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TOMORROW



"Tomorrow," he promised his conscience,
"Tomorrow I mean to believe;
Tomorrow I'll think as I ought to,
Tomorrow my Saviour receive.
Tomorrow I'll conquer the habits
That hold one from heaven away."
But ever his conscience repeated one word,
And only one word: "Today."

Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow —
Thus day after day it went on;
Tomorrow, tomorrow, tomorrow —
Till youth like a vision was gone;
Till age and his passions had written
The message of fate on his brow
And forth from the shadows came Death
With the pitiless syllable, "Now!"

"What will you do with Jesus?"
The call comes low and clear;
The solemn words are sounding
Now in your listening ear.
Immortal life's in the question
And joy through eternity.
Then what will you do with Jesus?
What will your answer be?

— Author Unknown

THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

A WORD . . .

When God gave Christians the privilege as well as the responsibility of sharing His Gospel with the rest of the world, He knew that He would also be providing His children with the tool through which they could learn much concerning His own nature and feelings.

When our hearts reach out in deep love for a person who is lost — a person we are trying to teach — we glow with a small part of the joy and happiness of God when he/she is obedient; or if the response is negative, we feel the hurt Jesus felt when the rich young ruler turned away (Mark 10:21).

We learn how it feels to long in agony for the welfare of someone who has done nothing to merit our concern; we experience deep grief when that person follows wrong thinking and won't be guided by God's council. And we, ourselves, grow with every joy and pang . . .



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**THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST
SALUTE YOU. (ROMANS 16:16)**

DON'T EVER SURRENDER

J. C. CHOATE
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



The world is full of wickedness (1 John 5:19). Darkness is everywhere. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Man is therefore lost and without hope. Satan is the prince of this world and controls the masses.

All of the corruption and evil in the heart of man originated with Satan — the devil, the evil one — who is described as a liar and a deceiver (John 8:44). With the majority giving themselves to various sins and wickedness, and reaping the consequences of the same, is it any wonder that there is so much war, crime, hurt, and sorrow in the world?

Even in America, the place which once was called 'a Christian nation', the evils of sin reign supreme. Half of the marriages end in divorce. One-third of the babies conceived die by choice. One fourth of all births are illegitimate. Violence and abuse have become common factors in these broken homes. Through the disintegration of the home and of family values, the very fabric of the nation is rotted and will surely disintegrate unless change comes quickly.

But America is not the only nation with critical problems. Throughout the world, sin reigns within man, in social life, in the family, in religion, in politics, and in business affairs. Man is power-hungry. Bribery and corruption are accepted as necessary. Wars erupt within nations and among nations, resulting in oppression of the weak by the strong. This often brings starvation, death, destruction, and the yearning for peace that is seldom found.

Even the religious world is corrupt. There are many false religions, with numerous false teachers (Matthew 24:24). Most obey the doctrines and commandments of men, and their worship of God is in vain. The vast majority are on the broad way that leads to eternal destruction.

With all that is wrong in this world, it would be easy to become disillusioned, confused, and ready to surrender to Satan and his massive army. There might be the feeling, "What's the use? The forces against us are too great. Eventually, finally, after all the struggle, we will lose."

But there is still hope.

The God of heaven is greater than the god of this world. Although humanity was lost and underserving, the eternal Creator had mercy and sent His Son into this world to die on the cross in the place of sinful man, in order that the obedient might be saved. Through Christ we can know the forgiveness of our sins, and He will add us to His family, which is also described as an army that fights a spiritual warfare with the prince of darkness and all of his forces.

Although the Christian life is depicted by some as being a difficult life, it offers far more than Satan offers. We may be in the minority but we have the Lord's promise that He will always be with us (Matthew 28:20). We have a

Father to call upon for help. We have our brethren, fellow soldiers, to join with us in our opposition to the world. We have the Word of God to guide us, and all spiritual blessings in Christ to sustain us. Above all, we have the hope of eternal life in that new world where we shall ever be with the Lord.

My plea, then, to all of us would be that we never give up, that we never quit, or become unfaithful, or surrender to the Wicked One. We must remember: we have the Lord's promise that in the end we will be victorious. No matter how much suffering or pain we experience in this life, and regardless of the challenges we must face and the battles we must fight, still, the Christian is assured of victory. We must never forget that.

Therefore, we must keep ourselves pure, remain godly, continue to stand for God and the truth, preach His gospel to the world, worship Him faithfully, and serve Him always. He will bless us and help us, even in the day-to-day challenges of this physical life, and in the world to come He has promised an eternal home with Him. (Revelation 2:10). The apostle Paul said, "*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us*" (Romans 8:18).

With that, we say in the name of Christ: Amen and amen. †



I'M GLAD THAT JESUS WAS TEMPTED

BYRON NICHOLS
MANAGING EDITOR

Have you ever felt glad that Jesus was tempted to sin while He lived here on the earth? I am very glad that He experienced temptation as a human being. Please do not misunderstand. I am not at all saying that Jesus **sinned**. I remember that the Hebrews writer stated that Jesus did not sin (Hebrews 4:15), and that Peter said that Jesus *"did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth"* (1 Peter 2:22). I understand that temptation is not sin — it is what causes a person to want to sin.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke all recorded the fact that Jesus, after His baptism by John, was subjected to three temptations by Satan. We perhaps have the idea at times that this series of trials constituted all of the temptations that Jesus was ever subjected to. However, Luke says that after these three temptations the devil *"departed from Him for a season"* (Luke 4:13). Satan left Him, but only for a while. That was not the end of all of the temptations of Jesus. Hebrews 4:15 tells us that our Lord was *"in all points tempted like as we are . . ."* Hebrews 2:18 states, *"For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted."* These verses declare to us that Jesus Christ, though being the very Son of God, endured temptations just like we do today.

The Bible is telling us that sin was at times attractive and appealing even to Jesus! If this were not true, then there would have been no temptation involved, would there? To realize and acknowledge that Jesus also found it difficult to not engage in sin ought not to cause our faith in Him to waver, not at all. Rather, it ought to increase our faith in Him! We have a Savior who was sinless in spite of sin's enticement and allurements. He was not without sin because He could not be tempted — He was without sin

because He overcame the desire to participate in sin! He wanted to please His Father much more than He wanted to please Himself. That was the key.

Whoever says that it is easy to live as a Christian must be living in a different world from the one in which I am living. Just as Satan was actively trying to get Jesus to give in to temptation, so is he constantly attempting to mislead us into thinking that we don't really need to try to please God all of the time. Surely we can all identify with the concern expressed by the spiritually-minded Paul in Romans 7:18 and 19. There the apostle says, *"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice."* Although Paul certainly struggled with temptation and sin, he was reassured by the knowledge that even though God does allow us to be tempted, He never allows us to be tempted beyond our ability to overcome the temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13).

When Jesus was tempted, His knowledge of God's Word was a great help. He relied upon the Scriptures for strength in times of weakness. We are reminded of the notable words of David in Psalm 119:11, *"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."* Jesus had hidden God's Word in His heart; then when Satan attacked Him, Jesus had the weapons of the Scriptures with which to battle the enemy. He not only **knew** what the Word said, He had **complete trust** in that Word. Jesus was also a Man of prayer. We should gain confidence in prayer from the words of Hebrews 4:16, *"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."*

Yes, I'm glad that Jesus was not immune to the appeal of sin. The Bible tells us in Hebrews 7:25 that Jesus ever lives to make intercession for those who draw near unto God through Him. What a tremendous blessing this is! Just think, as we pray to God through Christ, that same Christ who knows just what it is to be tempted is pleading to the Father in our behalf, remembering that Satan has the ability to make sin very attractive to man. How could we ask for more?

But wait — there is more. Such verses as 2 Timothy 4:1 and 8, Matthew 16:27, Acts 10:42, 2 Corinthians 5:10, and Matthew 25:31-34 reveal that this same Jesus who was tempted and who now intercedes for us is going to be the judge who will hear our case and declare our eternal destiny. As our judge, Jesus will offer to us the consolation that He has been in our shoes, He has experienced human life with its problems and trials. Because He will be my judge, I am very glad that Jesus was tempted. †

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OUR GOAL

Realizing that the responsibility given to the church by our Lord was the evangelization of the world, it seemed imperative to us that there be a publication for the church on a world-wide scale. **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** is our answer to that need.

American congregations are urged to add the support of this magazine to their budget. In return for contributions of \$25.00 per month, 35 copies of each issue will be sent for congregational use among contacts, new converts, in jail ministries, in WBS work, and for distribution in offices and waiting rooms. Used as an evangelistic tool, we believe the magazine can be a tremendous power for good.

We urge mission-minded churches to help us in our stand for the truth by supporting this work. Please call 601-283-1192.

JCC

Thank You, Father,

For these inadequacies
In Me

That give You room to work.

When things come easy
And I can meet the challenge,
I feel secure within myself.

Inadequacies are
Your answers to my prayers,

"Make me humble . . .

Help me to grow . . .

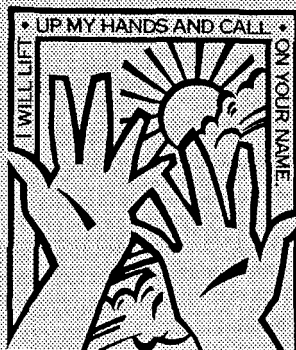
Show me what to do
and how to do it . . ."

Inadequacies are
Your working space.

You have blessed me
With so many.

I feel very special
to You . . .

— Betty Burton Choate





Why I Believe In God

Roy V. Palmer

Many people believe in God as a matter of fact. It is as obvious to them that God exists as it is that they themselves exist. The Bible says, *"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God."* (Psalm 53:1) But are there compelling reasons for one to believe in God? Is it not actually as reasonable to assume that there is no God?

In the first place, what do we think of when we speak of God? The Bible says, *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1). Therefore God is our Creator. *"Even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God,"* wrote the Psalmist. God is eternal. He always was. He always will be. And God is good. *"His righteousness endureth forever"* (Psalm 11:3). But He is also our Judge and Lawgiver. *"The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighted. The Lord*

shall judge the ends of the earth" (1 Samuel 2:3,10).

"The Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King, he will save us" (Isaiah 33:22). *"God is Spirit"* (John 4:24). *"God is Light"* (1 John 1:5). *God is love* (1 John 4:16).

But what are the reasons why one should believe there is a Creator, an everlasting, almighty, righteous, spiritual Being called God? The very existence of man, the world and the marvelous universe in which we live, the existence of Creation, make necessary the existence of a Creator. It must be accepted that either something or somebody (Being) has always existed. Otherwise there was a time when nothing existed, and something (the world, man, and all that exists today) necessarily came from nothing. But neither human experience nor human reason can admit

God

that something comes from nothing.

Therefore the existence of a First Cause is essential. God is that First Cause.

A second reason for believing in God is the fact of order and system in the world and in the universe. The existence of order is undeniable. The precision of the movement of the earth, sun, moon and the myriads of bodies in the universe is astounding. No watch can compare in accuracy. It would be vastly more conceivable to imagine that the intricate parts of a fine watch had formed themselves and assembled themselves into a

working unit without a maker than to think that the amazing universe, the marvelous processes of nature, and the wonderful function of the natural laws could have accidentally occurred and perpetuated themselves, without a Creator.

Another reason for believing in God is the existence of a moral sense in man. The conception of

right and wrong is not found in lower animals. Though it is culture-bound, and varies with enlightenment, it is a universal phenomenon. And though there may be individuals who are exceptions, there is without doubt a universal conscience in man, which mandates a moral law, and a moral law giver.

The existence of the material world requires Something or Someone powerful enough to produce it. The existence of mind requires Someone intelligent enough to create it. The existence of order and system, consciousness and conscience, require someone capa-

**Thus saith the
Lord, The heaven is
my throne, and the
earth is my foot-
stool: where is the
house that ye build
unto me? and
where is the place
of my rest?**

**For all these
things hath mine
hand made**

ble of purposing them and imposing them upon the nature of man and nature. The Bible teaches this is God. The Bible answer is infinitely more reasonable than any alternative ever conceived. †

Roy V. Palmer, long-time missionary to Zimbabwe, now lives and preaches in Abilene, TX, U. S. A.

The Cross of Jesus Christ

Hans J. Dederscheck

Paul emphasizes the fact that the word of the cross is folly to those who perish, but to those who are saved it is the power of God (1 Corinthians 1:18). Christians do well to preach the crucified Christ, a stumbling block to Jews and a folly to the Gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:23). For the apostle Paul, it was sufficient to know nothing else except Jesus Christ *"and him crucified"* (1 Corinthians 2:2). There are people who do not like the cross of Christ because of persecution (Galatians 6:12).

The Greeks are no more enthusiastic than the Jews in their reception of the preaching of the crucified Christ. They seek wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:22). Before they can believe they must understand. The only teaching they can accept as true is that which harmonizes with their conception of the world, and which satisfies their reason and their

sense of proportion. So they turn in scorn and mockery from the idea of a crucified Christ, which they term *"folly"* (1 Corinthians 1:24). The cross confuses them, and they cannot regard it seriously without abandoning all the values which add worth to their existence.

Those who are called by God have real insight into the meaning of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:24). *"For he was crucified in weakness but lives by the power of God . . ."* (2 Corinthians 13:4). Since the cross is the method by which it pleased God to reveal His power for the salvation of the world, any recourse which the preacher of the crucified Christ might have to the arguments of human wisdom or to the prestige of eloquence would strip the cross of its divine efficacy (1 Corinthians 1:17).

"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a

GOD

curse for us — for it is written, cursed be every one who hangs on a tree" (Galatians 3:13). When Jesus endured the cross, it was this shame that Christ despised (Hebrews 12:2), revealing thus the full measure of His obedience (Philippians 2:6-8). *"None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory"* (1 Corinthians 2:8). Here Paul sets the cross of Christ in a universal significance. God's wisdom is revealed in the plan of redemption, in which the death of Jesus Christ is the decisive event and the fulfillment of which will bring believers to glory, the divine life in all its fullness.

The effect of the cross of Christ is described in a similar way in Colossians 2:14, where we are told that God has forgiven our sins, having cancelled the bond which stood against us, nailing it to the cross.

Jesus said that he who would be His disciple must deny himself, and take up his cross (Mark 8:34), and he must bear his cross (Matthew 10:38; Luke 14:27). Paul would glory in nothing except in the cross of Christ (Galatians 6:14). Far from being ashamed of it, it is in the cross alone that he glories, for it is by its power that he has become a new creature (6:15).

Faith in Jesus Christ crucified

involves for believers a radical break with the law, with sin, with the flesh. Those who belong to Christ *"have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"* (Galatians 5:24). Baptism was for them the sign of their participation in the death of Christ (Romans 6:3). Our old man, the sinner, has been crucified with Christ (Romans 6:6). Therefore, we ought to live a new life according to the teaching of the Spirit in complete obedience (Galatians 5:25). Paul was convinced: *"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me"* (Galatians 2:20). †

Hans J. Dedeerscheck is an evangelist in Vienna, Austria.

"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."
(1 Corinthians 1:18)

GOD

The Bible is filled with what we call figures of speech. These are used to emphasize comparisons, stress a personal dimension, create an association, etc. Figures of speech were used with power by Jesus. They challenge the reader in the book of Revelation. They were the tools of the Old Testament prophets, and they were used frequently in the Psalms.

