

The

Restitution Herald

Who we are . . .



In

- Biblical beliefs . . .
- Personality profile . . .
- Expectation for the future . . .
- Creative use of stress . . .





Editor's Viewpoint

In our August/September issue . . .

We preempted the president.

You read right. We beat President Bush to the hedge. The hedge on the war on drugs, that is.

As you'll recall, we published several articles on substance abuse, and abuse in general. Of course, the president is pushing a billion-dollar budget. Ours is based on the compassion of God and is demonstrated in caring hearts by family members.

The family. That's always the key. Without a concrete understanding of your place in your family, love is lost.

Love. Identity. Caring and compassion. Real answers which must be transferred into your daily experience.

That leads us to

This issue . . .

Who are we?

That's a question I'm asked when telemarketing, when I visit with my Kiwanis friends, when I go to ball games, when I walk down the street—just about in any public situation.

I hope this issue helps you answer that question when you are confronted with it. Our lead article by Pastor Waldon Winner discusses your position concerning life—even life after death. We believe in life only in Christ. So, what does that mean? Pastor Winner's thoughts begin on page 4. Companion who-we-are-doctrinally articles by pastors Don Ward and James Mattison also

appear, beginning on pages 6 and 20 respectively.

Who am I? That's perhaps an even more important question. How do I make decisions? What motivates me to do the things I do?

You can find answers to who you are by examining Michele Millard's article which begins on page 7. Michele will lead you on in this self-exploration and is willing to work with you in this area. Her phone number at the end of the article catches her at the office.

A crucial problem which continues to plague us is stress. Pastors Craig Wagganer and Tony Baldwin deal with this and depression; see pages 11 and 16 for their lucid suggestions. Both give practical steps to making stress and depression work for you, not against you, as is usually the case.

It's almost party time! With 1989 winding down there are parties to commemorate Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's—have I forgotten any?

Some parties you're invited to you turn down, but why? Vicki Pulling asks you to reconsider. See her full treatment on page 14.

Back to stress . . .

More will come your way in future issues on this vital subject. Pastor and Mrs. Ray Hall will contribute to this theme in the December/January issue. Additional material is scheduled for February.

Again, our hope is to bring biblical

and practical evidence to bear on your experience. We aim to assist you, not discourage you.

Advent issue coming

The Advent pullout section usually appears in this issue. If you looked for it and didn't find it, don't despair. It will appear in the next issue, the December/January RESTITUTION HERALD. You will get it in time to participate in the Advent season.

Russian window of opportunity

When U.S. Congressman Frank Wolf of Virginia visited the Soviet Union in August, he brought back a report of poverty among the people. "When you get outside of Moscow, it really is a Third World country," he said. Wolf continued by suggesting economic assistance for the bear of the north. (See "News You Can Use" on page 25.)

Wherever Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev travels around the world economic unrest dogs his heels, in spite of the *glasnost* and *perestroika* he has fostered politically at home.

Then also in August an Orange County, California, radio station devoted an entire day of programming to rumors that Gorbachev might be a secret Christian.

Many positive signs indicate a new "window of opportunity" is opening. More Bibles flow into the country than ever before, religious themes in popular song and film are tolerated, three high-ranking Orthodox officials were elected to the new Soviet Con-

gress of Peoples' Deputies, and Western evangelical artists and speakers are welcome.

On the heels of such good news other signs send mixed signals from Russia. Unregistered Christian movements inside Russia continue to receive harassment via fines and intimidation. The Ukrainian Catholic Church remains pressured and unrecognized. Conscientious objectors continue to be sentenced to labor camps. Confiscated religious materials are reportedly piling up at Soviet customs, in spite of lifted restrictions.

How can the current climate in Russia best be assessed? Will "capitalism" and "religion" eventually become acceptable terms? Will there be a lessening of tensions between East and West to the extent that true peace will come?

Some things have yet to change, and when they do, then we can hope for peace. For instance, "Christian" is still a term which implies "second-class citizen" in the Soviet system. The key to education and advancement is still membership in the Communist Party, and entrance therein entails an atheist oath. Religion is still viewed as a foreign opiate of the people. Given the present rate of economic progress and the extent of a "trickle down" effect, true private enterprise is hundreds of years away.

Today there is a window of opportunity. Let's do our part to increase the view.

Change, a World War II aftermath
Whatever happened to aggressor

nations Japan and West Germany—after the war? They became economic marvels—50 years later.

How has the war changed the United States in the last 50 years? Take a glance at the federal budget—\$9 billion in 1939; \$91 billion at the end of the fighting. The war took us out of the Great Depression, and we've never looked back economically.

Socially the war forced men to travel the world, and placed women into their first jobs. Soon owning your own home became possible and suburbs sprang up everywhere to accommodate the dream.

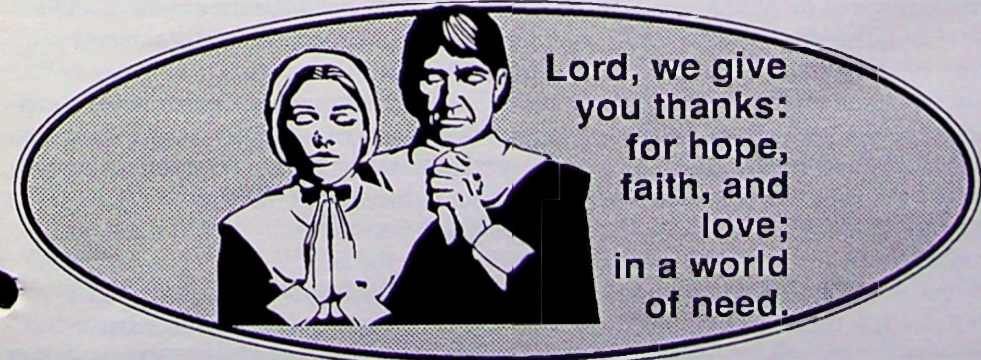
Politically Americans migrated all over the map, changing forever party allegiance in specific regions of the country.

But the war brought out the Bomb. Fear of it has driven nations to the peace table ever since. Yet no one feels safe anymore.

The war also fermented new religions which took the place of faulty faiths holding unsatisfactory answers. Today people want to know, "How can your faith help me in the here and now? There may be no tomorrow."

Then again, folks would like to be reassured: "Is what I'm doing the best I can do?"—a question in every mind. Those who supply a climate of care and self-realization get an audience.

Oh, to hear again the words of Jesus: "Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 9:28, GNB).



THE
Restitution Herald

Vol. 79 October/November/1989 No. 1

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 six times a year.

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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In England: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 16 Parsley Close, Pinefields, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England MK 77 DA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS
One Year, \$12 [£10]
Two Years, \$21 [£18]
Three years, \$30 [£27]
[English price in brackets]

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

CREDITS: Russ Magaw, page 31.



Discovering life after death

By
Pastor
Waldon
Winner
Jr.

THE DRUZE have a cemetery in the mountains overlooking Beirut, Lebanon. It has Egyptian-type obelisks at the entrance, and just beyond them is a pool in the shape of an egg with water in it representing the "egg of life." Everything goes through an egg stage: human beings, animals, everything began in the egg stage, say the Druze.

Once you leave that pool you will notice steps or footprints of crustaceans, footprints of animals, footprints of higher forms and, finally, footprints of man. Man is the highest form on the evolutionary scale, they say.

Beyond that pool is a depiction of the sun. When man leaves this life, he goes to the sun. His "remains" are borne on the wings of "The Bird of Life" until he merges with the sun.

According to the Druze, man begins as an egg and ends in the sun.

Very interesting! Aren't you glad that Christians aren't as befuddled about what happens to man after death?

The creature worshipers in Africa say that when man dies his spirit goes into a living animal or a tree or a bush, so that person continues to live on in some form—perhaps a much lower form than he was when he was a human being. In some cases he can pass on to a higher level if he has been the right kind of person, according to the belief.

Spiritualists say that when a person dies, he is not really dead, but passes on to a new transition. You can under the right circumstances,

Heaven, hell, purgatory, limbo, soul sleeping—what is the truth about what happens to that personality that once was you when you die?

they say, call up spirits to hold conversations with them.

You can see right away that these ideas can't be true because they are somewhat contradictory.

Perhaps of all the subjects that man could discuss, the most emotional is this: "What happens to man when he dies?" Everyone has an opinion on the subject. There are almost as many ideas about it as people to give them.

King Solomon made it plain: "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die" (Eccl. 3:1, 2).

The ancient Egyptians were concerned about death. Their attempts to solve the enigma of life after death reached monumental proportions. Pharaohs' burial tombs were filled with treasures and life's paraphernalia, including servants to serve the pharaoh in the state of existence after death.

The idea was perhaps perfected by the Greeks, primarily under the influence of the Athenian philosopher Plato (428-348 B.C.), who was a pupil of Socrates.

In *Phaedo*—one of Plato's most famous works—Plato recounts Socrates' final conversation with his friends on the last day of his life. Socrates declared to them:

"Be of good cheer, and do not lament my passing. . . . When you lay me down in the grave, say that you are burying my body only, and not my soul."

Socrates' statement is little different from the teaching of most churches today.

What about all of this? Are all of these ideas true? Are some of them true? Aren't we glad that Christians know what they believe and are more precise and specific on the subject?

Well, I'm not so sure.

Heaven, hell, purgatory, limbo, soul sleeping—what is the truth about what happens to that personality that once was you when you die? Where does it go? What does it do? What does it feel?

"What says the Bible?"

*The blessed Bible, this my question be,
The teachings of men so often mislead me.*

Some believe one goes through the egg of life to eventually merge with the sun.

What says the Bible to me?"

It would be God that would know the answer to this, since he made man. It doesn't make much difference what philosophies you and I develop, God has the only right answer and there is no better place to begin than at the beginning.

"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*" (Gen. 2:7).

There were no preexistent spirits waiting to inhabit bodies according to this formula. God breathed life into the form he had made and man became a living soul. That's a pretty simple equation even if math isn't your strength.

The phrase "living soul" is kind of strange. If man became a living soul at that point, can there be a "dead soul"?

Surprising many Bible readers is the reference to a "dead soul" in Ezekiel 18: 4, 20. The sentence repeated in both verses is "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Very interesting!

In Ecclesiastes we find another intriguing passage, "The living know that they shall die." Doesn't the thought of death pass through your mind upon an occasion or two? "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing" (Eccl. 9:5).

Evidently opposed to the idea of some type of conscious existence on the other side of the grave is this verse and the next (v. 6) which tells us that their love, hatred, and jealousy have vanished. If there was judgment at death and you found yourself in heaven, wouldn't you love it? Or, conversely, if you found yourself in a fiery hell, wouldn't you hate it?

Still on that theme, Solomon in verse 10 says that there is no working, planning, knowledge, or wisdom in the grave. The common understanding of a faithful Christian's situation after death would leave him in a heavenly reward for countless years, but, based on verse 10, apparently without a brain. There must be a better explanation. The Scriptures don't fit the popular beliefs.

The Scriptures continue to toss out all the information if we will grasp it. Psalm 115:17

strikes an additional blow to the predominant teaching in Christian circles when it says, "The dead praise not the Lord." If counted worthy of a heavenly reward when my last breath on earth had expired and I found myself in the presence of the Lord, I believe I would at least utter a thank you. However, the message of these passages begins to indicate to us that instead of an immediate reward, there just might be a waiting period.

What do other scholars have to say on the immortality of the soul?

"The immortality of the soul . . . comes from the Greeks, and when Greek thought and Hebrew-Christian thought came into contact in the Early Church, the Greek view often seemed to predominate." (Robert McAfee Brown, *The Bible Speaks to You*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955, p. 221.)

"To sum up, the essential idea of the Egyptian conception of immortality was that the ghost or spirit of the man preserved the personality and the form of the man in the existence after death; that this spirit had the same desires, the same pleasures, the same necessities, and the same fears as on earth. Life after death was a duplicate of life on earth." (George Andrew Reisner, *The Egyptian Conception of Immortality*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1912, p. 75.)

The immortality of the soul was believed and taught by the Romans, Greeks, Assyrians, Phoenicians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and many other pagans. The real origin is much earlier.

In the third chapter of Genesis, God said that Adam and Eve could not eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the garden. But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God."

This theory of the immortality of the soul persuaded our first parents to believe and accept it. It was the one desire that the human mind could not resist. Millions continue to teach this doctrine today. It leads eventually to spiritism and devil worship. It is contrary to Scripture. It destroys the Christian's belief in the resurrec-

(Continued, page 6.)

Discovering life after death

(Continued from page 5)

tion, the second coming of Christ, and judgment.

"The immortality of the soul . . . this widely-accepted idea is one of the greatest misunderstandings of Christianity. There is no point in attempting to hide this fact, or to veil it by reinterpreting the Christian faith. . . . The concept of death and resurrection is anchored in the Christ-event . . . , and hence is incompatible with the Greek belief in immortality." (Oscar Cullman, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?* New York: Macmillan, 1958, p. 15.)

If there was ever a tale to tell, a best-seller story, a made-for-TV movie, Lazarus would have been able to corner the market after his resurrection in John 11. Lazarus had no story to tell. He was unaware of any events transpiring for the last four days. Jesus told Martha that Lazarus was asleep. When Jesus called to Lazarus in his grave, he didn't say, "Lazarus, come down," or "Lazarus, come up," but "Lazarus, come forth." Why call him back to life at all if he was experiencing "heavenly bliss"?

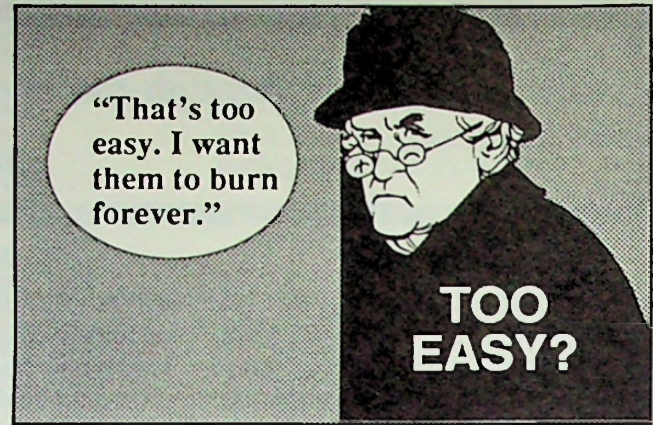
Notice the future promise by Jesus in John 11. "I am the resurrection, and the life. He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live. And who ever lives and believes in me shall never die."

The young man came to Jesus in Matthew 19 and asked what good thing he should do to obtain eternal life. Christ didn't inform him that he already possessed it in the form of an "immortal soul."

When a human being dies, he becomes unconscious or asleep, with no knowledge of the passage of time. He sleeps until Jesus, the life giver, calls him back to life at the resurrection morning. Only then does a person receive incorruptibility (1 Thes. 4 and 1 Cor. 15). Only Jesus has the keys to death and hell (Rev. 1:18). Other human beings do not have immortality. They do not have a separate existence without their bodies.

The only real hope of the Christian, as taught by the original inspired church, was to attain to the resurrection. They knew and understood that the only way to attain eternal life was through a resurrection from death.

Far greater than life insurance is this death assurance. ●



THE LADY did not care for the teaching that the final end of the unsaved will be eternal death. Does the Bible teach that God will cause those found unworthy of eternal life to have eternal life just so he can make them suffer unremitting, searing pain—forever?

Her appetite for retribution betrays more than a strong dislike for some people; it betrays what is far more common with many folks—a certain glibness with the whole subject of salvation and judgment. For in reality, who could stand to watch someone, anyone, scream out from the pain of being on fire without wanting to rescue him or her, and quickly? Witnessing a few hours of such atrocity would cause even the most vengeful heart to shudder and take pity.

But no, some say, "Let the rascals burn f-o-r-e-v-e-r!" This seems like justice—if not for all the wicked, then at least for the most despicable ones. But only if they have not considered carefully what they are saying. Think about such a fate for a moment. The most imaginative cannot begin to comprehend it. That's not justice. It doesn't come close. That's not an eye for an eye even. That's a billion eyes for an eye.

If the Bible has said it once, it has said it a hundred times: "The wages of sin is death" (Rom.

6:23). From the beginning it was so. God told Adam not to eat from that tree. You eat—you die (Gen. 2:17). But he ate and "sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men" (Rom. 12:12).

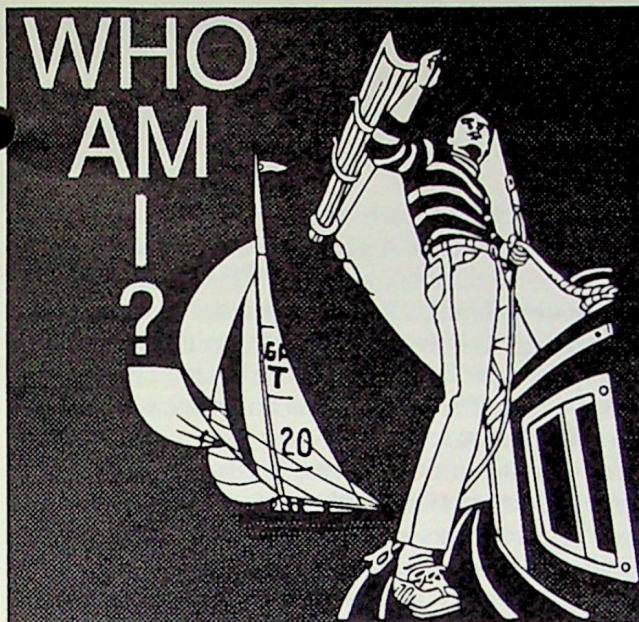
Consequently Jesus took upon himself the curse of sin (Gal. 3:13) that he might lift it from the backs of condemned men, "the just for the unjust" (1 Pet. 3:18). Thus he died on the cross. "For if by the trespass of one man [Adam], death reigned through that one man, how much more will . . . the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:17).

Paul warns of the unrepentant, "They will be punished with everlasting destruction" (2 Thes. 1:8). "Destruction" is used frequently regarding the final end of the lost. It is a frightening prospect.

Peter writes of "the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men," but also of God's concern. "He is . . . not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:7, 9). Men may relish vengeance. God wants all to be saved although he will administer judgment as required.

Remember, "Now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation."

By Pastor Don Ward



Personality—God’s Gift to You

From the time we were in our mother’s womb, the Psalmist tells us, God knew who we were and valued us. Along with the package of color of hair, skin, and eyes came another gift—that of our personality. It seems that our basic personality is genetic, and although our environment—or the way we were raised—has some effect on our personality, what is inherently “you” remains the same.

Behavior is not random. Since early Greece, attempts have been made to somehow systematize people and their behavior. Over the years you have probably noticed things about yourself—those “things” that make you “you.” The particular way we behave is unique to us. No one is just like us and no one knows us as well as we know ourselves. We may not always know why we behave the way we do, but we are aware of ourselves more than anyone else. We are aware of our deepest desires, our likes and dislikes, how we do things, and what idiosyncrasies we have that make us unique.

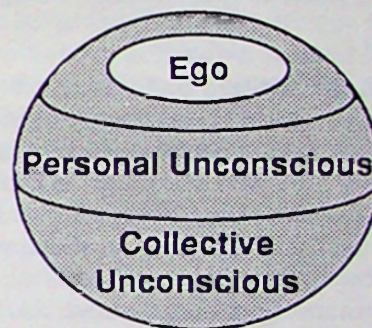
Differences Are Gifts?

As we begin to know ourselves, we also begin to notice that other people are different from us. Through our lives we are confronted, puzzled, and even assaulted by the differences of others. We end up comparing ourselves to others and ultimately ask, “Why am I like that?” or, “Why can’t I be more like him/her?” when we find these differences appealing; and, “Why can’t they be more like me?” when we find these differences irritating. Initially we may find these differences appealing because they seem to fill a void we may see in ourselves, but, as time goes on, these differences become an irritant, and we set about on the task of changing those people into an image of ourselves.

• A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY

The Hidden Self

As much as we *do* know about ourselves, there is much more we *don’t* know. There are deeply mysterious parts of ourselves that also influence who we are and how we behave. The Apostle Paul knew that well when he described his frustration at doing the things he didn’t want to do and not doing the things he wanted to do—and not really understanding why that was (Rom. 7:18-23). In Ephesians 3:16 Paul also talked about the hidden self—that part of him that was not known, yet was a part of him and his behavior. The psychologist Carl Jung helps us understand that same concept by dividing our personality into three different parts, the conscious, the personal unconscious, and the collective unconscious.



1. *The Conscious.* The conscious is made up of the part of ourselves of which we are currently aware and is believed to be only 10 percent of our total being. You are “aware” of certain aspects of yourself—your physical surroundings, if you are hot or cold, your present thoughts and feelings, and your viewpoints and values at any given moment. At the center of the “conscious” is the “ego” which is Latin for “I” and is the control center for your conscious existence. It directs who we are at any given moment, how we interpret our situation, and the reactions and behavior that we exhibit.

2. *The Personal Unconscious.* It is estimated that 90 percent of our personality is “unconscious,” and from this comes a great deal of our behavior and decisions. Just because we are unaware of these aspects of ourselves does not mean that it has no effect on us. The personal unconscious is that part of our hidden self that we have acquired because of our own personal experiences. It contains all of our unique memories—our life experiences, like past interactions with parents, friends, and relatives, our education and fun times, and the emotions that we have experienced through life. These things are stored in our memory and can be made conscious with effort, and have an effect on our behavior. An example of this would be, when I smell Zest soap, I am reminded of being in the hospital when I
(Please turn the page)

By Michele Millard

Who Am I? (Continued from page 7)

had my children (because the hospital used Zest soap) and I remember the warmth and happiness of that experience.

3. *The Collective Unconscious*. This is the part that "came with the package" God gave us when we were born. This is the aspect of our identity that is innate. It determines that I have certain preferences, certain ways of doing things, and certain abilities and strengths. It is the basis from which the conscious and personal unconscious develop. It has a great influence on our reactions and our behaviors. It surfaces under stress, in ways we don't understand or feel we can control—perhaps what Paul was talking about when he found himself doing those things he hated.

Interesting Stuff (or boring), But Why Me?

So what, you say? This may or may not be interesting to you, but why learn about personality? Contrary to the cliché, ignorance is not bliss. The more we know about ourselves and others, the better off we will be. Knowledge is a step in the lifelong journey in which we are all involved. We grow by learning because:

1. As we learn more about ourselves we also learn more about our Creator, in whose image we were created.
2. As we learn we are able to accept ourselves—with our strengths and weaknesses—as God's creation, valued and loved by our Creator.
3. As we learn we are enabled to see differences in others, not as wrong or threats to us, but as gifts which can be valued and appreciated.
4. As we learn we are enabled to see our own limitations—not as failures, but as gifts. We can now define our own finiteness, accept others' limitations, recognize our need for others and the communities in which we live, and point to our need for God and the grace we receive from him.
5. As we learn we are enabled to grow, develop, and find our full potential as a child of God as we move toward the wholeness that he has planned for us.

Discovering Our Preferences

One way of learning about ourselves is to develop some kind of measurement to define patterns of behavior. One such indicator is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator that was developed at the kitchen table of a mother-daughter over 50 years ago and has since been widely tested, researched, and applied in thousands of different situations. This indicator is based on the idea that we have preferences for the way we behave. For example, if you write your name with one hand, and then with the other, you will discover that it is possible to write with both

hands; but that one will be more comfortable and more natural to you. That is your preferred hand. You also have preferred ways of responding to life. This indicator measures four different areas of preference: 1) where you get your energy; 2) how you take in your information; 3) how you make your decisions; and 4) the kind of lifestyle which you prefer. These four areas are measured by four continuums which are:

- a. Extroversion (getting your energy from people and activity) and Introversion (getting your energy from the inner world of thoughts and feelings) E-I
 - b. Sensing (getting your information from your five senses, in the present) and iNtuition (using your "sixth" sense, thinking about future possibilities) S-N
 - c. Thinking (making your decisions based on logic) and Feeling (making your judgments on personal feelings and values) T-F
 - d. Judging (like a structured, organized lifestyle) and Perception (preferring an adaptable, flexible lifestyle) J-P
- To make a guess at what you might be without taking the inventory, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you . . .

E
have many friends?
speak before thinking?
need to be with people?
like interruptions?
like new people?

I
have a few good friends?
think before speaking?
need time alone?
hate interruptions?
avoid new people?

2. Do you . . .

S
like specific information?
live in present?
like practicality?
like routine?
like details?

N
like general ideas?
think about the future?
like different and new?
like change?
like to see whole picture?

3. Do you . . .

T
stay cool and calm?
like to be right?
like to be objective?
like to critique?
like to be just?

F
get emotionally involved?
like to be liked?
like to be sympathetic?
like to appreciate?
like to be humane?

4. Do you . . .

J
like structure?
like decisions?
like plans?
like deadlines?
work, then play?

P
like flexibility?
avoid decisions?
like to stay open?
avoid deadlines?
mix work and play?

Try and choose one side in each of the four areas that seems most comfortable and natural to you (it's difficult when it's so brief). In choosing one "letter" from each area, you will have a combination of four letters (i.e., ESTJ). From those four letters, you will derive your "type." Remember, this does not define you—it just gives you information on yourself. Also remember that it is all positive—it's great to be who you are, for it comes from God. It can be used to reveal your strengths, as well as areas that you could develop. There are no right or wrong types—they are all right.

Implications for Life

Romans 12:4-8 describes us as members of one body—that of Christ. As members of this one body we are very different, using the gifts that God has given to us. These gifts are manifested in many different areas of our lives, and as we understand and appreciate these differences, our lives will be enhanced. It can make a difference in our marriages, in our relationships with our children, as co-workers, as fellow church members, as students and teachers, and in our relationship with God. There is a high correlation between your preferences and spiritual gifts and how they are "fleshed out" in the church, both in the leadership of pastors and boards, as well as in the members, as they minister to each other. As we grow and develop, all of life can be enhanced.

Freedom to Grow

I hear many people, when describing their problems, give the excuse, "But that's just the way I am." They feel that their personality and behavior are etched in stone, that nothing will change, and that the world had better adjust to them. That is as antigospel as you can get. The whole message of Jesus is centered around the fact that as we accept him, we are changed.

Romans 12:1 tells us to "be transformed," which is taken from the Greek word meaning "metamorphosis," which if you remember from biology is the process a caterpillar goes through to become a butterfly. It changes and so can we. We've learned from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator that perhaps our basic personality stays the same with the preferences that we exhibit, but the forms of those preferences may change. When we recognize those preferences and accept them, we are then free to develop those "opposite" preferences, or those behaviors that are not the most comfortable for us to use. When we look back at our prime example, Jesus, we might wonder what preferences he used. In his humanity he probably did have a set of preferences, but in his high state of spirituality he had complete freedom to use what-

ever behavior, attitude, or preference was appropriate for that situation. For example, as an Extrovert he spoke to the multitudes, and as an Introvert he withdrew for prayer and meditation. As a Sensing person, he fed the multitude and taught about the sparrows and lilies. As an intuitive, he used symbols (light, bread) and taught about future possibilities (kingdom). As a Thinking person, he threw the money changers out of the temple, and as a Feeling person, he wept and healed the blind man. As a Judger, he immediately told the disciples to let the children come, and as a Perceiver, he refrained from judging the woman taken in adultery. He had the freedom to use what was most effective in every situation.

As people becoming Christlike, we can have the same goal—to attain spiritual freedom in order to develop all aspects of our personality. We can take the risk to try areas that we may not be most comfortable with. We can experience the freedom, not to be controlled by our behavior, but to understand and then choose the way Christ would prefer us to be. Several suggestions that would help us on this road of growth might be:

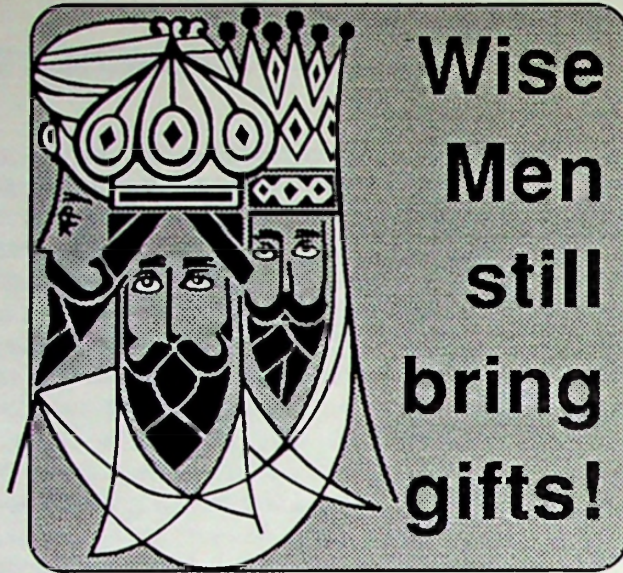
1. Thank God for who you are—that confidence will open you up to take risks in new areas.
2. Choose one area that may be helpful for you to develop (i.e., If I am a strong Extrovert, do I need to develop some qualities and skills of an Introvert to become more Christlike?).
3. Generate ideas of how you might develop these areas (i.e., I may want to structure time where I am alone, meditating and praying by myself).
4. Try to practice some new skills. It's like creating a new habit: it takes time, practice, and living with being a little uncomfortable.
5. Pray about areas that are problems for you and the areas you need to develop—and be patient as you grow.

Future Possibilities

Hopefully this has started you on a journey of self-examination and growth. Again, it is just a taste of what is there. If you want to learn more, the following books may be helpful:

Lifetypes, Hirsh and Kummerow.
TypeTalk, Kroeger and Thuesen.
Please Understand Me, Kersey.
Personality and Spiritual Freedom, Faucett.
God's Gifted People, Harbaugh.
People Types and Tiger Stripes, Lawrence.
Gifts Differing, Myers.

If you would like to explore the possibilities more for your own information, for your church board, or for your church congregation, please contact me by phone, 402-280-2733.



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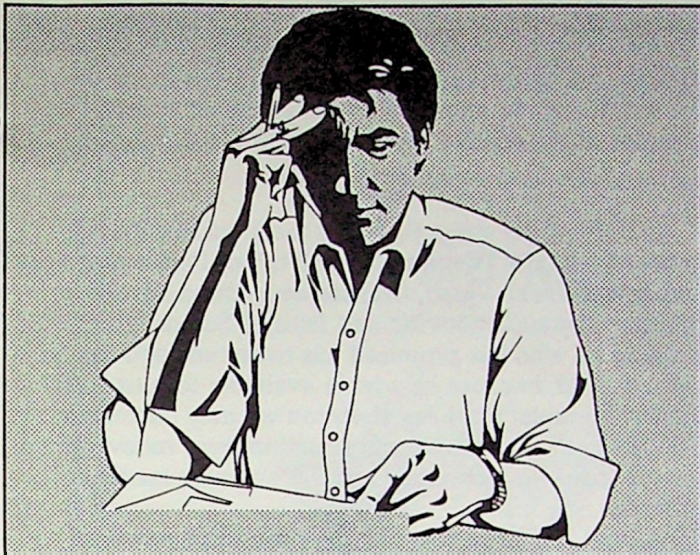
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STRESS—what an ugly word. Lately it has become a focal point of our everyday lives. I don't remember hearing it until recent years. It has gotten a lot of bad press and is now accountable for almost every ill and every problem that one faces. For many physical problems stress is the cause. The daily grind of life in these United States and the pressures of family life, or the pressures of not having a family life, job problems, and on and on, all reveal themselves in physical ailments from headaches to heart disease—and everything in between. Many psychological problems from an inability to cope with simple problems to severe chronic depression come from that nasty problem called stress. A quick trip to the card catalog at your local library will show that in recent years everyone from humorists to doctors have concerned themselves with the varied problems of stress. So what to do, what to do, what to do?

Two Types

You can easily see that the word "stress" is used very loosely today. It is hard to define because of the varied uses, but one thing is sure—however it is defined, we've got it. Medical research has done much to aid us in finding out how stress works. Medically there are two types of stress. One type is called *eustress* and is considered good stress.

Eustress generally comes from events that produce satisfying emotions or opportunities for advancement. Olympic records are not set on a quiet training track, but only with the stress of competition in front of huge crowds. The most efficient work done by a student is often during the stress of facing deadlines. The most electric performances don't occur during rehearsals, but rather in front of live audiences.

A certain amount of risk produces an extra effort that results in a performance which, without the risk and added stress, would not be possible. Perhaps for those of us in the Christian realm this risk is the reaching of faith, and the stress is our ability to trust.

The other type of stress is named *distress* and, just like

ALL STRESSED OUT AND NO PLACE TO GO

By Pastor Craig Waggener

it sounds, is the bad guy. Even eustress can be turned to distress if the level of risk or tension becomes too great. Distress is usually the one of focus because it is the one that causes the most problems. Distress can come from such everyday events as unrealistic job demands, financial pressure, family difficulties, and even the daily grind of living.

Stress, both types, is simply the body's physical, mental, and chemical reaction to circumstances that frighten, excite, confuse, challenge, surprise, anger, endanger, or irritate. So every event or circumstance we face, good or bad, produces stress within us. For the reaction to good stimulus, eustress happens and a favorable response is likely. Many of us would not consider this stress at all. We tend to think of stress as always distress, the bad guy that produces worry, anxiety, and a host of other psychological and physical problems.

Broad Effects

Stress is a spectrum. A certain amount of good stress is a catalyst for achieving optimum performance, but too much (and perhaps too little!) can damage your health and threaten your well-being.

We must understand that stress is a holistic problem. Stress includes all parts of our being. We cannot segment or fragment it into compartments of our life, but must realize that stress affects every part of us and so the cure must be enacted that way also. Here is the concern for God's plan, for our relationship with God touches every part of our being as well. Our problem of stress is holistic, but our God is holistic with us also. This does not preclude medicine or other avenues for helping to relieve stress, but they need to be used with Scriptural principles, not instead of or as a replacement for those principles.

Research has concluded that stress (distress) is primarily a psychological phenomenon that produces a physical symptom. So the place to start is with the mind and its creative, God-given ability to conquer circumstances by correct evaluation and action. Many solutions to stress are like the little boy searching for something next to a street light. A passerby asks what the boy is looking for and the boy replies, "I dropped a quarter and I can't find it." This well-meaning passerby begins looking with the boy, but to no avail. Finally the man asks, "Where did you lose the quarter?" The reply comes, "Over there in the gully." The man questions, "If the quarter was lost way over there, why are you looking for it under the street light?" And of course the answer comes, "'Cause over here the light is better."
(Please turn the page)

Grace vs. Stress

Sometimes we look in the wrong place for the right answer. Our intention is right, and even honorable, but our efforts are wasted because we are looking in the wrong place. Many physicians and researchers concerned with stress have gone to the physiological problem, but have missed the psychological approach into which Scriptures give insight.

Many examples of stress-handling can be observed in Scripture and put into practical usage by the reader. Many great men and women of the Bible can serve as models of taking distress and turning it into eustress. That is God's plan for all of the problem circumstances we face. Whatever is negative is used to produce a positive benefit. A good example to teach us productive behavior for handling stress is found in 2 Corinthians 12:9, 10. You are probably very familiar with these verses, but please take a moment and read them again in their context. (A reading of 2 Corinthians 11 and 12 is recommended to see the picture of the stress in Paul's life.)

Do you get the picture? See all the stress and tension that fill Paul's life? Picture yourself in that situation. Get into Paul's shoes and see what he is going through. Feel his feelings, think his thoughts, let your mind be overcome with the situation and circumstances that are pressing in from every direction. Now, let's take a look at what keeps Paul from falling apart, and try to gain some insight into its application for us.

Perhaps the first ingredient is knowing who you are, and who your strength is. Verse 9 has a quote that begins with Christ telling Paul, "My grace. . . ." Get a picture of who is making the promise to you, and what he has promised. He who has endured the vilest of circumstances gives the promise. The one who understands best that all things really can work together for the ultimate good is the one who confronts our stressful situations with us, and offers us grace and power.

Then the promise concerning his grace "is sufficient." An interesting and enlightening study is to follow through with a word study of that word "sufficient." It means to come to an understanding that Christ's grace is perfect and complete and lacks nothing, but in itself is able to handle any problem circumstance. This alone begins to reduce the stress and tension we feel in living lives in this uncertain, pressure-filled world.

The promise contained in verse 9 goes very deep. We see that we have an available power that goes beyond the situation and is made perfect by our weakness. This perfection is the ability for that power to be demonstrated in our lives. For if we can cope by ourselves, in our own strength, Christ's power would not be used. But because of our frailty Christ will demonstrate his power within our lives. And this power is in adequate supply to meet all our needs (Phil. 4:19).

In these short words of Christ we also see an unlimited support: that in the midst of our trials, problems, and threatening situations—those things that cause stress—there is the power supply of Christ working in our hearts

to make the distress into eustress. All this is available if we will focus our attention on the promiser and the promise as opposed to the situation or circumstance.

Outcomes

In light of the stress that Paul faced, notice the outcome of his faith. Verses 9 and 10 tell of Paul's gladness and contentment—glad, because everything needed is promised by such a loving and faithful Savior; glad, because he who has promised has overcome and can be trusted; glad, because he who is available for our sufficiency is greater than any situation we may encounter. The stress of Paul's personal situations was relieved by a proper focus on a promise, and the one who made the promise.

A little boy once was playing with some newborn puppies. A noted atheist passing by inquired of the boy what kind of pups they were. The little boy, knowing who the man was, responded, "Why sir, these are atheist puppies." A few weeks later the atheist was walking down the same street with a pastor, and, seeing the boy, asked again about the pups. To the astonishment of the atheist, the little boy replied, "Why, these are Christian puppies!" The atheist, somewhat miffed, asked the boy if they weren't the same puppies that had been atheists. The little boy looked up and replied, "Oh yes, but that was a few weeks ago, before they had their eyes open."

In dealing with stress let's open our eyes. Many times we boast of the pressures and stresses we feel, but not to Christ's glory. We do it looking for sympathy, hoping that others will think well of us for our power to endure. We try to solicit sympathy that recognizes and rewards our hard work and situations. If stress is a real problem, Paul's example is for our instruction and application. The use of stress as an excuse or rationality for our behavior becomes an admission of not being sensitive to the Word of God. If we indeed believe in the transforming power of the Spirit it must be evident, and overcoming stress in a Scripturally constructive way that brings glory to God is the answer. Our situations can become a statement of our own lack of faith.

Stress is fantastic, not fatal. It is the opportunity to be stretched to maturity. It is the opportunity for Christ to take our human frailty and work a miracle in our midst—that God may receive the glory by our testimony that Christ is the answer to any problem.

"Dear kind and merciful loving Father, grant us wisdom to understand that every situation we encounter is the opportunity for Christ to work a miracle in our lives. Let us trust your providence and his faithfulness, that, when problems arise that cause us distress, we may see that you are in control. May we realize that you are more interested in handling the situation than in the situation itself. Father, open our eyes to the magnificent possibilities in our lives because of our weakness, and may you receive the glory, and Christ the honor; and may we light the world with this very hope of your kingdom. In Christ's name, AMEN!"

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A friend of mine scrambled my thought process when she invited me to her party. As usual, I declined, and because she was a close friend, I told her the reason: "I'm not comfortable with the language and drinking at parties." My wonderful friend stopped and turned on me!

PARTY SEASON is approaching, and I'm ready—how about you? It used to be that the very mention of the word "party" made me uncomfortable. I made it a practice to stay away from parties—especially those given by non-Christian friends. I didn't like being around people who drink, and was easily offended by the language and the behavior of people at parties like that.

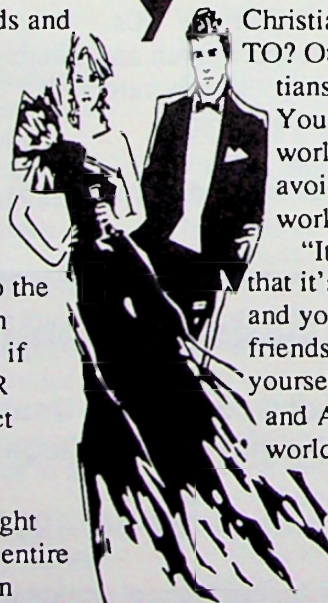
I had reached a point in which I was very comfortable with my life just the way it was. I controlled it by listening to Christian music, attending Christian aerobics, watching Christian TV, and associating socially with Christian friends. I was living in a Christian euphoria, and I loved it. My life was just as I had planned.

A friend of mine scrambled my thought process when she invited me to her party. As usual, I declined, and because she was a close friend, I told her the reason: "I'm not comfortable with the language and drinking at parties." My wonderful friend stopped and turned on me! In love and frustration, she said:

"Well, aren't you high and mighty! You seem to have made it your mission in life to be a Christian, and I've always admired you for that. I have to wonder, though, how you would define the word 'Christian.' I've always thought it meant "Christlike." I have watched you through the years, and seen you slowly and deliberately separate yourself from the world around you. You live in this sweet little idealistic world of Christian friends and music, and I wonder if you remember what your MISSION really is!!

"Jesus could have come into the world and been like you. What if he had NEVER come in contact with worldly influences and people? He might have spent his entire time on earth in

PARTY



communion with God, and never attempted to reach out to others. He could have surrounded himself with his followers, and avoided the others. But because he sought after the sinner, he was sought out BY the sinners.

"In his prayer for the righteous (John 17), Jesus prayed for his believers who were 'in the world, not of the world.'

You are acting like you're 'of the world, not in the world.' Who are you being a Christian example TO? Other Christians? Big deal! You aren't IN the world, you are avoiding the world.

"It seems to me that it's safer for you and your Christian friends to keep yourselves separate and AVOID the world. You keep to yourselves, and then you don't have the pressures

and the guilt or the risk of witnessing to others. If you never see a non-believer, who do you witness to?

"Oh, sure, you invite people like me into your world once in awhile, but you invite only the people who qualify. You pick and choose who you invite to church so that your world isn't contaminated. Why was I acceptable to you? Was it because I had a Christian upbringing, and I didn't drink or swear?

"I'm sick of 'Christians' who send their children to Christian schools, hide themselves in their church building on Sundays and Wednesday nights, preach to each other, and comfort each other with the things they all want to hear. They fellowship with their Christian friends socially . . . what do they care if the world is lost—THEY are saved and are determined to 'protect that salvation' by locking the world outside.

"You are concerned with your comfort when you choose to stay away from a party because you don't like the language! You poor baby. Jesus was never uncomfortable. John the Baptist was never

ANIMAL!

uncomfortable. Peter was never uncomfortable! Whoever told you that Christianity was comfortable!? When Christianity gets comfortable, it isn't Christianity anymore, don't you see?

"What would you do if your Sunday morning worship sermon was interrupted by a drunk walking down the aisle? Would you call the police? Would you whisper to each other, and get your children out of there so they didn't have to be exposed to it?

"Would you be threatened by coming to my party? Would you be exposed to things that you aren't sure you could handle? Would you be uncomfortable because you might be recognized as a Christian, or ridiculed if you don't drink? Are you afraid to rub shoulders with 'sinners' because some of their 'sin' might rub off? Jesus touched the leper and healed him—he wouldn't have had to touch him; what would YOU do if you encountered a person with AIDS at my party?

"Your concern with your comfort and your safety makes me want to

vomit! I hear you talk about love and see you loving your friends and family. That does NOT make you special. The people at my party love their families and friends as much as you love yours. The real test is whether you can step outside your little euphoria and love THOSE people.

"Love not the world, neither the things in the world, for if any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him' talks about THINGS, not people. You quote that verse to justify staying away from the PEOPLE! What about the ones who are dead in sin? Do you care about them? You might meet them at my party if you're brave enough!"

. . . .

Well, my dear friend made quite an impact on me that day. I really struggled with the thoughts that she sparked. I was touched by her honesty and concern, as well as angered by her gall and humiliated by her "accusations" toward Christians. I prayed about it, and now feel that she was RIGHT. Everything

she said hit me where it hurt. I began reassessing my values, and found that I had been hiding from the world. What a SIN that was when I had been commissioned to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!"

I went to that party, and there were times that I was uncomfortable. There were also times that I was able to talk to interesting people whom I never would have allowed myself to meet otherwise. I did have to answer some questions about why I wasn't drinking, and I did hear some language that was foreign to my ears. I came away from the party feeling that there are mission fields right within my life that I had been avoiding. I had been hiding behind the mask of Christianity, and I came home from the party ashamed of that fact.

I go to parties now, whenever I'm invited. I have even had a couple at my house. I feel that my friend was very wise to point these things out to me, and I hope that she made her point to you through this writing. I know that adults must be

responsible for their actions—this party thing could backfire if one is not mature in handling temptations that those situations might offer. However, I feel that you may someday see me coming out of a wild party, or even a bar. I hope you DO see me, because I will have a smile on my face, and I will have done my best to meet the people that are there. I will have attended that party with my mission in mind.

I believe that it is important for me to pass the thought on to my children, also. I will be very sure of their responsibility before I send them to a party unchaperoned, but I will not hesitate to have their friends to my home for a party. I believe it is important to socialize, and important to witness. In order to witness, one has to go where the people are.

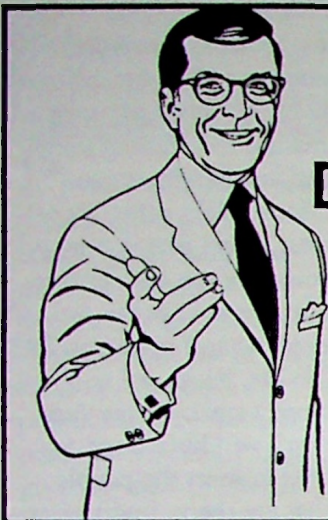
As the holidays approach, give these words prayerful consideration, and I pray that you will have a happy, joy-filled holiday season!!

God bless!

By Vicki Pulling

I believe that it is important for me to pass the thought on to my children, also. I will be very sure of their responsibility before I send them to a party unchaperoned, but I will not

hesitate to have their friends to my home for a party. I believe it is important to socialize, and important to witness. In order to witness, one has to go where the people are.



DEALING WITH DEPRESSION THE BIBLICAL WAY

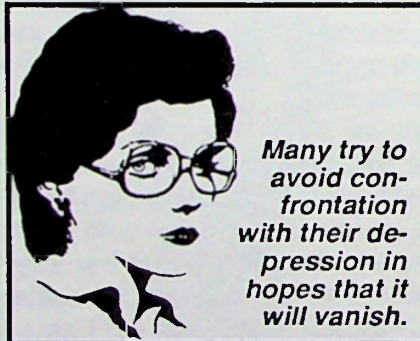
“HOW LONG wilt thou forget me, O LORD? for ever? how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? how long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?” (Psa. 13:1, 2.) It is difficult to understand that these were the true inner feelings of the strong and valiant warrior for God—David, king of Israel.

My reluctant discernment stems from the fact that from the days of entertaining the court of King Saul as a harpist to his final exaltation to king of all Israel, David was attributed the characteristics of being strong, courageous, influential, and powerful. He was not one whom you would readily associate with sorrow or anxiety. In spite of all the fortifying values David was attributed, his innermost thoughts and prayers indicate that he was engaged in a deeper battle, one that can conquer the fiercest warrior without so much as a battle's cry, and bring a swift and painful destruction without leaving so much as a physical scratch. David was dealing with an enemy more noxious than any Philistine force he had ever encountered, for this noxious adversary could not be fought with power or might. Its attack was unseen, its venom seeping directly to the heart and mind, leaving only emotional scars of pain and anguish.

What should be alarming is that this adversary is still alive, and at some point in our life we will have to combat this foe who is responsible for 15 percent of all suicidal deaths, regarded as the second leading cause of death among college students, and is the 10th leading cause of death in America. So who is this subtle cockatrice? Collectively it is referred to as melancholia; commonly we refer to it as DEPRESSION.

Depression Misconceptions

The feeling many Christians have toward depression is that, since they have accepted Christ



Many try to avoid confrontation with their depression in hopes that it will vanish.

and live a “good life,” such things are automatically repelled, and that only those who lack faith, righteousness, and virtuous morals could ever be susceptible to such adversaries. It is such a stigma that renders the Christian obfuscated to the reality that he is allowed to experience physical and emotional vexations as well as non-Christians. The fact is that depression can strike any gender at any age; it can even affect a man after God's own heart such as King David.

Most assuredly everyone will face some type of major depression at some point in life, but very few know how to constructively deal with depression, at least Biblically. Many try to avoid confrontation with their depression in hopes that it will vanish, only to find this suppression or denial intensifies simple depression, sending it through a traumatic metamorphosis which can eventually manifest itself in the form of anger, guilt, or anxiety. Depression has many faces and many forms which are not always so visible; this is why we consider depression pernicious, even at times fatal.

Although we acknowledge the subversive effect that depression has on the very spirit of man, depression is not indomitable. Depression is not a matter of circumstance, but rather a matter of choice. The dynasty of depression reigns only as long for the will for depression endures. As Christians Jesus Christ wills for us to be joyful, exuberant examples of the faith, not melancholy beings with the disposition of bereavement. God's Word has provided some excellent steps to overcoming depression, and if followed continually these steps also can be found to be most preventive to any type of depression. Through much prayer, research, and personal experience, I have gathered five vital steps to overcoming depression directly through the inspired Word of God. Read, pray, and apply these steps in your life, but first and foremost understand that happiness is a choice, a choice you want to make in your life.

Steps Against Depression

1. *Focus your mind and energy on overcoming your depression.* A very inspirational story of David and the children of Israel can be found in 1 Samuel 30. While David and his army went out to

By Tony Baldwin

meet the Philistines in battle, the Amalekites engaged a surprise attack on the Israelite camp, burning the camp to the ground, and taking all the possessions of the Israelites, including their wives and children. Verse 4 says, "They wept until they had no more power to weep." As for David, along with his own family being held captive, the people spoke of stoning him. With all opposition against him, and a heart full of grief, verse 6 says, "David encouraged himself in the LORD his God." He could have decided very easily that he was a victim of circumstance, and that his situation was impervious. However, David focused his



Depression is not a matter of circumstance, but rather a matter of choice.

thoughts and energies on overcoming his dilemma and, according to verse 19, "David recovered all." When experiencing depression, the greatest strength one can employ is that of positive suggestion. No matter how insurmountable the cleft may be in your life, if you have conquered the matter in your mind, and have set yourself to a positive train of thought, you have already depleted your mountain to half its original size.

2. *Develop an intimacy with God.* Since God is the source from which all blessings flow, the center of all power, all knowledge, all that is good and perfect, what position do we put ourselves in when we cut ourselves off from that source? Think of it as a house positioned directly next to a power

plant. Unless a conductive link of wires is connecting us to that power plant, no matter how close the house is positioned to the plant the house will remain in the dark. How ironic that, with the onset of depression, the first thing many Christians do is cut their "conductive wiring" to God when they should be trying to elevate their amperage. Usually the first wire they cut is that of prayer. Church attendance soon follows, and shortly they find themselves as Jonah, running from God. A passage of Scripture to write upon the heart can be found in Hebrew 11:6, "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

There are many treatments for depression, but one should seek only as far as God to find the cure, for he truly is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

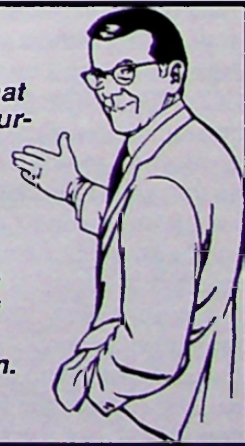
3. *Spend some time each day meditating on God's Word.* In Matthew 4 we find the passage that refers to the temptation of Jesus Christ. I am amazed that this man, capable of sin, resisted temptation and repelled all manner of evil. This truly defies logic according to today's standards.

How can a mere mortal man accomplish such a task? The secret is given in the words of Christ himself. As Satan approached Jesus on three different occasions in Matthew 4, Christ overcame each temptation with the words "IT IS WRITTEN." If Jesus could find, in the words of his Father, the strength to overcome all manner of sin, we too can find strength: the strength to overcome our deepest depressions if we meditate on the Word of God daily. The Lord God told his servant Joshua, "Do all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy ways prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (Josh. 1:8). Before entrenching yourself in the expense of psychotherapy take some free advice

from the Great Physician: Take one good dosage of my words each day, for in my treatment your cure may be found.

4. *Spend some time each week developing and enriching relationships with positive-minded Christians.* Note the wise words of Solomon: "He who walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Prov. 13:20). If you want to be a sorrowful person, surround yourself with sorrowful people. If you want to be a depressed person, surround yourself with depressed individuals. But if your focus is on being a positive forthcoming person, then those are the people who you need to let influence you. Attitudes are contagious, whether they be positive or negative, they can be caught and passed as easily as the flu. As the Proverb states, "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friends" (Prov. 19:15). One can readily see the danger of exposing ourselves to that which is detrimental, so we should be aware of the influential effect that positive persons can have in our lives.

It is imperative that we busy ourselves about our Father's work, and develop a consistent lifestyle of service toward him.



5. *Involve yourself in a daily routine which centers around Christ.* Again we quote the words of Solomon, "Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul (Please turn the page)

**Dealing with Depression
the Biblical Way
(Continued from page 17)**

shall suffer hunger" (Prov. 19:15). It is not the will of God for us to lock ourselves behind doors of slothfulness and self-pity, nor is it the pleasure of our Father to see his children idly stagnant in service to him because of our own self-concerns. There are two wonderful blessings that our Father has bestowed upon most of us: 1. the ability to learn his glorious truth; 2. the talents to relay those truths to others. As Christians it is our obligation to discover what talents the Almighty has given us, and to continually develop those spiritual gifts to the glory of our Father.

It is imperative that we busy ourselves about our Father's work, and develop a consistent lifestyle of service toward him. In doing so we restrict much of our depression, in that we clothe ourselves with a renewed and deserving sense of self-worth, and alleviate the hunger that the idle mind often experiences.

Consistent Application

I would like to append one final note. The preceding steps to overcoming depression can work in your life, but their effectiveness depends on one key element: **CONSISTENCY**. These steps must take precedence and daily application to effectively help you battle against depression. An important lesson of consistency can be found in Daniel 6. Prayer resulted in Daniel's consignment to the lions' den, but continual prayer got him out. The principles found in the Word of God can deliver us from the lowly pits of depression, but the secret is applying these principles on a continual basis. ●

A helpful source for this subject is *Happiness Is a Choice*, by Frank B. Minirth and Paul Meier, Baker Book House, 1988.



“... You can talk about me all that you please, I'll talk about you down on my knees...”

THESE LINES are from a popular chorus we sing in Sunday school. Alas, however, too often we do not practice what we sing!

Christians can often be tempted to gossip and speak critically about one another, instead of bringing such complaints to God or directly to the person being criticized. Perhaps some feel superior by the implied comparison when they are speaking ill of another. They think they can be uplifted themselves when they are downgrading others. All such conduct can only grieve the Holy Spirit of God (Eph. 4:29-32) and at the same time bring glee and satisfaction to Satan and his demons.

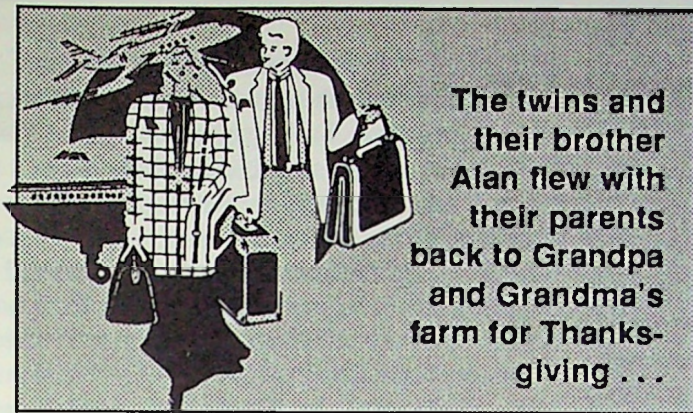
Even when we disagree seriously over doctrine or methods, we are in the wrong if we allow such disagreement to issue in personal attacks against those with whom we differ, or by innuendo try to influence others to feel ill-disposed toward such persons. The church robs itself of God's blessing when it tolerates or abets a faultfinding or censorious attitude. “For all the law is

fulfilled in one word, even in this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another” (Gal. 5:14, 15).

Paul declared that Christian love does not look for things to criticize: “It keeps no record of wrongs” (1 Cor. 13:5, NIV). “Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Cor. 13:4-7, RSV).

The next time you are tempted to speak to someone in criticism of another person, stop and ask yourself whether such criticism should not rather be prayed about before the throne of grace and—if you can do so in love and humility—mentioned in private with the person whom you feel you must criticize. Don't expose yourself to *God's* criticism by ignoring these vital principles!

—Pastor William Wachter



The twins and their brother Alan flew with their parents back to Grandpa and Grandma's farm for Thanksgiving . . .

The big day had arrived! The twins, Alice and Anna, and their brother Alan were all excited. This was Wednesday, the day they would fly in an airplane to go to visit Grandma and Grandpa. The children had never been to the Indiana farm where Grandma and Grandpa lived. But their daddy had told them many stories about when he was a boy growing up on the farm.

When the plane landed at the airport Grandpa was there to meet them. They got into the car and soon they were on the way to the farm. It was dark so



When everyone was seated, they all joined hands around the table to give their thanks to God. What a wonderful dinner it was!

Alan and the twins could not see what they were passing. Since they had gotten up early and had been on the plane for a long time, they were

getting sleepy.

Then Grandpa was turning into a driveway and they saw Grandma standing in the doorway, waiting to hug them.

Grandma's kitchen smelled so good. She had been busy cooking and baking for the dinner they would have the next day—Thanksgiving Day. She gave Alice and Anna and Alan each a glass of milk and some cookies. Then it was bedtime.

