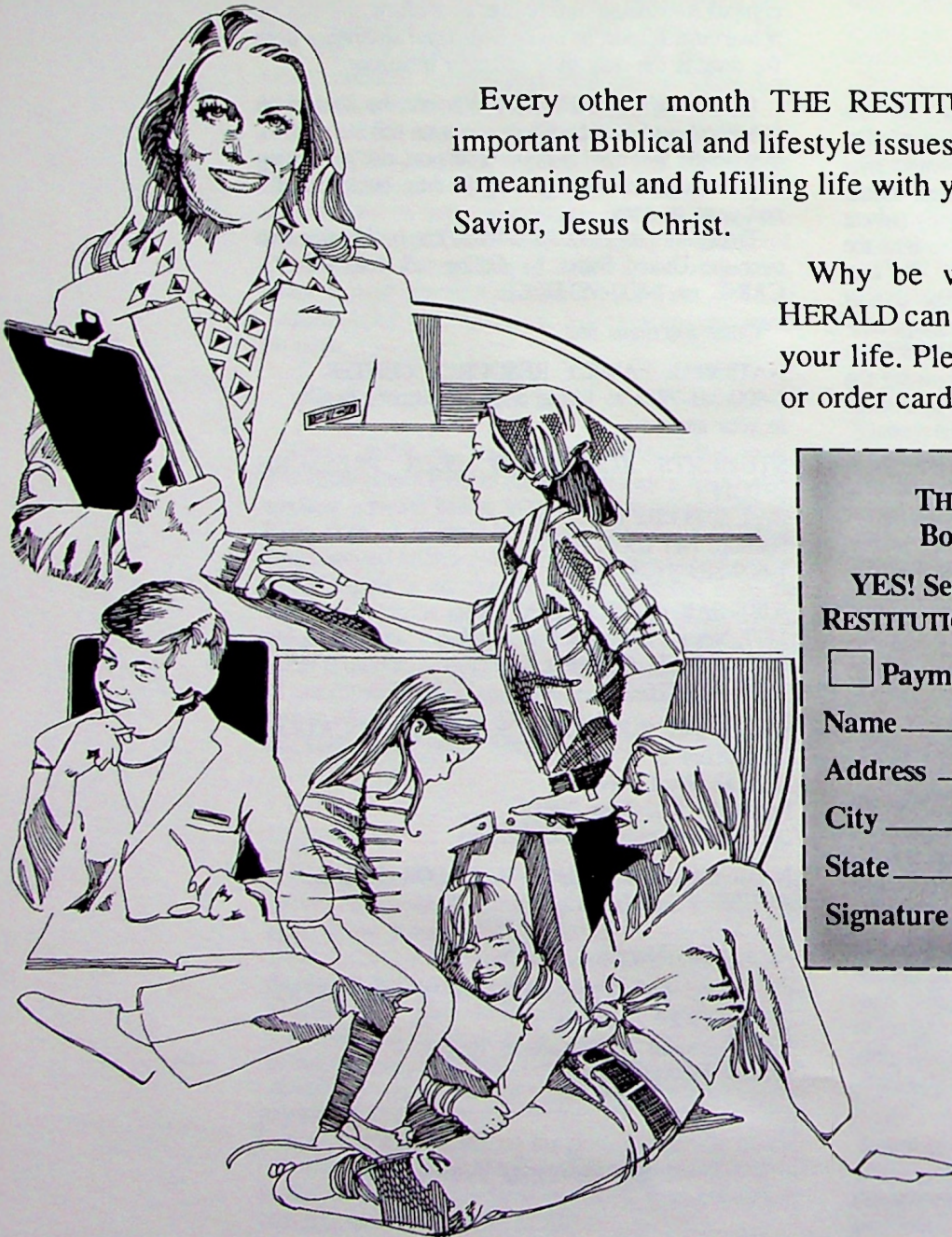
Support & Guidance for the Family of God

THE

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Nurturing Children's Spiritual Growth

For thousands of years, young adults have been plunged into the sometimes frightening world of parenting with no preparation or training. They were entering the most important task and role of their entire lives, that of raising the world's future generations, and all they knew was what they had learned from observation of others or from trial and error. Times have changed, for in the last decade parenting classes have become very popular, teaching everything—including changing diapers, nutrition, infant massage, and physical and psychological development stages. Before these classes existed, parents survived and did good jobs, but the advantages that parents might have today is found in the awareness of children's development, in order to add to their strengths, reinforce areas that are weak, and watch for potential problems that could be handled early.

We have entered a new era of awareness, but there is one aspect of our children's development that we sometimes neglect to encourage—that of spiritual growth. We are all concerned for our children and want them to grow spiritually, but our only intentional efforts consist of sending them to Sunday School and church, teaching them to pray, and teaching them things not to do, such as stealing and lying. We need to start asking ourselves questions such as, "How do we, as parents, teach our children to be growing and dynamic Christians? How do we transfer to them the values and belief systems that will be the foundation of their lives? What are the developmental processes whereby a child attains spiritual growth?" Our awareness of our children's spiritual growth processes needs to be increased in order that we might consciously aid in their development, for this is one area that will have eternal significance. Because these questions of spiritual development are rarely asked or defined, we end up muddling through this very important area of our child's growth, never being sure of what our role is and what exactly we need to transmit to our children.

The Bible gives us some general guidelines to follow, but is vague in dealing with the specifics of exactly how to nurture spiritual growth in children. Deuteronomy 11:18, 19 states: "You shall therefore impress these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. And you shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up." These verses indicate that this spiritual nurturing

should occur throughout the activities of daily life within the family. But how does teaching values and beliefs actually occur? The answer lies partly, I believe, in changing our perspective on parenting and consciously increasing our spiritual interaction with our children. The following are some ideas that may enhance their spiritual development:

1. **Expanding how we view our parental roles.** We sometimes view our function as parents as caregivers, rule enforcers, or teachers with full-time students. We need to expand our self-image and realize that we, as parents, are that child's link to God. Children's concepts of God are influenced by their parents. If a parent, particularly a father, is strict, cold, and untouchable, that is what a child will later perceive as God's qualities. If a parent is lenient, unstructured, and overly generous, a child will grow up believing that God will accept anything he does and require nothing from him in return. However, if a parent exhibits unconditional love and acceptance within the bounds of firm, loving, and consistent limits, then a child will grow to believe that God exhibits these same qualities. In essence, a child learns to follow Christ by following his parents.

2. **Allow your relationship to become a discipling process.** Discipling is a process that recently has become very popular in churches, whereby a mature Christian invests his time and concern into helping a younger Christian mature and develop in his spiritual life. Before this process is ever begun within the church, it needs to be incorporated within the home, where the foundation of spiritual growth is laid. So much of what we do as parents is short term and temporary, but the time and effort we invest in our children's spiritual development will not only pay off in their adult lives, but will have eternal effects as well. Begin to see yourself as creating a new disciple of Jesus Christ. There is no better definition of our role as parents.

3. **Focus on your child's inward qualities.** Too often we tend to emphasize our children's outward performances, such as grades, physical accomplishments, and social skills. There are two results: (1) The child begins to believe he is loved for only his accomplishments and his worth is found only in his performances, and (2) We neglect consciously nurturing inward qualities such as our value systems, priorities, trust, honesty, and compassion. We need to incorporate discussions concerning these areas

Jesus loves Me

into our daily lives as easily as we talk about report cards and baseball games.

4. Use discipline instead of punishment. The word "discipline" comes from the word "disciple" which means to teach. The purpose of punishment is retaliation and stems from anger. The purpose of discipline is to teach new and more Christ-like behavior and stems from love. When our child misbehaves, it is our Christian responsibility to sublimate our feelings of anger and to creatively discipline the child in order to achieve Christ-like behavior. That changes the whole process dramatically.

5. Teach children to be stewards of their material possessions. They need to learn first that we do not own our possessions; we are merely caretakers of them. Hence, it becomes easier to share, since it is all God's anyway. Frequently talk about people who are in need, not to create a sense of guilt in your children for enjoying what they have, but to increase a sense of responsibility that we have as Christians for those less fortunate. Provide examples of sharing in your own life as powerful lessons for your children, whether it be giving to a food bank, supporting missionaries, financially caring for a third-world orphan, or shoveling someone's sidewalk. Include your child in these projects and he will learn the joy of sharing both time and wealth.

6. Expose your child to Scripture. There is no better way for a child to learn about God than to hear it from his parents reading Scripture in the home. Instead of seeing it as an intellectual exercise, he will see the Scripture as a vital, dynamic part of their daily lives. You may see Scripture in a family devotional time, or it may be more informally applied as individual situations arise. What a strong lesson it would be for him to hear "Love your enemies" after another child made fun of him at school, along with a discussion of how Jesus might have handled the same situation.



Babies begin spiritual nurture long before learning to walk.

7. Pray for your child. Daily bring your child before the Perfect Parent. When we are in the middle of raising a child, it is difficult to see specific needs and patterns that might be forming. Pray that you might receive insight into your child's special needs. Pray for your relationship with the child. Let your child hear you praying for him. It will show him what a special child of God he is.

8. Teach your value system to your child. A value is what a person perceives to be of worth in his life. It is important enough to influence his behavior and is passed on from one to another by



Pray with your child.

example and teaching. A person reveals his true value system by how he invests his time, money, and effort. Your child will know what your value system is whether or not you directly teach it, by observing how you live your life. Teaching values is action as well as talking. You teach honesty by not cheating on your income tax. You teach friendship skills by helping a friend through a difficult time. You teach hospitality by welcoming people into your home. You teach generosity by allowing him to see you cheerfully give your money. You teach responsibility by meeting your obligations. Your child learns

self-control and discipline by seeing you create order in your life. He learns by observing and the lesson will be compounded if it is accompanied by discussions as they occur.

9. Emphasize the positive in life. If you study the Ten Commandments, you will notice that they include a lot of negative connotations that are used to monitor outward performance. However, the two greatest commandments are stated in the positive—love God and love your neighbor. These deal with inward attitudes. If we teach about God entirely in the negative aspect, children will learn to perform in a certain way to appease God whether or not their emotions concur. However, if we accentuate the positive ways in which we can show love for God and for our neighbor, then the learning will occur within their hearts and they will be able to apply that learning to every situation within their lives, for it has become part of them.

10. Create a strong marital relationship. The strongest lesson that children will learn about relationships is how they see their mother and father relating. This relationship will be the practical application of spiritual principles. Through this bond children will see how to give to one another, how to encourage one another, how to disagree with one another, and how to esteem one another.

11. Build bridges with the child. The gospel cannot be communicated unless there is a bridge between you. This occurs

Kids

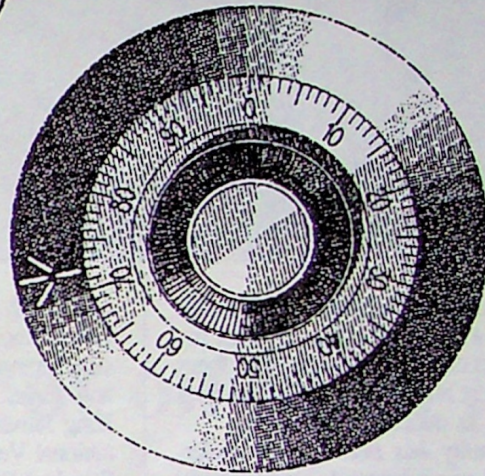
by spending time alone with the child, reading a story, listening to what happened in his day, encouraging him to create and explore, praising him for his strengths, giving hugs, forgiving him when he's bad. It is being available for him, being sensitive to his needs, earning the right to speak, and gaining his trust. When these elements are part of life, then the door is wide open for communication of the gospel.

12. Build your child's self-esteem. If a child is put down, criticized, and belittled, he cannot possibly believe that he is of value to anyone, much less God. However, when a child is encouraged and told that he is special, loved, and is God's child, he will feel secure enough to incorporate God into his life. Carl Buehner once said, "Kids may forget what you said, but they'll never forget how you made them feel." How we make them feel should be a reflection of God's love and mercy toward us. All kids need to hear, in moments of failure and uncertainty as well as success, that they are special and loved, by both God and us.

13. Share your life with your child. Talk about your own spiritual development and the journey you have taken with God. Discuss your spiritual highs as well as your lows. Share situations you face in your life where you faced difficult choices. Let him see some of your spiritual struggles as you apply Biblical teachings to daily life. Let him know that sometimes you fail, but that God forgives; you learn—and life goes on.

Our goal for our children is to help them acquire a heart for God. That includes knowledge of God, learning how to apply that knowledge, and acquiring wisdom, or seeing things from God's viewpoint. If the Christian faith is passed on to children, it will be because they see some direct benefit toward raising the quality of life. They will see it giving a sense of purpose and meaning to our lives, support and strength through difficult times, patience and forgiveness, enhancing common values, increasing respect for one another, and developing trust within the family, as well as hope for the future. As we define and exemplify the role that God plays in our life, our children will begin to assimilate him within their own lives. The responsibility placed on our shoulders is overwhelming, but if we remember that the Father we share is the perfect parent, he'll guide us as we nurture our children in his ways.

By Michele Millard



Unlock the Future

When you Invest in the OBC Development Foundation, you're Investing in the future of the Church of God and the future of Oregon Bible College.

The profits earned from the invested funds will be used to provide for the ongoing needs of:

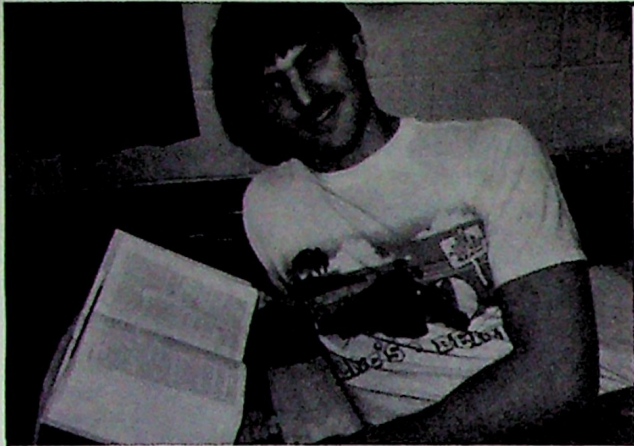
- Scholarships/Grants
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To reach our goal of \$1,000,000, we need your help in securing the following financial commitments:

5 gifts at \$5,000 =	\$25,000
10 gifts at 3,000 =	30,000
50 gifts at 1,500 =	75,000
100 gifts at 1,000 =	100,000
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Total of \$300,000

For more information write to:
OBC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061
or phone: 815/732/7991



BIBLICAL CHRISTIANITY EXPLAINED

By James Day

Christianity is one religion in a world awash in a sea of religions. It is not my purpose to compare religions. My focus is on Christ and what it means to be a Christian, as defined in the Bible.

Christianity *has been* and *is* understood and misunderstood; used properly and abused; loved by some and hated by others. I hope to dispel the myths and needless fears people hold regarding Biblical Christianity.

A good start down the path to understanding Biblical Christianity would be to procure a Bible. It is also wise to ask God for the ability to comprehend what is read. Talking with God, asking him for help, is called praying. Praying, seeking God by reading the Bible, and ultimately coming to a knowledge of God and Biblical Christianity requires faith.

Faith is essential. Faith is defined in the Bible. Hebrews, chapter 11 verse 1 reads: "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." The dictionary renders faith: "Belief and trust in." Every person has a measure of faith. We live day-by-day by faith. The simple act of sitting down on a chair requires faith that the chair will support us. We control our own faith and have the freedom to place it wherever we choose. While endeavoring to attain fulfillment in life, an individual can place his or her faith in materialism, another person, or in God who alone gives this life.

Along with faith, the ability to read is a valuable asset. However, for the illiterate, cassette recordings of the entire Bible are available. For the literate, Bibles are printed in almost every language spoken by man. In the English language alone, there are several versions. The King James Version, written

in the 16th century, is probably the most widely known and read. Two other versions, translated from the same Hebrew and Greek manuscripts used for the King James Version, are the New International Version and the New American Standard Bible. The latter two versions incorporate manuscripts discovered after the King James Version was first printed. The Dead Sea Scrolls are the most famous example of manuscripts discovered only recently. Delightfully, the New International Version and the New American Standard Bible are written in modern English. Any version is also available in different types. The types are: Paraphrased; Chain Reference; and Study Bibles. Paraphrased is a restatement of a text giving the meaning in different words. Chain Reference Bibles contain notes on each page to facilitate tracing a word or idea to wherever it appears in the Bible. Study Bibles include open space on each page for handwritten notes. I should also mention concordances. Concordances alphabetically list every word contained in the Bible. Under each word, a reference chapter and verse are given. If we look up the word *salvation*, we can find and read every mention of it.

After choosing a Bible, studying it is similar to the study of any other book. We will not fully understand an English or math book without time and effort, and this holds true of Bible study. We will not mystically comprehend the entire Bible simply by flipping through a few chapters. To learn what is in the Bible, find a quiet place; bring a pen and paper; use study guides, such as commentaries, lesson books, and a dictionary; then study. Some Bibles have study aids printed in them.

While all these items are useful in

studying the Bible, there are two intangible items needed: desire and humility. Without a desire to know God and his plan for mankind and for us individually, a person will not bother to read the Bible, and being humble means to realize the necessity of knowing God and that there is an opportunity to learn more about him. Humbleness includes asking God for his help in learning.

Learning requires disciplined study of the Bible and brings many rewards. Using knowledge gleaned from the Bible and applying it to our lives gives us guidelines to live by. This guidance will protect us from harm, help us understand life, and give us hope. An example is God's command written in Ephesians 5:18: "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit." Alcoholics and drunkards ruin their livers and brain cells, their families suffer, and traffic accidents involving drunk drivers kill thousands of people each year. Obedience to God's command would show love for God and prevent much heartache.

Furthermore, knowing and following God's Word enables us to distinguish between what is true and good and what is false and evil. Because a person claims to be doing God's work does not insure that he is. By comparing his words and actions against God's written Word, we can identify the validity of his claims. Adultery is treated lightly, even humorously in books, movies, and on television. But the Bible states that adultery is contrary to God's will and leads to heartache and death. Reading a newspaper, we will find that real life bears out what the Bible asserts about adultery.

Along with the rewards we receive at
(continued on page 17.)

Are you stepping out on faith . . .

You can join in the Harvest . . .



You can share the Word of God as faithful believers in these areas are doing.

Share in the harvest of evangelism by stepping out on faith to start new Bible study groups, Sunday Schools, and Churches in your area.

Also remember in your prayers these faithful believers in Atlanta, Georgia, Nashville, Tennessee; Columbia, South Carolina; Charlotte North Carolina; Apache Junction, Arizona; Rockford, Illinois; St. Charles, Missouri; Springfield, Missouri; Peterborough, Ontario, Canada; London, United Kingdom; and Lima, Peru; who have already joined in the harvest by planning or starting Bible study groups.

For ideas and ways you can get started in your area or assist in these evangelism ministries, contact Warren Sorenson, Vice President of Outreach and Church Development, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061, or phone 815/732/7991.



Church of God General Conference
Outreach and Church Development
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061
815/732/7991



“Pray for me as I wander through this world all alone . . .”

Happiness is . . .

Going to college, getting a good education that will provide you with an excellent-paying job, and marrying someone that is doing the same so you'll make lots of money together.

That seemed logical, so I did.

I worked hard at my education to become an attorney and so did my husband. But it has taken us away: away from church, family, friends—and for me, the richest part of my life. I'm only 32, but I feel like the best part of my life is already past.

I'm a Yuppie with Yuppie problems.

Yes, in fact these are creating heart problems for me. It is becoming apparent that my husband has a more materialistic view than I do, and this is making my heart heavy. As the Baptist minister said last week, “We can't serve mammon and God.” I know money isn't going to make me happy. So I have a problem.

I believe that it is very hard not to get a clouded view when you spend your life trying to make money to make mortgage payments, buy furniture, support children, travel, etc. I feel like such pursuits have a choke hold on Christians!

Even though I live in an urban area where there isn't a Church of

God, I still consider myself a Church of God member.

Just recently my husband and I started dividing our time between his Catholic Church and a Baptist Church. This is going to be a big step for us because I'm not even sure what this church preaches as doctrine. So, what may be a small step for some—taken for granted by those used to a church-filled life—is a bigger and harder step for us.

I want to start a Bible study group. But I wasn't the religious leader in my family—Dad was. This is hard for me.

My dad always taught me to look for signs of the times. I look for peace, peace, but there is no peace. Look at how our society now views homosexuality; and what about Sodom and Gomorrah? I truly believe God gets real upset over civilizations condoning or allowing “gay” behavior. I think we're in for some real trouble. Look at Rome. It was gay and it collapsed! Look, there are Devil

don't put the same emphasis on being Christians as the people of earlier times did. We see sex, violence, and promiscuity at every corner. Walking the straight and narrow is pretty hard with all the materialism and emphasis on worldly accomplishments and satisfactions of the moment.

If Jesus came now, he truly would be like a thief in the night. I'm watching and waiting, but I have trouble feeling good about what I'm doing with my life. I've made some choices with my head instead of my heart and they are very disturbing to live with. Even though my heart is like it always was, these pressures and situations of everyday life drag me down. I'm afraid of turning into someone I don't respect or like. I'm afraid of losing what's in my heart.

Of all my neighbors, only two other families attend church. What's happening? The children aren't being raised in church. They're worried about name-brand clothing, sexy bodies, peer pressure, and being successful. Children aren't children anymore. No one is naive. Then you read where a 15-year-old girl and her 16-year-old boy friend in the neighboring suburb became attracted to the Devil through Black Metal music and decided to pay the highest tribute you can in Satan worshiping by committing suicide.

Yes, there are things wrong in the world, and with my life that I'm not proud of or happy with. I want to fix them because I've been very unhappy. I want to be content again. Changes will



worshippers on the Oprah Winfrey Show!

It all seems to fit; we as people



Plotting out your life without Jesus Christ is mislead- ing and full of wrong turns.

have to occur. Some may be very hard and painful, but I know that happiness isn't in material things.

I've been thinking about my grandfather's farm, the church, family, and friends a lot for the past few months—ever since I realized that something wasn't clicking with my lifestyle.

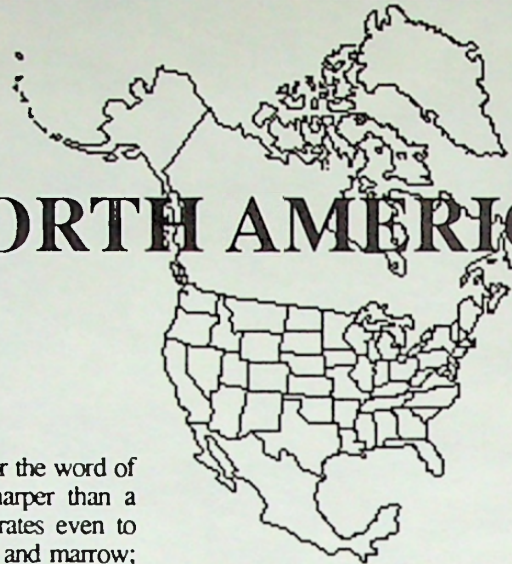
I've had the benefit of a great family and church that have taught me to have faith in God, and

through Jesus Christ I know I'll make it because he strengthens me and keeps me going and trying.

I ask that you pray with me to ask God for guidance and spiritual uplifting as I wander sometimes seemingly all alone . . .

Signed,
Young Urban Professional
In search of Spirituality

FAMINE STRIKES NORTH AMERICA



Word has been received at the offices of the Church of God General Conference of a very serious famine that is affecting members of our church family. The reports that we have received are actually heart wrenching. Apparently some of our own members are going around very lethargic because of weakness produced by the famine. Even their facial expressions provide testimony of their serious condition.

It is extremely hard for us to believe that in this day and age it would be possible for members of our own churches to be affected by famine. And yet that is exactly what the reports indicate.

Upon careful evaluation of the reports we have received, it appears that this famine is similar in some regard to the famine that occurred in about the eighth century B.C. The prophet Amos wrote: "The days are coming, when I will send a famine through the land—not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD" (Amos 8:11).

The famine that is being reported today is a famine of reading the Word of the Lord. It seems that some members have not yet experienced the tremendous satisfaction and blessing of feasting on the Word of God on a daily basis. It is almost as though they have proclaimed a fast and choose to indulge in Scripture reading perhaps only once or twice a week. Oftentimes, the indulgence occurs in connection with preparation for a Sunday school lesson, or by following along with scriptures that are referred to in the Sunday sermon.

Daily nourishment received from God's Word is just as important to our spiritual health as daily nourishment is important to our physical health. The reason spiritual growth does not take place is because of the starvation diet of reading God's Word.

Reading God's Word enables God to shape us into the kind of people he wants us

to be. Hebrews 4:12 says, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than a double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (NIV). God's Word has the unique ability to convict us of ungodly behavior.

Reading the Word helps us to understand more perfectly what God's will is so that we can make decisions and conduct ourselves in accord with that will.

Less is More

For many years, pastors and church leaders challenged congregations to read through the entire Bible in a year's time. I know this to be true because I was one of those pastors. Each year I conducted a Growing Spiritually Program in my local church to encourage people to get a Bible-reading calendar and read through the whole Bible in a year.

As commendable as reading the Bible through in a year's time is, I have discovered from my own experience that reading a shorter passage of Scripture each day can sometimes be more profitable than reading five or six chapters. Rather than priding myself on how many chapters I read each day, I think it is more important to take satisfaction from carefully studying a passage, meditating upon it, looking for applications, and then determining what my life response will be to the Word.

In the past, many times in my haste to read five or six chapters a day in order to meet the requirements for completing the Bible in 365 days, I skimmed over passages that I did not understand, and I often failed to hear God speaking to my life needs.

I have now come to experience the value of communicating back to God in prayer, in response to what he has said to me in my Bible reading. Rather than God speaking to me from his Word, and me speaking to God

on totally unrelated topics, I now feel that a good dialogue is taking place with genuine communication.

How About You?

Suppose you are one of those people affected by the famine mentioned in the first paragraph. Perhaps you are one who has never experienced a daily quiet time. Suppose that you are one who doesn't even have a real desire for this kind of experience. May I make several suggestions?

1. Pray and ask God to make you hungry for his Word. You know, when a person is hungry and there is food within reach, it really doesn't take much coercion to get a person to eat. So, if we ask God to create a craving and a hunger in our heart for his Word, we won't even be able to help ourselves. We will just be drawn to God's Word and we will desire to feast upon it. If we ask God to make us hungry for his Word, is that a prayer that you think God would answer? I have the conviction that God is more interested in our reading his Word than perhaps we are. Therefore, I am convinced that God will answer our prayer and will create within us a hungry heart.

2. A second prayer that should be prayed as we sit down with God's Word is, "God, speak to me today through the passage I read." Don't approach the reading just from the standpoint of trying to get a chapter read. But ask God ahead of time to make the reading meaningful and valuable in your life.

Get a sheet of paper and, as you read a passage, write down a key thought or verse. Then write down what the passage is saying to you.

Let me give you several examples of

**Biblical Christianity
Explained
(Continued from page 10)**

what God has said to me in my reading recently.

On Saturday, October 31, I was reading 1 Samuel 10. This chapter records the anointing of Saul by Samuel as king of Israel. I was particularly impressed with verses 6 and 7 where Samuel said to him, "The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you." This passage gives testimony to the fact that God's Spirit can change a person. And certainly Saul was a changed person as he assumed the leadership of Israel. Tragically, his life later changed again and he turned away from the Lord and was brought to ruin. But as long as we make ourselves submissive to God's Spirit, tremendous things can happen.

The second part of the passage indicated that as a result of being filled with the Spirit, Saul was to do whatever his hand found to do and God would be with him. I claim that as a tremendous promise for today. James 1:25 confirms that God wants people to be doers of the Word and not hearers only. And it says that those who do will be blessed in what they do.

In verse 26 of 1 Samuel 10, there is another interesting phrase which also caught my eye: "Saul also went to his home in Gibeah, accompanied by valiant men whose hearts God had touched." I looked in my concordance and found that the word *touched* is a Hebrew word which means, "To lay the hand upon." As we look for students to recruit to come to Oregon Bible College, these are the kinds of people that I think will make the best future leaders for the Church of God: i.e., valiant men whose hearts God has touched. As we look for pastors to start new churches, we are looking for valiant men whose hearts have been touched by God. It is these kinds of men who are going to help turn the world upside down.

On January 9, 1988, I read a verse in 2 Kings 7 which also had an impact upon me. In this passage, it tells of a literal famine in Samaria as a result of a siege by Benhadad, king of Aram. Things got rather desperate in the city and people resorted to eating

donkeys' heads and even their children.

Outside the wall were four lepers who also were feeling the effect of the famine. They concluded that since death was imminent, they might as well go to the enemy and plead for mercy. When they arrived at the enemy camp, you will remember, they found it deserted. They immediately filled their stomachs and began to carry away plunder which they hid. And then they went back and got more possessions and took them away to hide.

Then in verse 9 of 2 Kings 7, it says, "Then they said to each other, we're not doing right. This is a day of good news, and we're keeping it to ourselves."

Somehow that verse jumped out at me and convicted me that I too am a possessor of good news, and I am not doing right by keeping this good news to myself. I must not put my light under a bushel. I must not ignore those who are lost in sin. I must share the Good News so that others can come and receive life and hope and blessing from God.

I could go on and on picking out of my journal verses of Scripture that have spoken directly to me and have convicted me. Since I wrote these thoughts down, I can go back and be reminded of things that have impressed me from past readings.

3. After you have finished reading and journaling, it is desirable to pray to God based upon what he has just said to you in his Word. Share with God your insights and communicate with him what you are going to do with what you have heard. We certainly don't want to be deceived by merely listening to the Word and not doing what it says (Jas. 1:22).

As God speaks to you through his Word, perhaps God would lead you to share some journal thoughts with the readers of THE RESTITUTION HERALD. Please send your messages to me or to Russ Magaw, editor. We would be delighted to share your insights and blessings with other readers of THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

God bless you as you feast upon his Word!

By David Krogh

the present time, we can have hope for rewards and life in the future. The Bible speaks of God's Kingdom. In the beginning God created heaven, earth, and man. Man originally ruled over the earth and over all living creatures. This is specified in Genesis 1:27, 28. At that time there was no sin, sickness, or death. When man rebelled against God, man forfeited his authority and was cursed with death. Genesis 3:17-19 describes the resulting frustration and pain men would suffer. It is good to know that God has a plan to restore man's authority and remove the curse. God will live with man and we will see him face to face. Revelation 22:3-5 affirms these facts. God outlines his plan of forgiveness and restoration in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life," and in 1 John 2:2: "[Jesus] is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." God's plan of restoration is faith in Jesus Christ.

While Jesus' death on the cross brought forgiveness of sins to those who believe, Jesus' rising from the dead demonstrated God's power to raise us from the dead. Those who reject the good news will also be raised from the dead, as witnessed by Daniel 12:2: "Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt." Placing our faith in the good news grants us admission into the Kingdom of God where we will dwell forever.

Back in 1984 I believed the good news. I began to read and study the Bible. As I grew in my understanding of God, God brought about changes in my life. These changes began in my heart and transformed my way of thinking and my way of life. Some changes were easy, some were difficult. Now, as I reflect on those changes, I am glad for every one of them. Living my life based on Biblical Christianity has been the wisest and most joyous decision of my life. I am excited about meeting God. My only regret is I did not start sooner.



COGS

CHURCH OF GOD SINGLES



I am a single parent—divorced by my own choice, justified in that, and miraculously saved by grace!

By Vickie Pulling

I grew up in the Church of God, and my belief system was firmly planted. Divorce wasn't an option after marriage as far as I was concerned, and I remember hearing comments when I was young about "divorced women" . . . the last thing that I ever dreamed was that I would be one of "them." Well, in real life, dreams don't always come true.

I became one of them, and by the grace of God, I survived!

God has healed me in the last five years. He has held me during the times that I ached, and He gently taught me and helped me grow. I have a deep love for those people that were touched as I was hurting, and who offered their shoulders to catch my tears. I searched those people out—there are very few people who understand the emotion, and understand the pain involved. I found that only those people who had experienced divorce could even begin to understand.

I have often pondered God's purpose for me in life. In the last five years (since my divorce), I have felt a new sense of direction! All I ever wanted was "happily ever after"—not a career, not the things that have evolved! However, through the grace of God, I have "learned to be content whatever the circumstances—I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (Phil. 4:11b-13.) I have felt much closer to God than ever before,

and the stronger I feel, the more I praise him—he and I know that I could not have survived this alone.

There are support groups offering every solution from "a quick new relationship" to peace through reincarnation. I saw friends go through the stages of grief that follow divorce in various support groups, and I was glad that I chose to trust in God. I thank him for giving me that wisdom—my growth and acceptance was much easier in him than it was for them. In him I found strength and support; with him I was never alone. I know now that there are MANY others in the Church of God who have been faced with the same situation that I had to face, or are single for other reasons—it's amazing to me how God has brought me news of you! I feel that it is his purpose that we find each other.

I therefore put out a call to the "singles" in the Church of God. There is strength in the name of the Lord! There are those of you who have never married, there are those of you who are divorced, there are those of you who are widowed—no matter the reason, YOU are the ones who understand the feelings. YOU are the ones who understand that in a world of "couples," God may have an alternative lifestyle for you. There are

so many singles in the world today that are looking for an answer to the loneliness and despair that come from living in a world geared toward social behavior—together, we can help them! We can give them access to the answer . . . GOD!

I have so much to offer; you have so much to offer; God is calling us! We are COGS—a small part of the total activity

of the body of believers, but we can be instrumental in helping others like us.

COGS—Church of God Singles—Are you interested? Please express your interests by writing to COGS in care of the Church of God General Conference, P.O. Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061. COGS has such potential through you—a support group from within the Church of God, expanding to such things as classes at conferences, articles by COGS in THE RESTITUTION HERALD, correspondence among COGS, retreats for COGS, and prayer groups formed of COGS. Your correspondence will dictate the future of the COGS program.

Give this your prayerful consideration—God bless you!

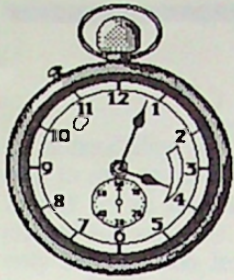
COGS

"I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation."

COGS FELLOWSHIP

If you are interested in fellowship with Church of God Singles, please write Vickie, C/O THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061. Your letter will be forwarded for her eyes only.

- Retreats
- Fellowship
- Conversation
- Sharing
- Shared ideas
- Future articles



TIME DRAWS NEAR TO JESUS' RETURN

By Pastor
James Mattison

PERILOUS TIMES

We are continually reminded of the Apostle Paul's words that "in the last days perilous times shall come," and "evil men . . . shall wax worse and worse," (2 Tim. 3:1, 13).