Such is the case when we ask, "Does God sleep?" The answer most definitely is "no," but notice how picturesque is the Psalmist's allusion: "*As a dream when*

one awaketh; so, O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image" (Psalm 73:20). In essence the Psalmist is saying that, just as we awaken from a dream and begin to act, so there comes a point in time when God says, "Enough," to the ungodly who have prospered in spite of their wickedness. At the end of God's patience and toler-

ance, the evil are set in "*slippery places*" (verse 18). They are "*brought into desolation*" (verse 19).

These people owe their very existence to the long suffering of God, which the Psalmist compares to God sleeping. But as the dream vanishes when the sleeper awakens, so

shall God exercise judgment in due time upon man's evil intent. When God awakens to judgment, those who despise

Him shall themselves be despised. When the morning breaks

and the Lord awakes as a mighty man, they shall vanish away like distant, unreal dreams. Job 20:8 paints a picture of such: "*He shall fly away as a dream and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as a vision of the night.*" †

Shan Jackson preaches for the Lord's church in Palacios, Texas, U. S. A.

Does

God

Sleep?

Shan Jackson

The Soul and Its God

Sometimes, with so much sin and ungodliness in the world, we would be inclined to say, "God has been forgotten." But if we look again we will see that the evidence of remembrance of God is there every day, everywhere.

Even when people want to deny God, He is on their minds enough that their frequent topic of conversation is why they do not believe in Him! How often is God's name used as profanity by those who have no respect for Him — yet they make constant reminders of His existence!

In songs, literature, art, and films, the subject of God, quotations from His Word, references to Him are interwoven with all of the other topics. And everywhere, in truth or in error, as a spirit or as an idol, God is worshipped.

Yes, God has made His indelible imprint in the soul and, whether men speak to acknowledge Him or to deny Him, still they all speak of God.

— Betty Burton Choate

Who made Satan?

If God did not create Satan, who made him? Is he an evil 'god'? Has he existed eternally along side of God Himself?

What a puzzle this seems to be, and yet how simply it is solved!

No, God did not create anything evil, yet neither has Satan existed eternally as the evil side of God. In the Bible we are told, "And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out...the Devil and Satan...was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." (Revelation 12:7-9)

Satan — an angel created by God — was given the **free will to choose whether or not he would obey God**. He disobeyed, and that *disobedience was evil*. Satan made himself evil by **choosing** to do evil. In the same way, **humans may choose to do right or wrong, and through their choices, evil flourishes**. Thus, it was **choice** that caused Satan to be evil, not an act of creation.

Next: What is sin?



“BLIND AS A BAT”

Gene Carrell

It's an old expression which speaks of someone being “as blind as a bat.” While not an expert in the ways of bats, I, nevertheless, have read about their remarkable radar system, and we might well wish that we human beings could maneuver our way around as well as they do. Scientists have done some extensive experimentation on the uncanny ability of bats to sense their way around in the dark. For example, they found that a bat can move at high speed through a room crisscrossed with hundreds of wires and never touch a wire. It was discovered that the bat gives off exceedingly shrill chirps while in flight. Echoes of these high-pitched notes return to the bat's ears, warning him of impending collisions, and his exquisitely balanced neuromuscular flight controls automatically go into action and cause the bat to swerve, dip, or do whatever it takes to avoid the collision. What remarkable powers!

The policeman, with a far less capable radar system, is able to determine your speed on the highway. Did you ever wonder where men got the idea of developing a device which can emit ultrahigh-frequency radio waves which bounce off an object and then return to the sending device? Man just looks over the shoulder of God and copies His materials.

We look at these things as still another affirmation of God's existence. There are times when I delight in seeing still more evidence to support my belief in the God of all creation. How could such a remarkable control sys-

EVIDENCES

tem have developed with no creator? Sometimes we are told that, given enough time, anything can happen. I challenge that with every fiber of my being. If we were to have ten billion explosions every day for ten billion years, never once would a complicated radar system drop out of the debris of one of those explosions. I will grant that no two of those explosions are likely to be alike, but in the very nature of things, explosions produce chaos, not order. The longer I live, the more convinced I become that belief makes more sense than unbelief.

Perhaps no one of us has gone through life without entertaining the thought, just once, "Do you suppose that maybe God does not really exist?" Then, given the presupposition that He does not exist, we try to do some explaining. How does order come out of disorder? When our scientists and astronauts examine other planets, they look for some kind of order, some evidence of things having been "made." Such evidence means that there had to be a "maker." For one to see the order of the planets themselves and the order of his own mind and body, and not see a Maker — he must be "blind as a bat." †

Gene Carrell is a preacher and also serves as an elder for the Fishinger and Kenny church in Columbus, Ohio, U. S. A.

God's Abundance

Aren't wild flowers amazing little things? They grow everywhere even under the most adverse conditions, with no one to weed and water them, seeming not to realize that anything beautiful should also be scarce.

There they stretch across a hill or a valley, painting it purple or red or yellow or a general mixture of all colors. They are so plentiful it is easy to see them as a mass and never to stop to appreciate the individual bloom.

But when I hold such miniature perfection between the tips of my fingers, studying closely the design and detail of that tiny, tiny bit of life, and then look across the covered field to realize that God has scattered His perfection in wild and glorious profusion, I am reminded of the difference between God and us: If human hands had made just one such perfect specimen, that person would be acclaimed as an outstanding artist.

But God repeats His perfection in such abundance that we count it as nothing — just wild flowers.

— Betty Burton Choate

The Orderliness of the Universe

G. F. Raines

Nothing excites our curiosity and interest more than the amazing orderliness of the universe. As Sir James Jeans said: "The universe seems to be nearer to a great thought than to a great machine."

For hundreds of years scientists have marveled at the uniformity of the shape of snow crystals, which, though they show many variations, are all of the hexagonal crystal system; that is, they are all flat and six-sided. It is indeed an amazing fact that no two of the little six-sided crystals are exactly alike.

The tides of the ocean, following the moon around the earth except where land stops them, rise and fall on a time schedule so definite that they regulate the day for the people who live along the seacoasts.

The constancy of the earth's distance from the sun maintains a life-supporting temperature; but if the average temperature should drop 80 degrees, life would be completely wiped out, and a change of 80



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degrees in the opposite direction would also extinguish the life on the earth.

The coloration and physical structure of animals is another splendid example of orderliness. The Australian sea horse has leafy growths on its body that give it the appearance of the seaweed in which it lives. Some of the little animals of the ocean are nearly transparent and their color blends so perfectly with the water that it is extremely difficult for their enemies to see them. If a flounder fish is put on a checkerboard, even the arrangement of the squares are reproduced on its body. The chameleon lizard also changes its color to match its environment.

The structure of insects is another unanswerable argument against atheism.

. . . the long-horned grasshopper, Metaprosagoga insignis, possesses wings which not only resemble leaves but which are equipped with irregular patches that look as though the leaf tissue had been eaten away by an insect, leaving only a network of veins visible. Another tropical leaf-grasshopper has brownish wings that suggest dried leaves. The resemblance is heightened by the fact that markings near their extremities give the impression that they are cracked or torn (Edwin Way Teale, The Strange Lives of Familiar Insects, Dodd, Meade & Co., 1964, pp. 4,5).

Most of us have seen the orderly V-shaped formation of a flock of wild geese flying to or from their breeding grounds of the Far North. A leader flies in the apex of the triangle and the other geese follow him.

As we observe the intricate construction and exquisite beauty of the plants and flowers that adorn the bosom of the earth, we see a wisdom and a skill that infinitely transcend human ingenuity, and exclaim in our hearts: "*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God*" (Psalm 14:1). We know that Jesus was right when he said:

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Matthew 6:28,29).

The wonderful orderliness of the universe indicates that it is controlled by an intelligent supreme being. It marvelously manifests the glory and handiwork of God, in whom "*we live, and move, and have our being*" (Acts 17:28).



G. F. Raines writes and preaches in Newton, Mississippi, U. S. A.

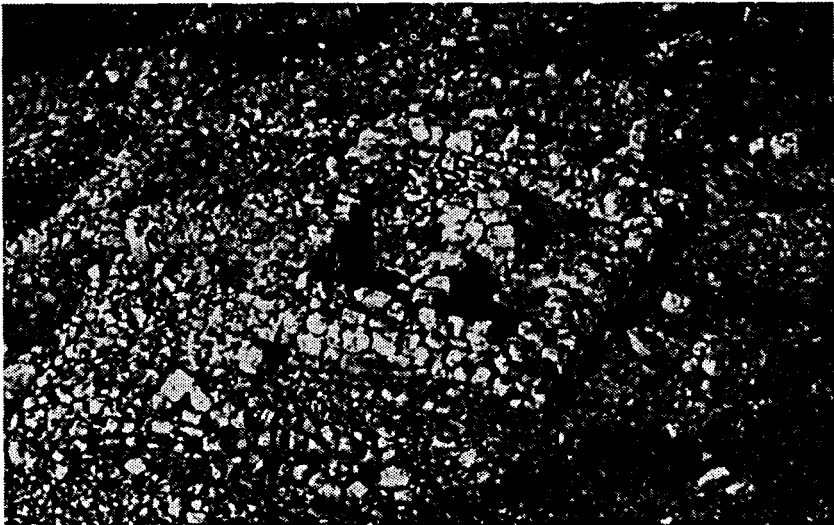
The Bible and Archaeologists

Rod Kyle

The science of archaeology is not an exact one, but it is interesting. Digging up the past is like playing detective with someone else's garbage.

But what is of interest to me in this field is the scorn and contempt the majority of archaeologists heap upon the accuracy of the biblical record, especially when it touches upon their digs, discoveries, and translations from ancient texts.

An example of this is the evidence for the exodus of the Jews from Egyptian bondage. The majority of Egyptologists deny that there is even



This structure, made of unhewn stones, was discovered on the northeastern ridge of Mount Ebal. It is believed to be the possible site of the altar Joshua built at the time of the reading of the entire law of Moses to the people of Israel (Joshua 8:30,34).

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any evidence that the Jews were in Egypt at the time and in the numbers the Bible indicates.

The biblical record says that Joseph was sold into Egyptian slavery (Genesis 39:1), that he became the Prime Minister for that nation (Genesis 41:41), that his family joined him there (Genesis 46:6), that they multiplied and spread through the entire land of Egypt to such an extent that Pharaoh felt compelled to enslave them and restrict their growth (Exodus 1:7), and that Moses, a Jew reared in Egyptian circles, led the people from the land of bondage to the land of promise (Exodus 3:17). This last event has been conventionally dated at 1500 B.C. So where is the proof?

Two interesting developments in Egyptian archaeology have occurred recently. They point to the accuracy of the Bible, and they prove the inexactness of archaeological dating methods:

1. A recent book on Egyptian chronology by Peter James, entitled **Centuries of Darkness**, strongly suggests that erroneous assumptions have lengthened Egyptian history by many hundreds of years. Sir Francis Petrie has reported on his findings in Kahun in central Egypt. Here he found millions of sun-dried mud bricks mixed with straw that had been made by people from the region of Syria or Palestine. These slaves suddenly disappeared. This fits well with the biblical record (Exodus 5). This discovery can now be dated to the period of the Exodus.

2. Manfred Bietak has been digging at Tell el-Daba in the Nile delta. He reports that the strata under his careful examination reveals dates of around 1740-1710 B.C. But what is interesting about his discoveries is that he identifies some of the population of the region as having links with southern Palestine. He reaches these conclusions through neutron pottery fragments found at Tell el-Daba. His fragments bear the marks of pottery fragments found in Palestine after the Exodus, around 1400 B.C., thus providing unwitting evidence of Jewish occupation in Egypt as the Bible said.

I would like to suggest that in the near future, assuming the present rate of research, we will be able to name the Pharaoh who suffered the most total defeat ever dealt to an earthly ruler. Perhaps then more and more archaeologists will have to humbly bow the knee before the biblical record.

In the meantime, must you handle accurately this Book which leads to life (2 Timothy 2:15)?



Rod Kyle preaches the Gospel in New Plymouth, New Zealand.

Be Like Philologus

Harvey Porter

We are fascinated by the many people that are named by Paul at the close of his letter to the church at Rome. As he sent greetings he gave praise for their labors in the Lord and for their love shown to him. He said that Tryphaena (dainty) and Tryphosa (delicate), who were probably twins, worked hard in the Lord. He wrote of the woman named Persis (Persian woman) that she *"worked very hard in the Lord"* (Romans 16:12). He then greeted Rufus (red hair) and his mother, whom Paul said had been a mother to him.

Then in verse 15, he sent greetings to Philologus, whose name meant "lover of learning." "Philo" was "love" in the Greek language and "logos" meant "word," or, literally "lover of words." We can see how that would be a "lover of learning."

If Philologus lived up to his name he was a great student, and as a Christian, he would have been a diligent student of the Lord Jesus Christ. We ought to find ourselves in his company, because the word "disciple" means "learner" and "rabbi" meant "teacher." Jesus said,

"Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me" (Matthew 11:28,29).

This is a continuing relationship. There never comes a time in our life when He ceases to be our teacher, or when we cease to be His disciple or learner. It ought to continue into eternity. Sheep need the Good Shepherd all of the time to lead them into green pastures and beside the still waters.

This is probably one of the great failures of the Lord's people in this fast and busy age — we do not study the Word enough. Even if we came to every service of the church for a sermon or a Bible class, we would be there only about four hours a week. Public schools and colleges meet many more hours per week than that. Most businesses require their workers to take study courses and seminars from time to time to keep up with their business.

We all need to set aside some time for Bible study. It would be good to choose a book of the Bible and read it through as many times as we could in a week or a month. We

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would become very familiar with its contents. We could then consult Bible helps, such as dictionaries, atlases, commentaries, or Bible handbooks concerning passages we did not understand. It is a rich and rewarding pursuit. It will demand some time. It will mean that we will have to give up some less important things. It will require discipline, just as every worthwhile endeavor does.

Paul wrote Timothy and said, *"Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth"* (2 Timothy 2:15). Diligent study will help us to *"correctly handle the word of truth."* This makes us "approved" to God and enables us to live "the life that is life indeed."

Jesus said, *"You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free"* (John 8:32). The Psalmist said, *"Thy word have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against Thee"* (Psalm 119:11). And again, *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my pathway"* (Psalm 119:105). Hosea wrote that God said, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"* (Hosea 4:6).

Learning is basic to life itself. Babies come into this world hungry to learn. They soon learn who feeds them and comforts them. They

learn the voices of those who love them and help them. They learn a language and what hurts and what soothes. Learning is designed to continue as long as we breathe. And learning truths from God are more important than learning the ways of this world.

We all need to sit at the feet of the master Teacher and be fed daily. Let's all adopt the name "Philologus" and be a "lover of learning." That means that we will have to live up to our name. †

Harvey Porter preaches for the Montgomery Boulevard church in Albuquerque, New Mexico, U. S. A.

**We search the world for
truth.**

**We cull through the
good, the pure
The beautiful from
graven stones and
written scroll.**

**Weary seekers of the
best
We come back from our
laden quest
To find that all the
sages said
Is in the Book our
Mothers read.**

—Joyce Mathis

The Gospel

Dalton Key

The Gospel is inspired of God. This life-bringing message of good news did not come about as the result of human reasoning, but was delivered to the New Testament penmen "by revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:11,12). Relative to this fact, Paul wrote young Timothy, saying, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Timothy 3:16). According to the text of 1 Corinthians 2:13, the very words of the Gospel message are God-breathed.

The Gospel contains the power of God. This power is not that which men have discovered within the heart of the atom, nor is it comparable to the power displayed by the electronic expertise of modern man. The Gospel contains the power of God unto salvation, the power to transform a child of darkness into an enlightened child of God (Romans 1:16).