The children were up early the next morning all ready to go to the barn with Daddy. There they watched as Grandpa milked the cows and fed them and the horses and the pigs. Grandma called them in for breakfast and then there was more time to explore and to play in the snow.

The ringing of the big dinner bell brought the children hurrying back to the house for Thanksgiving dinner. When everyone was seated, they all joined hands around the table to give their thanks to God. What a wonderful dinner it was! There was a big roasted turkey, mounds of mashed potatoes, gravy, vegetables.

A Thanksgiving Story

By Maxine Herr

They were almost too full to eat any of Grandma's good pumpkin pie with whipped cream.

After dinner the twins climbed into Grandpa's lap while Alan sat beside him. "Grandpa," said Alan, "will you tell us a story about the Thanksgiving Day that you remember the best?"

This is the story they heard.

farmers, too, for there had not been enough rain. The land was so dry that the things they had planted grew either just a little or not at all. The harvest had hardly been worth gathering. But we knew it was important to harvest every single grain and fruit and vegetable.

"When Thanksgiving Day was near, some of the people said they didn't have anything to be thankful for. Well, I thought about that and then I got an idea. Grandma and I visited each one of our neighbors and told them our plan.

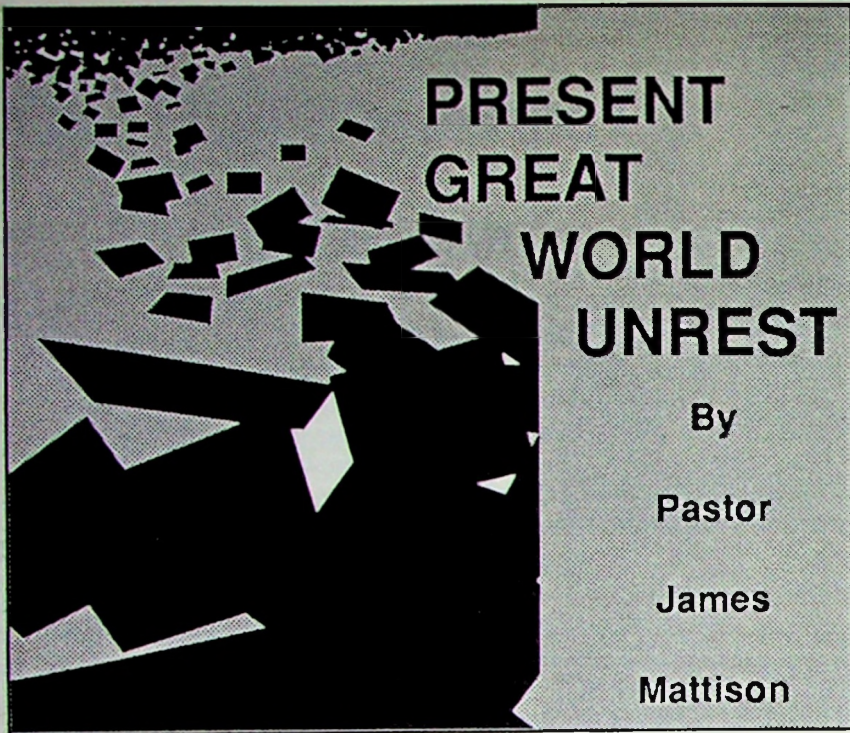
"Each family was to prepare one dish of food, and then bring it to the church on Thanksgiving Day, and we would all share what was brought. Every family agreed that this was a good idea. So on Thanksgiving Day everyone came to the church, bringing their one dish of food. We all stood around the table, joined hands to make a big circle of love, and then prayed, thanking God for the many blessings he had given us.

"When we had eaten our dinner, we found that much of the food was still left. Each one now knew that God takes good care of every one of us and that he wants us to trust him and to thank him."



"Each family was to prepare one dish of food, and then bring it to the church on Thanksgiving Day, and we would all share what was brought."

"Grandma and I—only we weren't Grandma and Grandpa yet, just Mom and Dad to your daddy and your aunts—well, Grandma and I lived on this same farm. It was in the 1930's and there were many people who didn't have jobs because there was a depression. It had been a bad year for the



PRESENT GREAT WORLD UNREST

By
Pastor
James
Mattison

OUR LORD JESUS told us that in the end of our age, there would be “upon the earth *distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.*”

“And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.”

Jesus said that when these things *begin* to come to pass, “look up, and lift up your heads; FOR YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH” (Luke 21:25-28).

Unrest Everywhere

Betty Ackels of Peculiar, Missouri, my main supplier of all kinds of world events to help write this page, recently sent me a large packet of clippings, and I noticed a major trend in most of them—that the whole world at present is in a state of troubling unrest, distress, uncertainty, bewilderment, and fear because of major concerns in many areas.

Israel

Take Israel and the Palestinians, for example. Ever since that bus incident on the road between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in which a Palestinian terrorist

killed 14 Jews, the Israelis look with fear and suspicion on their own Arab neighbors.

Not only that, but Israel’s two main leaders have been attacked by their own people out of frustration. Recently, Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir was threatened at a funeral for an Israeli who had been stabbed to death. Also very recently Shimon Peres, leader of the Labor Party and former Prime Minister, had to be evacuated by soldiers and police while attending a funeral for one of the bus victims. “Because of you this tragedy happened,” cried one of the mourners.

Some Jews are also assaulting Arabs at random in retaliation for the bus attack. The government has denounced this violence, but how can it be contained when even top government officials face physical assault? Tensions are high. The terrorists are certainly “pricking briars” in the side of Israel

today, as Ezekiel predicted many years ago (28:24).

The two aforementioned leaders present two very different approaches to the Palestinian dilemma, but neither has solved the problem.

Although PLO chief Yasser Arafat has acknowledged Israel’s right to exist, Israel wonders if he can be trusted. Some in Israel are willing to give land for peace, but others believe God gave them the land, including the West Bank, and refuse to negotiate.

So our eyes are returned again and again to Israel and the Mid-East by the news every day, and this is as has been predicted: the end of the world shall come in the Mid-East, the very area to which our Lord Jesus Christ shall return.

Anti-Western Unscrupulous Regimes

North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Libya, and Syria either already have a combination of chemical weapons and ballistic missiles or are quickly moving to obtain them (*Kansas City Star-Times*, Aug., ’89).

Both Libya and Syria have received from Moscow modern MIG 29 fighters and T72 tanks. The quantity of weapons in Third World hands is staggering. Iraq has 4,500 main battle tanks, almost twice as many as Britain and France combined, and just a little less than West Germany, which has the largest tank force in NATO, with the exception of the U.S.

This writer, because of Daniel's prophecies, looks for the last-day "Assyrian" or antichrist, to come from the Syria-Iraq region, being, we understand, the king of the north of Daniel 11. The northern king in Ezekiel 38 appears to refer to Russia, that northern force that will invade Israel (and the Mid-East—Dan. 11:40-45) in the end-time. The two appear to combine their assault upon Israel and the Middle East. But at Armageddon our Lord will defeat them and establish his kingship over this whole earth, beginning at Jerusalem (Jer. 23:5, 6; 3:17).

Pollution Concerns and Global Warming

"Earth's capacity to support a rapidly expanding population is declining ominously. So the \$2.25 billion Japan is offering the Third World for environmental purposes is too little and too late. Nevertheless, Japan's proposal might point world leaders in the right direction—toward environmental and population dangers that threaten humanity's well-being more certainly than a nuclear war" (*Kansas City Star-Times*, July 17, 1989).

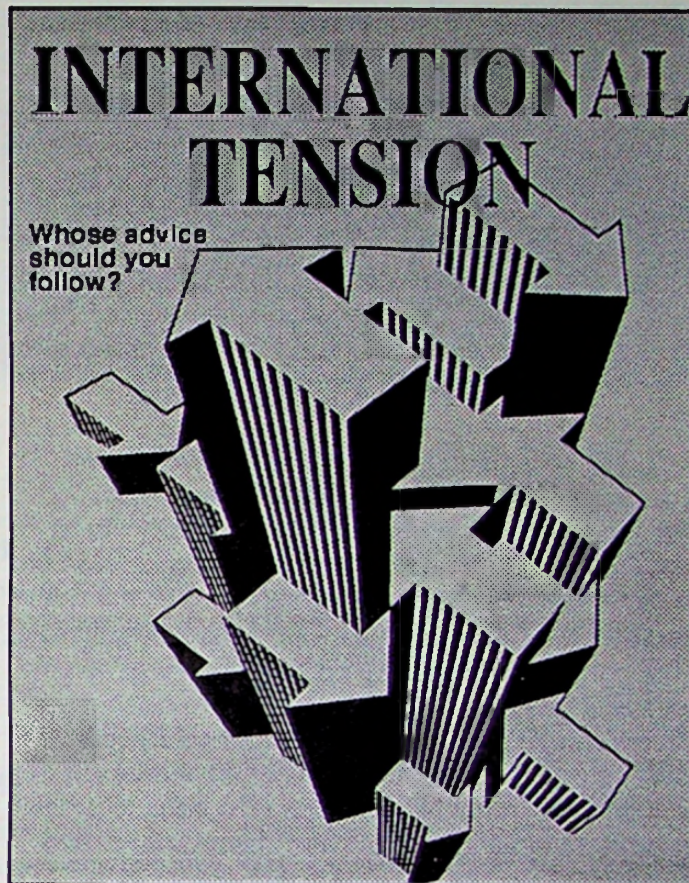
Said President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt: "We [Egyptians] increase by about 1 1/2 million every year. It threatens to choke all our efforts in all fields and quashes all hope of growth, production, and development."

Egypt's problem is a 2.7 percent annual population growth rate, a declining death rate, and 53 million people now dependent on the four percent of Egyptian land that is farmable.

And Egypt's problem is not the worst in the world. Overall, global population, which doubled from 2.5 to five billion between 1950 and 1987, is expected to expand by another billion mouths to feed by the year 2000. It took more than 100 years for the world population to nearly double from 1.5 billion to 2.5 billion in 1950.

The combined world population growth and the threatened global warming is viewed as drastically increasing the possibility of inadequate food supplies in coming decades (from *Global Change and Carrying Capacity*, Stanford University).

With the depletion of the ozone layer over the Antarctic, vast quantities of ozone-poor air are being carried by jet streams all over the world. Scientists from the Goddard Institute for Space Studies in New



York say, "Something strange is happening, but we are not sure yet what it is."

Plagues

The AIDS plague has become well established on earth. Now a deadly strain of streptococcus has been found in four Western states: Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Utah.

In the *New England Journal of Medicine*, doctors have reported 20 serious cases of group A streptococcus infection in the last two years. Six of the patients died, three within 36 hours of hospitalization. Most of the patients were in shock when they reached the hospital, and more than half had difficulty breathing.

Dr. Dennis L. Stevens, who wrote the report, said doctors should be alert to this new problem, and families should seek prompt treatment for serious sore throats in which patients have fever. Most sore throats are not serious, but this particular toxin is dangerous. In some cases the time from diagnosis to the patient's death was remarkably short. One patient died in the emergency room, while another was dead the next day. And these were mostly young healthy persons.

(Please turn the page)

**PRESENT GREAT
WORLD UNREST**
(Continued from page 21)

In the last days, plagues are to come. This appears to be one. And we believe more will follow.

Nuclear Waste Cleanup Difficult

It has been thought that world war would be deterred by stockpiling nuclear weapons—that no one would use them for fear of a retaliatory knock-out. As the cost of nuclear cleanup emerges from the recent nuclear accidents in various parts of the world, another factor also emerges. One Senate official says, "It's not enough to say we created this mess, so now let's clean it up. We don't know how to clean it up." He added that from the standpoint of safety, the cleanup process is as dangerous as the manufacturing process. Also, about all that can be done is to protect ground water and fence off the contaminated areas.

The Christian and Fear

Although worldly men's hearts will fail them for fear near the end, Christians are not to have this reaction.

David said that though he walked through the valley of the shadow of death he would fear no evil, for God was with him (Psa. 23:4). Paul said that God does not give Christians the spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7).

Our confidence and hope are in God. When tragedies come, we are not to sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thes. 4:13), for our dead Christian loved ones will be resurrected to eternal life when Jesus returns.

People begin to fear when they take their eyes off God. Peter began to sink when he took his eyes off Jesus. We must be strong and of good courage. Then we will have peace. Remember the words of Isaiah: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee [God]: because he trusteth in thee" (26:3).

We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of God, and he who endures to the end shall be saved. "Be of good cheer," Jesus said; "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). And through him we can, too.

**Prophecies
of the**



**End of the
World**

- Israel
- Little Horn
- Rome
- Egypt
- Gaza Strip
- Syria
- China
- Iraq
- Libya
- Iran
- Assyria
- Ethiopia
- Ten Kings
- Tribulation
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Armageddon

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GOD'S LETTER TO YOU

By Pastor Stephen Bolhous

AN INTELLIGENT and talkative lady attending a dinner party found herself seated beside a Bible-believing pastor. She knew that most men are flattered when the conversation concerns their particular field so she decided to talk about the Bible.

"I don't read it as much as I should, and parts of it seem hopelessly out of date, but there are some beautiful passages."

"What is your favorite?" asked the clergyman.

"I like the line that says, 'All the world's a stage, and men and women are just players in it.'"

Confusing Shakespeare with Scripture showed how little this woman really knew about the Bible.

"What is your favorite passage?" she asked.

The pastor decided to have some fun with this dinner conversation: "It's hard to pick out a single selection," he responded, "but I guess I most enjoy the chapter that tells about Eliza crossing the ice."

The Bible is God's letter to you! Don't you ever read your mail? A well-honed, working knowledge of Scripture is a valuable asset to any life; ignorance of God's Word is a detriment to one's life. Last summer our church

conducted Vacation Bible School. It was so refreshing to see young minds anxious to know the contents of God's Word. That same youthful desire to assimilate God's truth needs to be a continuing element throughout life. Their hunger for Bible learning prompted me to write this article.

Psalm 119

The longest chapter of the Bible, Psalm 119, is devoted to the praise of the Word of God, which it mentions in nearly every verse under one title or another. Ezra probably composed it in order to lead the people to better appreciate and prize the Holy Scriptures. Psalm 119 is an alphabetical acrostic. It is broken into 22 short divisions of eight verses each—one division for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, with each of the eight verses in the division beginning with the featured acrostic letter of the alphabet. As the author of Psalm 119 writes, he speaks about benefits that accrue in the life of the person who understands and practices the principle of the Bible.

Whole Thinking

God's Word in one's life develops whole thinking—viewing life from God's perspective. "Thy commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for they are ever mine. I have more insight

than all my teachers, for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, because I have observed Thy precepts. . . . From Thy precepts I get understanding; Therefore I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:98-100, 104, NASB*). God's perspective on life, absorbed from familiarity with his Word, enables us to better cope and deal with our problems. As the author of life, God certainly knows how to manage it better than we. His Word reveals his mind to ours.

"The unfolding of Thy words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple" (v. 130). College professor William Lyon Phelps once said: "I believe a knowledge of the Bible without a college course is more valuable than a college course without the Bible. You can learn more about human nature by reading the Bible than by living in New York City."

"Those who love Thy law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble" (v. 165). Instead of a mind twisted by jealousy, pettiness, insecurity, etc., the life filled with God's Word experiences whole thinking and peace for the mind.

Behavior and Conduct

Another benefit God's Word brings to one's life is its influence on our lifestyle, the way we
(Please turn the page)

GOD'S LETTER TO YOU

(Continued from page 23)

conduct ourselves. "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word. With all my heart I have sought Thee; do not let me wander from Thy commandments. Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee" (vv. 9-11). God's Word equips us to overcome temptation and gives us the guidance to choose what is noble and pure while saying "no" to that which is base and self-serving.

"Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. I have sworn, and I will confirm it, that I will keep Thy righteous ordinances" (vv. 105, 106). Moral and ethical conduct is in jeopardy in the work place and in private lives. 'Consenting adults' license the conduct of their choice on the basis of their age and privacy. The light of God's Word in one's life causes him to commit to, confirm and keep just principles in life's choices and actions.

God's Word is an eternal treasure giving each generation the light it needs for a lifestyle that is pleasing to God and personally gratifying. "I rejoice at Thy word, as one who finds great spoil" (v. 162). Discover this treasure for yourself!

*All Scripture quotations in this article are from the New American Standard Bible.



The year 1990 has been declared the *International Year of Bible Reading*.

The Washington, D.C.-based *International Bible Reading Association*, endorsed by a broad coalition of Christian leaders, expects a congressional resolution and a presidential proclamation to make it official.

The organization is encouraging people worldwide to read through the Bible.

Recent surveys find American adults are biblically illiterate. In a survey of American adults, the Barna Research Group examined how often Americans read the Bible and how much they know about the Scriptures.

The survey revealed that 93 percent of all Americans own a Bible. But half of them have never read the Bible. Only 18 percent of all who say they are born-again Christians said they read the Bible every day.

A recent George Gallup poll revealed that many Christians could not name the first five books of the New Testament.

An estimated 200 million Americans have never read through the entire Bible. Furthermore, over one-half of the world's population has never even seen a Bible.

The Bible is God's training manual for mankind. The Bible states that "All scripture . . . is profitable" (2 Tim. 3:16).

As individuals, groups, and even nations read and follow God's principles for living, the quality of life will be improved for all mankind (note Hosea 4:6).

Just think of the difference it would make if additional millions of people began a systematic, consistent reading of the Bible, the key to successful living (see Joshua 1:8).

The *International Bible Reading Association* plans a number of action points in 1989 including:

1. Gather a strong list of endorsements from worldwide leaders in national governments, religion, business, academia, athletics, and the arts.
2. Secure endorsement proclamations from governors and mayors of large cities.
3. Utilize a powerful speakers bureau of leaders.
4. Implement major public relations programs utilizing all forms of electronic and print media.
5. In the U.S. and other countries where Bibles are readily available, focus on a variety of innovative programs designed to encourage systematic, consistent Bible reading.
6. In countries where Bibles are not readily available, focus will be on distribution of Bibles and Bible-study materials in each country's primary language.

"As we approach the closing decade of the twentieth century and realize the widespread deterioration of our moral and traditional values in America and elsewhere, we must press for a unified action on the part of all Christians," said Dr. John A. Hash, chairman of the association.

Dr. Hash is appealing to all Christians to join together in this effort to fulfill our Lord's command: "Go . . . teach all nations . . . to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20).

For further information, contact Cal Hubbard, *International Bible Reading Association*, P. O. Box 1501, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-1501, (615) 896-4243 or (800) 222-3161; or David Krogh, P. O. Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061, (815) 732-7991. A 30-minute video detailing the 1990 project is available free of charge by contacting David Krogh.

General Conference President David Krogh is a member of the Advisory Board of the *International Bible Reading Association*.



Cold Calling Nets Results

PLEASANT HILL, OH (RH)—During September the Pleasant Hill Church of God sent its members onto the streets of this small southwestern Ohio village in door-to-door canvassing. The calling program took the place of regularly scheduled Sunday evening worship times, and netted at least nine families expressing interest in the church's programming. Pastor Scott Deane asked for providential assistance in his weekly bulletin: "Keep this effort in your prayers," he wrote. "We plant the seed, but God gives the increase."

Amity Press Chinese Bible Production Almost at One Million

NEW YORK (ABS)—In Nanjing, People's Republic of China, the Amity Printing Press arrived at two major landmarks in September—its second anniversary, and the expected one millionth Chinese Bible off its production line. United Bible Societies equipped the \$7.3 million Amity plant at the invitation of Chinese Christians, then critically short of Scriptures, with funding from the American and other member Bible Societies.

Every Bible and Testa-

ment is being produced in the Union Version translated in 1919; product is written in simplified Chinese script, a standard for virtually all printed matter throughout the country.

Bibles have also come off the press in other languages spoken by people in various parts of China, such as Korean, Miao, Yi, Lisu, and Jingpo.

Telemarketing Gets Response

LOVES PARK, IL (RH)—Students at Oregon Bible College, members of Family Bible Fellowship, and Church of God General Conference staff participated in five days of telemarketing pre-evangelism during September, achieving a 10 percent response ratio to a word track which invited clients to receive information via mail about Family Bible Fellowship, a church begun a year ago by telemarketing. Respondents will receive at least four pieces of mail before the October 29 anniversary service of the new church.

Included in the telemarketing experience were 160 families of responders from the first telemarketing a year ago. Ninety-nine of these expressed increased interest even

after eight months of no contact.

Family Bible Fellowship hopes to realize a gain of many families from this limited effort.

U.S. Congressmen Visit Perm 35 Labor Camp

WASHINGTON (NNI)—During the August congressional recess Congressman Frank Wolf of Virginia and Representative Chris Smith of New Jersey examined conditions at the infamous Perm 35 labor camp in the Ural mountains. They interviewed 23 of the reported 38 inmates, and were allowed to photograph and videotape their tour through the facility. After reporting on rather severe conditions of the prisoners, Wolf was asked about Russia's progress of *perestroika* and the move toward human rights. He replied:

"There are many positive changes and I say this as one who is very skeptical. We met with a lot of Jewish refuseniks and with many Christian believers who have had a very difficult time.

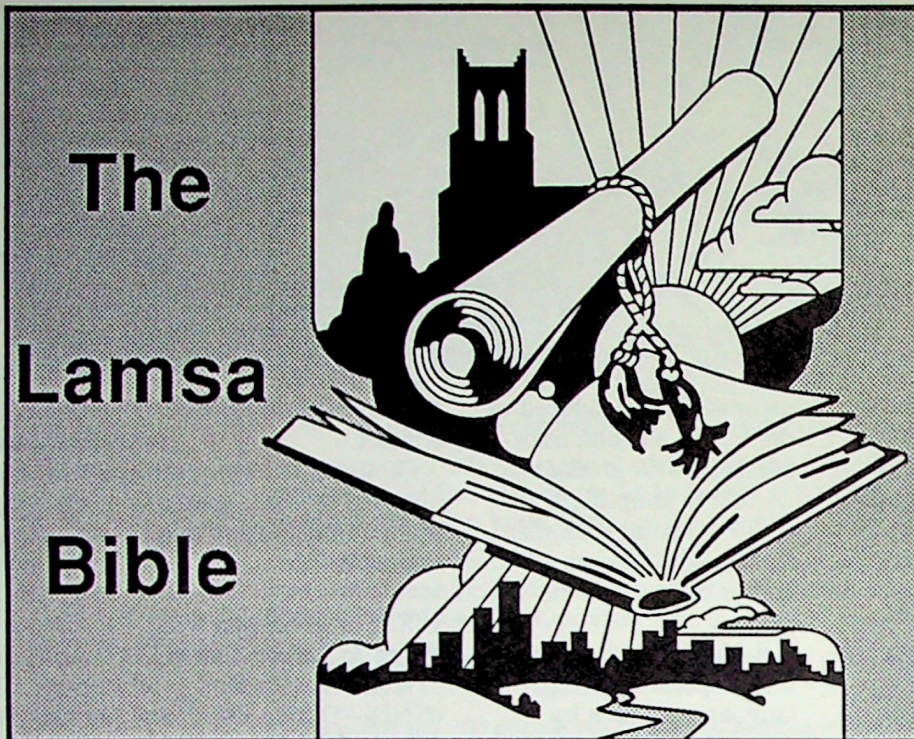
"Many acknowledge that they have seen improvements, but I think the jury is still out. The country is very poor. When you get outside of Moscow, it really is a Third World country.

There's not a lot of food, they need a lot of help with their environment, their economy is an environmental abomination.

"People talk about pollution standards here in the U.S.—there are no standards in the Soviet Union; their rivers are dead, and the air is filthy. They need our aid, non-military, to help clean the country up."

The Bible Is Alive and Well

OREGON, IL (RH)—Proof of that headline comes in a battery-operated electronic device which fits in the palm of your hand, weighs less than a pound, wears a \$299 price tag, and comes in both the King James and Revised Standard versions. This electronic Bible was made in South Korea, and became available in October. A three-man team spent one and a half years developing it. Within seconds it can display verses familiar or obscure, tell which books in the Bible contain certain words or phrases, and even locate words which the user has misspelled. The machine displays four lines of the Bible at a time on the top half of a liquid-crystal display screen, while the abbreviated names of the 66 books are etched on the bottom half of the screen.



The Holy Bible (from Ancient Eastern Manuscripts), by George M. Lamsa, A. J. Holman Company, Philadelphia (1957).

The flyleaf states: "Containing the Old and New Testaments translated from the Peshitta, the authorized Bible of the Church of the East."

My dictionary defines Syriac as follows: "An Aramaic dialect spoken in Edessa and western Mesopotamia until superseded by the Arabic after the 13th century. The version of the Bible known as Peshitta." Peshitta is the standard Syriac version of the Bible.

Then in the introduction on pages VII and VIII the publisher says in part: "The term Peshitta means straight, simple, sincere and true, that is, the original. This name was given to this ancient and authoritative text to distinguish it from other Bible revisions and translations. . . . This ancient Peshitta is still the only authoritative text of the Old and New Testament of all Eastern Chris-

tians in the Near East and India, the Church of the East, the Roman Catholic Church in the East, the Monophysites and Indian Christians. This is because this text was in use for 400 years before the Christian Church was divided into several sects."

Dr. Lamsa was uniquely qualified for the task to which he devoted the major part of his life. He was Syrian and a native of ancient Biblical lands where he lived nearly all of his life. This background, together with his knowledge of the Aramaic (Syriac) language, enabled him to recover much of the meaning that has been lost in other translations of the Scriptures.

Since the Bible is an Oriental Book, and many things in it perplex the western mind, this unique translation can be most helpful. The student who wishes to

become better acquainted with the customs of Bible lands—which leads to more accurate interpretation—would do well to use Lamsa's work along with other good translations. Lamsa's translation could be called the forgotten translation. Dr. Lamsa lectured in some of the churches in our conference several years ago.

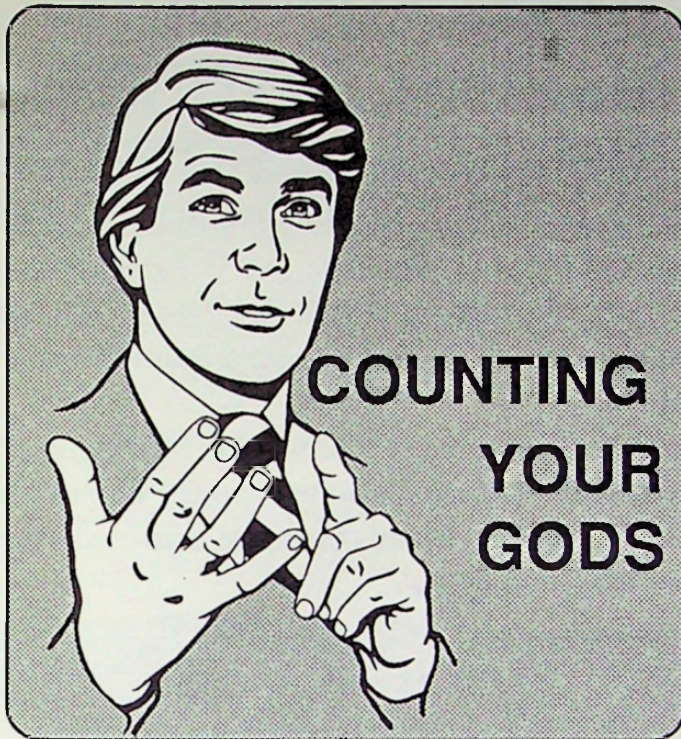
Dr. Daniel Poling, former editor of *Christian Herald* magazine, said: "This is the Bible translation from the language Jesus spoke."

Defender Magazine has stated: "The present translation from the original Aramaic deserves acceptance in Christian circles everywhere."

I believe that reading and studying Lamsa's translation will enrich the understanding of the true interpretation of God's Word.

—By Pastor Hollis Partlowe

By Anthony Buzzard



A VERY CURIOUS mathematical confusion seems to plague Bible-readers and church-goers: It is a matter of counting—up to ONE, TWO, or THREE.

The Bible says repeatedly that God is ONE, that there is ONE God, that there is ONE God and no other. In no verse does it ever say that God is TWO or THREE.

Creeds which ask you to believe in TWO or THREE persons who are GOD reject the Bible, whose first great principle is that God is ONE person (Deut. 6:4; 1 Cor. 8:6; Mal. 2:10).

It is a very simple matter to demonstrate that Jesus believed God to be ONE person, not TWO or THREE:

He prayed to his Father and called him "The ONLY TRUE GOD" (John 17:2). He also publicly expressed his belief that "The Lord our God is ONE" and praised the intelligence of a Jewish scribe for understanding that "God is ONE and there is none besides Him" (Mark 12:28, 32, 34).

Paul defined the true Christian creed with these words:

"There is to us [Chris-

tians, as distinct from the pagans] ONE God, the Father" (1 Cor. 8:4-6).

Monotheism—belief that God is ONE—is the simplest of all creeds. It states that there is ONE God, the Father, and no other God but ONE (1 Cor. 8:4-6). There is "none besides Him" (Mark 12:32).

In the Bible, the Father is ONE person in exactly the same sense as any father is one person. Jesus is also ONE person, in the same sense as any son is one person and a different person from his father.

If you say that there are TWO or THREE persons who are God, you are committing yourself to belief in TWO or THREE Gods. That contradicts the Bible. And it is polytheism.

If you say that you don't mean 'person' in the dictionary sense of that word, you contradict both the dictionary and the Bible. In the Bible God and Jesus are always described as persons, like any other father and son.

If God, the Father, is the only one who is God, who is Jesus?

The answer from one

end of the Bible to the other is that He is the Christ, a perfect human representative of God, fully empowered to speak for God. He is the human King, Judge, and Savior appointed to act for God.

Jesus, however, is not God any more than the ambassador representing the President is the President.

To summarize:

There is only one God. The Father is that ONE God. If you say that Jesus and the Holy Spirit are also God, you have confessed to belief in THREE Gods, which is polytheism.

"Jesus is not God but God's representative, and, as such, so completely and totally acts on God's behalf that he stands in God's stead before the world. The gospel clearly states that God and Jesus are not to be understood as identical persons, as in 14:28, 'The Father is greater than I'."—Jacob Jervell, Prof. of N.T., University of Oslo, Norway. Excerpted from: *Jesus in the Gospel of John*, Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984, p. 21.

If you say that there are TWO or THREE persons who are God, you are committing yourself to belief in TWO or THREE Gods. That contradicts the Bible. And it is polytheism.

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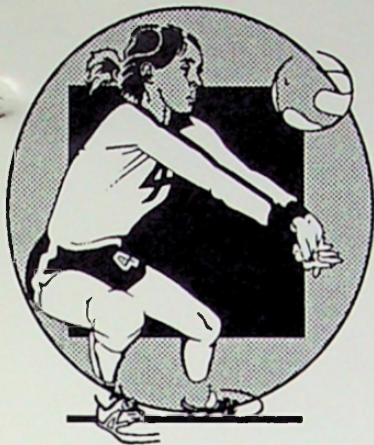
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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)



Reflections on a week of camp life

(Continued from the back cover)

set and I hadn't even opened my mouth!

Soon the entire camp was immersed in the daily schedule of activities. Loosely, a typical day started with breakfast, morning devotions, then cabin cleanup, followed by three classes. After the noon meal, there was activity hour, when we staged television game shows with Bible questions. The rest of the afternoon was spent in recreation and swimming. Supper was followed by an evening worship service, campfire, and the every-night challenge of going to bed. In other words, after "lights out," the counselor tries to get everyone to be quiet at the same time so she can get some sleep!

Though dormitory living is far from "roughing it," you do have to make adjustments. There's the cricket in the bathroom sink that

greeted me at 1:00 in the morning with a loud chirp. The bunk-size mattress on a piece of plywood doesn't quite compare to my inner-spring mattress at home. And usually when I returned to my bed after recreation there were several items of clothing tossed across it, none of them mine! Socks, in particular, seem to take on a life of their own at camp. You find them strewn everywhere—in the dorm, the bathroom, the swimming area, the baseball field. Once they become dirty and mateless, no one claims them. How did these socks ever get to camp in the first place, then? I wondered. Maybe these are the socks that have mysteriously disappeared in your washing machine over the years, and have suddenly sprouted all over the campground!

Gradually, as the days slowly passed, one after another, I began to remember once again why I was at this youth camp. It wasn't just to teach a class, dish up food, or

lead the singing. It was to answer a hundred questions ranging from "What should I wear?" to "Does God always listen to me?" It was to marvel at the 12-inch Northern sweat-stained boy proudly showed me, and admire the swimming skills of one of my girls. I was here to share my life with these kids, 24 hours a day, and show them by my actions what Christianity is really all about.

Early one morning I looked around the room at the tousled heads of my girls, sleeping soundly in various poses on their narrow bunks. Today, once again, I would settle their arguments, dry their tears, soothe their fears, share their joys. Today I would attempt to make a difference in their lives.

On the last day of camp my little bunk-mate came over to give me an exuberant hug. "I'm going to miss you," she said. And I would miss her. But there's always next year, I told her. We'll all be together again. I am looking forward to it.

The summer of 1989 . . . camp scenes



Arkansas Youth Camp guest speaker Pastor Wally Winner.



Singing group dedicates song to fellow camper at Arkansas Youth Camp.



Dozens of campers at Arkansas Youth Camp respond to God on Decision Night.



Reflections on a week of camp life

By Paula Kirkpatrick

GETTING READY for our Church of God state youth camp has always been a big undertaking. My husband and I are co-directors of the week-long June event, which is held at Long Lake Bible Camp, a beautiful island setting near Eden Valley.

Our work begins in February, planning the theme and classes, deciding on the schedule and various activities. Soon it's time to fill in staff positions and duties from the applications we've received. Who would enjoy directing senior recreation? Who will be free to build the campfire each night for the juniors? Who wants to "take on" the crafts class? After these decisions have been made, the staff manuals, and then camper applications can be sent out.

This year, the calendar seemed to be on "fast-forward" as far as camp was concerned. How could it suddenly be only a week away? The lessons I was writing for my nine- and 10-year-old classes were far from finished. Other duties and details had hardly been considered. And, most of all, my heart wasn't in any of it. This was my eighth year to be a counselor at church camp, and our fourth year at directing it. What had happened to my anticipation, my excitement? "I just think I'm too old to work at camp anymore," I muttered to anyone within earshot around my house. "It takes too much time, too much effort," my mind would silently affirm, like a never-ending recording playing over and over.

But ready or not, excited or not, the beginning day of camp arrived. Somehow, through long hours and little sleep, my classes were done, activities prepared, and bags packed for myself and my family. There was only one thing left to do at the end of my long list. Recapture my camp enthusiasm!

As we drove across the causeway over Long Lake, the buildings of our campground came into view. There was our beautiful white chapel, the men's and women's dormitories, kitchen and dining hall, and recreation building. My home for the week would be the back of the girls' dorm, where I would be the counselor for 13 nine- and 10-year-old girls. Soon the room was filled with suitcases and sleeping bags, chatter and giggles. My campers had arrived! Sleeping in the bunk above me was a dark-haired 10-year-old with freckles on her nose and mischief in her eyes. "I hope you don't roll around too much in your sleep!" she admonished me. Somehow, the guidelines were being

(Please turn inside to page 31)

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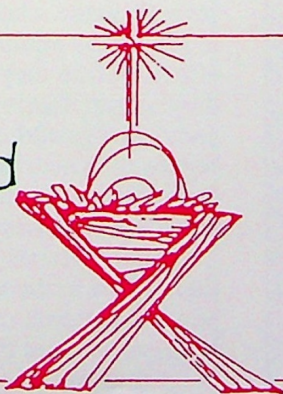
December/1989/January/1990

*Merry
Christmas*



Giving God Glory at Christmas

his name
was called
Jesus....



Special Advent Pullout



EDITOR'S VIEWPOINT

- Holiday Greetings
- WWII—50 Years Later
- Masthead Changes
- War on Drugs

Merry Christmas

With this issue you will be able to insert Advent observances in your family and church life. The Advent pullout has been put together by Pastor David Wilsterman. I hope it helps you with your celebration of the message of Christ and Christmas.

On other pages in this issue you will enjoy more stories of the Christian observance of the holidays. Shepherds and wise men, observers from both ends of the socio-economic scale, witnessed the first Christmas and received great blessings as well as contributing meaningful gifts. God bless you with an especially enriching Christmas this year.

Fifty years after World War II

In 1989 the world celebrated 50 years after the war which impacted our world forever. We have noted comment in the October/November/1989 issue regarding the significance of this war. In this issue we publish a touching story from that war, written by theologian Sidney Hatch. His humane expression appears on pages 14 and 15.

New contributing editors

You'll note in the masthead some changes. Longstanding contributor to news and prophecy, Pastor James Mattison, has informed THE RESTITUTION HERALD of his desire to resign. With this issue Pastor Gordon Landry assumes that role. His first submission begins on page 28.

Pastor James Graham has been added as a contributing editor. Bro. Graham will continue to provide

readers with challenging copy which is guaranteed to upset and stir us up. We appreciate his gift of proclamation. His latest copy begins on page 23.

Oregon Bible College student Mark Cain is helping with design on a part-time basis. The son of Pastor Rex Cain, Mark brings to our staff much expertise in this area.

What about the war on drugs?

The war on drugs is not going well.

That assessment comes from a school district on an upper middle-class island in Puget Sound which has been waging a battle against drug and alcohol abuse for 12 years.*

Antidrug education begins in the first grade and continues through graduation 12 years later for all public school pupils on Bainbridge Island, Washington. In spite of the concerted effort, five percent of junior high and high school students are chemically dependent, and 70 percent use drugs and alcohol weekly.

The breakdown happens in the seventh grade when students begin mocking the antidrug educational effort. Before they exit junior high they're anticipating "D and A weekends" [drugs and alcohol] at the homes of absent parents, and visiting Puget Sound beaches for what they term "Miller Time."

School officials are redoubling their effort in the war on drugs. The new educational material urges students to bond themselves to helpful social groups like the Boy Scouts, a church group, or a community organization.

The pitch is also aimed at parents to be home more often. In spite of the new thrust, morale wanes among school officials involved with the campaign. Response from parents to evening seminars has been minimal. No evidence for success of the campaign any of its 12 years has been documented.

It may seem gratifying to the church that it should be recognized as a useful tool in the war on drugs. But usually school students impacted by peer pressure regard helping institutions as havens for nerds who end up as narcs—hypocrites of the first order. If the church is to help in the war on drugs, it will need to change its image and credibility in the minds of children and teens.

Unfortunately, attacking the problem at such a late stage in life as the first grade limits the possibility of success. Almost all social/moral/family disciplines are determined in the first three years of life. Success against substance abuse begins there, among family ties and mores. Building blocks of self-esteem, trust, and reliance on a higher power (or lack thereof) come built-in by the time children are of school age.

What can be done if the church is to become part of the answer to a critical problem? It's going to take a lot of understanding and compassion—understanding for the problem and compassion for substance abusers and their families. The church must accept all it can learn from scientific and human services disciplines to gain credibility. That means mutual appreciation for each other in both circles. For us in the church, that will take a lot of listening and learning.

The first place to take action is within the framework of the family. Communities within the ministry of local churches must be impacted by church members who exhibit care and concern for problems. That concern is demonstrated by more listening/learning and perception of needs.

The church must eliminate ulterior motives like the huckster's "Have-I-got-good-stuff-for-you" come-on.

Hidden agendas tacked on to social concern will not accomplish the job. Assumed answers preached to the people offer little help. Only straightforward assistance without expecting a kickback will bring changes to lives. The gospel must come dressed in work clothes; carriers of the Good News accomplish more by doing deeds than with high-sounding words. "Our love should not be just

words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action" (1 John 3:18, GNB).

Can the church help in the war on drugs? Yes, when it is willing to become a helping institution.

* Factual information for the Bainbridge situation was gleaned from a cover story in the November 10, 1989, *Wall Street Journal*.

God Bless YOU this Holiday Season!



Betty Hall

Becky Spill

Russ Magaw

Judy Myers

Bill Burnham

Mark Cain

*Barbara Landry
Gordon Landry*

from your staff at THE RESTITUTION HERALD

THE

Restitution Herald

Vol. 79 Dec/1989/Jan/1990 No. 2

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

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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Address all correspondence to THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

In England: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 16 Parsley Close, Pinefields, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England MK 77 DA.

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Photo credits: Dorothy Sheeley, cover; Russ Magaw, page 16; Rachel Carr, page 22.

How to Give God Glory at Christmas



GLORY IS ALMOST synonymous with Christmas.

Listen to the radio. Walk through the shopping malls. What well-known phrases come to your mind from the carols you hear?

"Glory to the new-born king."
"Joy to the world!" "O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord."

Christmas—the time we celebrate the birth of Jesus. The spotlight shines upon him . . . or at least it should.

And perhaps that's how it ought to be. I say "perhaps" because for followers of Christ it

is one of the seasons in which he occupies center stage.

So that our Christmas play doesn't become a "one-man production," let's widen the beam of the spotlight, and include another of the cast. In fact, without him, there would be no "curtain going up." You've guessed it. I am talking about God.

We have good reason for expanding the focus of our attention. The Scriptures we read, and the hymns we sing speak often of the glory of God. "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psa. 19:1). As a young man Isaiah went into the Lord's house, and experienced a vision of God's glory. He heard the angelic message, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isa. 6:3).

It was helpful for me to look up a definition of the word "glory." One writer defined it as follows: "The glory of something is its . . . worth, value, or splendor. The glory of God lies in his character of holiness and love, wisdom, and power." In the Old Testament people were given glimpses of God's eternal glory. They saw miracles he performed in Egypt; a cloud led them through the wilderness by day and a pillar of fire by night. As the Israelites saw this, they said, "God is with us, God is with us."

Turning to the New Testament, the glory of God is almost always associated with Jesus Christ. At the time of his birth, the angels proclaimed, "Glory to God in the highest." As the shepherds returned from visiting the Christ child they were "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had seen and heard." John tells us that "God is glorified in him" (13:31).

It is easier to say "the glory of

God" than it is to define it. Dr. George Sweeting has written, "By the phrase the glory of God we mean a manifestation of all that God is, a revelation of the essence of God, the sum total of all His perfection."

How to Give God Glory

With these brief thoughts about "why" we should give God glory, let's now turn to the practical part. It is one thing to *know* that we should do something; it is another thing to actually *do* it. In the paragraphs that follow we will be looking at both the *why* and the *how* to regarding giving God glory at Christmas.

Give God glory because he remains the same. The future that we face in 1990 is uncertain and uncharted. Individuals, families, businesses, and nations change. God is the solid rock on whom we can rely. How reassuring it is to have a changeless God in a changing world! The prophet Malachi wrote, "For I the LORD do not change" (3:6, RSV).

You can give God glory by demonstrating to others a stability that perhaps may make you a source of security for someone who needs a shoulder to lean on.

Give God glory because the Bible continues to nourish you. The Bible speaks to your needs through God's law, and gives you hope for the future. Take delight in the words found in Psalm 119. It speaks of benefits and blessings that are yours. Spend time in the Word. Allow it to speak to you. Follow the counsel it gives regarding real-life situations that you face.

You can give God glory by thanking him for his Word. Then go one step further. Be helpful to others as you share it with them. Let them know it is helpful to you.

Give God glory for the joy, peace, and happiness he has given to you. At this time of the year many people use alcohol as a means of coping with stress and depression. It may relieve tension temporarily, but it brings on a deeper depression. The message of Christmas begins with the promise of good news that will bring great joy. Through Christ, God provides us with the ability to cope with life in a manner that will bring inner joy and contentment to us.

You can give God glory by thanking him for the gift of his Son. The gospel is not "good advice"; it is "good news"! It can produce daily living that brings joy to you and to others. Glorify God by sharing this good news with others at this very special time of the year. Many doors of opportunity will be open because of the very nature of the season. Be sensitive to take advantage of the opportunities that will be presented.

Give God glory because he is a living God who loves and cares for people. The Golden Text of the Bible proclaims: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (John 3:16). The greatest Lover . . . the greatest Giver . . . the greatest Gift. In Jesus Christ we have God presenting a great and precious gift to mankind.

You can give God glory by accepting the gift of his Son as your personal Savior if you have not already done so. Then, when you have, make others aware that you worship a God who both loves and is concerned about them. Knowing that God cares about them as a person can be very reassuring to people who live in an

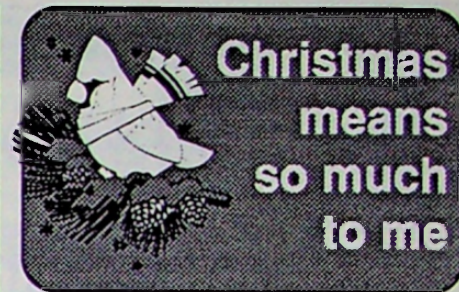
impersonal world where very few really care about anyone other than themselves.

Give glory to God because that is to be your number-one priority. Are there just certain times or places where we are to give glory to God? Well, it may seem "more natural" to do so on Sunday morning in church. However, I rather think that Paul had something else in mind when he wrote to an early group of Christians. "So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31, RSV). Sort of says it all, doesn't it? All the time . . . every place . . . regardless of conditions . . . in whatever you do! That doesn't leave much out.

You can give glory to God by being a full-time follower of Jesus Christ. Practice your Christianity at home. This can be a challenge if for no other reason than the amount of hours spent in close contact with other members of the family under all conditions. Be faithful in worship and caring for other members of your church family. Return to God a portion of his blessings to you. Be ready to share a word of encouragement to other members of your church family. Be willing to give of your time as well. It has been astutely observed, "You may be the only Bible that someone ever reads." Let your faith be more than a pin on your lapel; let it be a way of life.

How can I give God glory at Christmas? I like the words of the hymn writer, "Make me a blessing to someone today." And as you are, remember that the glory is not to be yours. "To God be the glory, great things he hath done."

By Pastor John Hearp



CHRISTMAS means so much to me,
Its when our family gathers 'round the tree,
My heart is filled with so much joy,
It goes much deeper than when I was a boy.

Happiness, then, was found in each gift,
The more toys I got, the bigger the lift.
But that's not the feeling in my heart anymore,
I know that there is much more in store.

It's more than a time to just loosen my belt,
Christmas is a time of love deeply felt.
Opening up gifts in our home,
I'm reminded of the gift sitting by God's throne.

It is Jesus' birth we celebrate that day,
Each of us in our own special way.
The message comes through time and again:
"Peace on earth, good will to men."

The source of this peace and the source of this love?
They both come from our Lord up above.
By him to us hope has been given,
Blessed is he with his Father in heaven.

Christmas means so much to me,
More than just my family 'round the tree;
Christmas is a time to give and receive,
And on our Lord Jesus to believe.

—Pastor Dennis Cheatwood.



“I DON’T HAVE any legs,” he said softly through a week’s growth of beard. He flipped the blanket aside revealing a short stub.

“I know, but when Jesus comes back you can have new ones,” I said.

“Thank you for the book.”

I knew by the sound of his voice that he had read it—there was hope in the sound. He shook my hand with a firm dirty grip.

It was Christmas time. The lights of the casinos flickered a few blocks away. They sat near the railroad tracks and the Salvation Army by a fence with blankets hung to protect them from the wind. A pregnant woman huddled on a barren mattress. With an almost defiant air her husband said, “I’ve delivered sheep, and I can take care of her!”

He asked for an extra book for the absent man who had occupied the next space. He explained that the man had left the Baptist mission to go to the bar a week ago, and someone had shot him in the leg. The police had just come by and taken him to the hospital.

A few days later I saw a brief clip on the news of two men lifting the man with no legs. The announcer was saying, “The city has had a change of heart.” They were all gone the next week.

Since we had no church in this city, we wanted to get involved in some way in spreading the gospel. I had written a book on prophecy and doctrines and still had 2,000 copies. I had passed out my book to friends at work, but there was little response—they were all busy making a living, raising families, going on weekend excursions.

I had heard of a church which grew rapidly from one simple idea—find a need and fill it. Where was the need? I knew that the Methodist movement had started with a group of young people who ministered to the poor. They did it so methodically that they were nicknamed “Methodists.” Having never tried this, but determined to do something, we headed for the mission area uptown.

The first time we went some of them took the book courteously, but I’ll never forget the hard look on the face of

one young man who refused. Another man snapped, “Why don’t you give us something we need?” My husband suggested, “Why don’t we give each person a dollar? When you’re broke, a dollar is a lot of money.”

We were an instant hit. They looked at us in disbelief. The same questions surface again and again—“Why do you pay people a dollar to read your book?” “Where are all the other Christians?” and, “What church are you from?” We call it our “Buck and a Book” ministry.

There is a Baptist mission. The next building used to be a bar. Then came a walled area where 300 homeless slept on mattresses. A man who called himself “John 3:16 Cook” had started this “mission” with a truck featuring a sign, “Soup, Soap, and Hope.” One meal a day was served at 3:16 along with liquor which the people said he referred to as “holy water.” He left town and a \$2,000 utility bill when accused of absconding with the donations. Last in the barren row is the Salvation Army. Three small trees are the total shade (you aren’t allowed to go inside the Salvation Army until supper time). The ambulance comes as much as twice a week in the summer to pick up anyone who has collapsed from the heat.

The Salvation Army doesn’t “do” breakfast. St. Vincent’s, about two miles away, serves lunch and lets you take a shower if you want to get athlete’s foot. Then it’s back to the Salvation Army for supper (until your two weeks are up). Then you can go to the Baptist mission (no smoking is allowed) or hit the streets. If you get too near the casinos, you are thrown in jail. If you are broke, the only way to get out of town is to hitchhike or hop the train (the nearest city is 400 miles in any direction). If you happen to have a car but don’t have the money for gas, the city will tow it away. The Salvation Army does have a rehabilitation center now, but there are no mental institutions in Nevada. To get a job, you have to have identification—many do not have funds to get I.D.’s or know where to go to get it. So the unemployed, the robbed, the fugitives, the bums, the mentally ill, and the adventurers keep moving.

But this means they will also carry their ideas and thoughts with them wherever they go—a frail little old lady in jeans and a cowboy hat from Barstow who gave me a big hug, a young man from Lebanon, a Jewish redheaded teenager from New York, an Afro-American from Georgia waiting for money from home, a beautiful blond girl and her husband from Europe, a couple sitting on the railroad tracks who had their wallet stolen on the bus trying to get to her daughter in Idaho, a mercenary from Warsaw who has four degrees, speaks five languages and has met the Shah of Iran, a bewildered farmer from Minnesota, a Cuban from Florida.

I miss playing the organ in church, but I also have a “warm fluffy” feeling in my gut when some men around an old stove say, “That young man who was here last week called his parents and went home.” A good-looking black teenager stopped us and enthusiastically held up a copy of the book. “This is worth more than the dollar!” One man said, “I

already read your book—I found a copy in the train station at Utah.” An old bum recently told us, “You know that dollar you gave me last Christmas—I won \$23 with it!” Last week, when a short Mexican man found we were passing out tracts (we have run out of books), he scurried off, returning in a couple of minutes with a tattered book with a missing cover. He said excitedly, “Have you seen this book? It’s full of prophecies.” I said, “Look on the back”—my picture was on it. He just looked at me as if he had seen a ghost. He just couldn’t believe the author would be walking around down by the railroad tracks.

“
During my Bible reading each morning I started making notes on verses pertaining to the poor and was surprised how many references I found.
”

We have to time our arrival so there will not be too many people around. We have gone late in the afternoon (there are usually about 80 people lined up for supper) and started giving out our books and bucks at the end of the line. As soon as we were discovered, everyone wanted the dollar so badly they would not get in line. Thirty pairs of dirty hands all stretched out is not a sight you soon forget.

During my Bible reading each morning I started making notes on verses pertaining to the poor and was surprised how many references I found. Here are just a few: “To the poor the gospel is preached” (Luke 7:22); “The poor are hearing the good news” (Matt. 11:5); “He has sent me to announce good news to the poor” (Luke 4:18); “Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God” (Luke 6:20); “Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he has promised to those who love him?” (Jas. 2:5); “Give to the poor, and then you will have riches in heaven” (Matt. 19:21); “But when you give a party, ask the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind, and so find happiness. For they have no means of repaying you; but you will be repaid on the day when good men rise from the dead” (Luke 14:13).

“The poor will be always with you in the land, and for that reason I command you to be open handed with your countrymen, both poor and distressed in your own land” (Deut. 15:11); “You shall not completely strip your vineyard nor glean the fallen grapes. You shall leave them for the poor and alien” (Lev. 19:10); “If you wish to go the whole way, go, sell your possessions, and give to the poor, and then you will have riches in heaven” (Matt. 19:21); “Happy is the man who has a concern for the helpless. The LORD will save him in time of trouble. The LORD protects him and gives him life, making him secure in the land; the LORD never leaves him to the greed of his enemies” (Psa. 41:1-3).

“I saved the poor man when he called for help and the orphan who had no protector. The man threatened with ruin blessed me, and I made the widow’s heart sing for joy. . . . I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. I was father to the needy, and I took up the stranger’s cause” (Job 29:12-16).

“He who is generous to the poor lends to the LORD; he will repay him in full measure” (Prov. 19:17); “If a man shuts his ears to the cry of the helpless, he will cry for help himself and not be heard” (Prov. 21:13); “He who oppresses the poor insults his Maker; he who is generous to the needy honours him” (Prov. 14:31); “When you see a man being dragged to be killed, go to his rescue and save those being hurried away to their death. If you say, ‘But I do not know this man,’ God, who fixes a standard for the heart, will take note. God, who watches you—be sure he will know; he will requite every man for what he does” (Prov. 24:12).

Christmas is over, the news media are gone, and the “No Water” sign has gone up again at the Salvation Army. I knocked on the window last week to ask for a paper cup and gave a drink of water to Eugenia. “And if anyone gives so much as a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, because he is a disciple of mine, I tell you this; that man will assuredly not go unrewarded” (Matt. 10:41).

Yesterday a young woman dressed in a business skirt and carrying a purse stood on the steps of the Salvation Army with a kidney infection and asthma, crying in pain. They wouldn’t let her in until supper time. She had a bracelet around her wrist and said she had used her Medicaid twice and was not eligible for any more free help. We gave her our bottle of water and called 911. They said they would call Mercy Hospital. I plan to check on her outcome today—I have a feeling she may still be there. “For when I was hungry, you gave me food; when thirsty, you gave me drink; when I was a stranger, you took me into your home; when naked, you clothed me; when I was ill, you came to my help. . . . I tell you this: anything you did for one of my brothers here, however humble, you did for me” (Matt. 25:35). “You ought to give judgment for the weak and the orphan, and see right done to the destitute and downtrodden. You ought to rescue the weak and the poor and save them from the clutches of wicked men” (Psa. 82:3, 4).

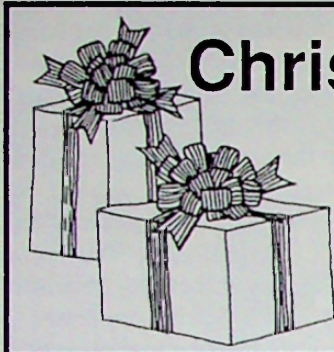
Dr. Schuller recently told a story of a man who saw another lying in the gutter. He said to God, “Why do you allow this suffering? Why don’t you do something about this?” The answer came back, “I did, I just called it to your attention.”

The news media recently interviewed a lady from the Baptists, who held their national convention here, and asked her what she had learned. She said, “I learned that Las Vegas is people, not casinos.”

“Tend my sheep, tend my sheep, tend my sheep. . . .”

—Jesus.

By Elaine Poole



Christmas Is Sharing

By Myra Huffer

Eric sat by the window as the snow buried the sidewalk in front of his house. The snow family Eric had made that afternoon nearly disappeared from sight as the wind blew the snow harder and harder. But Eric didn't notice. He was busy thinking about the Christmas play at the church tomorrow night.

He had been chosen to play one of the three kings that came to visit baby Jesus. The more Eric thought about it, the more frustrated he became. Mother was to make his costume. What fun he and Mother had had planning the magic to turn Dad's old bathrobe and some cardboard into a royal robe and crown fit for any king.

Eric's heart sank even further as he heard Mother's voice coming from his sister Tascha's room. Tascha had been sick for days and no one really knew what was wrong. Mother spent all her time with Tascha. She even spent the night sleeping in the chair in her room. Mother hadn't even thought about the Christmas play. She was worried about her baby.

The play was all that Eric thought about. When was Mother ever going to make that costume? Ever since Tascha was born things had been different. Mother didn't walk Eric to the bus for school anymore; she didn't want to leave Tascha alone. She didn't play or sing songs with him after school anymore because they might wake Tascha from her nap. The more Eric thought about it, the more he believed that he would never be a king in the play. In fact, Mother might not even have time for Christmas. A big tear rolled down Eric's cheek.

The next thing Eric knew, it was morning and he was carefully tucked in his own bed upstairs. Mother had found him asleep in front of the window and had carried him there. Eric smelled the delicious aroma of bacon frying. Mother always fixed an extra special breakfast on Sunday mornings.

Eric ran downstairs to the kitchen and there was his mother cooking at the stove. Eric walked over to his place at the breakfast table and his eyes grew bigger and bigger. There laying across his chair was a robe fit for a king and a crown covered with

sparkles and sprayed a glowing gold. Mother had stayed up very late making it.

Eric ran over to his mother, threw his arms around her, and gave her a giant hug.

"Oh, Mother, I thought you didn't like me anymore. I thought you just liked Tascha," said Eric tearfully.

"Eric, you know that I love you and Tascha just the same, and that is very much!" Mother said.

"But you don't do as many things with me anymore. Ever since Tascha got sick, you just stay with her," cried Eric.