Recently we enjoyed a few weeks of working with the Harlingen, Texas, Church. While there we subscribed to the local paper, the *Valley Morning Star*. This paper carries a daily unusual section called the Police Blotter, which reports the crimes that occurred in the Harlingen area the day before. Here are some samples from the January 30th *Star*:

"LaFeria—A woman reported a brown Lacks room air conditioner valued at \$599 was stolen sometime between Tuesday and 3:30 p.m. Wednesday from her residence."

"Harlingen—1674 N. Business 77—A man reported that a customer bought an unknown dollar amount of goods at the Maverick Market at about 11:45 p.m. Thursday and paid with an altered dollar bill.

"The ends of the bill had been cut off and replaced with the ends of twenty dollar bills, according to the police report."

"Harlingen—Valley Vista Mall—A woman reported that her navy-blue coin purse valued at \$45 that contained \$100 in cash, her driver's license, birth certificate, medical card, and her Dillard's card was stolen between 3:30 and 4:00 p.m. after she had made a purchase on her Dillard's card.

"The woman placed the card back and put her coin purse in her purse. After walking around the display racks, she noticed her purse felt lighter and upon searching for the coin purse discovered it was missing, according to her report."

"Harlingen—100 block East Harding—A man reported that someone removed a 30-foot piece of Hurricane fence valued at \$50 from his front yard last weekend."

"Harlingen—7000 block Wind Drift—A man reported that a wooden exterior door valued at \$150 and two metal flush doors valued at \$300 were stolen between 8:30 and 9:30 a.m. Thursday from a house that was under construction."

"Harlingen—1900 block West Tyler—A man reported a 1985 black four-door Lincoln Towncar with license plate number 970-HMJ valued at \$15,000 stolen between 8:15 and 9:15 p.m. Thursday from the Holiday Inn parking lot.

"The man was still in possession of the keys at the time of the theft and police have no suspects, according to the report."

"San Benito—500 block Franklin—A man told police that his 19-inch color television valued at \$500 was stolen from his home sometime between 7 p.m. Thursday and 6:30 a.m. Friday."

Harlingen, Texas, is also about 30 miles from the border of Mexico. When we lived in Harlingen 34 years ago, 10 Mexican pesos equaled one U. S. dollar. Today, it takes 2300 (did you get that?—2300) pesos to make a dollar. I don't see how the Mexican people exist. This devalued



money issue causes more crime. Matamoros, Mexico, has such a high crime rate city officials and citizens are alarmed.

And the story is similar all over the country. Thefts of radar sets and tape players out of cars are common. Break-ins are taking place all over the country. Recently the Guthrie Grove church was broken into with a crowbar. "In the last days, perilous times shall come." Aren't they here?



GULF CRISIS

God's prophet Ezekiel noted that several European and Mid-East countries, including Turkey and Iran, would side with a great Northern conglomerate in an invasion of the State of Israel in the last days (Ezek. 38).

Every prophetic student is watching closely as new Mid-East events continue to occur. "The Persian Gulf war is now an international conflict threatening to involve the armed forces of several nations" (*Present Day Events*, No. 385, Australia).

We are convinced that now as we rapidly approach the end of this age every Mideast event has a special prophetic meaning. With Israel restored to its ancient land according to prophecy, we know that the termination of this dispensation will soon take place. Every significant event in this area has a relation to Israel and to God's purpose. For instance, because of her fanatical tactics, Iran is fast running out of friends in the Mid-East. Also, since the United States and other nations have intervened in the Persian Gulf with their warships to protect oil tankers coming through, Russia sees a golden opportunity to vastly increase her influence in the region. Eventually Iran will be allied with Russia, if we understand Ezekiel 38 aright, and soon thereafter the invasion of Israel will occur; this to be followed by our Lord's return from heaven.

When this happens, our present hope will be reality; eternal life will be the reward of the faithful, and this earth will see righteousness the dominant force of the hour.



ISRAEL CONTINUES TO RETURN

According to *Present Day Events* 385, "the immigration of Jews to Israel from all sources was up 35% in the first five months of 1987 compared with the same period for 1986.

"Most of the increase came from Russia, South Africa, and countries that the Absorption Ministry said must remain nameless.

"In the first five months of 1987, more than 2300 Jews left the Soviet Union for destinations the major one of which was the USA. However, about 25% proceeded to Israel."

The regathering of Israel in the last days is one of the major teachings of both the major and minor prophets.

Note Ezekiel 36:24: "I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land."

Also Amos 9:15: "I will plant them upon their own land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God."

Remember, "When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory" (Psa. 102:16).

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost

By C. Jesse Pestle

Bible texts which trouble us get the most attention, and so they should: for how else can difficulties be resolved? Trinitarians frequently cite Matthew 28:19 in defense of their teaching because it is the only text where the three titles appear together in this order, and to such believers in a triune God this settles the issue over whether God is one, three, or three in one. But nontrinitarians approach the verse for different reasons: namely, to determine what it really says and to verify its authenticity.

Except for the above words in the Great Commission, the cardinal teaching of orthodox Christianity called Trinity is without direct Scriptural connection. "Neither the word *Trinity*, nor the explicit doctrine as such, appears in the New Testament, nor did Jesus and his followers intend to contradict the *Shema* in the Old Testament: 'Hear O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD' (Deut. 6:4)" (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th ed.). This same authority mentions the gradual development of the doctrine as early Christians attempted to define the nature of Christ and his relationship to God and to explain the Spirit. "It was not until the 4th century that the distinctives of the three and their unity were brought together in a single orthodox doctrine of one essence and three persons." (Ibid.)

A comparison of trinitarian terminology used in the Nicene Creed of 325 A.D. with Bible language about the nature of God and his only begotten Son suggests strongly that this teaching was *not* part of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Yet Adam Clarke says orthodox believers "have generally considered this text (Matt. 28:19) as a decisive proof of the doctrine of the holy Trinity: and what else can they draw from it? Is it possible for words to convey a plainer sense than these do?"

Christians quite naturally treasure the last command of their Lord, but they look at it even more intently when some claim it as a basis for a teaching which developed 300 years after the apostles. Is there some mistake here? Were the words "Father, Son, and Holy Ghost" added later? Do they really mean the one God of the Old Testament has become part of a New Testament

trinity?

There is growing evidence that the command to baptize and the so-called triune formula of Matthew 28:19 were missing from the original records. How can we believe this, since the originals were probably lost even before the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrian manuscripts (oldest extant today—4th & 5th cent.) were written? Two clues.

The first clue comes by comparing early writings of Eusebius (Bishop of Caesarea) with later writings. This church father, who lived before and after the historic ecumenical council held at Nice at which the trinity was formed, wrote volumes on church history and council proceedings. He is one of the most respected historians of the church due to his mass of material and position as moderator and right-hand man to Constantine the Great in this first council. From his own pen we learn of changes in his theology.

Before the controversy between Arius and Athanasius over Christ's nature and relationship to God, Eusebius quoted Christ as follows: "Go and make all nations disciples in my name, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." But after the controversy turned into a crisis and had to be settled by the council which adopted the trinitarian view, we find him using the longer version found in our Bibles. Is it possible that 4th century fathers added to Matthew's conclusion by including their newly formed doctrine, and that the original Commission was short, simple, and harmonious with other texts about baptism being in Jesus' name? Yes, says David Flusser, who also gives us our second clue.

Mr. Flusser wrote an article in *Swedish Theological Institute, Jerusalem Annual* (Vol. 5, of 1967) entitled, "The Conclusion of Matthew in a New Source," in which he unveils recently discovered material from a Jewish Christian sect of the 5th or 6th century. These ancient Christians were already in conflict with their Gentile counterparts and rejected some sayings the latter attributed to Jesus—including the long version of Matthew 28:19. According

to Flusser, these Jews saw church history as "a progressive deterioration of the plain Jewish doctrine of Jesus." He quotes them as saying, "Then they (the Christians) began to make changes and alterations, (to introduce) innovations into the religion, to seek dominion, to make friends with people by (indulging) their passions, (to try) to circumvent the Jews and to satisfy the anger (which) they (felt) against the latter, even if (in doing so) they (had) to abandon the religion. This is clear from the Gospels which are with them and to which they refer, and from their book, known as the Book of Praxeis (Acts)." (P. 113.)

Thus Mr. Flusser finds "an independent witness to the short 'Eusebian' conclusion of Matthew," and he concludes the probability that baptism and the triune feature were not originally part of the Great Commission. But whether or not we accept these deductions, there is another method of approaching Matthew 28:19 which is equally acceptable and satisfying.

Not wishing to arouse unnecessary suspicion on other parts of God's infallible Word, most Church of God writers disallow the spurious aspect of the Great Commission as implied by Eusebian writings and 5th-century Jewish Christian testimony, and they simply treat verse 19 as a "difficult text." So it was with R. H. Judd, whose book *One God, God of the Ages* first appeared in THE RESTITUTION HERALD before publication in 1949. Although Mr. Judd acknowledged "some plausible grounds for such a conclusion" (that Matt. 28:19 is manifestly an interpolation), he chose to leave the text intact and analyze it carefully. Even though it might have been inserted later by believers in a triune God, and even though it is usually cited to support that dogma, and even though it is usually misinterpreted, he showed his reader that the truth is still there waiting to be investigated.

Hardly anyone can see or hear these three words in order without thinking trinity, because the teaching is so prevalent and supposedly based upon our verse. Yet several Scriptural reasons make "three Persons in one God" or "one God in three Persons"

an impossibility. The Bible, from beginning to end, speaks of one God who alone existed before time and who by himself created all that exists. It also speaks of his only begotten Son Jesus the Christ. These two make up Father and Son. "God the Father" is Scriptural, but "God the Son" is not. Everywhere Jesus is called "Son of God," but never are the words reversed in the Bible.

It is doubtful the "three-in-one" theory would even cross the reader's mind had he not been exposed previously to such teachings. First, there is nothing here or elsewhere in the Bible to indicate that the Holy Ghost is a person with a name. The Holy Spirit is characterized as God's power or influence, the means by which his purpose is accomplished. Even though masculine pronouns are used in English translations referring to the Spirit, the original word is neuter in gender and speaks of wind, breath, or air. God's name is JEHOVAH and means self-Existent or Eternal One

(Ex. 3:14; 6:3), while his Son's name is JESUS and means Savior (Matt. 1:21), but the Holy Spirit has no name, chiefly because it is a power rather than a person.

Secondly, we notice *name* is singular, and even with only two persons now remaining, baptism is to be carried out in one name. Elsewhere it was in the name of Jesus that the early apostles baptized. We need only consult Acts 2:38; 8:16; and 19:5 to understand this fact. New Testament baptism was administered in Jesus' name because it depicted his death, burial, and resurrection. Though God was behind it all, we don't find his name being used. Jesus came in his Father's name, but the apostles baptized in Jesus' name.

Finally *name* refers not only to the person but also to his authority and character. Inasmuch as baptism depicts identification with Christ, it naturally is to be administered with his authority. With his own mortality behind him and having received

"all power . . . in heaven and in earth" (v. 18), Jesus sends his eleven disciples to make other disciples among the nations. The means by which this was to be accomplished was by passing on to others the commandments of Christ.

In conclusion: even apart from the probability that these critical words of the Great Commission were missing in the original text, their presence is not disruptive to cardinal truths like God's oneness and Christ's command elsewhere to preach in his own name. While the wording of Matthew 28:19 is to some proof of all that the trinity came to be in the creeds of Christendom of the 4th century, to the careful Bible student it is a summary statement and commission of Jesus about his own authority as it came from God and his power.

Check it out, and you will see that it always pays to prove what others say the Bible says.



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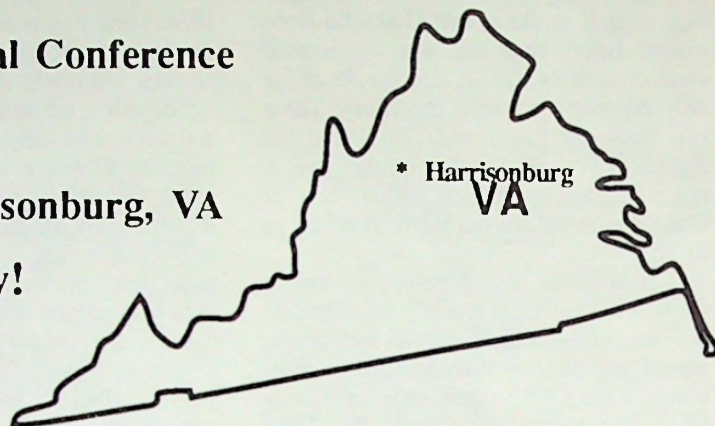
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- Learn ways to revitalize existing churches and plant new ones
- Become a stronger disciple
- Disciplemaking in your local church
- Lots of fellowship



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington. The nation's capital city centers on the U. S. Capitol. Take a conducted tour of the Capitol, visit the White House, (ask your Congressman to arrange a VIP tour, which lasts longer and shows more of the mansion). Ride a tour-mobile operated by the National Park Service along the East and West Malls. Take a trip on the new Metro. Near the Capitol are the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court Building, and the U. S. Botanical Garden. On the Mall are Washington Monument, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art. Near the White House are the U. S. Treasury, Ford Theater where Lincoln was assassinated. The Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts are a few other places that make a visit to Washington, D. C. so rewarding.

VIRGINIA

Alexandria. In George Washington's home town are Christ Church, where he worshiped in

pew 60; Gadsby's Tavern; the Stabler-Leadbetter Apothecary; Carlyle House; and Friendship Fire Co., all of which he knew well.

Arlington. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the grave site of President John F. Kennedy and that of his brother Senator Robert Kennedy attract millions of visitors every year. The home of Robert E. Lee overlooks the park.

Ashland. King's Dominion, six miles north on I-95, is the largest theme park in the Middle Atlantic states. Exciting twin roller-coaster ride. The 800-acre park includes Lion Country Safari, with almost 100 different kinds of African animals roaming free. Take a monorail through the game park.

Charlottesville. Thomas Jefferson's genius as an architect is expressed in his Monticello home, in Ash Lawn, which he planned for President James Monroe, and the University of Virginia. Monticello also offers fascinating evidence of Jefferson's gadgeting skill.

Fredericksburg. The home of George Washington's mother, Mary Washington, Mercer's Apothecary Shop, and James Monroe's law office are among the historic buildings of the town. Washington's boyhood home Ferry Farm is east of town on State 3.

Hampton. At NASA's Langley Research Center in this oldest of all surviving English settlements in the United States, visitors may see a moon rock, the Apollo 12 spacecraft, and the spacesuit worn by Alan Shepard, first U. S. Astronaut to venture into space.

Jamestown. The site of the 1607 settlement has monuments to Captain John Smith and his beloved Pocahontas and a replica of an early-day Glass House where craftsmen create hand-blown colonial-type wares. Nearby is Jamestown Festival Park, with a re-

creation of James Fort, Powhatan's lodge, and at the dock replicas of the three sailing vessels that brought the colonists to Virginia.

Lexington. An electronic map in the George C. Marshall Research Library and Museum and a voice narration give the highlights of World War II.

Mount Vernon. George Washington's beloved mansion overlooks the Potomac River.

Newport News. Old ship figureheads, model ships, and other nautical displays are in the Mariners' Museum.

Norfolk. The tomb of General Douglas MacArthur, historic houses and museums, and Norfolk Naval Station, the world's largest naval base, are on a self-guided tour.

Portsmouth. The U. S. Naval Shipyard Museum and Naval History Museum keep alive the traditions of the sea.

Richmond. The Capitol planned by Jefferson, the Battle Abbey, and the Confederate Museum all fascinate visitors. So does St. John's Church where Patrick Henry gave his "Give me liberty or give me death" speech. Edgar Allen Poe's house is another highlight of the city.

Virginia Beach. Miles of boardwalk, beach-buggy tours, and musical entertainment make this a popular resort.

Williamsburg. Virginia's colonial capital has been restored as one of the great attractions of the New World. Costumed residents ply their trades of metalsmithing, printing, candlemaking, and wigmaking, in fact most of the trades of colonial life. A visit to the colonial Capitol Building and the Governor's Palace are intriguing experiences. A few miles east on U. S. 60 are Busch Gardens. The park is divided into the Old Country, a re-creation of the streets of an Elizabethan England town, Old Germany, and France's LeMans Race course. There is a 1,000-seat replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, outstanding rides, and a free-roaming animal display.

Yorktown. Walk on the battlefield where Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington to bring the American Revolution to an end.



Mandate to Disciple

"GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES."

Could it be any clearer? Here, the words of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, recorded in sacred Scripture, admonish his followers to invest themselves in service to Messiah by assisting others in both knowing Christ as King and aiding them in maturing in their relationship with the Master. This is the whole task of "discipling," and this is the whole duty of a Christian.

We usually communicate to believers "young" in the faith that we have three expectations of them as new additions to Christ's body, the church. These are:

- (1) Attend the meetings of the church fellowship;
- (2) Pay tithes and offerings to the church; and,
- (3) Live an upright life.

Today, the Apostle Paul might rebuke us for so distorting the expectations of the Savior for those who would follow him by saying,

"You are all good members—of clubs, sororities, fraternal organizations and the like, but you are not authentic disciples of the Risen One, because you have never been properly disciplined yourselves."

It's true. Most of us have had to "grow up" on our own, much like street-wise orphans. We have never known the care and nurture of spiritual parents. An so many of us, without an appropriate model in our own pasts, are indeed good members of the church, but not even adequate disciples whose purpose it is to communicate our lifestyle to yet another generation of spiritual orphans. And that's what discipleship is—communication of Christian lifestyle.

Basically, the process of discipleship is much like the nurturing of a baby (a

real baby). They have a need to be protected, held, and given opportunity for social interaction; and, they need food. Believers young in their faith development have the same needs, and this, then, is what is involved in "discipling" others. And that, then, is your responsibility as a committed follower of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are many methods of discipling available to the one concerned with communicating Christian lifestyle to new believers. In fact, the shelves in your local Christian bookstores dealing

Think of making disciples as a personal benefit to both you and the church with which you fellowship.

with this topic are the most abundantly filled, as this is a prime concern for the mid-80's church.

Each method has its own virtues, and any of them is more beneficial to the body of Christ and his cause than anything the church is using at the present time. It is more important for you at this moment to be familiar with the "whys" of the discipleship philosophy than with the "hows." And so, let us speak of the Christian's motivation to become involved in a discipleship program.

It is a sad commentary on us as a race and a people that we are not more obedient to the words of the ones we feign to

honor as our God and serve as his Christ. We will not simply make disciples because Jesus *commended* that work to us.

He told us to do it.

He *commanded* that that is what is to occupy our time. But for many of us, that is not reason enough.

So, for you who hesitate, let me offer some other reasons to be about the task of making disciples:

(1) Discipling is one of the most strategic ways to have an unlimited personal ministry;

(2) Discipling is the most flexible of ministries;

(3) Discipling is the fastest and surest way to mobilize the whole body of Christ for evangelism;

(4) Discipling has more long-range potential for fruit than any other ministry; and,

(5) Discipling will provide the local church with mature lay leaders who are Christ-centered and Word-oriented.

So, don't think of discipling as drudgery any longer. Think of it no longer as a compelling commandment (although it is). Rather, think of making disciples as a personal benefit to both you and the church with which you fellowship.

In the scheme of salvation, you are Christ's vital link to fledgling believers—the street-orphans of the spiritual realm. You are the one called to protect, cuddle, and feed those newly born into eternity. What a privilege is yours, that Jesus has entrusted to one such as you the keeping of the young and helpless.

By Pastor David L. Wilsterman

MIRACLE REVEALS THE GLORY OF GOD

"Daughter, your faith has made you well." For 12 long years she had suffered with an "issue of blood"—today we would call it a hemorrhage—and had visited doctor after doctor, to no avail. In the end she had spent all her money.

There have been many like her in every age. For them the restoration of bodily or mental health becomes the most important thing in life. We find it hard to blame them—and yet a total preoccupation with bodily health can reflect an attitude of mind that makes this life all there is. If our spiritual health is ailing, usually a matter of which we are less conscious, our whole approach to life, including bodily health, can be wrong.

We read of the incident involving this woman in Mark 5. While her physical condition continued to grow worse she heard reports about Jesus (vv. 26, 27). Most probably these stemmed from the many healings mentioned in Mark 3, where Jesus asked his disciples to have a boat ready "because of the crowd, lest they should crush him; for he had healed many, so that all who had diseases pressed upon him to touch him" (vv. 9, 10).

We can imagine her getting a first-hand report from someone who had been healed by Jesus, given in such a way that she was convinced that if she could but touch his garment she too would be healed. No doubt she heard Jesus preaching and felt the magnetism of his voice and personality. Her conviction would have increased as she pressed forward, reaching through the crowd until, at last, she touched him. Immediately "she felt in her body that she was healed of her disease."

No healing could have taken place without Jesus being aware of it. The record says that Jesus perceived "in himself that power had gone forth from him" (v. 10). He turned and said, "Who touched me?" The disciples were surprised, for many were touching him, but the woman felt his gaze upon her and fell trembling before him to declare "the whole truth." What a confession of

faith! It brought from Jesus the response: "Daughter, your faith has made you well: go in peace and be healed of your disease."

What is "hard" about this saying? The difficulty comes not with the saying itself but in the resulting question, whether it is right to see in this saying an all-embracing principle that we can apply to daily life. To rightly judge this matter is critically important.

By faith only? Are we to conclude by this incident and the reply of Jesus that "faith" is the essential ingredient in every healing? Can we conclude that where a healing is sought, but does not take place, a lack of faith is to blame?

Another healing in Mark 5 took place immediately after the incident with the woman. Jesus was on his way to the home of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, whose daughter was critically ill. A messenger came with news that the child had died and said there was no need to "trouble the teacher any further" (v. 35). But Jesus ignored this saying, "Do not fear, only believe." To have faith was all important, for when Jesus came to the house the child was brought to life again. So again faith played a vital role.

So is faith the vital ingredient in every healing? Can we accept the sayings of Jesus in relation to these two incidents as setting out the basis upon which Jesus will respond to our prayers and petitions?

Many will answer "Yes" and quote in support such passages as James 1:5-8, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God . . . but let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. For that person must not suppose that a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways, will receive anything from the Lord."

Help mine unbelief—there is the unstable, double-minded man—but such a man is different from the father who came to Jesus urgent in his need for the healing of this child, who was suffering from what we today call epilepsy. Jesus says, "All things

are possible to him who believes," to which the father immediately cries out the anguished response, "I believe: help mine unbelief" (Mark 9:23, 24).

Troubles in many forms come upon those who strive to follow Jesus. They find it hard to always believe and like the anguished father they say, "Help thou mine unbelief," and their prayers are also answered.

The prayer of faith, whether feeble or strong, is always answered. We point out that to say a prayer is answered is not the same as saying God always says "Yes" to a petition asked in faith. Surely it is only pride in the heart of man if he presumes a prayer remains unanswered unless the answer is "YES." Those who so dare to presume ignore the clear lessons of Scripture.

"No" answer—the greatest example of a prayer of faith being answered but not granted is the case of Paul. In 2 Corinthians 12 he relates how "three times I besought the Lord about this" (v. 8). Paul understood the reason for the answer: "to keep me from being too elated by the abundance of revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh" (v. 7). It is not clear what this thorn was and it does not matter, but Paul's prayers for its removal were not answered! Yes, they were answered—"No." Who can doubt that Paul's petitions were asked in faith?

Or consider Jesus. In the Garden of Gethsemane his earnest prayer was, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me" (Matt. 26:39). Again, the answer was "NO." It was not a question of faith or lack of faith, but of achieving that maturity of mind which says, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

"As thou wilt"—Paul understood this lesson. He could write, "For the sake of Christ then I am content with weaknesses" (2 Cor. 12:10). All who follow Christ can expect the same experiences: they should learn to perceive his will and that of the Father in the path mapped out for them. This may mean that even the most earnest prayer may sometimes not receive the de-

sired answer. The lesson to learn is: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

If we look again on the healings in the New Testament, it is clear that many are neither connected with faith on the part of the one seeking healing nor his relatives. In Mark 5, the miracle concerning the madman who dwelt among the tombs, Jesus cast out "demons" Legion believed had possessed him, and sent them into swine that perished in the sea. It is impossible to construe the madman's cry (v. 7) as evidence of "faith." Then consider the raising of the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:12-16). What astonishment greeted this miracle. In no way was faith involved. It was the same with the raising of Lazarus. The sisters believed in the resurrection—"at the last day" (John 11:24), but Lazarus was asleep in death. The motive of the miracle was to reveal "the glory of God" (v. 40), not to give a response to faith.

We Didn't Write The Book on Living,



But We Like What It Says . . .



Search the Scriptures daily for the filling
of the Spirit necessary for a fruitful life.

Thank You, Lord

I thank my Lord, for all he's done
For pleasures and for pains
My home, my family, my life
For sunshine and the rains.

For the smells of flowers in summer
For winter white, cold snow
For the clean fresh air I breathe
For all of nature that I know.

I thank him for all good things
All the richness of my days
For every smile of every child
And all their charming ways.

And yet in life there has been times
When I've wondered, why, Lord me?
When health has failed my body
When I questioned, "what will be?"

I've asked his blessing to restore
Me to my former self
And in time he blessed me
And gave back my former health.

Perhaps I should have realized
That without a little pain
I could not truly appreciate
Good health when it came again.

I lost a special loved one
Whom I'd had for many years
And from my eyes and heart
Issued ten thousand salty tears.

I could not bear to think of life
Without her special smile
My heart and life seemed empty
And so sad, for quite awhile.

But now I smile with sweet recall
The days we spent together
For laughter shared and sometimes tears
For joy in any weather.

Although I miss her still sometimes
I thank the Lord for years I had
To share her loving and her care
And so I learned, death is not all bad.

So today I thank my Lord indeed
For all of life I'll see
The good, the bad, the sorrow, yes
Everything he's sent to me.

—Joyce Housman
1987

THE PARABLE OF THE ORANGE TREE

Dr. John White

I dreamed I drove on a Florida road, still and straight and empty. On either side were groves of orange trees, so that as I turned to look at them from time to time, line after line of trees stretched back endlessly from the road—their boughs heavy with round yellow fruit. This was harvest time. My wonder grew as the miles slipped by. How could the harvest be gathered?

Suddenly I realized that for all the hours I had driven (and this was how I knew I must be dreaming) I had seen no other person. The groves were empty of people. No other car had passed me. No houses were to be seen beside the highway. I was alone in a forest of orange trees.

But at last I saw some orange pickers. Far from the highway, almost on the horizon, lost in the vast wilderness of unpicked fruit, I could discern a tiny group of them working steadily. And many miles later I saw another group. I could not be sure, but I suspected that the earth beneath me was shaking with silent laughter at the hopelessness of their task. Yet the pickers went on picking.

The sun had long passed its zenith, and the shadows were lengthening when, without any warning, I turned a corner of the road to see a notice "Leaving NEGLECTED COUNTY—Entering HOME COUNTY." The contrast was so startling that I scarcely had time to take in the notice. I had to slow down, for all at once the traffic was heavy. People by the thousands swarmed the road and crowded the sidewalks.

Even more startling was the transformation in the orange groves. Orange groves were still there, and orange trees in abundance, but now, far from being silent and empty, they were filled with the laughter and singing of multitudes of people. Indeed it was the people we noticed rather than the trees. People—and houses.

I parked the car at the roadside and mingled with the crowd. Smart gowns, neat shoes, showy hats, expensive suits and starched shirts made me a little conscious of my work clothes. Everyone seemed so fresh, and poised, and gay.

"Is it a holiday?" I asked a well-dressed

woman with whom I fell in step.

She looked a little startled for a moment, and then her face relaxed with a smile of gracious condescension.

"You're a stranger, aren't you?" she said, and before I could reply, "This is Orange Day."

She must have seen a puzzled look on my face, for she went on, "It is so good to turn aside from one's labors and pick oranges one day of the week."

"But don't you pick oranges every day?" I asked her.

"One may pick oranges at any time," she said. "We should always be ready to pick oranges, but Orange Day is the day that we devote especially to orange picking."

I left her and made my way further into the trees. Most of the people were carrying a book. Bound beautifully in leather, and edged and lettered in gold, I was able to discern on the edge of one of them the words, "Orange Picker's Manual."

By and by I noticed around one of the orange trees seats had been arranged, rising upward in tiers from the ground. The seats were almost full—but, as I approached the group, a smiling well-dressed gentleman shook my hand and conducted me to a seat.

There, around the foot of the orange tree, I could see a number of people. One of them was addressing all the people on the seats and, just as I got to my seat, everyone rose to his feet and began to sing. The man next to me shared with me his song book. It was called "Songs of the Orange Groves."

They sang for some time, and the song leader waved his arms with a strange and frenzied abandon, exhorting the people in the intervals between the songs to sing more loudly.

I grew steadily more puzzled.

"When do we start to pick oranges?" I asked the man who had loaned me his book.

"It's not long now," he told me. "We like to get everyone warmed up first. Besides, we want to make the oranges feel at home." I thought he was joking—but his face was serious.

After a while a rather fat man took over from the song leader and, after reading two sentences from his well-thumbed copy of

the Orange Picker's Manual, began to make a speech. I wasn't clear whether he was addressing the people or the oranges.

I glanced behind me and saw a number of groups of people similar to our own group gathering around an occasional tree and being addressed by other fat men. Some of the trees had no one around them.

"Which trees do we pick from?" I asked



the man beside me. He did not seem to understand, so I pointed to the trees round about.

"This is our tree," he said, pointing to the one we were gathered around.

"But there are too many of us to pick from just one tree," I protested. "Why, there are more people than oranges!"

"But we don't pick oranges," the man explained. "We haven't been called. That's the Pastor Orange Picker's job. We're here to support him. Besides, we haven't been to college. You need to know how an orange thinks before you can pick it successfully—orange psychology, you know. Most of these folk here," he went on, pointing to the congregation, "have never been to Manual School."

"Manual School," I whispered. "What's that?"

"It's where they go to study the Orange Picker's Manual," my informant went on. "It's very hard to understand. You need years of study before it makes sense."

"I see," I murmured. "I had no idea that



picking oranges was so difficult.”

The fat man at the front was still making his speech. His face was red, and he appeared to be indignant about something. So far as I could see there was rivalry with some of the other “orange-picking” groups. But a moment later a glow came on his face.

“But we are not forsaken,” he said. “We have much to be thankful for. Last week we saw THREE ORANGES BROUGHT INTO OUR BASKETS, and we are now completely debt free from the money we owed on the new cushion covers that grace the seats you now sit on.”

“Isn’t it wonderful?” the man next to me murmured. I made no reply. I felt that something must be profoundly wrong somewhere. All this seemed to be a very roundabout way of picking oranges.

The fat man was reaching a climax in his speech. The atmosphere seemed tense. Then with a dramatic gesture he reached two of the oranges, plucked them from the branch, and placed them in the basket at his feet. The applause was deafening.

“Do we start on the picking now?” I asked my informant.

“What in the world do you think we’re doing?” he hissed. “What do you suppose this tremendous effort has been made for? There’s more orange-picking talent in this group than in the rest of Home County. Thousands of dollars have been spent on the tree you’re looking at.”

I apologized quickly. “I wasn’t being critical,” I said. “And I’m sure the fat man must be a very good orange picker—but surely the rest of us could try. After all, there are so many oranges that need picking. We’ve all got a pair of hands, and we could read the Manual.”

“When you’ve been in the business as long as I have, you’ll realize that it’s not as simple as that,” he replied. “There isn’t time, for one thing. We have our work to do, our families to care for and our homes to look after. We . . .”

But I wasn’t listening. Light was beginning to break on me. Whatever these people were, they were not orange pickers. Orange picking was just a form of entertainment for their weekends.

I tried one or two more of the groups around the trees. Not all of them had such high academic standards for orange pickers. Some held classes on orange picking. I tried to tell them of the trees I had seen in Neglected County but they seemed to have little interest.

“We haven’t picked the oranges here yet,” was their usual reply.

The sun was almost setting in my dream and growing tired of the noise and activity all around me, I got in the car and began to drive

back again along the road I had come. Soon all around me again were the vast and empty orange groves.

But there were changes. Something had happened in my absence. Everywhere the ground was littered with fallen fruit. And as I watched it seemed that before my eyes the trees began to rain oranges. Many of them lay rotting on the ground.

I felt there was something so strange about it all, and my bewilderment grew as I thought of all the people in Home County.

Then, booming through the trees there came a voice which said, “*The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers . . .*”

And I awakened—for it was only a dream!



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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 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 tape," 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.

By Rachel Carr,
Contributing Editor

Children's Page



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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

The Mighty Word of God

“... and the Word was God.”—John 1:1.

The beginning of the Gospel of John is one of the greatest passages in the New Testament on the Word of God. There John asserts, among other things, the infinite power of God's spoken word: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Three things are mentioned in this verse. First, in the beginning was the *spoken word*. The Greek word is *logos* and meant “word, saying,” or “account.” According to Moulton and Milligan, its developed meaning was “speech in progress” (*Vocabulary of the Greek Testament*, p. 379). Obviously, John is referring to the creation account in Genesis, chapter one, where, again, and again, we read, “And God said.”

Second, this spoken word was “with God” or, more literally, “with *the* God.” That is, it belonged to the one true God. It was his word, not the word of someone else.

Third, it “was God.” The Greek word order is, “and God was the word.” Also, the Greek text says simply “God” (*theos*), not “the God.”

Scholarship divides over the significance of this one word “God” in the final clause of John 1:1. The “orthodox” trinitarian says it means “God.” The Arian Christian, who believes Christ was a lesser God, says “a god.” And a third viewpoint is that it means “divine.” Thus the Moffatt Bible has, “the Logos was divine.”

Of these three, the Moffatt Bible comes the closest to the meaning. God's Word was certainly supernatural, it was with him or belonged to him, and it came forth from his person. Hence, in that sense, it was “divine.”

But we must remember that John is writing here, not about a person, but about the spoken word. Is it sufficient then to say that the spoken word was divine? Is this all that John had in mind? And, is this what the context is all about? I do not think so.

In Franz Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament we have the word *'elohim*. The Great German Lutheran scholar of a century ago (1813-1890) translated the New Testament into the Hebrew language in an attempt to convert the Jews. In doing so, he used the Hebrew *'elohim*

in verse one for the Greek word *theos*, and therein, I believe, is the key to the passage. A literal translation of Delitzsch's version of this third and final clause would be, “And *'elohim* was the word.”

Those familiar with Bible study know that the word *'elohim* has other meanings besides “God.” Its basic sense is might, strength, greatness, or power. Although used most of the time in the Old Testament as a word or name for God, there are instances in Scripture where it is used in the sense of greatness.