The Gospel is the seed by which sons of God are begotten. In the explanation of His parable of the sower, our Lord revealed, "The sower soweth the word," and "The seed is the word of God" (Mark

4:14; Luke 8:11). The apostle Paul said, "For in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Corinthians 4:15).

The Gospel is everlasting. Christ proclaimed, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). The timeless message of Christ's Gospel has continued throughout the centuries to be the world's "Best Seller." God, through His servant Peter, said, "The word of the Lord endureth forever" (1 Peter 1:25). Our sentiments are expressed in the words of the poet:

"Hammer away, ye hostile hands;
Your hammers break;
God's anvil stands." †

Dalton Key is the editor of *Old Paths* and preaches the Gospel in Amarillo, Texas, U. S. A.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes . . . For in it the righteousness of God is revealed . . ." (Romans 1:16,17).

Turn Not from It

Andrew S. Banjarnahor

The word of God is the absolute truth, the only inerrant guide in our way of life. God gave His word to men not only to teach us concerning life on this earth but also to guide us on the way to reach that heavenly place and to receive the promise of eternal life.

When Joshua took over from Moses the leadership of the Lord's chosen people, Israel, God warned Joshua concerning the keeping of His law, *"Turn not from it."* He said, *"Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth: but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success"* (Joshua 1:7,8).

Joshua was successful in leading Israel to the promised land. The secret of his success was that he

held fast to the teaching of "the Book" and turned not from it to the right hand or to the left, as God had instructed. In the time of trouble, when the people tried to withdraw themselves from the true and living God and turn to another god, Joshua showed his unwavering faith, challenging the Israelites and telling them about the strong stand he and his family were taking for the living God (Joshua 24:15).

Today we can be strong Christians only if we do not turn from the true teaching of the Bible. The Hebrew writer said, *"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin"* (Hebrews 3:12,13). Brethren, let us take the warning, also, not to turn from the truth but to continue walking in the path of God. †

Andrew S. Banjarnahor is a radio speaker, writer, and preacher of the gospel in Jakarta, Indonesia.



New Testament Writers

Don Hatch

Men who wrote the New Testament are some of the greatest biographers known to history. The circumstances of trials, tribulations, and suffering for the name of their Savior serve as a memorial for all generations. The accumulation of

these men's writings, inspired of God, is the greatest book ever written. They instructed, through the medium of writing, countless generations on the victory over evil by doing good (Romans 12:21). Following is a list and a brief

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account of the New Testament writers:

Jude — Very little is known of this man, with the exception that he was a very devout disciple and follower of Jesus Christ. It is believed that he was one of the Lord's own brothers (Matthew 13:55). His writing is unique and simplistic.

Mark — was the nephew of Barnabas and was a co-worker of Paul in preaching the Gospel among the nations. His full name is **John Mark** (Acts 12:12). The biographical account he gives of Jesus Christ presents Jesus as a worthy example to the Gentiles.

Luke — was a close friend and co-worker with Paul. He was known to be a physician. He wrote the biographical account of Jesus in "**the Gospel of Luke**" and the history of the early church in "**The Acts of the Apostles**." Both are chronological accounts of events carefully traced by the writer.

Matthew — was a "publican tax collector" for the Roman government. This would have been one of the most hated positions in the Jewish world. His writings were to the Jewish mind and followed their teaching as a format in his composition. It is thought that he was slain by the sword in Ethiopia for the name of Christ. He wrote the first book in the New Testament.

John — was the brother of

James, the martyred (Acts 12:11-20), and was considered to be the closest to Jesus. Confusion is removed when we know that he was not John the Baptist (who never wrote any letters in the New Testament). John, who also penned Revelation, was the last living Apostle.

Peter — is also called "Cephas" or "Simon." He was the writer of 1 and 2 Peter. He and his brother Andrew were partners in a fishing venture. Some of the life and times of Peter are seen in **Acts and Galatians**. He is thought to have been crucified upside down.

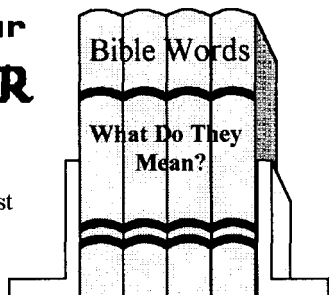
James — There were three disciples named James (Mark 1:19; Galatians 1:19; Matthew 10:3). This James, from all historical accounts, apparently was the brother of Jesus. James' book is one of the most practical works. It became a hated book during the "Reformation" period of history.

Paul — was the most prolific writer of the New Testament (with more than one third of the books carrying his signature as their writer). In early years called "Saul," Paul is generally believed to have been beheaded in Rome for the cause of the Gospel. He was one of the most influential missionaries of all times. †

Don Hatch preaches the Gospel in Abilene, Texas, U. S. A.

It Helps to Enrich Your BIBLE WORD POWER

BY FENTER NORTHERN



Are you sure you are understanding the richest meaning of the Bible? Test your comprehension of the following words used in the context found in I Corinthians 15:23-58.

After making your choices, turn the page for the correct answers.

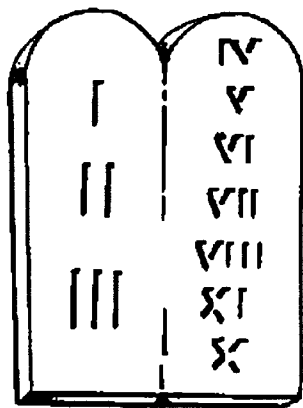
- firstfruits** n.—A: an early harvest. B: the best of the harvest. C: the first of anything offered in sacrifice to God. D: unripened fruit.
- kingdom** n.—A: the kingdom of God. B: the nation of Israel. C: any earthly nation. D: A new nation to be set up by Jesus with headquarters in Jerusalem.
- jeopardy** v.—A: a TV game. B: stubbornness against God. C: continuous sinning. D: to put in peril.
- communications** v.—A: a postal service. B: to be in company with. C: means of travel. D: to send and receive written messages.
- quicken** v.—A: to hasten one's actions. B: to produce alive. C: to prick or cut. D: prodded.
- celestial** adj.—A: angelic. B: godly. C: shining. D: heavenly.
- terrestrial** adj.—A: sinful. B: fleshly. C: upon the earth or earthly. D: land.
- corruption** n.—A: perishing. B: infection. C: mucus or pus. D: immorality.
- raised** v.—A: stood up in an erect position. B: produced a crop. C: arouse from the sleep of death or recall the dead to life. D: built a building.
- image** n.—A: a shadow. B: likeness; like Jesus in Character at his coming. D: a spectre.
- mystery** n.—A: the unknowable. B: a story about crime. C: unexplainable. D: the secret counsels of God.
- trumpet** v.—A: a musical instrument. B: the reverberating sound of a trumpet. C: to blare as a horn. D: a coronet.
- immortality** n.—A: to live in heaven. B: the resurrection. C: a historic person of great fame. D: undying, everlasting.
- death** n.—A: to be buried. B: to cease to live. C: separation when the spirit separates from the body. D: cease to exist.
- sting** n.—A: to prick, as a bee or scorpion with its sting. B: inflict pain. C: to be cheated or duped. D: to be burned.
- sin** n.—A: to be arrogant against the truth. B: to disobey God. C: to miss the mark. D: to commit wickedness or evil.
- steadfast** adj.—A: a character in *Pilgrim's Progress*. B: to observe a religious fast. C: attend church regularly. D: firm, unmovable, abiding.
- abounding** v.—A: jumping or bouncing. B: to exceed a fixed measure. C: observing a command with joy. D: hilarity.



1. **firstfruits**—(Gk. *aparche*) C: the first of anything offered in sacrifice to God; hence the first of the wheat harvest, the firstborn of the cattle, etc. The first born of the human family was redeemed by a sacrificial offering.
2. **kingdom**—(Gk. *basileia*) A: the kingdom of God; not to be confused with an earthly kingdom of the world.
3. **jeopardy**—(Gk. *kinduneuo*) D: to put in peril. The Christians of the first century were in daily peril for preaching the gospel of Christ. Note I Timothy 3:12.
4. **communications**—(Gk. *homilia*) B: to be in company with, hence to converse or talk about. In this context, keeping bad company pollutes good morals.
5. **quicken**—(Gk. *zoopoieo*) B: to produce alive, to arouse, invigorate. Here, the germination of a planted seed; likewise after one's burial the eventual resurrection to life.
6. **celestial**—(Gk. *epouranios*) D: heavenly; meaning that God made the heavenly bodies, those in deep space.
7. **terrestrial**—(Gk. *epigeios*) C: upon the earth, earthly. God made the earth and all things therein.
8. **corruption**—(Gk. *phthora*) A: perishing. The human body perishes in decay when it dies. The body return to the earth. See Eccl. 12:7.
9. **raised**—(Gk. *egeiro*) C: arouse from the sleep of death, recall the dead to life. The general resurrection of the dead.
10. **image**—(Gk. *eikin*) B: likeness; like Jesus in character at his coming.
11. **mystery**—(Gk. *musterion*) D: the secret counsels of God. Not meaning unknowable, but revealed to those with eyes to see and ears to hear. Read Matthew 13 and Rev. elation 2 and 3.
12. **trumpet**—(Gk. *salpigx*) B: the reverberating sound of a trumpet. Trump is the noun — the instrument; trumpet is the verb, the sound it makes. The trump shall announce the end of time and the second coming of the Lord.
13. **immortality**—(Gk. *athanasia*) D: undying, everlasting. The newly resurrected body will be equipped by the Lord to live forever.
14. **death**—(Gk. *thanatos*) C: separation, when the spirit separates from the body. See also James 1:26.
15. **sting**—(Gk. *kentron*) A: to prick as a bee or scorpion with its sting; thus a weapon to hurt or kill.
16. **sin**—(Gk. *harmartia*) C: to miss the mark. A military term as an archer would aim for the target but miss the center mark. Biblically it means to transgress the word of God. See I John 3:4)
17. **steadfast**—(Gk. *hedraios*) D: firm, unmovable. Always abiding faithful, even under strong persecution. Read Eph. 4:14
18. **abounding**—(Gk. *perisseuo*) B: to exceed a fixed measure.

Vocabulary Scale

7—10 correct.....	good
11—13 correct.....	Bible Student
14—15 correct.....	Bible Scholar



Better Promises

John Thiesen

Today, many are trying to return to the Old Testament in their service to Christ. They say that we should be meeting on Saturday to worship because that is what

Moses told the Jews to do. Also, we should not be eating pork or other meats forbidden in the Law of Moses.

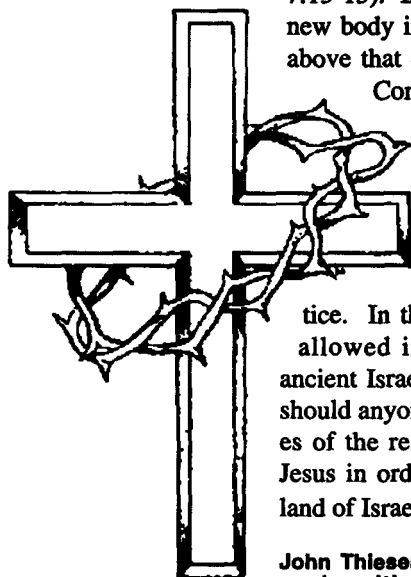
Failure to tell the differences between the two major Covenants God gave his people has caused untold confusion since the early days of the church. Perhaps the best way to encourage people to leave the Old Covenant and come to Christ in the New is to contrast the promises under both.

National And International Differences. The first Covenant, also called the "Law of Moses," was made with the **Jews only**, not with any other nation of people. Moses told the Jews, "*The Lord made not this covenant with our Fathers but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day*" (Deuteronomy 5:3). But the gospel is **for all**, Jew and Gentile alike. Jesus told His disciples to go into all the world and "*preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15).

The Earthly And The Heavenly. The first covenant was fleshly or physical. The Israelites were promised a land of their own on this earth, the land of Canaan. They could possess it only during "*the days that ye live upon the earth*" (Deuteronomy 12:1). But the blessings of the gospel are spiritual and eternal. The Christian's inheritance is "*incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you*" (1 Peter 1:4).

The Temporal And The Eternal. Whereas the Israelite was promised, if he kept the Covenant, good health, children, and fruitful fields and flocks, nothing was mentioned to him of inheriting eternal life (Deuteronomy

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY



7:13-15). But the Christian is promised a glorious new body in the resurrection and a heavenly land above that can never be taken away from him (2

Corinthians 5:1; 2 Peter 3:12). No wonder the Hebrews writer said that the New Covenant has *"better promises"* (Hebrews 8:6)!

There is no profit for people today trying to go back to the Law of Moses for their faith and practice. In the first place, they would not even be allowed into that Covenant, since it was for ancient Israel only and not for Gentiles. But why should anyone want to forsake the superior promises of the resurrection, heaven, and eternal life in Jesus in order to live for a few short years in the land of Israel? †

John Thiesen is a former missionary to Malawi and works with the Pleasant Valley congregation in Mobile, Alabama, U. S. A.

"But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, 'It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.' And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

"And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, '... Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear . . .?' and they sent this letter by them, '... For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these essentials: that you abstain from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication . . .'" (Acts 15:5,6,7,10,23,28,29).

Why Should You Be A Christian?

Jack Harriman

Because of the spiritual blessings. Blessings such as the right to pray (1 Peter 3:12), the peace and joy that come from knowing that one is saved (2 Timothy 2:10), the knowledge that God is at work in one's life (Romans 8:28), and all other spiritual blessings enjoyed only by faithful Christians.

Because it is just using good judgment. To have the abundant life here (John 10:10) and eternal life hereafter (Matthew 25:46) is just good common sense. To be on a Father-child basis with the eternal all-powerful God is just using good judgment.

Because Christ gives real purpose to life. A man without a purpose is as good as dead. A Christian has a reason to live. He lives to glorify God (Matthew 5:16) and teach others (Mark 16:15).

Because it is your duty. First, you owe it to yourself. Second, you owe it to your family. Third, you owe it to your fellowman and to your country.

Because God needs your service. The Gospel has been committed unto men for the purpose of its proclamation (2 Corinthians 4:7). Those who work in the Lord's vineyard are few (Matthew 9:37). You are needed.

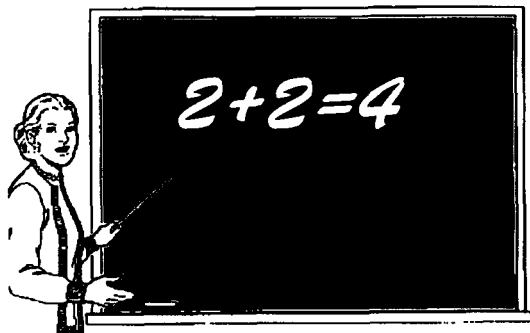
Because of God's love. God loves you (John 3:16). Christ loves you (Romans 5:8). This love should leave you no choice but to be a Christian (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Because of the reward of heaven. Heaven is a place far greater and far more desirable than words can express. You can't afford to miss heaven. If you miss heaven, you have missed it all.

Because of the terror of hell. The horror of hell cannot be described in words. Jesus said it is a place of outer darkness, where the worm does not die, the fire is not quenched, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. I don't want to go there, do you?