"Do you remember last month when you had the measles? We sent Tascha over to Grandma's to stay so I could take care of you. You see, Eric, part of being a family is learning to share—even sharing each other's time," Mother explained.

Eric felt so much better, and he knew Mother was right. He loved his mother and he loved Tascha, too. Eric took off upstairs, put on his king costume, and ran into Tascha's room.

"Listen, Tascha, this is what I am going to say tonight in the play, 'Mary and Joseph, I bring this gift of gold for your child, the King!'" Eric said in his best king's voice. Tascha clapped her chubby little hands. Eric was so happy his sister was better.

That night the Christmas story came alive in the church. It was time for the kings to come down the middle aisle. First they sang "We Three Kings," and then each presented his gift to baby Jesus. It was Eric's turn. "Mary and Joseph, I bring this gift of gold for your child, the King. And Mary, I hope you are as good a mother to Jesus as my mother is to me."

After the play Mother hugged Eric harder than he had ever been hugged before. Eric knew now what Christmas is all about!



Children
are the
best
receptors
of our
gifts.

Let Jesus Out of the Cradle



A Reflection and Challenge

By Anthony Buzzard

A recent skit performed by Oregon Bible College students featured a man who put God in a box. We were invited to reflect on how frequently we try to confine God in a box and limit him to what we think he can or ought to do.

I wonder, too, whether we do not often put Jesus in a cradle and leave him there. After all, a helpless baby may stir tender emotions within us, but can he demand that we give up everything for him? The Jesus of our Bibles does just that. He demands and commands our full obedience. He insists that only those who actually perform the will of the Father can realistically expect to enter the kingdom of God when Jesus returns (Matt. 7:21, 22).

Such teachings can make us uncomfortable as we realize the danger of being our own worst enemies. We have the power to keep ourselves out of the kingdom. It is much easier to create our own religious placebos, and we can even use the Bible to do this.

It is instructive to note that the comforting Psalm (23) is perhaps the best-loved psalm; yet the apostles are intensely interested in Psalm 110, which is by far the most frequently quoted Old Testament passage in the New Testament. This psalm speaks of the Lord Messiah "waiting until His enemies are made his footstool." This Jesus is the military conqueror who is one day going to put down all opposition.

"Theology," following our very human tendency to soften the "hard" teachings of the Bible, has done its level best to promote the gentle Jesus and to soft-pedal the Jesus who intends to destroy his enemies. This is not to say that Jesus is not wonderfully compassionate. My point is that we humans all too easily romanticize Jesus and try to tone him down to a level which we find acceptable. One way of doing this is to leave him in the cradle. However, is not this attempt to whittle Jesus down to size only a subtle form of idolatry, the invention of "another Jesus"?

The Jesus of our Scriptures was and is a highly provocative and controversial figure. So unpopular were some of his teachings that at least five of the letters in the New Testament were written from jail and others were by men who awaited jail sentences and were eventually killed for their faith. The prophets were killed for telling the truth to their generation.

Yet much of what we now call Christianity seems to

live most comfortably with the world. Most churches seem hardly ever to attract any opposition. I am suspicious about this sort of Christianity. It may not be genuine at all. The time has come for a thorough review of what we are really doing as Christians.

In a world full of different Jesuses, the Christian's only anchor is to study the true Jesus of the Scriptures and to be earnestly in prayer for light and inspiration, for correction, and for growth in the faith. We put our hands to the plough when we first believed in God's great plan for the world, and there can be no turning back. We have caught a glimpse of the glory of the Messiah and his kingdom. We dare not shrink back and miss the mark of our high calling to membership in God's beautiful kingdom to come.

We Christians have everything to gain and everything to lose. In a confused and confusing world, the light of Truth is more than ever needed to guide us on our pilgrimage in the wilderness to the promised land of the kingdom. Through much tribulation we are destined to inherit the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). Endurance in the heat of trial is gained by contact with the adult, resurrected Jesus now enthroned with his Father. The baby in the cradle grew up to be God's supreme human being—Son of man—who loved mankind so much that he gave his life for us all. Let us not confine him within our own limits. Let Jesus out of the cradle and God out of the various boxes we have built for him.

I suggest a new challenge for the Church of God. It is drawn from a statement of the great Apostle Paul. He announced to the disciples at Thessalonica that men are perishing "because they did not receive a love of the truth in order to be saved" (2 Thes. 2:10). Paul goes on to say that "believing what is false" leads to destruction (v. 11). It is the same as "delighting in wickedness" (v. 12). May we all ponder these extraordinary words.

We are living in a world which promotes an easy tolerance of every kind of belief. Paul, however, insists that "the love of the truth is necessary for salvation." Could any message be better designed to kindle within the people of God a zeal for truth and a desire to rid ourselves of "belief in what is false?" Only the glorified, resurrected Jesus could challenge his people with words like these. Let us not resist the challenge by keeping Jesus in a cradle.



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YOUR FAVORITE CHRISTMAS SONGS

What would be your all-time favorite Christmas songs? It was obvious that Silent Night is the all-time favorite as over half of the responses to the survey listed it as their first choice. The second choice was O Come All Ye Faithful, but we had a three way tie for your third all-time favorite Christmas song.

There were 17 songs that made the list including NOEL, Hark the Herald Angels Sing, and Reason for the Season by the christian rock group Stryper. But the third all-time favorite Christmas song among Herald readers was/were Joy to the World, O Little Town of Bethlehem, and Winter Wonderland.

Congratulations go out to our winner, S. O. Ross of Litchfield, Minnesota. Brother Ross selected as his three all-time favorite Christmas songs: Silent Night, O Come All Ye Faithful, and Joy to the World. Brother Ross will be sending three of his friends a one-year subscription to THE RESTITUTION HERALD.

If you have a friend that you don't know what to give for Christmas. You can still give the gift that will keep on giving all year long, THE RESTITUTION HERALD.



FAVORITE ALL-TIME CHRISTMAS SONGS

- #1 Silent Night
- #2 O Come All Ye Faithful
- #3 Joy to the World
- O Little Town of Bethlehem
- Winter Wonderland

COMPASSION

By Vicki Pulling

A tragedy. An accident caused the woman to lose a leg. Young, and in the prime of her life, she was struck with a tragedy that affected the rest of her life. Just take a moment to visualize how a situation such as this might change a life:

A world turned upside down. Loss of life as it was previously known. An adjustment period that would be difficult for those unaffected to imagine. Loss of income, loss of self-esteem, loss of security, loss of normalcy in many ways. One might feel separated from others; different—needing help from outside sources for the first time. Needing help, but perhaps afraid to ask; not wanting to make others feel obligated.

Can you imagine what it would be like for YOU to suffer a tragedy such as loss of a limb? Just think about the changes that would occur in your life. Imagine the emotions that might course through your soul; thoughts of “Why me,” or “It’s just not fair; why would God do this”? It would definitely affect the way you view the future . . . what about your hopes and dreams; the things you had planned for yourself and your family? The unwelcomed changes in your life might cause you to feel bitter and resentful toward those who were normal, or even toward God. Life would lose its meaning as you knew it.

Tragedy. Fortunately, when misfortune strikes,

**It is so easy
for us to get
caught up in
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those who
have no one.**



people come to the rescue. The beloved family and neighbors pitch in to help, and the victim is sheltered, fed, and comforted. Christians are wonderful when a sister or brother is struck by affliction. Prayer chains are formed, and intercessors go to God on behalf of the victim, who comes through the ordeal surrounded by a blanket of love, and thanks God for those who care.

I give this scenario as a preamble for this article, because I believe that you might be able to visualize with compassion what suffering would occur in such a calamity.

Compassion. Webster defines the word as “Sympathy. sorrow for the sufferings or trouble of another or others, accompanied by an urge to help; deep sympathy; pity.”

With the approach of the holiday season comes

(Please turn the page)

COMPASSION

(Continued from page 11)

the hustle, bustle, and activity of preparation. I've had a deep love for the holiday season as a time of thanksgiving and worship, time spent with the family, and happiness. I enjoy the anticipation and preparation. There was a time in my life, though, that the usual happiness of the holidays turned to dread and depression—that was during the few years after I was divorced. Now that those years have passed, I am aware of others that have trouble in their lives, and I know that the holidays aren't a happy time for everyone.

I ask you to remember to be compassionate. There are so many people who are going through this holiday season as the first after the loss of a loved one. You imagined what it would be like to lose a limb in the scenario above . . . now imagine what it would feel like to lose a loved one. You can acquaint the same emotions—the feelings of loss and change in lifestyle. The emotions would be the same regardless of the reason (death, divorce, or separation) as in other tragedies of loss. The grief is nearly unbearable during the holidays.

This season, I ask that you think of those who are alone. It is so easy for us to get caught up in our families, and forget that there are those who have no one. We would find it hard to imagine the loss of a loved one, but there are those around us who are suffering through the first holidays without that loved one. It's hard; more suicides occur during the holidays than at any other time of year.

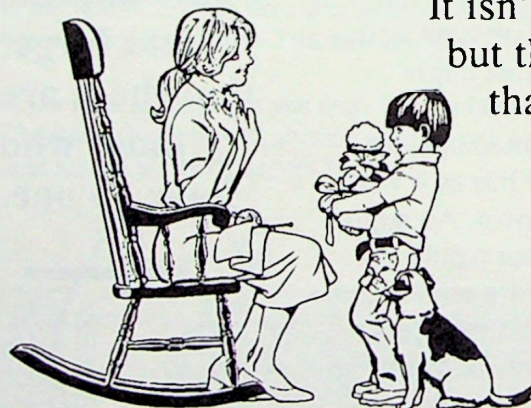
Do you know of someone who might be left alone? A newly widowed or divorced person? A person who is suffering at the break up of an engagement or who is separated from a spouse for any reason? There are old people in nursing homes who never have visitors. You could be involved in visiting them with gifts. There are children in orphanages.

There are the homeless at city missions.

The loss of a love or lack of love in life is devastating at any time, but is never felt like it is during the holidays. I ask you to look around—find someone to love outside your family; make it a family project to adopt a person who may be hurting.

Our God is a Father of love; Jesus was a teacher of compassion. We are taught by him to give unselfishly, with no thought of reward. You can set an example this holiday season for your children, and your community by showing compassion to those who are hurting or in need. For it isn't the gift, but the giving that counts.

In Luke 6:38 Jesus says, "Give and it shall be



It isn't the gift,
but the giving
that counts.

given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."

Finally, I remind you to love those that are around. Love them now; don't wait till they're gone away. Love them now, while they're still around. Tell them; kiss and hug them. The only things in life that are important are people, and compassion is the language of love.

Happy Holidays!!

**The loss of a love or lack of love in life is devastating at any time,
but is never felt like it is during the holidays.**

Setting goals for your children

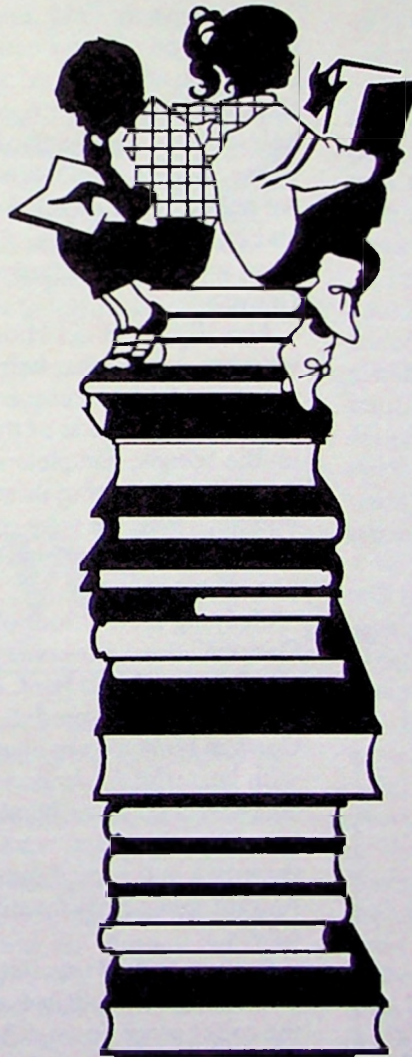
By Kim Ek

Setting goals for your children is entirely up to you as a parent. It's a matter of whether or not you want your child to grow up knowing about God and believing his Word.

I'd like to be the perfect parent and be able to say that I'm always a good example to my children and I read Bible stories every night. But I can't say that and be truthful. I find myself saying things and acting in ways God wouldn't approve of in front of the children. Also when they're acting up and don't seem to be listening to me I yell a lot to get their attention. I find myself yelling MOST of the evening. So if things work out and it's not too late I like to get them ready for bed and myself too, and have them pile up in our bedroom and read from the Children's Bible Story Book.

I find my five-year-old very open to the truth of the Bible and he asks a lot of questions about a story we're reading which means to me he is listening. My two-year-old isn't quite as attentive, but give her a couple of years and she'll be a good listener. The important thing is to start teaching and reading them things out of the Bible when they're young. The older they are when you start the harder it will be to reach them, I feel. Sure, you can read Walt Disney stories and get their undivided attention, but unless they

It takes a little planning, a lot of discipline, and a little time to rear our children the way God wants us to.



The important thing is to start teaching and reading them things out of the Bible when they're young.

really believe what the Bible is saying and believe YOU believe it, they won't care or give their attention to it.

Another way to reach your children is to bring up God or Jesus in a conversation often. Sometimes the whole day may go by when I haven't acknowledged God as I should; therefore the children haven't had any positive input about God. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING in our lives should be the fact that God exists! Why are we so lazy sometimes? (Because it's easy to be lazy.) It takes a little planning, a lot of discipline, and a little time to rear our children the way God wants us to.

First, we parents have to be right with God before we can help our children so let's make those goals for our children and work hard to follow through. In the end when Jesus comes we can hear Jesus say we've done well teaching our children about him and that we lived in such a way as to be a witness to them as they were growing up. So let's all try harder and get motivated to set goals for our children.

Let's raise them in a Christlike atmosphere and watch them become young Christians believing in the Word of God so they can be accounted worthy for the Kingdom of God. That's my goal. I pray God will be my strength so that I can carry through with my dreams for them to finally meet the goal in the end.



The year was 1945. I was a rifleman in an infantry company, a part of the 86th "Blackhawk" Division. . . . Our invasion of West Germany etched in my memory a scene at Wolzhausen which I'll never forget.

Not long ago I was browsing over a road map of West Germany when my eyes fell upon the name "Wolzhausen." There it was, in very small print, not far from "Marburg." The sight of it surprised me; I had not expected to see it. But, happily, it kindled a feeling of excitement, and brought back a flood of memories.

The year was 1945. I was a rifleman in an infantry company, a part of the 86th "Blackhawk" Division. We had been in fox-holes on the west bank of the Rhine. After a while, however, we pulled back, traveled south, and crossed the river at Bonn. Then we moved on farther into Germany.

Actually, I did not know where we were, except that before long we entered a picturesque little town or village, one of those idyllic scenes, complete with a small brook running through the middle. There we were to remain for several days, billeted in homes or buildings.

Sleeping on the floor of a German house, however picturesque it may be, is hard. So some of the men discovered that German homes were equipped with beautiful *Federdecken*, eiderdown quilts or blankets which are thick and warm. These they took and spread upon the floor to make beds for themselves.

But hardly had this liberating feat been accomplished, when the order came down, "All the 'Federdeckes' must be returned at once to their German owners." I was one of those given this assignment, and, with the help of another soldier, we went around, loaded down with "Feder-deckes," and the people identified and claimed their own. One house I shall never forget.

We stepped inside, and the people selected their blanket. But, in a moment, my eyes swept

round the room. Verses of Scripture, beautifully lettered and framed, adorned the walls. The family, now seated quietly, almost stoically, watched me as I stood there, rifle slung over my shoulder, and read the Scriptures.

"Am I in a Christian home?" I thought to myself. "I must be—and shall I say something?"

I had more blankets to return. These people were "the enemy." We were not to fraternize. I am a soldier under authority, and, of course, I must obey.

But the Bible verses on the wall kindled another voice within me. Another impulse kept tugging at my heart. Two kingdoms were at war for control of my thoughts, my emotions, and my words. "You are a Christian,"

Wolzhausen Scriptures

the second Voice said. "These people must also be believers."

I felt so strongly the impulse to at least acknowledge the Scriptures that finally I said, speaking in German, "Those are verses from the Bible."

"Yes," the father replied, "they are selections of Holy Scripture."

A few more words were exchanged, regarding the verses on the wall. I don't remember now what was said, except that it became obvious that I was a Christian—and, most importantly, I too believed the Scriptures on the wall.

During those few seconds, the family, a rather large group of people, remained quietly seated around the small living room, saying nothing. The father was doing the talking, the mother

standing dutifully nearby. But I can still see the light that came upon the faces of them all.

Perhaps it was a mixture of delight, relief, and incredulity.

Then, after a moment, the father turned, went to a shelf, and came back with a beautiful Bible in his hand. "I want to give you this," he said, "in appreciation for returning our Federdecke." But I felt it was really his way of acknowledging our mutual faith in Christ.

By that time, however, I began to feel some concern. Another soldier was with me, and I realized he may have been anxious to get on with the job of returning the blankets.

Nevertheless, as I looked at the Bible, I could not refrain

for several days. It was a pleasant respite for us, while the war raged elsewhere in Europe.

When we had first arrived, the company commander had sent two of us to locate the burgermeister. We brought him to the headquarters, set up in a power house or station, and I had the responsibility of interpreting to him the captain's words that the American military was, in effect, the government of the town.

Before long, I saw a sight I shall long remember. The town crier walked down the principal street of the village. Occasionally he would pause, ring his bell, and make an announcement. The people leaned on the window ledges, listening. I

ahead of us, though we did not fully realize it.

We gathered near the bridge that crossed the stream, to await the convoy of trucks to take us away. I looked up one of the village streets, and coming down the slope toward us was a group of civilians. It was the family from the home with the Bible verses on the wall—and several others appeared to be with them. They were approaching me.

An officer standing nearby shouted, "Tell those people to get back!" I raised my arm, and they stopped about 20 feet away, with uncertain looks on their faces.

I conveyed my orders. We could not converse. But then I added, as best I could, the glorious message of the Lord's return (1 Thes. 4:13-18). When Jesus comes, I would see them again, I said. That was my final word. The officer did not understand.

We sat in the trucks waiting to pull out. My friend who had gone with me to find the burgermeister remarked casually, "The name of this village is Wolzhausen." I thought to myself, "I must remember."

For more than 40 years I wondered if I had heard correctly, and if there really was a Wolzhausen. I could never find it on maps of Germany, and no one I spoke to seemed to know.

The names of most places have been forgotten—if I knew at all. But not Wolzhausen. It is more than a name or a place to me. It is a message, a portent of the future.

"What was the name of the German family?" I don't know. I did not ask, and they did not tell me. We weren't supposed to fraternize. But, happily, the Word of God was not so bound (2 Tim. 2:9).

Wolzhausen: The Bible Verses On the Wall

from asking, "Whose Bible is this?" "Our son's," the father replied.

"Where is your son?" I then asked, and he said, "He died on the east front."

To my left, on the wall, was a picture of a young man in uniform. "Is that your son?" I asked, and the father answered that it was.

"I cannot accept this Bible," I said, "it is your son's. But if you have a small German New Testament and Psalms, I would like to have that."

In a moment, one of the family came back with a New Testament and Psalms. I accepted it with thanks, then left to complete the task of returning the eiderdown blankets.

We remained in that village

assumed he was conveying to them the instructions the burgermeister had received.

Acquiescence throughout the village was quiet and without incident. One morning a group of us was standing near the little stream that ran through the center of town. An old man, small and frail, came and meekly asked for permission to "milk the cow." I felt compassion for him.

Someone remarked, "We may sit out the war right here in this village." I'm sure such wishful thinking was the secret prayer in the heart of more than one fearful "GI." But such was not to be.

The day came when we had to leave. The campaigns in the Ruhr, and then Bavaria, lay

By

Sidney

Hatch

Making Your Golden Years the Glory Years

We ask the question, what are the golden years of one's life? Fifty seems to be the Golden Anniversary of any event. So, are the Golden Years those after age 50? After age 50 some may look on us as "over the hill."

Let us look at Scripture. It appears that as one gains the Golden years that he has, or should have, acquired some wisdom and knowledge that can be helpful to society.

At age 80 Moses was called out to deliver the Israelites from their bondage in Egypt. Moses has questions how to proceed and God tells him to go gather the elders (assuming the more aged brethren) together and talk it over with them. (See Exodus 3:16.)

At the institution of the Passover (Ex. 12:21) Moses called the elders and they were given the responsibility to carry out the orders from God.

Then Moses himself said, "Remember the old days, consider the years of many generations: ask the father, and he will shew thee; the elders, and they will tell thee"

(Deut. 32:7). His directive: seek advice and counsel of their elders, you see. Later in Israel's history the call went out for the counsel of the elders (Ezra 10:8).

The Golden Years can be meaningful years if we will make ourself available. May I share a personal testimony of those years in my life.

I had the privilege to be an elected county official for 22 wonderful years. I had much joy in those years and met a multitude of people throughout our county. We had established our home, had a family of three children, and were deeply involved in the life of the community.

It was at the Golden Years of my life, exactly 50 years of age, when I was called to come on the staff of the Church of God General Conference in Oregon, Illinois. Peggy, my family, and I had dozens of reasons why we could not accept this call. Yet I guess we knew from the very first that we would accept and make this major move in our lives at age 50. I had been on the Board of Directors for nine of the 11 years before this and was well acquainted with the workings of the conference.

A banker friend of mine told me that either I was crazy or had a lot of "guts" to make such a move when gray haired and 50 years old. How glad I am that we did accept this challenge. The



Adulthostel students and staff are constantly in the work of ministry in various areas of the nation.

"Remember the old days, consider the years of many generations: ask the father, and he will shew thee; the elders, and they will tell thee" (Deut. 32:7).



THE PLEAS OF FUGITIVES AND THE CHRISTMAS ANSWER

THE NIGHT was one not unlike millions that had preceded and have succeeded it; the darkness, threatening; the stillness, intimidating; the quiet, deafening. And yet, with all of its threat and intimidation and silent-thundering, this night did provide some respite from the frightening flex of raw power that the daylight hours offered those who walked in it. In the shadows crept fugitives . . . fugitives not from a system, but from an environment.

The fugitives were not particularly attracted to gloom; in fact, nothing about it endeared it to them. But they did find some solace in the cover the darkness afforded. This too, contributed to the distress they suffered—wanting desperately to be delivered from the darkness and its attendant threat, and yet fearing the exposure incumbent upon those venturing into the light.

The few hours between dusk and dawn provided the refugees concealed in their shadows time to settle their fearful hearts and frenzied minds. Time to review the past, consider tomorrow—time to pray.

And what would they pray, these castaways from a culture that preferred the night? Would they ask to be rescued from the darkness, only to be abandoned on a white-bright stretch of deserted beach? Would they ask to be plucked out of the danger-fraught dark, just to be deposited into the sure destructiveness of pure radiant energy?

No, tonight's prayer would be bold. It would be direct and explicitly detailed. The petition that would issue from the lips of the exiles hidden in darkness this night would be for a complete rescue—liberation from the gloom and tenacity to withstand the brutality of the light. This night their prayer would be not solely for survival throughout another passing of the sun, but for equipping that would enable one to stand victoriously in its blinding rays, never again to tremble in fear—of either night or light.

Their prayer said, their pleas made, their desperate appeals completed, the outlaws huddled together in a cleft of despair/deliverance to pass yet another night—long, dark frightening hours—awaiting the sun's rising. They waited in expectation that their prayers would be answered just as they had been made—faithfully—all the while fearing that the brilliance of the new day might prove too severe for them to withstand. They waited . . . hoping and fearing.

The light was dazzling. In a nanosecond it had transformed the cold, hard, utter blackness of the night into a soft and accepting warm glow, not harsh and stark and blinding, but assuring and comforting in its illumination. It seemed to the onlookers that a million entities were contributing their energy to the radiance. It had happened in an instant, too, the transformation from dark to light.

As they stood gazing at the light, they were filled with awe and a collective "Ooohhh!" escaped their lips. Their prayers had been answered: they had survived the pre-Christmas

shopping season, made all of their planned purchases, and had money left to spare. The parties had been politely frequented, family banquets and gift exchanges properly attended, the house had been luxuriantly decorated, the presents extravagantly wrapped and arranged under the fantasy-festooned noble fir. And the cute little cherubic figurine at the tree's top smiled benevolently on all who stood at her feet attending this ritual of Christmas. Complete was the rush of the holidays. Now all that was left the refugees was the silent hush of expectation.

These, too, prayed at night. They ask for deliverance from the hurry of their daily schedules, their frequent illnesses, the unending demands of their careers, the unrelenting pressure from their debts, the unbelievable burden of their accumulated fortunes; relief from the merciless requirements of their relationships and the pitiless expectations their society had of them. These fugitives sought relief, not from want and impending destruction, but from spoiled, excessive abundance and its attendant meaninglessness.

Basking in the pleasant glow of their Christmas tree, these aliens were much similar to their cleft-hidden counterparts: they desperately wanted to be delivered from their present circumstance, but they weren't confident into what they would ultimately be delivered. Both wanted to see the dawning of the new day, but neither was sure it would provide exactly what he desired. They dreamed of relief from the "now," but were uncertain if they ever really wanted to realize their hopes and aspirations.

All of us pin our hopes on Jesus and his birth at Christmas. From ancient times we aliens have sought safe conveyance from the things—both people and circumstances—that trouble us and cause us to be disquieted and distressed. People of superstition have looked to their animistic and astrological deities for their rescue, while people of faith, authentic believers, have invoked the name of the everlasting Creator-Sustainer for relief.

"From the LORD comes deliverance.
May your blessing be on your people"
(Psa. 3:8, NIV).

"The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer;
my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge.
He is my shield and the horn of my salvation,
my stronghold.
I call to the LORD, who is worthy of praise,
and I am saved from my enemies"
(Psa. 18:2, 3, NIV).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his
one and only Son, that whoever believes in him
(Please turn the page)

THE PLEAS OF FUGITIVES AND THE CHRISTMAS ANSWER

(Continued from the front cover)

shall not perish but have eternal life.
For God did not send his Son into the world
to condemn the world,
but to save the world through him"
(John 3:16, 17, NIV).

Strip away all the fantasy and mythology, all the tradition and commercial hype that accompanies most Christmases for most "fugitives," and Christmas becomes God's answer to the prayers we've cried while hidden in cold, darkened caverns. The birth-anniversary of the Anointed is startling, undisputably divine testimony that the All-in-All has not abandoned us to this world's gloom, but has ordained that we walk again with him in the radiance of his glory. It is his will, as evidenced by the sending of the "Light of the World," that we should not only dare to venture out of the shadows, but that we

should thrive in the blaze of Christ's glory. It is the will of God for us this Christmas to be at once both delivered from that which threatens to destroy us and to prosper in the new environment which Jesus' presence affords.

What do you pray for for Christmas 1989? Beyond the things of this present order, what do you long for? Is it a new beginning? Change? Relief? Happiness? Fulfillment? God will answer that prayer . . . did answer that prayer when he sent Jesus into our world. That's right, all of his answers to our petitions are found in the person of Jesus. Now it's just a matter of daring to step out of the gloom with all its coldness, and stand in the light of Christ's presence. Fugitive, the answer to your most fervent prayers is at hand? Merry Christmas!

—From a former fugitive, David L. Wilsterman.

HOW TO APPRECIATE ADVENT

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 reestablished 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 Sunday, December 3. 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.

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 reordered 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.

—David L. Wilsterman.

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.

December 3—Remembering the Messiah's Commission.

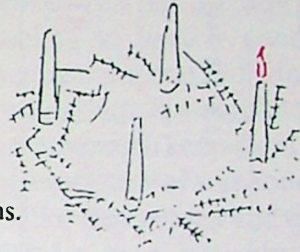
Scripture text—Isaiah 49:5-7

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 10—His Advent Is a Gospel of Light.

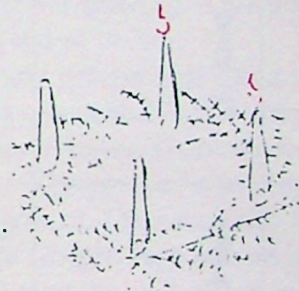
Scripture text: 2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

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 17—This Light Foretold in Scripture.

Scripture text: Psalm 119:105; 130

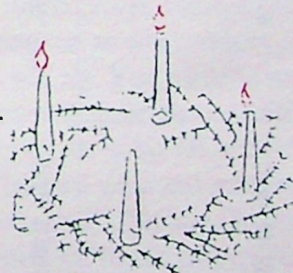
Father: Light three white candles beginning devotions.

Mother: Read Scripture text.

Oldest child: Open with prayer.

Youngest child: Close with prayer.

Song—"The First Noel."



December 24—A Light in a Life.

Scripture text: Luke 8:16-18.

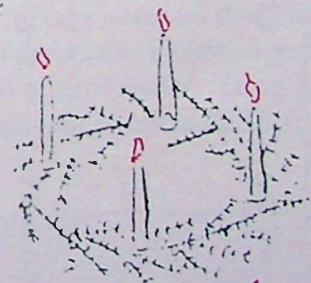
Mother: Light three white candles and the pink candle beginning devotions.

Oldest child: Read Scripture text.

Youngest child: Open with prayer.

Father: Close with prayer.

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

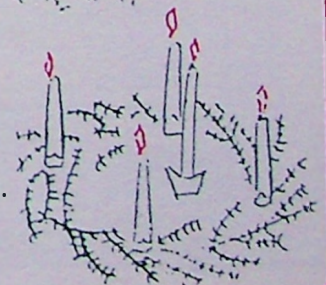


Christmas Day—The Light Is Really Here!

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 1989



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1	2 John 3:19-21
3 Advent Begins Isa. 7:14; 49:5-7	4 Gen. 3:3-5	5 John 8:12-20	6 2 Cor. 4:1-6	7 Micah 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	his name was called Jesus... 					

**Over all of these golden years, I have been able to
take part in scores of civic and religious activities that have truly
filled my life with joy and a feeling of serving.**

next 19 years were truly Golden Years in my life. We saw our two sons graduate from Oregon Bible College and go into full-time service in the Lord's ministry in pastorates and other related work. We saw our daughter graduate from college and get into a successful career in the business world.

In those years Peggy and I had the privilege to know any who came through Oregon Bible College on a very personal basis as we dealt with the student body in one capacity or another. It was my joy to meet thousands of people as I visited virtually every church in our denomination, including the Mission Field churches. I had two trips completely around the world, visited some 20 countries; visited th Holy Land three times; and spoke in hundreds of churches, conferences, foreign churches, and other settings too numerous to list. What Golden Years these have been.

Since leaving the General Conference Staff in 1980, I am now in my tenth year in the pastorate of the Litchfield Church of God. Another great and wonderful "golden" experience. Over all of these golden years, I have been able to take part in scores of civic and religious activities that have truly filled my life with joy and a feeling of serving.

I am in civic clubs, serve on task forces in several organizations, am on some local civic and religious boards, and do keep busy.

There are today so many opportunities for the Golden Age person to do volunteer work in civic and religious settings. If one has reasonably good health there is no need for one to be bored.

Even if one is a shut-in there are still many opportunities to serve. There is the pen to be used to contact and encourage someone who may be hurting or needing a friend. There is the telephone to keep in touch and to lift

up someone in need.

Everyone who has a ready mind can pray. What a great feeling to have a good prayer life and to be encouraging someone or lifting someone up to God in prayer when there is a need. Many folks are lonely and need that contact to keep them going. This is especially true when we know of someone who is sick. Spend time in prayer for that person and their family. It will hopefully do them good, but even more importantly it will help the one praying. It is a good feeling to lift someone up to God in prayer.

For any person who has a semblance of good health and says he is bored; it is simply a "cop-out." There are so many avenues of service for everyone, especially the Golden Age person, who may not be tied up in a job of employment. Opportunities to serve are everywhere.

If the Golden Age person is healthy and has a car he can go visit the sick, those in the nursing home facility or in the home. He can use his car to transport those less fortunate to the grocery, the drug store, the doctor and on and on. Yes, I guess we can be called upon too often. One may need to say "no" sometimes, but what a good feeling to have helped someone today.

To you who are younger, don't bemoan the passing years and dread the Golden Years. The alternative is not good. To those of you have reached that Golden age, make the most of it. Be an active Golden ager as long as possible. We can make our Golden Years into Glory Years. May we ever use our wisdom and knowledge to God's glory.

By Pastor S. O. Ross



OVERCOMING STRESS . . .

HOLIDAYS

By Pastor Ray Hall

Getting through the holidays without experiencing stress would be only short of miraculous; nonetheless I believe it is possible. It's possible, not because we are great masters of inner peace, or particularly adept at transmitting tranquility to those around us, but because God is great!

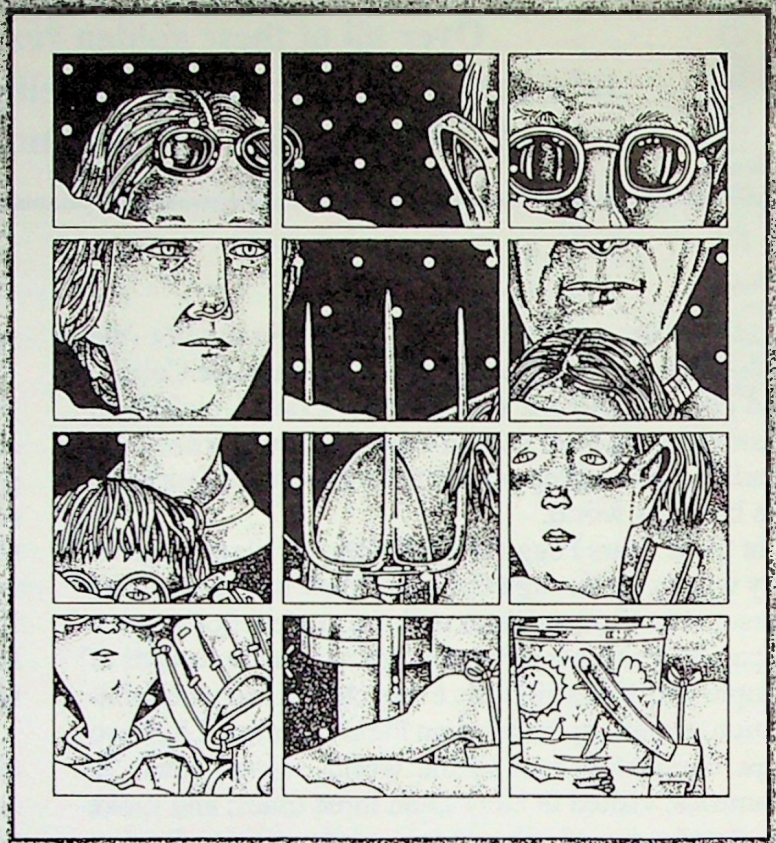
A dictionary definition of stress will help us find the cure. Webster's: "1. To subject to the action of external forces; esp., to overstrain."

Daniel and External Forces

As a youth, the prophet Daniel was subject to the action of external forces. He was snatched from his home in Palestine and taken captive to a distant land with a strange culture where he lived every day in fear of his life. You could conclude that he would have experienced some sort of stress under the circumstances, and would have been deeply depressed. Not so! Depression doesn't parallel with the personality of Daniel which we have come to admire and respect in the Old Testament character.

His stability in that situation seems indeed miraculous. I would like to suggest that we can know the same peace by applying the same principles to our lives. Often our expectations of the holidays are so unrealistic that the situation is not much different from being ripped from our native homeland and placed in an atmosphere foreign to us and our families. When this is the case, stress, if not depression, is unavoidable. The key then seems to be to enter into the holidays with something stable around us.

Most of the conflict and pressure in the average home starts over small things. Stress is seldom caused by the big things. For some reason we are better prepared to rise up and meet the larger issues and challenges of life than the small day-to-day hassles. When you reduce Christianity to its lowest common denominator, it's the way we respond to the little challenges of life that makes the difference. Bible heroes were men and women who were faithful in the little



things. Daniel was still a teen-ager when he first demonstrated his dedication to the Lord in the little things: Kosher food, prayer three times a day, commitment to a destroyed homeland, etc. Commitment to a small flock of sheep groomed David for the position of general of the national army and eventually king of Israel.

External Versus Internal Forces

One of the major problems we face trying to combat STRESS is that we don't separate the external from the internal forces in our life. Remember the dictionary definition of STRESS, "To subject to the action of external forces; esp., to overstrain." In dealing with stress many of us self-sabotage. We all do it sometimes. Unfortunately, some of us make a habit of it—holding ourselves back from getting what we want out of life. Here the dictionary definition lacks a little, because this definition is dealing primarily with physics and the law of materials, not with emotional and mental stress. In the case of emotional and mental stress you can create your own through inconsistencies in your own desires and behaviors, or, where Christians are concerned, inconsistencies with the will of God for your life. The biggest lesson I ever learned in managing stress is simply "TO YOUR OWN SELF BE TRUE." If you are not consistent with who you are and what you know, there will be internal stress, creating a situation that will quickly collapse when just a little outside pressure is added. No wonder most

people can't handle anything extra in the 20th-century lifestyle, because the "what you know" part includes your morals, ethics, values, and the will of God. We live in a society that creates most of its own stress—inner stress. Our lack of conformity to God's will for our lives creates more stress.

We are particularly aware of that in the common issues of life. We do not have to look far to find violations in our own standards and values that are the cause of stress in our lives—times when we don't live up to even what we like to believe about ourselves, let alone our Christian convictions and Spirit-filled life. We are most prone to give up our own ideals and values for living during the holiday season. Though we identify this as all for good reason, and feel it unavoidable, the product of trying to live a hypocritical life, or living for the sake of someone else's values at the cost of our own, will create stress.

Questions of Christmas Forces

Were you not comfortable in your home and your job before the holiday season closed in on you? Had you not chosen the community you live in for the pace of life around you? Did you not marry with ideas of living with that choice and spending leisure hours together for the rest of your life? Don't you find ample peace giving of your time and energy to the children with whom God has blessed you? Now because Halloween is over and there are **ONLY FOUR MORE WEEKS TILL CHRISTMAS**, are you *willing* to sacrifice all that to keep the spirit of the season? Though you may sacrifice, the stress you have created to sacrifice shows us you are not "willing."

BEFORE you start—and it is not too late—decide your goals in celebrating Christmas: Is it to draw the family together? to impress others? to have fun? to increase spirituality? Or perhaps is it just to survive the season?

The goal should be to have a Christmas in which you glorify God through the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ by enjoying the ultimate spirit of good will. Seek peace so you can enjoy friendships and kinships without being left with a mountain of bills and unfinished projects. You can organize Christmas and make it the special time of the year it was meant to be.

The Best Use of the Christmas Forces

Be careful not to sacrifice the family ties and relationships that have come to mean so much to you. Many of these you have a covenant with God to maintain. Plan your season around these people, doing it with them instead of only doing it for them. Christmas has to be more than a task we perform; it has to be a Spirit we share.

This will obviously take a lot more planning and preparation than what was done previously. Organize the activities around what your goals and objectives are for the

season, eliminate those things that do not address your purpose or goals for celebrating this holiday season. Jot down all the little details because these small details make all the difference between success and stress. Delegation is a key factor for good time management and doing things together.

As time progresses be sure to reassess often. The main thing to check is **ATTITUDE**. Make sure it stays positive. If you're feeling too pressured, evaluate your plans and look for possible things to cancel or combine. Ask yourself: will the world end if I don't do everything I hoped to do today? If the answer is **NO**, cancel some of the items on your list. Remember, Christmas is about people, and you have to decide who are the most important ones in your life. They're the ones you want to spend your time with.

Be sure your kids take part in the Christmas preparations. Be careful, however, to maintain your regular routine so they're not exhausted by the time the celebration arrives. Creativity can keep your children involved. Advent calendars, for example, are always fun for children. Nativity scenes can be used as learning experiences by taking out one character at a time each night and talking about their part in Christ's birth. Or, begin a Christmas scrapbook of stories, poems, and photos.

Christmas Forces Interest in Others

The Christmas season is a good time to nurture the value of service to others. It helps turn our hearts away from commercialism and turn "What will I get?" into "How can I help someone else?" Plan at least one family service activity to reinforce thinking of others. If you think your family has been particularly poor in this area, this is a good time of year to change some of those concepts and attitudes. Plan a service activity a week to help them get the right spirit. Ideas may include: visiting a rest home or hospital to sing or bring goodies and cheer, asking someone living alone to share dinner with your family, attending a special service (Christmas Eve, etc.), or sending something special to someone overseas or servicemen who can't come home for Christmas.

Whether living alone or in a house full of children, seek others to share in activities, friendship, or service. **GOOD WILL** is a commodity that expands to reward both the giver and receiver.

Traditions bind our families together. They are comforting. Traditions help us know who we are and build self-esteem. They give a feeling of joy, security, and continuity. Traditions passed down from generation to generation will give us roots. They may be simple or involved. When traditions govern us, however, when they become a checklist of things to be done rather than things you want to do, it is time to reevaluate. The most important thing about traditions is that you have several, and that they are yours to use, enjoy, change, or discard.

LOVE—

A COMMAND?

By Pastor Michael Brown

When I was reading my Daily Bible Reading verses the other day, a question popped into my mind. "Why is love a command?" I asked myself. Then I wondered, "How can you make yourself love someone and really feel sincere about it?" These questions arose after I read Deuteronomy 11:22, which says, "Obey faithfully everything that I commanded: Love the LORD your God, do everything he commands, and be faithful to him" (TEV). "That's fine," I thought, "but won't we just go through the motions of love by obeying rather than truly feeling love as we should?" It's the old "I'm doing it because I have to, not because I want to" syndrome which, by nature, we all have to some degree.

As I meditated on the passage, my mind related the command to love to the command of doctors to exercise. We should enjoy exercise, for doctors insist that it will help us live happily and longer, right? But we don't think that way, do we? If a visit to our physician results in his requirement to get that body in better health by walking two miles a day, we usually don't want to but we surely don't want a heart attack, either. So, do we walk because we enjoy it or because the alternatives are threatening to our health?

No doctor told me I must get more exercise, but my conscience told me it wouldn't hurt if I did. Along with an interest to lose some excess cargo from my 5' 9" frame, I decided to jog

each day. It wasn't easy, though. At first, I ran and puffed and walked, caught my breath, then ran and puffed and walked a little more, and I was merely a short block away from my house! Muscles ached. My feet were sore. Boy, was I out of shape! But there was something stimulating about it, too. Each day I ran a little farther and walked a little less until one time I ran a whole mile without stopping! And, what's even more amazing, I loved it! Now I jog about three to five miles a day. If, for some reason, I don't have the chance to go out on a certain day (I don't go out on Sundays because that's my day of rest) I miss it, for I miss the exhilaration it gives me. I also pray and meditate when I jog and I feel closer to God.

I can relate jogging or exercising to the command to love. If one only waits to get into a certain mood to finally exercise, love someone, or do anything else of value, sooner or later one is going to give up, perhaps not even try at all. That's because feelings fade and moods move like the tide—in and out. Unless we are told to do something, we seldom will. Whether by the dictates of God or our consciences (don't forget, God invented our consciences, too), it takes obedience and an attitude of willingness to make what we do succeed. We must be willing to go ahead and do (and we don't mean "just try," either) because it's the right and good thing to do. As we make our choice to obey, that is when the love kicks in.





God Is Love

By
Oregon
Bible
College
Freshmen

THE PHRASE "God is love" reminds me of the Biblical assertion, "The greatest of these is love." I consider that love is the motivation for God's plans and actions. God made us with a desire to love us—and he saves us because of his great love. Jesus is more often associated with love than is God, but God made Jesus—and God put that love into him by his Holy Spirit. God is love because love takes up such a great portion of any true description of God, and also because God is the archetype of love itself.

—Daniel Smead.



GOD IS love. One cannot think of total and pure love without thinking of God. There is nothing in this world to compare with the wonderful concept of his love. The amazing part about this is that even if a worldly person tries to imagine total and pure love, and comes up with something other than God, and are convinced that he is right, God still loves him as much as he loves one who acknowledges God as being total love. And he sends his Spirit to save us and accompany us through life. He carries us in love. God is love.

—Michelle Mattison.

"GOD IS love," reads the bright yellow bumper sticker. "God is love"; hear the little children in Sunday School. But is there more to it than this, shall we say, "sentimental fluff"? I find the endless capacity of God's

love—and the fact that God's whole nature is love—quite incomprehensible. Because there is nothing to compare God's personality to, it is really undefinable for me. I know God must be love to accept me, forgive me, and send his only Son to die for me. Plus, he created me, created the world for me to live in, and people to care for and be cared for. Perhaps it is the little children in Sunday School who can understand it best. Their innocence and naivete allow them to better comprehend the personality of God which has love as its primary purpose. So next time you see that little yellow bumper sticker, smile, and try once more to comprehend that little statement that means so much. God is LOVE.

—Marcia Hall.

"GOD IS Love." I've heard that saying since I began going to church in the third grade. This phrase, to me, means that no matter what we do God will always love and care for us, as long as we ask for forgiveness. God's love for us was so strong that he gave his Son for our sins. That sums it all up. God truly is love.—Shawn Yager.



How a belief system impacts life



By John Demmitt

WHAT ONE believes, also affects how you live. A man who doesn't believe in God or has no respect for God can't live a life that is acceptable to God, therefore would never be able to receive the salvation that God offers.

In religion there are many points that can be argued among churches or individuals in churches. But in Titus 3:9 and in 2 Timothy 2:23 the Bible tells us not to argue. What you believe is only one step for salvation, how you use that resource is another.

In John 5:24 it says "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life."

So that one believes the truth is important for salvation, by determining whether you live or die.

“I want to be just like Daddy.”

By Mark Cheatwood

My grandparents were in town for the night. They were vacationing in several states for a couple of weeks. Since they were going to visit Hot Springs, Arkansas, they decided to stop here in Little Rock to see my family and me for a night.

We were sitting at the dining room table chatting while Joseph (Joey) was playing with Angie in the living room. We had our eyes on them most of the time we were talking. It got to be late in the evening—time for Joey to get ready for bed. Angie told Joey, who was 22 months at the time, to help her put away the toys. Joey didn't fuss about it at all. Instead, he picked up little toys and put them in the plastic box. He seemed so content. I sat there and felt glorified at Joey's calm, cheerful, and quiet obedience. For a moment I thought of Joseph as other people see him. I felt that this little action of his was a positive mark on his character. I also felt pride in having my child behave so well.

Joseph doesn't always behave so perfectly. There are times when he is irritable and demanding. At times like those I am embarrassed, even ashamed. Unfortunately, he is reflecting the character of his father. As much time as we spend together he can't help but learn from me.

There was an important lesson for me in Joseph's behavior that night. As I sat there feeling pride in my son I was quickly reminded of the relationship which I share with my heavenly Father. I wondered how often I had brought glory to him, or how often I had brought embarrassment to his name. Jesus said, “Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16, NASB).

Calling God “Father” helps me to understand my relationship with him better. I then see how I embarrass him, and how I glorify him. I see how he disciplines me, and how I should discipline my children. It also helps me to understand the necessity of communicating with God—both speaking and listening. If I had



As I sat there feeling pride in my son I was quickly reminded of the relationship which I share with my heavenly Father.

spent all my time as a child speaking to my earthly father and no time listening to him, I would have learned nothing from him. If I had spent all my time listening to my dad and never speaking to him, I would have received all instruction and no understanding. Either way, our relationship would be painful and ineffective for both of us. However, I learned and understood much from my dad. Today I walk in his path in many ways. Like all children I learned life from those I lived with. Now some of my actions glorify my earthly father. But some of my actions probably embarrass him as well. That's the way it is because we are human. The point is that as a child I mimic my father.

As a child of God I must learn to mimic my heavenly Father as well. Jehovah offers an ear and a mouth. I must communicate with him. Then I can live the life I see him living. Then I can say with Jesus, “The Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing” (John 5:19). As I learn life from the Father, so will I live it. If I do not spend time with the Father learning about life, I will live it recklessly and uselessly. I must live life the way the Father does—then will my actions bring glory to him.

As I sat watching Joseph I found a simple but deeper meaning for my own life. I discovered a profound secret in an ordinary moment. My Father was speaking to me, his child. What a wise and understanding Father we have. Like a child of an earthly father says, so do I say of my heavenly Father, “I want to be just like Daddy!”

As a child of God I must learn to mimic my heavenly Father.

“Jim, it just cuts my heart out to sit in my office and watch members leave after Sunday School. They have come and given God a nod and off they go. It is really causing me despair.”

A New Area of Leadership Is Open for Exploration

“NO CHIEFS . . .
. . . TOO MANY MEDICINE MEN”

By Pastor James Graham



A pastor-friend of mine recently related this soul-wrenching confession to me. I related all too well. Dare you comprehend what it is like to preach “the presenting of our bodies as living sacrifices” to a generation that is so bent on satisfying self that it cannot stay for the corporate worship of the One God of Eternity—who excuse themselves from church on Wednesday nights because they have had to work during the day? These same folks hurry out of the office or leave work early when they have tickets to a sporting event or dinner with a special friend. But when the God of eternity calls, “Nooooo, we can’t go!” I’m compelled to ask, “Which god is receiving our sacrifices?”

It is agony to have people neglect God’s church while building a second home. The “Son of man” (along with the majority of this world) had no place at all to lay his head. Yet we see giving to the “Bride of Christ” cut because of the purchase of newer and bigger homes (with an astronomical mortgage payment), a motor home, or some other trinket of the god of this age.

As pastors, it is distressing to serve often for limited income, a people who are busy accumulating toys (that we can only dream about and play with only when they let us play with theirs). Depression occurs as we look out of our offices on a Sunday morning and watch the saints head for the hills after Sunday School and before the corporate worship of the God of eternity. There is a real despair in the ministry today. While church members talk about how God enhances their lives, the minister relates to Jeremiah’s assessment, “Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by? Is any suffering like my suffering? . . . See, O LORD, how distressed I am! I am in torment within, and in my heart I am disturbed . . . people have heard my groaning but there is no one to comfort me.”

The church today is bankrupt when it comes to leadership. We seem to be plagued with the same problem which is limiting our nation—strong leadership. The church is a reflection of our society in this area. We need leaders—men and women who will stand, pick up the staff, and say with conviction, “Follow Me.”

As I address this subject, I must focus upon the role of the pastor within the Church of God. I confess, as one of them, that we may have failed the church. We have not taken a “prophetic” role upon ourselves. Many of us do not even know what that might be. We have become passive, anemic, even wimpish in leading the church. Instead of communicating a radical gospel, we neuter it so it will offend no one. We accept a medicine-man role. We chant on Sunday and conjure up metaphysical images of a God afar off. We become proficient at hatchings, matchings, and dispatchings.

And in moments of candor we might dare confess that we hate it. That’s right, hate it. We grapple with feelings of inadequacy, uselessness, and being patronized. The ministry we were called to is somehow lost in potluck dinners, meetings, and agonizingly repetitious rituals which we can mindlessly recite. So after a few years, many quit or, worse yet, grow accustomed to it. Some even convince themselves that they are happy with it all. We believe in a gospel that is more important than all else only to preach this to a generation which by its actions shows that it cares more about this world than the gospel of another world.

I’ve stood by and said nothing, blaming myself for having a “cynical attitude.” I even went so far as to believe that maybe I should quit if I couldn’t get my attitude straightened out.

(Please turn the page)

But no more. I came to the resolution that perhaps this inner feeling has developed because things "just aren't right" and someone needs to say so. It would be presumptuous for me to say that I am not so much writing my opinion as attempting to reveal the Word of the Lord. This is my opinion. It is my assessment of the church and God's Word. I pray that this is what God would want to be said.

Here, my brothers and sisters, is what I believe to be true. I've seen people leave the church because their needs were not being met in worship. My dear friends, I thought that it was God we were lifting up in worship, not our parasitic needs. There have been those who have accused the church of "sin" over the smallest of changes that requires more of them or unsettles their comfort zone. I've had people complain and criticize that they were not being used, only to have them say no when asked to serve in an area of church work where there was a real need but not in an area which they wanted to serve. Since when, my friends, did bond servants start telling the master what they would do? I'm not equating the pastor to the master, but we are the ones who are called overseers and who must give account to the master. So what would be wrong with the servants serving more and dictating less?

I'm also tired of commitment always being viewed as short term. I remember the day when a teacher felt called and when a calling lasted a lifetime. There are teachers in my home church who were teaching children when I was a child and who are still teaching. These people are "dedicated" (how's that for some archaic language) yet have been criticized as not being "filled with the Spirit" by members who have left the church because it did not contribute to their quest for "gettin' high on Jesus." Isn't commitment the same word we use to describe our role in a marriage relationship? How can we blow in and out of fellowship based upon our feelings, needs, and often misdirected ambitions?

And experiential religion! Since when did one's experience dictate reality? I recently had a member say to me concerning a specific spiritual gift that he "didn't know what the Bible said about it, but it sure made him feel good." As I write this down on paper I am amazed at how ludicrous it sounds. Do you recall the old story about the blind men at the circus? They came upon an elephant and their experiences produced a varied opinion as to what it was they were touching. And they were all wrong.

Experience without the insight of the Word is dangerous. I recently heard of a person who claimed that he had the gift of tongues even though some of his "experience" did not square with the Word. He had previously told anyone who would listen that God was not in control of his church but Satan was. During a worship service he stood up and spoke in tongues. While the church was not of this persuasion, his gift was going to be expressed no matter what the consequences. When an interpretation was given (short compared

to his extensive babbling) it was that "God was there." Now tell me, who's wrong? Earlier the declaration was that Satan was in control and now it was God. Someone was wrong—either my strong-willed friend, or God himself.

You might ask, What is the solution? Let me tell you what I think would help.

First . . . Let's do it God's way.

The Bible seems to be given to us for a purpose. It is for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. While I do not have to quote the source, I feel I must remind you that it is being neglected. In my years as a pastor, I have never seen such apathy as I see today for the Word of God. All types of reading materials are taking precedence over the Word. **If we are to bring the church back to where God wants it, we must become students of His Word!** Let's be willing to sacrifice "our distinctives," "our heritage" and "pet subjects" to the sword of the Word. Let's test God and see if his Word really is "sharper" than any other—if it really can divide and reveal. And let's begin to radically submit to it.

Second . . . Let us build a church that is built on Biblical fellowship.

The problem is that we often talk about it more than we do it. We are disjointed and worldly minded. We are a far cry from being one. We are being plagued with the disease of hyperindividualism and it has reached an epidemic level in our society and is threatening the very existence of the church. We have, as one writer described, become a lifestyle enclave.

"A group built around the narcissism of similarity . . . people who want to be with other people like themselves. You wear the same clothes, you have the same kind of activities but you don't do anything together. You don't take any responsibility for any common action. A community involves people who are not necessarily similar, but who are related to each other by some kind of mutual dependence on each other" (Robert Bellah).

Another wrote:

"The early Christians had things in common with one another. They were together. They didn't come for worship like an isolated bag of marbles that made a lot of noise as they banged together, then marched out in single file. No, they came like a cluster of ripe grapes. As persecution pushed them together, they bled on each other. Their lives naturally ran into each other. How much better it is to think of ourselves as two handfuls of ripe grapes than as a bag of highly polished marbles. Our time together becomes so much more valuable when our lives become entwined with one another, moving closer together, feeling each others' strain and struggles, deeply caring for one another" (Chuck Swindoll).

Third . . . let us dare be obedient to the admonition in Hebrews 13.

"Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you" (Heb. 13:17).

We need pastors who lead as ordained by God—men and women who understand that they carry the weighty responsibility of being accountable for the spiritual well-being of their flock and therefore will seriously and diligently exercise the duties of that calling. We need overseers who will stand and declare the Word—prophets who lovingly and humbly refuse to tickle this generation's ears as they speak forth words from our Eternal Father. We need pastors/leaders who listen to Paul's advice to Timothy:

"Command and teach these things. Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift! . . . Be diligent in these matters . . . watch yourself and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Tim. 4:11-16).

And church members, cooperate with your leaders to make the task of their high calling easier for them. Follow, obey, and submit to them so they can discharge their duties joyfully and not with sorrow. We cannot selectively ignore the focus of this Hebrews text merely because we have historically been a "congregationally governed church." The admonition is clear. Pastors/leaders are far more than "medicine men." They are the ones who must give account to God. Pray for them and support them. When this occurs God will bring joy to the heart of your pastor and this will be an advantage to you.

I may well have exaggerated the problem. Consider, however, that the solutions may indeed be exactly what God wants.

Fallen Leaves



By Darlene A. Day



Small buds of life begin in the springtime.

Tiny little forms of leaves grow green; full of different shapes within, they bloom.

The leaves are so full of life,

they create families that flourish together.

They have particular identities: big, long, short, and slim, rough, smooth, tall, and thin.

The leaves grow and live together.

The leaves fill the limbs;

they cover the branches.

To live, the leaves take from the earth, sun, and rain;

but to live in return they give the shade, coolness, and life.

The leaves cover the trees,

so pretty, green, and full.

The weather pours down upon them.

The leaves blow, bend, and tarry through the storms of life.

Some leaves may tear, but with nature's love they can mend.

The leaves look stronger after the storm's end.

The leaves live on as time passes by.

The warm summer is closing as the autumn season draws nigh.

The leaves begin to rustle

and take on new patterns of life.

The leaves quickly change from a lovely green

to orange, yellow, and red—colors so warm and bright.

They are so beautiful at this late stage of their lives.

And even now the leaves continue to give beauty increased, to our astonished eyes.

Such tremendous warm beauty,

yet no fret or doubt in mind.

Only hope that all's intact,

for the colors contain a sign.