In Genesis 23:6 we read that Abraham was “a *mighty* prince.” In Genesis 30:6, Rachel said, “With *great* wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister.” And in Exodus 9:28 Pharaoh intreated Moses for relief from the “*mighty* thunders” of Jehovah!

So also in 1 Samuel 14:15 we are told that there was “a *very great* trembling” when Jonathan smote the Philistines. Finally, the book of Jonah tells us that Ninevah was “an *exceeding* great city” (Jonah 3:3).

In every example cited above, the Hebrew word is *'elohim*, used in its basic sense of might, strength, power, or greatness. It may be of further interest to note Genesis 35:5 where “the terror of God (*'elohim*)” protected the sons of Jacob as they traveled among the cities about them. Gesenius suggests that the meaning is “panic terror” (*Lexicon*, p. 50), and The New English Bible simply says that the cities were “panic-stricken.” A *mighty* terror, a terror of *'elohim*, protected Jacob and his household.

R. B. Girdlestone, in his *Synonyms of the Old Testament*, discusses at some length the Hebrew word *'elohim* as a name or word for God. But in doing so, he writes that almost all scholars are agreed that the name *'elohim* (or “Elohim”) signifies “the putter forth of power” (p. 26).

This meaning applies also to the spoken word of God. It was and is a putter-forth of power. It created all things. “And *mighty* was the spoken word” is the impact of John 1:1c.

I am mindful that Delitzsch's Hebrew New Testament is a translation. Also, this is not to say what Delitzsch had in

mind when he translated John 1:1 into Hebrew. But we do know what *'elohim* means and what the word itself suggests.

John 1:1, then, says that in the beginning was the spoken word of God. It was the word of the one true God. And, finally, it was “exceedingly powerful.”

There are two things we must remember in interpreting the opening verses of the Gospel of John. John was a Hebrew Christian. He did not think and write in terms of a trinitarian theology developed hundreds of years later in the Roman empire. When he thought of God, he would always think in terms of “one God” and “God is one.” That promised One of the Old Testament would be, not a second God-person, but the Messiah, the Son of God, and the offspring of the virgin's womb (John 20:31; Isa. 7:14).

Secondly, the interpretation which we have presented here—the mighty spoken word—fits in with the context of these opening verses (1-5). Their theme is creation, and all things were created by the spoken word (v. 3). The person of our Lord does not appear in the context until after verse six where John the Baptist is mentioned. In verse 14 we are told that the spoken word became flesh and dwelt among us (cf. Heb. 1:2).

Many years ago, in a classroom setting, I heard the esteemed Lewis Sperry Chafer say that the New Testament really began with the Gospel of John. Matthew, Mark, and Luke, he said, were the completion of the Old Testament.

I was surprised by Dr. Chafer's suggestion. However, I was intrigued by it, and have never forgotten it. If that is so, there is a remarkable similarity between the beginnings of both Testaments. John 1 and Genesis 1 correspond; in both we see the creating power of the spoken word of God.

That, I believe, is what John 1:1-3 is all about, the “exceeding power,” the *'elohim* of the Word of God!

By Pastor Sidney Hatch

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TV Splitting Family Time



"Spudding" before the TV— America's favorite pastime.

The January 5, 1988, *USA Today* newspaper carried a short article about TV viewing today, by Brian Donlon. Because of its shortness, we quote the entire article:

"TV viewers are taking time out from the tube, a new report says. "The average USA household watched TV—network, cable, PBS, inde-

pendent—49 hours and 48 minutes per week during the 1986-87 season.

"That's 28 minutes less than the previous season and the first such decline in more than 20 years, according to the Nielsen Media Research Report, *Television Audience: 1987*.

"It's basically attributable to VCRs," says CBS Research Vice President David Poltrack. "It doesn't explain it all, but VCRs cut into network viewing."

"Paul Schulman, head of his ad firm, says at least among the major networks, it may be their unwillingness to ditch shows.

"In years gone by, if a show wasn't clicking, it was gone. Now, it's given a second and third chance."

"Other trends:

"59 percent of homes have two or more TVs; 20 percent three or more.

"22 percent get 15 or more channels."

The above poll mentioned that USA "households" watch TV about 50 hours a week, about 28 minutes less a week than last year. I suppose this is adding up the TV time seen by father, mother, and the children.

At any rate, 50 hours a week watching TV by a family is a lot of hours.

When I was a boy, there was no such thing as TV. We kids had to entertain *ourselves* rather than be entertained. We spent time doing chores and being outside. It was my job to bring in the wood and the water (we didn't have water in the house then). We used to fish in the creek, look for morels in the woods, climb Devil's Backbone (a local rock), work in the garden, cut the grass, and all sorts of other things.

Our Christian teacher, the Apostle Paul, told us twice that Christians should "redeem the time" (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5). This means to make the best use of our time.

Making the best use of our time, I would think, would include Bible reading and prayers each day as a family (family altar), and even the learning of excellent Bible verses, at least one a week.

Today, family members many times eat at different times and have little time together to talk about each other's joys, sorrows, problems, and general well-being. TV watching may be partly and even greatly hindering these good and necessary things.

How much time does *your* family use up watching TV shows? Do you have your family altar? We **MUST** *redeem the time* "because the days are evil," as Paul said. There are evil influences working on each family member nowadays, and perhaps more so on our youth.

I wonder if there will be any TV in God's great Kingdom of righteousness. I dare say some of the shows shown today will not be on then, if any of them.

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By Pastor James Mattison

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**HOW TO GET THE MOST
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TERRIFIC FAMILY SHARING TIMES

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Page 18
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Page 16
- Home Vacation Bible School Ideas
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- Who's Watching Your Children This Summer?
Page 21
- Time Management for God
Page 10
- Keeping the Flame in Your Marriage
Page 4



Fail-safe Banks? Communist-safe Central America?

Put it in the Bank?

It's a great life of safe savings—socking cash in a trusty savings and loan institution—or better yet, dumping dollars in rock-solid FDIC-insured banks.

Not as safe and solid as assumed, I'm afraid.

The April 1, 1988 issue of *The Kiplinger Washington Letter* warns that 1500 of the 14,000 banks insured by FDIC, and 345 of the 3150 FSLIC-insured savings and loans are shaky, some even bordering on insolvency. Most are in the Southwest where real estate loans met tragedy, but others are scattered throughout the country.

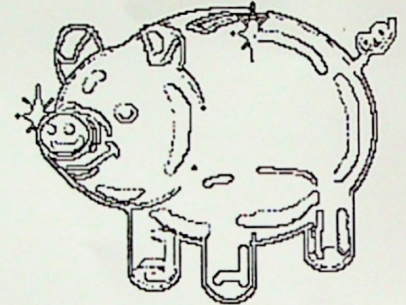
Of course, investors of every stripe are wary with this news. If you can't trust the money people, who can you trust?

Since as much as one-third of the Bible deals with money matters at least indirectly, it might help. The sayings of Jesus are most instructive: "Whoever is faithful in small matters will be faithful in large ones; whoever is dishonest in small matters will be dishonest in large ones. If, then, you have not been faithful in handling worldly wealth, how can you be trusted with true wealth? And if you have not been faithful with what belongs to someone else, who will give you what belongs to you? No servant can be the slave of two masters; he will hate one and love the other; he will be loyal to one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money" (Luke 16:10-13, GNB).

Because so many North Americans in trustworthy positions will fail in money faithfulness, it will be easy for an "all-wise" savior to step in, paint a rosy picture for victims, then take over. With so many countries involved in the lending economy, the global nature of the take-over will only be a matter of time. His mark will be required for buying and selling (Rev. 13:17). Such a power will lead a final rebellion against all that is upright, be worshiped by his converts, "oppose every so-called god or object of worship and will put himself above them all," Paul warned. (2 Thes. 2:4, GNB.)

Only "when the Lord Jesus comes, he will kill him with the breath from his mouth and destroy him with his dazzling presence" (2 Thes. 2:8, GNB).

Apparently the crooked ways of "the Wicked One" (verse 8) cannot stand the light. Come, Lord Jesus.



Uncle Sam Is Watching Over You?

That's the question on many minds of natives of Central America. When Communist-backed Sandinistas—now led by Daniel Ortega—took control in Nicaragua, even the United States could not promise enough help to the Contras to get the Sandinistas out. With truce terms drawn up, Contra hands are tied to not accept more military aid, but Soviet aid continues to flow to the Sandinistas.

Other small nations like El Salvador now must wonder . . . will U.S. aid be there when Commu-



nists infiltrate and take over?

Admittedly, the whole picture is muddled with reports and counter-reports of loss of human rights on every side. Yet the question must remain in the minds of Latin American countries, can the U.S. help?

Long, long ago in American history an early president established what became known as the Monroe Doctrine—America will care for its neighbors. Today the Monroe Doctrine is becoming the Gorbachev Doctrine.

The question allies of Israel will pose to an invading northern army must also echo in the lives of Central Americans confronted by Communism: "Have you assembled your army

and attacked in order to loot and plunder? Do you intend to get silver and gold, livestock and property, and march off with all those spoils?" (Ezek. 38:13, GNB.)

Fastest Growing Age Group

On what age group does the federal government spend the most money? The answer: the same age group growing five times faster than the rest of the population—those 80 years old and older. Because of increased life expectancy this age group will represent over 12% of the population in 2010; now 7.5% are over 80. Today the fed spends \$51 billion on this group; by 2000 over \$100 billion.

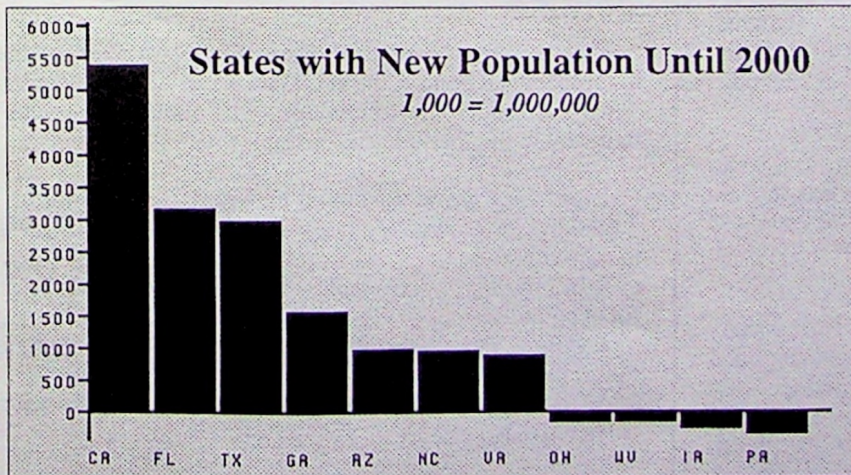
Relocation of the Conference/College

This issue will be examined fully at the August 1-5 meeting of the General Conference delegates in session at Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA. Part of the purpose is to locate in a growth area where many new churches can be planted until the year 2000 and beyond.

Currently our location in a solid midwestern small town helps stabilize such concepts as tradition and introspection. But lacking are concepts of progressive urban planning, becoming involved in cultures outside the midwest mindset, and appealing to the 74 million baby-boomers in the population.

In the past much has been done through traditional methods of gospel work in rural North America and like pockets around the globe. The same Gospel message must now be cloaked in methods which appeal to those in urban settings, where well over 85 percent of the world population resides.

Where should the Conference/College relocate? A recent statistic illus-



trated in the above graph shows states that will add the most people in the next dozen years. California leads the list with 5.4 million new people. It is followed by Florida, Texas, Georgia, Arizona, North Carolina, and Virginia in that order. States that stand to lose the most population from now to 2000 are Pennsylvania, Iowa, West Virginia, and Ohio.

Restitution

THE 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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Keeping the Flame

WHAT DOES KEEPING THE FLAME in your marriage mean?

"If it means what I think it means," you say, "skimpy lingerie and chase scenes around the bed every night—forget it!"

For some that may be the norm and that's okay. But for everyone in the marriage bond, the need to keep the flame is ever present to varying degrees, depending on the stage of your marriage.

Of course, a good flame begins with a roaring fire. Where better to find the raw materials for a flaming marriage than in theology based on Scripture?

Theological Principles Applied to Marriage

Marriage finds its origin in the Garden of Eden where God declared, "It is not good that the man should be alone" (Gen. 2:18), and "The two will become one" (Matt. 19:5, GNB). A brief review of that scene in the first garden and comments made on it by Jesus and the Apostle Paul leave us with the distinct impression that marriage was instituted by God for the good of mankind. The purposes and functions of marriage sanctioned by God include:

1. Union (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5).
2. Fellowship (Gen. 2:18).
3. Procreation (Gen. 1:28).
4. Nurture (Gal. 5).

The words of Jesus—"What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder"—find their basis in the foregoing functions and sanctions. Thus it is vital to the welfare of humankind to undergo and strengthen the marriage bond.

The love chapter of the Bible, 1 Corinthians 13, provides a solid foundation for all relationships and especially the marital relationship. Read again the ingredients necessary for lasting love as Paul contrasts them with emotions and traits that must be avoided:

Love is patient and kind; it is not jealous or conceited or proud; love is not ill-mannered or selfish or irritable; love does not keep a record of wrongs; love is not happy with evil, but is happy with the truth. Love never gives up; and its faith, hope, and patience never fail (1 Cor. 13:4-7, GNB).

Marriage is a covenant relationship where God and society participate to assist the couple in strengthening the bond through a lifetime of companionship. "Christian marriage is not simply a personal choice by two individuals. It is not merely a legal contract or a social institution. Nor is it just a Christian ceremony prescribed by the church. It is all these and more. Essentially the Christian marriage is considered to be a covenant relationship of a man and a woman under God in which the partners live together in love and fidelity to this covenant with God." (*Growing Love in Christian Marriage.*) The marriage covenant is a personal one, a social one, and a sacred one.

Marriage is a unique personal relationship between you and

your love for one of the opposite sex. As partners, you make your relationship what it is. You and your partner are very important to each other, to your families and friends, to the church, to the community around you, and to God. You are unique and your relationship is very special. In many ways, it is different from any other human relationship. Together, you shape your relationship in your own ways. Through this growth you can share the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal. 6:22, 23).

The Search for Greater Intimacy in Marriage

After setting the theological principles upholding marriage, now focus on the personal side of marriage that keeps it flamingly alive—intimacy.

There is in the heart of every human being a powerful longing for a meaningful relationship with at least one other person. "The inescapable need for relationships produces a striving in man which could be described as the will to relate" (Clinebell). Marriage offers one of the most favorable opportunities to satisfy the will to relate and also to meet the intense desire and quest for a greater and greater intimacy. Intimacy is closeness and unity. A motivation in this direction satisfies the universal human hungers for affection, recognition, caring, esteem, dependency, and sexual satisfaction. The hungers of the heart can be satisfied only in relationships. Another motivation in this strong desire to relate is the striving to realize one's potential. The fulfillment of this need moves one to relate and is a force in developing the intimate relationship. Marriage partners should be committed to an ongoing process of developing and pursuing growth toward a greater intimacy in the marital relationship.

Intimacy is never stagnant. There is a growth clearly evident in intimacy. Of course, intimacy can waver and know ups and downs. Consider the following points about the growth of intimacy in the marital relationship:

1. Intimacy grows as couples dare to risk greater openness.
2. Intimacy grows as couples learn to be emotionally present to each other.
3. Intimacy grows as couples develop a high degree of caring for each other.
4. Intimacy grows in a climate of trust, based on commitment to fidelity and continuity (Clinebell).
5. Intimacy grows as a couple develops complementary ways of living.

While intimacy knows a growing trust, often that trust allows a certain release of personhood and autonomy in the relationship. Perhaps Lois Wyse's "Intimacy and Autonomy" poem expresses this point best:

There is within each of us
A private place

in Your Marriage

For thinking private thoughts
And dreaming private dreams.

But in the shared experience of marriage,
Some people cannot stand the private partner.

How fortunate for me
That you have let me grow,
Think my private thoughts,
Dream my private dreams.

And bring a private me
To the shared experience of marriage.

What are the areas of intimacy in marriage? The major opportunities for marital intimacy include sexual intimacy, emotional intimacy, intellectual intimacy, aesthetic intimacy, creative intimacy, recreational intimacy, work intimacy, crisis intimacy, commitment intimacy, and spiritual intimacy.

As expected, at the same time a stronger and more intimate marital relationship is desired there are barriers to such intimacy. Some barriers are:

1. Emotional immaturity
2. Fear of being hurt
3. Low self-esteem and guilt feelings
4. Identity problems
5. Mishandled hostility
6. Chronic busyness
7. Manipulation
8. Conflict of role expectancies
9. Lack of trust.

Barriers may be turned into bridges when worked at and overcome, thus resulting in a greater sense of intimacy. Barriers present possibilities and opportunities.

"Troubled marriages are essentially hungry marriages, and since the road to fulfillment and intimacy is mutual need-satisfaction, it is crucial for married people to learn about their basic needs" (Clinebell).

Dorothy W. Baruch in *Living with Your Teenager* describes the basic emotional foods that everyone needs and craves:

We need love in good measure, and we need to give it. We need to feel that we are wanted and belong. We need to feel that we are capable of adequate achievement so that we can manage to meet life's demands. We need recognition for what we achieve. We need to know that the pleasure which our senses and our body can bring us is permissible and good and that our enjoyment does not make us "bad." We need to feel accepted and understood. And finally we need to feel worthwhile and essentially worthy in being uniquely the self that we are.

In a nutshell, the couple in marriage longs for the security their special relationship offers. The following points will help

enhance security:

1. Stand by and with your mate (Isa. 58:10).
2. Give attention to self-esteem of your mate.
3. Allow for freedom in your togetherness.
4. Promote fulfillment of need for pleasures of the mind and body.
5. Love. "Love is the experience of knowing that another person cares—deeply, warmly, acceptingly, and dependably; this is the most indispensable need of any human being to which all other heart-hungers are tributaries" (Clinebell).

The Apostle Paul describes the analogy of love perfect for all couples in marriage. He says that the husband-wife relationship is likened to that between Christ and his church (Eph. 5:22-33). We grow in our relationship with Christ just as we are to grow in our relationships with our mates.

So how does the flame glow in your marriage? White-hot with deep roots in theology and intimacy? Or are you two heaps of gray ash dampened by the cold waters of emotional immaturity, chronic busyness, and manipulation? Or are you somewhere in between these two extremes?

To help in assessing your marriage, you and your mate might consider which of the following statements, compiled by David and Vera Mace, best describe your marriage:

1. I believe our marriage has developed very well. I am deeply satisfied with it and am hopeful that it will continue to grow.
2. I would say we have a good marriage, and I am on the whole satisfied. However, there are a few aspects of it that could be improved to make our relationship better still.
3. Our marriage is a stable one and certainly not in any danger. Yet I am aware that, in terms of what I expected and hoped for, our relationship leaves a good deal to be desired.
4. I must admit that our marriage has been deeply disappointing to me, and we are suffering a lot of unhappiness as a result. I wish something could be done about it.
5. Our marriage has been a failure, and I really see no hope that it can ever be any good. I would like to get out of it as soon as possible.

Where are you in your marriage? If I can be of any help, please write me at THE RESTITUTION HERALD address: Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061. Your letter will be forwarded to me unopened.

By
Joe James

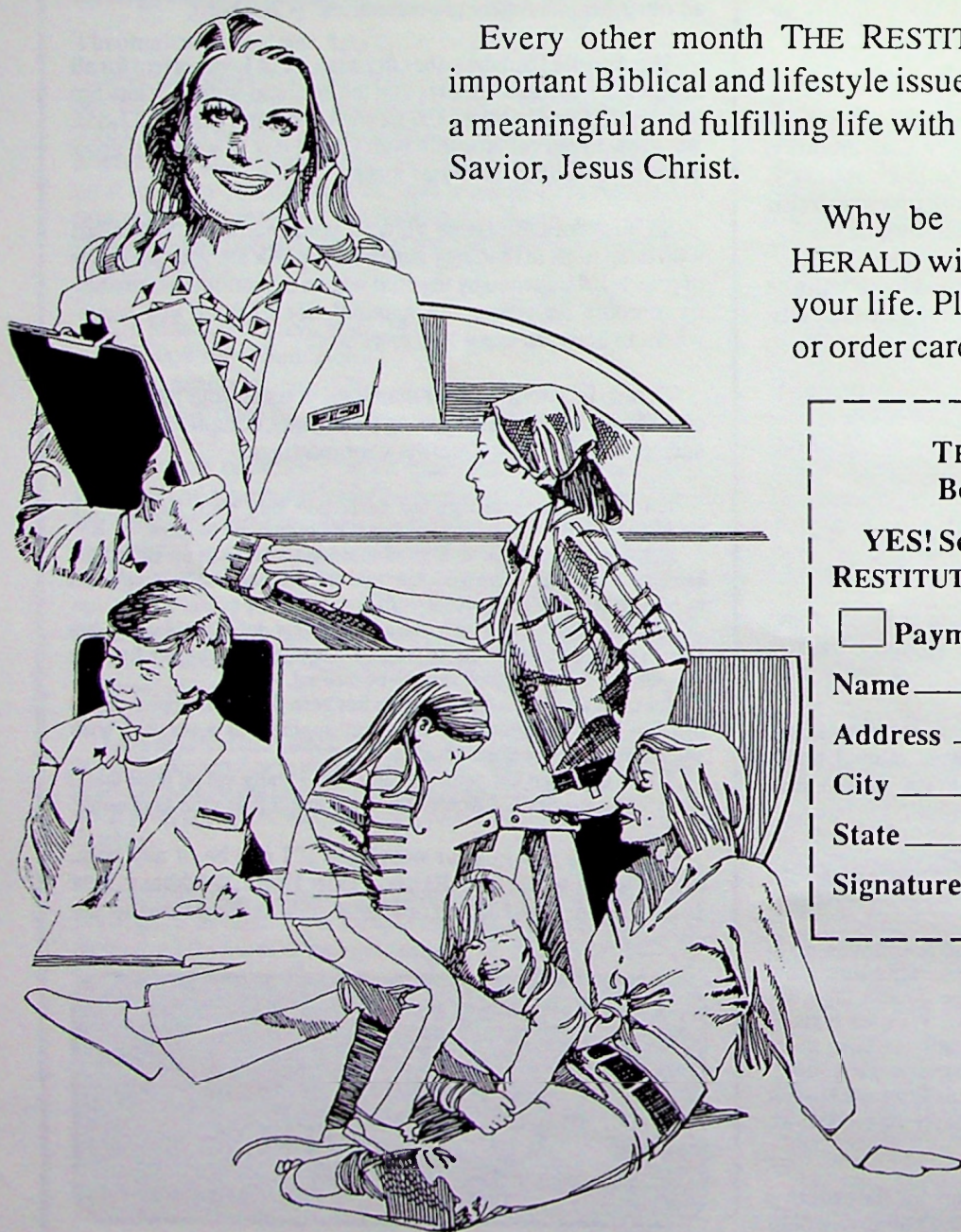
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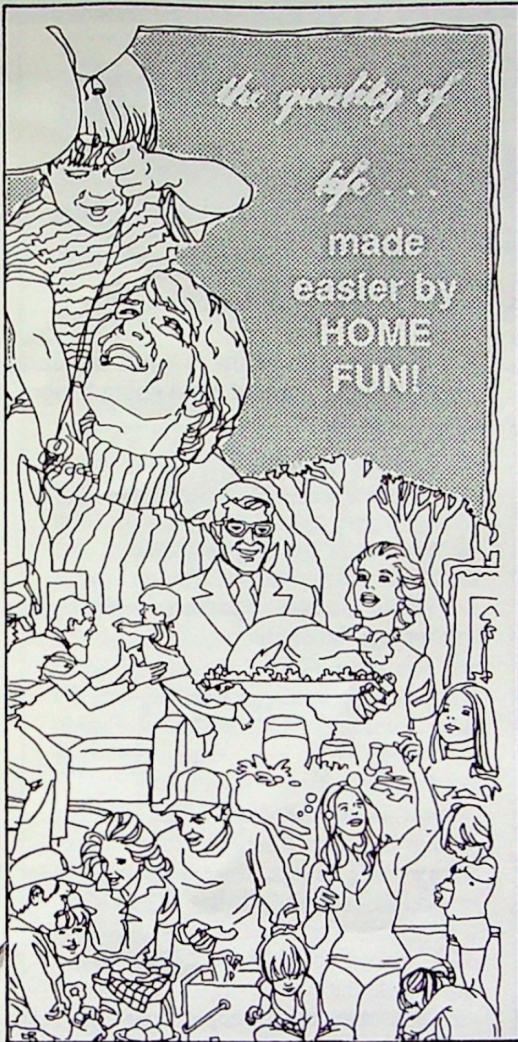
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HOME VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IDEAS

By Carol Ring



Families today, as never before, live in a fast-paced world because of busy and varied schedules. But have you thought about how our leisure and recreational activities are a large part of that busy schedule? We have more leisure time today than ever before because of automation which provides our basic necessities. Consequently, spare time has become an important part of our lives. We therefore are faced with the challenge of handling our leisure time. This challenge makes it important for families to plan their extra time as quality time which builds quality family relationships. "Families need to be aware of a variety of activities and the needs these activities meet. Planning and implementing a creative family recreation program is going to take effort by all the family members. A family is 'we,' not 'I.'

In planning for your creative family leisure, do not think in terms of time—a weekend camping trip, a week's vacation, a day at the circus, a picnic—but in terms of

quality. Think of each family member's likes and needs and vary the activities to meet those needs. One child may like to camp; another likes ball games or doll houses; dad enjoys gardening or woodworking; mom loves to go out for a meal or put a puzzle together. By varying the activities and times, you are helping the children become more mature and responsible. Giving children real opportunities to act in an adult manner doing activities that parents enjoy, helps them understand you better and makes them feel a part of your life and a part of the family.

Quality time is a gentle touch, warmth in the voice, conversation, listening, playtime, chores, games, and excursions by which you are building relationships and guiding a child's personal and spiritual development, helping to grow in "wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52.) Always be aware of God's presence in the midst of all your activities and you will have *quality time.*

The following ideas are a few practical tips for "Home Vacation Bible School Ideas" that produce powerful results when they spring from a growing love for God:

1. FIND A PET

This is an excellent outdoor family activity; children love to collect rocks, and parents need the exercise. Go to your favorite creek-bed, walk along the road, or walk up hills on a farm to see who can find the prettiest or most unusual rock. (Set a size limit.) Take the rocks home, wash them, display your "PET ROCK COLLECTION." Let your collection grow by making this a monthly outing. (You also have the start of another family activity, no. 2.)

2. SCRIPTURE ROCK

This is an excellent night-time activity. Take your "PET ROCK" and, with tempera

paints, have each member paint his favorite verse on the rock. (If you don't want to use your pet rock, let each member find two rocks on your "Find a Pet" excursion.) Make the rock colorful by decorating with painted flowers, decals, or glued-on pictures. Use as paperweights or gifts.

3. GOD'S BEAUTY

This is an activity for Saturday that can be used to teach about the beauty of the world, God's plan for nature, or to teach responsibility.

Every family member has his own garden plant (or plot), flower plant, or family tree. By taking care of the plants, responsibility is taught to the children and, when they see the results, they learn of God's creation and beauty. It is especially important to teach children (through teen years) how to care for God's world and the beauty with which he surrounds us. If you decide to plant a family tree, make it a yearly activity. Children can watch each tree grow and relate to the year it was planted by how old they were or by remembering an important event in their lives that happened that year. This idea has been around many years, making it a tried project that works as a family activity, that provides hours of enjoyment, and that sometimes develops into a life-time activity.

4. SHOPPING SPREE

Since children think groceries means potato chips, cookies, etc., let them be responsible for part of the shopping.

a. Give them the newspaper ad from your grocery store and tell them the amount of money you can spend on groceries for the week. After they compile their grocery list for the week, sit down with them and go over the list. Explain the staples that must be purchased each week and how to get the most for the money spent.

b. Give each child a set amount of money when you go to the store and he is to purchase his snacks for the entire week. If he purchases expensive snacks and con-

(Please turn to next page.)

HOME VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL IDEAS

(Continued from page 7)

sumes them in one or two days, he cannot have more until the week is up. (He also cannot eat other members' snacks.)

c. Give the children a set amount of money to spend on school lunches if they pack their own. Tell them how much they can spend on dessert items so they have a balanced lunch.

d. Let children take turns once a week planning the evening meal menu. Let them know how much can be spent and that it must be a balanced meal. (A great lesson is taught here as well as making everyone feel a part of the family. It also provides conversation during the meal as to why each child picked certain food items.)

I'm sure you will be able to come up with many variations on the shopping spree.

5. PEOPLE-WATCHING

Go to the parking lot of a grocery store and watch people as they enter and leave the store. Use the time to talk about how everyone is different but God loves everyone the same. People walk differently, look different (some smile and some frown), some have handicaps, etc. You can even talk about the funny things people do while loading the car, pushing the cart, or driving. This can really be a fun time and a great teaching opportunity. Follow it up with ice cream at the Dairy Queen.

6. BLOWING BUBBLES

Buy a dime-store bottle of soap bubbles and use it in a simple worship with your fami'y. Take turns confessing sins against other family members. As each person confesses, blow a few bubbles into the air and watch them pop. As those bubbles disappear for good, remember how our sins disappear when we confess them to God. (A variation would be to name sins that are mentioned in the Bible or something you saw during the day that was wrong.)

7. LOVE NOTES

Write notes to members of your family telling them how much you love them, thanking them for something, with a Bible verse printed on it, just telling them you appreciate them, etc. Leave the notes in books, lunch boxes, under pillows, in a suitcase if they go on a trip, in the car, or under a plate. See how many places you can come up with to leave a note. (Dad's briefcase?)

8. GAMES

Set aside one night each week as game night. Family members take turns picking the game they want to play. It can be a purchased game, a game fashioned after a TV show, Bible games, or putting a puzzle together. Make up your own.

I hope your "Home Vacation Bible School" this summer becomes a creative family activity for years to come.

RESTFUL IDEA:

Allow extra time during your trips to play ball, frisbee, or tag at rest stops to get out the kinks. Everyone gets cranky and tired from riding too long. Keep family tempers from flaring up by trying these activities. Any form of exercise helps the mental attitude as well as the physical body.

WHAT'S IN A WORD*

1. In EGYPTIANS, find the opposite of leave

2. In PHARAOH, find a musical instrument that David played.

3. In HEBREW, find the opposite of there.

4. In AARON, find a word that means faster than walked.

5. In MOSES, find a word that means not all.

6. In PLAGUE, find something sticky.

7. In LOCUSTS, find something you do with scissors or a knife.

8. In FLIES, find the opposite of truth.

NUMBER PUZZLE*

In the puzzle below is a gift that Jesus used to keep a crowd from going hungry.

7	10	6	18	4	14	3
A	S	O	I	E	T	V

12	20	2	9	15	1
N	H	L	D	W	F

Fill in the blank spaces with the correct numbered letters.

1	18	3	4			
2	6	7	3	4	10	
7	12	9				
14	15	6	1	18	10	20

NAME PUZZLE


Who are these people who saw Jesus after his resurrection? John 21:2 will give you a clue.

- M _ R _
- J _ H _
- P _ T _ R
- J _ M _ S
- T _ O _ A _
- N _ T _ A _ A _ L

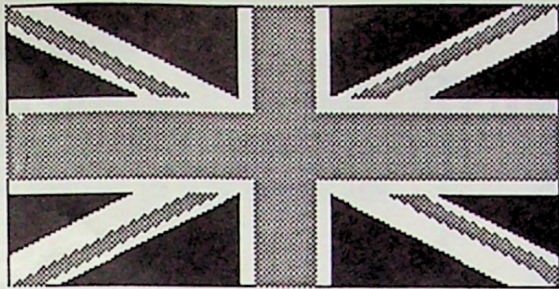
*Answers in the next issue of the THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

Fishers of Men

Jesus called four fishermen to be fishers of men. Insert the names of these fishermen in the puzzle. Check your answer in Matthew 4:18-22.



		3			
	F	O	U	R	
1					4
	2				



Taking the Good News to England

England is a nation that needs to hear the truth about Jesus Christ. England is a nation of 55 million people. Of its population, only one in ten people attend church. England has many historical cathedral churches that serve as tourist attractions during the week but sit empty on Sunday mornings. England has been called by many today a "Post-Christian nation." It is time for the Church of God to go into England, plant churches, and show them the truth about Jesus Christ.

Jeff and Karen Fletcher have been selected as the Church-Planting family. Jeff's heritage goes back to England. His grandfather, Joseph H. Fletcher (92 years old, Fonthill, Canada) was born in England. His father, Joe Fletcher, is a pastor of the Columbia Station, OH, Church of God. Jeff graduated from Oregon Bible College in 1986 and currently pastors East Oregon Chapel. Karen also attended Oregon Bible College and has a strong background in the church. They have one child, J. J. (17 months) and are expecting their second child this fall (he or she will be born in England).

Jeff and Karen experienced their call to this ministry in stages during 1987. They began praying that God would raise up leaders for the church in England. They soon came to realize that God was calling them to that ministry. Their call was confirmed by members of the General Conference who approved funding for the project. You, as members of the Church of God, have also indicated that you are in favor of planting a church in England by giving toward the project.

Upcoming Plans

Jeff and Karen made a preliminary trip to England April 5-19, accompanied by Warren and Irene Sorenson. During this trip they determined a suitable loca-

tion to begin Bible studies and are purchasing a home. They interviewed pastors of several churches and had Bible studies with John Cunningham and Ken Newman, two men in England who share our beliefs.

They are preparing themselves for their move in August. They will need to sell their house in Oregon, their car, ship their possessions, and prepare themselves spiritually.

Jeff and Karen will leave permanently for England following General Conference in August. When they arrive in England they will begin to get acquainted with their community. They will make personal contacts, build relationships, and begin to have Bible stud-



England; the dominant country of the British Isles; a fertile mission field.

ies.

It is hoped that at least one Bible study group will be going by the end of October. They will continue to conduct Bible studies and make new contacts. At some point, perhaps the summer of 1989, a calling team from the United States hopefully will go and help generate some additional contacts. As God brings people to the Bible studies, it is anticipated that some will make commitments, be baptized, and become members of the Church of God.

As the group continues to grow they will prepare to begin public worship services in rental facilities. At that point they will continue to evangelize, disciple, and become a growing and living church within their community.

A major goal of the new church will be to begin planting other churches. We don't want to see this church become



Pastor Jeff Fletcher in discussion with an English church member.

just a church, but a church that plants churches that plants churches. Ultimately, we desire to see a church that is faithful to God and receives blessing from God.

How Can I Help?