Yes, there are many good reasons to be a Christian. And because of the uncertainty of life, and because God has not promised you salvation on any other day (2 Corinthians 6:1,2), and because you have precious little time to serve God at best, you should become a Christian today. †

Jack Harriman preaches for the Center Street church in Fayetteville, Arkansas, U. S. A.



You can
believe
it.

Carroll Sites

Why is there such a diversity of teaching concerning baptism and the salvation of the soul? Is it necessary for the alien sinner to be baptized? When people are taught the Gospel and they accept Christ as God's Son and their redeemer, at what point are they saved? Examine each of the following statements carefully and see if you have difficulty understanding them:

1. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be promoted to a better job."
2. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be given a new automobile."
3. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be given a month's vacation."
4. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be given a free trip abroad."
5. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be paid a thousand dollars."
6. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

If we take the first five, we can all understand that they promise a certain reward to the ones who believe and are baptized. It is easy to see that the reward cannot be claimed until both conditions — faith and baptism — have been met.

Now how about number six? Is it any different? Do you understand the statements — all of them? I thought so. Now the big question is, can you accept it? May God grant you the wisdom to obey His will!



Carroll Sites preaches for the Lord's church in Higden, Arkansas, U. S. A.

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY



The Blessings Of Heaven

Wayne Jackson

Though we cannot fathom the intricacies of heaven from our current vantage point, surely we can

appreciate some of the blessings of that state as set forth in the Bible.

(1) Heaven is a place of rest

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

from earthly hardships. *"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them"* (Revelation 14:13). *"Let us therefore give diligence to enter into that rest"* (Hebrews 4:11).

(2) Heaven is a place of reaping. This earth is a place of obedient activity wherein one lays up treasures to be finally enjoyed in heaven (Matthew 6:19). There will be a tremendous "reward" of satisfaction in knowing that we have helped to increase the population of heaven (cf. 1 Corinthians 3:14).

(3) Heaven will be a place of rejoicing. Those who remain loyal to Christ will hear the Master say, *"Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord"* (Matthew 25:21). All who enter heaven will rejoice for the great victory they have won over the forces of evil (Revelation 12:12; 19:7).

(4) Heaven will be a place of righteousness. *"And there shall in no wise enter into it anything unclean, or he that makes an abomination and a lie: but only they that are written in the Lamb's book of life"* (Revelation 21:27). *"Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie"* (Revelation 22:15).

(5) Heaven will be a place of responsibility. The celestial realm will not be a domain of idle inactivity. There *"his servants shall serve him"* (Revelation 22:3). In one of His parables, Jesus told of ten servants who were each entrusted by their master with money to invest in trading. When they were finally called to account, each was rewarded with responsibility in direct proportion to the way in which he had used his ability (Luke 19:17-19).

(6) Heaven will be a place of reunion and recognition. When the patriarchs died, they were *"gathered to (their) people"* (Genesis 25:8; 35:29). Both Jacob and David expected to be reunited with loved ones after death (Genesis 37:35; 2 Samuel 12:23). The Lord taught that we shall *"sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven"* (Matthew 8:11). Paul affirmed that those whom he had helped in their heavenward journey would be a source of joy at the time of the Lord's return (1 Thessalonians 2:19,20). This clearly implies future recognition.

Surely with these great blessings ever before us, we will constantly renew our diligence to obtain this magnificent destiny. †

Wayne Jackson is the editor of *Christian Courier* and is a preacher in Stockton, California, U. S. A.

Can you identify me? Read each clue and think carefully. If you guess my name after the first clue, give yourself a score of 100 points. If you know who I am only after the fifth clue, your score is 60, etc. When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify the facts from God's word. I am a good example to follow as a Christian.

1. 100

My father was an idol worshipper, (probably he worshiped "Nanor", the moon god, to whom human sacrifices were often made) so I was not brought up "in the faith". (Joshua 24:2)

2. 90

I had two brothers and a half-sister. (Genesis 11:26; 20:12) My home town was Ur of the Chaldeans, but most of my life was spent as a nomad and a herdsman in the land of Canaan. (Genesis 11:28; 13:14-18)

4. 70

For 25 years my wife and I lied about our relationship, because I feared for my life as her husband. (20:13)

5. 60

After I defeated King Chedorlaomer, a king and priest of the Most High God came out to bless me. (14:17-20)

6. 50

God changed my name and my wife's name when He made a covenant with me, promising a son through whom great nations would be developed. (17:1-19)

7. 40

Showing hospitality to strangers, I once fed the Lord and two of His angels a meal of beef, bread, butter, and milk, under a terebinth tree in Mamre. (18:1-8)

8. 30

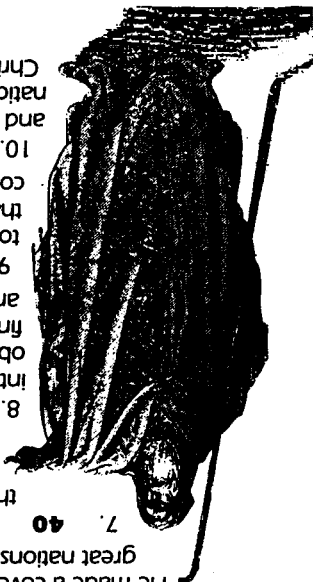
Trying to save cities which God intended to destroy because of their homosexual obsessions, I asked God to spare them if He could find as few as ten righteous persons. (Genesis 18 and 19)

9. 20

I was willing to sacrifice my only son to God, in obedience to His instructions, believing that He who had given him "as from the dead" could literally raise him back to life. (Genesis 22)

10. 10

I was called "the father of the faithful" and it was promised that through my descendants all nations of the earth would be blessed, that is, in Christ. (Galatians 3:7)



See answer on inside back cover.



Willingness to leave the crowd

Garell L. Forehand

Robert Frost's beloved and much-quoted poem, "**The Road Not Taken**," reminds us of the exuberance of independent thought and of the reality that taking the less-traveled path in life can often end up making "all the difference." Jesus Christ, Himself, pointed us to the spiritual fork in life's road, encouraging us to think carefully about the destinations to which those paths lead. Look closely at His words. *"Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. How narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it"* (Mat-

thew 7:13-14).

Crowds seem to appeal to the more aesthetic side of us. We watch for the longest lines and the busiest traffic, convinced that such clues will lead us to the best-tasting food, the most entertaining movie, or the most enjoyable time available. That belief has filtered into our religious thinking as well. For some reason we have often come to equate the majority viewpoint with spiritual quality or validity. It's just hard to imagine so many people being wrong. But Jesus calls us back to reality in the spiritual realm. He actually advised us to look for the road less traveled. However, He recognized that even having made

SALVATION

that appeal to the whole world, the outcome will still be tragic: "...there are few who find it."

Morality simply cannot be determined by observing the ever-changing winds of human approval. The Lord desires that we learn to discern right and wrong in life; but He calls for us to base that determination on something other than the crowd. The Lord advised through Moses, "*You shall not follow a crowd to do evil*" (Exodus 23:2). The crowd can be wrong! In fact, with reference to the most important thing of all, Jesus said that the crowd would be wrong. The two final segments of the human population will not be equally divided at all. Speaking of eternal life with God in heaven, Jesus said, "...there are few who find it."

So there is, indeed, something to be said for the road less traveled. Though we certainly should not assume that every minority cause is automatically proved right by virtue of its lack of popularity, still we should always be willing to give it a closer look. May we, by the Lord's loving help, one day be able to look back at a pivotal earthly decision and to happily say, "That has made all the difference." †

Garell L. Forehand preaches for the Granbury Street church in Cleburne, Texas, U. S. A.

Because I Dare

His death begun,
His pain intensely real —
Jesus looked at His
friends,
Fainting and crying —

Yet to the end, His impact
Shook the earth
For He was living Truth
Far more than dying!

Now I am dying to what is
No more:

to ways familiar —
Things too good for losing.
I live. I live abundantly
Because I dare to find
The Saviour's joy in things
Not of my choosing.

— Louise Dominy

WHY THE APOSTLES WAITED

O. P. Baird

After Jesus arose from the dead He gave the great commission to His apostles, telling them the work He wanted them to do. He told them to wait in Jerusalem until they received power from above before beginning their work (Luke 24:44-49).

This raises four questions: (1) What was the work? (2) What was the power? (3) Why were they told to wait? (4) Why was Jerusalem the place where they were told to wait?

The Work

The accounts of Jesus giving the commission to His apostles are found in the last chapter of Matthew, of Mark, and of Luke. Jesus said, *"Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high"* (Luke 24:44-49).

The work Jesus gave His apostles to do was to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to all people.

The Power

The power Jesus promised to send is the Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit. When Jesus gave the commission to the apostles He said, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8).

Before Jesus was crucified He promised the apostles that He would send the Spirit to them. He said that the Comforter, or Spirit, would teach

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them all things and bring to their memory everything He had taught them, and even tell them things that He had not taught when He was with them (John 14:25,26; 16:12-14). This is the power for which the apostles were told to wait in Jerusalem.

Why They Waited

The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). That makes it very important that we have the message of Christ just as He gave it, without any additions or changes. That is why Jesus told His apostles to wait. He would not permit them to begin their work of teaching until the Spirit gave them power to teach the perfect message. They spoke that perfect message and wrote it in the Scriptures so people in every generation could hear and receive the truth of God in all of its saving power.

This should be a warning to all people, a warning not to teach by their own wisdom, but to believe and teach only what they find taught in the Scriptures. That is the only place where we find the teaching which God has given by the Holy Spirit.

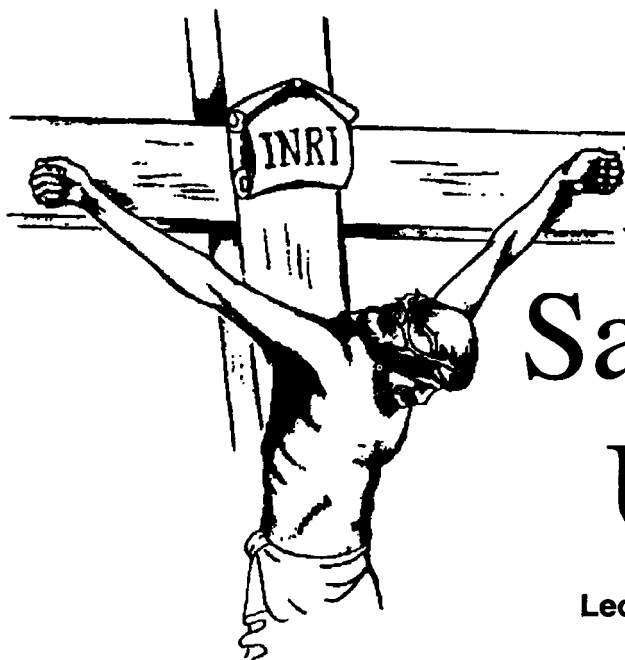
Why Jerusalem?

Jerusalem was the place for the apostles to wait for the power of the Spirit, because it had been prophesied in the Old Testament that the word of the Lord would go out from Jerusalem. The prophet Isaiah said, "*. . . for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*" (Isaiah 2:2,3). Jesus said the preaching would begin at Jerusalem (Luke 24:46,47).

The Gospel First Preached?

In Jerusalem, according to the promise, the power came and the Gospel began to be preached in its fullness, and the Gospel terms of forgiveness were first spoken (Acts 2). The people were told to believe that Jesus was Lord and Christ. Then they were told, "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 2:36-38). About three thousand people obeyed those terms the first day. If a person today believes what they believed, and obeys the commands they obeyed, he is sure to receive the remission of sins and the salvation which they received. There is one Gospel, and it does not change. †

O. P. Baird is a former missionary to Korea and now lives in Searcy, Arkansas, U. S. A.



He Saved Us

Leon Barnes

Text: Titus 3:1-7

Do you ever feel like a child being told to “be good” by your parents when you were leaving for school? Sometimes, when reading through the Scriptures, there are so many instructions on what to do, it feels like we are being told all over again to “be good.” However, all of us know, being told to “be good” did not give us any *power* to not do the wrong things or to do what we knew we should. It didn’t even cause us to *want* to do right many times.

When you get to this segment of Titus, Paul is telling Titus the things he should teach to different ones regarding daily life. He wants them to be gentle and considerate of each other and to be careful not to malign anyone. But notice, it is as though he realized they might begin to think that these were just more instructions on how to live, while they had already been struggling with the instructions they had before. So he turns to explain *the power* through which all of us can live the new and godly way he described.

SALVATION

Remember From Where You Came

The first thing he wants us to do in trying to live as we should is to remember from where we came. *"For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another"* (verse 3). It is a good reminder for us of our own frailty even as we strive to be Christ-like in the world. Perhaps one of the sayings often heard, "God is not through with me yet," helps us feel the fact we are still in the process of growth for God.

If we can just keep in front of us where we have been, what our failures have been, and how far we have come in living for God, this will serve to keep us from being so hard on others who are still having a hard time with some of the things we have already overcome. It will help us to feel encouraged that we are growing into the image of the Lord. It will also remind us that we have some distance to go yet before we have it all perfected.

Remember, He Saved Us

The second thing which should stand out to encourage us in our Christian lives is the memory of how we are saved. Our salvation comes by the *"kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind."* It is *"not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit"* (verse 5).

There is a danger in the way we usually refer to becoming a Christian. We may talk about being converted, obeying the Gospel or being baptized. All of these are correct, but they tend to place the emphasis on what *we* have done. We tend not to use the equally scriptural phrases which talk about us being saved, being redeemed or being justified. Maybe the reason so many of us get discouraged in our Christian living is that we are prone to see only ourselves and forget the Lord in the whole process of both conversion and Christian living.

"He saved us." He did it by His kindness and love. It is not by deeds of righteousness which we have done. It is according to His mercy. When the emphasis is placed on God, rather than ourselves, what a marvelous difference it makes in our whole view of Christianity. It is suddenly workable. Instead of feeling any sense of superiority, all we can feel is gratitude.

By what means does He save us? *"By the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit."* This is an exact parallel to John 3:5 when Jesus was explaining to Nicodemus that he had to be born again of water and of

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the Spirit in order to be saved. This washing of regeneration takes place when a person is baptized into Christ. At that point our sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). We are baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26,27) and in so doing we put on Christ. We become a new creation, or we are reborn before the Lord.

Notice that it is not the act of baptism which saves. God saves us. He saves us by means of the new birth. Could He save us in another way? Certainly! He is God. He could save anyway He wanted to. Will He save you if you reject His will and refuse to do what He says you are to do in order to be saved? That is an entirely different matter. Who are we to tell God how to save us? When we really submit to Him we are ready to do whatever He wants and commands for salvation.

When we submit to Him in being washed in baptism, He renews us by means of giving the Holy Spirit. He comes to dwell in us as Christians (Acts 2:38). We are not left alone to fend for ourselves for God. He abides with us. Our bodies become the very temple of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us (1 Corinthians 6:18-20). We are not given some minor gift from the Holy Spirit. Instead Paul says, “. . . whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior” (verse 6).

We Are Heirs

The final thing about which God reminds us, as we view the challenges of doing the things He has commanded, is that the best is yet to come. We are heirs of God. He owns heaven and lives in it with all of its splendor. He is all-powerful, all-knowing, and all-wise. He is so loving and full of mercy that I can't even comprehend His goodness. And I am His heir. In Romans 8:14-17 God says, *“For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba! Father! The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.”*

Listen, people qualify for the inheritance because they are in the family of God. If you are not in the family yet, what are you waiting for? Christ paid the price. You can, today, be born again of water and the Spirit. Don't miss the marvelous blessings given by God both now and in eternity. †

Leon Barnes preaches in Little Rock, Arkansas, U. S. A.