Some leaves are ready to face the end;

Other leaves still want to live.

But nonetheless, they all eventually turn brown;

and suddenly fall to the cold, wet ground.

They harden, crack, and crumble

while on the ground they lie.

Life in its beauty becomes a memory;

fallen leaves have lived and died.

The Beginning Of Sorrows

By Gordon Landry

Pastor James Mattison produced a News and Prophecy page for THE RESTITUTION HERALD for many years, and did an excellent job of keeping us up on news happenings in light of the revealed Word of God. His news clippings ran the gamut from wars and rumors of wars to AIDS to abortion to Satanism. This writer will attempt to fill his shoes—perhaps intermittently rather than regularly—but they are large shoes to fill. Bro. Mattison has taught me many of the principles of Biblical interpretation over the years, and I'm grateful to him for it. We still may not see eye to eye on some matters (as I'm sure will be the case with you and me as well), but we both love and respect each other—and this is as it should be with brethren in Christ. So, Jim, with the urging of Editor Magaw and some trepidation, I'll pick up your pen where you laid it down. . . .

The Sea and the Waves Roaring

Charleston, South Carolina, will never forget it, nor will the inhabitants and tourists in the Caribbean. Hurricane Hugo struck both places with a vengeance in middle and late September, and both—as well as many other devastated areas—are still reeling under the impact. One-hundred-thirty-five-mile-per-hour winds churned the waters of the Atlantic into giant surges that ripped apart whatever was in their way. Winds howled ashore and lacerated homes and businesses and trees and power lines. Nothing was safe while the fury of the storm played about the Atlantic islands and the U. S. coastline in the Georgia-South Carolina-North Carolina vicinities. The cost of Hugo has been estimated at this writing to be nearly \$5 billion. In addition, and more important, about 50 lives were lost.

A book on *Atlantic Hurricanes*, first published in 1960 and revised in 1964, indicates that a hurricane with the ferocity of Hugo generates and releases approximately sixteen trillion kilowatt-hours of energy per day and that at that time the total electrical energy generated in the United

States was about two billion kilowatt-hours per day. Even with a three percent efficiency rating, the heat released by that size hurricane could provide the entire United States (at that time) with more than six months' supply of electricity.

"An average hurricane will squeeze out about 20,000,000,000 tons of water in a twenty-four-hour period. This represents an energy equivalent to 500,000 atomic bombs (Nagasaki type). An atomic detonation lifted 10,000,000 tons of water in Test Baker, but a hurricane poured 2,500,000,000 tons of water on the island of Puerto Rico within a few hours, and this was only a fraction of the total rainfall throughout the area of the cyclone. Another calculation has a hurricane 500 miles in diameter releasing latent heat energy at the rate of ten trillion horsepower and maintaining this rate for as long as ten days." (*Atlantic Hurricanes*, Gordon E. Dunn and Banner I. Miller, co-authors. Copyright 1960 and 1964 by Louisiana State University Press.)

In prophesying of the last days, Jesus referred to "the sea and the waves roaring" (Luke 21:25). This is connected with "signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity." It has been thought by many that the roaring of the sea and the waves refers to political upheaval and unsettled national and international climates resulting in anarchy and ultimate repression. Perhaps so, in light of Revelation 17:15: "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." But in the light of the context of Jesus' words in Luke 21, he just might have meant exactly what he said.

Certainly Hugo was not the first hurricane to devastate a given area, nor will it be the last. Quirks of nature, though, bear watching. In the equivalent passage in Matthew 24, Jesus mentioned earthquakes. So not only will men rampage through the last stages of his history, but nature will vie with him. "Watch therefore; for ye know

not what hour your Lord doth come. . . . Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (vv. 42, 44).

World Series Earthquake

"Mother Nature" dealt a double dose of death and destruction when, on Tuesday, October 17, San Francisco reeled from a shaking of the earth of such intensity that highway 880 dropped its upper layer onto the lower layer for a mile and a quarter of its length. At this writing workmen are still engaged in a desperate effort to shore up the remaining structure so as to be able to extricate the bodies of those killed when the mass of steel and concrete came tumbling down. Six-year-old Julio Berumen was rescued only after his dead mother's body was sawn in half so he could be reached, and his leg was amputated. His sister also was extricated from the same car. Buck Helm, who miraculously survived in his crushed automobile, was pulled from death's door by cheering workmen. The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge dropped a section from the upper level to the lower level, effectively cutting quick travel between the two cities. Buildings weakened by the devastating earthquake have been bulldozed so as not to create an additional hazard. Cleanup and rebuilding will continue for many months to try and restore what the 7.0-scale \$7 billion earthquake has cost Californias.

The financial considerations are not the most important items to deal with, however. The real tragedy is in the great number of families affected and perhaps scarred for life because of the suffering, death, and destruction that have ripped apart their world. It was heartening to see the outreach and care provided for the hurt and bewildered. Though there was some looting by the insensitive, it seemed to be held to the minimum.

Since the earthquake occurred, we've been made aware of one in China too. But the interesting thing to note is the number of predictions of possible earthquakes in the future. One map showed geological faults almost throughout the United States. "Great earthquakes shall be in divers places," said Jesus, "and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven" (Luke 21:11). Though earthquakes have occurred from the time Korah and his band were swallowed up by one (Num. 16), the indication is that they will increase in number and violence as we approach the end of man's day.

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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

Divine Judgements (continued from back cover)

twinkling of an eye, you will be made immortal (1 Cor. 15:51-58; 1 Thes. 4:16, 17). Payment for your sin has been made in full. Hallelujah! The future judgments will be carried out by Christ, "For the father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22).

II. The BEMA—Judgment Rewarding of Believers

Writing to the New Testament Church, Paul the apostle explained: "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. 5:10). The context limits the ones in view (the "all") to the body of Christ. The *bema* was the tribunal where only winners came to receive their reward. It was a platform from which official decisions were made. Only participants came before it. The spectators did not appear there since they had not entered the race. They had nothing coming. Now obviously that's an illustration. Only believers who have run well will stand before the *bema* to be rewarded. Now keep in mind that eternal life is a gift of God which cannot be earned or deserved. Our reward is the position that we'll have in God's kingdom in the age to come.

Some scholars believe that the *bema* judgment or rewarding seat and the wedding banquet of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9) take place just after the church is raptured and before Christ comes with the church. In my opinion, these students are on the right track, although that point will continue to be in dispute.

III. The Judgment of the Nations (Matt. 25:31-46)

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (vv. 31-34).

When does this judgment take place? Jesus said, "When the Son of man comes." The ones judged are the mortal people who are living at that point in time, and the purpose of this judgment is to determine

their worthiness to enter the kingdom of our Lord as subjects. Jesus taught that when he comes in his glory, "then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations." The word "then" designates the time of this judgment when Jesus separates the sheep from the goats.

The church is not being judged here—certainly not the dead either, but the generation that is living when the Son of man comes to establish his kingdom throughout the whole world. These mortal people of all nations who survive the War of Armageddon and the Great Tribulation, and are classed as "sheep," go up from year to year to worship the Lord at Jerusalem and to keep the feast of tabernacles. (Zech. 14:16.)

IV. Revolt of Living Nations at the end of the Millennial Kingdom (Rev. 20:7-9)

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters [corners] of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

Could this judgment be the same as the one in Matthew 25? Apparently not. It is a different kind of judgment altogether. The one in the Matthew passage is a separation of sheep from goats; the one in Revelation is destruction to the whole rebellious mass that comes against Christ and the Holy City. None is saved. Then, too, the timing is clearly different. The Matthew 25 judgment is before the millennium. The one in Revelation 20:7-9 is at the close of the millennium. Study these two passages in detail and you will find some marked differences. They could hardly be the same event.

Ezekiel 38 and 39 speak of a Gog and Magog and an invasion of Israel from the north, very far north really. The rebels in Revelation 20 come from "the four corners of the earth." The invasion described in the Ezekiel passage takes place before the thousand years. The rebellion of Revelation 20:7-9 takes place at the end of the millennium during the "little season" (v. 3). Destruction of these rebels at the close of the millennium should not be confused with the judgment of the nations at the beginning of the millennium or with the non-Christian dead. This judgment could be compared to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

V. The Judgment of the Wicked Dead (Rev. 20:11-15)

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (vv. 11-15).

This final resurrection and final judgment take place at the end of the millennium. All not restored to life in the first resurrection will be raised here in the final or last resurrection. "The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished" (v. 5). That's another way of saying that they will live again when the thousand years have run their course.

Christians are raised in the first resurrection; sinners are raised in the last resurrection; believers are raised to immortality and glory; sinners are raised to mortality and judgment.

The subjects of this resurrection and judgment (Rev. 20:11-15), are the dead from the beginning of human history. Their names were not in the book of life. There was only a blank where their names could have been. The destruction of the wicked dead (vv. 13-15) is a clear teaching of Scripture. They are raised, judged, and destroyed.

Well, where does all this judgment business leave you? If you belong to Jesus, you have dealt with judgment number one and you will be rewarded at judgment number two—the rewarding seat of Christ (the *bema*). Consequently, the others will not affect you. You will be made like Christ in your physical nature "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." See 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 for details.

The Bible tells us that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15:26). Then all opposition to God's rulership has been removed. History as we now know it will be brought to a close.

Where and when will your sin be judged? "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Divine Judgments

by Pastor Hollis Partlowe

The word "judgment" is used in various ways in the Bible. It may mean:

1. To determine guilt or innocence.
2. To pronounce the verdict of condemnation or acquittal.
3. To separate persons into groups.
4. To execute the penalty upon the guilty and to bestow the reward upon the righteous. (*Systematic Theology* by Dr. Alva G. Huffer, page 533).

Obviously, we have to digest the use of the word "judgment" in order to understand the different judgments in God's Word. For example, the Matthew 25 judgment (vv. 31-46) is clearly a separation of different classes of people, while the judgment in view in 2 Corinthians 5:10 is clearly a rewarding of believers in the body of Christ.

The Certainty of Future Judgments
Our lovely Lord said: "Every idle

word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36). Solomon, the wise man, wrote: "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14). The writer of Hebrews tells us: "It is appointed unto men once to die but after this the judgment" (9:27). In his great sermon on Mars' Hill, Paul the apostle said that God has "appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Yes, God's judgment on sin is as certain as the resurrection of Jesus Christ which has already taken place. Friend, your sins will be judged somewhere sometime. The choice is yours; as it is written, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going

before to judgment; and some men they follow after" (1 Tim. 5:24). That is to say that you can accept Christ's death as a sacrifice for your sins, or you can take your sin into judgment and be the penalty yourself. And remember, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). There is no other possibility.

Moreover, the Gospel cannot be adequately preached without its alternative—the judgment of God on sin. We cannot understand the cross apart from the nature and consequences of sin.

I. The Believer's Sin Is Judged at the Cross

"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). In this Golden Text of the Bible, Jesus made it clear that the alternate to salvation is perishing. He didn't leave the meaning to speculation. Furthermore, he assured his followers: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24). The true believer in Jesus can rest assured that his sin has been dealt with and need not fear standing before the Lord. "There is therefore now no condemnation [judgment] to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:1, 2).

At the cross God judged sin in Christ, having imputed our guilt to him. Christ was our substitute and the bearer of our sin in his own body on the tree (1 Pet. 2:24). The cross was and is a judgment—an execution of wrath upon sin. Our score as believers was settled there, we "have passed from death unto life," and "we shall not come into judgment." Our judgment is behind us. I'd like to shout that from the housetops.

The judgment of sin is based on the character of God and the nature of sin. God is holy. To fail to judge sin would violate his holy character, and he is not about to do that. The purpose of Christ's death was to pay the penalty for our sins, and at the same time to allow God to maintain his holiness. Our salvation rests on the finished work of the Son of God at Calvary. No one can add anything to that; no one needs to. Just before he breathed his last breath on the cross our Savior said: "It is finished" (John 19:30). His sacrificial work and our redemption were complete. Praise God for "so great salvation" (Heb. 2:3). Salvation is a gift of God (Rom. 6:23). How do you accept a gift? You reach out and take it and sincerely say, "Thank you." Have you ever said "thank you" to God for the gift of his Son and the salvation he freely brought to us by way of Calvary?

If you are included in God's blood-washed children, the rest of what I'm going to say will affect you very little if any, for in a moment, in the
(Continued inside back cover)

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**THE
RESTITUTION
HERALD**
February/March/1990

Pastoral Leadership Section

Editor's



Viewpoint

Time Squeeze

Compared to just 20 years ago, North Americans spend less time reading and writing, enjoy television watching differently, spend less time sleeping and taking naps, work fewer hours—yet they always feel rushed. According to *American Demographics* magazine, February, 1990, most people have more discretionary time than ever, yet they prefer to take in sporting and arts events



People have more discretionary time than ever, but they prefer to take it in sporting and leisure activities.

and organizational activities—with the exception of church services. They also fill free time with personal hygiene and grooming, talking to people—both face-to-face and on the telephone. They spend less time eating, especially meals prepared at home. With many options open to people in entertainment, foods, activities, most people feel rushed to choose (and to miss) selections offered. The educated and affluent are more likely to feel rushed.

How does all this impact the church? Obviously, approach to ministry must be different. People will respect less demands on their time, yet expect more in the way of service to their needs. Programming must be professional, small groups must become support groups, and meetings must be replaced with the expectations of Jesus, who's yoke is easy and burden light.

Without a doubt, ministry today is far more difficult, complex, and frustrating than it was 20 years ago.

But the Church of God is far more ready for change, able to care meaningfully than it did 20 years ago.

Observations . . .

A new sense of competition encroaches upon the church in the 1990s. North Americans have many religious choices. Local churches which discover how to meet specific needs will be most attractive and effective. People are drawn to needs-meeting

Biblical teaching presented in a nonthreatening environment. A variety of responses are left for the church-goer to choose. Those local bodies best prepared to identify and minister to such needs are most likely to succeed.

Given the foregoing, it may be necessary for congregations to redesign mission and ministry concepts. Some suggestions:

- Grant leadership to the pastoral team.
- Authorize the pastoral team for the responsibility of Christian education.
- Evaluate community/church needs to discover and implement a small group ministry.
- Free church members to minister within the community.
- Relieve time constraints throughout the church program.

Most importantly, allow the church freedom to interact with the unchurched on a one-to-one level. Then the church will know how to

reach new people with the unchanging Good News which changes persons for eternity.

God bless the church in the 1990s.

Pastoral Leadership

Church of God pastors enjoy an autonomy which allows them to practice ministry suited to their unique mix of gifts and talents. In this issue we hear from four of our leading men who have seasoned pastoral leadership before God and for the good of appreciative congregations.

Pastor Larry Mayberry, president of the Church of God Ministerial Association, leads off on the issue of leadership by interviewing a pastor of a growing church. Pastor S. O. Ross follows with his responsibilities as the pastor's pastor. Pastor Hollis Partlow, retired after 30 years of ministry to three congregations, handles conflicts between pastor and the congregation. Pastor John Hearp, a member of the Board of License, unveils his role as a pastor who serves his community through official boards within the local region.

These writings will encourage you in your understanding of the pastoral office and responsibility of pastoral leadership before the local church. Turn to the eight green pages in the center of this issue for their insights.

Unity

Over 6000 Christian denominations exist in the world. With such diversity, can there be any unity—the type Jesus called for in his High Priestly prayer (John 17)? David Opel explores this crucial question from personal experience. His findings begin on page 6. Conquer the temptation to write off his views as impos-

sible. After all, our faith is in a God who makes all things possible.

Political and Economic Freedoms in Communist Europe

The last nine months have seen vast changes in communist Europe. With the speed of change in Germany, Romania, Slovakian lands, and Russia itself, the map of Europe will be redrawn countless times before the year 2000.

What does all this mean? This question has been explored by two of our writers, Pastors Gordon Landry and Hollis Partlowe. Turn to their thoughts which start on page 10 (Landry) and 23 (Partlowe). Then *Gospel Publicity League* editor Charles French makes observations in a sidebar on page 24.

Bible Doctrine

This issue also contains doctrinal

copy which should prove to be a spiritual feast for you. Advent Christian Devonia Rexrode starts things off with "The Truth About Death" (page 8). Pastor Sidney Hatch's "The Prediction of Francis David" (page 21) takes us back to church history for a biography of a radical reformationists.

Spirituality

Rounding out our issue are diverse treatments of a spiritual issue. Debbie Schmidlapp helps us love the unlovely (page 4). Vicki Pulling urges us to try a little tenderness (see the back cover). Lois Pryor imparts insight about neighbors (page 25). Pastor James Graham challenges us toward significance (page 26).

As always, we attempt to meet your needs in THE RESTITUTION HERALD pages. God bless you as you read.

THE

Restitution Herald

Vol. 79 February/March/1990 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 six times a year.

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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Address all correspondence to THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

In England: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 16 Parsley Close, Pinefields, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England MK 77 DA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS
One Year, \$12 [£10]
Two Years, \$21 [£18]
Three years, \$30 [£27]
[English price in brackets]

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

Photo credits: Becky Hall, back cover.

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The market is full of movies, novels, and music about love. It can get to be so much it's nauseating. Most are sappy and unrealistic. However, with such images in mind people go about "loving," with the results of broken hearts and mixed-up emotions.

We Christians don't pattern our thinking after the world. Therefore, when we go about loving, our motives are unique. They are for Christ's sake.

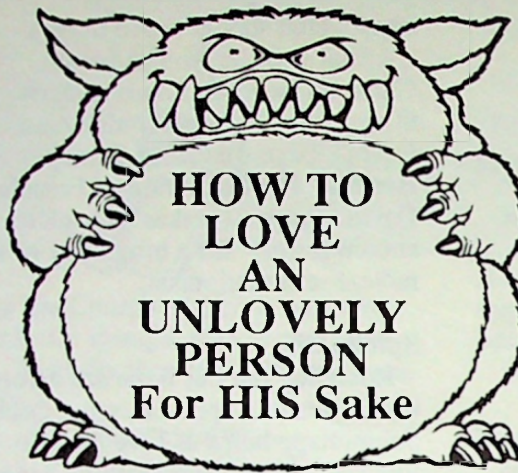
Have you made acquaintance with someone who is humanly impossible to enjoy? I have. At least in my opinion she was impossible.

While working in a factory recently, I was confronted with an undesirable person in my section. The job caused me very little stress aside from the endless chatter of this young lady on my line. I didn't know her personally, but had heard enough of her to make my premature decision about her. She was too much this and too much that for me. Worse yet, I found out she was a Christian!

"O Dear Lord," I prayed while driving home from work, "I know you've asked me to love and even be intimate with every person, but on my own I'm sure I cannot tolerate this person. To be honest, Lord, if she comes near me and continues to use that tone of voice I could shake her! I could pull her hair out. But Lord, it's for your sake I need to try. It's by your changing power that things will improve."

Within days God conveniently had this young lady moved to work directly across the line from me. Not knowing how I felt, she continued to be herself. I began to see that she was not putting on a show to bid attention, but this was really her. Time passed and I was able to see and appreciate past the surface by which she'd first been judged. In fact, we grew to be close friends. Long after I'd left this job we stayed in contact, sharing our problems and our faith.

The Lord's definition of love is found in the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians, and it's not all nice and sugarcoated like some of the movies. It is a difficult thing and we must carefully consider this truth before saying to someone, "I love you." In my own paraphrase, 1 Corinthians says "Love is



not cheap because it calls for a huge choice of commitment from my side. Love is tough. It fights on behalf of the other person. Love gives and does not count the cost. Love is very patient. It can wait; forever if necessary."

Is God asking me to love each and every person? There are people who have hurt and disappointed me. There are people I hardly even know.

Then there are those boring, dreary, "ho hum" people I have to see every single day. Some of them are very unloving and unappreciative of my efforts . . . and God IS asking me to love them all, without reserve.

Love for others can only be as deep as our love for God. According to Joseph C. Aldrich in his book *Life-Style Evangelism, koinonia* (loving Christian fellowship) involves the horizontal dimension. This is people to people but it is not fully understood unless it is tightly linked with the vertical, which is the individual's relationship with God.

We'd better jealously guard our time alone with God because only out of a burning passion for God is there enough overflow with which to genuinely love others. So the deeper we run into God, the more we have to share with those around us. We must run into him so far that we get lost. Daily we need to lose our own lives (Matt. 10:39) for his sake. Practically, I can talk about loving one another and serving, but unless it is for HIS sake I become sidetracked and my service becomes burdensome. But when we are emptied of self, God's love can reach those people through us. Naturally—without any special method—we'll love those people.

Time and time again I've met difficult people. However, I don't have to wait until the situation is intolerable to take it to God. Remembering God's wonderful intervention back in the factory, I'm quick to remind God and wait for a new friendship to develop.

Now let me encourage you with some words from Gayle Erwin: "Every person is an adventure in whom God has invested much of Himself and worked things out. By keeping this in mind, we'll never be bored."

Keep reaching out. There's much to be learned and experienced for his sake. ■

By
Debbie
Schmidlapp

UNITY: Is It Possible?



Today we are confronted with over 6000 different sects and denominations that call themselves "Christian." Each one of them is diverse from the other. Is unity possible? Is it practical? Is it even a Scriptural responsibility?

"That they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity."

Since that time I have been keenly interested in things that might unite Christians of various denominations as the "revelation" infers that we each possess truth in part and that we need each other in order to possess truth in its fullness. But a question: What does God say?

My Testimony

As I sat in my living room three others were gathered about me, each one a minister of the gospel. One was from the Church of Christ, another from a Pentecostal church, and the third was my pastor from the Church of God. We were discussing various aspects of the Bible. As the discussion progressed, I found myself siding in agreement with one minister against the other. Then I found myself siding with the other whom I previously opposed. This happened successively several times. Then, bewildered, I asked the Lord what was happening (not actually expecting a reply). But a reply did come! It was one of the very few times that I really felt that God was communicating with me. I was given a vivid impression that God was telling me that we (Christians) must work together in order to come to the pinnacle of truth. The "revelation" was laid upon my heart. I was left in a high emotional state. This was no little thing for me as my traditional reaction about emotion in religion was to always keep it separated.

The Leading of the Scriptures

Several scriptures began to come to my awareness. "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3, NIV). This text attests to the fact that a *spiritual* unity should and does exist between Christians of different denominations. Such unity exists because of the spiritual life that Christians share as "new creatures" in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17). This particular kind of unity makes possible a bond in fellowship. "Fellowship" in itself implies common origin and a shared ancestry; hence, we are of the same Christian family.

But many times we over-zealously contemplate the diversity that exists because of our doctrinal and theological differences. Here the apostle comes to our rescue again. Paul speaks of a time when "we all reach unity of the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining the full measure of perfection found in

(Please turn the page)

By
David
Opel

UNITY: Is It Possible?

(Continued from page 5)

Christ" (Eph. 4:13, NIV). It is true that we do not presently have such a unity of faith and knowledge, but it should be a goal to be reached for.

Over-emphasis of these theological differences leads one to believe that his own theology is truth absolute and in turn engenders disunity and judgmentalism. Paul warns us about such actions. "Let us stop passing judgment on one another" (Rom. 14:13, NIV). "Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls" (v. 4). He advises the church to "give a warm welcome to any brother who wants to join you even though his faith is weak. Don't criticize him for having different ideas from yours about what is right and wrong" (Rom. 14:1, 2, LB). The fact is that God accepted both people who were disputing over opinions (cf. v. 3). This should indicate to us that inerrancy of opinion is not more valuable to God than the operation of love.

Paul follows up on the greater importance that love plays towards unity when he tells the church at Philippi, "Fill my cup of happiness by thinking and feeling alike, with the same turn of mind, and a common care for unity" (Phil. 2:2, NEB).

Unity in Diversity

I do not believe that unity must require theological or ecclesiastical uniformity because there can be unity that incorporates diversity. The New Testament church was very diverse in organization, community life, and in matters of theology, but it did not lose sight of its commission. Darrell Guder in his book *Be My Witnesses* (Eerdmans, 1985) observes:

"The various theological traditions within the NT give impressive evidence of the rich diversity with which the early church taught and understood the gospel. In their writings,

the apostles urged these early Christians toward a unity that would not squelch that diversity but would, instead, incorporate such diversity fruitfully into the church's life and work."

Unity and Church of God Gospel

I have always thought of the Church of God understanding of the gospel as more correct and more complete than that of other denominations, and in a unique way it is. But could we accept for the moment that it might be only a part of the full gospel? For example, our ministers are presently divided on whether there is any application of the kingdom to the church during the gospel era. Whereas we have been very good at seeing future elements in the gospel of the kingdom, we have with great reluctance and infrequently ever accepted a present sense of that kingdom. Is there room for a "realized eschatology" within our definition of the kingdom? Should we be content with only part of the whole? Does gospel fullness transcend any official theology? These are some of the ideas being propounded by Darrell Guder. Here is his rationale:

"We must recognize that the various versions of the gospel that we proclaim are only partial, are all filtered by our 'ecclesiastical defense mechanisms' so that we can live and work comfortably with them.

"We have set up our various theological traditions as absolute definitions of the faith, excluding all other approaches to the fulness of the gospel.

"Thus, we separate the components of the gospel that should not be separated, and divide the church into theological camps.

"We are all confronted with our individual limitations . . . and the humble awareness that our theologies all tend to divide and conquer, and that it is our calling to move beyond our theological boundaries

Is there room for a "realized eschatology" within our definition of the kingdom? Should we be content with only part of the whole? Does gospel fullness transcend any official theology?

and categories in order to discover more of the fullness of the gospel.

"We must view our particular work as a contribution to the understanding of a much bigger gospel. We must be very careful that we are not, again, taming and domesticating the gospel by reducing it to the manageable limits of a particular theological approach or system, or a particular cultural, social, or political interest.

"We must be prepared to contribute our view of the gospel to the emerging consensus of the whole church, and, in the process, work zealously to join together what we have separated in our doctrine and practice.

"We could describe the unity at stake here as the bringing together of all the expressions and meanings of the gospel into an emerging comprehensive understanding of the 'whole gospel.' It is a unity of purpose, of common commitment, of experienced call and mission. It is a unity that emerges out of our common submission to Christ, not out of our uniform formulations of one official theology."

Personally, I believe that Church of God theology has a major contribution to make to the "whole," and when it does a great unity will be achieved.

Church of God Credibility

How can a Church of God become credible among the various churches and within its community? I believe the answer is simply in one word—EFFORT.

(1) Recently, I answered a call in the community to assist in the ministry at a "halfway house." They had sent out a call to 78 local churches and ministry functions and strangely my pastor and I were the only ones to respond. As a result we were asked to give Bible studies and consultations. Shortly after that we were asked to assist with

studies and consultations at our community's Juvenile Center for troubled teen-agers. Blessings have been received on both sides.

(2) We have attended special functions (special music, reports, etc.) in several local churches and have become acquainted with the pastors who recognize our attendance to the members from the pulpit. Several of those pastors have met with us later to give us their personal testimonies and to share other things of interest.

(3) We continue to conduct a monthly informal Bible study at the public library in a nearby town. We advertise the meeting in four newspapers and draw interested people from six other towns. Participation has been by Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Church of Christ, Pentecostals, Mormons, and the ex-Jehovah Witness community who consider the meetings as their "support group."

(4) We are conducting wide-range Bible conferences in the Northwest at the rate of three to four yearly. We openly discuss our different theologies with others of various denominational backgrounds. The fellowship has been fantastic. Sleeping rooms and meals are freely given.

Summary

As a result of the foregoing, we are developing a credibility that has afforded us a chance to explain (to open ears) why we hold the particular doctrines that we do. With the proper attitude we have cushioned the usual resistance and close-mindedness. Many barriers have been broken down before our very eyes. A rapport has been established and we continue to learn from the others too, working together for the fullness of truth. May God also bless your efforts.

By Devonia G. Rexrode

The Truth About Death

Ever since
Adam and Eve
sinned in the
Garden of
Eden, death has
been a dark,
overshadowing
reality to
mankind.

Because most of us find the subject of death to be unpleasant as well as uncomfortable, it is not usually included in our list of popular conversation topics or on our menu of "favorite food for thought." Our human nature suggests that life is only temporary; therefore, we prefer to enjoy it while we can and refrain from thoughts regarding our inevitable destiny. However, the Bible portrays for us a more hopeful future. In 1 Corinthians 15:26 we are told, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." Daniel 12:2 states, "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." Revelation 20:6 declares, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." The summation of these verses directs us to one of the most important messages of the gospel: God's intention to resurrect the dead when his Son Jesus returns to earth. At that time, those who have accepted Jesus as their personal Savior and have chosen the Christian lifestyle will receive their reward of eternal life. In view of this plan for our redemption, we can more easily accept our current state of mortality and come to a better understanding of our unavoidable, deadly fate.

Ever since Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, death has been a dark, overshadowing reality to mankind. Among the other curses placed on the

two delinquents and their descendants, the most horrible punishment is named in Genesis 3:19 where God declares, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." From that moment on, the human race has been forced to accept the certainty of death. The Psalmist inquires, "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death?" (89:48.) This question has no answer according to Hebrews 9:27, which states that "it is appointed unto men once to die." Our natural instincts, confirmed by these verses, cannot deny the fact that despite all our efforts, it is impossible to escape the clutches of death, mankind's most dreaded enemy.

Since our human nature compels us to pursue a long life and shun that which seems potentially fatal, we have already subconsciously established that death and life are opposite states of being. In Isaiah 38:1, the prophet delivers a message from God to Hezekiah. Isaiah warns the king, "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." Romans 14:8 tells us that "whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." Both verses indicate that a person cannot be dead and alive at the same time; he is either one or the other at any given instant. Therefore, since we are all familiar with life because we have experienced it, death can become less mysterious if we simply think

**“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth;
in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 115:17**

of it in terms opposite those we would use to describe life.

Medically speaking, death is defined as a state of unconsciousness where there is no heartbeat, breathing, blood pressure, or functioning of the brain. Similarly, the Bible describes death as the cessation of life and also mentions the body functions which no longer continue to operate when a person dies. Psalm 146:4 says of man, “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 115:17 states, “The dead praise not the LORD.” The author of Ecclesiastes speaks plainly about the condition of the deceased. Beginning with the fifth verse of the ninth chapter, he tells us that “the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing.” Verse 6 continues, “Their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.” Verse 10 of the same chapter advises, “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, whither thou goest.” Rarely does such a close comparison exist between the medical school of thought and the Biblical way of thinking. Since both regard death as the natural end of the life cycle process, we must accept the grim reality that life is not a permanent condition.

Scriptural passages relating to death parallel the scientific explanation in yet another way. The Bible often depicts death using the term “sleep,” a condition which can imitate death because body

functions such as heartbeat, breathing, and movement are slowed or minimized during the sleeping state. In the eleventh verse of the eleventh chapter of John, Jesus speaks to his disciples about a friend who had been sick. Jesus tells them, “Our friend Lazarus sleepeth.” Assuming that he was resting, the disciples concluded that Lazarus must be doing well. In the fourteenth verse, Jesus plainly says, “Lazarus is dead.” Psalm 13:3 presents another good example of the way the Bible relates sleep and death. Within a prayerful section of Scripture, we find David pleading with his heavenly Father, “Consider and hear me, O LORD my God: lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death.” It is obvious that what David was hoping to avoid was a sleep from which he realized he would not awake. Considering their limited medical expertise, it is not surprising that those who lived during the Biblical age would associate sleep with death because, prior to a closer examination, someone who has died may appear to be only sleeping.

Although it would be mentally unhealthy to dwell on this subject, it is important to note that no one is immune from the fate of death. The acceptance of this fact provides the motivation to accept God’s Son Jesus as our Savior and follow his example, for it is through him that we have hope of living again. John 3:16 explains, “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.”

**We
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condition.**

Current Affairs

By Pastor Gordon Landry

Demise of Communism?

As 1989 faded into history, the world was still shaking its collective head in wonder at the accelerating events that had seemed impossible a few months earlier. The Soviet Union's grip on its satellite nations slipped somewhat, perhaps heralding newly independent thinking and action throughout the communist world. As nation after nation declared communist rule at an end, Romania's Nicolae Ceausescu attempted to stop the stampede toward democratization in his country. Taking a leaf from the Chinese government's impulsive and harsh crackdown on its citizens in Tiananmen Square earlier in the year, Ceausescu alerted his secret police and army to use any and all means necessary to squelch demonstrations against his iron-handed rule. As a result, hundreds of Romanian citizens were shot to death or crushed by tanks as the military ran rampant over its citizens.

But a turning point came when some in the military decided that the guns were turned in the wrong direction, and diverted their attention to the rulers rather than the populace. After the smoke cleared, thousands lay dead, and Ceausescu and his wife were placed before a firing squad and shot to death. Following the announcement of their deaths, dancing in the streets occurred in those cities where the cruelest of measures had been used to quiet resistance to the communist reign of terror.

Mikhail Gorbachev gave approval for Soviet satellite nations to restructure their governments, but not so for the Soviet Union itself. By easing restrictions on Warsaw Pact nations, he has been applauded by the West as a man seeking peace for the world. *Time* magazine has pronounced him the man of the decade, and he has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for the third time, thus giving him status as a "good guy."

But the "good guy" is still a dyed-in-the-wool communist. The system has gone awry, and he and the Politbureau know it. Speculation as to reasons he has been lenient with countries under his control has ranged widely. Some believe he is really interested in making *Glasnost* work. He wants—yea, needs—better relations with the West if he is to salvage anything from the shambles of the present Soviet economy. *Perestroika*, his four-year effort to reform the Soviet economy, has not budged the mountainous problems that an unwise centralist government has created.

Judy Shelton, in *The Coming Soviet Crash*, says that the Soviet government has spent itself into near bankruptcy. Its indebtedness is 12-16 percent of the Soviet Gross National Product (GNP), while that of the United States, though perhaps higher monetarily than that of the Soviet Union, runs only 3-4 percent of the GNP. *And we think we've got it bad!* Former President Ronald Reagan warned the Russians, when instituting the "Star Wars" program for the United States, that we could easily outspend that leading communist nation. Though both the Soviet Union and the United States are reeling from overspending on military items, Reagan's prediction has come true. The Soviets seem to be on the ropes.

Destabilization of the Soviet economy has been so severe that bread, once used as a football by children because it was so cheap, is now in short supply. All the basics—shoes, milk, bread, and butter—are hard to find and are expensive when found. Luxury items disappeared long ago. *And we think we've got it bad!*

But Lenin is still the god of the Soviet Union. Stalin and more recent chairmen of the party have been castigated, but not Lenin. Communism has not been denounced. Russia still foments strife in the world by shipping highly sophisticated armaments to hot spots—several of them being in South and

Destabilization of the Soviet economy has been so severe that bread, once used as a football by children because it was so cheap, is now in short supply.

Central America. Though the economy wears thin, production of weaponry continues at a high rate. Though "Gorby"

smiles and shakes hands with the West, he has not been won over to a democratic way of thinking. The sly devil has devised a stratagem to get the West involved in shoring up communist failures, and U. S. government figures seem fearful that a breakdown in the Soviet economy might bring about some tragedy—what, they're not sure.

If Russia is the leading protagonist of Ezekiel 38 and 39 ("Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal"), then it appears that communism will indeed be bolstered at this time, and will live on to become a greater despot than it has been to date. But some of our students (Roy Johnson, Francis Burnett, James Mattison, Anthony Buzzard, Mark Mattison) have veered from this way of thinking, and believe that Ezekiel 38 and 39 refer instead to a reconstituted Babylon (Iraq and Syria). If they are correct in their thinking and interpretation, the Soviet Union could take a nosedive at this time from which it would never recover. Time will tell.

Gorbachev and the Pope

During the first full week in December, 1989, Mr. Gorbachev, in an unprecedented move, met with Pope John Paul II to try and iron out differences between the Soviet Union and the "Holy See." Since that time, the Russian Orthodox Church has found itself at liberty to practice its religion in the Soviet Union without fear of reprisal. To many this heralds a new era of peace, for if communism and the Catholic church can work out their differences, there must be hope for all of differing opinions to come to peaceable solutions. In Gorbachev's words, "There is room for God in the Soviet Union." How magnanimous of him! I'm sure God appreciates his generous attitude. But, of course, for those involved in religious and church activities (whether Catholic or Prot-

estant), the news is super. Bibles can now be sent into the country, and the Protestants will fare better as a result.

But again, behind the scenes there may be diabolical reasons for the meeting of church and state. In its history, the Catholic church has been as despotic as has Russian communism. Tyranny has reigned supreme where the church has reigned supreme. Where the church has been in the minority, as in the United States, it has pleaded for coexistence and understanding, for mutual unity and reciprocity.

Many have seen in Revelation 17 and 18 the uniting of church and state for the purpose of ruling the world with the heavy hand of politico-religiosity. Revelation 13 can also be used in conjunction with the joining of religion with civil authority. Until Jesus establishes God's righteous kingdom, tyranny will result from church-state weddings.

Excision in Panama

General Manuel Noriega of Panama took a note from Scripture and declared that a state of war existed between the Republic of Panama and the giant to the north, the United States. Perhaps he was not familiar with the prophecy he used, but here it is, as plain as can be from the pages of Joel: "Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: *let the weak say, I am strong*" (3:10). Though the prophecy does not refer to Noriega, we can see by that dictator's rhetoric how those words can increasingly come true in these last days. At this writing Noriega languishes in a United States federal penitentiary awaiting trial. Shortly before Christmas the United States unleashed its forces to "bring Noriega to justice." Though he sought asylum in the papal nuncio in Panama City, he wound up in the hands of prosecutors in the United States. Amid speculation that he "will spill the beans" and implicate President Bush and the CIO in allowing his drug deals, he will be brought to trial unless assassinated beforehand.

A Single Coin in the Hand

By Jeff Bull

He held out his trembling hand toward his master, his dirty fingers curled tightly into a fist. Fresh soil caked the slits under his nails and trickled from between his fingers. His arm was stretched to its limit, as if imprisoned in his own hand was the deadliest of snakes and his only desire was to get it as far away from him as possible. But it was not a snake; it was more like a precious pearl clutched tightly within a stubborn oyster waiting for the shucker's knife to release it from its prison of human flesh.

Slowly the man eased his grip and the fingers of his shaking hand yawned wide to reveal the treasure that lay in his palm. There in the very center of his hand rested a single coin. Its markings were practically unreadable because of the earth that clothed it. Yet his master knew what it was and he was filled with anger.

So might have been the scene that the Bible records for us in Matthew 25:14-30. Jesus was sharing a parable with his disciples concerning the end of the age when he will return to establish his kingdom. He told the story of a man who was going on a journey and entrusted his property to three of his servants. To one he gave five talents* of money, to another two talents, and to the last he gave one talent, each according to his ability. Upon his return the master found that the one servant entrusted with five talents had invested and doubled them as had the servant who had started with two. But he who had one had dug a hole and buried it. The first two servants were commended for their wise ventures and were rewarded with more responsibilities. The last man, however, tried to excuse himself by pointing to the master's hardness, and saying that he hid the talent out of fear. His lord's anger was not abated, nevertheless, and the servant was rebuked for not following the example of the other two. His talent was taken from him and given to the one who started with five talents, and he was thrown into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Now, we must note three things. First, each of these servants was given money to invest according to his

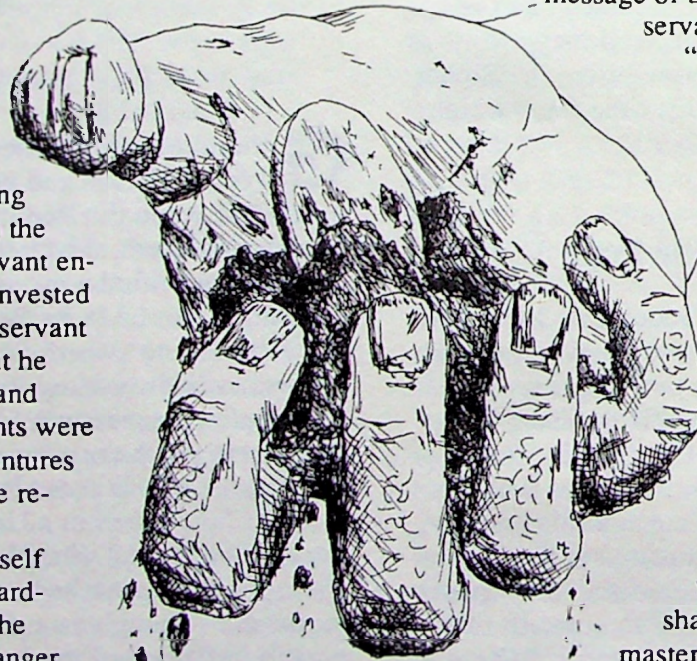
abilities. One had no reason to be jealous of another because each was trusted with an amount that suited his qualifications, not according to favoritism or partiality. Second, when the master returned he expected that the money had been put to use in his absence. He used the same words to compliment both of the first men. One was not better than the other because he had more profit to show. The reward he promised them was based on faithfulness, not ability. He called them "good and faithful," not capable and clever. Their virtues are commended, not their skills. He was impressed with their willingness and eagerness to serve, not their financial gain.

And last, each of the servants is rewarded. The first two are given more responsibilities because they showed a desire to serve and use what had been given them. The third servant is banished from their company into darkness and sorrow because he was afraid, not of the master, but of failure.

Our Lord Jesus has gone away and left us with his message of the kingdom and salvation. As his servants, his slaves, it is our duty to "invest" the treasure of the gospel in the banks of our neighborhood, our workplace, our schools, our towns, provinces, nation, and in the entire world. At some time unknown to us, Jesus will return to this world to establish his kingdom and call us for an accounting.

"How did you proclaim and share my message of salvation while I was away?" he will ask. How will you answer? Will you have earned five times the investment he made in you, or even two? Or will you have to hold out your shaking dirty hand and show your master that you buried the talent that he gave you? Don't fail to plan, and thus plan to fail. Take the abilities and the gospel message that God has given you through his Son Jesus and "invest" it. Share it with someone who is lost and doesn't know the joy that comes with being a "good and faithful servant."

*Note—a talent was actually a unit of silver weighing between 80 and 95 pounds and each one was worth over \$1,000.



The Prediction Of Francis David

By Sidney Hatch

“In that day
shall there be
one LORD,
and his name
one”—
Zechariah
14:9.



One of the great heroes of the Reformation was Francis David (1510-79). He ministered in Transylvania, a land which is today a part of Romania.

David began life as a Catholic, but, when he became a Protestant, he was, successively, Lutheran, Calvinist, and finally Unitarian. He believed that the only God is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only-begotten Son of God who was present in the mind of God from all eternity. The Holy Spirit is the life-giving power or grace of God (cf. George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, p. 720).

David was brilliant in preaching and debate—and those were the days when debates were conducted in Latin! A Jesuit priest, writing to his superior in 1581, two years after David's death, testified that Francis David was so familiar with Scripture that he seemed to have both Testaments at his tongue's end. It was David's custom, the correspondent said, to explain Scripture by Scripture (Earl Morse Wilbur, *A History of Unitarianism*, II, 29 fn.).

The king of the land, John Sigismund, was sympathetic to David's views and preaching. However, John died in 1571 and was succeeded by another prince, one Stephen Bathory.

Although tolerant at first, the new ruler eventually ordered David to stop preaching. The political and religious situation in Transylvania was changing dramatically. David, however, defied the royal edict, and concluded what turned out to be his final sermon by declaring, in effect, that whatever men may yet try to do, it would someday become clear to all the

world that God is one (Wilbur, *ibid.*, p. 73).

This was a strong statement, but it is in accord with prophetic truth. Zechariah 14:9 says, “And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one.”

The Hebrew word for “one” is *'echad*. It means “one” in the sense of “only” or a single one, the only one of its kind.

Zechariah 14:9 predicts that in the age to come the world will recognize the unity or oneness of God. The Isaac Leeser translation of the Old Testament, by supplying the word “acknowledge,” has caught the spirit of the passage: “On that day shall the LORD be [acknowledged] one, and his name be one.”

This unity and uniqueness implicit in *'echad* is evident in other passages of Scripture, as well as in Zechariah 14:9.

In Zechariah 14:7 the prophet says that the brilliant day when Christ returns will be “*one* day . . . at evening time it shall be light.” That is, it will be a unique day, the only one of its kind.

**Great changes will take place on
the earth when Jesus comes again.
These will include, at long last,
a purity of doctrine.**

In the Song of Solomon, the king of Israel exclaims, “My dove, my undefiled is *but one*; she is *the only one* of her mother” (6:9).

And, in Deuteronomy 6:4 we read, “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is *one*

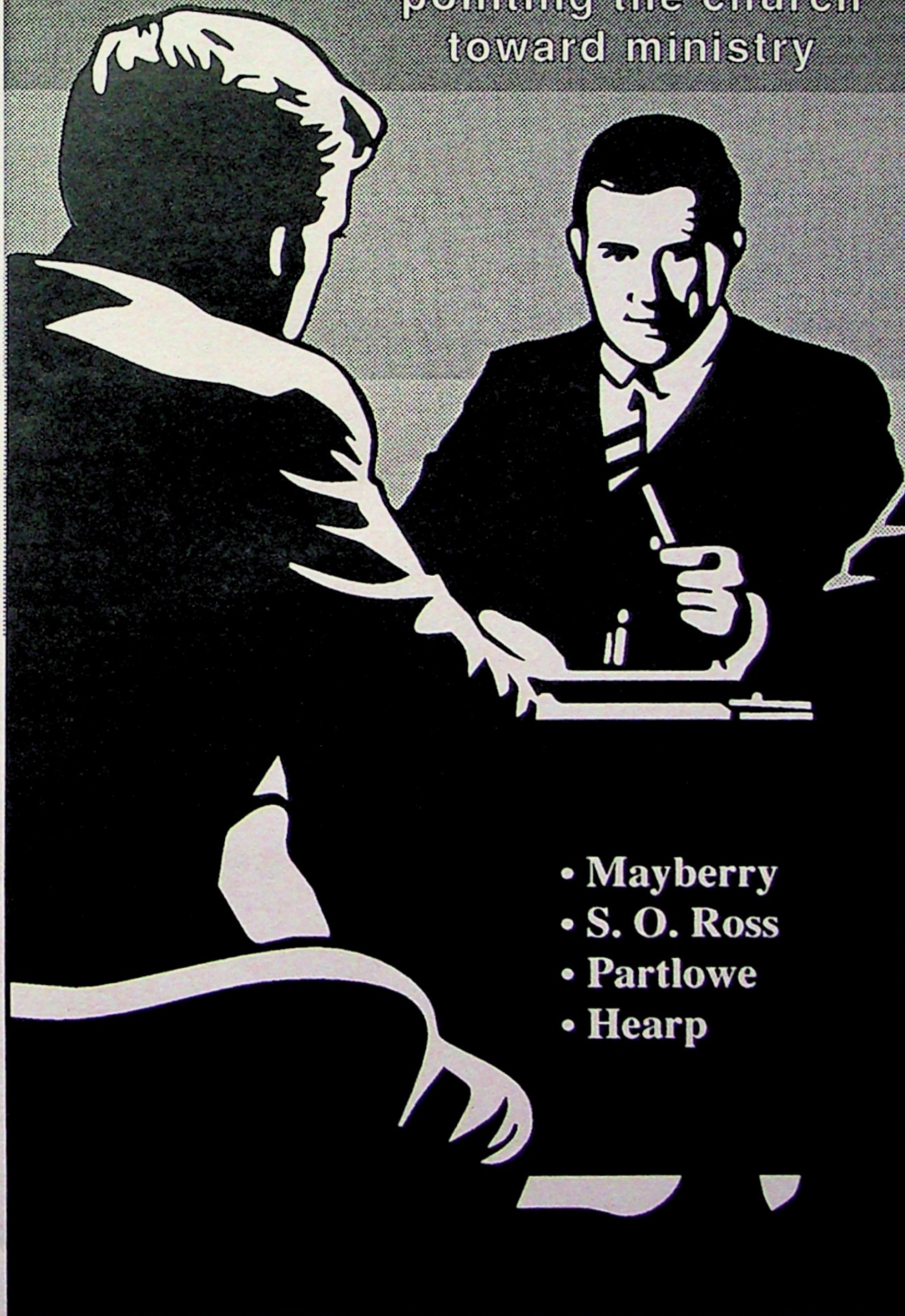
LORD.” The thought of this passage, as Koehler's lexicon indicates, is “Jehovah our God is *the only* Jehovah” (cf. p. 27).

There is only one Jehovah, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, contrary to what we sometimes hear, Jesus is not Jehovah.

(Please turn the page)

Pastoral Leadership

pointing the church
toward ministry



- Mayberry
- S. O. Ross
- Partlowe
- Hearp

THE KEY TO PASTORAL LEADERSHIP



Interview

with

Pastor

Rick

Warren

Pastor Larry Mayberry of the Pennellwood Church of God, Grand Rapids, MI, and President of the Ministerial Association of the Church of God, interviewed Pastor Rick Warren of the Saddleback Valley Community Church in Orange County, California.

Richard Warren is the founding Pastor of the Saddleback Valley Community Church which is one of the fastest-growing churches in America. Beginning with one family in 1980, the church has grown to over 3,000 in attendance during its first eight years, with a high attendance in 1988 of over 5,000.

Larry: Pastor Rick, with such a success story as Saddleback Valley Community Church, and all the attendant publicity and glamour, what would you want to communicate to pastors who feel discouraged because they are not experiencing success of such magnitude?

Rick: Well, I would say first of all, Galatians 6:4 is a key verse that says, "Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in himself, without comparing himself to somebody else" (NIV).

I think that in this verse is really a great warning. I have talked to over 10,000 pastors in the last five years who have been through my seminar on church growth and planting.

One of the biggest mistakes guys are making today is they are comparing themselves to others. There are two problems with that: 1) you'll always find somebody whose doing a better job than you, so you get discouraged; 2) you'll always find somebody who's not doing as well as you do, so you get full of pride. Either way you get in trouble. The Bible makes it very clear: we are not to compare ourselves.

I actually stopped reading our denominational annual about five years ago, because I was reading it one day and comparing how many baptisms had happened and God just smote me, saying, "I never told you to compare yourself to anybody else."

I believe the Bible says you can take legitimate satisfaction in what you do. One day God is not going to say, "Why weren't you more like Billy Graham, or Chuck Swindoll, or Rick Warren. But he's going to say, "Why weren't you more like you?"

So discouragement comes when we start comparing ourselves and the Bible says not to do that.

Larry: You are a church planter and you specifically planned to be a church-planting pastor.

Many Bible colleges and seminaries are beginning to put a lot of emphasis on the training of church planters. What of the man or woman who desires to be a pastor but does not feel he or she wants to be a church-planter pastor? What should the colleges and seminaries do with them? Are they of value to the ministry?

Rick: I think that the problem with a lot of colleges and seminaries is that they are training us to be ministers and not training us how to be leaders. There are very few courses on leadership. So they train us how to be chaplains, such as how to pray, baptize, serve the Lord's supper, counsel one-on-one. That training in the personal ministry that will help a church grow to about 200 people. But to grow a church beyond 200 members you must learn other additional leadership skills like:

- Management of your time
- How to delegate the ministry to other people
- How to equip others to do what you yourself have been doing

There is a different set of problems in church planting compared with an established church. It's just which set of problems you want to live with.

In an established church, the problem is resistant leadership. In other words, members don't want to change and they say, "We've always done it this way," or, "We've never done it that way." There's a resistant leadership.

In a new church the problem is the lack of leadership. There aren't any leaders because you're reaching out to non-Christians and you don't have the years of experience that have been built up. It's just which set of problems you want to live with.

So I think it takes a different type of temperament. Not everybody is called to be a church-planter; not everybody is called to pastor an already established church.

To be a pastor of an existing church takes a tremendous degree of patience, the willingness to put up with people's foibles and faults, and realize that change comes very slowly.

You must be willing to wait it out if you're going to pastor an existing church—to see change take place very slowly over a period of time.

Larry: So it does take a different type of person to be planter from one whom goes to pastor an established church?

Rick: That's exactly right. It takes a different kind of temperament and qualifications and characteristics.

Larry: Then do you see two different types of

training needed?

Rick: I think our schools need to be training both. We need to train not only for the existing church, but we also need to train for new churches. We need to train for what churches are going to be like 15 years from now.

My fear is that a lot of schools are training pastors for churches that aren't going to be in existence 15 years from now.

Larry: If you could speak to every church congregation across America, what would you say to them about pastoral leadership and congregational followership?

Rick: Well, I would say that for a church to grow two things must happen:

1) the pastor must be willing to let the people assume the ministry;

2) the people must be willing to let the pastor assume the leadership.

Now in most churches those roles are exactly reversed. They hire a pastor and say you do all the ministry, the visiting, the counseling, all the caring, and we'll make all the decisions. As a result the ministry cannot grow beyond the ministry of that single man which is usually about 100 people. So the pastor actually becomes a bottle-neck.

Whereas in the Scripture, the Bible says, the objective of the pastor is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. So the members do the ministry and the pastors are the equippers.

Here at the Saddleback Valley Community Church we say, "The members are the ministers and the pastors are the administrators." Leadership belongs in the hands of a few and ministry belongs in the hands of many.

Larry: With all the talk of burnout, breakdown, and monotony of ministry, what are you doing to insure that this does not happen to you?

Rick: Well, I experienced burnout the very first year at our church. At the end of the first year we were running about 200 in attendance, I was working 18 hours days, the office was in my home, I was doing all the preaching, teaching, baptizing, caring, and visiting, and I just burnt out.

The very last Sunday of 1980 I stood up in the pulpit, began speaking, and I started to faint, and I then had to sit down. I was physically and emotionally exhausted. I had to take an entire month off, went through a period of deep, dark depression where I had to reevaluate. What were the causes of the burnout I was going through?

There is a long story behind all of that, but one of the lessons I learned is the value of pacing yourself. One of the verses that God gave me was when he told Joshua, "I'm not going to give you the land all at once, but I'm going to drive them out little by little—drive the giants out little by little so you can handle it."

I think that's pacing growth. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither is the church. I say that "when God wants to make a mushroom he takes six hours. When he wants to make an oak tree he takes 60 years." The question is, do you want to be a

mushroom or an oak tree?

The whole idea is, we're in it for the long haul. There are guys who are great starters in the ministry but they flame out. I'm not impressed with great starts; I'm impressed with consistency. I planted this church when I was 26 years old and I anticipated a 40-year ministry in one church. So when you take the long haul you are more apt to look at a pacing thing, not trying to accomplish it all overnight. There's a verse from Proverbs in the Living Bible that says, "A relaxed attitude lengthens a man's life."

I think part of that involves obeying one of the 10 Commandments that says, Six days you labor and on the seventh day you rest. Now for a pastor Sunday is not a day of rest. So if you're not taking a day off you're breaking one of the 10 Commandments.

So I think balance is the key to avoiding burnout. You must develop other interests, hobbies, keep in physical shape, try to eat the right things, and develop some close friendships.

Luke 2:52 says Jesus increased in wisdom, and stature, and favor with God and men. Intellectual, physical, spiritual, and social growth must be kept in balance.

I have found that in the ministry you can either be a workaholic or the laziest person; you can go to either extreme. I have a little formula that I use to keep balance: "You divert daily; take time with your family. Withdraw weekly; take a day off. Abandon annually; take a vacation."

Larry: For the last question. In terms of advice to fellow pastors, what do you intend to do until the Lord comes?

Rick: Larry, I think my greatest advice to pastors would be: "growing churches requires growing pastors." The moment that I stop growing, the church stops growing. Imagine a balance of scales in your mind. On one hand you have your personal life; on the other hand you have your professional life. Those two must be kept in balance. The moment you overemphasize the professional life to the neglect of your personal life, you are in trouble; that's where stress comes. So I think the key is to continually be growing, learning, reading, asking questions, attending seminars, listening to tapes. If you don't keep feeding yourself you're going to dry up from all the giving out and giving away that pastors must be involved in. I am constantly trying to teach myself to stay sharp.

There is a verse in Ecclesiastes; it's one of my life verses: "If the axe is dull and its edge unsharpened, more strength is needed but skill will bring success" (10:10. NIV). What that says is work smarter, not harder. If you're skilled at what you do, it doesn't take much energy. I have seen a lot of guys dedicated in the ministry, but they're unskilled. They are working with a dull axe. It takes more time, energy, and effort to get the same or fewer results. But if we learn to sharpen our skills then we will have less stress and more success. ■

THOUGHTS

From A Pastor's Pastor

By Pastor S. O. Ross



In this RESTITUTION HERALD issue on "Pastoral Leadership" it seems good that I share some thoughts and ideas and some things I have observed. Two years ago at the annual Ministerial Conference of the Church of God, I was appointed by that body to act in a capacity of being a pastor to the pastors of our churches. In this capacity I have had the privilege to counsel and share with a number of our pastors. With some we have shared joy and progress, other pastors are hurting, despondent, and considering leaving the pastoral ministry.

First let me share that I think pastors are very important and a necessary part of our church function. When Paul and the others had visited many cities and started churches we read, "When they had ordained them elders [pastors are elders] in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed" (Acts 14:23). Note, in every church they ordained pastors. Pastors are vital and important persons and are expected to be leaders in their congregations. That is why Paul

felt he could leave them when they had the ordained elders—or pastors—to continue the work.

When the Lord appointed the 70 and sent them out two by two, they were to be taken care of by those to whom they were to minister. Jesus said, "The labourer is worthy of his hire" (Luke 10:7).

Too many pastors are leaving the pulpit ministry. Why? I feel that both the pastor and the church membership must rise to the challenge. Both need to accept and respond to the needs in their church and deal with the situation. Harmony must be found.