1. **Pray for Jeff and Karen** and their preparations for the move. Pray that God would prepare the hearts of the people to receive the message.
2. **Learn about missions.** Please keep informed through your local church and through the General Conference.
3. **Share the vision** of planting churches with others in your church and community.
4. **Give.** It costs money to plant a church. By giving through the PACT program or by giving directly for the England project you will greatly help this church get started. Get your church involved. Have a bake sale, a car wash, involve the children in the project. And thank you for your support.

How You Can GET MORE DONE FOR GOD

“I don't have time to do it.”

How many times have you heard this or spoken the words yourself?

“But you can always do more. After all, the harder you work, the more you get.”

Well, that may have been true back in the days when you grew your own food. But the super successful people today almost never work as hard as the merely successful.

The book of Proverbs is filled with wisdom and instruction. In the sixteenth chapter we are instructed that “the PLANS of the mind belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord” and that you are to “commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established.”

Ultimately, what you accomplish in your career and with your life is the result of the accomplishments in a typical day. That's where plans are made and the blessings of the Lord begin. “When a man's ways please the Lord, he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him.” So it is important for us to remember that “A man's mind plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps” and you'll find that planning a good day in order to get more done for God pays off in four ways:

1 You'll get more done and enjoy it more. It's not only a matter of reaching

your goal, but by your demonstration of loyalty and faithfulness, iniquity is atoned for, and by the fear of the Lord you avoid evil. That you find happiness, fulfillment, and self-respect are by-products of doing more for God.

2 You'll make more money. Let's

teousness than great revenues with injustice.”

3 You'll have balance in your life. “A just balance and scales are the Lord's; all the weights in the bag are his work.” By planning your day to get more done for God, you'll find that your produc-

tivity will increase at work, and that you'll have more time to enjoy with your family, on your hobbies, or just goofing off.

4 You'll feel better. When you act wisely and plan your day around God, you'll be filled with his Spirit, enjoy better health, have a more positive attitude, and certainly suffer less stress.

I have found that the only way to insure getting more done for God is for me to write it down and tell myself that “if God instructs me to do this list of things, I'd make sure it was completed.” Then I go about doing the tasks I've written on my Daily Planning Guide for Success.

You can get more done for God by using weekly and daily planning guides. I encourage you to try this exercise for a week.

Make a To Do list of things you'd like to accomplish over the next week. Do this for work, home, and for God. Then make a To Do list for the next work day just before you leave for home; make the To Do list to accomplish around the house the next day

face it. In our society we are paid for our contribution. When you earn a reputation as a person that gets things done, you generally can expect consistent raises and promotions. But remember, “better is a little with righ-

The Price for a Day of my Life

This is the beginning of a new day. I can waste it, or I can use it well. It is important what I do today because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, today will be gone forever, leaving in its place something I traded for it. I hope I shall not regret the price I paid for it.

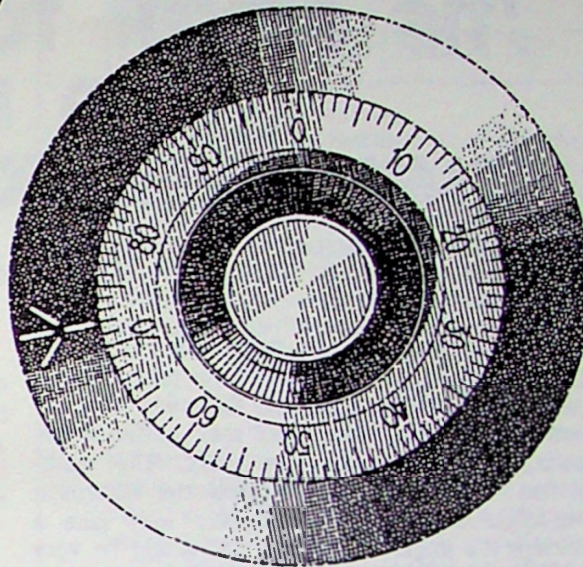
One of the keys to success is to plan each day as if your life depended on it. You know, in a way it does.



Just before you go to bed the night before. It's important to remember that the average person spends 112 hours each week awake. When scheduling your time, plan to not only give a tenth of your time to God, but look at how everything you do is for God. Then each day as you go about performing the tasks on your list make notes as to how you spend your time and note additions and changes for your planned schedule. At the end of the week, look over your week's worth of lists for patterns. Don't be surprised if you find that half of your To Do list is unfinished. You'll probably find that your adjusted list of accomplishments is longer than your original To Do list.

Praise God for all the accomplishments he made possible and start the process over again.

By Rick Cooper



Unlock the Future

When you invest in the OBC Development Foundation, you're investing in the future of the Church of God and the future of Oregon Bible College.

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48	50 gifts at 1,500 = 75,000	73,000
96	100 gifts at 1,000 = 100,000	96,000
82	100 gifts at 500 = 50,000	41,000
196	200 gifts at 100 = 20,000	19,600

Total of ~~\$300,000~~ \$278,600

For more information write to:
 OBC DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION
 Box 100
 Oregon, IL 61061
 or phone: 815/732/7991

'TIS BETTER TO HAVE LOVED AND LOST THAN NEVER TO HAVE LOVED AT ALL

Writing these articles hasn't been easy. I would much prefer to use a by-line; then I could remain anonymous in my writing. I'm revealing much more of what I feel than I'm used to . . . I think you might identify with that. (Perhaps it's therapeutic for me.) But, maybe if I let you inside my heart, you'll do the same with me and with others like us. What would happen if we took down ALL the walls?

You see, I've found that single people have one thing in common almost without exception. We have all loved and lost at one point or other and in one way or another, and we are different people because of it. Forgive me for assuming, but bear with me as I speak your thoughts on this subject.

Chances are you CHOSE to love—I did, too. We took a risk. We took that risk willingly, trusting another with feelings and thoughts, actions, and secrets that we may not have disclosed normally. We allowed that other person to know the innermost part of ourselves—the part that can ONLY be hurt by someone you love. We loved with abandon; it was almost a relief to be so close to another—to have a companion and a true “best friend.” We allowed ourselves to be vulnerable because we trusted that person. Isn't that what love is?

Many of us are still single because we lost that love. We lost, and that innermost part of us was betrayed by that loss. That part of us that gave so freely was wounded—for

some, to the point of burial! That innermost part retreated almost to the point of no return! We seem different because we “mask.” The “masking” protects the innermost part—recovery may take a long time. It would be very difficult to take that risk again because we know what the hurt is. It would be very difficult to take that risk again because that part that was wounded is now buried deep within—it rarely shows itself to another. About the only time we are truly ourselves is when we're alone. The part that we buried has been scarred, and we protect it carefully.

We learn to live alone.

There are stages of grief that are suffered at the loss of a loved one. Those stages are the same, and are very real whether that person left you to love another, left as a result of divorce, or died. The trauma is not easy, no matter what the situation. The healing takes time, and it will never be easy to give yourself to another person again. It's risky. It scares us to even think about it. But we must learn to GIVE again.

We are very caring, aren't we? In group situations, it's even easy to say “I love you.” We are “giving” people—

me a mate!” We begin to feel sorry for ourselves and get depressed. We lose our sense of self-worth. (“No one could love me.”) We blame other things or other people, or our lost love (whether living or dead) for our loneliness.

God gives us a perfect example in Naomi, who loved and lost. She lost her husband and both sons. Was she bitter? Read Ruth 1:13 and 1:20. I'd say she was pretty upset! Yet, God gave her Ruth, such a blessing in Naomi's life. God also gave Naomi a grandson—probably something Naomi never thought she would have. Naomi allowed bitterness to overcome her, yet God blessed her abundantly.

Loving begins with giving. Our God gave his Son willingly . . . his loss was our gain. He experienced the grief, he experienced the pain of loving and losing. He gave freely, and continues to do so! Praise him!

Ministry begins with giving. We must be able to get on the inside of people. The world is changing, and Jesus can operate on the INSIDE. In order for him to do that, we must be touching people; making contact with them, drawing them to him, and watching him heal them from within. We MUST touch them, and in order to do that, we must reach out. That inner part of ourselves that we are protecting so carefully is the COMMUNICATOR. It is the part that others like us can identify with. We have an obligation to come out of our shell and give again. We have an obligation

Greetings, COGS! I have been encouraged by your response to the last article! Although I looked forward to hearing from many old friends, the response that God directed was from COGS that I didn't know! Praise him, and thank you for taking the time to write! I will keep your letters and compile a mailing list. If YOU would like to receive a COGS Newsletter, please write to me in care of: Church of God General Conference, PO Bx 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

We are haunted by the inability to communicate, particularly with members of the opposite sex who we find interesting. We are subconsciously (or consciously) afraid to reveal too much of “the real me.” To us, love hurts. It would be better (and easier) to go without love—some of us are determined to do so.

most of us would do anything for anybody, and truly enjoy giving to others. It only gets risky if it's one-on-one with members of the opposite sex. So, we tend to be found in groups (flocks? or packs?).

Some of us are bitter about being alone. Bitterness is usually the result of not getting what you want. We say, “Why ME!”—we pray, “Lord, find

COGS

by Vickie Pulling

to love and to care about others—we have a MISSION to win them to Christ. We have an obligation because of our loss to offer our hearts to those that are hurting . . . others that are alone can be comforted and encouraged by those of us who understand their pain. There are other singles out there who are hurting a thousand more times than we are. Let's help them.

Don't be bitter. Bitterness is a selfish indulgence. Pray for courage to reach out and see beyond yourself. Our purpose in life must be to give glory to God and not merely seek happiness. Let God lead you on to the great plan he has for your life—he is asking us to use our years as singles to be BIG PRODUCERS! First, we must replace thoughts of ourselves with thoughts of him and thoughts of others.

Get on with the life with which God has blessed you. Making contact with other people, and letting them know of the HOPE within you will win them to Christ. They won't care what you know if they don't know you care.

'Tis better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all . . . to have loved and lost builds in us a character that God can use in winning others to him. He can be glorified through us in a ministry to others like us . . . others that may not be reached by those who don't understand. Reach out, singles; don't hold back. We are blessed with a ministry that is going to be more and more in demand. Give to oth-

ers as God has given to you.

To have loved and lost can be a blessing in disguise—God can use you and he loves you. Get outside yourself and GIVE! God bless you in your ministry.

RECOMMENDED READING: *"Great Leaps in a Single Bound"* by Kaaren Witte. Written from a woman's viewpoint, Kaaren knows what it's like to be single (never married) today. She describes her life with humor and insight. Her thoughts made me laugh, identify, cry, and THINK. I ended the book feeling blessed by her thoughts. (Bethany House Publishers.) Available through your Christian Bookstore.

Church

of

God

Singles

Letters

February/March 1988 Issue

This was one of the best issues I can remember for a long time. I actually tore it to pieces in order to put the articles in my files. I am making copies to send to people. I mostly find doctrinal/"new research" information most exciting and most helpful. I didn't even read beyond the headlines of the articles on disciplinmaking and pastoral leadership. Of course, as Paul said, this is my personal opinion, but I feel we've had enough articles on "how-to" and need the articles on the "what-to" preach more.

Chuck Jones' message on sin ("Does Your Heart Beat with the Heartbeat of God?") was very convicting. We need more messages that don't beat around the bush. We cannot continue to sidestep the fact that we believe the truth in a totally different manner from the masses of Christians of this world. We cannot continue to try to candy coat these differences and slip them in unnoticed. "Just a spoonful of sugar," as Mary Poppins sang, may help the medicine go down, but too much would overdominate "our" peculiar message.

Two letters in the April/May HERALD stated the need for shorter, simpler articles. Cannot technical, in-depth articles share the space with some easy-to-read articles? I would not want to alienate those with less understanding of the Bible, but neither should we turn off those who desire something heavier and meatier. We all wish to be challenged! When we refuse to be challenged, we stop growing. When we stop growing, God stops using us.

There are enough so-called Christian magazines on the market proclaiming simply "Jesus is love" and detailing the "happy-ever-after" salvation stories of born-again believers. Let us then strive to be distinct in our approach as well as in our message. Remember that no one else is proclaiming the things concerning the name of Jesus and the kingdom of God (Acts 8:12). We are therefore compelled to do it.

—Oregon, IL.

Another Response . . .

In response to two "Letters to the Editor," April/May/1988 issue, I would point out that many well-educated and rich people were followers and even close disciples of Jesus.

While it is true that Jesus called the sick, down-trodden, needy, and uneducated, it is also true that Jesus called the educated, the rich, and the wise. Consider Jesus himself at age 12 in the temple asking questions and giving answers that amazed the teachers. (Luke 2:46, 47.) How about the Apostle Paul, called and used by God? Paul, a Pharisee, was highly educated and used his knowledge of the Scriptures to prove that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 9:22). Finally, consider Apollos, a man mentioned in Acts 18:24, 25. It was said of Apollos: "A learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures . . . instructed in the way of the Lord . . . he taught about Jesus accurately . . . Priscilla and Aquila . . . explained to him the way of God more adequately . . . a great help to those who by grace had believed . . . he refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ."

Following these good examples, we should exert much mental effort to learn all we can of the Scriptures so that we will be of noble character like the Bereans, and, "diligently and accurately handling the word of truth so as to be approved to God."

—Oregon, IL.

An Answer from our Man in Springfield . . .

I understood the last RESTITUTION HERALD. It was not written for intellectuals.

—Springfield, OH.

A PARABLE ON FISHLESS FISHERMEN

Is a Person a Fisherman if Year after Year He Never Catches any Fish?



By John M. Drescher

Now it came to pass that a group existed who called themselves fishermen. And lo, there were many fish in the waters all around. In fact the whole area was surrounded by streams and lakes filled with fish. And the fish were hungry.

Week after week, month after month, and year after year these, who called themselves fishermen, met

in meetings and talked about their call to fish, the abundance of fish, and how they might go about fishing. Year after year they carefully defined what fishing means, defended fishing as an occupation, and declared that fishing is always to be a primary task of fishermen.

Continually they searched for new and better methods of fishing and for new and better definitions of fishing. Further they said, "The fishing industry exists by fishing as fire exists by burning." They loved slogans such as "Fishing is the task of every fisherman," "Every fisherman is a fisher," and "A fisherman's outpost for every fisherman's club." They sponsored special meetings called "Fishermen's Campaigns" and "The Month for Fishermen to Fish." They sponsored costly nationwide and worldwide congresses to discuss fishing and to promote fishing and hear about all the ways of fishing such as the new fishing equipment, fish calls, and whether any new bait was discovered.

These fishermen built large, beautiful buildings called "Fishing Headquarters." The plea was that everyone should be a fisherman and every fisherman should fish. One thing they didn't do, however; they didn't fish.

In addition to meeting regularly they organized a board to send out fishermen to other places where there were many fish. All the fishermen seemed to agree that what is needed is a board which could challenge fishermen to be faithful in fishing. The board was formed by those who had the great vision and courage to speak about fishing, to define fishing, and to promote the idea of fishing in faraway streams and lakes where many other fish of different colors lived.

Also the board hired staffs and appointed committees and held many meetings to define fishing, to defend fishing, and to decide what new streams should be thought about. But the staff and committee members did not fish.

Large, elaborate, and expensive training centers were built whose original and primary purpose was to teach

(Continued, page 28)

Expert Advice for Catching Fish

Want to be a better fisherman for the Lord? There's just one piece of advice that works every time.

Go fishing!

It's as simple as that.

Fishermen learn by doing. The same holds true in reaching new people for Christ. You never learn how to do it without reaching new people for Christ.

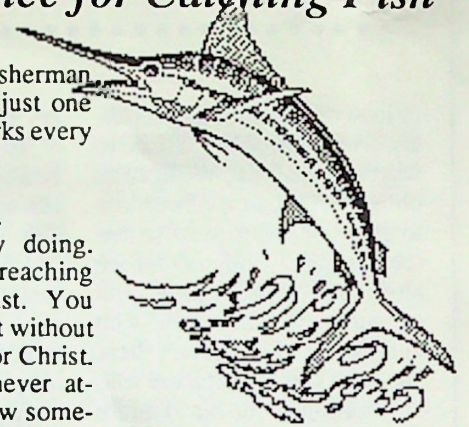
What if you have never attempted getting to know someone? You don't even feel close to your own relatives. How do you reach them?

Let's say you want to reach just one friend for Christ in the next six weeks. Here are some simple how-to's:

Get well acquainted. Greet your new friend with a smile. Listen to his name; repeat it several times in natural conversation. Pronounce it and spell it correctly. If you know his name and use it naturally many times in speaking with him, you've won a friend. Be a good listener by seeking to discover his interests instead of yours.

Invite him to your home. Be genuine in your invitation. Avoid putting it off until the house is immaculate—no one lives that way anyway. When he sets foot inside the door ask him to sit down, then chat with him for several minutes. Make him feel relaxed, comfortable, and wanted. One no-no: don't "buttonhole" him with a formal gospel appeal. In fact, avoid any reference to the gospel. Let him bring it up first. He will—eventually. Give him time.

Do things together. Discover hobbies and sports you hold in common. Set appointments to do them together. Have fun! If you have no common interests, discover his; then set about



honing your own skills so you can have fun together. If necessary, learn how to play racquetball, tennis, billiards—even develop the art of crochet!

Capitalize on holidays. July 4 is coming up. Plan to enjoy the fireworks with your friend. Invite his family to picnic with yours. Do something similar for Labor Day. On Thanksgiving watch football and eat turkey with him. During the Christmas holidays do something together. Go caroling.

Be available to help. Suppose your friend's family comes down with bad colds. Take a meal over. Tend to some needs that stand up at such times. Maybe he's painting his house. Bring over a paint brush and ladder. Pitch in. Perhaps he shares bad news of a death in the family or the loss of a job. Be there to hug and hear his hurts. Let your heart flow toward him.

Give him something to read. After the foregoing has taken place, he's ready to read about your faith. Buy him appropriate books, tapes, records, videos. Send him a subscription to THE RESTITUTION HERALD. Talk to him about what he's reading and understanding. Fill in the gaps regarding your personal faith. Gently.

(Continued, page 31)

THE RESTITUTION HERALD



John 3:16—Its Impact on My Ministry

“Whosoever believeth in him should not perish.”—John 3:16.

By Pastor Sidney Hatch

In one of my early pastorates, I had an experience which helped to change the course of my ministry.

Along with other responsibilities, I was also teaching an adult Sunday School class. We were studying the Gospel of John, and the lesson for the next Sunday included the familiar John 3:16: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

It was a temptation that week to let down in the lesson preparation. After all, the material was familiar to all of us. But there came into my heart one afternoon a resolve which I realize now was of the Spirit of God: I would carefully study John 3:16 in my Greek New Testament. Perhaps the Lord would give me something new to share with the class.

I carefully pored over the passage before me, looking up the words again, and considering their relationship to each other. In time, I came to the word “perish.” It was, I observed, a translation of the Greek verb *apollumi* which meant “to destroy utterly” or, simply, “to destroy.” In the middle voice, as in John 3:16, it meant “to be destroyed” or “to be put to death.”

I was somewhat taken back by what I had observed. This word *apollumi* indicated that the wicked would be destroyed or put to death. It did not say they would be tormented forever. It simply said “destroyed.”

I immediately began to seek a way of escape from the evidence before me. “You must not take this word in its plain and simple sense,” I said to myself. “That would be naive.”

But then another thought came to mind: Why should I impose a secondary sense on *apollumi*, when its plain and simple meaning is “destroy”?

I sat and thought for a long time. Could it be that that terrible doctrine of “annihilation” was right after all? Could it be that the lost will simply be destroyed, and not tortured forever in a fiery hell?

I must pause here and explain that “annihilation” was the term we used for the “destruction” of the wicked. It was a distortion of the Scriptural truth.

But the most disturbing thought of all was the question, Do I dare to tell my class what I have discovered? Shall I tell them what God’s Word really says? Or, shall I take the easy way out, and just give them a re-hash of my heaven-and-hell theology? It was a critical moment in a young pastor’s life.

This was not the first time my confidence in the doctrine of eternal torment had been shaken. Several years before, in a theology class in seminary, the professor was asked if it was necessary for us, as ministers of the gospel, to believe in the eternal hell-fire torment of the lost. I was shocked that the student would ask such a question, and fully expected him to be squelched by the professor’s reply.

But the professor appeared troubled, and did not immediately reply. He looked down, and then, in a moment, looked up at the class. With a wan smile, he said, in effect, “There are difficulties in the orthodox position. But, after all, it is the orthodox one, and the best one to hold.”

The answer was as unexpected as the question. I realized that, actually, it was not an answer, and I left the class puzzled by the professor’s reply. Nevertheless, I clung to my belief in eternal torment.

Put now, several years later, in the privacy of my study, and with the Word

of God before me, I was able to search and see for myself.

Obviously, eternal torment was not in John 3:16. The issue there was clear and simple: The one who rejected Christ would “perish” or be utterly destroyed. But the one who believed in Christ would “not perish.” He would receive “everlasting life.” Further study revealed to me that this “everlasting life” was the resurrection life of the age to come.

Life or death, not better housing in eternity! That, I saw, was the issue in John 3:16.

At about that same time, in connection with our Wednesday evening Bible class, I had been studying the opening chapters of Genesis in their Hebrew text. There I noticed, for the first time, that Genesis 2:7 says nothing about man being an immortal soul. He is simply “a living soul” or “living creature.”

“Living soul”—not an “immortal soul”! I realized for the first time that Genesis 2:7 and John 3:16 were complementary. If man was not an immortal soul, then there was no such thing as eternal torment.

The decision which I had to make in my study that afternoon was not long in coming. Through the Scriptures, God had spoken to my heart. I would go before the class and tell them the truth.

The experience described here took place thirty years ago. I told the Sunday class, and I told my congregation.

A new joy, enthusiasm, and dedication entered my ministry. Never, since that day, have I doubted the message that eternal life can only come through faith in Christ alone. The wicked will “perish” or be destroyed. But the righteous, in the resurrection, will put on immortality.

Reprinted with permission from *Brief Bible Studies*, Volume 19, Number 1, pages 4-6.



Christ of the Ozarks

Christian Va

A century and a half ago, the first American settlers came to Northwest Arkansas. There, in the Ozarks, they established a new heritage of Americana, developing their own quaint, charming culture, music, and folklore.

Nowhere has that heritage been more preserved than in the 100-year-old village of Eureka Springs.

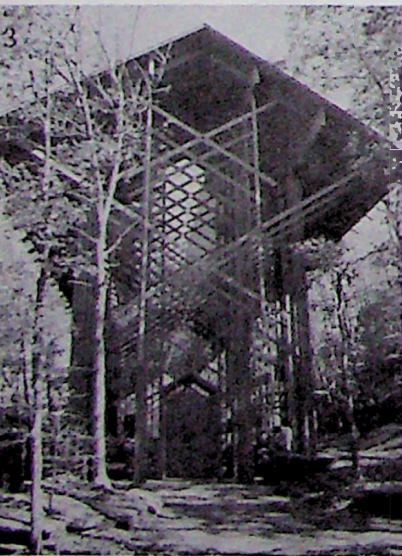
Eureka Springs

Built on the Ozark hillsides, the township captures the charm of Old

World Europe and takes great pride that none of the city's winding streets cross at right angles.

The town emerged in the late 1800's with the discovery of 63 natural springs, which doctors of that day prescribed for their exceptional healing and medicinal properties. Folks came from all over the country to partake of the waters, especially when the railroad connecting with Kansas City, St. Louis, and Chicago arrived. Settlers coming to the area felt that the Greek word translated, "I have found it!" aptly expressed their feelings, so they christened the town Eureka Springs on July 4, 1879.

The town boasts of many fine attractions. A trolley car system continues fully operational. One may enjoy fine railway dining reminiscent of the 1920's while riding through the scenic countryside. The entire downtown district is on the National Register of Historic Places because of its restored and preserved Victorian architecture. Art galleries, craft shops, antique stores, and museums combine with fiddle and banjo contests, outdoor musical programs, an antique car show, arts and crafts fairs, and the Ozark Folk Festival to make the Springs a complete vacation spot.



Thorncrown Chapel.

But the most significant drawing card for Christians is the "Great Passion Play" Eureka Springs hosts which depicts Christ's last week of his earthly ministry. From April to October, this drama, complete with sound effects, costumes and scenery, is presented in a beautiful outdoor amphitheater.

Attracting thousands of people each year, it's estimated that over three and three quarter million people have seen at least one performance.

Eureka Springs is also home of the famous "Christ of the Ozarks" statue—a giant figure of Christ visible for miles. Another Christian showpiece is Thorncrown Chapel in the Eureka Springs hills. The Chapel is considered by some to be one of the most beautiful small chapels in the world.

Known as "Little Switzerland of America," Eureka Springs is one of the most popular vacation destinations of the Ozarks today. Its Passion Play provides an excellent religious experience for vacationing Church of God families.

*The
Passion
Play
in
three
sites*



Eureka Springs Passion Play.

ication Guide



Black Hills Passion Play.

The Black Hills Passion Play

It's the most renowned outdoor theatrical production in the Midwest. The Passion Play portrays the last seven days of the life of Christ. Spearfish has hosted the play for over 50 summers in its amphitheatre set against the Black Hills. The play originated in 1242 with the Luenen Passion Play in Germany, performed by monks. Seven centuries later the production moved to the U. S., touring from coast to coast, and in 1939 the Spearfish amphitheatre was constructed for summer performances. The cast numbers 250 with acting professionals in all speaking roles and locals filling nonspeaking parts. Josef Meier's portrayal of Christ has been internationally acclaimed. Authentic costumes and props are used, and camels, sheep, donkeys, and doves reinforce the realism.

The Black Hills Passion Play northwest of Rapid City, SD, is an excellent setting for vacationing Church of God families.

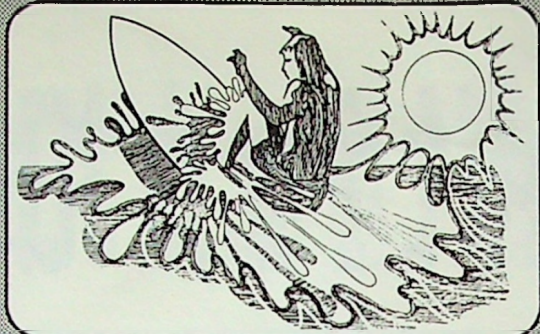
West Germany

The site of the original Passion Play is in the Black Forest of Germany. The current version of the play will begin staging in 1990. More information can be secured at a later date.



Map to the Black Hills Passion Play.

IS FAMILY-CAMP WORTHWHILE?



The Chairman of the Board was about to enter the church. He noticed an elderly man standing at the corner of the building. He seemed to be patting and examining the bricks. The Chairman's curiosity was aroused so he approached the stooped, grey-haired man. "Pardon me, sir, but you seem to have some special interest in this corner of our building. As a member of the church, I'm curious to know what's so interesting about those bricks." The old man answered, "Yes, I have a special interest. You see, when this building was erected many years ago, I was a workman on the project." Patting the bricks again, he said, "These bricks—I set them here." With a smile of satisfaction, he added, "And I think I did a pretty good job." He had used good materials and had built well. The building was solid and "his corner" was plumb to the line.

How about the "corner" where God has placed you? If you are a parent you may sometimes feel backed into a corner as far as family responsibilities and relationships are concerned, sometimes wondering if you're really getting anywhere. There is no ideal marriage. Children never seem to grow up. Teens are being weaned away from the family at a time when Satan is fighting to entrap them. How can you be successful and build a solid foundation and a plumb line in this all-important "corner"?

A week-long family camp, nestled in the woods away from the world with semi-primitive facilities, is certainly no panacea. Nor is the annual General Conference, where oftentimes the fellowship and renewing of friendships are more important than the business to be considered. But these experiences can certainly help.

This article and this writer will focus primarily on the week-long family camp from a personal point of view. As a boy I attended Indiana Family Camp for four years. Several years later I was able to return as an adult and have attended and served on the staff an additional 14 years. It is truly a rich experience for the entire family and a highlight of the year. The

children in our church talk about it months ahead of time.

It has been said that 10% of the Christian faith is *taught*, while 90% is *caught*. Read that statement again. There may be no documentation for that statement, but if you think about it, you'll probably agree. Which has more impact—the Sunday School teacher telling the class that God is truth and that honesty and integrity are a must in the child of God, or watching that teacher give money back at the camp store because too much change was given? Which has more impact—listening to the pastor talk about being a peacemaker, or watching him resolve a conflict when two children start fighting? Which has more impact—hearing the familiar talk about the importance of prayer, or having daily times of group and individual prayer?

Living together with the same group of people for a whole week brings many experiences. Friendships are cemented. Sometimes they crack and need reinforcement. Mature Christian role models are provided. Sometimes they make mistakes or act immaturely and are seen to be real people, but also to be really trying. It's so refreshing to break away from the "world" for a time and enjoy a bubble of protection. Sometimes the world bursts that bubble and you feel intruded upon, but what better way to learn how to put up your defenses and wear the protective armor of God?

A full schedule of activities and choices for all ages is challenging. Sometimes you wonder why they call it "Family Camp" when you're not sure you've spent much "family time." But then you realize the impact of this time spent with the extended family—the family of God. You may be glad when it's over so you can go home and rest up after a week of "vacation." But you go home with a good feeling. You feel closer to God and some of his people. You suspect that you've tasted, in a small way, of the kingdom. Your whole family discovers it's lived an entire week separated from the world—and survived. You've been challenged to make some changes, some

improvements in your life, in your witness, in your relationship with God.

Family Camp is a nice addition to the programs of a state conference. It offers the entire family the experience that typically only youth are able to have at a youth camp. A typical day at camp would include morning Bible classes; optional afternoon classes, crafts, music, or Bible study; a varied recreation schedule, including swimming, boating, softball, volleyball, four-square, and ping pong; special activities such as a boat tour, nature hike, pre-schoolers' water class, sports tournaments, beginners' lessons on piano and guitar; a variety of evening services including preaching, quizzing, a concert, and talent night; campfires and singing; and—believe it or not—good food!

You be the judge. Is family camp worthwhile? The Indiana State Conference feels it is. It has offered a week-long family camp for years. In fact, it heavily subsidizes the tuition of Indiana residents to make it possible for families to attend. The Michigan State Conference thinks so. It too subsidizes the tuition so that Michigan residents can attend our camp. The same could be done by other state conferences or they could have their own family camp. As director of Indiana's Family Camp, I would be glad to explain in further detail how our camp works and provide information which might be helpful in establishing family camps or other conferences. If you'd like more information, contact me at 219-277-8577 or 16623 State Road 23, South Bend, IN 46635.

By
Pastor
John
Railton

The Secret to Perpetual Youth

By
Pastor
James
Mattison



Anti-Aging Cream

"When medical scientists reported in January they could turn back the wrinkles of time, it instantly got the attention of millions of middle-aged and elderly Americans" (Harlingen, Texas, *Morning Star*, February 29, 1988).

"Physicians throughout the Valley were immediately overwhelmed with requests for Retin-A, or retonic acid, a strong medicated cream derived from vitamin A and originally designed for treatment of acne. . . .

"Pharmacies on both sides of the Rio Grande soon ran out of the cream that reportedly improved the condition of wrinkled, sallow, rough, and blemished skin. The demand still far exceeds the supply" (ibid).

Wrinkles are a normal part of the aging process, begun back in the Garden of Eden when the curse of death was placed upon men because of sin. But many people don't want to grow old or, at least, look old.

In 1987, University of Michigan scientists made only a 16-week study involving just 30 persons, yet came up with evidently a sound and impressive skin improvement.

The January 22, 1988, issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* ran an editorial stating, "Although most physicians have long ignored the cosmetic concerns of their patients, it is increasingly apparent that appearance contributes to society's evaluation of an older person's competence and to that individual's sense of self-worth and well-being, with direct repercussions on health-care needs. Thus, the prospect of an even modestly effective anti-aging product for the skin may have direct medical benefit beyond its effect on premalignant lesions."

Retin-A, since the late '60s, has been known as a product to treat acne. It did such a good job on young faces that Dr. Albert Kligman, dermatologist at the University of Pennsylvania, tested it on older people with very good results.

Accutane, a cousin of Retin-A, is used to treat severe cystic acne that does not respond to other treatments. It is antibiotic, anti-inflammatory, anti-secretory, controls psoriasis, and even cures some skin cancers.

So it appears that these new discoveries in Vitamin A derivatives will be a blessing to many of our second "heaven and earth" dispensation. And we are glad for that—glad for all things that help alleviate the sufferings of mortality.

Real Anti-Aging Relief

When Jesus returns he will do more for his people than remove wrinkles. He will give them eternal life without pain, sorrow, suffering, and the threat of death. Then "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," (Isa. 33:24), and "there shall be no more death" (Rev. 21:4). These are precious promises to the faithful and we all look forward to the day when our dead and living Christian loved ones will rise or be changed to enjoy perfect health and life again.

Remember what Malachi said? "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (4:2). That Sun of righteousness is Jesus Christ, Son of God; and the healing spoken of will restore believers to a sound, healthy condition, and cure them forever from sin and its effects.

For Jesus is also called "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jer. 23:6). Is he *your* righteousness?

FOSSIL FUELS ARE DWINDLING

By Pastor James Mattison

This was the title of an article in the March 24, 1988, *Valley Morning Star*, Harlingen, Texas. It stated, "New, reduced estimates of undiscovered oil and natural gas reserves are a reminder that the world is running out of fossil fuels."

Reevaluation of the estimates of undiscovered oil and natural gas reserves by the U. S. Geological Survey come up with 40% smaller figures than estimates made in 1981.

This is due to several factors: 1) some of the "undiscovered" gas and oil in 1981 has been discovered, 2) some of the areas that showed great promise—such as parts of Utah, Wyoming, Nevada, and the North Slope of Alaska—have turned out to have less gas and oil than expected, and 3) other areas of the country were excluded because of the difficulty and cost that would be involved in extracting the fuels.

Richard F. Mast, of the U. S. Geological Survey, said, "We've found and produced a large part of our undiscovered oil and gas resources. We've been at it more than 100 years."

Predictions now are that the undiscovered oil is equivalent to an 11-year supply, and the undiscovered gas is equivalent to about a 14-year supply.

That's not much of a cushion for a nation that is dependent upon fuels. The article continues: "The lowered estimates of yet-to-be discovered oil and gas deposits dramatize the need to conserve—and to focus on safe reliable alternatives whether they be nuclear, geothermal, or solar."

We don't have figures of oil and gas reserves in other parts of the world, but we would suspect their outlook is nearly the same as the U. S. Think of the enormous amounts of fossil fuels being used each day in the world. It is no wonder that we are fast using up these great blessings God has given us.

It is true that we do need to be good stewards of all our blessings now. Remember Jesus gathered up 12 baskets of uneaten food when he fed 5,000 men (John 6:12, 13). Nor should we waste the bounty God has given us.