Church Growth And Numbers

Jerry Jenkins

Is it biblical to emphasize numbers? It is not if that is all in which we are interested. It is not when we begin to devalue souls and relegate them only to a boasting statistic. It is not Biblical to emphasize **only** numerical growth.

It is the primary work of the church to preach and teach the Gospel to men, women, and teenagers who are without Christ. It is *not unscriptural* to count the results of efforts to convert the lost, for this is exactly what the inspired writers of the Bible did.

Acts 2:41: *"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added (unto them) about three thousand souls."*

Acts 2:47: *"Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."*

Acts 4:4: *"Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men*

was about five thousand."

Acts 5:14: *"And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women."*

Acts 6:1: *"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."*

Acts 6:7: *"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."*

Acts 9:31: *"Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."*

Acts 9:35: *"And all that dwelt at Lydda and Saron saw him, and turned to the Lord."*

Acts 16:1: *"Then came he to*

THE CHURCH

Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father (was) a Greek."

Acts 21:20: *"And when they heard (it), they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law."*

Numerical church growth was very much a part of the early church. There is no mention of decline, but it is obvious that time after time the church was encouraged by reference to this numerical growth. In our restoration of the New Testament church we need to restore the emphasis and priority given to the increase. Let us be encouraged to set goals and strive to attain them! Let us keep the church aware of the constant need to improve in every way.

Please be reminded that we are not for one moment suggesting that we think numbers-growth alone is acceptable to our Father; neither should we reduce people to only a face to be counted. On the other hand, let us never justify our lack of growth by the simple affirmation, "we are growing in quality." †

Jerry Jenkins is the preacher for the Roebuck Parkway church in Birmingham, Alabama, U. S. A.

Leaders

God needs leaders in His church today.

For without them, it will fall away.

Leaders able to take all the flack,
Not to lash out, but a soft hand
on the back.

Criticizers and bench warmers
God has a plenty.

Leaders who are willing,
I'm afraid there aren't many.
Being a leader isn't easy, you
see,

God never promised that it
would be.

When the time comes to pass
from this life

I would like to be able to say,
"Thank You, God, for letting me
be,

One of Your leader in my day.
I love You, Lord, and Your Son,
too,

Just isn't time for things needed
to do.

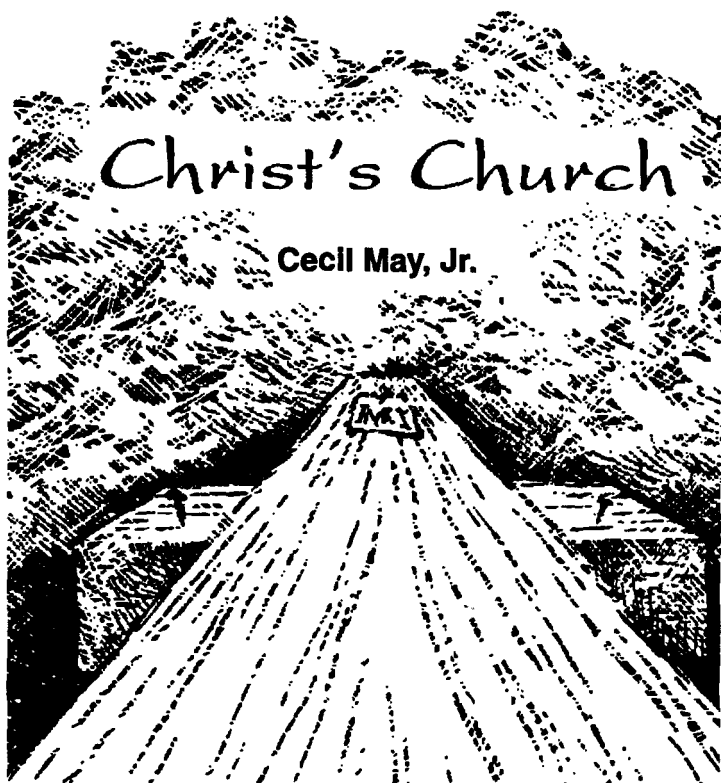
Forgive me, Lord, when I fail in
any way,

May I count my blessings, and
be able to say,

Thank You, God, for letting me be,
One of Your leaders in my day."

—Sarah Daniel

THE CHURCH



Rock-bottomed. *"Upon this rock I will build my church"* (Matthew 16:18). The church of Christ is built on the solid rock foundation of the truth which Simon Bar-Jona confessed: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

"Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus" (1 Corinthians 3:11). God has set Christ, *"the stone which the builders rejected,"* as *"the chief cornerstone"* (Psalm 118:22; Acts 4:11). Whatever is not founded on that rock will fall. *"Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up"* (Matthew 15:13).

Christ-built. *"I will build my church"* (Matthew 16:18). The church belongs to Christ. He built it Himself.

He laid the foundation by His death and resurrection. He set apostles and prophets in the church (1 Corinthians 12:28), and through His blood and

THE CHURCH

the word of their testimony He adds to the church day by day those who are being saved (Acts 2:47). He continues building His church, forming a holy temple and habitation of God through the Spirit (Ephesians 2:20-22), laying living stone upon living stone (1 Peter 2:5-7).

Blood-bought. The church of the Lord was purchased with Christ's own blood (Acts 20:28).

A young boy put many hours into his first artistic project, a boat carved out of wood, with much effort and careful attention to detail. While sailing it in a stream, he lost the boat. He felt the loss very keenly. That boat was the first thing he had ever made alone with his own hands, and he loved it.

After weeks of grieving, he saw it one day. Another boy was playing with it. The other boy admitted finding it, but was not willing to give it up. "Finders keepers," he claimed.

After negotiations, the finder of the boat agreed to sell it to its maker. It took all of the lad's savings, but he loved his boat; so he purchased it. Taking it home, he kissed his boat, hugged it close and said, "You are mine; I made you and I bought you. You are twice mine."

So with Christ, the church.

Hell-proof. *"The gates of hell (hades) shall not prevail against it"* (Matthew 16:18). It is a kingdom made without hands, which can never be destroyed (Matthew 16:19; Daniel 2:44).

The power of death could not prevent God from putting Christ on the throne. He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand.

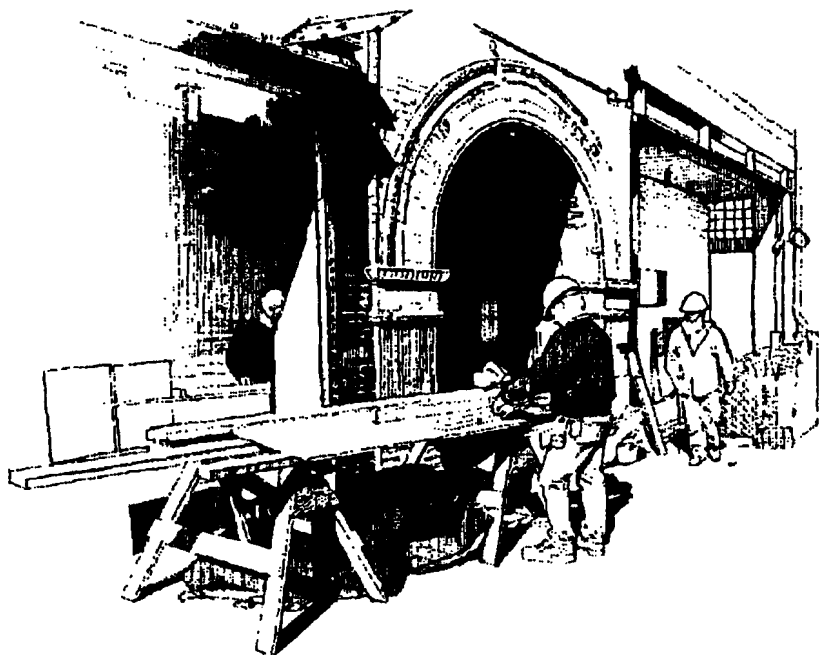
The Word of God will endure (1 Peter 1:23-25); therefore, so will the church. The Word of God is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:10,11). Whenever and wherever the Gospel is preached and honest souls receive it in obedient faith, there is the church.

The church has suffered persecution even to death, but death has not prevailed against her. The dead in Christ will be raised, the mortal and corruptible will be changed into the immortal and incorruptible. Death will be swallowed up in victory (1 Corinthians 15:53,54). Hades and the grave will be cast into hell. Death cannot overcome the church. The faithful church will conquer death.

The church militant on earth will share fully in that victory as the church triumphant in heaven.



Cecil May, Jr. is president of Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, Mississippi, U. S. A.



God's Pattern For A Local Church

Clarence DeLoach, Jr.

The church at Thessalonica was established by Paul while on his second preaching tour (Acts 18). Later, he sent Timothy to see how they were doing. When Timothy returned to Paul, he brought, "*good news of their faith and love*" (1 Thessalonians 3:6). Paul then wrote his letters to the church, emphasizing the qualities God wants in the church.

THE CHURCH

It Was A Saved Church.

"Knowing, brethren, your election of God" (1 Thessalonians 1:4). They were in the Lord Jesus Christ (1:1). Their conversion was genuine — ***"they turned to God from idols"*** (1:9). No church can be effective in reaching people for God unless it has been touched and changed by God. God's pattern for the church begins with real, genuine, personal conversion.

It Was A Surrendered Church.

"You became followers of us, and the Lord" (1:6). Paul and his co-workers exemplified Christ among them. An example is a powerful thing. They mimicked what they saw. When individual Christians surrender to Christ, they will be like Him. That is the basis of unity. When each one follows Christ, there will be no problem getting along with each other.

It Was A Soul-Conscious Church.

Early Christians affected a whole region by their exemplary lives. People were attracted to Christ when they saw their joy and conduct. Real evangelism is more than talk — it is life! Evangelism grows naturally out of what we are. Good news is for spreading, both by lip and life.

It Was A Serving Church.

"They turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1:9). We have not been saved to sit, but to serve. We are servants. Christ is our master. What is the pattern of our service? Look at Jesus! Follow Him through Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John! He sought the lost. He brought light to those in darkness. He brought hope to the hurting. He reached out to children. He comforted the grieving, encouraged the lonely, fed the hungry, and taught the Scriptures. Peter said, ***"He went about doing good"*** (Acts 10:38). His life and His ministry are the model for His body — the church.

It Was A Waiting Church.

They were thoughtful of Jesus' return — they waited for God's Son (1:10). Their waiting was motivation for service. Let us never lose sight of Jesus' coming. May His coming give us incentive to be about ***"the King's business."*** †

Clarence DeLoach, Jr. preaches for the Walnut Street church in Dickson, Tennessee, U. S. A.

Which One Is The REAL Church?

Jimmy Jividen

No one can deny that religious confusion results from the multitude of churches, creeds, and clergy. They all claim to follow the same Lord. What's a man to do?

Is he to systematically examine each one to see if it fits his perceived felt-needs? Is he to blindly follow the faith of his fathers or conform to the current religious fad? Is he to wait for some overwhelming emotional surge to come upon him and then accept that feeling as a special revelation from God?

In the midst of claims and counter claims, how can he distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit? It is scriptural and reasonable to say that there is one genuine Lord. It is just as scriptural and rea-

sonable to say that there is one genuine church (Ephesians 4:4,5).

The question is, **"How can this church be identified?"**

The church of Jesus Christ was not founded by men and is not an evolved cultural phenomenon. She is Divine, holy, and unshakable. She was planned by God, purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ, and is the temple of the Holy Spirit. She is described in the Scriptures as God desires her to be. We can open our Bibles, and in them we have the criteria to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeits.

THINK ABOUT IT. †

Jimmy Jividen is a writer and preacher living in Abilene, Texas, U. S. A.

Most people are trying, basically, to be 'good', believing that surely this will satisfy God — whoever He may be — when they die. After all, they reason, being good is the important thing, because all religions require that.

Yes, it is true that all religions teach personal goodness and social goodness, to some degree. The question is, is human goodness enough to make us acceptable to God? No religion actually teaches such a doctrine, for all demand also some type of gift or sacrifice, some system for gaining merit or forgiveness.

Only one religion says it is impossible for a man to save himself; only one religion offers a Saviour: the religion Jesus Christ brought into the world . . .

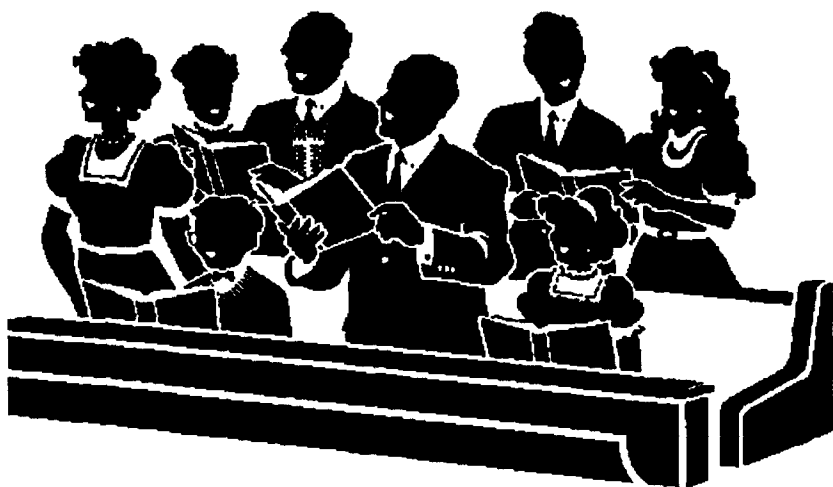
— from **Jesus Christ the Eternal Sacrifice**

The Book of 1 Corinthians for adults

Write the correct word in the blank, then circle it in the puzzle.

1. _____ wrote two letters to the Christians in Corinth. 1:1
2. Paul was an _____ of Jesus Christ. 1:1
3. Paul said, "I give _____ to God always." 1:4
4. The word of the cross is the _____ of God. 1:18
5. A little _____ leavens the whole lump. 5:6
6. Your body is the _____ of the Holy Spirit. 6:19
7. _____ puffs up, but love builds up. 8:1
8. Every athlete exercises _____ - _____ in all things. 9:25
9. All things are lawful, but not all things are _____ 10:23
10. Be _____ of me, as I am of Christ. 11:1
11. As often as you _____ this bread and drink this _____ you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. 11:26
12. There are varieties of _____ but the same Spirit. 12:4
13. You are the _____ of Christ. 12:27
14. Love is patient and _____. 13:4
15. Love never _____. 13:8
16. _____, _____, _____ abide, but the greatest of these is love. 13:13
17. Christ has been _____ from the dead. 15:20
18. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be _____. 15:51
19. Be steadfast, immovable, always _____ in the work of the Lord. 15:58
20. Be watchful. _____ firm in your faith. 16:13

I M I T A T O R S T H A N K S
 B S G H L R T N D U F E Z T E
 K O O T E M P L E P N V L D L
 L J D W H O L T S I H O P E F
 E L O Y N A F A I T H L U G C
 A P O S T L E S A H O A H N O
 V A P M D E T C R E A T E A N
 E U C N O F N R A K J Y L H T
 N L A E I B S A I I N G P C R
 D T V G C T E I L N R D F U O
 S C I K N O W L E D G E U P L
 N A B O U N D I N G I B L R T



The New Testament Church and Its Worship

Dennis R. Smith

Since the first century the religious world has veered far from the type of worship that was originally designed by Jesus Christ and taught by the Apostles. People offer up to God anything they desire. Any type of talent, dramatic arrangements, musical compositions, plays, recita-

tions, special day arrangements (Christ-mas, Easter, Mother's Day, etc.) are not uncommon in some religious circles. The question that needs to be answered is, "Where in the Bible does one find authority for all of these?"