First to the ordained and licensed pastors I want to say, accept your responsibility as a servant of God. If you have had a call to ministry, and have accepted the oath of ordination, don't go back on your commitment to God. Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ." Paul also said, "I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity" (1 Tim. 2:7).

I would urge all pastors to

give grave and serious consideration before leaving the ministry. After hearing all the excuses of those called to service, Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom" (Luke 9:62). Some might say this only pertains to the Christian walk, but consider the words well, dear pastor, before leaving this important work as a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I would like to encourage the church officers and membership to take a real close look at your own local church body. Are you giving your best in your service? Are you encouraging your pastor and upholding him in prayer and proper support, or do you take him for granted? Is his family able to live comfortably (on a par with the membership of your church), or does he need to struggle to pay the necessary bills?

I encourage all in the ministry and all the membership to take a good close look at your particular situation. Evaluate it with an open mind. Make changes and corrections where necessary for a smooth-running operation.

Paul told the Ephesians that the church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord" (Eph. 2:20, 21). This is God's church. May we make every effort to work together in unity and to God's glory. Let the church be the church that God wants it to be.

GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T GET ALONG

By Pastor Hollis Partlowe

Conflict with those among us is nothing new. It goes back to the dawn of human history when Cain murdered his brother Abel (Gen. 4:8). The New Testament says: "The man who actively hates his brother is a potential murderer" (1 John 3:15, Phillips).

Make no mistake, conflict will come to all of us in our various relationships—in marriage, parenting, at work, at church, etc. The question is, how will we handle it? Everyone at times needs the advice and support of others. As Solomon, the wise man, wrote: "There is safety in many counselors" (Prov. 24:6, LB). "Many counselors bring success" (15:22, LB). "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (16:7).

Perhaps more people leave churches because of interpersonal conflicts than over doctrinal differences. It's the same in the secular world. Many leave lucrative jobs because they have trouble with the personnel. Marriage counselors reveal that few marriages break up over major differences; most breakups are over the small issues such as whose relatives to visit on holidays.

Certainly interpersonal conflict among Christians isn't a problem for our day alone. "Mary and Martha, as well as Abraham and Lot, let family disputes interfere with God's best for them. Arguments and jealousy broke out among the disciples as they vied among themselves for positions of greatest importance. Barnabas and Paul, though both devoted to the cause of evangelism, found it expedient to part company due to their disagreement about travel itinerary and companions. The Greek and Hebrew widows turned the New Testament church on its ear with a dispute over who was receiving the most attention and good from the church community. On a larger scale, the first-century Christians found it necessary to call a Jerusalem Council to formulate guidelines to quiet the conflict over Jewish laws and customs. (Acts 15.) Confrontation was no foreign element to Jesus Christ himself; he was challenged by unbelievers in the crowds and money changers in the temple."¹

Since solving conflict is so important in the Christian life, and since unresolved conflict leaves such devastation in its wake, we cannot afford to ignore it. In seeking a solution to this malady, I believe it will be helpful to discover at least some of the causes. Some of the more prominent causes of conflict in most of our relationships are:

1. Lack of Communication.

Now I realize that this has been said many times, but it's still true and needs to be addressed. Communication is the ability to speak to someone else so he can understand what we are presenting, and so we can listen and comprehend his reception and conception of what he has heard. This means a mind totally tuned in to the opportunity of sharing. Communication is certainly at the heart of nearly all relationships.

"Some of us speak about four hundred words a minute with gusts up to six hundred; others drag out their thoughts so that it is the epitome of restraint not to finish sentences for them."² Needless to say, listening is the other half of communication—the most neglected half.

"It is the fear of conflict that harms, the blind obedience to the

notion that all conflict is wrong or unchristian that scatters people when conflict arises. Too many churches presume that the only choice they have is either no conflict or all-out war. The pastor can be the key in reassuring the members that a wide array of faithful responses are possible.

"When a congregation has a pastor who is courageous and resourceful enough to stay and minister to people in the midst of conflict, there are few circumstances in which conflict should be suppressed and avoided. Even in a congregation's darkest hours, the Christian faith provides the resources necessary for making sense out of difficult situations and surviving them . . .

"Where a congregation operates on a style of constant suppression of conflict, conflict acts like a pressure cooker. The heat continues to build; the inevitable explosion is more destructive. Through continuous release of pressure in the weekly struggles of an open active parish, conflict is less likely to be destructive. When conflict is constantly suppressed, it tends to explode in the most unlikely ways and over the most unlikely issues.

"Conflict is a sign of vitality. It occurs most often in congregations in which there is a deep commitment to the church. People only fight over what is important to them."³

Flee or fight? When the pastor is faced with congregational conflict, there are two choices. He can ignore the situation or he can intervene. Ignoring the situation means that the conflict will either go away or get worse. Sometimes chronic troublemakers, because of some purely personal reasons, try to create a congregational crisis where none exists. Care must be taken in making the diagnosis. There are people in nearly every congregation whose level of personal need is so high that they seem to thrive on the creation of conflict. These persons must be identified by the pastor and offered individual care.⁴

The level of communication one has with another depends on the relationship that exists between the two. "You must establish emotional intimacy before someone can really level with you. Talking to some people is like crashing into pavement. Every comment is questioned or challenged; every feeling is denied or judged inappropriate; every offered confidence is met with silence."

"Recall the feeling you get when you zip into a parking space a little too fast and far and bounce your front tires off the curb? There's a sudden jolt, you look around to see if anyone is watching, and you regret the wear on your tires. The same is true when you bump your honest self—basic feelings, inner conflicts, or problems—into a person who sits like a cement curb and watches you bounce off."⁵ Some people who like to rock the boat don't seem to know how to row it.

2. Lack of Healthy Role Models.

Jesus often took the disciples aside for counsel, advice, and teaching. John 4 records one of Jesus' greatest discourses (a counseling session really), which was given to one person.

Pastors, elders, board members, and teachers need to learn how to resolve conflict in an appropriate way. The rest of the congregation needs role models. "Because Christianity is not a philosophy but a relationship with Jesus Christ, we practice our faith by

(please turn the page)



GETTING ALONG WITH PEOPLE WHO DON'T GET ALONG (*Continued from page 17*)

establishing relationships and dealing with others by example."⁶

Let's face facts. No one has a magic formula to resolve conflict. "Preaching provides no 'quick fix' for conflict, because there is no substitute for committed, patient, long-term pastoral work before and after the pastor stands up to preach."⁷ Certainly a vital part of the pastor's work is to keep on predicting, identifying, and resolving disagreements in the church family, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). Without this unity and peace in the body we will lose our effectiveness and end up being "unprofitable servants" (Matt. 25:30).

"Most church observers agree that the quality of the relationship between the leaders and the members of a congregation is the single most important factor in the health of a congregation. As a voluntary association, parish leadership tends to be far more political than managerial. That is, clergy must build consensus among the people whom they would lead. . . . Clergy do not have the coercive powers of an employer. All they have is whatever consensus they are able to forge by their own leadership."⁸

"Know thyself" is the beginning of wisdom as we wade into a church conflict and prepare to address that conflict in a sermon."⁹

3. Power Struggles.

Who's in charge here? The pastor resigned. He probably had the support of ninety per cent of the congregation, but he grew tired of the hassle. He's not a fighter. He left an effective ministry because of a few disgruntled members. Sound familiar? It has happened countless times.

Such hassles are nearly always not over important doctrines but over concerns about budgets, music, style of worship, or leadership philosophy. Often the real issue is: Who's in charge here? Almost every church has its Diotrephes who wants to throw his weight around and show who's boss. (3 John 9.)

The New Testament teaches that a congregation is to have a plurality of godly leaders, with no one person assuming the role of dictator. If this pattern is followed, a good many conflicts could be avoided. But when the pastor is not responsive to the authority of his board, the congregation often digs in its heels and won't be under the authority of the pastor either. In such cases the gap between the pastor and his people can only widen.

Then too, "Accountability of time is important. Sometimes pastors, as professionals, fall into the trap of thinking they can come into the office at 10:00 a.m. and leave at 2:00 p.m. without giving account to anyone. . . . There is cause for anger and misunderstanding when people give very little time accountability. . . . Mutual accountability is very helpful to good staff functioning."¹⁰

Now a word about the personality of the leaders: "Expect an explosion if you insist on staffing the church with two powerful, dynamic, headstrong pastors with enormous charisma—and both are used to large followings. Remember that someone has to be in the wings to open and close the curtain and change the props. Two 'center stage' is more than most relationships and churches can survive."¹¹

Great care and earnest prayer are needed when selecting church staff so that personality clashes and repetition of gifts and abilities can be avoided. The goal is to complement not compete or repeat abilities.

4. Resistance to Change.

When people resist change, whether it be style of worship, location of the church building, changing classrooms, etc., they are being asked to leave their comfort zone. They also resist because the change is taking away their invested interest. A teacher may say: "I've painted this classroom, decorated it, and done all that's been done to it the last 10 years—and you want to take it from me and give it to another. NO WAY!" That teacher is defending her invested interest.

"The narcissistic person is usually very resistant to change. The rights of others are disregarded in order to indulge one's own desires. Others are taken advantage of for self-grandizement. Lack of the capacity for empathy is obvious. Self-esteem is built on a false or naive assumption of superiority."¹²

5. Keep Confidences.

A Minister, being a professional, is expected to function in a professional way. "Keep confidences. God keeps confidences, and people speaking to a pastor expect confidences to be kept. It is a fact that people leave churches, reject the Christian faith, and reject God because of their disillusionment when a pastor passes along words spoken in private."¹³

6. A Sharp Tongue.

The tongue is the greatest cause of division in the church. If each Christian would control that boneless member of the body, the church would have nearly trouble-free sailing. "And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell" (Jas. 3:6). Study this whole chapter to get a description of the destructive force of the uncontrolled tongue.

We've all heard people say, "I'm just the sort of person who says what he thinks." Worse yet, they sound as if they're describing a virtue. *Thinking* something is no justification for *saying* it. Tact has its place too.

"It isn't a sin to have a conflict; the sin originates when you don't settle the conflict in a Christian manner. . . . Be sure when you are dealing with conflict that you describe only another's action, not his character, motives, or attitudes."¹⁴ In other words do not attack the person; address the behavior.

When we have done all that we can with God's help, and have followed Jesus' instruction about resolving conflict (Matt. 18:15-17), we can find comfort in Romans 12:18: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." "If it be possible" implies that sometimes it is not possible to settle an issue. I have met a few difficult, impossible people. Another phrase, "as much as lieth in you," reveals that we don't always have control of the circumstances. We are not responsible for the behavior of others.

"Conflict creates a chance to change situations for the better and to grow stronger people in the process. But unresolved conflict festers into a painful break in relationships. So when in conflict, confront."¹⁵

Footnotes

¹*Getting Along With People Who Don't Get Along*, Dianna Daniels Booher, Broadman Press, Nashville, TN, p. 8.

²*Ibid.*, p. 11.

³*Preaching About Conflict in the Local Church*, William H. Willimon, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1987, pp. 16-18.

⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 21-23.

⁵Booher, p. 30.

⁶*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷Willimon, p. 46.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 35.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁰*Let's Talk About Church Staff Relationships*, Ronald W. Wiebe, Bruce A. Rowilson, Green Leaf Press, Alhambra, CA, 1983, pp. 50, 51.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 27.

¹²*Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹³*Ibid.*, p. 43.

¹⁴Booher, pp. 118, 119.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 125.

Pastoral Care for the Community

By Pastor John Hearp

The breakfast meeting that I called of the Jail Chaplaincy Board ended up lasting two hours. But it was necessary, and several important matters were resolved. Now I have to go home and poll the remaining nine members of the board, explaining to each one what was discussed, and asking for their opinion. At times like this I can wonder, "Why do I always seem to get involved?"

The opportunities for service and involvement are all too plentiful for the local pastor. This is especially true if he indicates his willingness to be a contributing member of the community. The desire to serve others is eloquently expressed in the classic passage found in James 2:14-26. In commenting on "believe" found in verse 19, this is what Barclay has to say: "There are two kinds of belief. There is belief which is purely intellectual, and which consists in the acceptance of a fact with the mind." This is not what James would have to be the case. The second kind is what he has in mind. "To believe Jesus was to take that belief into every part and section of life, and live by it . . ."

The Outreaching Pastor

Someone has referred to the pastor as "the last of the General Practitioners." He is expected to know (and perhaps to do) a little bit about a lot of things. This article touches on just one phase of his ministry—that of reaching out to the community.

As we look at the life of Jesus we see not an isolation from mankind, but rather an identification with it. He is found in their homes, at social gatherings, with the sick, meeting one-on-one. These opportunities were used to speak to them about their relationship with God in many and varying ways. The gospel was preached. Pastoral care was given. These same tasks were committed to his followers by Jesus at the completion of his ministry on earth. Service projects are never an end in themselves. They are a means of reaching out to others.

God's Program Is People

God and man both have written history.

Yet they do it in a very different manner. Man writes about the rise and fall of great nations and organizations. Interestingly enough, with few exceptions, nations have never impressed God. The prophet Isaiah puts it in graphic terms in viewing them as "a drop in a bucket" and like "dust on the scales" (Isa. 40:15, NIV). God sees people when he views history. In Hebrews 11 we have God's "Hall of Fame" of the faithful. The people mentioned here were more concerned with being associated with God than with great nations.

The importance of people is conveyed very clearly in John 15:13: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends." Jesus calls upon us to do what he did . . . sacrifice ourselves for people.

Looking Around

It has been my privilege to travel our country from coast to coast, and top to bottom. I also "enjoyed" a trip to China and Japan at government expense. When I had the opportunity, I was the typical tourist looking from side to side, up and down, so as not to miss a thing. A guide book has often been helpful in assisting me to interpret what I saw.

As a pastor, or a layman, I need to look at the world around me. Jesus looked around, and urged us to do the same. "Open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest" (John 4:35, NIV). Our guidebook is the Bible, and we are to see people with the eyes and mind of Christ. When we see a need, we cannot remain indifferent. The love of Christ requires action on our part.

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Pastoral Care for the Community

(Continued from page 19)

A Place to Participate

Do you enjoy meeting a variety of people? with diverse needs? of all religions—or none? If so, being a volunteer chaplain in a hospital is possibly just for you.

The Clergy Fellowship that I attended in Welland, Ontario, had discussed for some time starting a volunteer chaplaincy program at the Welland Hospital. At one meeting this impetuous American made the mistake of asking when we were going to begin the program—and was named chairman of the committee. Some people are slow learners!

The next few months were spent working with a few other pastors, and the hospitals were going along the same line. A chaplaincy program was soon started having a chaplain and back-up for each wing. Thanks to some dedicated, concerned pastors it functioned very well. Over the years thousands of people have received a personal visit that otherwise may have seen no one at all. While on duty and responding to a maximum alert I became acquainted with two people. Later they were led to Christ and affirmed their faith by being baptized in his name.

Perhaps you desire to develop deeper, long-term relationships. The next ministry I suggest is very rewarding, yet over time it will tug at your heartstrings. Ever think of serving as a volunteer chaplain in a nursing home? You will get to know some of the residents very well. In fact, you may be their only visitor. You soon realize that over the long term they are going to get progressively weaker. Your visit will be a bright spot in their day . . . and in yours! After making my chaplaincy rounds on one floor of a very large retirement-nursing home I always left feeling somewhat drained, but much better than when I began.

Does your preference for community service run more along the lines of administration and planning? If so, what I am currently doing may be your preference. It is presently my privilege to serve as chairman of the Clark County Jail Chaplaincy Board. Our program is unique in that it is entirely funded by churches, individuals, and organizations in the community. We are the only county in the State of Ohio, and one of the few in the nation that employs a full-time chaplain.

We establish policies for the program and serve as a sounding board and support for the jail chaplain. Fund

raising and communication with the community are also portions of our responsibility. This month (January, 1990), we are purchasing a house that will be used for After Care for selected people upon their release from jail.

My service as a member of the Canadian Mental Health Board in Welland, Ontario, was very rewarding. This presented the opportunity of working with people from the entire spectrum of society. As a pastor, along with others, I was able to bring a Christian perspective to the board. For our annual meeting, I

suggested a good friend of mine, Dr. Leonard Kirk, a quadriplegic and a former Baptist pastor who had a counseling ministry. The slight apprehension by some in having someone with a religious emphasis speak at a basically secular meeting later turned to astonishment. They had the largest attendance ever at the annual meeting.

Some Tips on Involvement

1. Be certain that the church you are serving is agreeable to community involvement. I have been blessed in serving three churches—Riply, Illinois, Fonthill, Ontario, Canada, and Lawrenceville, Ohio—that were supportive of me in my participation in the community.
2. Remember that your primary responsibility is to God and the church that you are serving.
3. Don't build your entire ministry around community involvement. Avoid a one-sided approach.
4. Select one or two jobs in the community, and then commit the necessary time and effort to them.
5. Select those jobs that are worthwhile, and to which you feel you can make a meaningful contribution.
6. Learn to say "No" with a gracious manner and a clear conscience.
7. Don't spend unwarranted amounts of time in either denominational or community work.

Why Be Involved?

I often wish I had someone else's gifts or abilities. I, too, would like to accomplish great things for God. Ever find yourself thinking that way? If so, consider these words of Helen Keller, "I long to accomplish a great and noble task, but it is my chief duty and joy to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble . . . for the world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker."



The Prediction Of Francis David (Continued from page 21)

The unity of God, obviously, is the greatest truth in the Bible, and this, essentially, was the position of Francis David and his followers. They were willing, not only to openly preach this doctrine, but to die for it.

Francis David was arrested and tried for heresy. Weak and ill, he had to be carried into the judgment hall. The Calvinist ministers who were present at the trial demanded that Prince Stephen Bathory impose on David the death penalty. (During an earlier controversy, in 1567, they had suggested that he should be stoned.)

The prince, however, condemned David to "perpetual imprisonment" and consigned him to a nearby castle dungeon. Five months later, he died.

Francis David's message, of course, may be suppressed, but it cannot die, for it is in accord with the Word of God: "God is one."

Great changes will take place on the earth when Jesus comes again. These will include, at long last, a purity of doctrine.

In its comments on Zechariah 14:9, *The Interpreter's Bible* says that the kingdom of God will be established over all the earth and Deuteronomy 6:4 will become the universal creed. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD."

1990—International Year of Bible Reading

President expected to proclaim 1990 International Year of Bible Reading for the U.S.A

WASHINGTON, D.C.

November 27, 1989—

"The need for worldwide study and application of the teaching of the Bible" is at the heart of a Joint Resolution of Congress passed on November 21. The Resolution authorizes and requests President George Bush to issue a proclamation declaring 1990 the *International Year of Bible Reading* in the United States. White House sources indicate that he will do so before the end of the year.

Fifteen governors have already issued similar proclamations for their states and more are expected to do so. But it took a series of minor miracles for harried congressmen wrestling with budget legislation and eager to adjourn for their holiday recess to obtain the November 21 passage of the historic Joint Resolution.

(Editors note: States signing proclamations include Alaska, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Dakota, and Tennessee.)

The project was initiated in late 1988 by Dr. John A. Hash, founder of Bible Pathway Ministries which has published and distributed more than 60 million through-the-Bible devotional guides in more than 25 languages in its 16-year history.

The project quickly gained momentum and interest.

Presently, over three hundred Christian ministry leaders, pastors, and key laymen have committed themselves as members of the advisory board. They include entertainers, publishers, members, and former members of Congress, ranking military leaders, astronauts, syndicated journalists, members and former members of the White House staff, professional athletes, representatives of various ethnic groups, key evangelical leaders such as Dr. Jerry Rose, president of the NRB; Dr. D. James Kennedy, Coral Ridge (Florida) Presbyterian Church; and Dr. Jerry Falwell, Old Time Gospel Hour.

The advisory board is a broad-based coalition representing several major denominations.

House and Senate Pass Historic Joint Resolution in Final Hours of Current Session

Directing the *International Year of the Bible Reading* campaign are Dr. John A. Hash,

chairman; Mr. Cal Hubbard, executive director; Dr. Jerry Wiles, strategy director; and Richard Dingman, legislative director.

"We are very pleased that the Joint Resolution received such strong support in Congress," commented Hubbard, "and we're grateful to the coalition of interested participants who have helped bring us this far."

The project officially began on January 1, 1990, on Israel's Mount of Olives, where leaders began a year-long Bible-reading marathon involving people from more than 50 countries.

"People visiting Israel during 1990 are encouraged to participate in the marathon," said Dr. Hash.

According to the Joint Resolution, "The Bible has made a unique contribution in shaping the United States as a distinctive and blessed nation and people. Deeply held convictions springing from the Bible led to the early settlement of our nation. The history of our nations clearly illustrates the value of voluntarily applying the teachings of the Bible in the lives of individuals and families."

Cal Hubbard, executive director of the *Association*, sponsor of the 1990 project, said, "Wide use of media, print advertising, and direct mail, interfacing with churches, providing published reading guides and helpful literature are all part of the implementation of this project. A special television program, narrated by Pat Boone was produced for special release on CBN and other stations on January 1.

"We're asking committed believers everywhere to lend their prayers, encouragement, and support. However, it will be the Bible itself which produces the profound spiritual impact for which we are all praying."

"We plan to hold a Bible-reading marathon on the steps of the Capitol in Washington in conjunction with the National Day of Prayer in May," said Dr. Hash. "It will be the first public marathon in this country that I am aware of."

“There Is Room for God in the Soviet Union”

By Pastor Hollis Partlowe

This was the headline of the daily news on December 2, 1989. This announcement was made at the Malta summit by Mikhail Gorbachev, President of the Soviet Union. In so doing he renounced 70 years of official atheism.

After more than seven decades of bitter ideological rivalry, the leader of the world's first communist state and the leader of 850 million Roman Catholics met December 1, 1989, for the first time. Both agreed to establish diplomatic relations between the Kremlin and the Vatican. This heretofore unheard-of meeting took place in Vatican City.

The winds of change are clearly blowing all the way from Moscow to Rome. Describing his meeting with Pope John Paul II as “a truly extraordinary event,” Gorbachev said he had invited the Polish-born pontiff to visit the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev proclaimed the right of all Soviet believers to “satisfy their spiritual needs.” Furthermore, he said that the Soviet Union would soon pass a law guaranteeing freedom of conscience and the Kremlin leaders are now stressing the importance of “universal human values.” Gorbachev, who revealed earlier this year that he had been “baptized” as a child, has started a series of changes in the communistic world totally unknown since its inception.

Just about everybody seems to agree that the Malta summit between President Bush and President Gorbachev was a smashing success. Against a backdrop of dramatic change in the communist world, the two leaders proclaimed the dawn of a new era in U.S. and Soviet relations. For all practical purposes Bush and Gorbachev presided over the funeral of the cold war, if one can accept at face value what seems to be taking place. Changes have come so fast and gone so far that they have left us a bit stunned and dizzy. I trust that it is the prayer of the Christian world that changes will continue.

Five years ago—or even five months ago—it was a different world from the one that was discussed at this shipboard summit. It will be equally interesting to see what happens when Gorbachev comes calling on Bush early next summer.

A Big Snag—A United Germany

The Soviet Union has expressed to West Germany that pressing for German reunification at this time can only bring trouble. The Soviet people well remember history and the



tragic lesson of the Second World War in which they say they lost 20 million people.

Following the defeat of Adolph Hitler's Nazi Germany, the German state became divided into two nations—communist East Germany (in the Soviet camp), and pro-Western West Germany. I believe that one can understand the Russian fear of a united Germany, although Gorbachev has indicated a willingness to let history decide. If this proves to be true, the democratic tides that have inundated Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and East Germany may well continue to spread. We have only praise for these peoples who had the courage to stand up against their leaders in their search for freedom. Everyone should have the privilege to breathe free.

Reasons Behind These Drastic Changes

Perhaps there are two basic reasons for the drastic changes taking place in the communist world today.

1. The strong military capability of the United States. It appears that the leaders of the communist block are convinced that the military muscle of the United States will defend freedom. Strong military power is a vital asset in any international negotiations.

2. The economic problems that Gorbachev has at home. For reasonable people everywhere it makes good sense to use money to feed and clothe a nation's people in place of using it for unnecessary arms build-up.

Two Things of Prophetic Significance

What about the Russian invasion of the Middle East? Most prophetic students believe that Ezekiel 38 and 39 predict a Russian invasion of the Middle East in the last days. I share that viewpoint, although it may take place after Gorbachev has gone the way of all the earth and kept his appointment with death. Then too, one must remember that an assassin's bullet could drop Gorbachev in his tracks. Who

(Please turn the page)

"There Is Room for God in the Soviet Union"



(Continued from page 23)

then would grab the reins of leadership in the Soviet Union? In fact, a number of things could happen to turn things in the other direction. From a political standpoint, one would do well not to predict too far ahead. However, it will be very interesting to watch further developments.

A United States of Europe

Most prophetic students also believe that the old Roman Empire will be revived in the end time in a coalition of 10 nations corresponding to the 10 horns of the beast in Daniel 7:7 and Revelation 13:1-3. The European Economic Community may well be the beginning of this power, the very entity which will produce the Antichrist, betray peace agreements with Israel, and launch the last holocaust. The map of Europe is rapidly changing, and since there is no prophesied event between now and the rapture of the church (1 Thes. 4:13-18), we would do well to expect Christ's return at any moment and prepare for it. He said: "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. . . . Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh" (Matt. 24:42, 44). Do you think that Jesus could come today? He said he would come in "an hour when ye think not."

While we watch with interest the movement of the nations and other signs of the times, we are admonished by Scripture to watch "for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:13, NASB). Nothing is more certain than the return of Christ; nothing more uncertain than the time of his return. "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him" (Matt. 25:6).

European Economic Community

By Charles French

Editor's Note:

HERALD reader Betty Ackels keeps me and editors of many similar magazines and papers updated on world events by sending newspaper clippings. Recently she received comment on the European developments from Australian Charles French of the *Gospel Publicity League*. Here are Mr. French's comments.

Through the news shine a few salient facts. Firstly, the eastern nations, with the exception so far of Romania and Yugoslavia, are dead scared of being left behind in the European race for economic millions of dollars. Secondly, Russia is dead scared of being the odd man out in a confederated Europe in which total power will be in the hands of the European Economic Community (EEC). Now, keep in mind too that Russia has an enormous content of decedents of Reuben and is not short on brains. All that limits Russia in most areas is inertia brought on by its system and if it had a capitalist free economy it would be a boomer. However, in denying God nationally, it has been sent judgments which limit its ability to anything constructive—except developing a military capacity which in the end will cause its final and terrible demise.

So—Russia is being forced into a freedom campaign which will limit its wealth flowing from its

satellites. What this will mean in the end is that Russia will have to "think an evil thought" which the Bible speaks of, because it will need a vast influx of wealth to keep it afloat. Where can it get this wealth? The west will be too strong yet stripped a little of preparedness because of the new peace offensive waged by Russia. China could not provide any wealth, so what's left? Only the middle east and the same old oil wealth. Romania has large amounts of oil. Turkey has nothing to offer, nor has Syria—except oil.

On the matter of Gorby and the Pope: Russia can see that the world at large is leaving them for dead and that large groups in Russia have to be kept under control. How to do that with the Roman Catholics? Answer—use the Pope and make a deal with him for freedom in Europe. What about the cost? Well—the Russians think this can be "adjusted" later on when they are in control again. But it will be too late. Here is the Godless making a deal with the God-opposer. The first will be destroyed before the second and thus will never have a chance to take back what it is now giving, in total. The second will not eventually profit either because its destruction is written—"In one hour is their end come."

*It's not that men by their strength
Live to see the next day,
But that God in his kindness
Sends it their way.*

Neighbors Are For Helping

By Lois Pryor

*I want to be a helper,
A helper kind and good,
To people living near me,
In my neighborhood.
You may think I'm too small,
But I'm growing in many ways.
I will soon be big and tall,
And help on many days.*

I like to live on my street. I have many friends. During the winter months I don't see them as often as in the other seasons. Mrs. Maple doesn't get out when it is icy; Mr. French is afraid he will catch cold in this damp weather.

I like to go next door to play with Sheila. She is a foster child. Mother says a foster child is a boy or girl who lives away from his or her real family. Sheila just moved in last week. She was shy at first but we shared our toys and became good friends. Some of my doll clothes fit her doll, too. We had an after school tea party yesterday. I hope she stays with the Smith family for a long time.

Joe lives in the other house beside me. Sometimes I play at his house. His favorite game is checkers. I have a happy time playing games with my neighbor, Joe. When we play at my house it is my turn to pick which game we play.

I need to go visit Mrs. Maple today. She lives down the street. Maybe I can help shovel her walk. Even though she doesn't go out on cold snowy days, the mailman needs to reach her door. She looks forward to his regular stop. Her daughter lives in Iowa and writes every week. I think I'll skip the checker game this afternoon. She will be glad to see me.

Mother says neighbors are for helping. Last summer I helped Mr. French put bricks along the edge of his flower bed. He gave me a marigold to set out under our kitchen window. Mr. French fixed my bicycle, too. He has all kinds of tools. He lets me use them sometimes. I wonder if he found the picture I drew and left in his door last week. I stopped by after school to say hello, but he wasn't home. I remembered it was Wednesday. That is the day the van from the Senior Citizens Center comes by to take him to craft class.

In the winter it is often hard to find things to do when the temperature is below zero and I cannot go outside. Mrs. Sunday School teacher gave us an idea last Sunday. She suggested we try this activity; cover a box with colored pictures cut from old magazines. Use a paintbrush to put white glue thinned with water on the pictures. Let the glue dry. Fill the box with no-bake cookies. The cookie recipe sounds easy, too:

Crush a 1-pound box of wafers in a plastic bag by rolling over the bag with a rolling pin. Add one-half cup frozen lemonade, three-fourths cup powdered sugar, and three-fourths cup shredded coconut. When mixed, shape into balls. Keep in refrigerator until time to eat.

I think I will start to make two boxes today for my special neighbors. I'll bet Mr.

French and Mrs. Maple will be surprised when I dress up warm after school in a few days and deliver them a treat. Do you have a neighbor who could share this treat too?



It's early. I'm being thrust into unfamiliar surroundings. Looking at my watch I realize I have plenty of time. Yet, as I park my car, I feel rushed to run to the shuttle bus that will take me to the Superior Court building of Maricopa County. I have been "summoned" to jury duty! Even though others have told me what a great experience it will be, I must admit that I sense a foreboding and rebellious spirit coming over me. I don't want to be here. As the shuttle bus rambles through traffic, my mind wanders to more important matters.

I teach a high school class at church and I am more concerned about what is happening in the lives of "my kids" than in this bureaucratic train of forms, procedures, and illogical enterprises. The wheels of government are trivial compared to the salvation and discipleship of the young church.

I arrive at the "impressive-looking" building and am told to take a seat. This is the first of many similar exhortations, to relax and wait, that I will hear on this day. After a half hour I am told to come and pick up a form. I stand in a long line and listen to our highly trained public official dynamically exhort us to "fill out and return." By the time I get to her, she has her lines down perfectly . . . "fill out and return." It is amazing what proper training can do. Do these people go home at night feeling that they have accomplished something of significance? I fill out my form—pretty good for a college graduate—and stand to wait in another line to turn it in. But I failed to print my name at the top of the form, so my sense of accomplishment was destroyed and I am seriously beginning to doubt myself. We then hear the announcement . . . the form we filled out will be destroyed after our tenure of service is over. So much for a lasting impact on society.

Eighteen kids . . . all different . . . all with unique needs . . . all with unlimited potential. Two have already dropped out of high school. Their lives are now being pulled into that "nowhere land" between adulthood and

A Day in the Quest for

Significance



By
Pastor
James
Graham

childhood. If they hang out with their friends at the football game Friday night? If they live at home, do they have to obey their parents? These are tough decisions for kids who just a short time ago held onto their parents for dear life when confronted with strange new challenges. What can I do to help them, to help their parents?

The first "panel" of prospective jurors is called. This is it, the vital process of the Great American Judicial system. I'm not called so I continue to wait. I'm in a room with about 500 people. The man next to me is a retired, and somewhat bigoted, fellow from Nebraska. He wants to talk but I can already see that if I let him know my opinion on some of his "wisdom" that our conversation will be brief and no longer pleasant. As he intersperses his stupid comments on race, politics, and any other subject that comes up with profanity, I decide . . . why not tell him that I am a minister? With obvious embarrassment he tells me that he thought about being one once, and then retreats to talk the ear off of the man on his other side. I'm encouraged. I was beginning to think that ministers didn't hold any power today. I now wait in blissful quiet and look at the faces of the others who are participating in this privileged process. If this is so vital, why is everyone looking so bored?

A couple of the kids in the group are in "love." Now I'm not opposed to love. Love is a vital part of my life. But is love always so saccharine? These two are very open in expressing their love for each other. In class last

week, the girl asked me a question about the lesson. She did so without taking her head from her beloved's shoulder. Do they know how uncomfortable they are making the other kids in the class? Do they care? If they act this way in public, what do they act like when they are alone? I am concerned about their relationship. Yet, if I confront them, I'll be accused of having a "dirty mind." I guess I would gladly admit to this if they would use the same honesty. I pray they don't make the mistake of confusing love with the passion welling up in their developing bodies. What can I do? What can the church do to help them? To help their parents?

I just finished watching a video on the judicial process. I was informed, by this modern audiovisual, that it is an essential privilege of every citizen to participate in the system. The expressions on the faces of the prospective jurors do not reflect the magnitude of this privilege. They are bored, tired, and wear haggard "wishing-they-could-go-home" expressions. What vitality? What significance?

There are a couple of others in the class who have unlimited potential. They could be doctors, lawyers, teachers, scientists, or about anything else they set their minds to. I'm concerned that they may just do that and not be involved in the work of Christ. I'd love to see them in ministry. Pastor, missionary, counsellor . . . it would be such a waste of potential for them to spend their lives working at what Solomon discovered to be "a vanity of vanities." These two could impact eternity. I pray that God will use me to direct them to a lifelong commitment to the Lord's work. Just think of the difference they could make. . . .

My name was just called. I'm brought back to the mundane realities of my surroundings . . . of my significant experience. Now the question is, Will they take us up to Judge Nastro before or after lunch? While marking time, the remarkable lady (who has maintained her pleasant demeanor all day) returns and tells us that we can go to lunch. The lunch hour is two and a half hours long. Remember the day when you worked real hard and were rewarded with a whole half hour for lunch? This America, it is a marvelous country. I sit all morning long and get a two and a half hour lunch!

Another student comes to mind. He's 16 and now lives with his aunt and uncle. He was thrown out of his own home by a step-father who couldn't stand looking at the reminder of his wife's first marriage. He has started smoking. In spite of all that has happened in his life, he still comes to church regularly. I think he can be reached.

He's basically a good kid. If only the right people can touch his life!—busy people who have filled their lives with important activities . . . things like jury duty. While I'm not a pessimist, I doubt if this young man gets the discipling he needs.

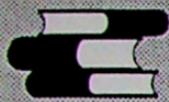
Lunch is over and I'm still languishing in anticipation. The still-pleasant lady tells us we should know something shortly. She soon returns to the podium. A lot of bored people look relieved as they are dismissed with the words, "We won't be needing you today." If it is so vital, why do they look so relieved? I hope I can share their expression soon.

My mind runs back to the class . . . to the quiet ones who sit and behave themselves. They make no waves. While some might feel that they would make ideal church members, I'm worried that this may indeed be what happens. They become quiet, submissive church members who have learned the lesson on hiding their rebellion well. I pray to God for wisdom on how to motivate them into becoming young radicals for Jesus. I don't know what can be done. They read teen and auto magazines. They get braces. They look good and listen to popular music. They even hang "Jesus" trinkets around their necks. Can the church do anything to change them? to stimulate them to give body, soul, and spirit to the Lord of eternity? Or do we just want the quiet and conforming in the church? Is our objective to fill the building with only the safe and compliant?

They just announced that the judge is still hearing opening arguments and will not be selecting a jury today. I'm free to go. I believe that I can now understand Martin Luther King's declaration: "Thank God I'm free, I'm free at last!" I have to tell you, this has been a senseless waste of a day in a human's life. Well, not a total waste. We get \$12.00 for participating in the process. I quickly multiply this by the 500 people assembled and realize that the government (by the people and for the people) just paid \$6,000.00 and accomplished nothing.

"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs—he wants to please his commanding officer"
(2 Timothy 2:3, NIV).

Look back over my diary and answer me this question. Why do we think the most boring things of life are the most vital and the most vital things of life the most boring? If you're looking for significance, you will not find it in the enterprises of this world. Get involved with the eternal. If you want vitality and meaning, try the ministry of God's eternal kingdom. If not, give me a call and you can take my place on the next jury duty. I'll even give you the \$12.00, but I will not go! My time is going to be spent in an arena which will impact eternity.



Premarital Counseling

by H. Norman Wright

Moody Press, 1977
(215 pp., hardcover, \$10.95)

Nearly every minister knows that he should be doing premarital counseling. However, few ministers do it well because they lack the time and/or the skills. Norm Wright eliminates many of the excuses by giving us a volume that contains almost everything needed for a good premarital counseling program.

Dr. Wright believes that no couple should marry without thorough premarital counseling. In this book he gives guidelines for conducting a four- to six-session counseling program. He suggests ways to deal tactfully with couples who don't want counseling and with a Christian and non-Christian who want to marry.

Premarital counseling provides one of the greatest opportunities for teaching available to the average minister or church. The people who come, because of their deep concern for success in marriage, are teachable to a degree rarely experienced in Christian work. Premarital counseling can do more toward helping establish a Christian marriage than almost anything else we can do for them in the future. It also develops rapport between the counselor and counsees that moves them in the direction of a deep commitment to the life of the church.

Perhaps the greatest opportunity is the chance to help reduce the rising divorce rate which statistics show has risen with a dizzy rate since the late sixties. While in my pastoral ministry I have not tied into Wright's style totally, I have received invaluable help from this gifted man. Having read some of his other books also and having attended several of his seminars, I'm confident that he is one of the best family counselors on the American scene today.

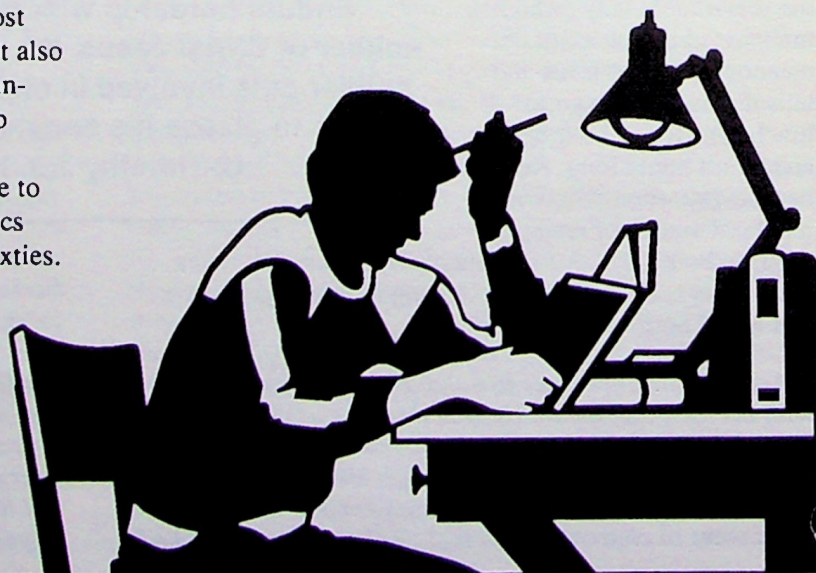
Premarital Counseling contains a three-

By Pastor Hollis Partlowe

chapter introduction to the main course. This introduction lightly but thoroughly covers major issues confronting each of us in marriage and family living. However, the heart of the book is the four chapters that deal with premarital counseling resources and that outline six sessions of premarital counseling. Topics which need to be discussed by every couple—finances, in-laws, spiritual life, sex, and more—are all thoroughly covered. The author also gives a sample of wedding vows (p. 205), which can be especially helpful to new pastors. This book deserves wide distribution in our conference and throughout the Christian world. For the average premarital counseling experience, it covers almost everything necessary.

A question which needs to be handled in more detail: how should a minister respond to the couple who is sleeping together? Wright suggests to tell them to stop or the counseling will not continue. He says he has not encountered couples who refuse to follow his advice. I sure have. That approach places a couple in a position of lying about what they are doing if they don't want to stop. Moreover, it would be difficult to check up on them to determine the facts in the case.

This criticism, however, should not detract from the value of the book. For too long the church has been involved in conducting weddings when it should have been creating Christian homes. For years we have needed a thorough plan of action for premarital counseling. Dr. Wright gives us a very good one. We may want to modify it for our own use, but at least we should begin by making use of it.



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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

Try a Little Tenderness

Continued from back cover)

sound of his son's breathing. The night is spent in quiet slumber.

Try a little tenderness.

He said something that angered me. I didn't tell him, but kept the anger inside. When he went home, I told myself that I wouldn't answer the phone. Messages came across my desk and I didn't return them. I was intent upon making him uncomfortable. I wanted him to wonder what was wrong.

As time went on I realized that my behavior was stupid, but pride wouldn't let me give in. I wanted to teach him a lesson. I refused to talk to him at all. He lived far away, and it was easy to make him the victim of my little scheme.

One night, a couple of weeks later, I was sitting in my living room, and he walked in the front door. He had driven for hours to see me, not knowing what the reception would be when he walked in. He sat down next to me, and silently took my hand. Then I realized how much I had missed him.

Try a little tenderness.

Keeping the tenderness in life is a challenge for the '90s. So many of the miscommunications and moments of paranoia in life could be alleviated with a little tenderness. To love one another deeply is a challenge, because it requires giving a lot of oneself. Peter implores us Christians to be clear minded and self-controlled, so we can pray. He says, "ABOVE ALL, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality without grumbling. Serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (See 1 Pet. 4:7-11.)

How can we administer God's grace to others? By serving them with the strength God provides so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

The epistle to the Philippians is a favorite of mine because of the tenderness that is exhibited by Paul. I am warmed by his affection and expression of love for others. His prayer for them is that their (our) love may abound more and more in knowledge, not that the knowledge may abound more in love. LOVE is the object—and, again, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 2 is beautiful prose expressing the pattern Christ set by exhorting us to meekness and humility. Paul speaks of doing nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but treating others better than we treat ourselves. In humility, we must look to others' interests as well as our own. Verse 7 tells us that Christ made himself nothing, taking on the very nature of a servant.

So many of the miscommunications and moments of paranoia in life could be alleviated with a little tenderness.

In this new year, it isn't too late to remember tenderness. It isn't too late to see people—the rest of our lives lies before us. Read Philippians, and in light of the New Year re-read 3:13-17. Forgetting what lies behind, press forward to what lies ahead. Join with us in following Paul's example, and take note of those who live according to the pattern (of Christ) Paul spelled out for us. Christ expects us to be gentle and humble in heart, and to learn from his example. When we learn from his example, we will find rest for our souls (Matt. 11:28, 29).

As 1990 lies before us, let us remember that sometimes we can't control how we feel, but we adults can control how we think and how we act. Take the time to ACT on situations instead of REACTING to situations, and Try a Little Tenderness—it's the way of Christ.





“My lord knoweth that the children are tender” (Gen. 33:13).

Try A Little Tenderness

When I was 10, I remember one day sitting at the kitchen table in my grandmother’s house. She and I were waiting for my grandfather to come back from the grocery store with milk and bread for dinner. I remember seeing the look of pleasure on his face as he came into the house. He had a sack in one hand, and the other hand was hidden behind his back. He smiled at me, put the groceries down, and walked up to my grandmother. He handed her a

bouquet of Tootsie Roll pops—her favorite candy. She didn’t say a word; she smiled a bit, and put the candy away. My grandfather was still smiling, and I knew my grandmother was very much in love with him.

**By
Vicki
Pulling**

Try a little tenderness. My 13-year-old daughter came home from school one day in a very bad mood. She was tired, and from living with

her I knew that she got cranky when she got tired. It was hard to listen to her moaning and complaining, because I also am cranky when I’m tired. She came by it honestly. Normally I might have spoken harshly, and fueled the fire by reprimanding her or ordering her to bed. But for some reason I took a different course of action. I walked up to her and took her in my arms, hugging her close to me caressing her hair. She melted. We had a nice evening.

Try a little tenderness.

The toddler is two, and for some reason is crying. He has been cranky for hours, and it’s hard for mom and dad to listen to it any longer. He keeps getting out of bed; no matter how many times he’s put back he comes crying down the hallway. Parental patience is failing, and the temptation is to spank him and make him sleep. Dad has had it! He rushes toward the toddler. But when he looks at the baby he sees his son, his precious son. Dad picks the baby up, wraps him in a warm blanket, and rocks him quietly, patting the little behind rhythmically. Soon the baby is sleeping, and dad is comforted by the

(Continued inside back cover)

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THE

RESTITUTION

HERALD

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Spring!



BOUQUETS OF THOUGHT

April/May/1990

EDITOR'S VIEWPOINT

Church-Planting Calls

As you probably know by now, Rick Cooper and I have been called to church planting in St. Charles County, Missouri. We begin this venture during this summer, and our first service will be October 28, 1990.

Of course, nothing of this magnitude is accomplished without preparation. Much soul-searching by both of our families prepared us for this decision. We believe God has called us into this ministry as much as Paul and Barnabas felt set aside by the Lord and by the church to plant churches (Acts 13:1-3). Moved by the Holy Spirit, we must obey.

For a period of three or four years the Missouri State Conference and a small core of St. Louis church members have called for this new planting. They have teamed up to finance (with the aid of the Church of God General Conference) the work. Contract arrangements between us and the Conference/core group commit us to a two-year project. A vision strategy and master calendar for the 24 months are in place, and a bare-bones plan extending beyond to 10 years is in focus. If you are interested in more information, just contact me.

This project will only come about if you by God's grace will help. All we ask is your prayers—daily. In return we will submit updates on our progress on a regular basis. If you feel moved to assist financially, your contribution can be sent to Mrs. Leroy Elkins, Missouri State Conference Treasurer, Box 505, Raymore, MO 64083. We thank you in advance for your faithfulness.

I am still interested in the ministry of THE RESTITUTION HERALD. My prayers are with those in charge of this publication because I know it helps meet your spiritual needs.

May God bless you and us together as we continue to serve him in sharing his love to more hearts until Christ returns.

How to Plant a Church

There are as many strategies as there are plantings. It's appropriate that we

discuss how we will go about the work in Missouri.

Our research shows that a target market for 100,000 people exists within a five-mile radius of the McClay Road and Thoele Road intersection in St. Charles County, and that 30 to 49 percent of the population is unchurched. Typical family size is around 3.2 persons per household. The average household consists of a married couple between the ages of 25 and 44 with one child at home school-age or younger.

Our vision is to reach the target by gathering a critical mass via telemarketing (August 19 through October 26, 1990) and continual gathering through small groups for the purpose of bringing God's love in Christ to the target audience so that worship of God, active faith in biblical truth, and continual service to him and Christ will result.

We have already discovered a meeting place: the St. Charles 10Cine' movie theater. Programming will include contemporary Christian music, with an emphasis on family needs.

Unchurched people will be attracted on their turf. No ornate religious symbols will stand in their way. The theme for the first service is: "Your dreams, your goals, your success are important to God."

The use of telemarketing and small groups will highlight the work at first.

Telemarketing involves the telephoning of homes in the five-mile ministry area and asking them if they go to church. Those who say they don't will be offered a mailout inviting them to church in the cinema. Then just before Big Sunday, which is October 28, those on the mailing list will receive a second phone call. "We are looking forward to meeting you in

person at the St. Charles 10Cine' Sunday, October 28, at 10:00 a.m.," they'll be told.

All attenders will be encouraged to join a small group of from seven to 10 persons. Each group will have important study/devotional functions as well as task/mission functions. Eventually, church members will become acquainted with several unchurched friends to invite them to a fellowship dinner in their home where they would also participate in an interrelational Bible discussion. In time these persons would also attend the new church in the cinema and become members of the body of Christ.

Perhaps more importantly, the children of families coming to St. Charles 10Cine' church will have

programming to meet their needs in the form of a learning nursery and junior church. Teens will also enjoy time when they can relate to God and his truth.

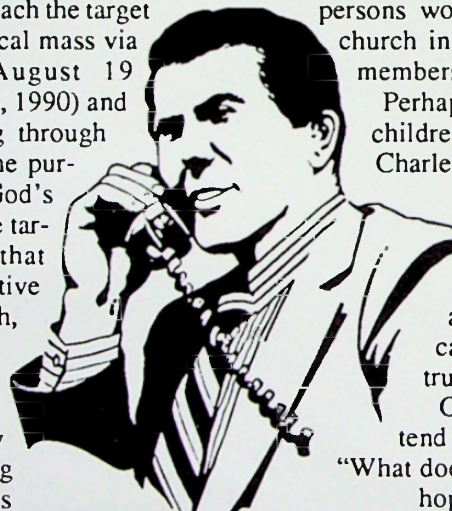
Of course, people who attend will be asking all the time, "What does this mean to me?" We hope to answer by pointing them to a relationship with Christ as our goal.

Perhaps this can be summed up in the words of our Lord as he spoke to religious leaders in his day: "You study the Scriptures, because you think that in them you will find eternal life. And these very Scriptures speak about me! Yet you are not willing to come to me in order to have life" (John 5:39, 40, GNB). People want to know and experience Jesus in their lives; they just need to have someone show them the way.

Want to know more about the new church planting? Be there October 28. It happens at the intersection of Missouri State Route 94 and Pralle Road in St. Charles, Missouri.

In this Issue . . .

Lifestyle and biblical truth are major



Telemarketing involves the phoning of homes in the ministry area and asking them if they go to church.

concerns in our pages. Everyone has questions about careers, intimacy, healing, laughter, and how life is impacted by such.

We lead off with Pastor John Railton's concepts of vocation. Next comes Debbie Schmidlapp's call for intimacy, in spite of the mobility of our society. Pastor Mike Brown's short piece on laughter helps you read through Pastor James Mattison's ideas on healing.

Bible truth always finds a place in THE HERALD. In this issue we examine again the principle of conditional immortality, raise questions about preexistence and predestination, discuss the diety of Jesus and demonism. There is even an article on cults by Marsha Behrens.

Pastor Gordon Landry also examines the implications of Bible prophecy on our lives today.

My prayer is that you will be enriched through the reading of this issue.

Needy People . . .

Think about it. Within a few blocks of where you are now there are needy people. In this year of the U.S. Census special care has been taken to ferret them out.

What can you do about needy people? What can the church do to help them?

First of all, make a list. Here is a sample of ministry possibilities to:

- The deaf
- Prisoners

- Orphans
- Widows
- Substance abusers
- Broken families, battered women
- The hungry, homeless, and poor
- Do crisis counseling
- Shut-ins and terminally ill
- AIDS victims
- The elderly
- The grieving
- Child abusers or their victims
- Sexual addictions
- Pregnant teenagers
- Runaways

Now read the account of the final judgment of Christ: "The righteous will then answer him, 'When, Lord, did we ever see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we ever see you a stranger and welcome you in our homes, or naked and clothe you? When did we ever see you sick or in prison, and visit you?' The King will reply, 'I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me!'" (Matt. 25:37-40, GNB).

Then pray that God will show you one person today for whom you can minister in the name of Jesus. Expect to act on the answer!

You have just begun a special ministry Christ called you to accomplish. God bless you!

THE

Restitution Herald

Vol. 79 April/May/1990 No. 4

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 six times a year.

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 (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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In England: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 16 Parsley Close, Pinefields, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England MK 77 DA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS
 One Year, \$12 [£10]
 Two Years, \$21 [£18]
 Three years, \$30 [£27]
 [English price in brackets]

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

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TAKE THIS JOB AND LOVE IT



Work is not something we do apart from God. It is not beneath God's dignity or concern.

MILLIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN go to work every day without seeing the slightest connection between what they do all day long and what God wants done in the world. Many put in 8-, 10-, or 12-hour days thinking God doesn't notice, much less care what they're doing. Others are bored by their work, thinking it has no significance at all. Too many have a dim view of, and even despise, their occupation, employer, and work place. There are Christians who feel they can't maintain Christian integrity and ethics in the work place so they split or separate their work world from their faith. This is tragic!

Our work, that which we do most of the time, really does matter to God. Work is not something we do apart from God. It is not beneath God's dignity or concern. It is not a necessary evil. It is not something we do during the week only so we can have time off on the weekend. Work is a major part of human life that God understands, intends, teaches concerning, and takes very seriously.

Doug Sherman and William Hendricks co-authored a book entitled, *Your Work Matters To God*, which well addresses this topic and would be beneficial for any who wrestle with these issues. I'd like to share three of the

Biblical principles which are expounded upon in this book.

First of all, God himself is a worker. His first appearance in the Scriptures presents him as working, creating the heavens and earth. Genesis 2 tells us on the seventh day of creation he "finished the work" and "rested from all his work." Don't assume that this means he hasn't worked a day in his life since. It means he rested from his work of creation.

In John 5:17 Jesus said, "My Father is always at his work." Passages such as Psalm 111, Psalm 104:10-30, and Deuteronomy 11:1-7 identify some of the ongoing workings of God. He may have rested from creating, but his ongoing work is that of sustaining his creation. He has not simply created the world and then turned his back. Some might say he's allowed it to go to pot, but in all honesty that is man's influence on the world, not God's. God sustains, provides for his creation. He is working to bring about his plans for man. He is himself a worker.

Secondly, he has created people to be workers. After all, we are created in his image, and that's a pretty good hint that we should be workers as well. In the beginning God put Adam in the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it. He was to rule over the garden, the animals, the entire earth. This was not a 52-week all-expenses-paid vacation.

When we think of the Ten Commandments we're usually reminded that man was to have a day off for rest. But let's also notice God's expectation that man work the rest of the week.

Ecclesiastes 5:18, 19 should give us a fairly good feeling about our work. "Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of his life God has given him—for this is his lot. Moreover, when God gives any man wealth



How BUSY ARE YOU?

BY PASTOR RICHARD YOUNG

and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God.”

Thirdly, God views people as his co-workers. This is no doubt best understood when we think of the work of the church, or evangelism, or other spiritual work. However, man’s partnership with God is not limited to religious careers. Remember God created the earth and the animals but in Genesis he made man responsible to subdue the earth and to rule over the animals. He set up the Garden of Eden but told man to dress it and keep it. We are co-workers with God in sustaining this great creation.

Through our work we serve people’s needs, we meet our own needs, we meet our family’s needs, we’re able to share with others, and support the less fortunate. This is true of every imaginable profession or career, except those which are illegal, immoral, or illegitimate.

Take a moment to again read the preceding paragraph. Think about your own work. Brainstorm as to how you serve people’s needs, your own needs, your family’s needs and those of the less fortunate. Realize you’re a co-worker with God, helping to sustain his creation. Realize God does notice your work. He does care what you do. It’s his good pleasure to provide satisfaction in your labor, and that we would enjoy whatever wealth and possessions he gives us. Our work really does matter to God!

THAT THE WORD “busy” appears only six times in the New International Version of the Bible (twice in the KJV) ought to be a sufficient comment of our prolific use of the word. In these few occurrences, the word is used to describe God’s people as a whole only once.

On August 29, 520 B.C., Haggai delivered the Word of the Lord to the people who had returned to Jerusalem from captivity in Babylon. “Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on your clothes, but are never warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it” (Hag. 1:5, 6, NIV). Does this sound familiar? The reason the people to whom Haggai preached could never seem to get ahead is given in Haggai 1:9, NIV, “‘You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?’ declares the LORD Almighty. **Because of my house, which remains in ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house!**” (My emphasis.)

Certainly matters of the home are not to be neglected. Paul tells Titus to command the older women in the congregation to train the younger women “to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and

pure, to be busy at home” (Titus 2:4, 5, NIV). Family has always been the second priority for the people of God. First priority, however, is always God. The people’s sin in Haggai’s day was that they had placed themselves before God. God did not want them to be without adequate shelter. The people, however, were pouring their resources into themselves, and leaving the Temple in ruins; they were neglecting God to care for their own interests.

Almost every conversation we have includes how busy we are. But with what are we busy? Are we busy to the point that we neglect the things of God, reading his Word, caring for his church (the people, not the building), discharging the duties of our areas of service within our congregation? How does our being busy affect our family responsibilities? How often do my children go without the attention they need because “I am busy”? The reason we feel that we just can’t seem to catch up or get ahead, as in the days of Haggai, is God’s way of calling attention to the fact that we are busy with the unimportant in his eyes. God never wills that we be too busy for him or for our families. God never wills that we be so busy with our family that we do not have time for him.

Surely it’s time God’s people reevaluate this matter of being busy.

O GOD, FORGIVE US when our being busy means that we are neglecting you, our families, or your church. Lead us to restore your priorities to our lives, that we might know the wholeness which comes to our earthly relationships when we maintain a right relationship with you. This I pray through your Son, our Lord Jesus. Amen.

ON INTIMACY



AFTER READING MY ARTICLE on loving in the January issue of THE RESTITUTION HERALD a friend had questioned my comment on intimacy. I'd written that I think God wants us to be intimate with everyone. Perhaps there is a need to clarify and consider the idea of intimacy. I do believe what I said and at the same time I personally struggle with it. Working in Youth With A Mission, I lived a very mobile lifestyle. I often wonder if the time and energy put into close relationships is worth it. I sometimes think I experience too many good-byes and not enough hellos. When the good-byes become tiresome, my initial longing is to not invest myself in any new people. This will save the pain of departure later on. However, by holding back I would be resisting one of the very things I was created for. Intimacy takes effort. But we must believe it's worth it.