Kingdom Power Needs

God's power will take care of all needs throughout the ages of eternity in God's kingdom. All life on earth then will be completely God-oriented.

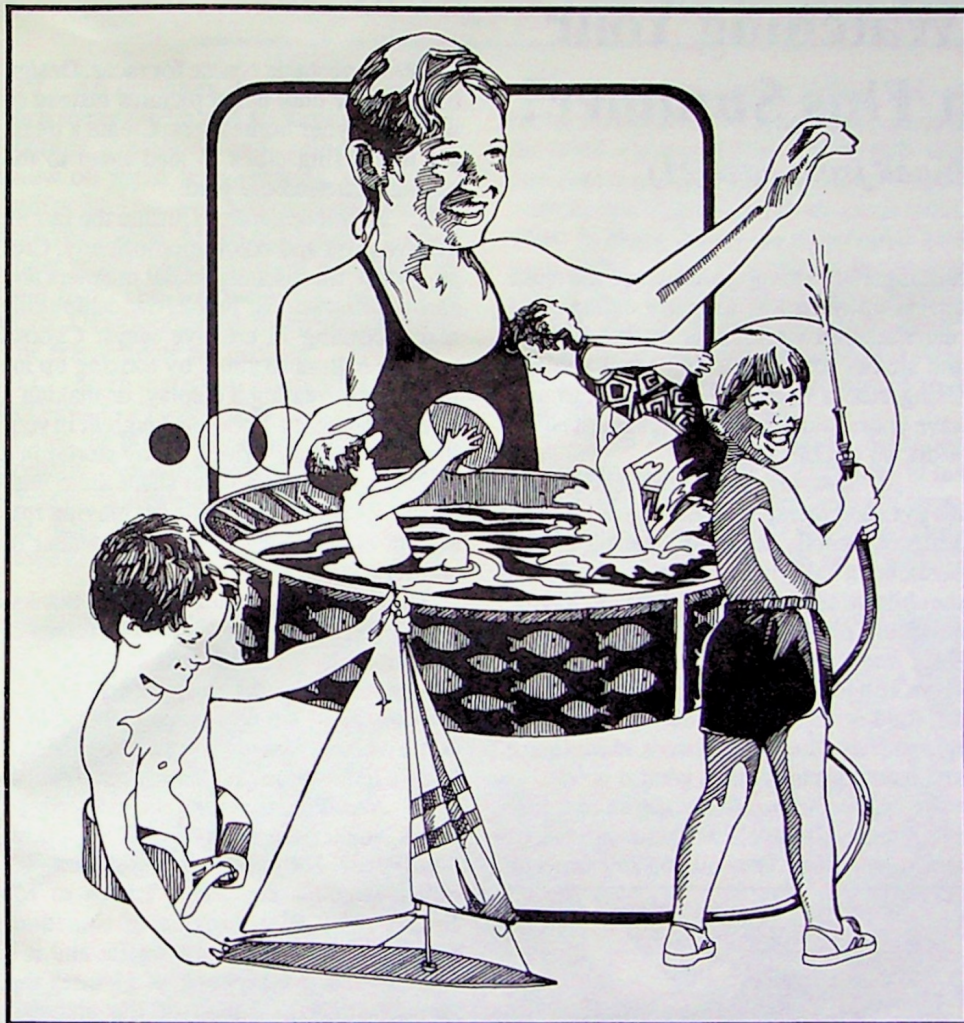
When every man sits "under his vine and under his fig tree" (Micah 4:4), and "the plowman shall overtake the reaper" (Amos 9:13), and the righteous "shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isa. 65:22), God will have solved all fuel and transportation problems for us and we will forever praise his holy name!

Of certain ones with white robes in Revelation 7 it is promised, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (vv. 16, 17).

It is certain that we do not have to worry about the future if we are allowing Christ to live in us now. All praise be to God on high, and to Jesus Christ his Son, our REDEEMER!



WHO'S WATCHING YOUR CHILDREN



THIS SUMMER?

"Summer"—that six-letter word dreaded by parents universally. The word initially conjures up visions of happy family vacations, days spent at the lake, bike rides, and picnics in the park.

Those ideals may become reality for a few of the 90-odd days of school-free schedules. But what about those other 70 days of summer, especially when August rolls around and the novelty of sleeping late, playing ball, and watching cartoons wears off? What happens when the uttered comment in your home becomes, "Mom, I'm bored. I don't have anything to do." (This oft-repeated comment can be particularly irritating when you know that your closets are bulging with expensive toys.)

One problem with making adjustments

from school to nonschool activities is the extremes that they require. For nine months of the year, children are involved in the schedule of school during the day, and lessons or activities on many of the evenings. They have routines and regular stimulation. Then suddenly, for three months schedules are either nonexistent or disrupted and stimulation is minimal. Perhaps what we need to do is modify both extremes a little.

One of our goals as parents is to see summer as an opportunity for us to enrich the experience and cultivate the environment of our children. In essence, we can

take over the role of "teacher" for our children. "I just don't have time," you probably will say, "I have work and laundry. . . ."

"But," I would respond, "many things only take a few minutes and much of it is just becoming aware of the hundred little opportunities that occur when you are with your children." "Secondly," you might reply, "I am not a teacher." "But we are all already teachers," I would respond. "Every experience your child has with you is a teacher-learner interaction. Webster defines experience as something personally undergone or lived through. Even being in the same room with you—observing your actions and speech—is a learning experience for your child." "Thirdly," you might argue, "summer is for free time and fun, not for teaching and learning." "You are right," I would agree, "but for a child it is difficult to separate fun and learning. A child learns through his play and experiences. Why not make the learning more fun and the fun more enriching?"

Solomon once said that there is nothing new under the sun, and I certainly have nothing original to offer as shared activities and experiences with your children. However, I have tapped into the almost limitless resources available on the market today to give you a few ideas to encourage interaction between you and your child.

1. *Encourage creative play.*

a. Toys should be purchased by asking, "What can the child do with the toy?" rather than "What can the toy do?" Blocks, building toys, cars, dolls, puppets, hats, kitchen equipment, etc., are good imagination-building toys.

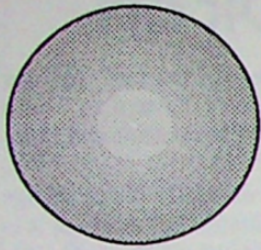
b. *Pretend time.* Use a big cardboard box for a hideout, cans from the kitchen to make a grocery store, blankets to make a tent; these are great for pretending.

c. *Workbench.* Have scraps of wood, hammer, nails, glue, tempera paints, etc., so children can make their own creation.

d. *Water play.* Either inside or out, use different objects that will float or sink, suds and food coloring to mix and create new colors.

(Please turn to page 22.)

By Michele Millard



Who's Watching Your Children This Summer?

(Continued from page 21)

e. *Sand play.* Fill a baby's old bathtub with sand in the basement and use spoons, baking pans, small cars, etc., to make it a fun time.

f. *Dress-up clothes.* Have a special box filled with old purses, shirts, dresses, scarves, jewelry, ties, hats, belts, empty compacts, lipstick, empty razor, eyeglass frames, old watches, etc.

2. *Help spark imagination.* Make your own back-yard miniature golf course from the garage. Trace your family tree and imagine living with different family members in the past or future. Play the "What If" game. (What if all the phones in the world were out of order?) Ask your children to name three things they love about their lives and three things they would change if they could. Make a family banner with each one's interests and talents. Act out your own TV show. Reverse family roles where you pretend to be the children and they pretend to be the parent.

3. *Sharpen the senses.* All learning occurs through the senses. If we use all five, our awareness of the world will increase.

a. *Smell and taste.* Have your blindfolded child identify different substances through taste and smell (salt, sugar, vinegar, cinnamon, coffee, pepper, etc.). Have them group tastes and smells together, like sweet, sour, bitter, etc.

b. *Touch.* Arrange items that children are familiar with (cotton, buttons, sandpaper, sponge, etc.) on a cardboard and have your blindfolded child identify them by touch. Cut geometric shapes and have your blindfolded child identify and sort the shapes. Hand your child jars of different temperatures of water and have him identify the temperature. Have your child hold different weights and identify heavy vs. light

c. *Sight.* Find shapes in pictures (all the round objects, etc.). Identify what might be missing in two nearly identical pictures. Use magazine pictures and cut off a functional part, asking the child what is

missing. Play a bingo game where the child covers up letters as they are called. Use manufactured worksheets to find objects and shapes that are different and similar. Using blocks or pegs, make a design and have your child reproduce the same design. Work on puzzles together.

d. *Hearing.* Have your child close his eyes and identify sounds like airplanes, animals, pencils dropping, tearing paper, bouncing a ball, jingling money, etc. Have the child close his eyes and clap your hands. Have the child identify how many claps there were or repeat a rhythmic pattern. Have him judge whether a sound is near or far, loud or soft, high or low. Hide a music box and have the child locate it. Hum a song and have the child guess what it is.

4. *Creative movement.* Be an automobile engine, airplane's wings, computer, or sewing machine. Pretend you're a bowl of



While eating may be high on a child's list of likes, use of imagination ranks well near the top.

jelly, an animal, a rubber band, or make yourself heavy and light. Make yourself smaller. Move in slow motion, and in fast speed. Conduct an orchestra, mime activities like cooking. Look happy, mad, or scared.

5. *Nature activities.* Encourage collections and displays of your child's "finds."

Create an obstacle course for races. Design a scavenger hunt using pictures instead of words for your nonreaders. Create a treasure hunt using clues to lead them to the treasures around the yard.

6. *Social activities.* Outline the family in newsprint and color appropriately. Create games for teaching social manners and care of possessions. Teach friendship skills and grooming in creative ways. Choose another culture to study by looking up information, creating a display, or making a book about them. Focus on laughter in your lives, perhaps by writing funny stories in a journal so your child can share them with others. Teach social skills by playing restaurant at home and you be the waiter or waitress.

7. *Spiritual activities.* Play a thanksgiving game, where each person thinks of something he is thankful for. Act out Bible stories using dolls or puppets. Play a memory game where your child memorizes Bible verses. Tell your child how he has been a blessing to you during the day.

8. *Reading activities.* Post letters on doors, make letters from pancake batter, form your body into letter shapes, eat alphabet soup, etc. Play "Listen to My Sound" (e.g., I'm thinking of something that begins like the word waffle and it is wet). Create a scrapbook of pictures that begin with each sound of the alphabet. Match pictures with word cards. Put stepping stones with the alphabet on the floor for him to travel around the room on. Teach big-word curiosity by using and explaining them. Practice reading out loud for inflection, voice control, and self-confidence. Spend time reading with him, which is the most important thing you can do to instill a love of reading.

9. *Writing activities.* Teach shapes of letters by providing different mediums—shaving-foam string, soapy backs, sand, finger paint, chalk, foggy windows, or even dusty furniture. Have your child tell you stories for you to write down. Learn a new word every day. Encourage him to retell stories in his own words. Play listening games like, "Walk to the refrigerator, turn in a circle, jump up and down and hop on one foot." Keep a journal of your child to help in feeling, thinking, and expressing. Encourage evaluations of situations.

Our last hint: limit TV, which discourages creativity and imagination.

10. *Art activities.* The goal is to experience many media and textures, and to encourage creativity and self-expression. Draw on paper with crayons, then cover with paint. Use sand, salt, or sawdust to add texture to paint. Make color rubs of a leaf under paper. Make collages using household junk. Use wet paper for painting or chalk. Use a toothbrush for spatter painting. The possibilities are endless.

11. *Math activities.* Predict the number of chews in a *Tootsie Roll*. Graduate sticks, straws, or books. Measure ingredients in cooking. Measure your child's growth. Measure things with a tape measure. Check off dates on a calendar. Play with play money.

12. *Science activities.* Collect leaves, rocks, insects, etc. Observe air movements on wind chimes, trees, etc. Watch and compare sunsets. Examine things through a microscope. Take an old alarm clock apart. Blow bubbles. Study an abandoned bird nest. Make a pine-cone/peanut-butter bird feeder and observe bird habits. Plant a garden. Record weather changes. Study clouds. Take a sleeping bag outside at night to lie down and observe the stars. Use a compass. Take your pulse.

13. *Take field trips.* Almost everyone has access to a number of resources in his community. The library holds a lot of treasures, from the many books to planned story times for the children. Go on a pretend

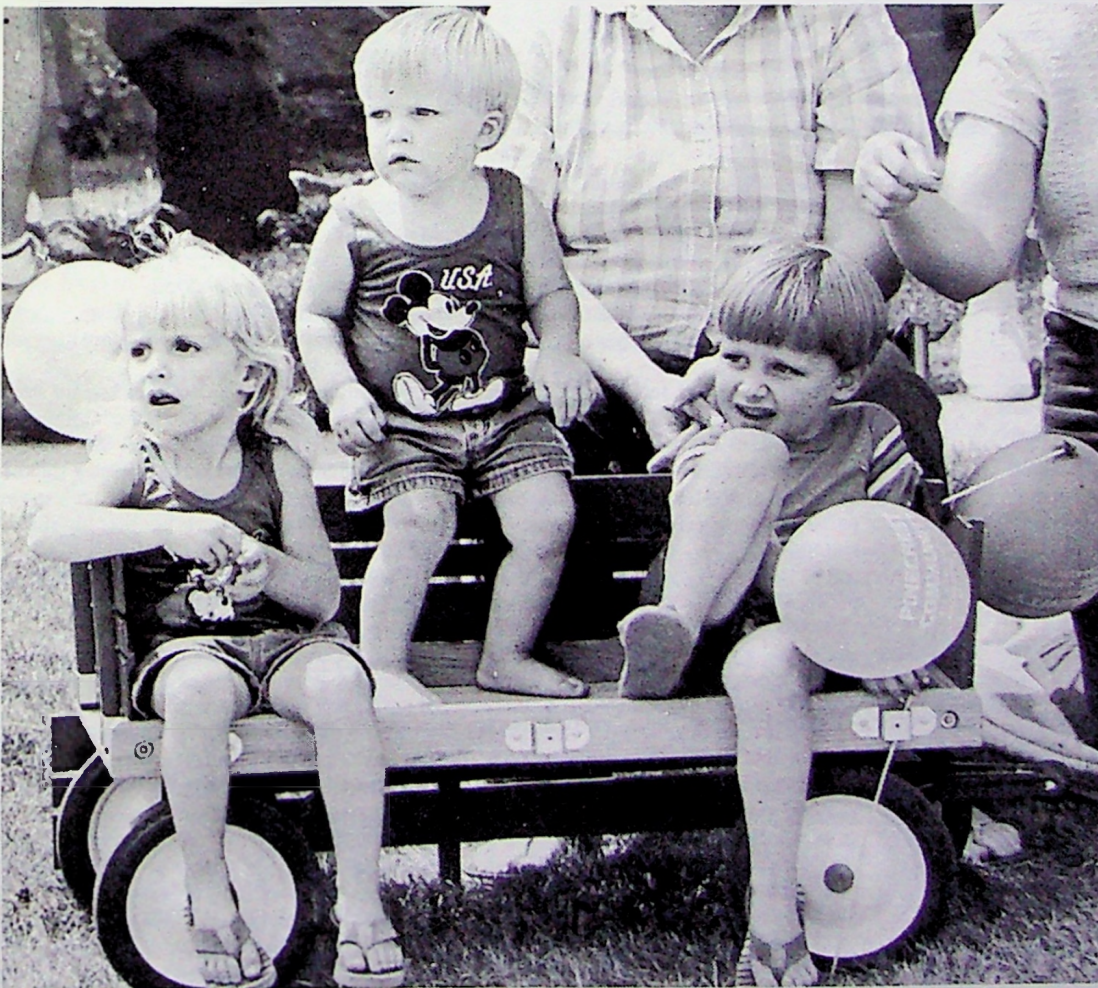
shopping trip to stores you don't usually frequent. Hunt for unusual objects at garage sales. Our community has planned nature hikes through parks, a children's museum, and children's theatre. Go for a picnic breakfast at a park. Take a camera safari to the zoo.

14. *Create a planned family time.* The smartest thing the Mormons have ever done is strengthening the family by creating a family night. It is probably one of the most difficult things, as well as the most important things, we can do. Take turns choosing activities, like skating, movies, favorite restaurant, or at-home activities, such as a flashlight hike, playing games, putting together puzzles, roasting marshmallows, everyone making part of a meal, having a talent show, etc.

I have to give credit to my sources: *A Parent's Treasure Box of Ideas for Preschoolers* by Judy Vany Rolfs, *Let's Make a Memory* by Gloria Gaither and Shirley Dobson, and *40 Ways to Teach Your Child Values* by Paul Lewis. Bookstores are filled with other valuable ideas and are at your disposal.

Our last hint: limit TV, which discourages creativity and imagination unless, of course, you have something to do like writing an article!

I know you must think I'm a perfect parent, spending all of my days enriching my children's experiences. But I'm sure my reaction after writing this is like yours after reading it—feeling guilty for not spending more time doing all these wonderful things with your children. The point of this article is not to create guilt, but to increase your awareness of what can be done at different times with your children—grabbing a few moments here and there to enrich their experiences and create closeness between the two of you.



Children love watching summer-time events with their family.

COMBINE YOUR VACATION WITH A MAGNIFICENT CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

68th Annual Church of God General Conference

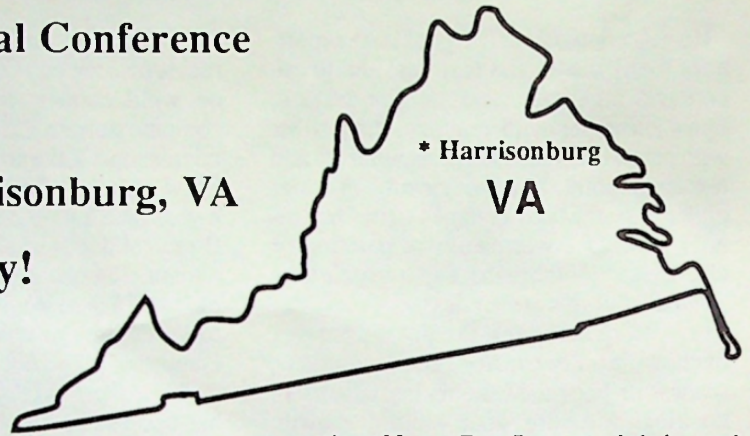
August 1-5, 1988

at

Eastern Mennonite College, Harrisonburg, VA

Theme: Disciplemaking: Today!

- Learn ways to revitalize existing churches and plant new ones
- Become a stronger disciple
- Disciplemaking in your local church
- Lots of fellowship



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington. The nation's capital city centers on the U. S. Capitol. Take a conducted tour of the Capitol, visit the White House, (ask your Congressman to arrange a VIP tour, which lasts longer and shows more of the mansion). Ride a tour-mobile operated by the National Park Service along the East and West Malls. Take a trip on the new Metro. Near the Capitol are the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court Building, and the U. S. Botanical Garden. On the Mall are Washington Monument, Smithsonian Institution, National Gallery of Art. Near the White House are the U. S. Treasury, Ford Theater where Lincoln was assassinated. The Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts are a few other places that make a visit to Washington, D. C. so rewarding.

VIRGINIA

Alexandria. In George Washington's home town are Christ Church, where he worshiped in

pew 60; Gadsby's Tavern; the Stabler-Leadbetter Apothecary; Carlyle House; and Friendship Fire Co., all of which he knew well.

Arlington. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the grave site of President John F. Kennedy and that of his brother Senator Robert Kennedy attract millions of visitors every year. The home of Robert E. Lee overlooks the park.

Ashland. King's Dominion, six miles north on I-95, is the largest theme park in the Middle Atlantic states. Exciting twin roller-coaster ride. The 800-acre park includes Lion Country Safari, with almost 100 different kinds of African animals roaming free. Take a monorail through the game park.

Charlottesville. Thomas Jefferson's genius as an architect is expressed in his Monticello home, in Ash Lawn, which he planned for President James Monroe, and the University of Virginia. Monticello also offers fascinating evidence of Jefferson's gadgeting skill.

Fredericksburg. The home of George Washington's mother, Mary Washington, Mercer's Apothecary Shop, and James Monroe's law office are among the historic buildings of the town. Washington's boyhood home Ferry Farm is east of town on State 3.

Hampton. At NASA's Langley Research Center in this oldest of all surviving English settlements in the United States, visitors may see a moon rock, the Apollo 12 spacecraft, and the spacesuit worn by Alan Shepard, first U. S. Astronaut to venture into space.

Jamestown. The site of the 1607 settlement has monuments to Captain John Smith and his beloved Pocahontas and a replica of an early-day Glass House where craftsmen create hand-blown colonial-type wares. Nearby is Jamestown Festival Park, with a re-

creation of James Fort, Powhatan's lodge, and at the dock replicas of the three sailing vessels that brought the colonists to Virginia.

Lexington. An electronic map in the George C. Marshall Research Library and Museum and a voice narration give the highlights of World War II.

Mount Vernon. George Washington's beloved mansion overlooks the Potomac River.

Newport News. Old ship figureheads, model ships, and other nautical displays are in the Mariners' Museum.

Norfolk. The tomb of General Douglas MacArthur, historic houses and museums, and Norfolk Naval Station, the world's largest naval base, are on a self-guided tour.

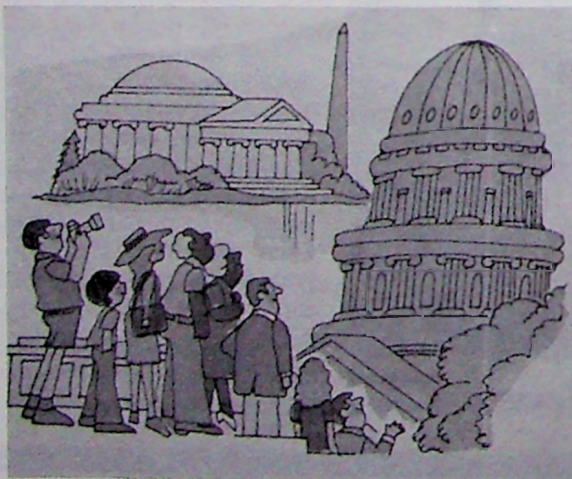
Portsmouth. The U. S. Naval Shipyard Museum and Naval History Museum keep alive the traditions of the sea.

Richmond. The Capitol planned by Jefferson, the Battle Abbey, and the Confederate Museum all fascinate visitors. So does St. John's Church where Patrick Henry gave his "Give me liberty or give me death" speech. Edgar Allen Poe's house is another highlight of the city.

Virginia Beach. Miles of boardwalk, beach-buggy tours, and musical entertainment make this a popular resort.

Williamsburg. Virginia's colonial capital has been restored as one of the great attractions of the New World. Costumed residents ply their trades of metalsmithing, printing, candlemaking, and wigmaking, in fact most of the trades of colonial life. A visit to the colonial Capitol Building and the Governor's Palace are intriguing experiences. A few miles east on U. S. 60 are Busch Gardens. The park is divided into the Old Country, a re-creation of the streets of an Elizabethan England town, Old Germany, and France's LeMans Racecourse. There is a 1,000-seat replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre, outstanding rides, and a free-roaming animal display.

Yorktown. Walk on the battlefield where Cornwallis surrendered to George Washington to bring the American Revolution to an end.





A VERY SPECIAL DAY

By Pastor Francis E. Burnett

A verse of Scripture that is often used, especially at the beginning of the day, is the one found in Psalm 118:24: "This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." True, each of us should certainly rejoice for each new day and should be glad that we are alive to see it. However, the particular verse was in reference to something much more important than each and every day—if that is possible. Please understand that I find no fault in using the verse to refer to a new day. It is the purpose of this article to set forth the day to which the psalmist was referring.

The context has to do with the *day* of Jesus Christ. The context really begins with the psalmist stating in these words. "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the LORD: this gate of the LORD, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the

LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psa. 118:19-24).

Jesus referred to this quotation in his teachings and used them to apply to himself. (See Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:10, 11; Luke 20:17.) When Peter was asked, "By what name, have ye done this?" he answered, "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth . . . by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:7-12). In writing to the brethren in Ephesus, Paul referred to Jesus Christ as "being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20). This is a definite reference to the promise given in the psalm.

In his first letter Peter wrote that

Christians should become "as newborn babes" who desire the sincere milk of the word" by which to grow. His writing continued in this way: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious" (1 Pet. 2:2-4). Peter continued by referring to the text from Psalm 118: "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner (v. 7).

Dear readers, each day is a day that our great God has made. But the day of which the psalmist was writing is the day in which God gave Jesus Christ his Son for our salvation. And oh! how much each of us should rejoice and be glad for this "day of salvation." So it is our hope that each and every time you hear someone quote: "This is the day the Lord hath made," you will be aware that it is also the day in which our salvation was fully given. Rejoice! Rejoice! Yes, rejoice!

OUTLOOK FOR TROPICAL FOREST GRIM:

Institute Trying to Halt Decimation of Jungle

By Pastor James Mattison

This was a headline in the March 26, 1988, *Valley Morning Star*, Harlingen, Texas.

Loggers and slash-and-burn peasant farmers are fast destroying millions of acres of tropical jungles each year, the article says. "The outlook is pretty grim," said biologist Peter H. Raven, director of the Missouri Botanical Garden. "Although tropical forests once covered at least 12 percent of the globe—an area twice the size of Europe—they have already been reduced to about half that.

Raven says, "Currently the forests are being cleared or degraded at the rate of about 60 million acres a year. That's an area about half the size of California."

About half the known plant and animal species on earth are found in the tropical forests. They also supply man with food crops, medicines, and other useful products. Perhaps their greatest importance is producing oxygen for this planet by photosynthesis. "Enough oxygen is elaborated by 180 square inches of green-leaf surface during an average summer to supply the average oxygen

requirements of a human being for an entire year" (Funk and Wagnalls Encyclopedia).

So far we are still able to breathe, and probably (possibly) trees will produce oxygen as long as this age lasts. We do remember that God, in his last-day wrath, will cause one-third of the trees to be burned up (Rev. 8:7). Certainly oxygen was in the breath of life the Creator gave us at the beginning.

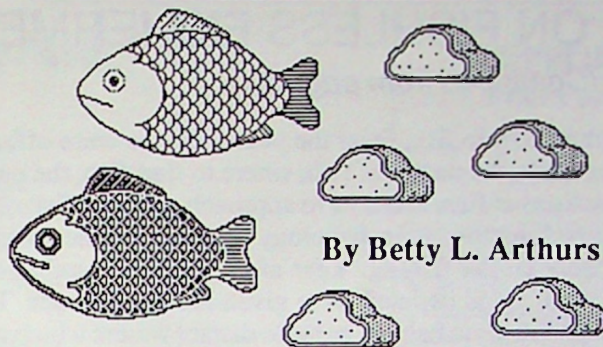
Did you know that over half the people in the world live in countries that are at least partly tropical, excluding China?

As fossil fuel supplies dwindle and the tropical forests are decimated, mankind continues to use up the resources God has given. We wonder if it won't be necessary, if only to preserve mortal mankind, for Christ to come.

Things will be restored then (Acts 3:21). Jesus has said that last-day tribulation will be so bad that, unless it is shortened, no flesh will survive (Matt. 24:22). Could conditions in many areas be included in that tribulation?



A TODAY MIRACLE



By Betty L. Arthurs

"Teacher, oh Teacher," Matt waved his arm. "How could five loaves and two small fish feed all those people?"

Mrs. Chambers, the Sunday School teacher, had just told her class of nine- and ten-year-olds a Bible story. She knew Matt always had many questions.

"When Jesus took the food and gave thanks, the Bible says over five thousand people were fed and extra food was left."

"Yeah, a massive picnic," Danny, Matt's best friend blurted. "And their leftover fish smelled bad!"

It took five minutes for Mrs. Chambers to quiet her giggling class.

Matt had heard the story so many times . . . was it for real? "I just wanna know, can that kind of miracle happen today?"

The teacher pointed to Matt's Bible. "Find John, chapter six, and read it over. Talk to your parents; maybe they have some better answers than I do. We're out of time today, class; see you next Sunday."

At school the next day, Matt found Danny and Melissa in the noisy cafeteria waiting to buy milk for lunch.

"You two were in Sunday School." Matt hadn't been able to forget the story. "I've been thinking," he held up his sack lunch. "Let's pray over our lunches; maybe God will multiply our sandwiches."

Melissa snickered. "Couldn't we try the cupcakes? My tuna fish sandwich is yucky."

"Oh be serious," Matt

scolded. "Do you think God wants to multiply junk food?"

They grabbed the milk and elbowed their way to a table.

Danny shook his chocolate milk. "Matt, I remember the time we heard the story of Jesus turning water into wine at the wedding. You put a glass of water by your bed one night and asked God to change it into Pepsi by morning."

"What happened?" Melissa opened her lunch and pulled out a carrot stick.

"Absolutely nothin'," Danny glared at his friend. "Matt, you almost had me believin' it would happen." He took a big bite of his peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

"It's not going to happen today or ever. My mom says God doesn't do everything we ask or give us all we want." Melissa peeled the bread off the top of her sandwich. "Anyone got pickles? Maybe that would help this fishy mess."

"Yeah, but my dad says a lot of things don't happen 'cause we don't believe hard enough." Matt threw his sack lunch onto the table.

"Ah, come on; don't get mad, Matt." Danny shoved the lunch back. Besides, if you open your lunch and two slimy fish flop out, I'll die laughing! You don't want me to die, do you?"

Melissa choked on her milk and shrieked in laughter!

"You just wait, Danny. Someday you're gonna forget your lunch and be happy to pray for God to increase mine!"

Danny yelled at Matt. "It's no big deal! Everyone's got a McDonald's down the street.

We don't need miracles like that anymore!"

Matt shut up and slowly ate his lunch while Danny and Melissa whispered. Matt wondered if they were right. "I've got to talk to Dad or Mom," he decided.

After school Matt jumped on his skateboard and headed home. His mom was busy in the kitchen.

"Hey Mom, what's for dinner?"

"Your favorite—spaghetti." Mom told him that his dad had gone to Grandma Parsons. It seemed there was some family stranded at her house with car trouble and no money, so dad had gone to see if he could help.

"Mom, do miracles happen today?" Matt told her about Sunday School and Danny and Melissa.

"Miracles absolutely do happen every day, but sometimes not in the way we think they will. Oh, there's the baby." Baby Jeffrey started to howl from his crib.

"Can you get him for me? He's teething again and with your sister Janey home with a cold, I haven't had much time to do anything."

Matt's plans for playing ball at Clark Park evaporated. He really didn't want to see Danny anyway.

Around six o'clock Matt's mom called, "Come on, Matt. Get Jeffrey and Janey, we'll go ahead and eat. Dad is really late."

Just then Matt heard their van pull into the driveway. "Dad's home, Mom." Matt looked out the kitchen window.

"Uh, oh, Mom. There are all

kinds of people piling out of the van . . . must be 50 people coming for supper. What'll we do?"

Mom reached for more plates. "Here, squeeze on as many as we need around the table."

The surprise guests for dinner were a mom and dad, a Mr. and Mrs. Norris, a Grandma Whiting, and four children. Dad took everyone into the living room while Matt and his mom worked in the kitchen.

"How on earth are we gonna feed all these people?" Matt whispered as he buckled wiggling Jeffrey into the high-chair. Then he saw that his mom looked like she was ready to cry.

"It's okay, Mom. We'll pray and God will multiply our food. I know he will!" Hugging his mom he prayed. "Lord, we need a miracle. We have this scrawny bread, a little bit of noodles and sauce, and some salad. In Jesus' name we pray you'll make enough food for all of us, and stretch the brownies, too. Amen!"

"Matthew James, you're just too crazy!" His mom wiped her eyes and started putting food on the table.

Matt watched the bowl of spaghetti stop at each person. When it came to him there was still some pasta left! Two meatballs were left after everyone had sauce and meatballs. Matt almost yelled and ran around the table. Even though the four kids ate a lot there was plenty of tossed salad and the garlic bread basket went around the table twice!

"God, you did it! We're all eating and we're all full!" Matt was so excited he almost forgot to eat.

"Matthew, do you feel all right?" His dad was watching him.

"Oh, I'm great, Dad. Please pass me another brownie, will ya?"

"Just wait 'til Melissa and Danny hear about this," Matt thought. "I've lived a today miracle!"

A PARABLE ON FISHLESS FISHERMEN

(Continued from page 14)



fishermen how to fish. Over the years courses were offered on the needs of fish, the nature of fish, where to find fish, the psychological reactions of fish, and how to approach and feed fish. Those who taught had doctorates in fishology. But the teachers did not fish. They only taught fishing. Year after year, after tedious training, many were graduated and were given fishing licenses. They were sent to do full-time fishing, some to distant waters which were filled with fish.

Some spent much study and travel to learn the history of fishing and to see far-away places where the founding fathers did great fishing in the centuries past. They lauded the faithful fishermen of years before who handed down the idea of fishing.

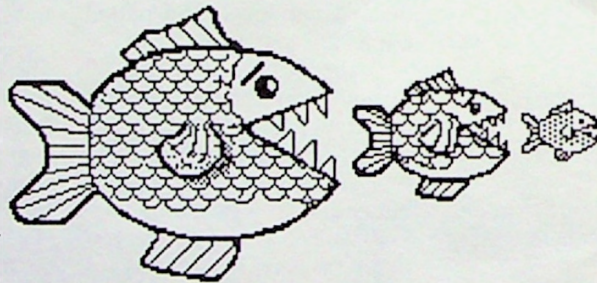
Further, the fishermen built printing houses to publish fishing guides. Presses were kept busy day and night to produce materials solely devoted to fishing methods, equipment, and programs to arrange and to encourage meetings to talk about fishing. A speakers' bureau was also provided to schedule special speakers on the subject of fishing.

Many who felt the call to be fishermen responded. They were commissioned and sent to fish. But like the fishermen back home they never fished. Like the fishermen back home they engaged in all kinds of other occupations. They built power plants to pump water for fish and tractors to plow new waterways. They made all kinds of equipment to travel here and there to look at fish hatcheries. Some also said that they wanted to be part of the fishing party, but they felt called to furnish fishing equipment. Others felt their job was to relate to the fish in a good way so the fish would know the difference between good and bad fishermen. Others felt that simply letting the fish know they were nice, land-loving neighbors, and how loving and kind they were, was enough.

After one stirring meeting on "The Necessity for Fishing," one young fellow left the meeting and went fishing. The next day he reported he had caught two outstanding fish. He was honored for his excellent catch and scheduled to visit all the big meetings possible to tell how he did it. So he quit his fishing in order to have time to tell about the experience to the other fishermen. He was also placed on the fishermen's General Board as a person having considerable experience.