The simplest form of worship

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can be seen in the Bible as the first century church had its beginning. Much of their worship was done in private homes (Acts 2:46; 1 Corinthians 16:19). The earliest writers on church history agree that a very simple worship was practiced, consisting of simple things: prayer, preaching, singing, observing the Lord's Supper, and giving of one's money.

The plea to "speak where the Bible speaks and remain silent where the Bible is silent" is catching on with thousands, and as such people are recognizing that the Bible truly is a "lamp unto their feet and light unto their pathway," so they appreciate the church of Christ for using **only the Bible** for everything it believes and practices. For too long the religious world has been bound by ecclesiastical powers and theological ideas which have

caused people to overlook the simple things of the Bible, and in its place have substituted a more formal, more ritualistic, and more traditional worship than was ever authorized by the New Testament Scriptures. This has created an idea among many that they cannot understand the Bible, and they therefore fail to use it as their guide, or check-list, or rule book.

Since the Bible declares "*all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work*" (2 Timothy 3:16,17), it becomes necessary to use the Scriptures in exactly that manner. †

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Adoration

I heard the trees clap their branches.

I heard the hills and the mountains shout for joy.

I heard the birds sing praises in adoration.

— Brunice C. Cole, Jr.

Secrets To Healthy Worship

Glenn Colley

Have you noticed how some Christians seem to leave worship assemblies refreshed and enriched, while others leave with nothing but their coat? There are some “secrets” to strong, healthy worship which we all need.

God, from the beginning, has intended for His human creation to worship. Worship is a human expression of subordination and humility. The first murder occurred at the hands of Cain when his desires in worship and God’s desires in worship clashed. Cain’s humility was lacking. Jesus taught us that proper worship, like a house resting on two mighty pillars, is “. . . *in spirit, and in truth*” (John 4:24). There have always been people intent on worshipping with emphasis on one of these while neglecting the other, but Jesus required both. To worship God in truth can only mean that we worship according to the pattern which He approved in the New Testament (Acts 20:7).

Consider Jesus’ admonition to worship “*in spirit*.” Surely this does not refer to the common practice today of “manufacturing spirituality” with the emotional fever of some current religions. Let’s go back to the Bible to learn how to fashion our hearts for healthy worship.

The brother announces the song the church will sing, and we all lift our voices in vocal praise. However, look into the hearts of the worshippers. What is there? The songs, some of which have been sung from our youth, are so familiar to us that we can mouth the words and never consider the thoughts contained in the hymn. Consider Colossians 3:16: “*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*” If I want my singing to be “*in spirit*,” then let me start with a heart filled with thoughts of God’s rich grace toward me. Let me remember the many sins He has thoroughly cleansed from my once spotted soul. Then let me sing.

Prayer is another avenue of worship needing our careful attention. If I pray the rushed, mindless, quoted prayer, the benefits seem small. But suppose, rather, that before I pray I carefully meditate on how desperate I would be without His goodness toward me. Paul wrote, “*Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks . . .*” (1 Thessalonians 5:17,18). It’s that thanks — beginning my petitions with a heart of genuine gratitude — which makes for

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rich and healthy prayer.

Some would argue, in regard to the Lord's Supper, that observing this part of worship every first day of the week causes it to be trite, stale, and lifeless. If you subtract from the observance the proper condition of the heart, then they are right! However, when Christians precede the eating of the Lord's Supper by filling their hearts with the scenes of His life and death, and the effect His blood has on their sins, every observance of the supper is fresh and enriching. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:24,25 that we are to obey the Master and partake while remembering His body and blood. Then in verse 28 Paul wrote, *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."*

Most of us are careful about spending our money. When we come to worship we may have a hard time keeping a good heart. "After all," we may reason, "that money is hard to earn, and maybe my giving to the work of the church could be smaller." How can I adjust my heart so that when I give I will really be cheerful? Here's the answer: *"Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him . . ."* (1 Corinthians 16:2). When a Christian gives, let him first ponder all the things with which the good Lord has prospered him. It is so easy to give liberally and cheerfully if we do our giving while meditating on all He has done for us.

And finally, the secret to good preaching is found in 1 Peter 4:11: *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God . . ."* Do you want the pulpit which you fill to be interesting, challenging, and worthy of the audience's time? Then fill your sermons with God's Word! We make, I believe, a terrible statement about the value of God's Word when our sermons contain no Bible, or are only seasoned with a smattering of the Bible here and there. Instead, our sermons should be filled with the Bible! Preaching our wisdom instead of God's is like the light of a candle compared with the light of the brilliant sun. People who love God are hungry for the Word. May we never send them away without a hearty spiritual meal from the Word of God.

There they are. These are the secrets to healthy worship. They rest in a simple understanding of who God is and how small I am before Him. I need His grace and love. He has poured out both in sending His Son. May we always worship in *"spirit and in truth."* †

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Early Will I Seek Thee

Jerll (Polly) Cline



My cushioned bed lay on the cool mat floor facing the sun as it sifted through the sliding paper doors. But it wasn't the cool of the room that early morning or the warmth of the sun that had awakened me. It was the

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deep gong of a bell and then an eerie chanting on the other side of my tiny garden wall. I struggled to recall where I was . . . Tokyo . . . a Christian home in the heart of Tokyo. And the sound? That was a neighboring Buddhist priest rising early to worship his god.

Wahiawa, Hawaii . . . just a few doors from my home on California Avenue . . . as the people arose to go work in the pineapple or sugar cane fields, often many of them stopped by this little plot of land where an idol to their ancestors watched over the dead. There they left their pots of rice or poi, mango or papaya, praying to the god for good fortune and health.

Maui, Hawaii . . . right across the street from our church building . . . an ancient Hawaiian Heiau to the sun god which rises directly over Haleakala volcano. There, also, early in the morning, fishermen bring bowls of rice, old women and young offer flowers and fruit.

You have seen them . . . the robed and chanting Moslem . . . kneeling, crying out, beating their chests . . . to Allah. Such dedication to a false god! And we haven't even mentioned the large population of India and their gods. Yet all of these have one thing in common. Their commitment leads them to seek their god early! Before work or school or play, there is something they must do.

When I was training to go to Asia, I heard brother Otis Gatewood tell of the time he took Bibles into the Iron Curtain countries. One Lord's Day he was asked to describe the way Americans worshipped. Did they stay all day? Did they come early each morning to enjoy another devotional period before going to work? How could he tell them that where Christians were *free to worship they felt free from worship?*

Now what about me? I'm not a morning person. My husband is, but not me. Oh, really? It depends on what I'm getting up for . . . to hunt . . . fish . . . hike . . . ah, that's different. Oh, really?

Early will I seek Thee . . . when I am in distress . . . when I want something . . . when my child is sick . . . when . . . when *what?* Really now, *when* will I seek Thee for Thy sake? That I might know Thee and praise Thee for that alone? How precious are You to me . . . Your Presence . . . Your Thoughts . . . Your attitudes . . . Your answers?

If a people who worship a dead god can get up early, if they can discipline themselves to honor eyes that cannot see, ears that cannot hear, a heart of dead wood or stone, surely the people of the Living God can rise up!

I speak not just physically, but spiritually. Deborah was called upon to **awaken** the children of Israel, in Judges chapters four and five. To **arouse**

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them from their lethargy! To **arise** and set **aright** those things that are **amiss** in spiritual Israel.

And not just spiritually, but chronologically. Early in life did Joseph seek the Lord. David composed psalms while still a child. Daniel was in captivity, yet as a young man he had already made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the world's permissiveness.

And Jesus, the very Child of this Living One, needed the relationship found only in Him. Very early in His life we see Him asking and answering questions about this One. If He sought God while still a child, arose early in the morning, while it was still dark, that He might go out to a lonely place and pray (Mark 1:35), surely I am in as great need!

*"O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee;
my soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee"*

(Psalm 63:1).

Share the Word of God with your child before he goes off to school. Teach him that you depend upon the Living One for your strength and wisdom. May he know early in his life that there is no other with answers to his questions. And if he were to come to your room before the sun has risen, may he find you in prayer, learning first hand, that as he eagerly sought you out, so you seek your Father . . . early. †

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"And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there" (Mark 1:35).

"And all the people would get up early in the morning to come to Him in the temple to listen to Him" (Luke 22:14)

"And early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him. . . ." (John 8:2)

"But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, bringing the spices which they had prepared" (Luke 24:1)

"They entered into the temple about daybreak, and began to teach. . . ." (Acts 5:21).

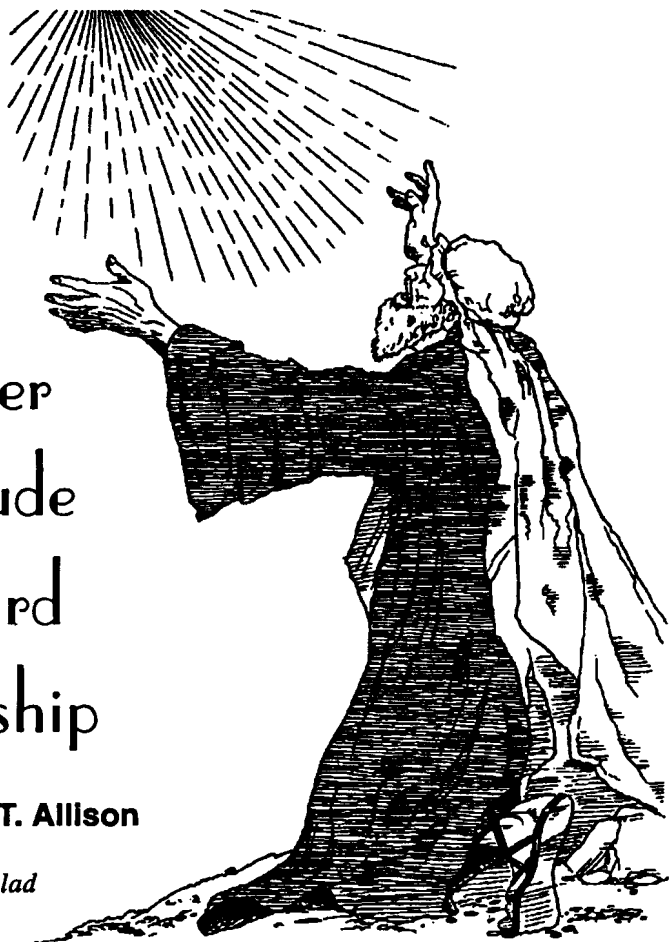
The Proper Attitude Toward Worship

W. T. Allison

*"I was glad
when they
said unto me,
let us go into the house of the Lord"*
(Psalm 122:1). Can you imagine
what the results would be if each
child of God expressed this attitude
toward worship? The Psalmist was
aware of the fact that he owed God
something that could be paid only

*"in the presence of God's people"
and in the "courts of the Lord's
house" (Psalm 116:18,19).*

Worship is natural, but most
difficult. Why is something that is
so much a part of life so difficult?
The reason is that it includes all of



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man (body, mind, and spirit). It is relatively easy to do things that involve only the mind and body, such as mowing the lawn, raking the leaves, cleaning the house, or typing a letter. Worship involves a man's spirit. We must put our whole heart into our worship (John 4:24).

God's people hear a higher calling to worship than a church bell or the sound of chimes. It is the spiritual desire to worship God that brings the child of God to assemble with fellow saints in mutual praise and adoration to God. There is a song within the heart that demands to be sung, a gift that must be presented to God, and a service eager to be rendered. Our worship must never be allowed to degenerate into an atmosphere of a "high-powered sales meeting" or the rivalry of a "hoopla" of a football stadium, or turned into the competitiveness of a "goal-conscious" crowd. *"O come, let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before the Lord our maker"* (Psalm 95:6).

What is worship? Christian worship is an act of reverence paid to our Creator. It means to bow down, prostrate oneself, and do reverence toward God. Worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God,

and to devote the will to the purpose of God.

Worship is getting God's attention and giving Him our attention. Jesus spent valuable time in His ministry in an effort to get the attention of the woman at the well (John 4). She kept evading the issue, but Jesus kept bringing her back to her relationship to God.

Worship is memory. The worship of the Passover was given to remind the Jews of all God had done for them. The Lord's Supper serves as that reminder for us. Our poor worship is the outgrowth of poor memories. It is for this reason that two people can come to the same worship service: one can leave inspired and the other leave bored. One has forgotten the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

Worship is fellowship with God and members of God's family. The Lord's people partaking of His Supper at His table implies mutual fellowship. Christians should look forward to the time when they meet the Lord around His table as His family comes together to express appreciation for all He has done for it.

Worship is service rendered to the Lord. In answer to the great question, *"Who is my neighbor"* (Luke 10:29), Jesus taught that we must serve those in need. The priest and Levite were "high" on worship



The Divine Plan For Unity Among Believers

Reggie Gnanasundaram

The greatest obstacle to preaching the gospel in my country is the innumerable divisions that exist among those who believe in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit, as stated by our Lord in His prayer in John 17:20,21 where he prayed, *"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."*

Our Lord never prayed in vain. On the cross He asked for the forgiveness of those who had crucified him. This prayer was answered when the apostle Peter, on the first Pentecost after the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, proclaimed the terms of pardon for the first time. We read in Acts 2:41,47 that about 3000 Jews rendered obedience and were added to the church.

In the same way our Lord's prayer for unity will be answered, provided the Bible plan for unity is implicitly followed and obeyed.

What is this plan for unity?

(A) The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 1:10 stated, *"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."* In this plea, Paul not only condemned divisions but he gave the solution when he said, *"Speak the same thing."*

The all-important question is, "How can we all can speak the same thing?" The apostle Peter answered this question in 1 Peter 4:11 saying, *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."* Thus it is easy to understand that if we all speak where God has spoken and be silent where God is silent we can all be agreed. It is an accepted fact that dissension and division come not from *what the Bible teaches* but from *what the Bible does not teach*.

(B) The apostle Paul instructed in Philippians 3:16, *"Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing."* The importance of the acceptance and observance of a rule cannot be over-emphasized. Throughout the world people conduct their secular affairs harmoniously as they follow the established laws. Rules such as measures of weight, length and other standards govern our daily lives. Similarly if all people would accept and observe the rules given by the Almighty God, what a wonderful, harmonious place this world would be!

(C) The apostle Paul stated in Colossians 3:17, *"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."* Many are confused as to what it means to say or do all things in the name of Jesus. This simply means "as authorized by Jesus Christ." If, in spiritual matters, all people would say and do only that which is authorized by Jesus Christ there would be perfect agreement.

(D) We are commanded not to add or to take away from the word of God. This warning is found in three distinct places in the Bible:

1. In the beginning of the Bible in Deuteronomy 4:2.

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2. In the middle of the Bible in Proverbs 30:6.

3. At the end of the Bible in Revelation 22:18,19.

According to the passage in Revelation, God warns that if we add to His Word He will add all the plagues that are written in His Book, and if we remove anything He will remove our name from the Book of Life.

(E) Finally, we read in 1 Corinthians 4:6, *"Follow only what is written in the scriptures."* Another version of the Bible (The New King James) states that we should not go beyond that which is written.

Man must know:

1. Concerning God

(a) that He is the Creator of all mankind — Genesis 1:1,31.

(b) that all things were created for Him and by Him — Colossians 1:16.