In thinking about all this, it occurred to me that many other people must identify with what I'm feeling. Mobility is the American way. Job transfers and business trips keep our culture on the move and lacking in the time for the nurturing of fulfilling relationships.

However, this constant shifting is not the only hindrance to the reaching of our goal. In this society the value of relationship is played down. Even those people who do not move find

BY DEBBIE SCHMIDLAPP

ways to busy themselves with never-ending projects which crowd people out. Those who do find time for visiting may suffer from a case of pride which can also alienate them from friends. Lastly, many people's perception of intimacy has been twisted. As a result, many fear the thought of getting "too close."

What can be done? Has closeness been lost forever in the irreversible progress of our culture? Not for Christians. We can progress against the system. There is hope. Jesus prayed for all believers, that we may be one as he and his Father are one. (John 17:21.) That's pretty close! Our responsibility in seeing this come about is to take the initiative and make ourselves easy to relate to. Sin brings separation. Jesus never sinned. He is one with his Father. Brothers and sisters, rid yourselves of all sin so that we might be one together!

MOBILITY: There is no sin in living a

We must slow down and allow the Holy Spirit to be our guide as to what things actually do need to be done.

mobile lifestyle. The problem arises when we harden our hearts and become independent as we travel from place to place. We need each other. Acknowledge that no matter how short-lived a friendship may be, it is not in vain. We cannot leave a friendship being unchanged. Each person involved has been affected and will therefore take part of that relationship on in life with him.

Distance does not have to mean the end of a relationship either. Through calls, letters, and visits we continue to build on our understanding

How can I find intimacy? Mobility is the American way. Job transfers and business trips keep our culture on the move and lacking in the time for the nurturing of fulfilling relationships.

of that person. Proverbs 25:25 tells us that news from a distant land is like cold water to a weary soul. How true. Although we would enjoy the daily company of that person, the rare times of getting to hear from him may become like precious treasure.

TOO BUSY: Being busy is not a sin. But when our projects become more important than those around us, we begin to miss the whole point of our existence. We all have things we enjoy doing and accomplishing, but none will ever bring the reward that comes from the time put into a friend. There will always be more projects. In fact, the more you do, the more you

Making ourselves easy to relate to means laying down any facades about who we are and allowing them to do the same. Yet, they remain accepted and understood.

will find to do. But be careful! While you are running to end the never ending, those priceless times with aging people are passing.

We must slow down and allow the Holy Spirit to be our guide as to what things actually do need to be done. It is okay to leave some of those undone things undone! From the time of creation in the Garden of Eden, relationships have been God's priority and therefore should be our central focus.

PRIDE: Some of us, and let's be honest, think we have the right to choose who we will relate to. Some people simply are not attractive to us. So the easiest thing would be to ignore them and go on to find someone we really like. Pride IS sin. God put those people in our paths

for a reason. How dare we be so arrogant as to push on past them looking for someone that better suits our fancy. They may be very different, but God made them that way and there is much to be learned from those differences. God, being vast, could not show himself to us fully through one single source. He manifests his character in many ways in many people. Each individual has the potential to add another piece to our concept of our Creator.

Making ourselves easy to relate to means laying down any facades about who we are and allowing them to do the same. Yet, they remain accepted and understood.

TWISTED PERCEPTION: When it comes to wrong behavior, there are those who just don't know any better. We can't be blamed for sin if we don't know any better. But we must learn! We have to untwist that perception of intimacy that society has been feeding us for too long. Intimacy is not just sex and romance. It is not even just for married couples. It is a matter of relating in purity and openness. The more we know about someone, the closer we become. We cannot know them, though, if honesty does not rule. Intimacy does not mean exclusion. To put our full attention and affection on one person will only cause pressure on him rather than blessing him. By becoming exclusive we are unrealistically expecting one human being to be our all in all. God and God alone is capable of doing that! So it is very important that we continue to develop closeness with everyone that God brings our way. In this we gain an abundant life of giving and receiving fully.

Our completeness of joy and satisfaction will only come as we do what the Lord asks. His request for relationships is not in punishment. It was intended to make us whole. Praise him!

*"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. 11:33.)*

THE ISRAEL OF GOD

BY PASTOR FRANCIS E. BURNETT

ONE OF THE MYSTERIES pertaining to God is his patience. Since all the world has been decreed by our God to be guilty and worthy of death, why did God provide a way of escape? And why does he allow us to go on and on in our foolish ways?

This brings us to our presentation of the nation of Israel which was chosen of God for himself. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise" (Isa. 43:21). The people were the descendants of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. Many persons who profess to know Jesus Christ and are believers in the true and living God have a difficult time understanding the teachings concerning Israel. One Bible verse that has created misunderstanding and a wrong application is found in Galatians 6:16: "As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." The New English Bible ends the verse with these words, "and upon the whole Israel of God."

In studying the Bible, there are basic things that must be considered. In regard to Israel, there are at least two of those. Paul the Apostle was an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin. He was very aware of Israel's failure to serve God as it had been commanded. Paul went to the "Jew first," then to the Gentile. He was burdened for that nation. We read, "I could wish that I were condemned—cut off from Christ—for the sake of my Jewish brothers, my human relatives. They are the people of Israel. God's sonship, glory, agreements, law, worship, and promises belong to them. They have the family roots" (Rom. 9:3-5a, Simple English Bible).

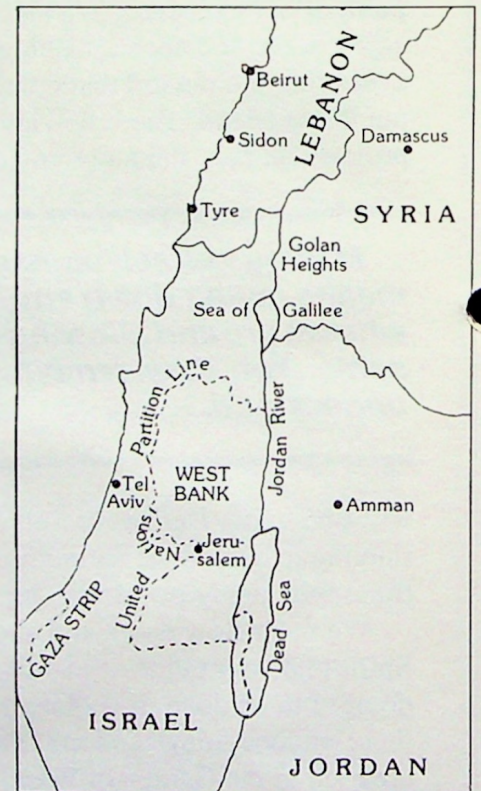
The second item in relation to Israel is the fact verified by many scriptures that they as a people and nation were chosen by

the Lord God of heaven to be his. Let the many scriptures be a testimony that Israel is a special nation and is God's chosen. God told Moses, "Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel is my son, even my firstborn" (Ex 4:22). "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).

Before considering other scriptures, two things from God should be noted. "My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips" (Psa. 89:34, NASB). An early warning of God, "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you" (Deut. 4:2, NASB). This same message is quoted in Revelation 22:18, 19. This makes it imperative that we be very careful as to what we do with the promises and statements that God has made.

We continue with other statements of God about Israel. "Thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth" (Deut. 14:2). "The LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure" (Psa. 135:4). "The LORD's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye" (Deut. 32:9, 10). "The LORD will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance" (Psa. 94:14). "But Zion said, The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have

compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet I will not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me" (Isa. 49:14-16). "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he;



I am the first, I also am the last" (Isa. 48:12).

The preceding scriptures are not nearly all that could be studied on Israel's relationship to God. They do, however, point out that Israel was much more than just a nation. The message of this article gives a good foundation for continuing into the next. In the next article, the background and history of Israel will be examined up to the present time.

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Picture this: Professional clowns dressed like doctors with white coats and roller skates, roaming the rooms of a metropolitan hospital in New York City, pulling funny pranks with the patients. One clown says, "Let's draw blood" as he produces a red crayon and sketch pad. The patient's face suddenly brightens up.

Laughter is being used more and more in hospitals to help patients to be healed, according to the December, 1988, issue of American Health magazine. In an article, "Laughter Is the Best Defense," it's reported that laughter manipulates certain immune boosters, such as interleukin-2, to express themselves. The result is that laughter empowers the immune system to fight illnesses so as to produce higher rates of antibodies.

This new medical discovery, quite interestingly, is not new as far as the Scriptures are concerned. Way back in the Old Testament, wise King Solomon said, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit drieth the bones" (Prov. 17:22). This verse seems to confirm what medical experts are just now finding out—that not only does laughter provide emotional release from mental stress, but "like a medicine" it is healthy in a physical way, too. God's Word is proven once again!

BY
PASTOR
MICHAEL
BROWN

WHY I'M NOT A UNITARIAN!

BY PASTOR JAMES GRAHAM

I AM BECOMING a bit paranoid concerning labels. You know, the type of label we accept or give to describe our various persuasions. Republican or Democrat . . . Conservative or Liberal. About the time I choose one, someone of the same label gets thrown into jail, says something that rivals an elected official for stupidity or Adolf Hitler for insanity. I'm finding out that religious labels are almost as bad. Being a fundamentalist or evangelical wasn't bad until Bakker, Roberts, Swaggart and Company let their true colors be seen. So I propose a new movement. A movement to be associated with no label and no heritage. To be judged only in light of God's Word and not by tradition, orthodoxy or any other "ism" around today.

This would allow us a new sense of freedom in looking at the Word. We could read scripture and not feel the pres-

The self proclaimed "Unitarians" in our world deny some of the basic truths of the Word.

sure of Calvin, Luther, Arminias, Arias or Athanasias looking over our shoulders. We would simply be motivated to find truth. This would make us non-traditionalists. With this as a motivation, let me address an issue that has long been on my mind.

I was recently called a "Unitarian" and grew up hearing members of our church call themselves "Unitarians" I have come to the conclusion that this does not best describe what I believe. In addition to this, I don't want to be called a "Unitarian"! The self proclaimed "Unitarians" in our world deny some of the basic truths of the Word. Right across the street from the church I pastor is the

Unitarian Universalist Church. Now these people believe that Jesus was just a man. They deny that he is the Christ, the anointed one. While good, in their belief system, he would occupy the same pew in history as Albert Einstein, Dag Hammarskjold, John F. Kennedy or Martin Luther King. They are truly "Unitarian." Or take the Jehovah Witnesses. Now these "Unitarians" believe that Jesus was an archangel in the Old Testament. I really don't appreciate being lumped with such manipulators of the word.

Labels always fall short. Tell me what label would best describe the following texts:

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible. . . . He is before all things. . . . For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him" (Col. 1:15-19).

or

"That they may know the mystery of God, namely Christ" (Col. 2:2).

or

"Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Phil. 2:6, 7).

or

"Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—He denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father" (1 John 2:22, 23).

or

"The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word" (Heb. 1:3).

or

"I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does....

Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgement to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him" (John 5:19-23).

or

"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

or

"Why do you call me [Jesus] good? . . . No one is good, except God alone" (Mark 10:18).

or

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:1, 14).

or

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6).

or

"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).

If we attempt to apply a "Trinitarian" label to these texts, I guarantee some problems. If you apply "Unitarian" you find enough "difficult texts" to fill pages with involved explanation. Why not refuse to do either? What would be wrong with letting the Word of God stand on its own merit without our contrived efforts of illumination?

What would be wrong with being a people who are "non-traditionalist" in our view of the Word? Who desire to be biblical and not traditional in matters of faith and doctrine. While this may not please the pharisees of Christianity who are bent on passing judgment on the beliefs of others, I believe our Lord would find it pleasing.

April 11, 1990

An Open Letter to Parents,

Greetings in the Name of Him who gave you life . . . and children. I hope this letter finds your family well and enjoying the gift we call spring.

With the new season comes a whole new set of demands on your time—demands that come from the work place, from home- or lawn-care projects, and from your need to get away and relax. All these things exert their own pressure, with the loudest squeaker winning our attention.

I write today to get in an early squawk on behalf of your children. This spring and summer hold much in the way of promise for your youth and it is promise that cannot be recaptured next year. I'd like to suggest several things that can help as you seek to "train up your child in the way he should go."

The first site of training is, of course, your home. What activities can you put on your summer calendar right now that will encourage your children's growth. Maybe you could allow each child to plan his own special day with you. Set aside a day per child and honor him with your time. Pick a day soon or there won't be any left.

If the home is the primary tool in training children, the community of believers is certainly a vital second. How could you encourage your children's participation in youth meetings, camps, and special activities? I'm not speaking of forcing their attendance, but of encouraging it. I grieve over learning opportunities that were lost simply because there was no transportation provided. It is none too early to begin working together with other adults to raise funds and organize transportation to this summer's camps. As the youth see your interest they will often reward you with decisions to attend the event.

One final thing, please weigh carefully your children's schedule. It is amazing for me to see how much busier high schoolers (and junior highers for that matter) have become in the fourteen short years since I graduated. If they participate in all the activities the school and community have to offer you can forget much participation in family or church . . . there simply won't be enough time. It may be appropriate for you to limit the number of these outside activities while allowing them to choose which activities will fill that number. If we aren't careful, your regret that "more of these activities weren't even offered in my day" will be replaced with their regret that "I didn't spend any time with my family in my day."

May the source of your children also be the source of the wisdom and love required to raise them.

For Your Children,

Pastor Bob Alcumbrack.

HEALING IN THE ATON

JESUS BORE both our sins and our sicknesses, according to Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:17; and 1 Peter 2:24.

Isaiah said, "Surely he hath borne our griefs [Heb., disease, sickness], and carried our sorrows [grief, pain, sorrow]; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed [Heb., *raphah*—physical healing]."

Jesus Bore Our Griefs (Sicknesses)

Check out this word "grief." It means, according to Strong, "malady," "anxiety," and "calamity." It is translated "disease," "grief(s)," and "sick(ness)." Here are a few examples:

2 Kings 8:8, 9: "Shall I recover of this *disease*?"

2 Chronicles 16:12: "And Asa . . . was diseased in his feet, until his *disease* was exceeding great: yet in his *disease* he sought not to the LORD, but to the physicians."

Deuteronomy 7:15: "And the LORD will take away from thee all *sickness*, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt . . . upon thee."

2 Kings 13:14: "Elisha was fallen sick of his *sickness* whereof he died."

Conclusion: Jesus bore our "griefs," or *sicknesses*, *griefs*, and *diseases* in addition to being wounded for our transgressions and dying for our sins. Isaiah 53:4 teaches that Jesus bore both our sins and our sicknesses.

Jesus Carried Our Sorrows (Pains)

Check out this word "sorrows." It means anguish or (fig.) affliction. It is translated "grief," "pain," "sorrow." Here are a few examples:

2 Chronicles 6:29: In Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple, he pleaded to God, "When every one shall know his own sore and his own *grief*, and shall spread forth his hands in this house," hear and forgive.

Psalms 38:17: "My *sorrow* is continually before me."

Job 33:19: "He is chastened also with *pain* upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong *pain*."

Conclusion: Jesus died for our sins, sicknesses, pains, and griefs. He died for the total man and his troubles. He shed his blood for our sins. He gave his body for our sicknesses. In the New Testament James tells us how to approach God for bodily healing.

With His Stripes We Are Healed (1 Pet. 2:24)

This verse from Isaiah 53:5 is quoted by Peter in 1 Peter 2:24. The word "healed" is the Greek word *iaomai* and means

"to cure." It is translated "heal," "make whole," and in the scores of places it is found in the New Testament, it always means physical healing. Notice a few:

Luke 9:2: Jesus sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

John 4:47: The nobleman besought Jesus to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

Luke 6:17: A great multitude came to hear Jesus and to be healed of their diseases.

Luke 5:17: "And the power of the Lord was present to heal them."

Acts 3:11: "Man which was healed held Peter and John."

Acts 10:38: "Healing all that were oppressed of the devil."

Conclusion: Because Jesus bore that terrible Roman beating for our bodily ills, we can call upon him to heal us of our maladies and infirmities.

Matthew 8:17

Matthew quoted Isaiah 53:4 and 5. Begin with verse 16: "When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Notice how Matthew translates this. Isaiah said, "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows." Matthew said, "Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

Matthew, inspired of God, rightly understood the Hebrew and Greek words here. He knew "griefs" meant maladies, anxiety, and calamity, as Strong's Concordance brings out by translating it "disease," "grief," and "sickness." Notice Matthew understood Isaiah's word "sorrows" to mean *sicknesses*. If Matthew is to be trusted, this is correct. All deep Hebrew and Greek scholars bear out these meanings.

Delitzsch, without question the greatest Hebrew scholar in Germany, says regarding Isaiah 53:4, "Freely but faithfully does the Gospel of Matthew translate this text, 'Himself took our infirmities and carried our sicknesses.' The help which Jesus rendered in all kinds of bodily sickness is taken in Matthew to be a fulfillment of what in Isaiah is prophesied of the Servant of Jehovah. The Hebrew verbs of the text, when used of sin, signify to assume as a heavy burden and bear away the guilt of sin, as one's own; that is, to bear sin mediatorially in order to atone for it. But here, where not our sins, but our sicknesses and pains are the object, the mediatorial sense remains the same.

"It is not meant that the Servant of Jehovah merely entered into the fellowship of our sufferings, but that He took upon Himself the sufferings that we had to bear, and deserved to

bear; and, therefore, He not only bore them away, but also in His own person endured them in order to discharge us from them. Now when one takes sufferings upon himself which another had to bear, and does this, not merely in fellowship with him, but in his stead, we call it Substitution."

Peter believed the same things, that Jesus died for our diseases as well as our sins, as we have seen. The fact is, Jesus died for the total mortal man—body, soul, and spirit (1 Thes. 5:23). He died for our anxieties, our griefs, our pains, our sin and guilt, our brokenheartedness, and our diseases—for all our infirmities. There is healing of the whole man in Jesus' atonement.

Some say this *was fulfilled* in the days of Jesus and the apostles and is no longer available today. This is a weak argument and not true, for the aorist tense of the verb is also used of future events as well as for the past—see Isaiah 42:1-4; Luke 4:17-21; compare Isaiah 61:1, 2.

James Shows the Way for Our Healing

Some evangelists today appear to try to "show off" in healing services, that they are some great one. However, it is the power of God and of Christ that performs the healing, AND THAT THROUGH OUR FAITH. James shows us the right and biblical way to go about asking for God's healing. He said,

"Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

"And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed [same word as in 1 Peter 2:24, meaning physical healing]. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (Jas. 5:14-16).

What blessing churches and individuals can receive when in faith James' words are obeyed. What blessing is lost by not applying them. We can attest, personally, to the power in such prayers.

The Prayer of Faith

James said it is the prayer of faith that will save the sick. Jesus said the same thing. Notice these verses:

Matthew 9:22: "Thy faith hath made thee whole."

Matthew 9:29: "According to your faith be it unto you."

Acts 3:16: "His name through faith in his name hath made this man whole."

Hebrews 11:11: "Through faith Sara herself received strength to conceive seed."

Acts 14:9: "Perceiving that he had faith to be healed."

Matthew 21:22: "All things, whatsoever ye shall ask in

prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

John 15:7: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

Matthew 18:19: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

James 5:16: "Pray for one another, that ye may be healed."

James 4:2: "Ye have not, because ye ask not."

If It Be Thy Will

We have seen that it *is* God's will to heal those who believe. To pray that we be healed if it is God's will is not a prayer of faith, but shows lack of understanding of God's already-made provision. John, who recorded Jesus' words "Not my will, but thine be done," also recorded, "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (15:7). According to certain conditions, then, we can ask according to our will, and our prayers will be answered. Naturally, all true Christians want God's will to be done. And it is already God's will for us to pray to him through Christ for forgiveness and healing.

Conclusion

Scripturally, Christians have the opportunity to ask God through Christ not only for forgiveness, but also for healing. If one is sick, he is to call the elders of the church and ask them to pray for him in the name of the Lord and anoint him. Such prayers are to be prayers of faith.

Christ died to save all sinners. But are all sinners saved? No, because they do not meet the conditions. Dr. T. J. McCrossan remarks, "It is just the same with bodily healing. Every saint has a blood-bought right to be healed, but thousands do not know that they must exercise the very same appropriating faith in the bruised body of Christ for their healing as they formerly exercised in His shed blood for their salvation."

Through Jesus' blood we may have forgiveness of our sins. Through his bruised body (his stripes) we may have healing. Every saint, when sick, should at once call to his aid the elders of the church. Just as direct a command is given the elders, that they should pray over the sick person, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. "The prayer of faith shall save the sick."

Are you willing to follow this God-given imperative?

Both our salvation and our healing depend on our faith. The way has already been provided. Many in Jesus' day had this kind of faith. We can have the same faith today and expect the same results. You can pray the prayer of faith.

BY JAMES MATTISON

CHANGING SOCIETY?

BY PASTOR GORDON LANDRY

An Apology

I apologize to Brother Jim Mattison for misunderstanding his interpretation of Ezekiel 38 and 39 (see last issue). He indicated in a letter to me that he still sees Russia pictured there, whereas he sees the Assyrian in other end-time prophecies.

Your Opinion, Please

You may agree or disagree with this section. I would be interested in hearing your thoughts on the matter.

Never did Jesus and/or the apostles try to change society. (Am I wrong in this?) Never did they petition that changes be made in what the Romans or the Jews morally allowed. Never did they join forces with those who embraced wrong doctrines so as to bring righteousness to the nation. Even at Ephesus, where the multitudes for "about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians" (Acts 19:34), the reason for their clamor was not because Paul and others spoke against Diana (v. 37)—though they did preach against idolatry in general (v. 26)—but because they spoke for Christ. Jesus and his apostles sought to rescue men and women from the world, not to change the world for them.

"I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev. 18:4). Though this certainly refers to the Babylon of the prophecy, can it not by extension indicate the worldly environs of society itself?

Yet you may say, "But if we don't do something to stop pornography and drugs and abortion and the breakup of marriages and evil in government and

racism and myriads of other societal problems, we're not doing our duty." Oh? What is our duty, really? To the man who wanted to go and bury his father before following Jesus, the Lord said, "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:60).

We do not sanction the wickedness in society, but we must realize that, despite all efforts to the contrary, "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:13). We must warn our people of these dangers, but we are not called to pull the world out of the world. Paul warned against "the works of the flesh" in Galatians 5:19-21, even cautioning that "they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." But, as far as this writer knows, he never marched in a parade denouncing the evils of his day; he never carried a placard exposing injustices; he never boycotted a business he didn't like. Indeed, he said, "Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake" (1 Cor. 10:27ff). He could have boycotted the shambles, for often food was sold there which had been offered to idols.

Note a case in point. Anita Bryant, whom I admired at the time for what she was doing, stirred up such a commotion in her attacks against the homosexual community that homosexuals "came out of the closet" and now are such a viable political force that even mayors of large cities parade with them in special "gay-rights" parades.

Since the American Family Association (AFA) has been advocating and promoting boycotts against television networks which broadcast (and advertisers that sponsor) programs which allow sex

and violence, I have noticed that in prime-time network shows the language has gotten worse and there has been no lessening in gratuitous sex, though AFA says otherwise.

Indeed, it seems to me that there is a conspiracy among television writers to increase the doses of foul language, perhaps in an attempt to broaden the spectrum for Christians to attack. The usually mild-mannered Bob Newhart show recently aired bad language that, to my knowledge, had never been used on that show before. Let's face it: "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8). We Christians needn't think we'll ever best any worldly person in an argument on morals. One atheist, calling in to a talk radio program recently, quoted from the story of Lot and his two unmarried daughters, by whom he fathered children when in a drunken state, and informed the host of the show that he didn't want his children reading such pornography—such "trash." The Song of Solomon has fueled attempts to have the Scriptures banned as being flagrantly pornographic.

"God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world," after all; "but that the world through him might be saved. . . . This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:17-19). "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world" (John 12:47).

There is no need for Christians to judge the world; the world is already condemned because it prefers darkness to light. We are not called to shove aside the darkness, but to bring individuals to the light of salvation through Jesus Christ.

(Continued on page 27)



BOOK REVIEW

UNTIL

THE COMING OF MESSIAH AND HIS KINGDOM

By Robert Shank

Westcott Publishers
P.O. Box 803, Springfield, MO 65801
\$11.95 (paperback, 517 pp.)

THE MESSAGE on the back cover reads:

"In a comprehensive survey of the prophetic Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments, the author demonstrates that fulfillment of God's redemptive purpose of Israel, the Church, and the nations awaits the coming of Messiah and his world kingdom, soon to appear on earth as the consummation of all history past and the prelude to the ultimate realization of the kingdom of God in its eternal dimension in the new heaven and earth."

"The precise correlation of the Messianic thesis of Old Testament prophecy and the eschatology of the New Testament is observed in depth. The significance of the nation of Israel today, the Arab-Israel confrontation and explosive Middle East, and the entire contemporary world scene is examined in the light of the total prophetic disclosure of the Bible. Attention is focused on the whole biblical panorama of end-time events and the accelerating clash of ideologies, nations, and blocs in the rush to Armageddon and judgment at the coming of Messiah."

"Scholarly and comprehensive, but written for all thoughtful readers of the Bible. Essential reading for all who in these turbulent final days of the age look with faith and hope to the coming of Messiah and the promised golden age for Israel, the Church, and the world, and the time of the great gathering of the nations into the everlasting kingdom of God."

Until is one of the most comprehensive books on Bible prophecy that this reviewer has read.

CHAPTERS

The Waiting King	Israel's Seventy Weeks
The House Left Desolate	The Conflict of the Ages
Jerusalem, City of the Great King	Armageddon
Israel, Indestructible Nation	Thy Kingdom Come
The Times of the Gentiles	Until the Day Dawns
	Waiting for the King

APPENDICES

- Was Pentecost the Coming of the Kingdom?
- The Rhetorical Mode of the Prophets
- The Time Frame of the Olivet Prophecy
- The Chronological Structure of the Revelation
- Revelation Twenty
- The Church and Premillennialism (history of the doctrine from the days of the apostles)

By Hollis Partlowe

UNTIL is a comprehensive survey of what the Bible teaches about the second coming of Christ in power and judgment and the whole area of eschatology. Nearly all readers of the THE RESTITUTION HERALD will appreciate Dr. Shank's thoroughness and keen insight into things to come.

This book was written not only for theologians and scholars, but for all readers of the Bible who are "looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13). All who seek to be found faithful dare not neglect the doctrine of the second coming of Christ, the most prominent doctrine of the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3).

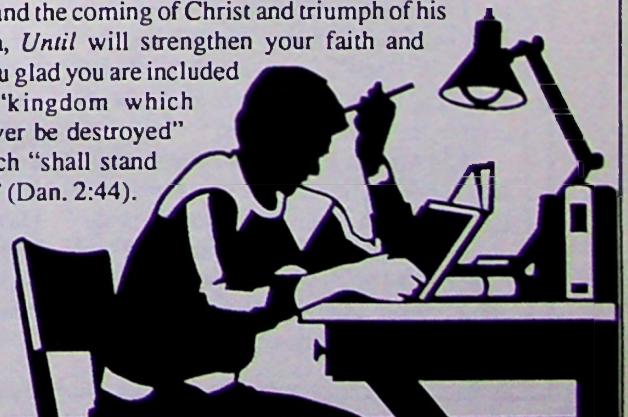
"My purpose," Dr. Shank writes, "was to survey the whole spectrum of the Messianic kingdom thesis of the Bible. My starting point was the eschatological definitions of Jesus and the apostles, as recorded in the Gospels and the Acts. Proceeding from their definition, I surveyed the Old Testament antecedents—Moses and the prophets—and the prophetic passages of the New Testament Epistles and the Revelation. The survey, I believe, has defined categorically the precise correlation of the Messianic thesis of Old Testament prophecy and the eschatology of the New Testament. . . ."

"Since the time of Augustine, in the main the church has failed to perceive the eschatological definitions of Jesus and the apostles and has been grossly confused about most of the prophetic disclosures of the Bible. It has been generally assumed that the church has totally and finally supplanted Israel in the redemptive economy of God, and the Old Testament prophecies of the restoration and glory of Israel have been interpreted allegorically, as finding their fulfillment in the church in Spiritual blessings and triumphs here in the present age. . . . Such assumption is without warrant in the Scriptures" (p. 9).

Dr. Shank admonishes his readers to "come to the Bible as auditors rather than as editors" (p. 11).

The roles of Israel and the church in redemptive history and prophecy and the full spectrum of Bible prophecy of the coming of Christ and the triumph of his kingdom are surveyed in eleven chapters, culminating in the fitting chapter, "Waiting for the King."

In these turbulent days, as the world rushes toward Armageddon and the coming of Christ and triumph of his kingdom, *Until* will strengthen your faith and make you glad you are included in the "kingdom which shall never be destroyed" and which "shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).



PREEXISTENCE AND PREDE

THE BELIEF of many churchgoers is that Jesus had a literal pre-existence, that is, he existed as a distinct person in heaven prior to his birth in Bethlehem. A question which any searching Christian must ask himself is, "Is this true?" Does the Bible teach that Jesus had a personal conscious existence in heaven prior to his birth? Let us look at some of the Biblical texts which speak of Christ's existence before his birth and see what they say.

In the first epistle of Peter chapter one and verse 20 we read that Jesus was "chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake." According to Peter, Jesus was chosen before the creation of the world. The New American Standard Version renders it "foreknown, before the foundation of the world." The Greek word translated "chosen" or "foreknown" is *proginosko* and it means "to know before." From it we get our word prognosis, a medical term which means to foretell the course of a disease by the symptoms.

In this letter, Peter states that God chose or knew Jesus before the world was even created. At first glance this would suggest that Jesus did, in fact, have an existence prior to his birth. But before we jump to a quick conclusion, let's look a little closer. Earlier in the same chapter (1 Pet. 1:1, 2) the author states that he is writing to God's elect who are scattered abroad and who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge (prognosis) of God. What we have Peter saying here is that the believers were chosen beforehand by God. In Peter's understanding, both Jesus and Christians were foreknown or chosen beforehand of God.

The Apostle Paul takes Peter's statement about believers one step further in Ephesians 1:4 where he states, "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight." Paul uses the phrase *pro kat'abolos kosmou* to describe God's fore-

knowledge of believers before the creation of the world. A careful comparison between this text and the one in 1 Peter 1:20 shows that they are identical phrases. In other words, Paul says that believers are chosen before the creation of the world, just as Peter says that Christ was chosen before the creation of the world.

The impact of this comparison of texts should be clear. If 1 Peter 1:20 is made to prove that Jesus had a personal preexistence in heaven prior to his birth, then it must mean that believers also have a personal preexistence in heaven prior to our births. This, then, creates all sorts of problems for us because nowhere in the Bible is it taught that human beings have a conscious, heavenly preexistence and few would believe it. A far more satisfactory answer would be that to be foreknown of God before the creation of the world does not mean a personal, heavenly pre-existence.

To find a satisfactory answer, let's look at some places which speak of God's foreknowledge. In Jeremiah 1:5 we are told that the prophet had been set apart by God and appointed as a prophet

In Peter's understanding, both Jesus and Christians were foreknown or chosen beforehand of God.

before he was born. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." God had a plan for Jeremiah's life before he was ever conceived. In Psalm 139:16 we are told that God ordained all the days of David's life before they came to be. God had an important plan for David and it was certain that the plan would be accomplished through David.

Throughout the Old Testament there

are countless promises of children not yet born who would one day come to greatness. Genesis 3:15 promises that a particular offspring of the woman would crush the serpent of the Garden of Eden. In Genesis 15:4 Abraham, who was then in his 80's, was promised that God would raise up an heir from Abraham's own body. God kept his promise and Abraham became the father of Isaac when he was 100 years old. In 1 Chronicles 17:11-14 King David is promised that one of his descendents would become King and rule over the coming kingdom of God forever. In Isaiah 9:6, 7 Israel is promised that a child will be born who will govern the people and reign on David's throne and establish an everlasting kingdom. In Isaiah 49:1 the servant of the Lord speaks and says, "Before I was born the LORD called me."

In the New Testament in Luke 1 we have two examples of angels coming to announce the births of unique and important children. First, the angel of the Lord comes to Zechariah, the high priest, and promises that he and his barren wife will have a son who will be called John. This son would be great in the sight of the Lord as he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. This child would turn the hearts of many back to God as he prepared the way of the Lord. This child was John the Baptist.

Later in Luke 1 the angel Gabriel visits the young virgin named Mary and promises that she will give birth to a son who would be great and be called the Son of God. He would sit on the throne of David and rule over Israel forever. The child's name would be called Jesus.

In the Bible, then, we are shown that men such as Isaac, King David, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and Jesus Christ were all known or promised of God before they were born. Each of them was predestined of God to fulfill a role in God's plan to bring salvation to mankind. Each of them did fulfill the func-

tions to which God called them. What this proves is not their personal, heavenly preexistence, but more important, it proves that God is totally sovereign. He is in control. When God promises that something will happen, it happens. When God promises that a child will be born who will carry out a specific function, that child indeed is born and does carry out the task to which God has called him. God is powerful enough to carry out his promises and accomplish his plan.

The next question we need to address is, "How does God both make his

descendent of Eve who will crush the serpent, Satan. Jesus is the seed of Abraham through which all the world will be blessed. Jesus is the descendant of David who will rule over the kingdom of God forever. Jesus is the servant of God who will restore the kingdom to Israel. Jesus is the embodiment and ultimate fulfillment of God's plan to save man from sin.

God's plan for saving man through Jesus involves Jesus' sacrificial death. In Acts 2:23 Peter tells us that Jesus is the man who was delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God. This means that even the betrayal and crucifixion of Jesus was a part of God's plan to save mankind before the foundation of the world. Revelation 13:8 is even more explicit—it states that Jesus, as the lamb, was "slain from the creation of the world." This verse powerfully teaches the true nature of preexistence/predestination. Jesus was not literally crucified from the foundation of the world. That event did not happen until sometime around 30 A.D. in Jerusalem. However, in the plan and foreknowledge of God, the crucifixion of Jesus was a certainty long before it actually happened. When the Jews rejected Jesus and turned him over to the Roman authorities to be crucified it was all part of God's plan to save sinners. Of course, God's plan did not stop there. It also included the resurrection of Jesus, his ascension to heaven, and his coming to the earth in power and glory to usher in the kingdom of God. Christ's second coming is a part of the plan that is yet to be realized, yet it is a certainty because it has been promised to us through God's Word.

Just as God's plan and foreknowledge included the births and lives of such men as Abraham, Isaac, David, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and of course Jesus, it also includes us. The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:29, 30 that "Those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness

of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."

Why is it that God has called us to be a part of his plan, to be forgiven of our sins, and given eternal life in his kingdom? Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:11-13 that we were chosen "having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit." Here we see that we were called of God according to his plan which is worked out in conformity to his will. In other words, we are called to be part of God's family because he wants us. We are part of God's plan just as Abraham, Isaac, David, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and even Jesus are part of his plan. We answer God's call by believing the truth of the gospel of salvation.

Did Jesus exist before his birth in Bethlehem 2000 years ago? The answer is "Yes." However, Isaac also existed before his birth and so did David and so did Jeremiah and so did John the Baptist and so did you and I. Was this a literal existence in heaven as a separate and distinct personal being? No. Jesus no more preexisted as a separate personal being than did you or me. Jesus existed as a part of the salvation plan of God. Jesus' life and death and the salvation of man which comes as a result of his life and death have been a part of God's great plan since the creation of our world. The Bible is the revealing of that plan as it is worked out in the very real world in the lives of human beings, and that process continues today wherever and whenever the word of God is preached and men and women hear and believe the gospel.

We are part of God's plan just as Abraham, Isaac, David, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and even Jesus are part of his plan.

plan known to man and carry out that plan?" The answer is, through his Word. Notice again in Jeremiah 1:4 it is the Word of the Lord which comes to Jeremiah and speaks of his being set apart by the Lord. In Psalm 33:6 we are told that it was by the Word of the Lord that the heavens were made. In Isaiah 55:11 we are told that God's Word which goes forth from his mouth will not return empty, but will accomplish the purpose for which it was sent. Hebrews 1:1, 2 tells us that in the past God spoke to the forefathers through the prophets (such as Jeremiah) at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, that is, Jesus. Jesus is the greatest communication of God to man. He is, as John 1:14 puts it, God's Word become flesh. He is the completely human expression of God's powerful creative Word. Jesus is the man who was predestined of God to bring salvation to the world. Jesus is the

COMBATTING CULT



A BOOK REVIEW

BY MARSHA BEHRENS

IN EARLY JANUARY of this year, the country was horrified by the news that a family of five had been found murdered and buried under a barn in Kirtland, Ohio. They were members of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and had been the victims of a charismatic leader who had been defrocked by the church for his radical doctrine and aggressive actions to gain control over church members' individual free wills. He left the church with a dozen or so followers who were subsequently arrested with him and his wife and son and charged with murder or conspiracy to commit murder in the case involving the shooting of the Dennis Avery family. Authorities said that from what evidence they were able to uncover, the murders appear to have been a part of a ritual sacrifice designed to "cleanse" the cult and allow it to relocate in the wilderness.

It is difficult for most of us to understand how people can be led to do such hideous things. Our horror at this incident reminds us of how the world stood aghast with the news from Jonestown, Guyana, that nine hundred members of the People's Temple had committed suicide under the leadership of Jim Jones. This followed the murder of Congressman Leo J. Ryan while he was trying to help cult members escape the Jones camp.

Steven Hassan knows first-hand about this insidious tyranny against individual free will. He is an ex-member of The Unification Church, also known as the "Moonies." Currently he is one of America's leading noncoercive exit-counselors, which he carefully explains is very different from what most of us know as deprogrammers. He is also the author of *"Combatting Cult Mind Control"* (226 pages) published by Park Street Press in

1988. Hassan is a Christian. He is listed in the *"Who's Who of Mental Health Professionals,"* and he holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from Cambridge College.

His thorough discussion of mind control goes far beyond just The Unification Church. Based on his interviews and primary source research, he writes about many other groups which employ, at various stages in their indoctrination and training, some very destructive techniques. They include groups such as EST (now renamed Forum), the Lyndon LaRouche Organization, Transcendental Meditation, the Truth Station, NSA (Nichiren Shoshu of America), The Way International, the Temple of Set (a satanist cult), the World Brethren, The Word, the Foundation for Human Understanding, the Children of God (renamed Family of God), and others. Hassan's book is filled with many, many individual cases and direct testimonies from ex-cult members.

According to Hassan, a group becomes destructive when it seeks to gain control over an individual's will and believes that whatever needs to be done in order to break the free will of an individual is justifiable. Hassan carefully points out, however, that not all uses of mind control are negative. Some positive uses include the application of mind control in order to stop smoking, overeating, abusing

drugs or alcohol, and the like. But, the author warns, the desire and control to stop must remain with the client, and must not be used to move the client into a subservient role, completely under the domination of the practitioner of such behavior-modification techniques. Learning to control one's own will should build self-esteem, not destroy it.

The destructive groups discussed in this book are no

A group becomes destructive when it seeks to gain control over an individual's will and believes that whatever needs to be done in order to break the free will of an individual is justifiable.

MIND CONTROL

limited to religious cults, but also extend to the areas of politics, psychotherapy/educational cults, and commercial cults.

The commercial cults "believe in the dogma of greed, and deceive and manipulate people to work for little or no pay in the hope of getting rich. There are many pyramid-style or multi-level marketing organizations that promise big money but fleece their victims. They then destroy their victims' self-esteem so that they will not complain.... Other commercial cults include those that browbeat people into hawking magazine subscriptions or other items door to door. . . . Salespeople are manipulated through fear and guilt and are sometimes physically and sexually abused. These people become slaves to the 'company' and turn over their money in order to pay for the 'living expenses.' "

Some cults even covertly offer workshops and seminars for hundreds of dollars to individuals or to corporations for their workers. They claim to present self-help sessions in the area of creative problem-solving, relaxation, and/or stress management. For some customers, the sessions' "peak" experiences will be all they encounter. But others will be manipulated to sign up for more expensive advanced courses and, further, to become members and eventually recruiters for the group. In the final chapter, Hassan includes a most interesting discussion of the dangers of cultism in the New Age Movement and seminars on the psychic form of communication known as channeling.

But whether the destructive group is commercially oriented or religiously, politically, or educationally oriented, one thing remains constant—the desire to manipulate people so that they will perform as the cult leaders wish. All power for decision making resides with the leadership. No debate is possible. Individual differences of opinion are perceived as weaknesses and anti-group, and therefore must be expunged.

Hassan reviews the history of mind control, pointing out that the eight basic elements of the process of mind control have been used by many in the past. The Chinese Communists, the SLA (Symbionese Liberation Army), and Adolf Hitler, among others, have used this type of

brainwashing which seeks to control others by controlling behavior, thoughts, emotions, and information.

Behavior is controlled, in part, by the requirement that everyone act as a group. Individual time alone is severely limited. The desire to want some time to oneself is clearly labeled as counterproductive, and one is made to feel selfish for having such a desire. The group attempts to regulate as much of the individual's physical reality as possible—where he lives, what he wears, what he eats, how much he sleeps, what job he has, and whatever else he does with his time.

The group attempts to regulate as much of the individual's physical reality as possible—where he lives, what he wears, what he eats, how much he sleeps, what job he has, and whatever else he does with his time.

Thought control is achieved in a number of ways. Some include having an absolutist doctrine with all the answers and no room for debate on any issues.

Members need not think for themselves since the doctrine does the thinking for them. Also members are trained to block out any information which is critical of the group, even their own doubts. Chanting and other thought-stopping rituals are widely used for this purpose. Sleep deprivation and fasting are also employed in order to facilitate control of the mind. Members are often told that the world can only be saved by their actions and that worldwide catastrophe can only be averted by their work. Hassan himself confessed to feeling a letdown after he left the Moonies. He missed the "high" it gave him as an insider who was close to Sun Myung Moon the Messiah, the "high" of feeling that what he did was cosmically important. He missed the feeling of power that singlemindedness brought.

Emotional control centers on the use of two of the most powerful of human emotions—guilt and fear, with guilt as perhaps the most effective tool in producing conformity and compliance. Separation from family and friends outside of the cult is also necessary in order that members turn solely to others of the cult for emotional support.

Since information is the basic ingredient used to keep our minds working properly, it is essential for the destructive cult to gain a tight hold on what the member or potential member is allowed to know. Individuals are not permitted to talk privately to each other about anything

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COMBATting CULT MIND CONTROL

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critical of the leader, doctrine, or organization. Members are encouraged to spy on each other to catch such transgressions. Phone calls and mail are carefully screened. The workings of the organization are compartmentalized in such a way that members are kept from seeing the "big picture" and know little about the organization as a whole. Direct questions concerning the "big picture" and details—for instance, about where the money is going—are not answered completely. In fact, the questioner is often chided for bringing up such matters and is accused of having a weak faith and a lack of spirituality.

Admittedly, this is just a brief summary of the contents of this most comprehensive and compelling book on the subject of mind control and destructive cults. Hassan covers many other areas besides those summarized here. He gives very concrete methods for protecting yourself against the subtle tyranny of mind control. He lists specific questions to ask any group you are thinking of joining and how to recognize a nonanswer when you hear it. In addition, he shows us how to help others free themselves from such groups without coercion, and outlines strategies of recovery after you have been involved with such a group. In the appendix of this text, a very complete list is given of organizations designed to help in these matters both in the United States and Canada as well as overseas.

It may at times be most confusing to consider the fact that God has given each of us a free will—a free will which can lead us to such a magnitude of mistakes and a wide array of sins. The pain potential and the grief quotient seem unreasonable. But, in fact, an individual's free will to decide, to ponder, to question, and to act is a precious gift. It is a gift to be protected. Steven Hassan's book, *Combatting Cult Mind Control* is an excellent and very readable presentation of the issues surrounding mind control and the tyranny of extinguishing the God-given ability to exercise one's free will. As Steven Hassan states, "There can be no true spiritual growth when one abdicates personal integrity and responsibility."

* * *

And so, the next time you are sitting in a lengthy congregational meeting filled with debate and heated discussion, thank God for the privilege we have to share our varying points of view and still come together in one body under the saving grace of our Heavenly Father whom we worship and serve freely with all of our magnificent diversity.

INNATE

By Steven M. Jones
Carrollton, Texas

IMMORTALITY! It has been "brought to light" by Jesus Christ and his gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). Eternal life—an immortal existence—is offered freely to the lowest of sinners who reach out and take hold of the Savior by faith. Christ himself said, "This is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40). This must be underscored in the church today; it is a point at which multitudes stumble. The eternal life given by our Lord is fused inseparably to the resurrection at the end of the age. It has nothing to do with some ethereal, phantom-like threshold crossed at death. The Blessed Hope of the Christian (Titus 2:13) will always be the Second Advent—the time when mortality is swallowed up by immortality, corruption puts on incorruption, and death loses its terrible efficacy (1 Cor. 15:52-54).

This is a truth in constant need of emphasis. It has been supplanted over the centuries by a concept utterly foreign to the Scripture: the innate immortality of man. All human beings, we are told, possess a "soul" (the real self) which dwells for a time in the body. Death is the liberator for the believing soul, which wings its way to the "hereafter" to be with Jesus. That "last enemy" (1 Cor. 15:26) is not an enemy, nor is it even a true death—it is only a change from one life to another, an evacuation of the body.

Immortality of the Soul?

The Bible offers no sanction of such notions. Here we discover that God alone possesses innate immortality (1 Tim. 6:16). Man forfeited any claim to it in Eden (Gen. 2:17). Indeed, not only did

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Advent Christian
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IMMORTALITY:

God impose the sentence of death upon Adam and Eve, but also repelled them from that Tree of Life which was the source of human immortality (Gen. 3:22-24). Would any contend that our first parents, who returned to dust in fulfillment of the divine curse (Gen. 3:19), were nevertheless immortal beings? If so, then we must ascribe integrity to the serpent's lie, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4).

Scripture paints death in a much different hue. When a man draws his last breath, he perishes—in totality. That is why David dreaded the grave. He knew that to die was to lose one's self, to cease consciousness. Listen to his testimonies:

"For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?" (Psa. 6:5.)

"The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence" (Psa. 115:17).

Godly Hezekiah also shrank from the shadow of death, recognizing its true character:

"For the grave cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate thee, they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee" (Isa. 38:18, 19).

The inspired Preacher of Ecclesiastes sums up the entire matter of death in the plainest possible language:

"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished" (Eccl. 9:5, 6).

New Testament theology presents death in the same manner. Paul wrote of the recovery of Epaphroditus, who was sick unto death. The apostle's commen-

tary on this event was that "God had mercy on him" (Phil. 2:27). Mercy? Is being deprived of heaven a mercy? And the raising of Lazarus, or Dorcas, or the widow's son. Would it have been a mercy to snatch these saints out of celestial bliss to suffer pain and temptation again on this wicked earth? No, the restoration of life is always portrayed as a good and gracious act. Length of days on the earth is a blessing from God (Eph. 6:3), not a postponement of glory. The elders are to anoint the sick, that they may be healed (Jas. 5:14, 15). Why? Because death is death and not life. The open grave is a curse, an enemy to be overcome.

Resurrection Hope at Christ's Coming

When the Thessalonians were sorrowing over deceased loved ones, Paul took up his pen to offer encouragement. Did he tell

The authors of Scripture, however, are adamant about this: the second advent is our only hope for life after death. If Jesus does not come again, we will all perish in the dust of the earth, forever.

them that the righteous dead are "with the Lord" as bodiless souls? Did he assure the church that the grave is really a doorway to eternal joy? He did no such thing. The apostle wrote of the return of Christ, when the dead shall rise (1 Thes. 4:13-18). Those departed brethren are not singing, or rejoicing, or "looking down on us"—they are asleep in their graves, awaiting the resurrection (1 Thes. 4:14; 1 Cor.

15:51. See also Job 14:12; 2 Kings 20:21; Acts 7:60; 2 Pet. 3:4). Such is the Pauline view of death.

The tragic consequence of this widespread belief in inherent immortality is the devaluing of Christ's second coming. If the dead saints are really alive with the Lord, what great need is there for a resurrection? Since it is constantly asserted that the "soul" is the all-important component of man—his "true self"—the raising up of the body should be a comparatively trivial matter. Even Christ's own resurrection sounds a hollow ring when we maintain that all men since Adam survive death as immortal souls.

The authors of Scripture, however, are adamant about this: the second advent is our only hope for life after death. If Jesus does not come again, we will all perish in the dust of the earth, forever. A simple reading of the following passages should make the answer to each subsequent question abundantly clear:

- Matthew 13:41-43: When will the righteous shine in the Father's kingdom?
- Matthew 16:27: When will everyone be rewarded according to his works?
- 1 Corinthians 13:10-13: When will we see Jesus face to face?
- 2 Timothy 4:8: When will we receive the crown of righteousness?
- Revelation 20:12: When is the judgment?
- 1 John 3:2: When will we see Christ and be like him?

The same answer virtually leaps from the pages of Scripture: The Second Advent. Death receives no accolades as a bestower of blessing, or as a "passing through the Jordan" into Christ's presence. It is a thing to be abolished and cast

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CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE?

INNATE IMMORTALITY: A CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE?

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into the Lake of Fire at the last day (Rev. 20:14).

The immortality of the soul makes a mockery of all this. Resurrection becomes superfluous, since we can relate to Christ "out of body." And because the saints have already spent long ages with Christ, the *parousia* becomes something less than the great "revelation" portrayed by Scripture. Finally, the judgment is transformed into a farce. After spending thousands of years in heaven, will Abel have to pass before the bar of divine justice to determine whether or not his name is written in the Book of Life? Conversely, will Judas be summoned from a hell he has occupied for two millennia to discover if he is really among the damned? Any doctrine which allows for such scenarios ought to be suspect from the very outset.

The Mortality of the Soul

The Word of God admits of no "undying essence" within the human makeup. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). This prophetic utterance should, by itself, put the whole argument of immortal souls out of court, forever. Man is mortal. In this he has "no advantage over the beasts" (Eccl. 3:19). Resurrection is his only hope. Without Christ he will "not see life" (John 3:36).

The standard objection to such teaching is the dogmatic assertion of a "life of the body/life of the soul" dualism. It is only the body—the empty shell once housing the soul—that has perished. The real person is either in paradise or in torment, a condition in which he will abide forever and ever.

The Scriptural testimony, however, is entirely against this view. The real person is always laid in the tomb. "Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah" (Gen. 23:19). Nowhere is it hinted that the patriarch merely buried a fleshly receptacle recently vacated by an immortal woman. There is no record of Abraham praising God for admitting his beloved spouse to the "streets of gold." Modern funeral language is

hopelessly out of step with the Bible. Death is always met with grief and mourning (even by Christ—John 11:35, 36), because the true person is now lifeless—no longer a functioning soul.

We read of the entombment of Jacob (Gen. 50:5) and of Stephen (Acts 8:2). In each case, the corpse is the person. Devout men wept over Stephen, not over a thing in which the martyr once lived. David, we are told by Peter, is in the sepulchre—"both dead and buried" (Acts 2:29). As if to refute any future notions of innate immortality, he assures us in the same breath that "David is not ascended into the heavens" (Acts 2:34).

Evangelicals Rethink "Soul" Concept

There is a growing recognition among evangelicals that the old main-line position on body/soul dualism is untenable. George Eldon Ladd comments on the Pauline perspective:

Paul's view is based upon the Old Testament view of man, in which man's "soul" (*nephesh*) is primarily his vitality, his life—never a separate "part" of man. . . . God's Spirit creates the human spirit (Zech. 12:1), but neither man's soul nor spirit is viewed as an immortal part of man which survives death.

Dutch theologian Herman Ridderbos echoes these convictions:

Psuche (soul) in Paul is neither after the Greek-Hellenistic fashion, the immortal part of man as distinct from the *Soma* (body), nor does it denote the spiritual as distinct from the material. *Psuche* stands in general for the natural life of man (cf. Rom. 11:3; 16:4; 1 Thes. 2:8—to give his "soul," that is, his life for someone, et. al.).

Such men as Ladd and Ridderbos are recognized by evangelicals as conservative, responsible theologians. They can hardly be written off as "cultists," neither can they be justly accused of harboring a bias toward such an interpretation. On the contrary, both acknowledge a conscious survival of the man after death. Their impeccably honest scholarship, however,

shines through as they exegete *psuche* and *nephesh*—even when such exegesis is inconsistent with their own views on life after death.

Conclusion

The average Christian has been instructed to regard the concept of total mortality as "cult doctrine." For this reason it is difficult for many of God's people to approach the subject with an open mind. This is understandable; no genuine follower of Jesus desires to be caught up in bizarre, cultish dogmas. On the other hand, we must be quick to realize that guilt by association is not a fair method by which to test the truth or falsity of any tenet of faith. If it were, we might discountenance the immortality of the soul on the basis of its acceptance by Spiritists, Mormons, Christian Scientists, and New Age advocates. Obviously, a rejection of either position on the basis of *ad hominem* arguments is a practice unworthy of a careful Bible student.

The total mortality of man is a doctrine of great antiquity in the church. Its exponents can be found in nearly every age of church history. Whether or not it has always been a majority opinion is irrelevant. Was not Luther expressing a very obscure minority opinion when he posted the theses? And the Anabaptist martyrs—were they not regarded as wild-eyed fanatics for opposing the unquestioned union of church and state? Yet these men believed they possessed truth, and were willing to stand up for it in the face of overwhelming majority opposition.

Their courage of conviction ought to be emulated in the church today. It is time to examine this issue in the light of *sola scriptura*, rather than simply parroting the opinions of the masses. With an open Bible and a Berean spirit (Acts 17:11), let us seek out the things which God has freely revealed to us in his Word. As we penetrate the recesses of divine truth, may we then share our findings with the rest of God's people in the loving spirit of the one who is the Resurrection and the Life.

Steven Jones is a freelance writer who lives in Carrollton, Texas. He writes on a variety of biblical and theological issues.

20 QUESTIONS ABOUT FINAL PUNISHMENT

By Steven Jones

In articulating our views on the final punishment of the lost, we conditionalists are frequently put on the defensive with a flurry of questions:

"What about the Rich Man and Lazarus?"

"What about the 'eternal punishment' in Matthew 25?"

"What about the 'smoke of their torment' in Revelation 14?"

Such polemical inquiries often come in rapid-fire succession, leaving the conditionalist overwhelmed before the doctrine can be adequately expounded. Why must this be the case? In our opinion it is the traditionalist who has far more explaining to do. Perhaps the time is ripe for those of us believing in total extinction to begin posing some doctrinal inquiries of our own. The following twenty questions are begging an honest Biblical response from our "eternal-torment" brethren.

1. The curse upon Adam for his sin was death, i.e., a return to the dust from which he was taken (Gen. 3:19). If in addition he was required to burn forever in hellish torments, why is this not even hinted at in the passage? Would God hide such a solemn fact from Adam, especially knowing that the punishment for original sin would be passed on to the entire race?

2. In Deuteronomy 28, Moses declares the penalties for disobedience to the divine law. Where in the text does he even remotely suggest that offending Israelites will be tortured in a "disembodied state" for all eternity?

3. Why did Jeremiah refer to *gehenna* (hell) as "the valley of slaughter" (Jer. 7:32) if it is the abode of "never-dying souls"?

4. If a soul must live on forever in misery, why did Jesus state categorically that God destroys both body and soul in hell? (Matt. 10:28.)

5. Why did Isaiah refer to the "everlasting burnings" as a "consuming fire" if no one is ever burned up there? (Isa. 34:10.)

6. How can the following metaphors of the wicked's doom possibly be harmonized with the common hell?

- shattered like pottery (Psa. 2:9).
- crushed with rod from mouth of God (Isa. 11:4).
- eaten up as moth devours cloth (Isa. 51:4-11).
- killed like victims of Pilate, tower (Luke 13:1-5).
- slain like wicked husbandmen (Luke 20:9-16).
- destroyed like house in storm (Matt. 7:24-26).

7. How do we reconcile the Bible's statements that God's anger is momentary (Psa. 30:5; 103:9; Isa. 57:17) with the common notion that he will torture the majority of mankind forever?

8. In the Book of Acts, why do the many sermons to the unconverted contain no warnings of "endless woe"?

9. On what grounds do we disqualify the final, irreversible destruction of the lost, who cease to be living souls forever and ever, as an eternal punishment? (See Matt. 25:46.)

10. If the unrighteous live on forever in hell, why did Christ repeatedly state that only believers have an eternal life? (John 3:15, 16, 36, etc.)

11. Was Paul misleading his readers when he wrote, "The wages of sin is death"? (Rom. 6:23.) If the popular view of future punishment is true, should he not have written, "The wages of sin is to burn in hell without dying"? Would the apostle equivocate on such a crucial point as man's penalty for sin?

12. Scripture teaches clearly that Christ bore the sinner's penalty at calvary (Isa. 53:6, etc.). If that punishment is endless torment, rather than the death endured by our Substitute, how could God have accepted the crucifixion as a suitable atonement?

13. Where does the Bible state that the wicked will be raised up in immortal bodies that cannot perish in the lake of fire?

14. If the flames of hell never kill, but only torment, how do we explain the following texts which plainly teach the total incineration of the wicked? (Zeph. 1:18; Mal. 4:1, 3; Nahum 1:10; Heb. 10:27; 2

Pet. 3:10-12; Psa. 37:20; Isa. 1:28, 31; 33:11, 12; 34:10.)

15. How can the following words, all of which are used to describe the final punishment of the impenitent, ever be demonstrated to have the plain meaning of "subjected to endless torture"?