Now it's true that many of the fishermen sacrificed and put up with all kinds of difficulties. Some lived near the water and bore the smell of dead fish every day. They received the ridicule of some who made fun of their fishermen's clubs and the fact that they claimed to be fishermen yet never fished. They wondered about those who felt it was of little use to attend the weekly meetings to talk about fishing. After all, were they not following the Master who said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"?

Imagine how hurt some were when one day a person suggested that those who don't catch fish were really not fishermen, no matter how much they claimed to be. Yet it did sound correct. Is a person a fisherman if year after year he never catches a fish? Is one following if he isn't fishing?



Special New Member at Litchfield Church of God

At steadily-growing Litchfield Church of God, Litchfield, MN, Pastor S. O. Ross made nursing



home visits to 86-year-old Clayton Wood, a stroke patient unable to speak and confined to a wheelchair. During one chat Clayton kept "trying to tell me something, but nothing would come out," Ross remembers.

Then Clayton pointed to the New Testament in Ross's coat pocket. Taking the hint, Ross asked if he wanted to accept Christ and be baptized.

"With tears flowing, Clayton shook his head up and down," Ross said.

Aided by the church elders, Clayton was baptized March 20, wheelchair and all, in a very emotional and blessed service.

Certainly the angels of heaven found a special joy that day.

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- ... What Does Abrahamic Faith Mean?
- ... What Happens After Death?
- ... What is Man?
- ... What is the Soul?
- ... Who Owns the Wool?

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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

NOTES from around the WORLD

SOVIETS GRANT PERMIT FOR SHIPMENT OF 100,000 UKRAINIAN BIBLES

SANTA ANA, California (ODNS)—Russian Orthodox Church official Metropolitan Filaret of Minsk and Byelorussia, has notified the United Bible Societies (UBS) in Stuttgart, West Germany, that permission has been granted for the importation of 100,000 Ukrainian language Bibles in 1988. UBS official Dorothea Kindt said production will begin immediately with an actual shipment set for the latter half of the year. According to statistics issued by the Ukrainian Family Bible Association, there is currently "only one Bible for [every] 30,000 Ukrainian people in the USSR."

PRESSURES ON MALAYSIAN CHURCH MEMBERS CONTINUE, SEVERAL DETAINED FOR ADDITIONAL TWO YEARS

SANTA ANA, California (ODNS)—Increasing pressure is being placed on Malaysian Christians for conducting evangelization activities in the Islamic-dominated country. As part of the Malaysian government's Internal Security Act in which more than 100 people were arrested last October, several church members are now being held for an additional two years for their alleged association with Muslim evangelization. Other signs of increased pressure on the evangelical community include reports that telephone lines belonging to churches

and Christian organizations are monitored, and speakers to Varsity Christian Fellowship events on the campus of the University of Malaysia must secure police permits.

OBSERVERS CONFIRM BIBLE DISTRIBUTION IN USSR

SANTA ANA, California (ODNS)—An independent observer inside the Soviet Union has confirmed that a shipment of 35,000 Bibles designated for Baptist congregations in that country have arrived and are being distributed. According to the Slavic Gospel Association, the Bibles are being distributed to "members of their congregations" and "either given free of charge or sold for nominal prices" to defray transportation expenses.

OVER 100 CONGRESSMEN ASK SOVIETS FOR RELEASE OF PSYCHIATRIC PRISONERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (ODNS)—Over one hundred U.S. Congressmen have appealed to Soviet authorities for the release of seven Lithuanians currently detained in psychiatric hospitals. The February 19 letter to Dr. Aleksandr Churkin, head of the Psychiatric Section of the USSR Ministry of Health, asks for information about the fate of those named, some of whom were forcibly committed in the 1960s. Among those being held is Vilius Dogilis, who was imprisoned after he publicly described overcoming drug

addiction following his conversion to Pentecostalism.

FORMER PRISONER SAYS WEST EXAGGERATED EFFECTS OF GLASNOST

SANTA ANA, California (ODNS)—While conditions in the Soviet Union have improved under *glasnost*, a former Latvian Baptist prisoner has stated that the West has exaggerated its effects and is unaware of the contradictory nature of the new policy. Speaking at a London press conference, Janis Rozkalns said the Soviet people were encouraged to express themselves freely but often risked KGB surveillance or expulsion to the West if they did so.

NEW-AGE VIDEOS STRESS "LOVE EVERYBODY" THEME

OREGON, Illinois (RH)—Billed as the most famous positive-attitude advocate since Dr. Norman Vincent Peale is Dr. Leo Buscaglia, a best-selling author who is a

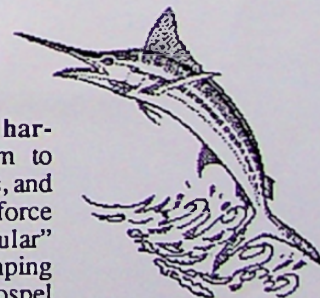
professor of education at the University of Southern California. His video, *The Politics of Love*, consists of a lecture given to an audience of 10,000 in Chicago. For nearly an hour Buscaglia imparts good humor and a genuine warmth by which he exhorts his viewers to become "militant lovers"—that is, have unconditional love for one's brethren.

Buscaglia's video is just one of dozens under the New Age label. The tapes urge audiences through soothing music and hair-raising trances to express a self-love which encompasses all. Advice ranges from medically sound to metaphysical crystal-gazing. Moods range from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The catch: millions of North Americans in search for something more than routine entertainment find themselves swept up by New Age themes. The same millions are inexplicably forsaking gospel moorings in pursuit of a perceived unfulfilled void.

Expert Advice for Catching Fish

(Continued from page 14)



Look for appropriate harvest vehicles. Take him to seminars, movies, dinners, and other events which reinforce your lifestyle. Even "secular" activities as fishing or camping trips can be contexts for gospel sharing. An occasional special at your church might help here.


Sow the seeds. Look for opportunities to plant little seeds of the gospel here and there. What can you say? Use the outline of the tract *Six Steps to a New Life for You* as a starter; order it from us. But remember, rarely is it fruitful to dump the gospel on him all at once. Your friend needs time to think and meditate on the message of

Christ in order to make an honest decision and commitment.

These bits of advice help establish redemptive relationships with a new lost friend. The bottom line is that it takes time, effort, and availability. It may be hard at times, but it will be fun and fulfilling. And it should definitely be genuine and sincere.

—Russ Magaw.

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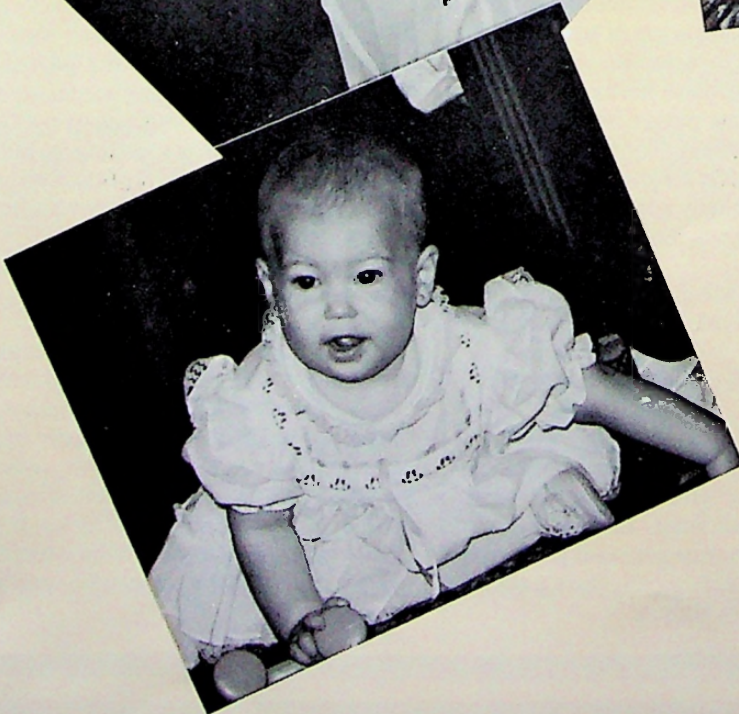
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August/September/1988

THE
**RESTITUTION
HERALD**

Maturing with Jesus



How to Beat the Rat Race

Page 4

**Is There a Communication
Problem in Your Marriage?**

Page 16

Who Says I Should Exercise?

Page 18

Is Sincerity Enough?

Page 26

Test Your Spirituality

Page 27



With the dog days of August fading into the school days of September, it's confession time for your editor.

Something's happened to me recently.

During a visit with friends, I interrupted my wife twice to finish a story for her. Two weeks ago I supplied the punch line for a colleague who was telling a joke. Just this week I injected a totally different story into the discussion we were having during break while my good friend, Gordon Landry, was in the middle of making a point.

Why did I do those things? Why must I insert my story/punch line—too anxious to wait for a friend?

My wife had similar questions when I interrupted her. I had no plausible answer.

Then during devotions the other night I ran across the following paragraph:

"Cardiologists have discovered that individuals who are impatient, who walk and eat quickly, interrupt others [underline mine], and complain constantly, are more likely to suffer heart problems than other individuals. These caustic complainers are called 'Type A' personalities."

Whoa, there. Too many things on that list belonged to me. I knew I had heart problems, but I didn't think such characteristics might cause the real thing.

I looked at the author of the paragraph; a certain Harold Paul Adolph, M.D. He practiced medicine for over 30 years and recently retired as a general surgeon at Central DuPage Hospital in Winfield, IL.

Well, so much for his credentials, but what does an M.D. know about psychological/sociological things?

Then I read the next paragraph where he backed up his opinions with reference to research:

"A study done by psychiatrists at Duke University Medical Center reveals that the cynical, complaining heart may be an un-

healthy one. Duke researcher Redford Williams believes that some components of Type A behavior are physically more damaging than others. In conjunction with psychologist Paul Costa of the National Institute on Aging, Williams believes that he has isolated one such damaging component: cynicism."

Wait a minute! The good doctor has gone to meddling! I know a lot of good cynics—perhaps myself included. What he has indicated is like pronouncing a death sentence on us all! Infuriated and scared (like a good cynic), I read on, hoping to somehow discount his claim.

The next two paragraphs clinched it:

"Williams administered a section of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) that measures the hostility and cynicism of more than 1500 patients being examined for arteriosclerotic symptoms. Those with high levels of cynical, complaining behavior were 50 percent more likely to have clogged arteries than those who scored low. Since the MMPI has been used extensively since the 1950's, researchers were able to consult earlier test results and confirm Williams' finding. One study of 255 physicians who took the test 25 years earlier showed that those with high 'cynicism' scores had five times the level of heart disease than those who scored below the median.

"Further laboratory experiments have shown that Type A personalities also produce more of certain types of hormones in certain situations than do less discontented individuals. Since these hormones are believed to accelerate plaque buildup on artery walls—'hardening' of the arteries—those people who find a great deal to complain about in life may not find themselves experiencing it much longer."

That did it.

Right there I asked God's forgiveness for my attitude. I ask you to forgive me as well.

Only time will tell about the arteries.

Just Say NO!

The Nancy Reagan-inspired war on drugs—complete with its slogan—has been effective in rural and small-town America. Kids can turn on to the jingle, the beat, the message. After all, there's something to live for in Utopia.

Then there's the inner-city; hard-core types; street-wise smarts—the works. For too long drugs have been a way of life there. "Just Say NO!" doesn't make it. By saying YES! even preteens can make tens of thousands of dollars. No one in his right mind dare say NO! Without drug-dealing there's no future.

What to do?

Any day now Congress will approve a drug-control package. Reagan will go along even though it won't be as tough as he wants.

Money will be earmarked for education and prevention. Poor kids in big cities get sports programs to help them say NO!

State- and city-run drug treatment programs get a big boost so addicts who want help will not be discouraged by the present overcrowding in clinics.

In the workplace where government contracts are involved, detection and treatment programs with discipline will be instituted. Transportation workers will undergo random drug testing.

The military will be used to combat drugs, especially the Coast Guard and Navy. Customs Service will hoist radar balloons on the Mexican border to spot traffickers. Drug smuggling will get stronger attention; attempts will be made to destroy crops in South American countries to discourage distribution to our shores.

There has been some headway in the war. Marijuana use in high schools is down. Drugs on campus are not as popular. The scene is shifting underground.

Gradually companies are routinely testing job applicants for drug use; they are helping those already on the payroll to break the habit.

But the problem doesn't go away. Government at all levels is spending \$6 billion a year in the fight, but the profits are so huge that others move in on territory vacated by those arrested.

There's no easy solution. It will take years and years to succeed against such a strong evil.

For Christians, obedience is the crux of the matter. When Paul condemned human nature's many wrongs, listing "witchcraft" among them, which etymologically implicates drug misuse, he added: "those who do these things will not possess the Kingdom of God" (Gal. 5:21, GNB). Will we choose to obey what God inspired to be written, or will we disobey to our own ruin—now and for all time?

Church-Growth Facts

Noted church-growth researcher Flavil Yeakley recently reported these findings about church growth. These observations are based on member interviews and samples from diagnostic studies of some 300 churches, including some that were growing and some declining.

Generally speaking, *growing* churches reflect a balanced program which includes a strong emphasis on good adult Bible study classes, along with strong programs for children and youth. Churches in *decline* spend more money, time, and resources on their non-adult programs than they do on adults.

In *growing* churches, he observed smaller class sizes and small groups in adult classes. In *declining* churches he found that the trend was toward larger, lecture-oriented classes.

In the area of curriculum studies, Flavil noted a real emphasis on serious "meaty" Bible study in *growing* churches. In *declining* churches the emphasis was on rehearsing doctrine.

Seen in the A.L.C.M. (Association of Leaders in Christian Ministry) Newsletter, ACU Station, Abilene, Texas.

LETTERS

I am not happy with THE RESTITUTION HERALD at present, but perhaps it will get better? It seems that people do not want to think or study any more. It is not the art work or the testimonials that make our HERALD different than other church magazines, but the message. *And* the news of sister churches.

Well, I hope that it will get better. I think that the COGS (singles) is a much needed feature, and very good. It fills a great need.

—Greenbrier, AR.

Response to letter #1 in June/July/88 Issue

The author of the letter said, "When we refuse to be challenged, we stop growing. When we stop growing, God stops using us."

Does this author want to be challenged and used? Earlier in his letter he says he didn't bother to read the articles on disciple-making and pastoral leadership. There is no greater challenge in the world than being obedient to Jesus' commission to "make disciples."

Being called to pastoral ministry is a high calling and a tremendous challenge. Where will the Church of God be in a few years if we don't have effective pastoral leadership?

I hope the author will go back to the Feb/Mar/88 issue and read the articles he skipped. Maybe there is some "doctrine/new research information" that will excite and help the reader. We need balance in the Church of God between learning and doing.

—Oregon, IL.

Restitution THE 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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CREDITS: Photos by Russ Magaw.

Summer's

GONE!



School's ON!

THOSE LAZY, HAZY, CRAZY DAYS of summer are now over and it's back to the old routines. After a summer of riding bikes, sleeping late, and fun vacations, children and parents are thrust back into the rigors of the structured days. The rat race has begun and you begin to wonder who is winning the race.

Gone are those simple "good old days" where the kids come home from school and are welcomed by the smell of freshly baked chocolate chip cookies and milk for a snack, a couple hours of free play with friends, a leisurely dinner with Mom and Dad, followed by homework, TV, and an early bedtime. Those days of Ward and June Cleaver, "Father Knows Best," and Ozzie and Harriet have joined history along with bobby socks and Bobby Vinton. They are remembered fondly and occasionally find their way into contemporary life, but that type of lifestyle is a rare bird indeed.

Instead, many families experience days like this: Mom and Dad rise at dawn to prepare breakfast, lunches, children for school, themselves for work, and at the same time squeeze in a load of laundry. Children rush off to school; after school come football practice, music lessons, dance lessons, Girl/Boy Scouts, etc.

How to get Your

The family occasionally meets for dinner to remember what each other looks like and then everyone is off again to a round of meetings, social gatherings, sporting events, etc. Life is a whirl, a merry-go-round which never seems to stop. Activity levels are high, but interaction and communication levels are low. Statistics show that married couples spend a total of four minutes a day talking, and that fathers spend 30 seconds per day in communication with their children.

So we feel guilty for time wasted and lost and for not being Ward and June Cleaver. I heard of one mother who stuck store-bought chocolate chip cookies in the microwave to warm so the children would smell "fresh-baked" cookies. Now that is a creative woman!

Then we go to church and hear more things we should be doing—like spending more time at church, witnessing, having daily devotionals, and on and on. We know in our hearts that God comes first, but our heads are asking "Where do we fit God into this whirl of activity? What part does he have in our lives?" The little voice in your head is probably saying, "I know it's important to be religious, but my days are absolutely filled with unavoidable activities. I can barely keep the laundry done, help the children with homework, run errands, make dinner, and support the PTA. I don't even take time for myself. Don't ask me to add one more thing to my day." We know it's important, but we just don't see a way to do it, and in turn we end up feeling guilty and frustrated.

There is no magic solution to this universal problem. I cannot simplify your life, but perhaps a few of these suggestions will help you gain a foothold in your struggle to find time to squeeze God into your life, and consequently into the lives of your children.

1. Integrate the sacred with the secular.

One of the most important things a Christian can do is to realize there is little or no difference in his religious activities and his "regular" life. Religious activity does not start when you go to church or end when you leave; nor does it start when you open your Bible and stop when you close it. Religious activity should be everything you do. In other words, your life should be "God-centered." He should be a part of every move you make. For parents, it is realizing that God is part of your early morning bustle, that he is with you at work, as you struggle with your child's home-

Family Ready for Fall . . .

work, and in the middle of your PTA meeting. It is also instilling in your child that all of his/her activities are God-centered—from the math, to recess, to dance lessons. Religious activity is a simple, yet complex process of readjusting your thinking. Instead of mentally compartmentalizing God in a little corner of your life, you allow him to pervade your entire world. This activity consists of realizing that everything you say and do reflects God in this world. It is becoming aware



How will your family's life be different with Jesus present?

that you are a temple in which God resides. It is accepting the responsibility that the world is exposed to God through your attitudes and actions. When this concept is realized and integrated into your life, it will naturally be passed on to your children. They will begin to see that everything they do is "spiritual."

2. Gain control of your life.

One of the main causes of stress in life is the feeling that you are out of control. Many times we feel like our schedules and the demands that are placed on us from all sides are controlling us. We feel like marionettes, with many other people pulling the strings to watch us dance. We need to be allowed to cut those strings and, once again, dance ourselves. We must make choices in our lives of what to do and what to pass by. It is easy to get swept up into the egotistical trap of never wanting to miss anything or that someone would miss what we would contribute. Many of us lack the ability to say "no" and therefore get sucked into things we don't really have the desire or time to do. Taking control means making priorities and choosing where

By Michele Millard

we invest our time and energies. Not surprisingly, as our children observe us doing this, they will learn the same techniques in managing their own lives.

3. Create a family night.

Nothing will speak more loudly of the importance of God in your life than the importance you place on your family. When your spouse and children see you place the family in top priority, they will see God through you. The Mormon church has been strengthened immeasurably by its emphasis on and support of a family night. Activities may or may not be "spiritual," such as devotionals, religious games, Scripture study, etc. They could be something like bowling, with God and spiritual matters casually discussed, or a movie, with the value and characters analyzed in light of Christian ethics and attitudes. But whatever it is, it is done together and with the realization that God is the center of the activity.

4. Go to church, but not too much church.

"Aargh," say all of the pastors who are reading this. "Don't tell people not to come to church." This suggestion may be a bit unorthodox, but I would say it is very Biblical. Church, of course, is a very important part of a Christian's life. It is important to learn and study, as well as to fellowship with other Christians. It is also important to teach your children the priority that church and God's concerns have in your life by your attendance and participation. However, too much church, I believe, can be anti-Christian! When your family's needs and time are sacrificed because of your overcommitment to church activities, then God is not honored. Consistent attendance is important, but when your child is not allowed to accept the lead he is offered in the school play because several of the rehearsals are on Wednesday night, then church has become a problem. It is a problem because your child has seen you place church "activities" (and that does not mean God) above his needs. Resentment is the reaction of the child and walls are built. Now, I do not mean that church activities should *always* take second

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How to get your Family Ready for Fall

(Continued from page 5)

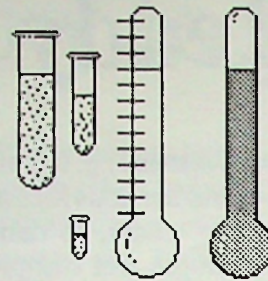
place, but that God is honored in the decisions you make in your own, as well as your child's life. Churches also need to be sensitized to the demands it makes of families and their time, not having activities for activity's sake, but programs which enrich the spiritual lives of its families.

5. Teach your child the value of self-discipline.

Nothing is more frustrating than knowing you should be doing something and you are not doing it. Paul expressed that frustration well in his writings. We feel guilty and lash ourselves with self-hatred. This is true in many areas—daily exercise, daily devotionals, daily prayer, eating healthful food, allowing time for yourself. . . . The list seems infinite. When I don't do these things I know I should, I feel terrible—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. However, when I start to exercise some control over my life to regularly do these things I know are good for me, I feel on top of the world. Life and all its facets fall into place. I believe that the Christian's greatest enemy is the lack of self-discipline, for in those daily habits the foundation of our spiritual life is formed. When we neglect our daily relationship with God and the care of ourselves, life quickly becomes chaotic and out of whack. If we care for ourselves spiritually and physically our children will experience growth simultaneously.

The busier our lives and those of our children become, the faster time passes us by. Before we know it, large segments of time have passed. Daily we are faced with choices of spending our time or investing our time. We choose to make God the center of our lives, delegate him to a five-minute slot, or neglect him entirely. In making these daily choices, author Joy Berry suggests three guidelines to aid you and your children:

1. Do everything you can to show God your love for him.
 2. Do everything you can to take care of yourself.
 3. Do everything you can to show others you care.
- I guess that says it all in a nutshell!



Quality Education for All

By Terrance D. Paul

For several weeks, the *Milwaukee Sentinel* has been running a series of articles on the poor quality of Milwaukee Public Schools. The *Chicago Tribune* has run similar articles on the problems of the Chicago schools. We definitely have a school problem and it's not just a big-city problem. High dropout rates and declining test scores are a fact of life across the country in every type of school district.

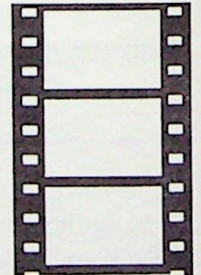
Poor-quality schools hurt all of us. High-quality education is essential for maintaining high living standards and for keeping our country strong and free. As a businessman I am acutely aware of the importance a good educational system has on the ability of American companies to stay competitive. Finally, it's just plain repugnant to our democratic ideal of fairness that a quality education may only be available to those who can pay for a private school.

So, what should we do? Spend more money? Yes, that may be necessary. Unfortunately, spending more money isn't the only answer.

Did you know that we spend twice as much today per pupil as we did 25 years ago in constant dollars? Also, there isn't a correlation between state spending and educational achievement. Some high-spending states have high dropout rates and low test scores. Some low-spending states have low dropout rates and high test scores. We may need to spend more on education, but at the same time we must change the system.

We need an educational system that gives all people, not just the privileged, the freedom to choose the school their children will attend. We need a system which allows star teachers the freedom to earn star salaries. We need a system which will allow high-quality schools to expand and to multiply. We need a system which will attract outstanding individuals to the career of teaching.

—Mr. Paul is President of Best Power Technology, Inc., Necedah, WI.



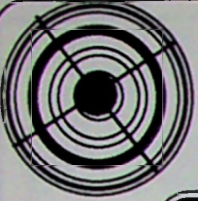


Friends are worth Everything!

Nothing feels quite as nice as spending time with some close friends. And fellowshiping in the presence of God makes it even nicer. Share the love of God with your friends by inviting them to study the Bible or attend church with you. Friends deserve nothing less.



Church of God General Conference
Church Development Department
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061



Sticks and Stones

By Pastor Rex Cain

The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?" (John 8:3-5, RSV.)

IT IS EASY for Christians to develop a Pharisaical piousness that honors oneself and reduces to abject humiliation anyone you choose to humiliate. Often this is done in the holy name of religion.

Some take great pride in their humility!

These is nothing more satisfying for hypocrites than watching their victims squirm while they safely hide behind the law of technicalities.

The Mosaic Law decreed execution for promiscuous affairs between married people, and with God commanding on the mountain absolutely no illicit affairs between married couples, and with Jesus pointing out the truth of the heart that lust without deed is still adultery before God—why did Jesus in this instance let this woman get off "scott free?"

The answer to that question is the point of this article. I'm not focusing on adultery, but on compassion.

Let me say that all the preceding remarks were a simplistic presentation of a more complicated law. There were different kinds of executions or punishments for different situations. For example, if the girl was raped and screamed out, or if she was raped and did not scream for help. It made a difference if she were only engaged. It made a

difference if she were a willing participant. Each situation demanded a different type of punishment.

It is believed that the woman brought to Jesus fulfilled the requirements of Deuteronomy 22:23. That is, she was engaged to another man, but while engaged, had relations with a different man, and in this case was caught in the act. The punishment was stoning to death because she didn't cry out for rescue (Deut. 22:24). The man should have been stoned to death as well, because he violated his neighbor's wife (the Jews considered an engagement the same as having a wife).

Of course the religious leaders, who were jealous of Jesus' popularity, seized this occasion to embarrass him before the people.

If he upheld the law of stoning (which at this time was not being rigorously enforced since the whole nation was into such sinning), Jesus could appear to be *heartless*. But if he advocated mercy, he could appear *too lenient* with the words of Moses. The religious leaders could then brand him a traitor—anything to make him look bad in the eyes of the people.

Being compassionate doesn't mean certain behavior is condoned or approved. It is said that some elements of the fanatic Puritans of early Colonial days (and churches in Eurpoe in the early centuries) used to avoid reading this passage, for it made Jesus appear too soft on adultery.

Often the same folks looked down their noses at the less moral than themselves.

But what of ourselves? Have we not desired to blow out the light of someone else so ours will shine a little brighter? Who hasn't whispered a juicy bit of gossip? What do you say about the good feeling you had when the listener replied to your gossip: "You mean so-and-so actually became involved with so-and-so"?

Or, "You mean they actually found them down at the tavern where all the sluts hang out?"

Recall the horror on faces when Jesus actually welcomed tax collectors into his fellowship. Or, when he literally sat down and ate a meal with a known community despot.

"Jesus did what? He let the prostitute wipe his feet with her own hair?"

"He actually talked to a Samaritan—that despicable race with no manners and no culture?!"

A person who can glibly talk about another in a derogatory manner has no manners, has no concept of the magnitude of his own sins, and needs to confess his latest sin—hypocrisy.

Let God judge sinners. We must all appear before his judgment seat.

Our task is to demonstrate love, compassion, and help. We are not judge, jury, and executioners. But that's what was happening before Jesus' eyes, right



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30

THE CUTTING EDGE

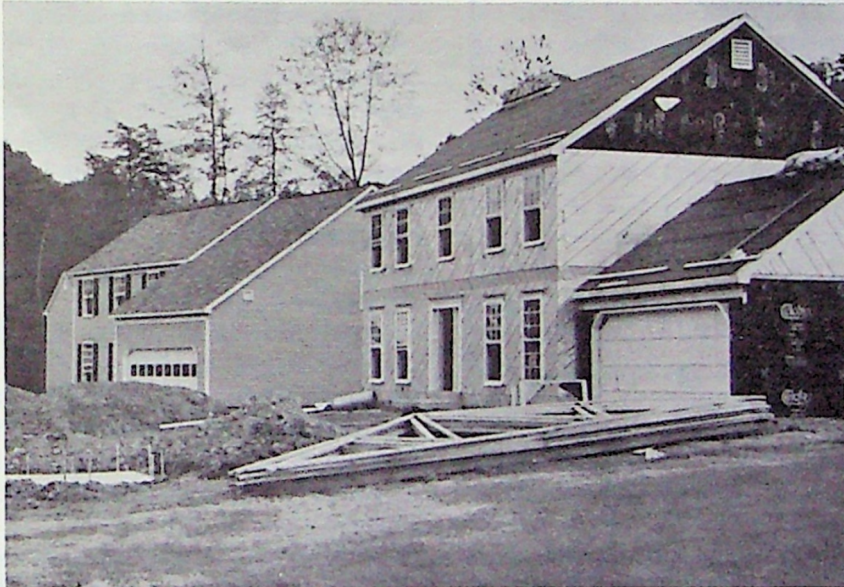
By Pastor Don Ward

The "Cutting Edge" is a commonly used modern idiom meaning, roughly, making progress or making a difference through keen awareness of the issues and decisive action. I believe Jesus commissioned his church to be on the "cutting edge" with the gospel—not to socially reform the world, but to personally transform the individual. Let me paraphrase the word picture of these dynamics Paul gave in Ephesians 4:7-13.

Jesus plunged into the blackest hell (he took upon himself the sins and condemnation of this sorry world and gave himself to die, nailed to a tree and scorned). But after three days he burst forth from ignominy to glorious power and authority over every wretched demon of darkness (he rose victorious from the grave). From this pinnacle of superiority he ordered condemned men and women released and sin's enslavement absolved. Then he assigned his emancipated followers to function within the realm of his own power as his body on earth ("he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men").



A church ministering to young adults is on the cutting edge.



The cutting edge sharpens a church to reach new families in its community.

In speaking simply of the "death, burial, and resurrection" of Jesus we can fail to grasp the magnitude of what is *really* involved. Likewise, in viewing the church as simply a collection of folks that share a common belief, we can fail to appreciate the crucial position and purpose God has for the church.

What I have stated here may seem as merely dramatics, yet I have really not overstated it at all. Denying or playing down these great scriptures may, in fact, be a tack of the Devil. By emasculating the church we unwittingly strip Jesus of his great work and glory. For we make him the head of an inept, ineffective, feeble body. In effect, we say he does not empower his church, and therefore he can do very little in the earth.

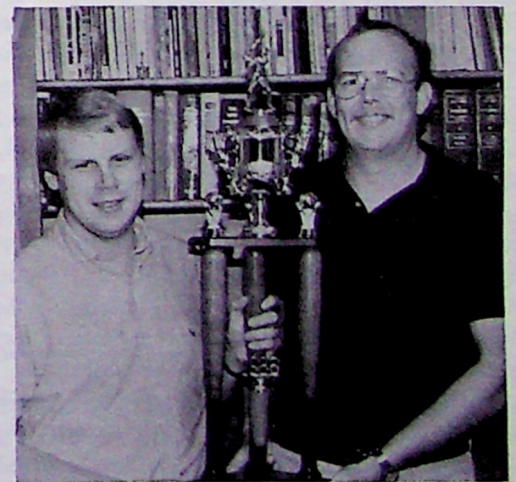
It is true that the church is a fellowship of folks who share common beliefs. But because Jesus is the living Lord wonderfully elevated in power and authority, it is more. Through faith in and obedience to him we become an instrument through which God in Christ can work mightily in our world. This is hard for us to believe. But believe we must if it is to become an active reality.

This all seems like a paradox. Who are we to claim power from on high? And yet, who are we to deny it? Paul, aware of his feeble physical frame, said, "We have this treasure in jars of clay," but went on to say this, therefore, is to "show that this all-surpassing power is from God" (2 Cor. 4:7).

Often we are too afraid of mistakes and failure. Mistakes are painful. Failure is embarrassing. But Jesus is not so concerned with errors as he is desirous of runs.

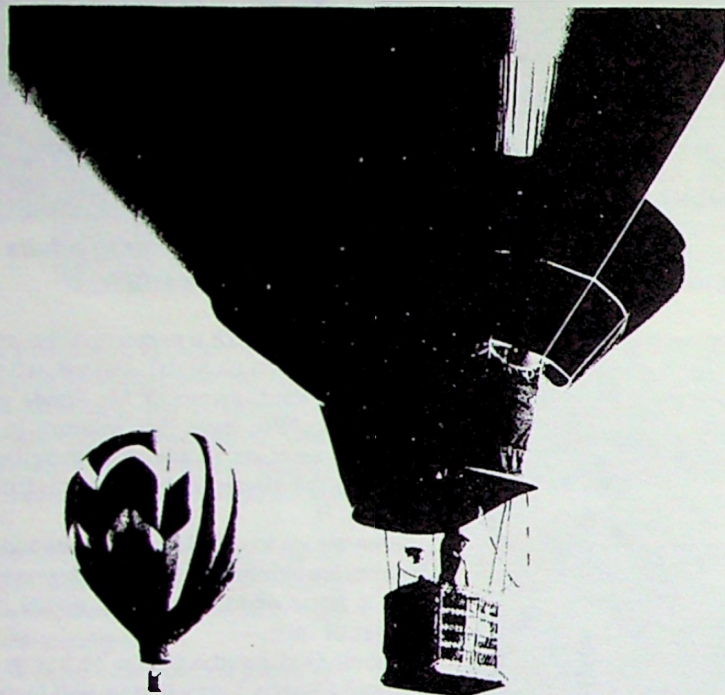
I thank God for the vision he has given the Raymore Church. I pray that he will increase the vision of what can be done so that more of us instead of feeling threatened will feel thrilled.

Jesus has stationed his church to be on the "cutting edge" (please review my definition) of this entire project of salvation. I don't see where he plans to call another single soul to take over that job.



The church softball squad cuts another entry gate into its fabric of life.

In Spirit and in Truth



“Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?” (John 18:38.) I realize that I have taken my title scripture far out of its intended context: I will refer to it in its proper meaning before I am done. Let us consider what is the truth about the Holy Spirit. We find the word “spirit” used 379 times in the New Testament, including 93 occurrences of “Holy Ghost.” This far outweighs any mention in the books of the Old Testament. Why? Quite simply, God’s Holy Spirit is an integral part of the gospel message.

In the Old Testament, God manifested his power in a sovereign manner; he performed the miracles himself. Seldom did he vest his power directly in man. When he did, it was often through an object such as Moses’ staff or Elijah’s cloak. Men only approached God through the priests and this was done at this temple.

From its inception, the New Testament gospel was powered by the Holy Ghost, working through men. The miraculous conception of Jesus, the spiritual filling of

John the Baptist, and the other events surrounding the Lord’s birth set the stage for God’s new relationship with his people.

The ministry of Jesus began with his baptism: “And lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him” (Matt. 3:16): “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness” (Luke 4:1). He was led by the Spirit to be tempted of Satan and was able to withstand that temptation because God had empowered him with spiritual power. This was his test and he passed it, not just because he was the Son of God, but because the spiritual power of God was within him.