(c) that in Him we live, move and have our being — Acts 17:28.

(d) that by Him all things consist — Colossians 1:17.

(e) that He upholds all things by the Word of His power — Hebrews 1:3.

2. that God knows best, as Creator, what is needed by man.

3. that God has given all things that pertain to life and godliness — 2 Peter 1:3.

4. that God's instructions for man will make him perfect — 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

5. that God's Word has been confirmed by signs, wonders, miracles — and gifts of the Holy Ghost — Hebrews 2:4.

6. that God's Word has been once delivered to the believer — Jude 3.

Why, then, does man want to add or take away from God's written instructions to us, or to change His Word in any way? He plainly says that His Word:

1. will stand forever — Matthew 24:35; Psalm 119:89.

2. will judge us in the last day — John 12:48.

Contrary to what the Bible so plainly states, man is dissatisfied and fails to realize:

1. *"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12).

2. Man by his own thinking or by following the teachings of other men

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can never hope to find for himself the way which is right. This is confirmed by what we read in Jeremiah 10:23, *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."*

The question therefore arises, *how can man direct his steps?* The answer is found in 2 Corinthians 5:7, *"For we walk by faith, not by sight."*

What is this faith according to which man must walk? In Romans 10:17 we read that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Therefore it is obligatory for man to walk according to the Word of God. This is what Jesus said at the very outset of His ministry in Matthew 4:4, *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*

Therefore we can conclude that if all men:

1. will speak where God has spoken
2. will live by the rules given by our Lord
3. will say and do all things as authorized by our Lord
4. will not add or take away from God's Word
5. will not go beyond that which is written

we can have unity among all believers in God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. We can be children of God, our One Father (Galatians 3:26, Malachi 2:10), and be members of His One family (1 Timothy 3:15), the One church (Ephesians 4:4-6), built by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18), of which He is the One Foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11) and the One Head (Colossians 1:18).

Let us keep uppermost in our minds that all plans of men will fail but God's plan for unity will never fail, provided we work His plan just as He gave it to man. †

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There is just one way to bring up a child in the way he should go and that is to travel that way yourself.

— Lincoln

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FORGIVEN?

Frances Parr

Which of us does not, at times, suffer from feelings of guilt? Oftentimes acquaintances, friends, and family give us reasons for guilty moments. People expect things of us which we cannot or don't want to fulfill. Sometimes salespeople use guilt to help sell

their products — "Don't you care about your child's education?" — to induce you to buy a set of expensive books.

Christians are especially prone to feelings of guilt. Many have previously led lives of which they are not proud. Even those trying their

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hardest to live in a Christ-like manner will be tempted and do things which are not pleasing to God.

The dictionary defines guilt as the fact of being responsible for some shameful act. It is also a remorseful awareness of having done something wrong.

True, nobody who has lived for any length of time has escaped making mistakes. It is human nature. To people trying to please God, guilt is a natural response.

The world has set standards for right and wrong, with varying degrees of severity. For instance, murdering another human being is a great transgression, punishable by death. Telling a "white" lie is not so serious, and is sometimes even humorous. In the old-time American west, cattle rustling was a death offense; and shooting a man who was cheating in a card game was considered his just reward.

God looks at sin differently. Sins are not large or small, but all are abominable to Him. In Romans 1:29,30 Paul lists disobedience to parents, boasting, and pride on the same level as murder and hating God. Solomon, the wisest man on earth, said in Proverbs 6:16,17, *"There are seven things God hates: a proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false*

witness, and one who sows discord among the brethren."

Yet, in spite of His feelings, God is forgiving. In his sermon on the day of Pentecost, Peter tells the multitudes gathered in Jerusalem that God had sent the long-awaited Savior. The people didn't recognize Jesus as such and they killed Him. Imagine murdering the Son of God, the very One who had come to save them! Visualize their utter terror and dismay when they were convicted of the truth of that news. They immediately asked, *"What can we do?"* Indeed it would have seemed to be a hopeless situation. *"Repent and be baptized and you will be forgiven,"* Peter answered. In view of so terrible an offense — such an easy solution.

Saul of Tarsus went around seeking out Christians, throwing whole families into prison and murdering others. He said of himself, *"I am the chief of sinners"* (1 Timothy 1:15). Yet, God took him, forgave him, and made him into one of the most powerful preachers and writers the world has ever known. Instead of wallowing in guilt, Saul (renamed Paul) says, in Philippians 3:13, *"... forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."*

Feelings of guilt are useful only

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when they inspire us to make amends so we can get on with life. Harboring these feelings, when they are forgiven and long past, is not only non-productive, but can cause physical bodily harm and render us ineffective in our Christian lives.

James 3:2 says, "*We all stumble in many ways.*" God knew we would, and before He made the first man He had already devised a plan of redemption. With few exceptions, every personal story mentioned in the Bible includes things that the individual did which were not pleasing to God. The ones who repented and asked for God's forgiveness received it.

David was overcome with grief and remorse when the child of his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba died. While there was still hope he prayed and fasted. When the baby died, he got up, changed clothes, and worshipped God. When questioned about his behavior he explained, "*Now he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me*" (2 Samuel 12:23). He had done everything he could do.

Just as God forgave the people on the day of Pentecost for murdering His Son, He will forgive anything you and I have done. After our initial acceptance of Jesus, we

have only to repent and ask for God's forgiveness. God's grace covers us, and He forgets that we have ever done the deed. Why should we labor our minds over something which God has entirely forgotten?

Let us then be imitators of Paul — forgetting what is past and pressing on toward the goal — eternal life with Him! †

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God Has Promised

God has not promised us sun without rain,
Joy without sorrow, wealth without pain,
But He has promised us His loving care,
Hope for tomorrow, answer to prayer.

God has not promised us eyes without tears,
Love without heartaches, faith without fears,
But He has promised us strength for today,
His constant presence all of life's way.

God has not promised us stars without night,
Health without illness, growth without blight,
But He has promised us He will provide
Bread for our journey, His Word to guide.

God has not promised us gain without loss,
Life without dying, crown without cross,
But He has promised us peace where there's strife,
A home in heaven, eternal life

— Owen D. Olbricht

Living Today Today!

Owen Cosgrove

There is an old saying that is sometimes used when someone is worrying about the future, "We'll cross that bridge when we get to it." The Lord put it a different way: *"Be not anxious for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"* (Matthew 6:34).

No one is strong enough to bear today's burdens well, plus those of tomorrow and tomorrow. Every journey of life must be made one step at a time.

Today is an installment payment on the note of life. The total note is not due now. Tomorrow's payment is not required until tomorrow. To try to pay the note in full today would bankrupt and destroy us. But one day at a time, our obligations and responsibilities are well within our ability to meet.

If your heart tried to supply all of the body's needs for a week

immediately, it would destroy itself. But one beat at a time, working and resting, working and resting, it can do its work well for many years.

Life must be lived within its time compartments. Someone has said, "By the inch, it's a cinch, but by the yard, it's just too hard."

Anxiety has been called "borrowing trouble." One old proverb says, "Never trouble trouble 'til trouble troubles you." Elbert Hubbard, an American author, wrote, "If pleasures are greatest in anticipation, just remember that this is also true of trouble."

H. W. Beecher wrote, "When we borrow trouble, and look forward into the future and see what storms are coming, and distress ourselves before they come, as to how we shall avert them if they ever do come, we lose our proper trustfulness in God. When we torment ourselves with imaginary dangers, or trials, or reverses, we have already parted with that perfect love that casts out fear."

A grateful and prayerful reliance on God brings peace that passes understanding (Philippians 4:4-6). *Live today faithfully.* That is all that you can do and all that you need to do. Trust God, and be not afraid. †

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PADLOCKING THE MIND

David W. Chadwell

A closed mind padlocks one's understanding. When a closed mind locks the understanding, that person sees as though he were blind, hears as though he were deaf, and ignores the obvious. A closed mind is determined not to learn. Therefore, a closed mind has no need of or use for understanding. To a closed mind, understanding is a deadly enemy.

The Gospel of Mark introduced Jesus' ministry by focusing the reader on this fact: Jesus did the impossible. He cast demons out of a demon-possessed people — the impossible spiritual problem (Mark 1:23-27). He cleansed people of incurable leprosy — the impossible disease (Mark 1:40-42). He immediately restored full, normal use of the body to the paralyzed — the impossible physical problem (Mark 2:3-12).

As would be expected, the news about Jesus and His incredible power spread greatly. *"Immediately the news about Him went out everywhere into all the surrounding district of Galilee"* (Mark 1:28). *"The*

whole city gathered at the door" (Mark 1:33). *"Everyone is looking for you"* (Mark 1:37). *"... Jesus could no longer publicly enter a city, but stayed out in unpopulated areas; and they were coming to him from everywhere"* (Mark 1:45). *"All the multitude were coming to him, and he was teaching them"* (Mark 2:13).

The Pharisees, prominent religious leaders, with their scribes and disciples, were quite aware of everything Jesus did and said. Again, as we would expect, they approached Jesus. However, they did not approach Him to learn, to observe the power of God, or to express appreciation for the good He did. They approached Jesus to criticize Him, to discredit Him. *"Why do you eat and associate with sinful, evil people?... John's disciples fast, and we fast; why don't your disciples fast?... Why do your followers violate the religious laws of the Sabbath?"* (Mark 2:16,18,24).

These were not sincere questions searching for understanding.

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These were determined efforts not to "see and hear" the obvious. Their questions were the methods used by closed minds to keep a padlock on their understanding.

These people ignored the abundant evidences which showed clearly that God was powerfully at work in Jesus. They attacked the tremendous impact for good that Jesus had on the masses. The Pharisees were blind to the fact that Jesus actually was accomplishing what they claimed to be their purpose — bringing people back to God.

Instead of seeing the significance of the divine power that forced demons out of people's lives, they saw only that He associated with sinful people. Instead of seeing the incredible power of God destroy an incurable disease, they saw only that His disciples did not observe the religious tradition of fasting. Instead of seeing the power of God that restored a paralyzed body to complete and normal functions, they saw an insignificant act — and declared it to be a serious violation of the Sabbath law. Instead of thanking God for the masses listening to Jesus teach them about God, they regarded everything Jesus did and said as a threat

to God.

A closed mind has made all the important decisions. It has examined all the "important" information. It has accepted all the "proper" evidence. It has reached all the "right" conclusions. Therefore, the closed mind does not need to think, to consider, to discover, to acknowledge personal mistakes or errors, or to make any changes in thinking or life. When challenged, the closed mind always looks for faults and error to evade responsibility. It never learns; it never reconsiders; it never grows. The closed mind locks a person in the darkness of his self-righteous ignorance.

An open mind sees, understands, and dares to struggle. It is willing to think, to learn, to redirect, and to change. An open mind understands it never knows everything, never has all the "right" answers, and never has made the "last" necessary change. An open mind leads a person to the light that makes full life possible.

Which mind do you possess?
How do you look at Jesus? †

David W. Chadwell is an author and preacher living in Oxford, Mississippi, U. S. A.

The normal reaction to a new idea is to think of reasons why it can't be done.

— Homer Youngblood



As Though They Have Not Been Anointed

Bobby Dockery

In the religious life of ancient Israel, anointing was an important ceremony. It was a solemn and moving ritual which must have been very impressive to witness.

In the Old Testament, prophets were anointed. Elijah, for example, was commanded to anoint Elisha as his successor (1 Kings 19:1). Priests were also anointed (Exodus 29:7). But the class of men most commonly associated with anointing was kings. Samuel anointed Saul to be the first king of Israel and later he anointed David to take Saul's place (1 Samuel 9:16; 10:1). Elijah was commanded to anoint Hazael as king of Syria and Jehu as king of Israel (1 Kings 19:16).

Anointing represented the idea of consecration, of dedication, and of ordination. Those who were anointed were set apart and commissioned for service.

When we come to the New Testament, we discover that all Christians have been anointed by God. Paul affirms this in 2 Corinthians 1:21,22: "*Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.*" 1 John 2:20 says, "*But you have an anointing from the Holy One.*" When does anointing come to the Christian? When we surrender to God's grace and are baptized. At

that point we receive the gift of God's indwelling Spirit (Acts 2:38; 1 John 2:27). At baptism, we are set apart as God's own distinctive people! We are anointed for active service!

The Scriptures warn, however, that we can fail to live up to our anointing. One of the saddest passages in the Bible is David's lament over the death of King Saul. Nothing sums up the tragedy and pathos of Saul's life quite so movingly as these words: "*The mighty is cast vilely away . . . as though he had not been anointed*" (2 Samuel 1:21). Saul had been anointed by God, but he did not live up to his anointing! He misused his gifts and wasted his great natural abilities. His life should have been a triumph; instead, it was a tragedy!

This is not just ancient history. Many today live "as though they have not been anointed!"

1. Some have fallen away from the faith as though they have not been anointed. Many, like Demas, have forsaken God because they love this present world (2 Timothy 4:10). Some, like Hymanaeus and Alexander, have had their faith shipwrecked (1 Timothy 1:19,20). They were once cleansed, but they dishonored their anointing and again became defiled (2 Peter 2:20-22).

2. Some are living worldly,

immoral lives as though they have not been anointed. Consecration is an almost forgotten word in today's church. Not many Christians are serious enough about God's instructions to be holy, separate, and set apart from the world! Many Christians do like the world does and go where the world goes. They watch the same television programs, read the same books, listen to the same music, wear the same fashions as the children of this world! They act like they were never anointed.

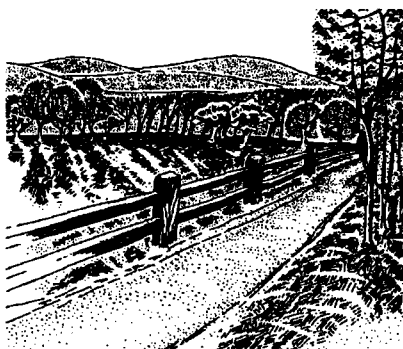
3. Some have neglected their service to God as though they have not been anointed. When we were baptized we were commissioned for active duty. We were anointed to serve. Christianity demands faithful involvement in the work of the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58). How tragic that so many Christians have folded their arms in idleness as though they had never been anointed!

As we reflect on the Old Testament ceremony of anointing, it ought to clarify our understanding of our relationship with God. We have been anointed! We have been cleansed, consecrated, and commissioned!

Are you living up to your anointing? †

Bobby Dockery is a writer and preacher in Fayetteville, Arkansas, U. S. A.

Staying



On The Right Path

Charles Pugh III

Those who are hunters will enjoy the following story from which we wish to draw a spiritual principle. There was a man who bought himself a new hunting dog. Eager to see how the dog would perform, the hunter took him out one day, hoping to track some big game. Sure enough, the dog picked up the trail of a bear! The hunter was excited and thought, "I really have a hunting dog now!" However, the dog suddenly stopped, sniffed a while, and then turned and headed in another direction. The hunter soon realized a deer had crossed the path of the bear, and the dog was now trailing the deer. While on the deer's trail the dog caught the scent of a rabbit, who somewhere along the line, had crossed the path of the deer. Now the dog was trailing the rabbit. On and on the dog went, and finally the tired, breathless hunter caught up with his "prize" dog, only to find it triumphantly barking down a small hole. Investigation revealed the hole was the home of a mouse.