- "Perish"—John 3:16
- "Devour"—Heb. 10:27
- "Consume"—Psa. 37:20
- "Destroy"—Psa. 145:20
- "Destruction"—Phil. 3:19
- "Slay"—Psa. 34:21
- "Die"—Rom. 8:13
- "Cut off"—Psa. 37:9

16. Scripture teaches that God is a just Judge who will punish the offender in proportion with the crime. In what sense is it either just or proportionate to punish men for sins committed in the relatively brief period of a human life span with endless eons of torment?

17. How is it that all things will someday be reconciled to God (Col. 1:20) if most of humanity will be wailing from the depths of the "infernal pit" for all eternity?

18. Why do the terms "unquenchable fire" and "eternal fire" require the meaning of everlasting torment when they clearly stand for the total annihilation of evildoers in the following passages?

- Everlasting burnings devour the wicked like stubble—Isa. 33:11-14
- Unquenchable fire burns up the "chaff"—Matt. 3:13
- Eternal fire destroyed the inhabitants of Sodom—Jude 7

19. Why is Jesus' judgment teaching in Mark 9:44 (undying worm, unquenchable fire) commonly used to support the idea of souls writhing in endless torture when the Old Testament passage he was quoting refers to the slaying of the ungodly? (Isa. 66:14-16, 24.)

20. Why do the New Testament authors use the destruction of Sodom (2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7) and the perishing of the world in the flood (2 Pet. 2:5) as examples of how God will punish the wicked if he does not intend to destroy them?

DEITY OF A RISEN SAVIOR

BY

PASTOR

TONY BALDWIN

DO YOU BELIEVE in the deity of Christ? If so, how do you explain exactly what "deity" means? If not, how can you deny the use of the word in the Scriptures? The fact is that the deity of Christ is a scripturally founded truth that has beautiful meaning and promise for those who are awaiting the Second Advent of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. For the next few minutes, let us take a closer look at the deity of our risen Savior; prior to this, forget everything you have ever heard or understood about the deity and approach the Scriptures with a readiness of mind. We are not going to examine the philosophies of theologians that have plagued the church for thousands of years, but we will examine the fidelity of God's Word in an effort to clarify any misconceptions we may have to its harmonious truth.

First, we must ask the question, "Is the deity of Christ scriptural?" Then, if so, "What does deity' mean?" Indeed, the Deity of Christ is scriptural! Quoting from the *Emphatic Diaglott*, which gives us the original translation from Colossians 2:9: "Because in him dwells all the fullness of the *Deity* bodily." As Christians searching for the glorious truths in God's Word, we cannot pick and choose verses on which to believe, but must accept the entire inspired Word of God and harmonize the truths therein. Do I believe in the deity of Christ? Of course, since seeing it in the Scriptures gives one no other choice; but, *what I believe must correspond with all other scriptures appearing in God's Word.* Secondly, "What does 'deity' mean?" If you research the word itself, you will find that it comes from the Latin word *deitas*, which means "to have a divine nature." We also find that the word "divine" comes from the Latin word *divinus*, meaning "heavenly; excellent in the highest degree; extraordinary." It is important to note that the word "deity" is never translated or defined as meaning Jehovah, but simply as having a god-like nature.

In accordance with this point, what charac-

teristics do you attribute to Jehovah? An appropriate scripture to bring into reference is 1 Timothy 1:17, "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." These attributes constitute the nature of Jehovah, but can we attribute Christ with holding these characteristics as well? Is Christ a King, immortal, invisible, and wise? Most certainly we can accredit Christ with these attributes, but two very important points must be addressed in accordance to this acknowledgment: 1) How long has Christ been invested with these attributes? and, 2) How are these attributes manifested in Christ?

We can attest that throughout the Scriptures there is evidence that the *spiritual* nature of Jehovah was manifested in Jesus Christ, for we read in Isaiah 11:2, 3, concerning the prophecy of Jesus Christ, "And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and

By humbling himself to become a living sacrifice, Jesus allowed the power of God to dwell in him like it has never dwelt in any other man.

understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears." We know that Christ had the authority for judgment, but the Scriptures say he did not judge of the sight of his own eyes. We know that Christ reprovved, but the scriptures say he did not reprove by the hearing of his own ears. So what was this power working through Jesus that enabled him to do

the things which he was incapable of doing alone? How beautiful to see the fidelity of God's Word! Jesus answers the question for us in John 5:19, 26, 27: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: *for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. . . . For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*" It is important to see how the divine power of God worked through Christ, and to understand that he was the only man to completely follow the instructions of our heavenly Father. By humbling himself to become a living sacrifice, he allowed the power of God to dwell in him like it has never dwelt in any other man. Christ, however, was not born with this divine nature, but, according to Isaiah 11:2; John 1:32; and Luke 1:15, *this spiritual nature would come upon him. Christ so followed the will of God. John writes, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with out eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of Life" (1 John 1:1). Christ was the Word of God personified, and through him worked and in him dwelled the spiritual deity, or divine spirit, of Jehovah. Without this power working through him, Christ himself stated, "Of mine own self I can do nothing." We must acknowledge that Christ did have some of the characteristics attributed to a divine nature, but only a spiritually divine nature.*

Though this spiritual nature was evident in Christ's earthly ministry, **THE FULLNESS OF JEHOVAH'S DIVINE NATURE WAS NOT PRESENT IN CHRIST UNTIL AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.** How do we know this? According to 1 Corinthians 15:3, "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures." We have already concluded from 1 Timothy 1:17 that part of the full nature of Jehovah includes

IMMORTALITY, and if this fullness existed in Christ prior to his crucifixion, then Christ would be incapable of death. If the fullness of Jehovah's nature existed in Christ before his crucifixion, it means we are still in sin and have no Savior, no hope, and no promise of eternal life. Think, however, when Colossians 2:9 was written; it was written AFTER the resurrection of Jesus. In understanding the acquired divinity of Jesus, we find validation of this thought in 1 Corinthians 15:42, 43, "So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power."

The deity of Christ is manifested not only through the immortality that he obtained, but also through his acquired Kingship. Christ, even in his earthly ministry, was our spiritual King, but now he, being seated at the right hand of God, is our physical King with power and glory. In Hebrews 2:7-9 this is emphasized: "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with the glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in him he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." It is crucial to understand and see how this nature did not exist in Christ until after his death, burial, and resurrection. Then, and only then, did the FULLNESS of this nature exist, and that not only in a spiritual sense, but a bodily, physical sense as well. The immortality and Kingship of Christ were indeed given to him, according to the scriptures. These were the attributes that were not innate, for, if they were, why would they be given to Christ again
(Please turn the page)

The deity of Christ is manifested not only through the immortality that he obtained, but also through his acquired Kingship.

**“Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is”
(1 John 3:2).**

after his resurrection? If Christ had all fullness of authority, why did Jehovah put all things under his subjection after crowning him with glory? If Christ had the fullness of Kingship, why was he crowned again after he suffered death? If Christ had the fullness of the divine nature, why did he put on immortality, and how could he have died? These are not mysteries; they are contradictions to the complete understanding of the true meaning of the deity.

In studying God's Word, it is most important not to “build faith” on one verse, but rather to build our faith on the entire Word of God. Much of what I have heard, or seen, on the verse in Colossians 2:9 has nothing to do with the rest of the chapter, and is taken out of context to prove something totally contradictory to the rest of the Scriptures. If one continues to read this passage, verse 10 states, “And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” It is true that Christ and the Father have these two divine characteristics in common, but this does not indicate that they are one and the same. As we referenced earlier in Hebrews 2:7-9, someone put principalities and powers under Christ; there was someone who crowned Jesus with glory and honor; someone who put all things in subjection under his feet. That someone had to have greater—not equal—power and authority than Jesus, or Jesus would not have been given anything that he did not already have. What person could have power over him who has been given all power and authority over this earth? Listen to the Word of God in Ephesians 4:6, “One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”

It is interesting to point out that the Kingship given to Christ, according to the Scriptures, is limited to the earth and the inhabitants therein. Nowhere do I find the dominion of

Christ extending beyond the powers and principalities of this earth. First John 4:14 is quoted as saying, “We have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.” Christ was born, raised, crucified, and resurrected on this earth. His concerns, teachings, and prayers were for the people of this earth. When Christ returns he will be King on this earth, but nowhere do I read of this rule extending beyond the expanse of the world. For Jehovah, however, we read in Psalm 115:16, “The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; but the earth hath he given to the children of men.” Not only does Jehovah have authority of the *heaven* of earth, but also the the heavens, plural, which includes all of the expanses of the entire universe. I accept Christ as being head of all things within the realm of his Kingship that has been appointed to him by Jehovah, which we know through the Scriptures as being those things of the earth. As for Jehovah, the Scriptures acknowledge him as being above all. This only shows that two separate persons can obtain the same qualities without being recognized as being the same person. What a wonderful promise we have as well, for some day we, too, will have, in part, the nature that exists in Christ Jesus! First John 3:2 states, “Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

To accept the deity of Christ is simply to accept him as the ordained and empowered Son of God, to whom all kingdoms, powers, and principalities of the world are under subjection. The deity of Christ also makes us cognizant to the fact that we serve A RISEN SAVIOR, that NOW, AFTER being resurrected from the dead, he has the incorruptible nature of the Almighty Jehovah. We accept through true understanding of the deity that the reign of Christ Jesus upon this earth will be an everlasting one, of which there will be no end. Amen.



COUNTING YOUR LORDS

BY ANTHONY BUZZARD

There is utmost confusion among students of the Bible about who God is!

Some say he is three persons, some two, and others maintain that he is strictly One Person.

Apart from the massive power of tradition which tends to grip the minds of people, the problem could be solved in a few moments. Here is the solution.

Jesus is our authority. Which God did he serve? The answer is simple and clear and is found in Mark's Gospel account, chapter twelve.

In verse 29 Jesus answered the question of a scribe (a theologian) by quoting the great foundational text of

Israel. The nation was instructed about the true God:

"Hear, O Israel; **THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD!**" (Mark 12:29, quoted from Deut. 6:4).

Who is "the Lord our God"? No question: **ONE LORD.**

Now **ONE LORD** is **ONE Person**, not two, not three!

We can prove that this is so.

Note first that the theologian, who was commended for his intelligence by Jesus (v. 34), affirmed what Jesus had said:

"God is **ONE** and there is **NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM.**"

How many persons is God? Obviously **ONE**, not two, not three.

Secondly note that in verse 36 the discussion is about **TWO LORDS**, one of whom is God and the other is the Messiah Jesus: "The *Lord* [God] said to

my [David's]) *lord*, the Messiah. . . . (Psa. 110:1.)

But remember. How many Lords make up the One God? "The Lord our God is **ONE LORD**" (Mark 12:29).

It is perfectly clear that God is **ONE LORD**. But in verses 36 there are **TWO LORDS**. Only One of these can be God, because God is **ONE LORD** (v. 29). That's what Jesus said (v. 29). The second "lord" cannot be God, therefore. Rather, he is the Messiah (Christ), the "Lord Messiah."

It is surprising that there should be any doubt about the Christian creed. Jesus said plainly: "The Lord our God is **ONE LORD**"—not two or three as some believe.

It is time for believers to agree with Jesus about the most important question of all: Who God is.

CHANGING SOCIETY?

(Continued from page 14)

Jesus said in his magnificent prayer to his heavenly Father concerning his followers, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). If we are not of the world, why are we trying to force the world into a righteous mold? Jesus never did this. There is coming a day when he shall, but that day has not yet arrived.

At this writing, the governor of Idaho has just vetoed this nation's most restrictive abortion legislation. Pro-choice people threatened a boycott of Idaho potatoes if he had signed it, or if he let it become law by neglecting to sign it. Christians use the same threatening tactics when we seek to intimidate tv sponsors, to blackmail them into setting up their programs the way we prefer.

Now I wonder: has anyone given thought to those employees of the companies under boycott who were not consulted

about what the company is planning to sponsor on tv? Those employees may be out of a job if a boycott is successful. The employee who has to feed his family on his wages may not be too disposed toward Christianity if his job is terminated because Christians caused sales of his product to drop. To be insensitive to his plight may be a bigger sin than to allow the sex/violence programs to continue. "Be ye . . . wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

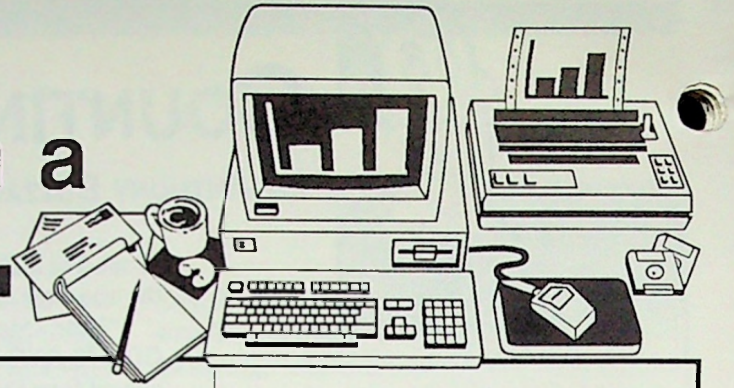
Lest you think I advocate the usurpation of the airways by the aforementioned purveyors of sleaze and mayhem, let me hasten to say that I advocate no such thing. But I must be pragmatic; I must seek to see the world as God portrays it; to see the human heart as God reveals it. Preach against evil! Certainly! Show the dangers to my congregation and readers of illicit and impure

thoughts? Yes! Boycott? Personally, perhaps so, but not by setting up machinery designed to work harm to another.

We can pour thousands—yea, millions—of dollars into preaching a social gospel (for isn't this what we are really doing by trying to change the world?) and see as a result the proliferation of those very items we so earnestly fought. Our forefathers in the faith warned against preaching a social gospel. Have we now fallen into that quagmire?

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. And of some have compassion, making a difference: and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire [not putting out the fire—a present-day impossibility]; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 21-23).

Making the Difference with a Good System



IN TODAY'S WORLD there's a system for everything. For example, try computers.

Each manufacturer has a different approach to the age-old problem of managing information. There must be a dozen makes of computers, but only one really "does it all" because it has the right system. It all depends on the way information is configured . . . or whether the printer outputs with smooth or jagged text.

Then just try to keep up with all the system upgrades available. Version 2 point oh (2.0) or 3 point 5 point 6 (3.5.6) . . . or better yet, the switch to a new product.

In just about any aspect of life—be it informational, transportational, or recreational—there's variant systems to get the job done.

The same goes for handling problems, you know—drugs, alcohol, that sort. Now whole families covering several generations enter the fray with help from many perspectives. That's called therapy based on Family Systems Theory—the rage in psychology today.

The same can be said for what you believe—that conglomeration of senses, events, and influences which shape YOU. Your approach to life, how you make decisions and tackle problems, has been labeled—of course—your belief system.

All this carries over into your faith. Faith? Something more than a set of rules. It's things you as a Christian believe in. Not just believe, but believe *in*—place your trust in, bet your life on.

What are some of the standards in your belief system?

For starters how about saying, "I believe in God, the Father of all mankind . . ."

he may be invisible, but he's behind everything which exists—
who had the idea of making men and women—

who painted the first art—from abstractions on a frozen landscape to the soft tenderness of a baby's face—

who dusted the sky with stars—
whole galaxies replete with great balls of fire and the dark heat of a black hole—

who designed people to long for him.

"I believe in Jesus, the Son of God . . ."

a real man among men who dared claim Sonship with the Father, sent to do the Father's work—shocking His peers with both word and deed—

whose entrepreneurial skills used in a three-year span charged a small group to organize a world-wide following covering every generation of mankind—

who died prematurely, yet reappeared alive for all time—

who penetrates hearts of those who believe—

who gets a hearing in every lifestyle on every day of history as followers of him heed what he says—

whose leadership, invisible today, will one day break out on everyone and be impossible to deny.

"I believe in the power of the Holy Spirit . . ."

a mighty force when God formed the universe, breathing life and meaning everywhere—

a powerful influence in great men of history who also believed in God—

a virtual powerhouse to everyone who today believes in God and Jesus—

the power by which the Father and the Son inhabit every believer to change his world—

the comforting, encouraging, teaching influence of Jesus Christ in your life and mine, by which we find the right way and through which we pull our thoughts together—

"I believe in people . . ."

who out of all the systems in the universe—all shining stars, stalking tigers, majestic redwoods, singing crickets—were given the gift of choice: to love or ignore God—

who know and fully experience the deepest meaning of the word "love"—

and who also fear the despair of love lost—

who of all treasures of the universe are chosen of God to enjoy his fellowship and bask in the One who loves—

whom God judges worthy of sacrificing his most precious Son for our shortcomings, and for whom Jesus gave his all to bring us to our senses—

whom no matter what, God loves.

By Russ Magaw

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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

DEMONISM

(Continued from back cover)

shall be considered to be guilty of blood, and shall be "cut off." Six times in these verses God repeated that warning. The term "cut off" is from the Hebrew root *but*, which means "to root out, to main, or to destroy." Comparing this with the words of Exodus 31:14, we read that concerning the Sabbath God said, "Whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people." We can safely assume that it means either excommunication from God's people, or death.

We notice in this text that, early in their wilderness wanderings, the people of Israel were warned not to pollute God's rituals with heathen practices. "They shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring" (Lev. 17:7). The word "devils" in this verse is from the Hebrew word *saiyr* or *sair*, literally "shaggy." As a noun it may refer to a he-goat; or by analogy to a fawn. This same word is used in Leviticus 4:23, where it is translated simply, "goats."

Following the division of the ten northern tribes of Israel from the two southern tribes, Jeroboam decided to establish a different temple to keep the people of the ten tribes from going to Jerusalem to worship and, possibly, becoming reconciled to Rehoboam. When he did this, the Levites (priests) who dwelt in the northern division "left their suburbs and their possessions: for Jeroboam and his sons had cast them off from executing the priest's office unto the LORD; and he ordained them priests for the high places, and for the devils, and for the calves which he had made." Evidently they had made idols to represent bulls and he-goats to worship, for the word "devils" again is the same Hebrew word.

In some instances, the Hebrew *saiyr* is not translated at all, but is simply picked up and set into the English text, where it appears as "satyrs." Isaiah 13 is a case in point. In foretelling the future of the city of Babylon, God said

that it should never be inhabited, "But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs [wild goats?] shall dance there" (v. 21). In Isaiah 34:14 a similar taunt is repeated, which in the King James reads: "The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow."

Obviously the word refers to goats, or simply to devils, demons, or objects of heathen worship. In another text, the word is translated "goats," and in yet

When pagans bowed down before images of stone or wood, to worship before them, and presented sacrifices to them—often their own children—Paul said that they were worshipping demons and not God.

another it is associated with heathen worship and practices. Apparently, from this and other texts, the idolatry of Egypt had invaded the ranks of the Israelites to a large degree. Josephus speaks of Jews worshipping goats in Egypt (*Against Apion II 7*). Not only goats of Egypt, but also a host of other idols from the Canaanites, Amorites, Egyptians, and other people were worshiped among them. "They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils [Heb., *shed*, a *daemon* as malignant], not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not" (Deut. 32:16, 17). "They sacrificed their sons

and their daughters unto devils [demons], and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan" (Psa. 106:37, 38). This strongly suggests that the word "demons" was applied to idols, or the spirits that they supposed inhabited them.

In 1 Corinthians 10 Paul reviews some of the sad history of Israel—how they put the Lord to the test by grumbling, desiring evil, indulging in immorality, and worshiping idols. "I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God; and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils" (vv. 20, 21).

A little meditation convinces us that Paul was referring to idols as demons. When pagans bowed down before images of stone or wood, to worship before them, and presented sacrifices to them—often their own children—Paul said that they were worshipping demons and not God. All of this brings up another somewhat different question: why were idols called demons? Why are demons often personified in the New Testament?

To summarize what we have learned thus far: devils, demons, and satyrs seem to be closely associated with idols and idol worship. Indeed, the passage from 1 Corinthians 10 that we just examined indicates that Paul used the term "idols" and "devils" (demons) interchangeably, as synonyms for objects of worship, except for the one true God of Israel, the Creator of all things. These demons are considered as integral parts of all forms of idol worship.

In the concluding article, which will be presented in the next issue, we shall give attention to some later beliefs, conditions, and practices that have developed from these beginnings.

DEMONISM

BY PASTOR REX CAIN
FIRST OF TWO PARTS

Reprinted from
THE RESTITUTION HERALD,
August, 1976

First, let me present my credentials for writing on this subject. I have not been possessed by demons, and have not known anybody who professed to be so possessed. Neither have I cast demons out of others. This, in the eyes of some, would automatically disqualify me to speak with authority on this subject. My defense is that, in this article, I plan to quote from an authority much more trustworthy than the testimony of any man. I am speaking, of course, of the Bible, the Word of God.

I am fully convinced that the Bible is exactly what it claims to be, the most important literature ever produced. Since it is inspired of God, and vitally affects the eternal future of every human, the exact words

that it uses are tremendously important. Speaking of the details to be carefully observed in constructing the first temple to the one true and living God, David declared: "All this . . . the LORD made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern" (1 Chron. 28:19).

Jeremiah testified: "Thus saith the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak . . . all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word" (26:2). And again, in 36:2: "Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee."

The Apostle Paul submitted his credentials: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God. . . . Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth" (1 Cor. 2:12, 13).

John the Revelator warned: "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life" (Rev. 22:19).

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The Basic Definition

The basic definition of demons is: Demons are considered by all (as far as I can learn) to be evil spirits that can take possession of, or take up residence in, a human body or mind, to cause mental disorders or unnatural physical manifestations. They supposedly attack persons who are susceptible to them. Possession is generally considered to occur only in the case of wicked persons, who are assumed to be particularly susceptible to them. Why this occurs with only a minute minority of the world's millions of wicked people is an unexplained question that puzzles me.

To Start at the Beginning

In Leviticus 17:1-9, we find God giving instructions to Israel, through Moses, concerning animal sacrifices. He warns that if this is not done according to his instructions, the person who offers the sacrifices

(Continued inside back cover)

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THE

RESTITUTION HERALD

Splash
for Summer



Articles to ride the wave of spiritual
victory, eluding the wake of defeat.

June/July/1990



Editor's Viewpoint

Splash of Summer

Summer.

Great sunny weather, at last. Get out the boat, dump on the sun-tan lotion, cast for some fish or splash some fun on skis. Grab a lawn chair and laze through a weekend with a good book. Rush off to a big-league ball game to see the Reds, Cardinals, or Cubs one last time.

Summer.

What a great time to live. Enjoy the outdoors. Smell the good earth. Reach for the sky. Kick back for some R & R.

Summer.

Another busy season. Fix up the house. Landscape the yard. Plan for and prepare for the annual family vacation. Time to repaint, refurbish, and refresh. Maybe even move to a new vocation, new home, new location.

Summer.

Take time out to look at THE HERALD pages.

Notice the great letters on page 3. You are responding to this publication. May our pages constantly inspire and challenge you.

This issue celebrates the writing gifts of a variety of our people. Sidney Hatch's pen invites you to once again relish the triumphs of our message. His thoughts begin on page 4.

Where do pastors come from? Not only does Pastor Vivian Kirkpatrick challenge you with an answer to that question, he hits you between the eyes with it. Catch him on page 6.

Pastor James Graham hits the mark with his expose on the Holy Spirit. His stirring theme begins on page 8.

News and Prophecy Digest. Associate Editor Gordon Landry offers such a pot-pourri, beginning on page 10. Carefully think through what he is saying.

Pastor Hollis Partlowe will take over the editorship with the October/November issue. His story about the centurion's confession starts on page 12.

Contributing Editor Anthony Buzzard follows with another thought-provoking piece (page 14). You warm up to his thoughts, especially on a hot summer day.

Our center spread is an excerpt from Dr. Alva G. Huffer's book, "The Triumph of the Resurrection." Don't miss it.

Pastor Francis Burnett continues his three-part story on Israel. Be sure to keep your thoughts going by connecting part one with this offering, then connecting again next issue for his final chapter.

Suffering. We all experience some. James Day has truth on this on page 21.

Did Jesus exist before he was born? That question is answered on pages 22 and 23.

Rachel Carr and Irene Poe offer thoughts from contrasting perspectives. Compare them as you read pages 24 and 25.

The way Mark Cain writes about marriage and celibacy, you'd think something is going around in his head and heart. Explore those topics with him on page 26.

Recommendations for vote at General Conference are printed on page 27.

Jean Hiner examines the thought, "In God's Image." Go with her on page 28.

Finally, Pastor Rex Cain concludes his thoughts on demonism, beginning on the back cover.

God bless you as you share in the thoughts and prayers of our writers this issue.

Why Russia Wants Economic Revival

Perhaps Russian peoples have finally discovered communication with global implications. This culturally diffused giant has awakened to the facts of life.

It's not guns and bombs which bring economic success. Military might does not guarantee a better life. Might does not beget right. Instead, to support a war machine costs money—at the expense of

national economy.

What brings a better life is participation in business with the rest of the world. Combine that possibility with a little free enterprise, Russians can again have vision, hope, and anticipate a glowing future.

Throw in a little recognition of cultural differences, a little democracy, let up on heavy-handedness from Moscow, then Russian people brighten up. A new realization takes hold.

The realization? Military might does not win friends and influence people. Only economic strength does.

Thus a kinder, gentler "Gorby" trots to a new summit in Washington. He takes the road show elsewhere as well; even meeting South Korean heads of state on neutral soil.

However, at home the economy is in a shambles, and will remain so until much-needed foreign investors are lured. It's a difficult lesson for communism to swallow, but it's one North Americans have learned over the last 45 years—since the end of World War II.

A Study of Economics

Perhaps the Japanese taught Americans the lesson first. By building a better car, one can bring the world to one's doorstep. Marketing and economic strategy make a lasting mark on the world, far outstripping the aftermath of a world war.

It's as if the world has learned a new way of life. Stick religiously to sound economic principles—take the long view and understand human need—to see growth in the "bottom line." That's the formula which leads to success.

Undoubtedly, there will be those who will tamper with the formula. Unable to profit from the mistakes of history, human nature's dark and greedy side—without proper moral and spiritual values—will rear its ugly head. Then the days of pre-

World War I and World War II will return.

The moral and the spiritual are two necessary realms which must be entered if "the good life" is to be discovered. Here the believer in Christ enters, offering creatures on our planet real hope and sustenance.

Traditionally in business, moral and spiritual principles are seen as tagalongs, optional, a problematic help over the short haul. If such a view is adopted globally, especially with Russian players coming into the picture, then economic

growth might be interpreted as the new god to save the world. The means becomes an end in itself.

When that scenario plays, then the predictions of John concerning the fall of "Babylon" in one hour (see Revelation 19) will bring catastrophe globally. The world will have literally gone to the dogs. A new order will be necessary.

That's the ultimate hope of believers in Christ. Then the Lord will return to wipe out the corrupt nations to establish his own rule and power.

Come, Lord Jesus!

Letters

Comments on the April/May Issue

I've enjoyed everything I've read so far. I plan to finish. We think of you often.

—Mesa, AZ.

I would like to see more emphasis on articles like "Changing Society," "Why I'm not a Unitarian," the *Until* book review, "Innate Immortality," and "Demonism." I really appreciated the spring, 1990, RESTITUTION HERALD and the February, 1984, is-

sue. I would love more inspiration and doctrine like it was in years past.

—Jefferson, OH.

Debbie Schmidlapp's "On Intimacy" is a new concept for me. Fletcher's "Preexistence & Predestination" was clear as glass, and Baldwin's "Deity of a Risen Savior" was perfect. I need more of Mattison, Landry, and Burnett. I've ordered *Until*.

—Hammond, LA.

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THE Restitution Herald

Vol. 79 June/July/1990 No. 5

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 six times a year.

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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Address all correspondence to THE RESTITUTION HERALD, Box 100, Oregon, IL 61061.

In England: THE RESTITUTION HERALD, 16 Parsley Close, Pinefields, Walnut Tree, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, England MK 77 DA.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

One Year, \$12 [£10]

Two Years, \$21 [£18]

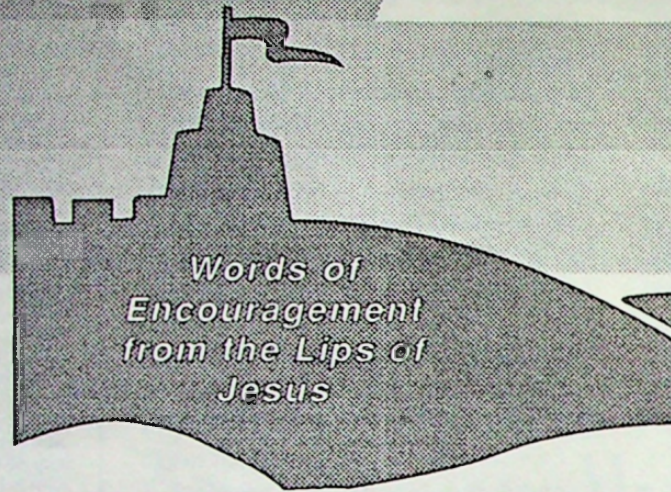
Three years, \$30 [£27]

[English price in brackets]

Most subscriptions begin with the February or August issue. Readers may begin full-year subscriptions at any time. Use the form on page 32 when corresponding concerning your subscription.

CREDITS: Russ Magaw, pages 6, 14, 25.

THE TRIUMPH OF OUR MESSAGE



"Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness... shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."
—Luke 12:3.

By Pastor Sidney Hatch

IT IS A CONSTANT source of grief and discouragement to lovers of the truth that the precious doctrines of God's Word are so often hindered, suppressed, or just simply ignored. This applies to such imperatives as conditional immortality, the oneness of God, or the hope of Christ's return and kingdom. Pulpits which should thunder forth these wonderful truths prefer to ignore them, or, in some instances, even oppose them.

Take heart, Christian! Our Lord assures us that such will not always be the case.

One day, after lunch with a Pharisee, Jesus warned his disciples against the "leaven" or doctrine of the Pharisees. But, when he did so, he gave some of the most wonderful encouragements in Scripture, encouragements that especially apply to truths which are ignored or suppressed.

First he said that there is nothing covered—even completely

covered—that shall not be revealed, "neither hid, that shall not be known" (Luke 12:2). Yes, our message may be covered now, but some day it will be uncovered and made known.

"Therefore whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops" (Luke 12:3).

The things which believers have been forced to share in secret in small groups, or whisper in private rooms, will be shouted from rooftops! It is the destiny of our message to have the greatest publicity in the future. It is foolish, therefore, for us to hide our faith. If we fail, God can raise up others to proclaim the truth.

Next, Jesus exhorts his disciples to fearlessness in the face of persecution (Luke 12:4, 5). Stop being afraid of your persecutors! Yes, they can slay a person. But after that, there is no more that they can do.

The one to fear is that One who, long after death has occurred, has the authority to cast a person into *gehenna*. That person, of course, is God.

The Apostle Paul told the Roman governor Felix, "there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24:15). The Lord Jesus, in his words to the disciples in Luke 12:4, 5, indicates that God will destroy the unjust in a fiery judgment. He, therefore, is the One whom we should fear. "The just," raised up in the resurrection, will be rewarded with immortality.

But then Jesus reminds the disciples of the individual care which God exercises over them (Luke 12:6, 7). Not a sparrow is forgotten before him—and they are of more value than many sparrows. More than that, even the very hairs of their heads are all numbered!

Jesus then gives his humble disciples one of the most staggering assurances in all Scripture:

Let us have hope. We anticipate the future triumph of all of God's Word.

It is the destiny of our message to have the greatest publicity in the future. It is foolish, therefore, for us to hide our faith.

Everyone who acknowledges him now before men, he will acknowledge before the angels of God (Luke 12:8).

Angels are concerned with the governments of the world (Dan. 10:13, 20; Heb. 2:5). We note also, for example, how an angel smote Herod, because he gave not God the glory (Acts 12:23).

Angels will be present at the second coming of Christ (Matt. 25:31). Perhaps, on that glorious occasion, the authority which angels now exercise over the world will be transferred to the

Someday the things that you believe are going to be uncovered and proclaimed far and wide.

sons of God. The "world to come" will be put in subjection, not to angels, but to man and the Son of man (Heb. 2:5; Psa. 8:4-6).

In that future day, we shall "judge" or "manage" the world. We shall also "judge" angels (1 Cor. 6:1-3). But this future judgeship will surely include a blessed fellowship. As someone has written, we shall converse with those who witnessed creation!

Tragically, those who deny Christ now will be denied before

the angels of God (Luke 12:9). What a terrifying moment that will be when they learn their fate and doom.

This leads, in our Lord's discourse, to a terrible warning: "Whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Luke 12:10).

"The Holy Ghost" is, of course, the "power from on high" (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). The book of Acts tells us how the disciples were endued with power from on high, and gave a great testimony to the nation of Israel. But Israel rejected this testimony. As a result, Jerusalem fell in 70 A.D., and Israel has been scattered to the end of the earth. Our Lord's dreadful prediction in Luke 21:24 has been fulfilled.

Then, before turning to the multitude to speak, Jesus gives another word of encouragement to the disciples (Luke 12:11, 12). They are going to be brought in before synagogues, magistrates, and rulers. But God's Spirit will teach them what to say.

This too is recorded for us in the Acts record—the persecution and scattering of the little flock. But it has had its application through

the centuries; and will continue to apply until Jesus comes.

This great passage (Luke 12:2-12) is often taken as simply a lecture against hypocrisy. This, of course, is because Jesus has just referred to "the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." However, the reference to hypocrisy is a further explanation of the doctrine of the Pharisees. It is pernicious, and it is hypocritical.

However, there is a connection between Jesus' reference to hypocrisy and his encouragements which follow: "Don't be hypocritical. That is, don't hide your true feelings or convictions, because of the fear of man. Someday the things you believe are going to be uncovered and proclaimed far and wide. Fear God, not man. He will care for you."

It is not just in apostolic times, but throughout the course of the so-called Christian era that Jesus' disciples have suffered and truth has been covered. Even today, much truth and serious study of God's Word must be considered in private classes. The "leaven of the Pharisees" is often in control.

But in view of such encouragements from the lips of Jesus himself, let us not give up. Let us have hope. We anticipate the future triumph of all of God's Word.

Reprinted with permission from Brief Bible Studies, Vol. 20, No. 4.

WHERE WILL YOUR NEXT PASTOR COME FROM?

By Pastor V. E. Kirkpatrick II

NOW WHAT ARE WE going to do? Our pastor has resigned and our search for a new one seems futile! There doesn't seem to be enough to go around. The General Conference and Oregon Bible College seem to be failing us in turning out an adequate number of pastors to fill our pulpits. Will we have to do without? What can we do?

If you have ever faced a situation like this, or if you presently are going without a pastor, you well know that a major concern of many people in our churches is the lack of an adequate number of pastors being produced by Oregon Bible College. This, of course, is a reflection of the number of students we currently have at Oregon Bible College. This concern is one that is shared by your Board of Directors and the staff at Oregon Bible College. Even as we consider relocation, a major concern is whether or not we can attract students to a new location. This is a question I have often pondered, and a question I have frequently been asked. As pastors in the Church of God seem to be a dying breed, it becomes a crucial concern for churches trying to hire a new pastor.

"Why aren't more of our young men choosing to becoming pastors?" There are many suggested reasons. "Oregon Bible College isn't recruiting the way it should be." What we don't realize is that Oregon Bible College's recruitment results are literally fantastic when we stop to consider that against great odds Oregon Bible College is attracting 10% of Church of God seniors each year. I challenge you to find another college attracting that high a percentage of eligible students. Others say, "Oregon Bible College doesn't offer enough," or, "Our education quality needs to be improved."

What is the solution? If you think moving the college to Atlanta is going to solve the problem, I



A vanishing breed?

suspect you are wrong. We will probably be able to offer a better education, but I doubt that will be a deciding factor. Nor is staying in Oregon going to solve the problem.

Where, then, will your next pastor come from? Today, the simple answer is, you may not have another pastor. You cannot depend on the General Conference or Oregon Bible College to supply one, nor can you expect them to do more than they are already doing. The fact is, only parents can produce pastors! Have you ever considered the possibility that it could be your son or daughter that the Lord has singled out to reach hundreds with the precious message of salvation that God has entrusted to us? It could be your son or daughter that will lead a small congregation like yours to faithfulness to God during the time we have left until Jesus returns. But unless you as parents see the possibilities and challenges, and unless you as parents encourage him or her to consider God's call to service, whether it be in the pastoral ministry, missions, or church planting, chances are Church of God pastors will continue to become an endangered species along with the Church of God as a whole.

Parents' attitudes are the key to the future! During my ministry I have often been shocked by parents who absolutely refuse to allow their children to enter the ministry. I have seen parents who insist on keeping their pastor on survival wages point out that you can't be a success in the ministry. Attitudes such as these have produced the current lack of pastors in training. The bottom line is what your definition of success is. If you pass on an attitude that pastors are not successful and fulfilled, in all probability your children will never desire that profession, even if you would allow it, and the possibility is that they may even leave the church. If

***Becoming a pastor has a lot to do with
the way a young person has been taught to think!
And home is where that takes place.***

you hold your pastor in high regard, and understand that true success is preparing people for eternity, that attitude will be passed on to your children.

I wish I could share the joys, feelings of fulfillment, and the sense of accomplishment that belongs to the pastor. But that would take a book in itself. However, let me say this: I would take the elation of having someone you have worked with step out into the aisle and come forward to give his life to Jesus, over any monetary gain or success by the world's standards. The rewards of the ministry are vastly superior to the sacrifices of perhaps never accumulating wealth or worldly success. To me, being able to serve God in his ministry is the greatest occupation a person could have. Granted, it is necessary to make enough financially to survive, but it is the responsibility of the church to understand that and provide adequately for you and your family. Paul points out that a worker is "worthy of his hire." A church's attitude toward God's chosen ministers and our individual Christianity are often tested in the words of Paul's instructions.

In a world where we are taught to measure success by the size of a paycheck, the car we drive, the possessions we accumulate, it is hard for parents to see their children give their lives to a ministry of sacrifice. Yet, understanding that God has called their child to his service is the greatest compliment Christian parents could receive. Becoming a pastor has a lot to do with the way a young person has been taught to think! And home is where that takes place. Timothy is an excellent example of the dynamics of that early education. No one can take a parent's place in forming those value systems. It is also possible that if our young people haven't developed these value systems, it says something about our depth of Christian commitment at home.

Where will your next pastor come from? That is a good question! If you keep looking elsewhere and ignoring the fact that God might be calling your son or daughter, you will probably never have another one.

Oregon Bible College can only supplement the training you have already given as it strives to develop pastors for the Church of God. Have you ever thought of the awesome responsibility God gave Mary by entrusting Jesus to her care and rearing? Perhaps he has entrusted your minister to your care and rearing. How are you doing?

OREGON BIBLE COLLEGE?

**“hmm...
well...
Nah.”**

Is this how you or people you know are deciding against a one-year preparation for life? If so, apply the brakes and think it over once more. In all likelihood that same ho-humness is present in your other career choices—whether in the planning stages or underway.

Remember, “*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might*” (Eccl. 9:10, NIV).

Ho-humness is not found in the Christian's dictionary—especially with such major issues.

God is our strength giver, sustainer, and provider. Do not fail to request his guidance in this matter.

OBC may or may not be your choice, but what you need is a decision.

—Mark Cain
OBC Sophmore

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I believe that all of them [the spiritual gifts] are available to the church today. But . . .

Do We Have The Right To Contradict Scripture?

By Pastor Jim Graham

“Well, it happened! I didn’t really think that it would, but it did. In fact I thought things were going pretty well without ‘it.’ But we got it anyway.

“Well, some got it. I didn’t. But I didn’t get the flu this year either. And as this runs its course, I feel grateful that I missed them both.

“What is it we, or rather some, got? Well, the Holy Ghost, of course. I mean the ‘Super Hybrid Brand.’ You know, the ‘Pow,’ ‘Socko,’ ‘Shazamm’ brand. The tongue-talkin’, spirit-slayin’, fallin’-on-the-ground, word-of-knowledge, health-and-wealth, raise-the-dead brand.

“Now don’t start feeling sorry for me and don’t attempt to intimidate me with accusations of blasphemy. I’ve figured out why I didn’t get it, don’t have it, and probably never will.”

You see, it happened again. We recently lost some members who were at odds with the church over the gifts of the Spirit and the exercise of those gifts. As I write this, I am also aware of other churches going through what we have experienced. My reason for writing this is to let those involved know that I have felt condemned, belittled, and rejected. These feelings have left me confused. I try to follow the Word of God. I believe in Scripture as the source of all doctrine, correction, and training in righteousness. My confusion comes from the fact that I find contradiction with teachings and practices espoused by those who “got it” and with what God reveals in Scripture.

When we look at spiritual gifts we need look at only a small portion of Scripture. First Corinthians, Ephesians, and Romans are the only places where we find it. They reveal a number of different gifts and I believe that all of them are available to the church today. But . . .

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines” (1 Cor. 12:11).

Why is the gift of tongues promoted as a gift for all believers or as the evidence of a spiritual baptism? Scripture does not teach this. Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 used the body as an illustration of gifted believers. We are different in gift and ministry. This is what will allow the body to develop and grow—each one exercising a unique gift just as the body and its different organs. If we all are to have one common gift, then I would propose that Paul used a most inappropriate illustration to teach this truth.

“Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church” (1 Cor. 14:12).

I have always believed that God’s actions are based upon what is best for his people. His gifts are for unity and the building up of the body. Why, then, would he give a specific gift to a believer, if it would cause division in the church? Or to a wife, if it would cause division in a marriage? This is an important question in light of Paul’s admonition for the wives to be silent (and ask their husbands at home) in relation to gifts (1 Co:

The Spirit which inspired the writing of the Bible will never be in contradiction to its words.

14:34-36). Why would it be exhibited in a marriage or a church where it would cause division?

One of our departed members disclosed that she spoke in tongues to another of our members. She was confronted with wise advice. "I am concerned. It caused a split in a church in which I was previously a member. It will cause trouble here too." The one who spoke in tongues responded with words unlike our Lord's: "Too bad!" Is the Spirit of God responsible for this type of attitude? I do not believe so!

Some who "got it" said that "we" (who did not get it) squelched the healing of one of our members. This member had been healed of a long-standing back problem. She was healed! And she continues to be! Now I would think that if we "squelched the healing," she would not be healed. I want you to know that I have great difficulty in this logic, for I do not believe that any mortal can have that type of power over God. If we evaluate the ability to squelch healing . . . we might look at the recent deaths of two within our church family. These two were prayed for by those who claim the gift of healing and had in faith been declared healed. Yet they died. If we who have not experienced the "special gifts" are to be blamed for squelching the healing of one who is healed, who is to be blamed when healing fails? Perhaps the ones who did the praying do not have the gift of healing they so boldly claim.

"If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God" (1 Cor. 14:27, 28).

"I have to go where I can see the fullness of God." So we lost another to this movement. I have wondered what the "fullness of God" means. Is it a place where speaking in tongues takes place in public services? Where no interpretations are given or where more than two or three speak? How can this be the fullness of God when it is in

direct contradiction to Paul's admonition for orderly worship in 1 Corinthians 14?

Is it where Christians, even though liberated from the power of Satan, can be demonized and require exorcism? Often these demons are blamed for a wide variety of ills—over-eating, illness, lust, suicidal thoughts, and even regrets left over from a less-than-perfect childhood. More than an exorcist, I believe an analyst is in order. A non-Christian can indeed be possessed by his Lord, but if a Christian can be controlled by Satan (or his minions) then Hebrews 2:14, 15 must be reexamined. Does Christ break the power of Satan or doesn't he?

Why, then, would he give a specific gift to a believer, if it would cause division in the church?

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:9, 10).

Is God obligated because of Jesus' death on Calvary to grant us perfect health as a sign of this victory? One would wonder why anyone would ever suffer illness (or die, for that matter) since death is also a consequence of the sin Christ came to destroy. I wonder why Paul was plagued by an affliction in his flesh. And why he did not always heal others? Surely, the one who spoke of healing and practiced healing would understand so simple a truth—unless it is not truth.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. I also believe that all gifts are still available for members of Christ's church. I believe that God heals and performs miracles. I believe that Satan can assume control over his own. And I believe in the Bible. *The Spirit which inspired the writing of the Bible will never be in contradiction to its words.* The actions prompted by the Spirit will never violate the words inspired by the Spirit. Be assured that, if they are, it is not the Spirit of God but rather one masquerading as God.

DECEPTIONS

By PASTOR GORDON LANDRY

Media Bias

I am indebted to Sr. Betty Ackels for supplying information contained in this article.

A column by Joseph Sobran in the May 3rd Kansas City Star is headlined "News media bias shows in abortion coverage." On April 19, 1989, advocates of legal abortion planned a march in Washington, D.C. "The news media gave the event advance coverage, amounting to eager promotion, all week long. It was reported before it happened. 'Nightline' devoted a segment to it." The resulting crowd was estimated at 319,000. It was front-page material for many papers and magazines. However, on April 28, 1990, *anti*-abortionists demonstrated in Washington, D.C., with little mention in the press ahead of time, and the result of the meeting was relegated to deep interiors of papers. "The size of the crowd is in dispute. The Cable News Network put it at 60,000—an absurdity. The U.S. Park Service said 200,000. To my admittedly untrained eye it seemed at least twice that. United Press International estimated 569,000."

When we lived in Baton Rouge during the school desegregation crisis, we saw firsthand the "managing of the news." When black militants took control of a specific building on the Southern University campus, one who was interviewed said something to this effect when asked why the police had given them an ultimatum about leaving the building: "We didn't do nothin'. We just took this building, and we ain't givin' it back." But when that clip reached the national news, the person was shown saying only, "We didn't do nothin'." The words were correct; the facts were there,

but they weren't complete. Managing the news can take many forms. Editing out pertinent facts manipulates the thinking of the viewer or reader.

Sobran continues, "The real model for the news media is the TV commercial, where some information is given but is embedded in a carefully arranged format designed to manipulate the viewer's response. An effective commercial also has to omit information that would complicate that response.

"TV news actually has two kinds of bias. One is inherent in the medium itself. The camera loves dramatic images: hurricane, war, violent crime, famished Ethiopians, dead otters covered with oil.

"An aborted child would be as dramatic a camera subject as could be imagined. But you won't see it on TV, because a different kind of bias supervenes: the personal partisanship of television journalists. The image of aborted children would elicit just the kind of response they don't want. . . .

"We are not being informed; we are being manipulated. What passes for news about the abortion issue is more like a series of commercials for legal abortion."

When asked for signs of his coming and of the end of the world, Jesus' first response was, "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:3, 4). Americans

(and I'm sure it holds true with much of the remainder of the world), are easily deceived, easily manipulated. This holds true in the religious world as well as in the secular. I've just listened to a radio program in which the talk-show host raked Christianity up one side and down the other because it teaches abstinence from sex outside of marriage. His view? If you're a teen-ager, don't be stupid and ruin your life by "getting caught"; that is, make sure you don't get pregnant if you're a girl; make sure you use precautions if you're a boy. But abstain? "Why should we impose our morals on these kids? That's a decision for everyone to make for himself."

Talk-show hosts—whether on radio or TV—carry a lot of weight. No matter how far-fetched their "reasoning," many will say, "That sounds like he knows what he's talking about." Be wary of deception, from wherever it may originate.

Ecumenism—Good or Bad?

Thanks to Bro. Arlen Marsh for sending a news item upon which this article is based.

Southern Baptist official Gary Leazer foresees a merging in style and practices of many of the "Christian" religions in America. "In the future, we're going to see less loyalty to a particular denomination and more fuzziness between denominations," he is quoted as saying. Indeed, this has been happening for a number of years. In 30 short years (1955-1985) Americans went from a ratio of one in 24 who left the faith of their childhood to one in three. That means

**"We are not being
informed;
we are being
manipulated."**

that every third person now has no allegiance to the faith of his fathers.

Many years ago I thought that when the Bible spoke of a falling away (1 Tim. 4:1-6), it had to be with denominations other than the Church of God of the Abrahamic Faith. But I see now almost a cynical attempt to shy away from the faith of Abraham as though it were a "hot potato" that will harm. What can be the harm of identifying ourselves with the father of the faithful? (Gal. 3:6-9; Rom. 4:1-3, 13; Jas. 2:21-23.) Let us remain staunch in the beliefs that kept Abraham in the good graces of God.

"If one denomination does not offer a particular item, people will go to another faith to find it," Leazer said. Robert Schuller has built a crystal cathedral on the motto, "Find a need and fill it." This is fine, but many people do not *know* their needs. Though I realize I'm not the final judge—nor would I care to be—it seems to me that people need to know the gospel message of the coming kingdom of God and the things pertaining to Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:5, 12.) This is the need of the world. Crystal cathedrals built upon crumbling foundations of man-made lore coupled with *some* truths of God's Word (those universally accepted among "Christian" denominations—love, kindness, mercy, etc.) offer little respite for eternity.

When we question whether ecumenism is good or bad we need to ponder the importance of those teachings—doctrines, if you will—which called our forefathers from the mainstream of "Christianity." Today, those truths are subtly under attack. "If that's all we have, we are woefully lacking in the important things of the Scripture," one might wail. Another might say, "We've emphasized those old doctrines for a hundred years or more, and we're losing ground right along." And a third may question, "Don't you see that a vast improvement in our system, a complete overhaul, is neces-

Crystal cathedrals built upon crumbling foundations of man-made lore coupled with *some* truths of God's Word (those universally accepted among "Christian" denominations—love, kindness, mercy, etc.) offer little respite for eternity.

sary if we're to 'preach the gospel to every creature'?"

The problem we've encountered as a "denomination" (if you want to call us that) has never been in the message. The message has life, because it emanates from him who is life. The problem has been our unwillingness or inability to get the message across to others. (Yes, I'm guilty too.) We need to be strengthened in our message, not trade it in for something a little more flashy and a little better received. We cannot gut the gospel and still expect it to have life-giving properties.

I know; I can hear some of you saying now, "That way of thinking is the whole problem. The hope for life and energy today and immortality for tomorrow is in Jesus Christ, and him crucified, not in the 'message.'" I concur. But I would hasten to add, "Can you divorce the message Jesus taught—and died for—from him? Can you ignore the hundreds—yes, hundreds—of passages that show God's unwillingness to profane his message to Israel? He sent prophet after prophet to teach his people that idolatry (worshiping other than the true God of heaven—does trinity fall into this category?) would portend their demise.

"Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the LORD. For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer. 2:11-13). Meditate seriously upon this evil perpetrated by the people of God. Have we too begun hewing out cisterns that can in no way hold the water of life? Have we begun to forsake the God of heaven for a more convenient and popular god? Have we begun to follow in the footsteps of those ancient peoples who disappointed a righteous and loving God? Then consider what occurred in the life of that nation.

And later, when the Jews had been back in the promised land for a goodly period of time and the heavy hand of Rome ruled and taxed and dominated, their Messiah wept over their capital city, and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:37-38).

Earlier, John the Baptist had said, "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham" (3:9). If we fail as miserably as did the Jews, and particularly the scribes and Pharisees, God is still able to raise up those who will do his bidding without compromising the message.

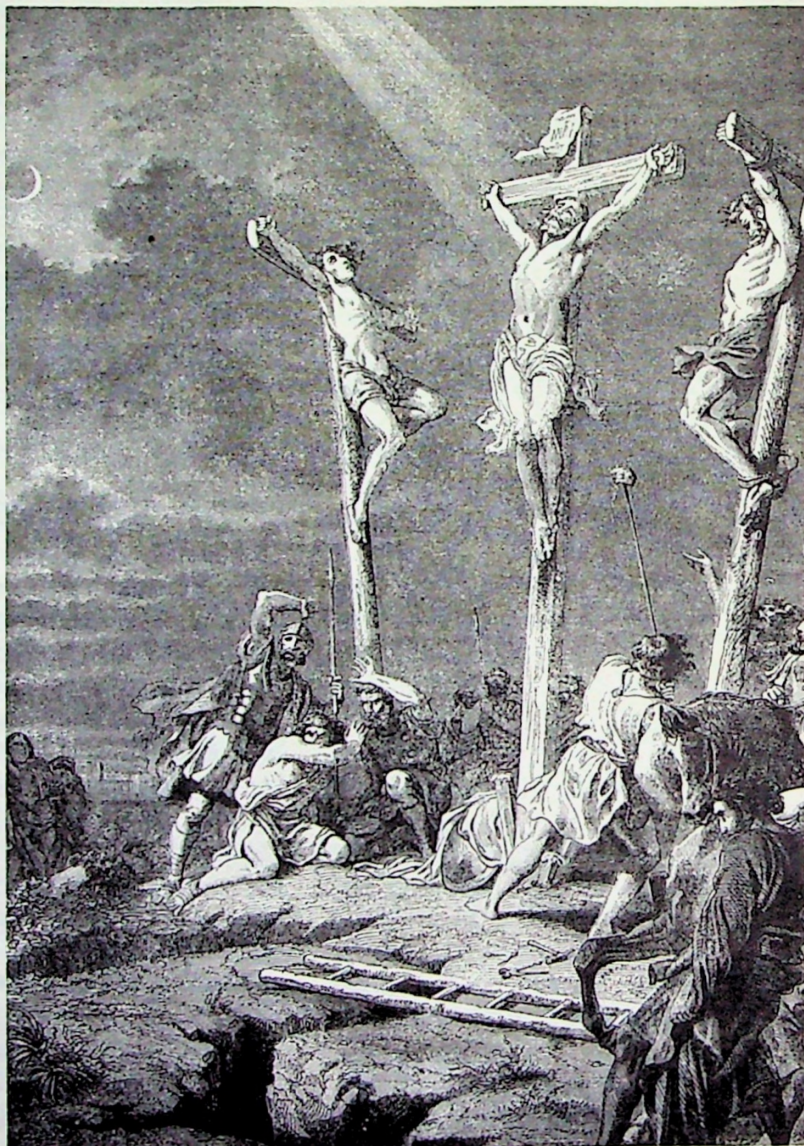
"Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be

(Please turn to page 19)

“Really This Man Was God’s Son”

By Hollis Partlowe

“Jesus uttered a loud cry, and breathed out His life. And the curtain [of the Holy of Holies] of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion who stood facing Him saw Him expire this way, he said, Really this Man was God’s Son!”
(Mark 15:37-39, AB)



The Christian needs to look often at Calvary—Calvary, where we find forgiveness of sin, newness of life, and the assurance of eternal life in the age to come.

The cross is God’s great plus sign to the world. The cross is the center of God’s moral universe. To this center God ever pointed, and the eye of faith ever looked forward until the Savior came. Now we look backward at Golgotha, the place of a skull, where our Lord was crucified for our sins. Praise his name!

Martin Luther said of the cross: “It is a pulpit from which God preaches repentance and remission of sins to a fallen race.” The value of the cross is determined by the man who died on it. Who was this man who died between two thieves nearly 2000 years ago? The whole testimony of Scripture says he was and is the Son of God.

Three important points are immediately discernable in this text (Mark 15:37-39), one in each verse.

1. Christ died (v. 37)
2. The veil was rent (v. 38)
3. Jesus is the Son of God (v. 39)

Jesus Died (v. 37)

He gave up the ghost, that is, he breathed his last. Now God had a purpose in Christ’s death—the redemption of a fallen race. Certainly Jesus experienced a real death and a real resurrection, the only one to be raised to immortality never to die again (Rev. 1:18; Rom. 6:9; 2 Tim. 1:10).

Jesus really died. There was a time when Jesus was not among the living. He was among the dead—for three days. “He was cut off out of the land of the living” (Isa. 53:8, KJV). Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 are two great Calvary portions of the Old Testament. Isaiah writes in the pa

tense as if Jesus had already died in his day. God's Word is so sure that he can speak as if it had already occurred, while in reality Jesus died about seven centuries down the corridors of time.

The Rent Veil (v. 38)

Notice it was torn from top to bottom, indicating that God did it. The tabernacle and later the temple had two rooms: the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place, which were separated by the veil or a huge curtain. The priests ministered regularly in the first room, but only the high priest could enter the Most Holy Place on one day of the year, the day of Atonement. Moreover, he could only enter with blood. No one would even think of entering otherwise, for it meant instant death.

The priest would have been in the Holy Place at the time Jesus died. Imagine the shock when suddenly the veil was torn from the top to the bottom. The timing was significant since it was the time of the evening sacrifice. The rending of the veil could not have happened unnoticed.

Two remarkable events occurred at Jesus' death: an earthquake (Matt. 27:51), and the veil of the temple torn in two. The veil had separated man from God, but now by his death Jesus has opened up for the world a new and living way into the presence of God (Heb. 10:19, 20).

The clear message of the rent veil is access to God. The way into God's presence was opened. The rent veil provides access to God in all his holiness. Each believer now has what only the high priest had and much more. Simultaneous with Jesus' death the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The direction of the tear indicates it was God's action.

Jesus Is the Son of God (v. 39)

The army officer who observed the crucifixion exclaimed: "Really this man was God's Son." Jesus is God's only begotten Son (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9), while we as Christians have been adopted into God's family (Gal. 4:6, 7); Rom. 8:15-17). We are children of God by redemption as well as creation (2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus is our elder brother.

The most important thing about Christ is that he is the Son of God. Why? Because that gives infinite worth to his sacrifice. It's not hard to understand how one man could take the place of one other man, but how could one man die for all of mankind? Paul the apostle deals with this complicated issue in Romans 5:12-21. In effect he says that one man (Adam) brought sin and death to mankind, and One Man (Christ) can get us out of it. That's really what the whole Bible is about. Scripture teaches adamantly that there was no sin or death before Adam (Rom. 5:12; 1 Cor. 15:21). In Christ we are declared free from sin because our Savior was and is the Son of God. Hallelujah! Throughout the New Testament he is continually referred to by this title. In fact, the theme of John's Gospel is that Jesus is God's only begotten Son. Then, too, the purpose

of John's Gospel is to convince us of that truth. Toward the end of it he wrote: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (20:31).