Shortly after that, Jesus declared the form of the New Testament ministry, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to

By William Clark

set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord” (Luke 4:18, 19). From that point he began a ministry of teaching, preaching, healing, casting out demons, and other miraculous things, not only to prove that he was the Son of God but *because* he was the Son of God, filled with spiritual power from God.

Jesus told his disciples that the same miraculous power he had would be made available to believers. (John 14:12). “If ye shall ask any thing *in my name*” through “the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost”—“I will do it” (vv. 14, 26). This chapter and the following chapter explain how and why the church was to be powered and led. Jesus repeated the directive after his resurrection. In Acts 1:8 he said, “Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.” In the next chapter, Peter explained that that same gift of the spirit will be given to all those baptized in the name of Jesus. That includes you and me.

The remainder of the Book of Acts is a testimony that, empowered with the gift of the spirit, and directed of God through the Holy Spirit, the followers and converts did those same things that Jesus did. I believe that they didn’t just preach the gospel and do miracles; they preached the gospel *by* doing miracles. Being enabled by God’s spirit and using that power as the Spirit directed was a necessary part of their ministry. That is why they were so successful.

The Book of Acts contains many scriptures describing the supernatural power of holy spirit displayed by the disciples. Accounts of healing, casting out unclean spirits, and other miracles followed the disciples wherever they went. This was the reason their ministries and churches grew. Why were they able to do these things? Because they were filled with the same

“I have seen too many of our churches devoid of any real spirit. They are truly ‘dead’ churches, and if we don’t get God’s spirit alive and working in our ministers, our lay people, and our churches, he is going to ignore the Church of God and invest his power in churches that want him”—William Clark.

spiritual power that Jesus had and they were directed by the Holy Ghost as Jesus promised.

What are we to conclude from the gospel message concerning the Holy Ghost? First, Jesus kept his promise and God sent a Comforter (John 14:16), which is the Holy Ghost (v. 26). It was this Spirit which *spoke* to Philip (Acts 8:29), *forbade* Paul and Silas to go to Asia, and *directed* Paul and Silas not to go to Bithynia. The Holy Ghost spoken of in these texts is derived from the Greek words “The *pneuma* the *hagion*,” which literally translated is “the Holy the Spirit.” This is the spiritual manifestation of God’s power *to* man.

Second, the apostles were filled with holy spirit which enabled them to speak with boldness, heal lame men, and cast out demons. This holy spirit is also translated from the Greek words “*pneuma*” and “*pneuma hagion*.” It is unfortunate that the writers used a word—*pneuma*—with so many different meanings and usages to describe something as important to us as God’s spirit. The word “*pneuma*” is translated Spirit, spirit, spiritual, ghost, life, and wind. It is also combined with the word “*hagion*” as Holy Spirit and Holy Ghost. The word *pneuma* has at least 14 different usages in the Greek manuscripts. It is no wonder that we become confused about “spirit.”

Regardless of what language we use, our confusion is heightened when we try to apply physical terms and attributes to something which does not have a physical existence. It is not something the mind alone can comprehend. Much has been written about what the Holy Ghost, the Comforter is or is not. The purpose of this article is not to define what it is, but to establish *that* it is.

At this point I would like to differentiate

the Holy Spirit (or Holy Ghost), that which is the spiritual manifestation of God’s power *to* man, and holy spirit (or spirit) which is God’s power manifested *in* man, the spirit we are commanded to be filled with.

Jesus said that he would have God send the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, to be with us when we ask for it and when we need it. This is the Spirit which *directed* the ministry of the disciples. It is the Holy Ghost that is the *giver* of spiritual gifts.

Jesus also said that the disciples would be filled with the holy ghost. This was the spirit of God that *powered* the ministry of the early church. This is the power *by which* spiritual gifts operate.

God said, in Joel 2:28-30, that in the last days “I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh.” Peter was inspired to repeat this scripture after he was filled with the spirit on the day of Pentecost. It is our belief that we are living in the last days. If this is true, then God, always true to his word, will pour that same spiritual power on *all those who believe*. Right? What do we believe is going to happen as a result of this spiritual outpouring? Surely we can expect to see something. We should expect the Holy Ghost to direct those who receive this spiritual blessing as God wills and we should see their personal ministries filled with the power of God as he wills. Shouldn’t a spirit-filled ministry see the same evangelistic success today that the apostles saw in the early church.

I doubt that God will be influenced by all that has been written and said about what can and cannot be done by his spirit working in an individual. He will do whatever he wants to do, bound only by the individual’s ability to act in complete belief and trust of his direction through his Spirit. Stephen said to the priests of his day, “Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye” (Acts 7:51). I believe that those who resist the presence of God’s Holy Spirit and deny the need for a filling of God’s spiritual power are going to be overlooked in the outpouring of spirit that God promised.

In preparation for this spiritual blessing, we should deepen our relationship with God on a spiritual level. Too often we try to worship only with our minds or our actions. What we say, do, or sing may be pleasing to God, but only when these actions come from someone who seeks God’s presence *with all his heart*. “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). A more literal translation would be “in spiritual truth.” Our purest relationship with God cannot be merely physical or mental because God is not just a physical being. He is Spirit and we must bow down before him in our innermost being—in true spirit. Then we will begin that wonderful relationship that Jesus wants us to have. When this happens, God will surely pour his spirit into our hearts.

Note: In his cover letter William Clark confessed “that this may be a controversial article but I think this is a subject that has been ignored too long in the Church of God.” We agree. Clark’s reasoning and conclusions are not usual thinking tracts in the movement. However, we think his viewpoint should cause proper concern theologically. It should also stir us out of spiritual lethargy. Clark wants to hear from you. Address him at 7533 Wrenview Dr., Springfield, OH 45502. —Editor.

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“What’s Next, Lord?”

by Vickie Pulling

Every time I sat down to put thought and prayer into an article, the topic of God’s guidance came to mind. Then I would put off starting the article because I thought, “Who am I to write about the divine guidance of God? I don’t know where to begin!” I felt convicted, however, and began to talk to those around me to gather information and advice on the subject.

I have often blamed God for things that didn’t seem to be going the way I wanted them to go. I suppose it was much easier than blaming myself, but what an atrocity for me to blame God for the mistakes that I’d made in my life! The fact of the matter is that sometimes I did not make wise decisions and had to learn lessons the hard way.

Many times I’ve wanted to do things my way, and even justified some of them as “God’s will” when deep inside I knew that God had nothing to do with my decisions. I would interpret my own thoughts and wants as God’s. There were times when I even had the audacity to argue with God—to study his Word to see if I could find loopholes! I wanted to find ways around what it said because I didn’t want to accept some of the things that were written.

Then, in my studies, I became humbled when I found this verse, “Woe unto him that striveth [or argues] with his Maker!” (Isa. 45:9.) I didn’t know that verse existed; it

was pretty humbling in itself. Then I began to look up the definitions of some of the words used to describe the Almighty, such as:

Sovereign—Superior to others, chief, greatest—supreme in power, rank, or authority. Independent of all others.

Omnipotent—All powerful—having unlimited power or authority.

Omniscient—Having infinite knowledge: knowing all things.

God began to look much larger in my eyes, and I felt very small. I was filled with wonder as I considered his Word, and realized that I might be damned for daring to argue with God!

Are you interested in making the right decisions in your life? Are you looking for answers to questions you have about life? The answers are found in his Word.

1) God wants to make his way known to you—he has spelled out his will for man in his Word—“All scripture is God breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

How often do you read God’s Word? When you read, do you study? God provided his Word for us so that we can be equipped for every good work, but we first must read and study. We must also apply

MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND THE CHRISTIAN WORKERS’ SEMINAR IN THE SPRING—MORE INFORMATION WILL BE FORTHCOMING—WE WILL HAVE A COGS CLASS AND COGS ACTIVITIES!

what we read to our daily lives—he gives us the guidelines.

Begin by being dedicated and wanting to **KNOW**. Romans 12:1, 2 tells us to offer our bodies as living sacrifices as an act of worship—don’t conform to the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, and then you will be able to test and prove what God’s will is.

2) Ask advice, and be willing to accept advice. You have access to the wisdom in God’s Word, and to people who have studied the Bible as well as human nature, and may know you better than you know yourself. Carefully weigh what they have to say.

Read books and commentaries. Carefully compare what they have to say with what God has to say.

3) Be mindful of your own thoughts. It is easy to deceive yourself and to justify your own actions. Proverbs 16:2-4a says, “All a man’s ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the Lord. Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. The Lord works out everything for his own ends.” Be careful not to trust your thoughts more than what God’s Word says.

P s a l m 139:23, 24
s t a t e s ,
“Search me,
O God, and
know my
heart; test me,
and know my
a n x i o u s
thoughts. See
if there is any
o f f e n s i v e
way in me,
and lead me
in the way
everlasting.”
When you
study and
learn his
thoughts and
guidelines,
he will lead
you through
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Church
Of
God
Singles

“What’s Next, Lord?”

(Continued from page 13)

the straight and narrow paths.

Think about what you are doing! Spend time in prayer, and consider the long-range consequence of your decisions. God gave you a brain—in his presence think things out!

4) Wait upon the Lord. God may not work as quickly as you want him to—he doesn’t have the same schedule: trust him to accomplish things in his good time. Isaiah 40:31 says, “Those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” He is faithful, and his promises are sure. Proverbs 3:5—“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart, and lean not on thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he will direct thy paths.”

5) Pray. Pray that God will give you insight as you study his Word. Pray that he will reveal the application for your life. Pray that he will be glorified through you

and that he will help you keep a pure heart, good conscience, and sincere faith. (1 Tim. 1:5.) Pray that your motives will be the right ones. (Read James 4:3.)

God does have a plan for man, and he also communicates with us through his Word and through his Spirit. We can find his will in his Word.

Psalms 23:3—“He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name’s sake.” God’s plan for man was purposed for his glory. We owe our lives to him, and our motive must be to give glory to him.

Finally, God will not contradict himself; there are no loopholes in his Word, and he does not change his mind. Isn’t it freeing to know that he is consistent, and that we can trust what he gives us? He is ever faithful, and his promises are sure—even though some of our questions cannot be solved directly by Scripture. God has given us guidelines and teachings that can be applied to our daily living and govern our decisions. He will instill in us basic convic-

tions, attitudes, ideas, and values by which we can live. With study and prayer, he will provide knowledge that will be within the limits of his will and that will not go against the Word. When we remain open to his guidance, he will lead us through the Spirit and through his Word.

You are to be commended for wanting to make Godly decisions in your life. God will help you. Commit yourself to studying what he has to say in the Word. Practice what you learn. Seek knowledgeable advice, and be critical of your own thoughts. Wait upon the Lord, and pray.

Thank God daily for his guidance in your life—and do your part in committing your life to him for the purpose of his glory!

MY LOVE AND THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ARTICLE IN THOUGHT, PRAYER, AND SUPPORT.



Russell Johns, seated on the left, chats with his friends Richard and Millie Appleby.

“God does not want you to have problems!”

There’s reassurance in those words, spoken by a man who cares about you.

Russell Johns, a lifelong Nebraskan, has shared his lifestyle with those near him over the years. He also allows a few words of loving advice to any who ask. As you might expect, he didn’t stop with that one statement. Here’s the full text of his remarks:

“God does not want you to have problems. If

“God does not want you to have problems!”

you’ve got problems, it’s because you want difficulties to hang onto.

“There are plenty of scriptures that tell you to hand your problems to the Lord. Leave them there.

“It’s your obligation to look around and solve your problems. If you can’t, you must then turn them over to the Lord. He wants to solve them for you.

“I live by these rules. I’ve seen them acted out successfully in my life and in the lives of loved ones around me.

“Paul learned to live with his ‘thorn in the flesh’ and forgot about it as being a problem.

“God wants you to have a happy life—not one full of worry. If you have a good association with him, you’ll have a happy life!”

HIGH TECH GEAR DRAWS CRIES OF "UNCLE"

By Pastor James Mattison

This was a headline in the April 27, 1988, issue of *The Wall Street Journal*. It appears that man's knowledge has increased so tremendously (Dan. 12:4) that few people can understand the extras now loaded on electronic gear.

Take for instance the new BMW cars. Their top-of-the-line 735i is so complicated that BMW of North America Inc. provides a 40-minute videotape on how to operate it. "Instructions for locking and unlocking the car alone take more than three minutes of the tape.

"A turn or two of the key can lock all the doors, the trunk and the gas cap without closing the sunroof or windows; lock the doors, trunk and gas cap while closing the sunroof and windows; or lock the car so it stays locked even if a thief smashes the window and lifts the lock button." (The tape cautions against using this last feature with passengers inside.)

People pay good money for all these fancy features. People buy microwaves that can be programmed to start cooking when no one is around, even though the whole point of the microwave is that anything can be cooked in minutes. People buy TVs that can show nine channels at once. Videocassette recorders can be programmed to record shows a year in advance.

This writer can remember when the first automatic washers came out, and grew to manhood before TV came out. We didn't have electric lights until I was a freshman in high school, nor did we have an inside water supply.

The point is, who needs all this? Who can understand it? Companies add new features constantly to "outglitz" the competition. All it takes is to rejiggle a few of the tiny connections in the powerful microprocessors that are the heart of all electronics. The results, however, often baffle even the most technically adept.

"The product designers have pushed the technology out to the frontier, but it's way ahead of the consumer," says R. David Pittle, technical director at Consumers Union of U.S. Inc., publisher of *Consumer Reports* magazine. Adds David Horowitz, the host of a syndicated television show on consumer

products, "The level of frustration out there is incredible."

Some companies have recognized the problem and are now explaining how easy their product is to use. But for most people, the typical new gadget is as difficult to understand as the Rubik cube. Peter McWilliams, author of several books on consumer electronics, for years asked his mother to tape TV shows for him while he was traveling. Eventually he discovered that she knew how to tape something only as it was being broadcast. She would stay home or set alarm clocks to wake up in the middle of the night to tape these things.

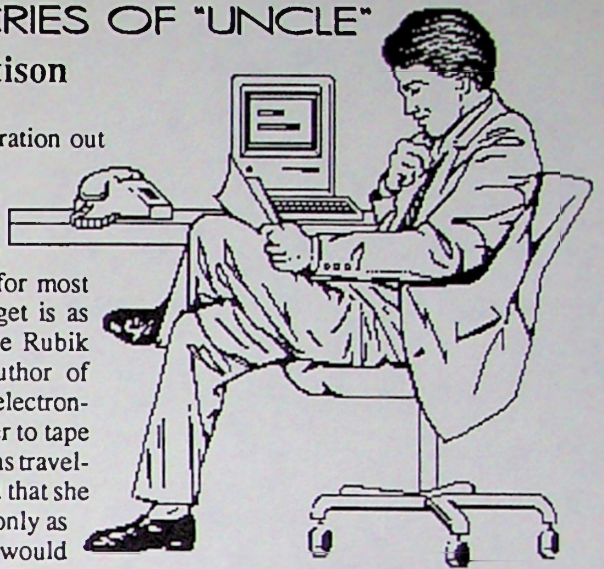
Some secretaries can hardly be fired because they understand computers much better than their bosses, and the boss has to ask them what is going on. A common refrain among otherwise self-confident executives at the end of a phone conversation is, "I'll try to transfer you to my secretary, but I really don't understand how to use this thing and I may lose you. Here goes nothing. . . ."

Answering machines provide another level of confusion, especially since they can now be connected to computers. Alice Kahn, author and syndicated columnist, tried sending information from her computer over the phone line to a friend of her husband's. When she (a computer enthusiast) failed, her husband told her to give up. When she persisted, an argument ensued that even rocked their marriage. She said, "The guy called my husband the next day and said, 'Well, you didn't access my modem, but you did access my phone-answering system, and I have an hour of you and your wife arguing.'"

A Computer Age

We have now, without question, a computer age. Computers run the world. Question: Do you think Christ our Lord will use computers to govern the world after he returns to earth?

Let us not forget that our Lord is "a greater than Solomon" (Luke 11:31). And let us also not forget that all knowledge has originated from the Almighty God, Jehovah, our Creator and sus-



tainer, the Father of the Christ.

Stand Fast in the Faith

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. (Prov. 1:7.) We might add another phrase to the list in 1 Corinthians 13: "If I can understand all computers, and have not the love of God, I am nothing."

Christ IS going to return. And that day may not be far off. Our job is to MAKE SURE we are ready for his return. This means seeking FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness; making sure the world with its problems and joys takes SECOND place in our lives.

Solomon said that the conclusion of the whole matter of life is, "Fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccl. 12:13). It was Paul who said, "If any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know" (1 Cor. 8:2). Then he added, "But if any man love God, the same is known of him."

Our Main Purpose

Loving and serving our Creator God and his Son Jesus is our main purpose here on earth. Jesus indicated there would be little faith on earth when he returns.

Friends, let us make EVERY EFFORT to live for CHRIST every day that God continues to grant us LIFE. If we fall away we CANNOT be saved. If we endure to the end, we can live forever in the beautiful kingdom of God which Jesus will establish here on this very earth when he comes.



Communication in the Marital Relationship

By Joe James

“If there is any one indispensable insight with which a young married couple should begin their life together, it is that they should try to keep open, at all cost, the lines of communication between them” (Revel L. Howe, *Herein Is Love*).

What Is Communication?

Communication is the means by which relating takes place. Good communication is the ability to transmit and receive meanings; it is the instrument for achieving that mutual understanding which is at the heart of marital intimacy. Clinebell stated, “The ability to communicate in mutually affirming ways is the fundamental skill which is essential to the growth of marital intimacy.”

Communication consists of what you say and how you say it. Both content and process are important. In communicating, being a skilled listener is just as necessary as speaking effectively. You and your partner have good communication when you achieve a common meaning, based on messages that you send and receive.

Three things must be remembered as we explore communication:

1. *We are always communicating.* There is never "no communication" between partners. The effect of the communication and the strength of commitment behind it is the problem.

2. *You communicate by what you do as well as by what you say.* Oral words, written words, facial expressions, body positions, touches, space, time, and many other channels help determine and define communication.

3. *Inaccurate or conflicting messages often occur.* More than one channel is used in sending information to your partner. If both partners are on different wavelengths during the process of information exchange, miscommunication will occur. Left unchecked, the results may become catastrophic.

Results and Characteristics of Communication

Effective communication results in mutual understanding. Communication involves sending and receiving messages with the goal of achieving shared meanings and understandings. There are three steps in communicating a message in a way to achieve shared meaning.

1. The speaker sends a clear message to the listener.

2. The listener restates the sender's message by summarizing the main points. That's called feedback.

3. The sender confirms that the listener's summary is accurate. (If inaccurate, the sender should restate.)

Marital communication is characterized by a high level of personal involvement. Because of the importance of communication to the relationship, each partner should strive not only for awareness and understanding of the other, but also for self-awareness. Self-awareness involves knowing one's own attitudes, prejudices, feelings, patterns of responding and behaving, needs, sensitive area, etc. All of these influence communicating.

How to Strengthen Communication

Strengthening communication in marriage is an ongoing process. Some steps to take to improve the quality of communication are as follows:

1. Learn to effectively use all the lines or channels of communication. For example, there are many ways in words and deeds to say, "I love you."

2. Both partners should learn to listen more fully. Listen to feelings as well as words. "To really listen to another means both giving oneself and being willing to receive the other within oneself" (Clinebell). Also, listen for the needs of the other.

3. If in doubt, check out meanings. Do not assume.

4. Develop the skill of "saying it straight."

5. Avoid ambiguity.

6. Be aware of your own and your spouse's coded messages.

7. Develop skills in communication for conflict resolution. The close marital relationship will experience conflict. To avoid negative results from conflict, take the following steps:

a. Focus on issues, not personalities.

b. Both partners must be willing to hear each other's positions and complaints and related feelings.

c. Narrow down the issues.

d. Each must state how he sees the problem and how he thinks the other sees it.

e. Negotiate.

Try These Exercises

I recommend at least six practical exercises for improving communication skills. By developing these skills you and your partner will take a giant step toward expressing more intimacy in your marriage.

1. Learn to read eyes. Look at each other's eyes for at least one minute.

2. Let one person say the other's name repeatedly, changing the tone and intensity until that person senses that it feels good or affirms him.

3. Practice listening and understanding with your partner.

4. Discuss and practice nonverbal communication with your partner.

5. Try arguing at a distance with your backs to each other; then turn around and continue face-to-face, holding hands and looking into each other's eyes. (William C. Schultz.)

6. Practice by setting aside specific weekly times for discussing issues important to the family.

God bless you in the next several days and weeks during which you put into practice effective communication in your marriage.



Exercise

By Pastor Brian J. Atra

AMERICA is being swept by a fitness fad! Spas and health clubs are opening everywhere. Who has not seen a jogger heading down the street?—perhaps even on one's way to work this morning. Sweat clothes have become stylish; in some areas designer sweat suits are a fashion rage. Television programs beam in-home workouts. Many a person has found himself lying on the living room floor attempting to stretch for one last sit-up and asking himself, "Is this worth it?"

What is the Christian response to the exercise fad? Many Christian bookstores sell Christian aerobic records and churches often promote Christian physical exercise sessions. Does the Bible speak to this issue?

Throughout the Scripture God has shown that he is concerned for the body as well as the spirit of man. He formed Adam as a physical being. Throughout the Levitical code he gave rigid details concerning care for the physical body. Jesus, in his earthly ministry, met bodily needs countless times. Paul, who spoke of bearing the marks of Jesus in his body, also foresaw the day of the resurrection to physical immortality—crowning evidence of the Lord's concern with the body.

Paul recognizes that "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit." As one preacher admonished, "Your body is a temple, not a garage!"

Thus, a concern for the physical well-being and appearance of the body is Scrip-

tural. If God was concerned with the physical details of the old covenant temple, how much more should we, with painstaking care, attend to the temple in which his Spirit now resides.

A well-conditioned body is more productive and has greater longevity. Thus, when the Scripture admonishes us to do with all our might what our hands find to do, we can do so longer and more effectively with a well-conditioned body!

How does one go about implementing a program of personal fitness? To begin with, the Christian must remember that he is a steward. Beginning an exercise program should not be a major financial investment. Consider the depth of your commitment before you invest in machinery or club memberships. A friend of mine in the extermination business has been in thousands of homes and has seen hundreds of in-home exercise bicycles, many of them expensive, but none of them ever being ridden! As good stewards, thoroughly consider financial conditions before investing several hundred dollars in health club memberships. Tithing money should not be sent to the spa!

We are stewards of time, too. While it is wrong to ignore the physical needs of the body, it is likewise wrong to devote one's entire time to exercise, jogging, weight-training, etc., and neglect a higher calling. A reasonable amount of time, such as forty minutes three times per week, can be set

aside for exercise.

Supposing one decides to start an exercise program, how should he begin? Slowly! Begin with simple things like brisk walks, a few sit-ups, or simply stretching while standing. Those who wish to progress further should consult qualified personnel: physical education instructors, health club personnel and, in many cases, a physician, especially if one has any health problems.

"No pain, no gain" is a saying which should be forgotten. Instead, remember "Train, don't strain." Pain is the body's warning signal, and it should be heeded. Stiffness and soreness the morning after a workout are to be expected, but stop exercising if you feel any sharp pains, dizziness, or shortness of breath. Remember, go slowly!

For those wishing to greatly improve their physical well-being, a health club, spa, or YMCA should be considered. Before becoming a member, tour the facilities and talk with friends who are members. Any reputable club will happily give you a tour, answer questions, and demonstrate its equipment. Be sure to visit during peak hours, such as 7 a.m. or early evening to see if the club is overcrowded. Finally, unless you are willing and able to work out at least three times a week, don't waste your money by joining!

Club personnel can guide you in beginning workouts. As a rule, beginners should spend time doing "machine" exercises such as Nautilus or Universal and progress to free

weights only after developing more confidence and control. An electronic exercise bicycle is especially good for keeping oneself in peak cardiovascular condition. Couple your spa workouts with activities such as jogging, walking, tennis, swimming, etc.

While most of us will probably not actually join a facility, there are other ways in which you can "exercise." The next time you are at the grocery store or a shopping mall, don't circle the parking lot three times looking for a close parking space; intentionally park about a half block (or more!) from the entrance. For nearby errands, such as trips to mail a letter or pay a utility bill, walk or ride a bicycle.

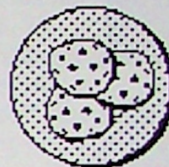
In most parts of the country a walk in the evening is a beautiful, as well as healthy, experience. Couples can use the time for sharing together. Even entire families can enjoy one another's presence this way. Turn the television off and get out and walk together! And for those with smaller children, pushing a buggy or stroller yields even more exercise.

No one in your family will walk with you? Do you live alone? Strolls together can be an excellent opportunity to get acquainted with neighbors, meet new people, cultivate friendships, etc. The time can even be used for meditation and prayer.

The Christian life is one of discipline in every way: spiritually, intellectually, and physically. Incorporating regular exercise and conditioning can make one a better-prepared disciple. As Paul concluded, "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31, RSV).

Note: Pastor Atra's fine article convicted us of the need to diet and exercise. In fact, many on the staff felt moved to offer their own sage advice as you'll see by the sample one-liners below . . .

It's Time to Diet and Exercise When . . .



. . . someone says "How are y'all?" and you are the only one standing there.

. . . your feet are too fat for your shoes.



. . . you can't see your toes.

. . . waste not becomes "waist" not.

. . . the rolls are on your stomach instead of the table.

. . . you work your fanny off—and it's still there.

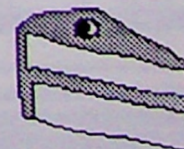
. . . you step on a scale and it says, "Sorry, I don't do cattle."




. . . your doctor tells you that you may be the first person to commit suicide by chocolate brownies.

. . . you look at a menu and say, "Yes!"

. . . you realize you've gained five pounds for every year you've been married and at this rate you'll weigh 250 pounds more on your 50th anniversary than on your wedding day.



. . . your clothes start to shrink.



Man in the Image of God: Is It Backwoods Theology?

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26).

IT WAS THE LATE 1940's. I was serving in my second pastorate, a rural church east of San Diego, California.

At the Wednesday evening Bible study that evening we discussed the creation of man. I assured the congregation that man's being in “the image of God” (Gen. 1:27) was not something to be taken literally.

God was a spirit-being, I explained. He filled the universe; he could not have shape or form. And, to enforce my point, I added that no reliable theologian—or thinking Christian—took “image” and “likeness” literally. It was crude, virtually pagan, I said, to reduce God to a being with shape and form. All this I explained with an air of confidence bordering on scorn.

After the service, a few of us gathered in the parking lot of the church. It was a warm evening with a clear sky overhead. There was no need to hurry home. Furthermore, to my surprise and mild chagrin, it was apparent that the pastor had not settled the question of “image of God.”

A diminutive lady in the group spoke up. “Pastor,” she said, “man stands tall and erect. In his figure and being, he points to the heavens—where God is.”

With that, she gestured upward. Her voice was meek and gentle, but it carried conviction—and the intimation that she rejected the pastor's theology.

Without realizing it, my eyes followed her hand pointing upward to the sky. They took in the stars overhead. Then I heard her voice add: “I believe man, in his form and shape, points to God above. He really is in the image and likeness of God.”

I wanted to argue, but did not quite have the heart. The truth of the matter was, I really did not know what the “image of God” was. This lady's theology may have been simple, but I did not have a convincing and satisfying rebuttal. I could only quote the commentators and theologians.

Almost a decade later, I found myself in a comparable situation: I was preparing a Wednesday evening lesson which included Genesis 1:26, 27 and the “image of God.”

Two books were open before me, my King James Version of the Bible, and a small paperback edition of the Hebrew text of Genesis. At my side were the Hebrew-English lexicons which I had acquired during the preceding several years.

I read the text again, for the umpteenth time: “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Gen. 1:26, 27).

This time, however, I did something different. I turned to the lexicons and

looked up the original words for "image" and "likeness." I had not been equipped before to follow this procedure.

"Image" in Hebrew was *tzelem* and it meant "image, likeness, statue, copy" or "drawing." "Likeness" was *demuth* and it meant "similitude, shape, pattern," etc. It was formed from the verb *damah* which meant "to be like" or "resemble."

What was I reading here? Man really was made in the "image" of God, according to God's "shape" or "pattern"! There was nothing mystical or philosophical about these words. Their meaning was plain and simple. Furthermore, *tzelem* and *demuth* indicated that God himself had shape or form.

This, however, presented an obstacle which, as time went on, had to be overcome. God is spirit, or a spirit-being. Can he, therefore, have shape or form?

When the heavens were opened to Ezekiel, he saw "visions of God" (Ezek. 1:1). There, upon the throne, he saw "the likeness as the appearance of a man" (Ezek. 1:26).

In this passage, the Hebrew word for "likeness" is *demuth*, the same word that appears in Genesis 1:26. And the word for "man" is *adam* meaning "man" or "human being."

When Ezekiel saw the appearance of God, then, he saw, not something vague, but the form of a man.

Man is the form, shape, or image of God, a copy thereof. This, in turn, indicates God's form.

References to God having human form are often dismissed as "anthropomorphisms." Christians who have taken "image of God" literally have been called

"anthropomorphites." In fact, throughout church history, persecution has sometimes been their lot.

Ezekiel 1:26 has not escaped being explained as an anthropomorphism. But there is nothing figurative in saying that Ezekiel saw a human form—or that man is made in the image of God.

Lest any doubt that Ezekiel actually saw God or Jehovah, we need only look at his testimony which follows: "This was the appearance of the likeness (*demuth*) of the glory of the LORD" (v. 28). The glory of the Lord (Jehovah) had a human form!

The conclusion is inescapable: A spirit-being can have shape or form. God has shape or form, and it is that of a man. Furthermore, despite the ravages of sin and time, the Scriptures indicate that man is still in the image of God: "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image (Greek *eikon*) and glory of God" (1 Cor. 11:7). "Men . . . are made after the similitude of God" (Jas. 3:9).

I have returned in memory many times to the Wednesday evening at the little country church east of San Diego. As I recall, I may have tried to explain "image of God" as being man's dominion over the earth.

But, like so many others, I floundered in those days among various views: The image of God could be man's power to reason. Or it could be his "spiritual nature." Or, since God was immortal, man, in the image of God, was immortal. It never occurred to me that I could therefore reason: Since God is omnipotent, man, in the image of God, is omnipotent! Or, like God, he is omniscient! Or omni-

present!

All of these views put theology, philosophy, or personal opinion ahead of exegesis or simple word study. To say that man's likeness to God is something mental, moral, or spiritual is to impose upon "image" and "likeness" meanings they do not have—certainly not in Genesis 1:26, 27.

But some may challenge us: What is the advantage of taking "image" and "likeness" literally, according to the meaning of the Hebrew originals?

First of all, herein lies the basic dignity of man. He is the one creature on earth whom God deigned to make in his own image.

It is wrong to curse men—because they are made in the likeness of God (Jas. 3:9).

Murder is a capital offense—because man is made in the image of God (Gen. 9:6).

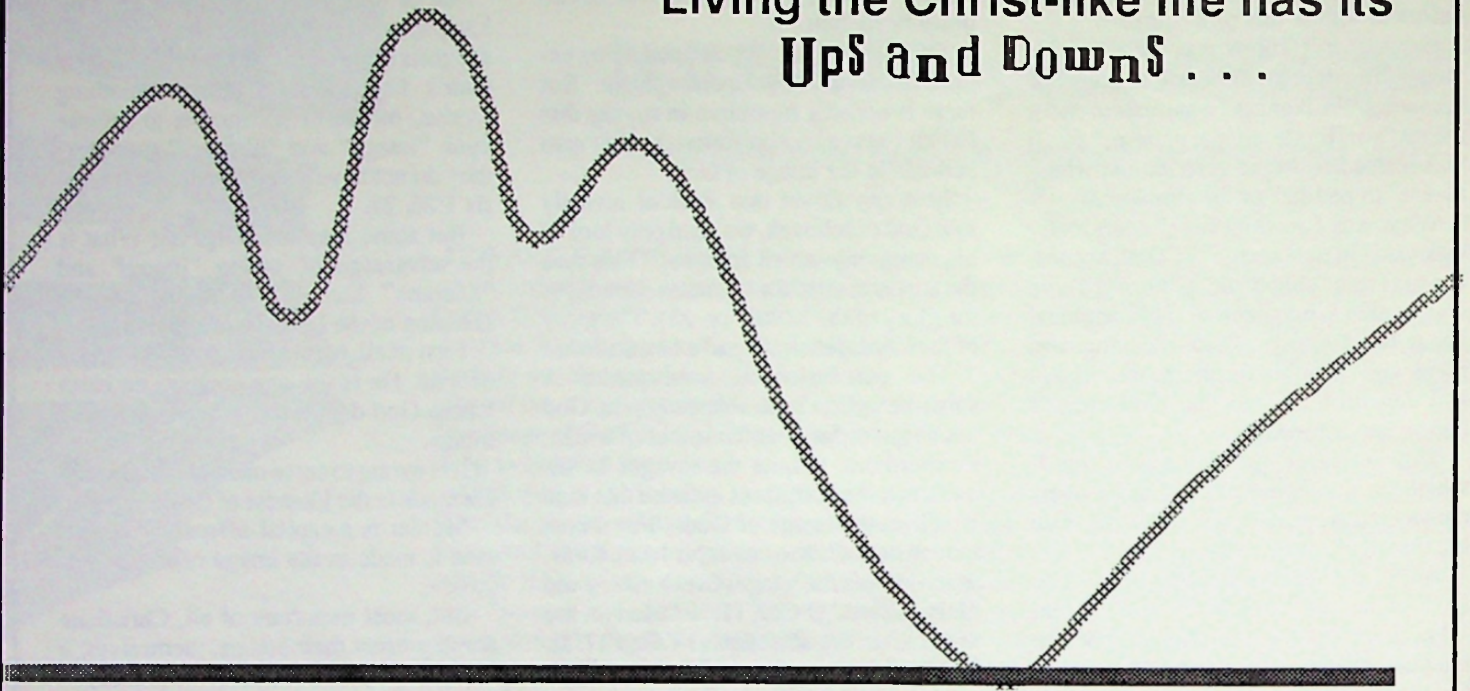
But, most important of all, Christians are to present their bodies, themselves, a living sacrifice to God (Rom. 12:1)—because they are made in his image.

The little lady who took issue with me that night said, in her own way, that she believed the Bible. Man really is in the image of God. Call it backwoods theology if you want to, it is what the Bible really says.

By Pastor Sidney Hatch

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We Understand . . .
Living the Christ-like life has its
Ups and Downs . . .



. . . but it sure is a lot
smoother than the alternatives!

Be a practicing faithful believer in God
and you'll receive the promise given to
Abraham.