The witness of the centurion is especially meaningful when you consider that his words could have gotten him into trouble with both the Jews and Romans. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God is one of Mark's important themes, which makes his servanthood even more wonderful. Although he had no reason to die of his own, he poured himself out for you and me. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:8-11).

Normally a person would have been on a cross two or three days, but Jesus' death came rapidly which accounts for Pilate's surprise (Mark 15:44). Jesus breathed his last, having been on the cross only six hours. Small wonder that Pilate "marvelled"!

The centurion who stood by observing these unusual happenings was the Gentile Roman officer in charge of the execution squad and accountable to Pilate (Mark 15:45). A centurion was usually in charge of 100 soldiers. This one was in charge of a smaller detachment for the crucifixion. It also adds evidence that Mark wrote for the Roman audience.

As Jesus was dying the army officer exclaimed, "Really this man was God's Son"

That's remarkable because of his pagan background. The Roman officer's confession is the climax of Mark's revelation of Jesus' identity. "Really this man was God's Son."

Because Jesus is God's only begotten Son, and because he died as a sacrifice for our sins, we can come to God and have assurance of eternal life in God's coming kingdom. Our Lord said: "Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24, NIV). This means that the community of believers has already been perfected in Christ. His death was God's judicial atonement whereby the sins of mankind were judged. By faith we have been translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. (Col. 1:13.)

Jesus became our Mercy Seat, whereby the claims of the law have been fully and totally satisfied. He put away our sins forever by the sacrifice of himself. (Heb. 10:12.)

How do we apply the work of Calvary to our lives today? "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9, 10).

The *Coming* of Christ and the *Coming* of Antichrist

By Anthony Buzzard

A definite program of events leading up to the arrival of Christ is given us by Paul in his second letter to the Thessalonians. "Scholarship" has been most reluctant to accept that Paul could have written such "fanatical" material. It all sounds most unlike Paul, some say. They would much rather he had not embarrassed us with such "doomsday" material.

Second Thessalonians is not the speculative forebodings of a sick mind. It claims to be divinely inspired prediction by one who was convinced he had the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:16.)

Let us recall the text:

"We implore you, brothers and sisters, in regard to the Coming of our

**Many will be gullibly
lured into accepting as
genuine the pseudo-
parousia of the
Antichrist.**

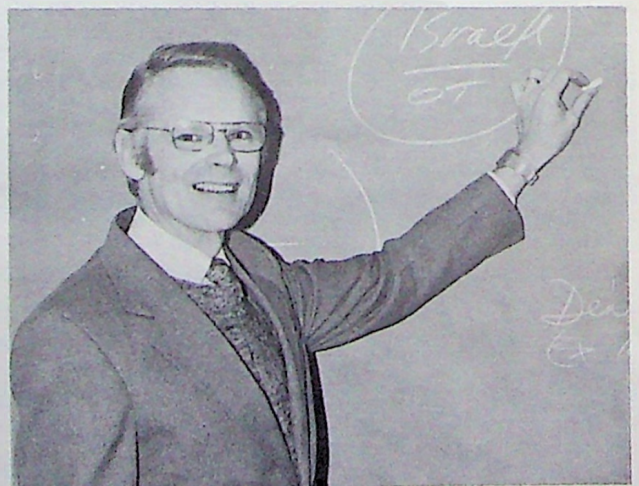
Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to meet Him, not to be shaken from your conviction, nor to become disturbed either by spirit or word, or letter pretending to come from us, claiming that the Day of the Lord is already present. Let no one

deceive you by any means. That Day [of the Lord's Coming] will not come unless the Apostasy [falling away from Truth] comes first and the Man of Sin has been revealed, the Son of destruction, who opposes Christ and exalts himself above everything called God or an object of worship, so that he enters the Temple of God and takes his seat there, making the claim for himself that he is God.

"Surely you remember that I repeatedly told you these things when I was with you. Now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. For the mysterious activity of evil is already at work; only he who hinders it will continue to do so until he is taken out of the way. And then that Man of Sin will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the manifested glory of his COMING. The COMING of the Man of Sin is to be in accordance with the energy of Satan, accompanied by every form of miracle—all based on falsehood—and with every possible deceit based on iniquity. This will mislead those

who are perishing, because they did not previously love the Truth in order to be saved. On this account God will cause these seducing influences to work on them, with the result that they will believe the Lie, so that they may be judged who did not believe the Truth but took pleasure in unrighteousness" (2 Thes. 2:1-12, translated from the Greek).

It must be clear from this passage that Paul was deeply concerned to pass on these prophetic warnings to the young church at Thessalonica. Indeed, a proper understanding of the future was a significant part of Paul's gospel message. He "repeatedly told them" about the coming crisis (2



In this article, author Buzzard cautions of the deceptive events preceding Christ's return.

Thes. 2:5, the verb is in the continuous past tense). Since the matters dealt with have still not yet received their fulfillment (Jesus has not yet returned to destroy the Man of Sin), the warnings must be kept alive in every generation until events finally vindicate the truth of the prophecy.

The theme of Paul's message is that the final events of the present age are to be marked by a dreadful departure from Truth—the "Apostasy" (cp. Dan. 11:30, 32). In connection with this defection from Truth the ultimate wicked individual will appear, in whom Satan will concentrate his most intense deceptive activity. The Coming of Jesus will thankfully put an end to this reign of terror and error (cp. Dan. 11:21-45).

Paul is keen to instruct his audience (and his point is equally relevant in our time) that an immediate arrival of Christ is impossible. What we and the Thessalonians are to understand is that two things are scheduled to *precede* the arrival of Christ—the "Apostasy" and the appearance of the "Man of Sin." It is out of the question, Paul wants his disciples to grasp, that Christ can have returned or can return yet. The "Man of sin" must appear first!

Paul's choice of words to describe the Antichrist's appearance are highly significant. Three times he states that he will be "revealed." This is no normal appearance, therefore, but an event attended by supernatural phenomena calculated to ape the Coming of Christ himself. Christ's own coming is likewise to be a "revelation" (2 Thes. 1:7). The Book of Revelation also speaks of the amaze-

ment with which the arrival of Antichrist (the "Beast") will be greeted (Rev. 13:3). As if to underline the counterfeit nature of the revelation of

A tragic fate awaits those who have not loved the Truth.

the Antichrist, Paul uses the term *parousia* (Coming) twice in quick succession, first to refer to Christ (verse 8) and then to the Antichrist (verse 9).

As is well known *parousia* is the standard term for the arrival of the Messiah at his return. But Antichrist is also to be manifested by a *parousia*. The clear implication is that many will be gullibly lured into accepting as genuine the pseudo-*parousia* of the Antichrist. This will be an appropriate judgment on their previous refusal to embrace Truth. The great lesson to be learned from all this is that we are to diligently learn Truth now, so that we will not be taken in by the Devil's deceptive techniques.

The essential and simple point conveyed by the Apostle's warnings is that *the first parousia revealing the Antichrist is a false one*, though it will give every appearance of being genuine. Did not Jesus warn about the appearance of false Messiahs?

"And then [during the great tribulation] if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ,' or 'Look, there He is,' do not believe it. False Christs and false prophets will arise to show signs and wonders to lead astray, if pos-

sible, the elect. But take heed, I have told you everything beforehand" (Mark 13:21-23).

No doubt the Antichrist will promise peace and security, but "when they say 'Peace and security,' sudden destruction will come upon them" (1 Thes. 5:3). A tragic fate awaits those who have not loved the Truth. "But you, brothers and sisters, are not in darkness so that that Day [the Return of the real Messiah] should overtake you as a thief" (1 Thes. 5:4). The world, however, will experience the Second Coming like a thief breaking in upon their falsely secure world.

The church, therefore, is to look for the real Revelation and Return of Jesus Christ which cannot occur until the counterfeit revelation of the "Man of Sin" has been manifested. Just as the mystery of the kingdom of God is now at work among those who are preparing to enter the kingdom when it comes, so the rival mystery of lawlessness is now developing in preparation for its final and awful manifestation in the Antichrist.

Equipped with the indispensable outline of the course of future events, as given by Paul and Jesus, and avoiding systems which contradict it, the Christian will be able to discern true from false and to "stand before the Lord" at his coming (Luke 21:36).

Correction:

In the second full sentence on page 31 of last issue's *Demonism* article, it should read ". . . the Hebrew root *krt* . . ." rather than ". . . the Hebrew word *but* . . ."



Christianity's Central Concept

Message of the Apostles

Our Savior's resurrection was the outstanding message of the apostles as they carried the good news of salvation into all the world. The risen Christ, with the apostles on the Mount of Olives prior to his ascension into heaven, told them: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Faith in the resurrection of Jesus transformed the lives of the apostles and made the church a tremendous influence in winning thousands of persons to Christ. Apart from the resurrection of Christ, the New Testament would never have been written.

The theme of Peter's message in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost was the resurrection of Christ. (Acts 2:22-24, 31-36.)

When Peter and John brought healing to the lame man at the gate called Beautiful in the Temple at Jerusalem, they insisted that the risen Christ had performed this miracle through his power. (Acts 3:12-16.) "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:10).

When Peter preached the gospel to Cornelius the Roman Centurion at Caesarea, he emphasized that God had raised Jesus from the dead, and that for-

giveness of sins was available to any person who would believe in him. (Acts 10:34-43.)

Before his conversion, Paul the apostle had been a notorious persecutor of Christians. On the road to Damascus, he saw the risen Christ who had ascended into heaven. He experienced a dramatic conversion. Saul of Tarsus, the persecutor, was transformed into Paul the apostle. (Acts 9:1-20.)

The risen Christ became the dominating influence in the life of Paul, who later declared, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Paul gave special emphasis to the truth that Christ has risen from the dead as he carried the gospel message to the important cities of the Roman Empire, such as Ephesus, Corinth, Athens, and Rome.

Athens was the school of the world. It was a center of art, architecture, music, drama, literature, science, and philosophy. Athens had been the home of famous philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, whose ideas concerning man's nature and destiny presented a sharp contrast to the message of Paul. Although Plato and Aristotle had lived nearly four centuries before the time of the New Testament, their thinking continued to influence the Mediterranean world.

When Paul addressed the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers on Mars' Hill near the Acropolis and Agora in Athens, he told them about the one true God, the Creator of heaven and earth. He told them: "He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:31).

The Greek philosophers mocked at Paul when they heard him setting forth the truth of the resurrection of the dead. The concept of the resurrection

Excerpted from the book, "Triumph of the Resurrection" by the same author, pp. 68-72, © 1981, Church of God General Conference.

By Dr. Alva G. Huffer

Part Two

marks the sharpest difference between Greek philosophy and the Bible. Greek philosophy advocated the false theory of the immortality of the soul; the Bible sets forth the truth of the resurrection as man's only hope.

The resurrection of Christ is the seedbed of the entire message of salvation. This central concept is the major theme of the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles of Paul, the General Epistles, and the Apocalypse. In other words, the entire New Testament was written from the perspective of the resurrection of Christ as an event that had actually occurred.

Major Emphasis of Early Christians

The resurrection as the central concept of the Christian faith was the vital force within the church, not only in the ministry and life of the apostles during the New Testament era, but also in the early centuries of the Church Age.

Writings of the early Ante-Nicene Fathers (men who lived before the Council of Nicea, 325 A.D.) show that many believed in conditional immortality. They emphasized the resurrection of Christ as the central theme of the gospel. They pictured the believer's hope as resurrection to immortality at Christ's second coming. They described the wicked's final destiny as destruction. They set forth immortality as a gift of God.

New Testament Christians and those living during the early centuries of the Church Age celebrated the resurrection of Christ by assembling for worship on the first day of the week. Every Sunday was Easter in miniature.

Faith in the return of Christ and their future resurrection to immortality enabled Christian martyrs, during the time of the great persecutions, to face death triumphantly.

Belief in future resurrection was a dominant theme emphasized in the early paintings on catacomb walls—the subterranean passageways where the early Christians were buried.

Belief in resurrection was emphasized by the early Christians in the manner in which they designed and erected church buildings. The basilica-style church building and the octagonal-style church structure emphasized the concept of the resurrection.

Baptism and communion—the two ordinances

ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ to be observed by the church until he returns—set forth the central truths of the Christian faith. The central concepts pictured in these two ordinances are Christ's sacrificial death and his glorious resurrection.

The triumph of Christ's resurrection and the believer's future triumph over death when Christ returns have inspired some of the great music of the Christian faith. Indeed, Bible Christianity is characterized by triumph, hope, and joy.

Torch of Truth Burns Brightly in Darkness

During the centuries following the death of the apostles, the church gradually slipped from the light into the darkness, from truth into error, and from simple Bible faith to acceptance of man-made creeds.

The Bible doctrine of conditional immortality was gradually replaced by Plato's philosophy of the soul's natural immortality. This influence can be traced through such men as Athenagoras and Tertullian, and it can be seen in its fullness in the theology of Augustine.

The Roman Catholic Church came into being as the church became inwardly paganized and as Christianity assumed an official place of authority in the empire. Constantine was the first Christian emperor (306-337). The Roman emperor, Theodosius (378-395), made Christianity the state religion.

As day turns gradually into darkness, so the early church was gradually transformed into the Roman imperial church and then the Roman papal church. When the papal church gained its authority, all opposition was suppressed by force. Men who would neither submit to papal power nor assent to its man-made creeds were treated as heretics.

The torch of truth, which was almost extinguished by the Roman Church of the Middle Ages, burned brightly again with the coming of the Protestant Reformation. Men asserted their freedom from Roman authority. Common people began to read the Bible in their own language. Important Bible doctrines, such as the return of Christ, future resurrection for believers, and Christ's coming kingdom, were restored in the message of the church. The reading of the Bible, forbidden for many centuries, has caused many persons around the world to accept the Bible's teaching concerning the believer's hope in resurrection to immortality at Christ's second coming.



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Part 2

The Israel of God

By Pastor Francis E. Burnett

This article will focus on material from God's Word to show the punishment for disobedience which has been upon Israel for centuries. Let it be reestablished that Israel was a nation unto God and that has not changed. "What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the LORD our God is near us whenever we pray to him? And what other nation is so great as to have such righteous decrees and laws as this body of laws I am setting before you today?" (Deut. 4:7, 8, NIV).

Why was Israel chosen out of all the nations of the world? "To accomplish His work of reclaiming the nations unto Himself, God planned to work through one chosen nation. This one chosen nation would be an example and a missionary witness to other nations."—Alva Huffer in *Systematic Theology*. Let this be added, "For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth" (Deut. 7:6).

In preparation for entering the land of Canaan, God through Moses gave this commandment: "The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways. And all people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid" (Deut. 28:9, 10). But God warned them in this manner: "It shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and

his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee" (Deut. 28:15). There are another 53 verses in Deuteronomy 28 which tell and describe the curses that would come.

Israel did not keep the commandments, and God's Word began to be fulfilled. One of the curses was, "The LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, even wood and stone" (Deut. 28:64). Many are the verses in the Bible telling of the carrying out by the God of heaven of the scattering of Israel. "Therefore will I scatter them as the stubble that passeth away by the wind of the wilderness" (Jer. 13:24). "I lifted up mine hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen, and disperse them through the countries; because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their fathers' idols" (Ezek. 20:23, 24).

Yes, it is true that the Israelites did not keep the commandments and laws that God had given them. "They kept not the covenant of God, and refused to walk in his law; and forgot his works, and his wonders that he had shewed them" (Psa. 78:10, 11). "Yet they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies: but turned back, and dealt unfaithfully like their fathers: they were turned aside like a deceitful bow" (Psa. 78:56, 57). "And first I will recom

“Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of thy youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you” (Ezek. 16:60).

pense their iniquity and their sin double; because they have defiled my land, they have filled mine inheritance with the carcasses of their detestable and abominable things” (Jer. 16:18).

Israel as a nation did turn away from the living God. They did not keep the commandments and statutes. They bowed themselves to the idols of the nations around them. They failed to remember God in the way he demanded: “The LORD our God is one LORD.” “And it shall come to pass, when ye shall say, Wherefore doeth the LORD our God all these things unto us? then shalt thou answer them, Like as ye have forsaken me, and served strange gods in your land, so shall ye serve strangers in a land that is not yours” (Jer. 5:19). “‘You have rejected me,’ declares the LORD. ‘You keep on backsliding. So I will lay hands on you and destroy you; I can no longer show compassion’ ” (Jer. 15:6, NIV).

However, God is going to remember Israel and the promises he made with their ancestors—mainly, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We read, “I will remember my covenant with Jacob and my covenant with Isaac and my covenant with Abraham, and I will remember the land. . . . For the land will be deserted by them and will enjoy its sabbaths while it lies desolate. . . . Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely” (Lev. 26:42-44, NIV). “Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of thy youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. . . . So I will establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 16:60-62, NIV).

We have these very wonderful promises given by our God on which to rely. “To me this is like the days of Noah,

when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again. Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be moved, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace

removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you” (Isa. 54:9, 10, NIV.) “I am with you and will save you, declares the LORD. Though I completely destroy all the nations among which I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you” (Jer. 30:11, NIV).

In the next issue, we will bring forth covenants and promises that God will fulfill and that were not made for anyone other than the nation of Israel.

DECEPTIONS

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11)

not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee” (Rom. 11:19-21).

If my memory serves correctly, several years ago Pope John called for all “daughters” to return to “mother church.” This was an invitation for all Protestants to go back under the umbrella of Roman Catholicism. Added to that appeal were other suggestions that the Buddhists, the Shinotists, the Muslims, and, indeed, all religions, might like to consider pooling their resources to bring about righteousness (Papal-style, naturally) upon the earth.

Politically, near the end of World War II Wendell L. Willkie called for a “one-world government.” The old League of Nations, set up to make sure that “the war to end all wars” (World War I) would forever cleanse the earth of belligerency, failed miserably. The United Nations was set up after World War II to bring all nations into closer alliances so as to obviate war. Since then the Korean Conflict, the Viet Nam Police Action, and other hostilities have occurred, bringing into world focus the fact that

man is incapable of properly governing himself. But with the cheering of “Gorby” on America’s streets, with the granting of “most-favored-nation” trading status again to China, with inroads being made into the Colombian drug cartel influence, the world again has faith in itself, that it can bring about a lasting peace.

Political and religious “one-worldism” are predicted within the pages of Holy Writ. Indeed, the political and religious spheres will meld into a highly totalitarian state the like of which has never been known upon this earth. (See 2 Thes. 2:1-12 and Rev. 13.)

Ecumenism indeed seeks to unite all “Christians”—eventually, all religions—under a single banner. As Bro. Alva Huffer mentioned to me at the last Ministers’ Conference, such a unification of religious thought has always caused persecution of those who would not “go along” with the majority. So ecumenism will actually lead to persecution of the minority religion—the adherents to the true God of heaven.

Let us shun ecumenical deceptions and remain faithful to our God.

News from Around the World

U.S. House Chaplain Says "Amen" to American Bible Society

NEW YORK (ABS)—James Ford, chaplain to the United States House of Representatives, said "Amen" to the work of the American Bible Society at that organization's 174th annual meeting here May 10.

The word "Amen" is a "word of affirmation and commitment, of belief and dedication" meaning, "Yea, yea it shall be so," Ford explained. The chaplain specifically said "'Amen' to the moral building stones of faith, family, and philosophy" that give "power to the ABS and strength to our work."

These three factors influence "ethics, society, morality" as part of "evangelism with the Word of God," Ford said. The Bible "touches society and culture and makes people do good things."

Praising ABS efforts to distribute Bibles in Eastern and Central Europe before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Ford closed his address with an adaptation of Scripture, saying, "'Let him who has my Word speak my Word faithfully' because walls have come down, the opportunities are there as never before. So let's take up our Bibles and walk, walk through that wall."

Missouri Church of God Leaders Say "Amen" to St. Charles Church Planting

ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI (RH)—When moving vans pulled up at two locations June 8 in the Tanglewood subdivision of St. Charles, Missouri Church of God leaders were on hand to welcome church planters Russ

Magaw and Rick Cooper and their families. Already the planters have met neighbors, rented office space, secured a theatre for Sunday celebration services, and settled into their homes.

Ministry team leader George Kugler beamed that the arrival of the planters was like an "amen" to the many months of planning by the core group in the area. Missouri State Conference president Loyd Cooper saw the event as the first of "hundreds who will respond to the church" eventually from the community of St. Charles County.

Contacts are being followed up as the ministry team gets ready for a month of telemarketing from mid-August to mid-September in preparation for the first service October 28 at the St. Charles 10 'Cine. Church of God people around North America are urged to pray for this ambitious effort, for "without God's help, nothing will be achieved," stated Magaw. "We are on the threshold of a tremendous opportunity. May God use us to bring persons to his Son," he added.

Czechoslovakian Changes Provide New Openings for Christians

NEW YORK (ABS)—Although religious groups were not actively involved in the Czechoslovakian shift to democracy, the changes there have had a tremendous impact on the work of the churches in that country, according to Dr. Jiri Lukl, executive secretary of the Czechoslovakian Bible Society.

Media attention to religion in Czechoslovakia is mounting, Lukl told reporters at a press conference following the 174th annual meeting of the American Bible Society, May 10. "Almost every day you can see something about religion on television," he added. "You can watch and listen to some Christian programs . . . even a Sunday school class on TV, and you can hear some good things about churches and about faith in God, which is very new in our country."

The new challenge for the churches, Lukl observed, "is to show by our life what it means to be a Christian and make the Christian faith somehow attractive for others. Many young people feel a certain emptiness through the atheist ideology which was taught for more than 40 years in our country. They are seeking something and this is [our] great chance" to help them discover Christianity.

Minneapolis Area Church Opens New Campus

BROOKLYN CENTER, MN (RH)—When Pine Grove Bible Church opened its new facility to the community here June 2-3, over 150 persons responded to the weekend of activity. All sorts of family-related games, food, and prizes attracted much interest in the Church of God congregation which normally averages 60 on Sunday.

Pastor Sydney Kirkpatrick anticipates the public relations value of the community event. "We heard a lot of good comments about our facility; several persons expressed interest in receiving more information about us," he said.

For several years the church had met in temporary meeting places on the campus of Hennipen Community College while preparing the new campus. Pine Grove Bible Church expects several opportunities to serve this community in the near future.

Zondervan Publishing Announces the New International Version Exhaustive Concordance

GRAND RAPIDS (ZPH)—In September Zondervan Publishing House will market its new NIV Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. It will be to the NIV Bible what Strong's is to the King James Version. Bible and reference-book scholars John Kohlenberger and Edward Goodrick head up the project that has taken more than 10 years and, by the time it is finished, will

have cost over \$500,000. It is the first time biblical scholarship has been combined with electronic databases to produce such a concordance. A special touch screen computer software program was invented to accomplish the task. Three editors have worked arduously on the project (one of them even burned out and had to be replaced).

One feature is that Kohlenberger and the others have created a new numbering system for the Greek and Hebrew words to replace Strong's system, which was badly in need of revision. Two indexes show the correspondence between the new numbers and Strong's old ones.

American Portrait Films International Increases Video Titles

ANAHEIM, CA (APFI)—John A. Hocevar, former owner of the world's largest glass recycling business and president of American Portrait Films International, has announced new videos encompassing 21 categories. "With the anti-God, anti-life, and anti-family material being generated by the secular society on an ever-increasing level, our company will work to counteract this effort by producing and distributing a wide range of video titles," Hocevar says.

The broadened video lines include American heritage titles, biographies and documentaries, children's entertainment, Christian theme movies, Christian messages, classics and serials, comedies, family issues, holiday classics, how-to and self-help programs, contemporary movies, Christian and gospel musicals, musical classics, nature and wildlife subjects, New Age and cult exposes, pro-life issues, public policy matters, sports and hunting, travel, and western dramas.

For further information on APFI or its video lines, contact APFI, 1980 W. Corporate Way, Anaheim, CA 92801, phone (714) 535-2189, FAX (714) 535-3816.



SUFFERING

By James Day

SUFFERING was very much a part of the lives of Old and New Testament men and women. Of course, those who opposed God suffered under his wrath; that is plainly seen in Scripture. Equally obvious is the suffering of the saints. Occasionally they endured the chastisement and correction from God when they went astray. However, being a saint living within the will of God was no guarantee of a trouble-free existence. As we will see from Scripture, those who lived in close relationship and obedience to the Lord could count on suffering from time to time. Truthfully, many could have avoided strife had they ignored God's commands.

The Apostle Paul warned Timothy that "everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted" (2 Tim. 3:12). The other writers of epistles echoed the reality that believers would suffer. Peter talked of believers "suffering grief in all kinds of trials," and that they should "not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you." (1 Pet. 1:6; 4:12). Certainly James and the author of Hebrews did not disagree with the apostles concerning this (Jas. 1:2, 3, 12; Heb. 11:32-40).

Jesus: The Suffering Servant

Jesus suffered. "[Jesus] himself suffered when he was tempted . . ." and "he learned obedience from what he suffered." (Heb. 2:18; 5:8.) Looking to the gospels we read of how Jesus was harangued by Pharisees and ultimately crucified. If the Lord of glory, the one the Father loved and was well pleased with, had to suffer, what deception convinces Christians that they can avoid it?

Someone may argue that Jesus suffered so we wouldn't have to. The second paragraph cited Scripture which renders that theology mute. Concerning the quiet, and sometimes not so quiet, desperation of some to avoid recognition of the Biblical truth about suffering, Dr. Larry Crabb points out:

"Modern Christianity, in dramatic reversal of its biblical form, promises to relieve the pain of living in a fallen world. The message, whether it's from fundamentalists requiring us to live by a favored set of rules or from charismatics urging a deeper surrender to the Spirit's power, is too often the same: The promise of bliss is for NOW! Complete satisfaction can be ours this side of [the kingdom].

"Some speak of the joys of fellowship and obedience, others of a rich awareness of their value and worth. The language may be reassuringly biblical or it may reflect the influence of current psychological thought. Either way, the point of living the Christian life has shifted from knowing and serving Christ till He returns to soothing, or at least learning to ignore, the ache in our soul.

"We are told, sometimes explicitly but more often by example, that it's simply not necessary to feel the impact of family tensions, frightening possibilities, or discouraging news. An inexpressible joy is available which, rather than supporting us through hard times, can actually eliminate pressure, worry, and pain from our experience.

"The experience of groaning is precisely what modern Christianity so often tries to help us escape. The gospel of health and wealth appeals to our legiti-

Peter said that suffering refines our faith and results in praise, glory, and honor.

mate longing for relief by skipping over the call to endure suffering. Faith becomes the means not to learning contentment regardless of circumstances, but rather to rearranging one's circumstances to provide more comfort."*

No Pain, No Gain

What is overlooked by the proponents of "heaven now" theology are the rewards that accompany or follow periods of suffering. Peter said that suffering refines our faith and results in praise, glory, and honor. Later we will be overjoyed when Christ returns (1 Pet. 1:7; 4:13). James said the testing of our faith develops perseverance, leads us to maturity, and ultimately aids us in gaining the crown of life that God promised to those who love him. (Jas. 1:2, 3, 12.)

In order to maintain a balance and avoid being labeled a masochist, I would explain that the Christian life is not all suffering. The Bible relates many stories of God delivering his people from certain harm or death. Daniel in the lion's den and the angel leading Peter out of jail are two of many examples I might cite. (Dan. 6 and Acts 12.) Jesus did say that he came to give his followers life, and life more abundantly. Paul did speak of a peace that passes all understanding. These are undoubtedly biblical truths also.

This paper was written so you may know that suffering is unavoidable in this evil age, especially if you decide to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Unabated peace and joy are reserved for the age to come. Wishful thinking and positive confession will not alter this reality.

*Crabb, Larry. *Inside Out*. (Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress, 1989). pp. 13, 14.

DID JESUS EXIST BEFORE HE WAS BORN?

• *A concise examination
of critical*

New Testament words.

LET US CONSIDER those verses which seem to imply some preexistence of Jesus. John 1:1, 2 is often quoted: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made."

THE WORD—To understand these verses correctly we must appreciate the use of the word "Word." In the original Greek of the New Testament it is quite simply the word for "word." A concordance such as Young's gives some other possible meanings, such as "speech, matter, reason." Note that they are all abstract; that is, they are comprehended in our minds, but have no physical substance. If we try to take what is written too literally, we find a paradox. "The Word was with God" implies that "the Word" and "God" were separate entities; yet "The Word was God" implies that "the Word" and "God" were the same entity.

How can we resolve the paradox? Is there an abstract word along the lines of "word, speech, matter, reason" that can be substituted for "Word" to resolve the paradox and make reasonable sense of the passage? "Plan" is quite suitable. God's plan centered in Jesus can be expressed in words, and is the reason behind all that God does. Verse 1 is telling us "in the beginning was the Plan, and the Plan was with God" (it was God's plan), "and the Plan was God" (God's Plan was bound up with his very existence).

THE WORD MADE FLESH—Consider John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father."

Here we have a clear reference to Jesus Christ, the Son of



God. Many people have gone too far in equating the Word with Jesus Christ, as if it said "And the Word was Jesus." What it does say is that something abstract (God's Plan, or at least the central feature of God's Plan) became something (or rather someone) real, namely Jesus Christ. It is not saying that Jesus existed before he was born; that would be like saying that a bridge over a river existed before it was built just because someone had a plan for the bridge!

"HIM" OR "IT"?—Unfortunately the theologians error in equating the Word too literally with Jesus, has been reflected back into verses 2-4 by the translators of most English versions. They have used the personal pronouns "he" and "him" to refer to the Word, whereas Tyndale, in one of the earliest English translations, used "it." Tyndale was correct because "Word" is abstract and not personal. With this in mind we can understand verses 2-4 something like this: "This [the Plan] was in the beginning with God; all things were made through it [on account of the Plan], and without [consideration of] it [the Plan] was not anything made. In it was life [the Plan included life, especially that of Jesus] and the life [of Jesus] was the light of men." (Light is used figuratively in the Bible for true knowledge or understanding; true knowledge of what matters most comes through the life of Jesus.) So by taking note of the abstract nature of the meaning of the word "Word," and by seeking a reasonable solution to the paradox found by taking statements absolutely literally, we can arrive at an understanding of the opening of John's Gospel which is in harmony with the narrative accounts of the origin of Jesus in the other Gospels.

JESUS AND CREATION—Other passages which are said to teach the preexistence of Jesus fall broadly into two categories: those which seem to imply that he played a part in creation and those in which Jesus speaks as if he existed before he was born. The first category:

"... the world was made through him ..." (John 1:10).

"... for in him all things were created ..." (Col. 1:16).

"... all things were created through him ..." (Col. 1:16).

"... a Son ... through whom also he created the world ..." (Heb. 1:2).

Whether any of these verses is actually saying that Jesus created the world depends on the meaning of the preposition "through" or "in." Anyone who has tried to learn a foreign language will know that there is frequently a problem and an uncertainty in trying to translate prepositions.

The English word "through" can mean "by means of," but can also mean "on account of." The same is true of the Greek

word "dia," which probably has an even wider range of meanings; for example, readers might like to ponder the meaning of "by" (Greek: *dia*) in Romans 15:30; "I appeal to you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ . . . to strive together with me in your prayers to God on my behalf."

The Greek word "en" is usually translated "in," but there are some passages (Col. 1:16) where "in" does not have a clear meaning, and somewhere we can understand it to mean "on the basis of;" for example John 20:31: "These are written . . . that believing, you may have life in his name."

By taking these meanings for the words "through" and "in" in the passages quoted above, we can understand them to mean that God created the world on account of and on the basis of Jesus, who was at the center of God's purpose from the beginning. Those meanings cannot be proved from the passages themselves, but should be accepted because they give them a meaning which is in harmony with the Bible teaching.

PREEXISTENCE? Now to those verses in which Jesus speaks as if he existed before he was born. Consider 1 John 8:58: "Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am." It might be thought that Jesus is claiming to have existed before Abraham; but if he were claiming that, he would have said, "Before Abraham was, I was. Assuming that Jesus used "I am" deliberately, he must have meant that his existence at the time he was speaking was significant before Abraham existed.

The One to whom the existence of Jesus was most significant before it occurred was God. Jesus was at the center of God's plan right from the beginning, so he was implying that his coming was understood even by Abraham, to whom God had made certain things known. Hebrews 11:13 makes a similar point like this: "These all [including Abraham] died in faith, not having received what was promised, but having seen it and greeted it from afar."

No one would have been more aware than Jesus that God's plan was made from the beginning and that God knows the end of all things from the beginning. It is in this light that we can appreciate how Jesus could be aware that his glorious destiny had always been determined in God's plan and foreknowledge, and so speak of it in prayer to his Father as "the glory which I had with thee before the world was made" (John 17:5).

Reprinted from the March 27, 1990, Newsletter of the Resurrection Hope Church of God, Lenoir, NC.

THE PRESENT

Rachel Carr, Editor



Grandpa was a good fishing teacher. He taught Jeff how to make dough balls for bait, how to cast, and how to bring in those big ones.

“JEFF, ARE YOU about ready?” Mother called up the stairs.

“Comin’, Mom,” answered Jeff.

Jeff grabbed his straw hat and galloped down the steps. By the front door stood his fishing pole where he had placed it the night before. Jeff was all set for a big day of fishing with Grandpa.

It was fun going fishing with Grandpa. He knew just the right spots where the fish were biting. And Grandpa was a good fishing teacher, too. He taught Jeff how to make dough balls for bait, how to cast, and how to bring in those big ones. But Jeff especially liked the talks that he and Grandpa had. Grandpa knew a lot about many things and Jeff learned much from him.

Today Grandpa said that he had found a new place to fish. Pretty soon they arrived at the small lake out in the country. It was a pretty spot, and it looked as if they would have it all to themselves.

Jeff and Grandpa took the small boat off the top of the car, loaded their gear, and put

the boat in the water. They each took an oar and together rowed the boat out to the middle of the lake. Now they were all set to get those fish!

Jeff knew just what to do. He got out the dough balls he had made, put one on his hook, and cast the line into the water. For awhile he and Grandpa both sat quietly. Then Jeff felt a tug on his line. He knew just how to reel it in—a nice bass! Jeff was proud that he had gotten the first catch of the day. But Grandpa was not to be outdone. In a few minutes he brought one in too.

After they had each caught a few more fish (enough to take home for a nice supper), things were quiet in the water.

“Grandpa, I’ve got a problem. I’ve been trying to think of something to get Dad for Father’s Day,” said Jeff.

“Hummmm,” said Grandpa.

“You know Dad left yesterday to go to teach at the church conference. And he will get back just before Father’s Day. I want to get him something special—sort of a welcome home present too.”

“So you are looking for ideas,” said Grandpa.

“Yes. Everything I can think of either Dad already has or it costs too much.”

“Well, Jeff, you’ve just reminded me of something. I remember back many years ago when your father was a boy. He gave me a gift for Father’s Day that I have never forgotten.”

“Boy, if you’ve never forgotten it, it must have been a special present. Was it something he made?”

“No. What made it different was that instead of giving me a regular present that I could see or use, your Dad gave me himself.”

“Himself? How could he do that?” asked Jeff.

“Well, your Dad wanted to buy me something in town, but he just didn’t have the money. Money was pretty scarce in those days. So he found a glass jar, decorated it with his paints, and filled it with little slips of paper.”

“A jar full of paper? That doesn’t sound

like a very good gift.”

“Ah, but it was what he wrote on those little slips of paper that made the gift so special. Your Dad made little coupons that were good for all kinds of things. Let me see . . . there was one for weeding the garden, another for cutting firewood. I think there was a coupon for feeding the chickens, gathering the berries—oh, all kinds of jobs that needed to be done on the farm. When it was time to get those jobs done, I could reach into that jar and pick out the right coupon. When I showed it to your dad, he went and did the job for me, no questions asked. He was really a big help to me.”

“Say, that’s a neat idea! O see how he was giving himself—it took his time and energy to do those jobs. . . . I wonder. . . . Do you think Dad might like to get a present like that himself?”

“I wouldn’t be a bit surprised,” said Grandpa.

Soon it was time to leave the lake and head for home. Jeff and Grandpa had done very well. They were anxious to get home and eat a good supper of fried fish.

Later Jeff thought some more about the Father’s Day present for his dad. There were a lot of extra jobs he could do around the house that would help his father. He sat down to make a list. There was lawn mowing, garage cleaning, car washing, weed pulling. He might even make some coupons for leaf raking and snow shoveling that could be used later in the year. Boy, wouldn’t Dad be surprised when he opened his present on Father’s Day!

Maybe you would like to surprise your own father with a gift like Jeff’s. The important thing to remember is what God says in the Bible:

“Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:2, 3).

One way we can honor both our parents is to love and obey them, not just on special days, but every day of the year.

THE THREE AGES

By Irene Poe

THERE ARE THREE Ages you and I can enjoy with Jesus and God, if we live right: THE AGE OF MAN, THE THOUSAND-YEAR REIGN OF JESUS, AND THE PERFECT AGE.

The whole world is rushing to the end of this century—coming down the Highway of Life by foot, car, motorcycle, skates, bicycle, scooter, skis, Co nestoga wagon, threshing machine, plough, rake, balloon, plane, rocket, race car, train, bus, three-wheeled bicycle, boat, ship, horse, donkey, mule, surfboard, highway truck, farm rake, wheel chair, glider, camper, and exercise machine.

Most people have never a thought about this being the end of the Age of Man. Many verses prove the coming of Jesus is near, even at the door. The non-Christian gives no indication of even a thought that, very soon, Jesus will usher in his reign of 1,000 years.

Near the end of this age we will have "much tribulation": false prophets and messiahs (men such as Hitler), wars, rumors of war, pestilences, earthquakes increasing, human suffering, hurricanes, starvation, famine, plagues, persecution, death, betrayal, false Christs, rumors of secret comings, staging of events.

Most people hurtling toward the end of the age are not aware that in God's coming kingdom Jesus, with the saints helping him, will put down all sin. The animals will all be tame and gentle. There will be peace, love, gentleness, kindness, happi-



Irene Poe holding a portion of "The Three Ages" display most of the panorama spreads out behind her. Sr. Poe commands interest in serious Bible study at the Church of God in Springfield, Missouri.

ness, no sickness, no wars, no upheavals. Jesus will be the ruler, with the saints. I want to be there! Do you?

At the end of the 1,000-year reign of Jesus, God will send down the new Jerusalem from his throne. Jesus hands the keys of the kingdom to God, so that he may be all in all. Time shall be no more, and all evil, wickedness, meanness, lying, thieving, and disbelief will have been destroyed in the lake of fire. God will be with man on earth. This is the Perfect Age. I want to be there. Do you?



The Church of God at Springfield, Missouri made a complete study of the "March"ing for Missions guide published by the General Conference Missions Advisory Committee.

Alice Wingo proudly displayed one of the well-worked guides at the Spring meeting of the Missouri State Conference hosted by the Springfield church.

Recommendations and Constitutional Amendments

The following recommendations and constitution revisions will be acted upon by delegates to the summer Conference, July 30 to August 2, at Brock University St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada.

Recommendation Number One

We recommend that the contributions to Church Builder's League assistance be increased to \$25 for each appeal (limit two per year) and that a goal be established to have 1,000 active members in the league by the 1991 Summer Conference.

Explanation:

When the Church Builder's League was started in 1957 by delegate action, the amount was set at \$5 per appeal. This amount was raised to \$10 in 1975 and to \$20 in 1980. Land prices and building costs continue to increase. Presently an appeal produces between \$10,000 and \$13,000. Over the years, membership in the association has declined from over 1,000 members to approximately 600 members who give regularly.

To reach the goal of having 1,000 active members, each local church could appoint an individual to promote the league and to attempt to enroll at least one-third of the local member families. The General Conference can provide to each church a list of current members and a supply of enrollment cards.

Recommendation Number Two

The Board of Directors proposes an amendment to Article II, Section 2c which has to do with delegates entitled to vote at business sessions. The new wording will read: "the President of the Church of God General Conference/Oregon Bible College."

Explanation:

The current reading of this item is "the Executive Director of the Church of God General Conference and the President of Oregon Bible College." Titles and positions have been changed. Currently there is only a President of Church of God General Conference/Oregon Bible College. This amendment brings the Constitution in line with the current organizational structure.

Recommendation Number Three

The Board of Directors recommends the delegates rescind the following recommendation which was approved at the 1989 General Conference: "The Board of Directors presents for the approval of the delegates of the Church of God General Conference, the relocation of the corporate offices of the General Conference, including Outreach and Church Development, Oregon Bible College, Printing and Publishing Services, and Business Services."

Explanation:

The Board of Directors is not asking the delegates to rescind last year's action because they do not believe in relocation. The Board believes that the relocation of the Conference and College is necessary for the further development of our work. However, the Board believes that there is a difference between relocating and relocating successfully. Though last year's action authorized the Board to pursue relocation, the motion to approve relocation at the 1989 General Conference passed with a vote of 56% to 44%. Several churches and individuals have expressed a concern that this vote was too close for an issue that is so important to the work of the Church of God General

Conference. Therefore, the Board of Directors has decided to ask the delegates to approve relocation with a two-thirds vote (recommendation four below). According to Robert's Rules of Order, in order to legally revoke on this issue, the action taken at last summer's General Conference must be rescinded. Approval of a vote to rescind requires a simple majority. If this recommendation is approved, delegates will proceed to vote on recommendations four through six. If this recommendation is not approved by the delegates, recommendation six will need to be voted upon.

Recommendation Number Four

The Board of Directors proposes a "suspension of the rules" and that a two-thirds majority vote be required in order to approve relocation and that a two-thirds majority vote be required in order to approve the specific location being recommended.

Explanation:

Several churches and individuals have expressed a desire for greater unity on the relocation issue. This recommendation to "suspend the rules" will permit the delegate body to require a two-thirds majority vote on these issues. This motion requires a two-thirds majority to be approved. If this recommendation is adopted, recommendation five will require a two-thirds majority vote to be approved. If this motion is not adopted, recommendation five can be approved with a simple majority vote.

Recommendation Number Five

The Board of Directors presents for the approval of the delegates of the Church of God General Conference, the relocation of the Corporate Offices of the General Conference, including Outreach and Church Development, Oregon Bible College, Printing and Publishing Services, and Business Services.

Explanation:

Please see pages 13 to 20 for specific proposals regarding this recommendation. This recommendation is requesting approval only for the concept of relocation. (Recommendation six deals with the specific location being recommended by the Board of Directors.) Approval of this recommendation will be by either a simple majority or by a two-thirds majority depending on the outcome of recommendation number four.

Recommendation Number Six

The Board of Directors proposes an amendment to Article I, Section 1 of the General Conference Constitution: The General Offices of the Church of God General Conference shall be incorporated in the state of Georgia. (The present reading: "The General offices of the General Conference shall be incorporated in the state in which the offices are located.")

Explanation:

Please see pages 13 to 20 for specific reasons why Clayton County, Georgia, has been proposed by the Board of Directors. The adoption of this recommendation requires a two-thirds majority vote since it is a constitutional amendment. If this recommendation is not approved, a new study will be made and a recommendation will be brought to the delegates at the 1991 summer Conference as a relocation site.

When Article I, Section 1 of the Constitution was amended at the 1989 General Conference, a motion was made and adopted requiring that a specific location for the corporate offices be inserted in the Constitution. This recommendation is in compliance with the wishes of the delegates at the 1989 General Conference.

Marriage & Celibacy

By Mark Cain

SINCE PAUL was not married and we are to be imitators of Paul (1 Cor. 1, NASB), we should not be married. However, from the same line of faulty reasoning we would also be required to write two letters to the church at Corinth. Rather, his desire was for us to be imitators of his servanthood and dedication to God (10:31-33). As concerns marriage, Paul presents several teachings that we would do well to heed.

In response to questions from the Corinthians about marriage, Paul said, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (7:1), and "I wish that all men were even as I myself am" (v. 7). This was in agreement with Jesus' teachings where, in response to the disciples' comment, "It is better not to marry," he said that "not all can accept this statement, but only those to whom it has been given" (Matt. 19:10, 11). Celibacy was a gift, a good gift, for Paul obviously had it and was pleased with it. Why else would he so strongly recommend it to those who could accept it?

However, Paul knew that celibacy could not be granted to all when he said, "But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband" (1 Cor. 7:2), and also, "But if they do not have self-control, let them marry" (v. 9).

Paul's message was to refrain from immorality. Marriage and celibacy were both acceptable. He states in chapter 5 verse 12, "All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable." Either was fine as long as there was no succumbing to immorality—that would not be profitable.

To those that were married Paul taught devotion, commitment, and the responsibility for each to satisfy the needs of the other (1 Cor. 7:3, 4). And in response to a practice in Corinth of celibacy within the marriage, Paul states that such should be done only with mutual consent, an agreement of duration, and with the express purpose of devotion to prayer. It seems that in Paul's eyes, marriage was intended to satisfy the carnal needs in a wholesome and acceptable way.

Both Paul's teachings and Christ's teachings emphasized the permanence of marriage. Paul wrote, "To the married I give instructions, not I, but the Lord, that the wife should not leave her husband . . . and the husband should not send his wife away" (vv. 10, 11). Jesus said that, "Consequently they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" (Matt. 19:6).

Marriage is nothing to be trifled with. God designed man and woman to become one (Gen. 1:28) and any misuse of this union, whether in divorce or immorality, is a grave error. Jesus said, "Whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another commits adultery" (Matt. 19:9), and Paul wrote that if a woman does leave her husband, she should remain unmarried or else be reconciled to him (1 Cor. 7:11). The teaching on divorce is clear. Problems should

Paul's big hang-up on marriage is not that it is wrong, but that it makes life harder.

not be resolved by separation, but by reconciliation.

"Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek to be released. Are you released from a wife? Do not seek a wife" (v. 7).

Paul's big hang-up on marriage is not that it is wrong, but that it makes life harder. "But if you should marry, you have not sinned; and if a virgin should marry, she has not sinned. Yet such will have trouble in this life, and I am trying to spare you" (v. 28).

How does it make life harder? Simple. Man is bound to the woman; he must do things for her; he must help support the household, which eventually contains children. There are many additions to living incurred upon the married. Paul knew that

these additions tend to subtract from man's devotion to God.

"I want you to be free from concern. One who is unmarried is concerned about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord; but one who is married is concerned about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, and his interests are divided" (vv. 32-34).

Paul, a devout servant of Jesus Christ, sought for all to be dedicated servants of the Lord. "And this I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote what is seemly, and to secure undistracted devotion to the Lord" (v. 35).

Paul was not trying to restrain us; he was sharing himself and his passion for the Lord so that perhaps we could understand complete devotion. His hope was that we would see it from his point of view, and as open-minded Christians, we should. His commitment isn't hard to understand; it's admirable! Oh, how we should desire that dedication!

But (and this is a crucial consideration) what is one to do if he desires complete devotion to God, yet because of a lack of self-control must marry?

One could ignore his spouse just as one could ignore any temporal, worldly thing juxtaposed to everlasting life in the kingdom (this could be misconstrued from 1 Cor. 7:29-31), but that would wreck the meaning and purpose of marriage and contradict Paul's own teachings (vv. 3-5).

Or rather, (as was intended in 1 Cor. 7:29-31), we should acknowledge the importance of eternal matters over the things of this world—"we" being both the man and the woman—for both must have their priorities set above this world. If a marriage is to have as much devotion as possible, both members must be in agreement. Only when their voices blend together will their devotion ring the loudest.

We Christians are free—free to marry; free to be celibate—but we are not free to choose what is priority in our lives. For that we are commanded: "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut. 6:5).

Author's note: Why doesn't Paul ever make any mention or allowance for affectionate/romantic love? Any ideas?

IN GOD'S

IMAGE



By Jean Hiner

JESUS WAS FLESH and blood, "the man Christ Jesus" as stated in 1 Timothy 2:5. Hebrews 1:3 describes Jesus as being the brightness of God's glory and the express image of his person. Genesis 1:27 informs us that God created all mankind in his image. God has a face and back parts (Ex. 33:23), hands (Isa. 45:12), and eyes and ears (Isa. 37:17). God warned Moses in Exodus 33:20: "Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live." Jesus told the Jews in John 5:37: "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape." When Jesus told Philip in John 14:9, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," he was merely saying that he looked like his Father.

First John 4:12 states, "No man hath seen God at any time." Having mortal bodies as we do now, we could not look upon God, but, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). The wicked will not see God, but everyone will see Jesus: "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him" (Rev. 1:7).

God did not cast aside his immortal image to come to earth in the form of Jesus. In Malachi 3:6, God assures us: "I am the LORD, I change not." James 1:17 states that there is "no variableness" with God.

If Jesus preexisted as part of an immortal trinity in heaven, coming to earth as a man would have made a change in him, but Hebrews 13:8 states that "Jesus is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

God says in Isaiah 44:24, "I am the

LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Psalm 33:6 records, "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." God spoke the word and things came into existence. "For by him [the Word] were all things created" (Col. 1:16).

A virgin named Mary conceived by the Holy Ghost (God's Power), and brought forth the Son of God, and "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). "And his name is called The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13).

Matthew 1:23 states: "They shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." In a sense, God was with the people through his Son. Jesus never failed to do what God wanted him to say or do: "I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. For I do always those things that please him" (John 8:28, 29).

Jesus made the statement in John 10:30, "I and my Father are one." In Jesus' prayer for his disciples (John 17:11), he prayed thus: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." Jesus was praying that his disciples would be one in harmony, unity, and purpose as he and his Father are one. We read in Galatians 3:28, "Ye are one in Christ Jesus."

The King James Version records Philippians 2:6 as saying, "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." But in the Greek, the Diaglott reads, "Who, though being in God's form, yet did not meditate a

usurpation [desire] to be like God." Jesus said in John 14:28, "My Father is greater than I." Jesus never claimed to be God, nor to be equal with God, only the Son of God.

God declares in Hosea 11:9, "I am God and not man." God is immortal and incapable of death. Jesus was a man who, being without sin, died for us, "that through death he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). "This man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:12).

There are many scriptures that show contrast between Jesus and God. James 1:13 tells us that "God cannot be tempted with evil," but Jesus "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15).

God has never lacked in wisdom, but "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52). God is omnipotent (having unlimited power or authority; all-powerful), as noted in Revelation 19:6. Jesus did not claim omnipotence: "I can of mine own self do nothing . . . I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30).

In Matthew 22:32, Jesus told the Sadducees: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Romans 14:9 tells us that Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be "LORD BOTH OF THE DEAD AND THE LIVING."

Mark 13:31, 32 states: "Heaven and earth shall pass away. . . . But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, NEITHER THE SON, but the Father."

John 5:22 reads, "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." First Corinthians 15:28 adds: "When all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Christ will reign in the kingdom of his Father, but he will acknowledge God as the universal ruler.

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(Transfer to line 2, page 29)

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DEMONISM

(Continued from back cover.)

right mind" (Mark 5:15). In his madness, he had torn off his clothing, but when he was sane he acted accordingly.

In Matthew 12 we are told of a deaf and dumb man being brought to Jesus. His condition was attributed to his being possessed with a devil. In this case, there is no mention of the casting out of the devil. We are told simply: "And *he healed him*, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spoke and saw" (v. 22). In the language of the day, to heal, or to cast out a devil (or several) seems to have been used for the same process. Little or no distinction is made.

Even though Matthew says simply, "he healed him," the Pharisees offered their own explanation of what had happened. Said they: "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils" (v. 24).

Jesus assailed their logic by asking: "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? . . . But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you" (vv. 26, 28).

Baalzebub is mentioned as being worshiped some eight hundred years before the birth of Christ. Ahaziah, a wicked and idolatrous king of Israel, fell through a lattice in an upper chamber and seriously injured himself. Instead of turning to the God of Israel, "he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease" (2 Kings 1:2). The fact that Ahaziah appealed to Baalzebub shows that at that early period Israelites were acquainted with the demonology of surrounding nations, and that they adopted their notions regarding the power of these demons. This fact explains the frequent use of the expression in the Gospels. Beelzebub was considered to be the god of flies, though the Pharisees referred to him as the "prince of devils."

Thomas Williams, whom we quoted before, has concluded that it is quite illogical to assume that Jesus believed in the heathen god, even though he used both the name of Beelzebub and spoke of casting out demons. Jesus cannot be held responsible for the errors associated with those words.

The difficulties which we associate with them arise from perversion of the language to accommodate heathen dogmas. A great many words have come into being in efforts to

explain thousands of heathen fictions. "Jesus and his apostles in their times, and we in our times, are forced by stubborn circumstances to use an impure language, saturated with heathenism. . . . When the glorious time comes to put an end to the 'strange language' of an idolatrous world, he who in the days of his humiliation was compelled, in measure, to take the language as it was, will 'turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent' (Zeph. 3:9)."—*Thomas Williams*.

In drawing this article to a close, let us turn to the one passage in the Bible where we read about exorcists. Reading from Acts 19:13-16: "Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of the house naked and wounded."

Thus we see Jews practicing exorcism, i.e., casting out of persons the supposed disembodied immortal spirits of the deceased. They did this in the name of their idols of wood and stone, to glorify them. The writers of the Gospels, rather than to try to be like Hippocrates and explain the real reasons why people were insane, disfigured, crippled, or maimed, simply used the terminology of the day which attributed them to evil spirits, and their healing to the casting out from them of these spirits. By doing so, they added a tremendous force to their God-given abilities to heal, despite the convictions of the idol worshipers that the disabilities were caused by the gods that they worshiped.

Since Jehovah, by his Spirit working through men like Paul, Peter, or Jesus, could destroy what these pagans considered to be manifestations of their gods in the lives of diseased and infirm men and women, they were tremendously impressed. Indeed, they were led to renounce their heathen gods and to destroy the literature which pertained to them. "Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted

the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver" (v. 19). This amount has been estimated to equal approximately ten thousand dollars of our money. "So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed" (v. 20).

The simple truth that we have tried to make clear in this message is that God is Lord over Beelzebub, demons, evil spirits, idols of wood, idols of stone—all of the figments of man's imaginations, dreams, philosophies, and theories. They were capitalizing on these in dealing with men and women who were diseased, or mentally ill.

God is Lord of heaven and earth. His Word is truth. He has brought light into darkness, into a world so full of darkness that we are forced to use terms of darkness so men can understand us.

We are living in a time when our own nation, which was founded upon the Word of God, like ancient Israel is reverting to paganism. It is manifest by the ignoring of God's Word and becoming involved with satanism, magic arts, fortune-telling, witchcraft, seances (talking with the dead). All of these are closely associated with demonism, a belief in disembodied spirits.

It is my prayer that the Word of God will grow and prevail mightily, even in your own personal daily life. "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy" (1 Tim. 4:1, 2).

May each of us be able to say with David, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Psa. 119:105). "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

You and I are the descendants of the heathen of Jesus' day, the Gentiles who bowed before wood and stone. But praise God, as Isaiah prophesied, and which prophecy was fulfilled in Christ, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up" (Matt. 4:16). If you still walk in the darkness of our ancestors, God invites you to his light of salvation through his Son Jesus. Do not choose darkness; choose light and live!

DEMONISM

BY PASTOR
REX CAIN

SECOND OF TWO PARTS
REPRINTED FROM THE
SEPTEMBER, 1981,
RESTITUTION HERALD

IN THE OPENING SECTION of this study, we presented for your consideration the background usage of the words "demons," "devils," and "satyrs" in the Bible. We noted that all were associated with idol worship, and that the Apostle Paul apparently used the words "idols" and "demons" interchangeably, making no distinction between them.

Time and history can do strange things to a teaching after it is first propounded in high-sounding philosophical words by someone who is recognized as an authority. Immortality of the soul, eternal torment, and going to heaven at death are prime examples of teachings which today are almost universally taught and accepted as totally true. There seem to be two basic reasons for this: 1) everybody believes it; 2) it has been around for a long time, even since before Christ. These were taught, grew, and developed over the centuries as doctrines of God, when in reality they were originated and first taught by men.

This is what happened to idol worship. Men knew that sin brought curses from God. That conviction had been ingrained in them for centuries. Over a period of time, they began to apply this truth to all forms of suffering, mental and physical. Blindness, deafness, lameness, and mental disorders were all attributed to the sins of the people who suffered from them. This belief was demonstrated when the disciples, after coming upon a man blind from birth, said to Jesus, "Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind"? (John 9:2.)

Superstition already had a strong hold in the time of Christ. Thus, demons, or idols, were just waiting to take on new dimensions, and they did, thanks to Greek intellectuals and Greek mythology. This evolved into the practice of bowing down to idols that represented various gods, supposing that they contained the spirits of those gods or of humans who had died. This sprang directly from the ancient belief that souls could not die, and that one dwelt in every human. After the death of the body, that soul could dwell wherever it chose, even in images of wood or stone. It was also supposed that they could take over and control the bodies and minds of living humans, even to the extent of manipulating their limbs and speaking with their tongues.

In the New Testament, several cases are recorded in which demons appear to have spoken. An example of this is found in Matthew 8:28-34: "When he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass that way. . . . So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine" (vv. 28, 31).

Thomas Williams, in his book, "The Word's Redemption," reminds us that in this incident we are in the presence of two insane men, and therefore we must not expect to listen to rational speech. They speak according to the deluded state of their minds. It is not uncommon for men in this state to believe themselves to be other people, and to behave as they suppose those people would behave.

When these men voiced the request, the disciples assumed that it was demons making use of their tongues, and so attributed their words to demons. The only conclusion, therefore, is that allowances must be made for the understanding and language of the times, and the circumstances under which these two insane men were restored to their senses. One of the men who had been thus delivered, is described as "sitting, and clothed, and in his

(Please see DEMONISM, inside back cover)

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