Church of God (Abrahamic Faith)
General Conference
Box 100
Oregon, IL 61061



THOUSANDS OF BIBLE COURIERS AFFECTED BY NEW CHINESE BORDER LAW

HONG KONG (NNI)—A new customs law targeted at the thousands of Bible couriers that travel from Hong Kong to Canton was introduced June 15 that makes liable for prosecution anyone who either mails or carries any printed matter across the border without making a clear declaration of its contents. According to sources, the law was promulgated because of "grave concern" over the numbers of Bibles and New Testaments being taken into the city of Canton by Hong Kong visitors.

MEXICAN PRESS CONTINUES ATTACK AGAINST PROTESTANTS

MEXICO CITY (NNI)—Mexico's leading newspaper, *Excelsior*, has joined the fray attacking evangelical churches with a May 25, editorial, titled "Religious Sects Gaining Ground," claiming, among other things, that "sects" use "economic power" to gain followers. *Excelsior* said that a shortage of priests makes it difficult to counteract evangelical activities and accused the "sects" of trying to "erase national identity."

MISSION TEAM TO MEXICO

OREGON, Illinois (RH)—Seven Americans selected to take a week-long Bible school program to Labor Vieja, Mexico honed its work on the native tongue and plans the activity to include evangelistic work in the village. The team's mid-August ministry represents a continuing effort on the part of the Church of God General Conference to assist church members and friends in Labor Vieja. The team will also gain cross-cultural experience through the enterprise. Missions Coordinator Judy Myers leads the effort.

OFFICIAL CHURCH LEADERS SUSPEND PASTOR OF LARGEST EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN HO CHI MINH CITY

HONG KONG (NNI)—Pastor Dinh Thien Tu, the evangelical minister of Ho Chi Minh's fastest growing church, the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church in Tuy Ly Vong, was recently suspended from all pastoral duties and evicted from the church parsonage after being accused of "teaching false theories and not observing the rules and regula-

News from Around the Globe

tions of the church." The one-year suspension order was issued by the official Evangelical Church of Vietnam. Indo-China watchers believe the clumsy attempt to muzzle the country's leading evangelical voice could force many believers to go underground.

PROSPECTING DISCOVERS TREASURE IN LOVES PARK, ILLINOIS

LOVES PARK, Illinois (RH)—During seven days in July, staff members of the Church of God General Conference (Oregon, IL) and Oregon Bible College rang 350 door bells north of Rockford to find families interested in forming sharing groups for discovery of "opportunities in God's Word." When about 220 residents answered their doors, over 50 indicated a favorable response. "We figure the 27 percent of positive responses is a good sign of interest in Bible study," said Russ Magaw, a staff member in charge of the prospecting. Gary Turner, group coordinator of the sharing groups, saw real hope in the project. "When only 31 people declared no interest in what we were doing," he said, "I knew a large majority really have an interest in the Gospel." The prospecting is just the first step toward a new church planting in the area scheduled for early fall. General Conference Outreach and Church Development Director Warren Sorenson heads up the project. Staff Member Rick Cooper is in charge of a nine-week telemarketing campaign with the initial worship service slated for October 30.

U.N. TO STUDY HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN CUBA

WASHINGTON, D.C. (NNI)—With the conclusion of the 44th session of the United Nation's Human Rights Commis-

sion in Geneva, U.S. Ambassador Richard Shifter told members of Congress that Cuba will be included in a list of countries to be scrutinized for human rights violations. Special ambassador and former Cuban political prisoner, Armando Valladares, said the U.S. delegation succeeded in its goal to focus world attention on Cuba's jails and stated, ". . . the long suffering people of Cuba won an important moral victory over their Communist tormentors." A report of the U.N. findings is expected in 1989.

KUWAITI MEMBERS SEND AID TO DISASTER VICTIMS IN PAKISTAN

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (NNI)—Pakistani believers in Kuwait have presented Pakistan's President Mohammad Zia-Ul-Haq with a check for 50,000 RS to assist in rehabilitating victims of April's munitions dump disaster which killed some 120 people and injured over 5000. The donors said they hoped the money would be used to help rehabilitate children who were severely injured in the blast.

CHURCH PLANTER FINALIZES MOVE TO ENGLAND

OREGON, Illinois (RH)—It's a return to his roots for church-planting pastor Jeff Fletcher when he and his family move to England August 15, when Fletcher's family background is considered. His grandfather, Joe Fletcher, a native of Canada, was a generation removed from English ancestors. Grandson Jeff finished final shipment of household goods and books in mid-July to begin prospecting efforts for the church plant in Milton Keynes, England.

SOVIET DISSIDENT QUESTIONS U.S. HELSINKI COMMISSION REPORT CITING "IMPROVEMENTS" FOR SOVIET BELIEVERS

WASHINGTON, D.C. (NNI)—A recently-issued report on the human rights record of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev by the U.S. Congress' Helsinki Commission claims that improvements have been brought about for religious believers as a result of *glasnost*. But celebrated dissident and expelled human rights activist Yuri Orlov said current reforms do not represent changes in basic strategy but rather a change of "tactics."



God can . . .

body. But the message of hope that can be given to the family of a Christian at the graveside has so much more meaning. God has promised to resurrect the dead to eternal life."

After answering various questions I left. As I drove home I felt good about my visit and felt that I had left behind a friend—a man I wanted to see again.

Realizing that I had not dealt with salvation at all and had not led Bud to make a decision for Christ I later called to make another appointment. It was clear that Bud and Lucy believed in God, and this crisis in their lives had them reading the Bible. When Bud couldn't sleep he would often get up in the night and read from the Bible and play Christian music. As we continued to talk about the Bible and get better acquainted I discussed with them what it meant to believe that Jesus Christ, the son of the Living God, paid their debt at Calvary, and what repentance meant (a turning away from sin). I emphasized the importance of being baptized by immersion for the forgiveness of sin, how God had promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to

A Matter of Life or Death

By Pastor Richard Eldred

"MY DAD HAS CANCER really bad."

I said, "I would like to meet him and talk to him."

"I will have to ask him if he would like to see you." Nancy was a young lady whose husband had come to talk with me about a boat I had advertised in the paper. I had never met her before and I knew nothing about her father, but I was concerned and let her know that I cared. Truthfully, as the boat left the yard behind their car I never expected to see them again, or to hear from her.

On Wednesday night just before our church group was to meet at our home for Bible study the phone rang.

"This is Nancy," the voice on the other end said softly. "My husband bought your boat last week. I talked to my dad and he wants you to come and see him." I could have dropped the phone.

She gave me a phone number and directions on how to get to their house. They lived in Howard City about thirty miles north of Rockford. I called and

made arrangements to visit in the home of this couple—Bud and Lucy—whom I had never met. Lucy gave me further directions over the phone on how to get to their house.

Meeting them was easy. Lucy made me instantly feel at home and Bud was very open and honest. He had a deep need and was really looking for someone who could give him some answers. He was dying of cancer and he knew it, even though he was willing to try anything the doctors said in hopes that his life could be spared. We were able to speak openly and honestly with one another about death. Bud was the kind of man who didn't talk in circles; if he had something to say he was bold enough to say it.

"What does the Bible say about cremation?" Bud asked.

"We are talking about having his body cremated," Lucy added. "When the spirit goes to be with the Lord it really doesn't matter what happens to the body, does it?"

Without disputing their

understanding of Scripture I opened my Bible and began to share some verses that talked about the resurrection of the dead at the coming of Christ. I read John 5:28, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (NASB). I read

We were able to speak openly and honestly with one another about death.

verses that talk about a trumpet blast that will raise the dead.

"Bud, I don't know that the Bible condemns cremation," I said; "certainly God doesn't need the body to recreate life. Some Christians have burned up in fires, and God will recreate them at the coming of Christ even though there is no

help his people live for him, and the assurance of Christ's return to establish the kingdom of God upon the earth.

"We've been talking," Lucy said, "and we want to be baptized together."

Shortly after that I made arrangements at a nearby church and we had a very

... use you to share the Gospel with those in need.

touching baptismal service. That was May 4, 1986. I had Bud's funeral service in September that same year.

Friends, don't be fooled into thinking that this is something that only a pastor can do. Every Christian ought to be able to lead another person to faith in Jesus Christ and explain the things concerning the resurrection to life in the kingdom of God.

We as Christians hold in our hands the keys to the kingdom.

countable for our failure to present the gospel to those we know who are lost. **AS CHRISTIANS WE MUST HAVE THE DISCIPLINE TO TRAIN OURSELVES TO DO THE WORK WHICH GOD IS MOST CONCERNED ABOUT—WINNING THE LOST.**

Let me suggest some steps that will help you become a better witness:

1. **Pray for opportunities:** Someone has said, "Be-

what your values used to be, and what is important to you now that you have allowed Christ to take over your life. Work on your testimony to get it to perfection. Practice it on the dog.

4. **Learn a good Biblical approach:** You must work to know your Bible, how to find the verification for the hope you have in Christ, and why you have confidence and joy. Be able to show that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God who paid the sinner's debt at Calvary. Get prospects to believe it (they probably already do). Tell them what repentance means (turning around), the need for water baptism (symbolically burying the old person to start a new life), and the importance of living for Christ. **Practice this on the dog, too; he won't mind.**

The verses I like to begin with are Acts 2:22-38. Here Peter proved to the people that they had crucified the Son of

people to understand that we today are as guilty as those Jews were. We too are responsible for the death of Christ. From here we must be able to show our contacts other verses that support repentance, baptism, and a holy life. **I believe God will hold us accountable for failing to have the discipline to learn a good Biblical approach to presenting the gospel.**

5. **Do it:** "Go make disciples" is a command. Do it!

I only had a few months to get acquainted with Bud. He knew I was his friend. I was with him all day the day he died. Lucy has become a wonderful worker in the North Kent Bible Church of God. She has a beautiful testimony of the hope she has of seeing her husband resurrected from his grave someday to live eternally in the kingdom of God. Their greatest concern, as people who believed in God, had been what God thought of cremation.

When it comes to sharing the greatest news they will ever hear, why do Christians panic and choke?

We can bring people to life in the kingdom if we are successful in getting them to accept Christ as Lord and Savior; death in the lake of fire awaits them if we fail. How many people will be lost for eternity because YOU haven't tried? This is not only the pastor's duty, it is *your* duty. You know people your pastor doesn't know. If you can't explain everything, fully convince them to talk with your pastor, but you are the key.

When it comes to sharing the greatest news they will ever hear, why do Christians panic and choke? Joe Aldrich suggests two major reasons: 1) "They do not know how to share their faith. **They have never disciplined themselves to learn a logical, Biblical, gospel presentation.** 2) They don't know the person they are trying to evangelize" (*Life Style Evangelism*, p. 219, emphasis mine). I believe God will hold us ac-

fore you talk to men about God, talk to God about men." Our failure to witness often stems from a failure to ask God to make divine appointments. If we are sincere, God will honor those prayers. "He is not willing for any to perish" (2 Pet. 3:9). **DON'T FAIL TO GET ON YOUR KNEES FOR THE SALVATION OF YOUR FRIENDS.**

2. **Work at building relationships:** Joe Aldrich says, "If they don't know how much you care they will never care how much you know." We have to earn the right to share the gospel by first communicating that we care about the person. Too many Christians are guilty of trying to stuff a raw Bible down tender throats. Earn the right to lead; let them know you care.

3. **Have a testimony:** If you can't tell someone what Christ means in your life, you can never convince him that you have something he needs. Share how your life used to be,

Share how your life used to be, what your values used to be, and what is important to you now that you have allowed Christ to take over your life. Work on your testimony to get it to perfection.

God and God raised him up again. He laid that at their feet and convicted them of their guilt. They were pierced to the heart and asked what they could do. Peter said, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." We must help

I say without the slightest intent to boast, "I am so thankful that God has given me a burden for the lost and has helped me learn how to effectively open his Word and share it with those who need Christ.

If he can use me he can use ANYBODY—ANYBODY!



Does What I Believe Matter?

By Pastor V. E. Kirkpatrick, Sr.

FREQUENTLY, we hear the thought expressed: "It doesn't matter what we believe, so long as we are sincere in our faith. We are all going to the same place anyway."

To a portion of that statement we can, of course, agree. We know that if the Lord delays his coming, we will all go to the same place. Every person will go to "his long home, and the mourners [shall] go about the streets" (Eccl. 12:5).

It *does* matter what we believe. Scripture tells us that God gave his Word for a number of purposes. "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, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16, 17).

That with which we are concerned at this time is doctrine. God's Word holds the key to eternal life, which is ultimately essential to every hope that man can have. God's Word only can be a sure source of knowledge and information for man.

Our age has seen the development, over a period of time, of creeds for various religious groups. They have come to regard these creeds as necessary for their fol-

lowers to learn, and by which they can be considered as members of that group. God has, however, given no other creed than that of the Bible. It alone must be the source of information concerning what is essential for salvation.

Again, it has often been suggested that the group to which we belong does not particularly matter, so long as we are sincere in what that group believes. Paul, in his letter to the Roman brethren (Rom. 10:2), speaks of Israelites as some who "have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." He pointed out that they were going about to establish their own righteousness, but were failing to establish themselves in the righteousness of God. This, again, involves man-made creeds, created in our age.

It is suggested that there must be something wrong with us, and right with other groups, since we appear to have divisions, a lack of harmony. We are not always as friendly as we should be toward those within the church, and also toward those who visit our church to worship with us. These are presented as reasons for not entering into God's fold.

If the accusations are true, we must account for our own shortcomings. But such excuses are not an "open sesame" into the kingdom of God. Most congregations include individuals who are guilty of erroneous conduct. The most effective ambassadors for Satan in the world today are often those who hold membership in churches. Unless we wish to place ourselves on the side of Satan, we cannot use them as an excuse for our own failures. Unfriendliness toward others does not open the way for us into God's kingdom. We must be faithful. We must be obedient in spite of the hindrances we face, even if they are found in the church body.

It *does* make a difference what one believes; it *does* make a difference with whom we affiliate and work while making preparations for the coming of the King. Church membership is not a matter of convenience. It is not to be entered into because of a friendly attitude, desirable as that may be. It is incumbent upon us to seek affiliation with the group that holds to what our study convinces us are the great truths of Scripture, and with which we can work unreservedly toward the final goal of eternal inheritance in God's kingdom.

What we must do is work together to share the gospel truths with each other to form a mighty team working against Satan and for God.

Note: This article first appeared in the August, 1977, issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD under the title "Does it Matter?"

TOM'S DECISION

By Rachel Carr

This was the week! After months of waiting Tom was going to camp! Each year all the Churches of God in Tom's state sponsored a youth camp. Since Tom had just completed fifth grade, he was now old enough to go.

Tom remembered how each year the young people would come back from camp and tell about what a good time they had. They told about swimming in the lake, hiking on the mountain trails, the good Bible classes, the special campfires. Now Tom could go and have a week of fun, too.

Bright and early Saturday morning all the kids from Tom's church met in the parking lot to load the bus.

"Hi, Tom," called his friend Bill. "Are you going to camp?"

"Sure am. I've been ready for two days. Hey, where do we put our stuff?"

"Right there at the back of the bus."

Tom added his things to the mound of suitcases, sleeping bags, and pillows.

Within 20 minutes all 25 kids had gathered, chosen their seats, and were on their way. A couple of the high school boys had brought their guitars.

"Let's sing," said one of them as he started strumming.

"He is Lord, He is Lord," everyone joined in. Chorus followed chorus, and the three-hour trip didn't seem nearly that long.

The bus rolled to a stop in front of the lodge at Windy Pines Bible Camp. With a lot of shouting and laughing the kids poured out of the bus, dragging their bundles with them.

"I hope we get in the same cabin," said Tom as he and Bill waited in the registration line.

It turned out that they were both assigned to Cabin #3 with

Mr. Jansen as their counselor. He was from the other church in Tom's city. The boys were glad to have someone they already knew since this was their first camp.

The first afternoon the kids had free time for exploring the camp and getting acquainted. After he and Tom had checked things out, Bill declared, "I could sure use a swim."

"I'm with you," replied Tom. "Let's get into our suits and I'll race you down there."

Other campers got into a

lunch. Then there was a variety of activities from which to choose—choir, drama group, volleyball, baseball, swimming, nature hikes—something for everyone.

Special evening services included lots of good music and inspiring messages from God's Word. The final event each night was campfire. Gathering around the fire, singing choruses, and sharing testimonies helped the campers to feel especially close to God and to each other.

All too quickly the week passed. On the last night everyone gathered in the chapel for the evening service. The

decision. Some of the young people from Tom's church were among those that went forward to give their lives to Jesus.

Early the next morning everyone gathered at the lake for the baptism of those who had decided to follow Jesus. What a fine way to end such a great week!

Tom was quiet on the bus ride home. He had seen people baptized before, but he was deeply moved by the service that morning. Some of those baptized were his friends and he was seriously thinking about his own life.

On Sunday evening the campers were in charge of the service at Tom's church. Now Tom was one of those who got to tell about the week at camp. He could see some of the younger boys and girls listening closely to every word. He knew they could hardly wait till they were old enough for camp.

In the weeks that followed, Tom thought back to his time at camp. He remembered the class on Jesus' second coming. He thought about the campfires and the special friends he had made. But especially Tom thought about Jesus and what he had done for him.

Tom also talked to his parents and his Sunday School teacher and asked many questions about the Bible and the Christian life. He attended Sunday School, worship services, and youth meetings to learn all he could.

Later that summer Tom made his decision. He wanted to give his life to Jesus. When his pastor invited people to come forward, Tom slipped out of his seat and walked down the aisle.

When Tom came up out of the water after his baptism he was happy that now he, too, belonged to Jesus. It was the most important decision he had ever made.



Lots of folks like Tom want to make a similar decision.

rousing volleyball game. Some went boating. By evening everyone was ready to gather around the campfire for singing and devotions before bedtime.

A very busy week followed for Tom. Each morning there were Bible classes. Tom learned a lot from the good teachers. One class that was especially interesting to Tom was the one about Jesus' second coming.

Afternoons were full, too. Each of the churches had brought a quiz team and the playoffs were held right after

speaker was very serious that night.

"Jesus willingly gave his life because he loves YOU so much. He paid your penalty for sin so you wouldn't have to. But he didn't stay dead. He is alive today because God brought him back from death to live forever.

"God wants you to accept Jesus as your own personal Savior—to be baptized in water—to become a part of his family."

Then the speaker asked those to come to the front who wanted to make this important

Eighty Years—In Retrospect

I AM COMPLETELY AMAZED when I look back on my 80 years. I have never lived where I could attend church, but accepting the lessons my grandparents, our church ministers, and our church families taught me, made it seem I was in Sunday School every week.

My mother was a wonderful Christian lady from a family of 10 children. She never ceased presenting God's truths to me, showing me how to make them part of my life. Five things she emphasized:

- Do right, even if it kills you.
- Conduct yourself in a lady-like manner with a boy, and never do anything you could not discuss with Jesus.
- Treat others as you want to be treated.
- Always be truthful.
- Study! Study! Study the Word!

My grandparents, Alfred H. and Keturah Lucinda Rogers, were strict Christian people who taught their children standards of Christian living, who in turn tried to instill those standards in their own children.

When I was about two years old my father disappeared, so my early training was amidst a family that loved us dearly, and we received great comfort and care.

In about 1914 after Grandpa Rogers passed away, Grandma, mother, my brother, and I moved to Cape Girardeau, Missouri. I began to be instructed in Bible precepts at home. I was sent to a Methodist church, and learned how to conduct myself in Sunday School. I began to learn our own Bible doctrines when friends from the General Conference would come to preach.

Brother J. H. Anderson was one of the first. One of the most important things I learned was that I must study the Word myself. He said it was his duty to present the gospel, and at that moment his responsibility ceased; then it was MY responsibility to continue to learn from the Word.

Brother S. J. Lindsay was also one of the earlier men to visit in Grandma's home. He came several times, holding services and preaching the Word.

Mother, my brother, and I moved to Springfield, Missouri, to be near my Uncle Hermas. Brother Drinkard from Texas led us in Bible classes over a period of several years. He looked momentarily for Christ

and his kingdom. He organized a class at Republic, Missouri, also.

In 1931 I met Arthur Poe, a boy from Texas. He was an altar boy in the Catholic church, but felt in his heart he was not being taught the truth. He broke away when he was 15, and moved to Springfield. Mother, Grandma, and I began immediately to show him the true plan of salvation. He accepted with great enthusiasm, and was baptized by Brother J. H. Anderson at Blush church near Fredericktown, Missouri. We have been married 55 years. Our home has always been open to any ministers passing through Springfield.

Lyle Rankin was a fabulous preacher. He was adept at constructing charts to help one understand the history of the Bible. He held services at the Lockwood church and at the Sundwall home in Cross Timbers. We attended many times although it was 60 or 70 miles away.

When Arthur was away in service during WW II, I decided I would start a concentrated study of the Bible on my own. I wrote Oregon and five or six ministers I knew the best, ordering their tracts and books on the principles of the Church of God doctrine, and on prophecy. I broadened my knowledge immensely—one can really learn by himself, if he wants to.

I filed all my material by subjects, including all worthwhile articles from THE RESTITUTION HERALD. I have a fine backlog on every subject of the Bible. I hope to leave this to my grandson, with the hopes he will get as much out of it as I have.

Francis Burnett was the minister at Cross Timbers, Missouri, for several years. We attended every time we could. Francis conducted meetings at my mother's home (Mrs. Myrtle Mitchener). When she could have them no longer, they met at our house. Since Francis has been settled at the Belle Plaine, Iowa, church, he still stops at our house for services.

Pastor Ted Armes came a few times, as well as Weldon McCoy.

My uncle Irenus Rogers, who lived near Doniphan, Missouri, was a very knowledgeable, self-taught Bible student. We drove the 160 miles to his home many times to talk Bible, and I've learned many things from him which helped me in my study of the Word.



The author presenting this subject at Missouri State Family Retreat.

We have been friends of the William Sundwall family for about 45 years. They are as active in church work as anyone I know. They live it morning, noon, and night, helping neighbors (or anyone in need) constantly. They help in the community anywhere they can, and talk Bible every time they have an opportunity. We have had nearly a half century of Bible study with this family.

Richard Lee came all the way from Morse Mill to present Bible lessons at our home, for at least two years. Jim Lippert sometimes came with him. When we first organized, Richard Cooper taught our class for about six months, and has come to speak to us a few times since. He is an exceptionally good Bible student.

The Cooper families at Fredericktown have influenced me over a period of about 50 years. I taught a class in the church camp for several years. The Coopers were always the leaders in every branch of the church.

If you are unfortunate to be in a vicinity where you have no Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith, stay close to your family teaching, attend a church service every opportunity you have, and teach your own children, day and night. Study Deuteronomy 6:3-9; 11:18-21.

I have thanked God ten thousand times for my Christian family teaching, for the influence of Christian friends and church people, and for a Christian husband to help me finish out my life and be in God's coming kingdom.

By Irene Poe

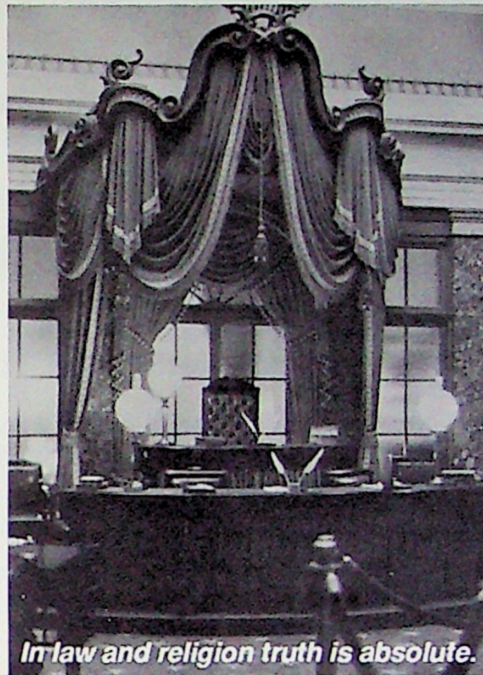
TRUTH—RELATIVE OR ABSOLUTE?

By Pastor Stephen Bolhous

AS JESUS STOOD before Pilate for questioning by him, Jesus stated, "I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice" (John 18:37). Pilate responded with a cop-out question, "What is truth?" as if to say, "Though you speak about truth, Jesus, it's an undefined entity!" Pilate displayed an irresponsible attitude that failed to pursue and search for absolute truth. He was satisfied with a truth that was relative to the moment: "If I don't let the mob crucify him they will get Caesar to fire me."

The same kind of behavior is frequently demonstrated by persons in our own age. Rather than search for absolute truth, humanity often satisfies itself with a guise of truth that seems relative to the occasion. Relative truth is that which appears to be true to our limited scope of human vision at any given moment. For example: "If I don't submit to the specific personal pressures from my associates to engage in drugs, sex, excessive drinking, giving approval to an abnormal lifestyle of adultery or homosexuality—then I will lose the friendship of these 'valuable' people."

The relative truth sees only the probability of lost approval but does not look at values or the long-term consequences of a specific behavior. Relative truth sees only the now and is often merely a weak means of justifying what the selfish will wants to do. Sometimes we "con" ourselves into accepting relative truth. Jeremiah said, "The heart is more deceitful than all else" (17:9). Relative truth denies the existence of absolute truth and that makes each



person's actions correct. This was the condition in the time of the Old Testament judges: "Everyone did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg. 21:25). Under such a system (and our society seems to be heading that way) even the basest debauchery and/or anarchy could be classified as relative truth. An absolute code of truth is desperately needed!

Pilate was baiting Jesus with his question, "What is truth?" Jesus had prayed about absolute truth just the night before: "Sanctify them in the truth; Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). God's Holy Word, the

Bible, is an absolute truth for our lives.

The Bible was not "made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet. 1:21). God, who is the epitome of truth, has provided us with a written revelation of truth through guided human authors. Paul said, "All Scripture is inspired by God"—the word "inspired" literally means "God-breathed"—and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The Bible is to be the source and guide for determining truth in our lives—not the times, the situations we may encounter, or the cries of special-interest groups.

Martin Luther referred to the Scriptures as *sola fidei regula*—the only rule of faith; the absolute of all truth. It is interesting to note that in some circles the authenticity and/or the literal interpretation of Scripture as having application to modern life is being questioned, attacked, or, worse yet, totally dismissed. Stripped of its pretentious facade, what is this but an attempt by a selfish self-justifying of relative truth in order to deny the absolute truth of the Bible?

Jesus said to his generation and to ours, "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32). When we allow ourselves to be governed by the absolute truth of God's Book we are not enchained, but rather are liberated to a more fruitful, satisfying life. In the quest for truth in your life don't be satisfied with a cheap imitation—hold to the teaching of the Bible as the foundation for your faith and life!

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Sticks and Stones . . .

(Continued from page 8)

in the temple by the religious leaders.

Such glaring sins by religious leaders—it was too much for the Lord. He stooped and wrote on the ground with his finger while they clamored for his attention and judgment.

Finally Jesus stood and faced them eye to eye, declaring: "LET HIM THAT IS WITHOUT SIN CAST THE FIRST STONE!"

Jesus went right over the technicalities of the law to the heart and spirit of the law—that all are sinners!

The Master Teacher did it again. His statement diverted attention from himself and from the woman—back to the perpetrators of the whole dastardly proposal. Now what were prideful religious leaders going to do?

Jesus returned to scribbling in the dust while they pondered his rejoinder.

There they stood—rocks clinched tightly in fists. Jesus draws in the dirt. Many awkward seconds pass. Pious

minds are whirling a mile a minute. Every angle of the problem is silently searched in those sage heads, but no legitimate "come-back" comes up.

Gradually fists relax. Stones drop behind backs. It begins with the oldest. Conscience works. Pride falls with each heavy thud of another stone. The crowd melts away with empty hands.

Jesus looks up to see the lonely woman.

"Where are your accusers?"

The woman shrugs, then turns repentant eyes on the Lord.

"Go . . . sin no more."

With a burden for the lost Jesus freely gave God's grace.

How about you?

Do you have stones in your fists? Are you quick to make rash judgments, especially if they make you look good and feel better at someone else's expense? Are you jealous of another's popularity,

money, home, car, abilities? Will you throw stones at him?

Jesus always showed compassion for the sinner. It didn't matter to him whether there was alcohol on his breath, his clothes were not coordinated, his toes stuck out of his shoes, his car was running on bald tires, or he lived in a shanty in the bad section of town.

As Christ's own Apostle Paul wrote: "Owe no one anything, except to love one another" (Rom. 18:8, RSV). Will you become a debtor of love to the unlovely?

To do so, change your view of "those terrible sinners" to "God's beautiful people." There are people that sit in taverns who possess great potential for spiritual gifts if we will climb down from our marble pedestals and mingle among them. View each bar stool sitter as God's child instead of a target for stone throwers.

Warning: Sacrilegious Movie Coming!

The movie is based on the book *The Last Temptation of Christ*, written by Nikos Kazantzakis. The following quotes come from the script for the movie. Jesus is presented as a weak, unstable man.

On the introduction page of the script the following quote from Kazantzakis is given: "It is not God who will save us—it is we who will save God; by battling, by creating and transmuting matter into spirit."

A lengthy passage places Jesus in a group of clients waiting outside Mary Magdalene's bedroom door. When he enters, Jesus says: "I've done a lot of wrong things. I'm going to the desert to be cleansed. The worst things I've done are to you. Forgive me."

Later he tells Judas to arrange with the Temple guards to arrest him in Gethsemane. Talking to Judas about his betrayal, Jesus encourages Judas to follow through on the betrayal. Judas says to Jesus: "If you had to betray your master, would you do it?" Jesus replies: "No. But that's why God gave me the easier job—to be crucified."

Jesus tells a group of poor and sick who

ask him for healing, "Get away. You sicken me. You're selfish and full of hate. God won't help you."

The story portrays Jesus marrying Mary Magdalene. His guardian angel wants to watch while Jesus and Mary engage in sex. According to the script, the guardian angel says to Jesus: "It's me. I wondered if I could watch [the couple engage in sex]. I'm lonely too." Jesus laughs and responds: "Yes, yes. Watch."

In another conversation, Jesus tells Mary Magdalene: ". . . now I know; a woman is God's greatest work. And I worship you. God sleeps between your legs."

After Mary Magdalene is killed, Jesus moves in with Mary and Martha, the sisters of Lazarus, and has children with both of them. Only a brief description at the very end identifies his relationships with Mary Magdalene, Mary, and Martha as a dream.

Universal not only refused to allow the screening as originally scheduled, but also refused to allow religious leaders to read

the script as it presently stands.

Suggested Actions

Write and call Chairman Tom Pollock at MCA (which owns Universal) and ask why MCA felt it necessary to do the film. (Paramount picked up the film several years ago, then dropped it after getting a considerable number of complaints from Christians.) The number is 1-818-777-1000. Local churches can run the number in their bulletins and newsletters and encourage their people to call. Petitions can be distributed.

Tom Pollock's address: MCA, Inc., 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608. MCA owns Universal Pictures, Universal Studios, MCA Music, MCA Development Co., MCA Publishing Group, MCA Television, Putnam Publishing Group, Berkeley Publishing Corp., Jove Publications, Coward-McCann Publishers, Grosset & Dunlap Publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons, Spencer Gifts, Universal Television, Womp's Restaurant Bar & Grill, Yosemite Park & Curry Company.

Bible Study Aids

If you're like me, there's always the question: "What to study for the next 10 weeks in my home Bible study group?"

Well, THE RESTITUTION HERALD has the answer—five answers, in fact. Take your choice from the selection pictured below.

Personally, I feel that "How to Enjoy an Abundant and Fruitful Christian Life" is an excellent pick for your first series. It gets you right into devotional reading and prayer.

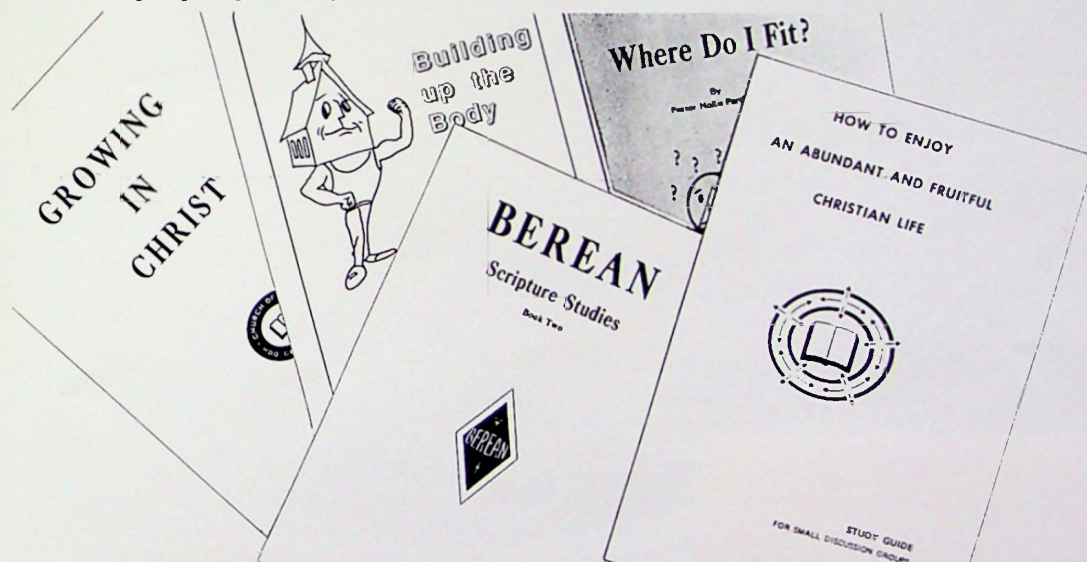
Then "Growing in Christ" follows that with things like forgiveness, the Christian walk, and a review of Bible truths.

After that you may want to use "Where Do I Fit?" to get your home Bible study class into the work of the church.

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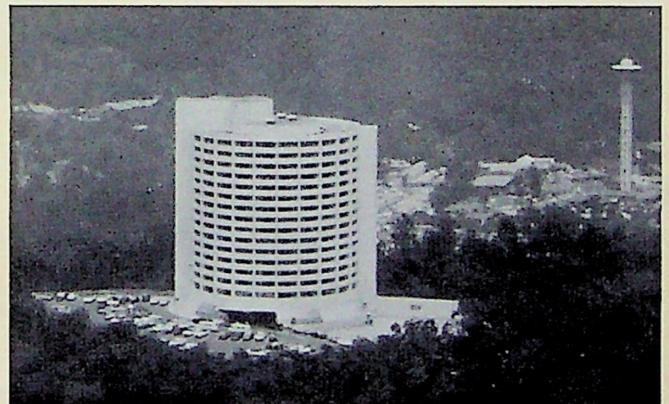
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