Sometimes we are like that hunting dog. We're often distracted by things which cross the path we're traveling in life. We find ourselves pulled in this or that direction, not remaining on the right path. We start out right, but end up off-course. Christians are sometimes pulled off the right path by the cares, riches, and pleasures of life (Luke 8:14; 1 Timothy 6:9,10; Hebrews 11:24,25). Some let various experiences pull them away — sickness, financial loss, death, or being mistreated by another.

If you have been pulled away from the right path, ponder the path of your feet (Proverbs 4:26), and arise and come back today (Luke 15:18). †

Charles Pugh III is the preacher for the Bridge Street church in New Martinsville, West Virginia, U. S. A.

Daily Vows

Jane McWhorter

"So will I sing praise unto thy name forever, that I may daily perform my vows" (Psalm 61:8).

It has often been said that Christianity is a life that must be lived daily. Each day, little by little, God expects us to do what we have promised in His service. Most of us work in surges. We will be inspired by a workshop, a gospel meeting, or some similar motivation, and then labor with zeal for several weeks or even months. Often the enthusiasm gradually lessens because we are creatures of moods, and this is only natural. A realization that God expects daily service should help us get our proper perspective and give us the incentive to do what we have promised even when desire dwindles.

Paul admonished those at Corinth: "... *Be ye steadfast* ..." (1 Corinthians 15:58). Steadfast means day after day after day. It involves work — hard work. The reason given for the success of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem is found in Nehemiah 4:6, "... *for the people had a mind to work.*"

The Scriptures abound with

examples of daily steadfastness.

"Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). *"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple . . ."* (Acts 2:46). The workers on the wall in Jerusalem worked so diligently that the only time their clothes were removed was for washing (Nehemiah 4:23). Romans 12:12 exhorted the early Christians to continue instant in prayer. The people at Berea were considered to be more noble than those at Thessalonica because they *"searched the Scriptures daily . . ."* (Acts 17:11). Turning our thoughts from Jerusalem, Berea, Rome, and other distant places, we should all make the application in this century and in the place where we live.

God expects us to be faithful in worship (Hebrews 10:25). Do we perform our vows by regularly assembling with the saints? What about our daily searching of the Scriptures? Has it also become second nature to us? Has it become second nature for us to constantly

seek ways to serve others? Habits can be good or bad. Regardless of their worth, they are formed in the same manner. What begins as a tiny thread is gradually reinforced until it becomes a seemingly unbreakable rope. We perform the action over and over until we become completely unaware of it as it sinks to the realm of the subconscious.

The church is blessed with many faithful Christians who daily

seem to notice numerous areas of need and then quietly do their best to improve the situation. Think of the people who have made a difference in your life. Have you made a difference in the lives of others? Remember that God is aware of every action. Nothing goes unnoticed. *"Be instant in season, out of season . . ."* (2 Timothy 4:2). †

Jane McWhorter is a Christian writer living in Fayette, Alabama, U. S. A.

The Results of Neglect

I looked upon a farm one day
That once I used to own;
The barns had fallen to the ground,
The fields were overgrown.

The house in which my children grew —
Where we had lived for years —
I turned to see it broken down,
And brushed aside the tears.

I looked upon my soul one day,
To find it, too, had grown
With thorns and nettles everywhere —
The seeds neglect had sown.

The years had passed while I had cared
For things of lesser worth.
The things of heaven I let go,
While minding things of earth.

— via The Gospel Trumpeter

Verse Search

Supply the missing information from the gospel of John, chapter seven.

1. Contrary to the belief of many people, Jesus did have physical brothers and sisters (Matthew 13:55,56). At this point in time, were Jesus' brothers convinced that He had come from God? (V. 3-5)

2. Why did the Jews marvel at the teachings of Jesus? (V. 14,15)

3. "Jesus answered them and said, ' _____ not Mine, _____.'" (V. 16)

4. "If anyone wants _____, he shall know _____, whether it is from _____ or whether _____." (V. 17)

5. At that time were there those who were looking for the opportunity to kill Jesus? (V. 20,25)

6. What excuse was being used to kill Him? (V. 23)

7. When the people heard Jesus speaking boldly in His own defense, and no one opposed him, they asked, " _____ ?" (V. 26)

8. Some of them reasoned, though, that Jesus couldn't be the Christ, because " _____ ; but when the Christ comes, _____." (V. 27)

9. Jesus' reply was that they did know Him and where He was from, but that they didn't know _____, Who had sent Him. (V. 28,29)

10. Why did many of the people believe on Him? (V. 31)

11. Why did the religious leaders send officers to take Jesus? (V. 31,32)

12. What invitation did Jesus make to His hearers? (V. 37)

13. Jesus promised that those who believed in Him would receive _____ (V. 38,39; John 14:15-18; Acts 2:38; 5:32)

14. Prophets in the Old Testament had foretold that the Christ would be born of the lineage of _____, and in the city of _____ (V. 42)

15. The officers said, " _____ !" (V. 46)



Are
Family
Values

Important?

Hardeman Nichols

Family values are receiving a great deal of attention now, even in politics. Some people protest that these values have no place in political discussions, while others believe that they are of vital concern. Intense arguments can be started by expressing views on either side of these issues.

That many people are vitally concerned about what they consider their "family values" cannot be denied, and all people could well take an interest. We are witnessing a time when pressures are upon families to give in to

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“change” — whatever that means.

The kinds of change which some are advocating would collapse the moral fiber of family life.

All humanity has been created in God's image. The One Hundredth Psalm says, *“Know ye the Lord, he is God. It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves. We are his people, and the sheep of his pasture”* (Psalm 100:3). Since we are the offspring of God, He has a sovereign right to set the standard for our lives.

The first of three divinely-ordained institutions that God established was *the family*. Jesus contended with the religious leaders of the first century who were defending changes in family values. He said, *“Have ye not read, that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.’ So that they are no more two, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder”* (Matthew 19:4-7). As one listens to the rhetoric of election campaigns, this precept from the Son of God should be the standard by which we measure every proposal to change family values.

In the biblical record, God established the family by creating

one man and one woman who were to be joined together for life. This standard does not approve same-sex marriages, any more than it approves polygamy. Jesus also prohibited divorces for every cause, stating one exception: *“And I say unto you, whosoever shall put away his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and he that marrieth her that is put away committeth adultery”* (Matthew 19:9).

God also takes notice of any mistreatment of those who are left alone and are defenseless in the world, especially those who have been deprived innocently of their families. Israel sang this admonition: *“A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation. God setteth the solitary in families”* (Psalm 68:5,6). They also were taught, *“Rescue the poor and fatherless. Do justice to the afflicted and destitute. Rescue the poor and needy: deliver them out of the hand of the wicked”* (Psalm 82:3,4).

Family values are just that — of utmost value. And we must not sell them for worthless momentary decorations of worldly pleasure.

Are family values important to you? †

Hardeman Nichols is an evangelist from Dallas, Texas, U. S. A.



Bob Plunket

I passed a house the other day and in the front yard was a sign which read "Home for Sale." I said to myself, "They've got it all wrong. It's a *house* for sale." Well, come to find out, they were getting a divorce, dividing everything. Maybe the home was for sale. I'm afraid many *houses* are for sale because the *home* has already been sold.

What is the home? Home is the family: the father, the mother, the children, the pictures, the memories. I guess it is a little hard to separate them at times, but I would hate to say, "I'm going home," and there not be anything there but a house.

And yet, that's exactly what many children go home to. Mother is gone. Father is gone. Only the television set is there to teach them. No, the parents didn't die. They are just out working so they can get a bigger house or bigger this and that.

How do you advertise a *home* for sale? A lot like you advertise a house for sale. You get a sign that says, "Used Wife For Sale" or "Used Husband For Sale." Even though one would not wear such a sign, this is done by action and conduct. There are so many out there who are available who have abandoned vows and commitments, who want to pull up and uproot and

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move on, and there just may be more homes for sale than houses for sale these days.

Who wants to buy a home anyway? Satan does, and he will pay top dollar for every one he can get. He knows their worth and value. He knows what the home means to the church, the community, and the nation. He bought the very first home that was ever established. He bought it with lies and deceit. Surely this is a picture God wanted us all to see — how Satan can rob us of the paradise that God intended for us. Satan and his disciples have been buying up homes since the beginning, and he may well be after yours.

Thank God for all those fathers and mothers who are committed to keeping the home together and off of the market, in spite of the fact that physical attraction may not be as great as it once was, or in spite of the fact that one mate may be handicapped or ill, or in spite of the fact that it's a struggle to get along financially, or in spite of the fact that there may be someone out there making flattering advances.

Sell your house if you must, but please don't sell your home. ". . . *Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life*" (Revelation 2:10). †

Bob Plunket preaches for the Lord's church in Tuscumbia, Alabama, U.S.A.

Refrigerator Dreams

You promised me big windows
from a bookstore magazine
shelved beside the modern bride
and I pinned it to the icebox door
so neither would forget;
even opened the shade so light and shadow
criss-crossed that little magnetized reminder.

Easy to forget about refrigerator dreams,
though,
when I am so blessed to lay my head on
your chest and you say,
"You're the focus of my world"
then pick me up to spin,
to yell like heathens just for loudness
and hope the neighbors hear,
but in such careful contrast
you watch my jutting elbows
passing smooth through our apartment doors,
throw me on the hide-a-bed
when it still looks like a couch,
tickling and apologizing,
but I just smile cause I'm tougher than that.

How can any tangible
be as bright as the light in you?
Will our windows grow bigger
as we rise upward from youth?
If we stand in them
will our heads just brush the top
or stoop hunched-over to fit?
Maybe we'll step off the sill
like mad-dashing young ones
snatching at something wilder
protecting each other's careful elbows.

— Georgia Choate

A Family's Determination

Danny Cline

Talk about determination — is it needed anywhere more than in making a home succeed?

Moses' father, a Levite, married a wife from the same priestly tribe (Exodus 6:16-20). Obviously each of them determined to spend life with one who shared mutual ideals. It will take solid determination to marry a Christian — another priest (1 Peter 2:9) — when many do not.

The woman conceived and bore a son (Exodus 2). That sounds so natural, but consider that many in our age abort births. It may take determination to give birth when many do not.

Because the Pharaoh ordered boy babies drowned, Moses' mother determined that her son would live, and ingeniously hid him. Do you think that it might take ingenious resolutions to keep your family intact when many disintegrate?

When the baby was found by Pharaoh's daughter, Moses' sister determined that she would get her mother to be his nurse. Thus the whole family had determined that

their little clan would succeed.

Moses grew in boyhood. You have never seen a more determined fellow. His faith led him from palace to wilderness, but he endured "... *as seeing Him who is unseen*" (Hebrews 11:27). Determination, learned at home, was the deciding factor in preserving the nation which gave us God's Son, and ultimately our salvation.

Determination!



Danny Cline preaches for the Lord's church in Blue Ridge, Georgia, U. S. A.

I determined that every
day
I would take some time to
pray,
To read my Bible, to help a
friend,
But once more as the week
shall end
I find I must decide anew
To do the things
I determined to.
— Jesse Granville

God's Promises

Betty Burton Choate

You reassure me with,
"The lilies of the field —
He cares for them
So — no need to worry:
How much the more
Will He take care of us?"

But just last night
A Mom who needn't worry
Heard the sirens,
And they brought her baby home . . .

How often do we take God's words
And forge them into pledges
He has never made,
*And then lose faith in Him
Because we think He failed?*
Where does He promise safety,
Security,
That all will be the kind of
"well"
We want?

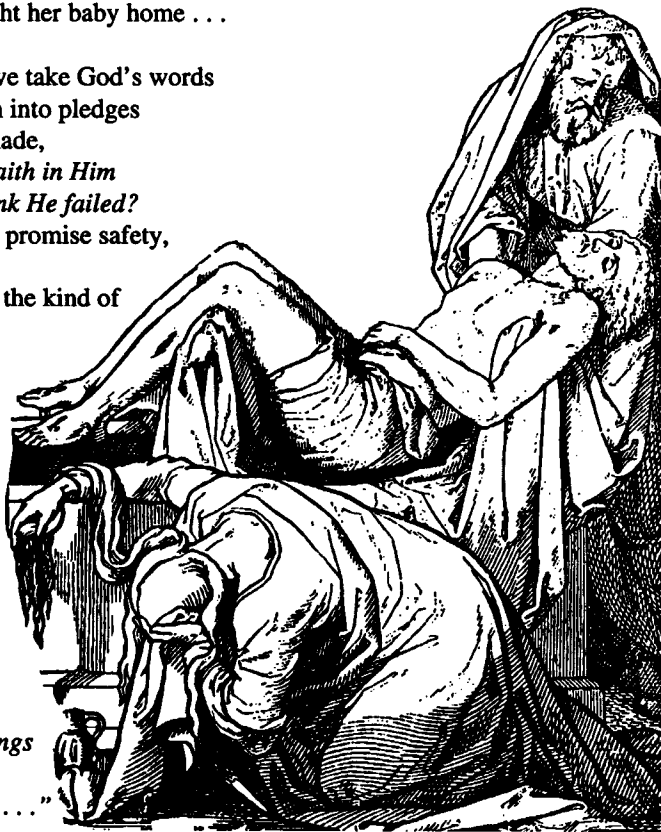
*He never
promised that.*

He said,
"I'll take your
cares
Because
I care . . ."

He said,
"For good
I'll work all things
together
If you love me . . ."

Our judgment is not His
Our vision is not His
And sometimes life is crushing pain,
But faith and love can grow
Within the pain
If we read His word aright
And wait in trust to see the way.

1 Peter 5:7
Romans 8:28



Centuries ago God lamentingly spoke through His prophet Jeremiah: *"An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land: The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and my people love to have it so. But what will you do in the end?"* (Jeremiah 5:30,31)

God has always been very concerned about the people whom He made in His own likeness and after His own image (Genesis 1:26,27), because He knows that he is immortal; and He knows the destiny of humanity: either heaven or hell. God has loved man always and has provided for all his needs. He has been kind to let man know from the beginning what course he should follow; both physically and spiritually. Yet, in every age man has drifted away from God's direction, and has followed an entirely differ-

ent path.

In spite of man's unfaithfulness, God's concern has never changed. One of the wonderful characteristics of God is that He is long-suffering toward mankind. (2 Peter 3:9) But the question, yes, the great question, that God posed to men through Jeremiah centuries ago remains critical even now: *"But what will you do in the end?"*

One of these days all of us will face God in His judgment, as the apostle Paul said in Galatians 6:7,8, *"Do not*

be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also

reap. For he who sows to his flesh

will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."

The end of man's earthly life is as certain as his very existence. At that point, after this physical life is over, only two things remain: eter-

Back

to

Basics

Sunny David

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nal condemnation in hell or the eternal life in heaven, as Christ taught in Matthew 25:46.

From the beginning God has instructed man as to how he should live on the earth. First, He spoke directly to man; then he spoke through His prophets; and finally, He sent His Word in human form — Jesus Christ, His Son — who lived an exemplary life for us to follow His steps.

Jesus taught many wonderful things to guide us in our daily lives. (Hebrews 1:1,2; 1 Peter 2:21) Just look at His sermon on the mount in Matthew 5, 6, and 7 as He spoke such profound truths: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit . . . Blessed are those who mourn . . . Blessed are the meek . . . Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness . . . Blessed are the merciful . . . Blessed are the pure in heart . . . Blessed are the peacemakers . . . Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake . . . Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven . . . Love your enemies, bless those who spitefully use you and persecute you . . . Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust*

destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is there your heart will be also . . . Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the law and the prophets."

These are some of the basics of God's Word to which all of us must turn for the shaping of our lives. But in today's world, the very opposite guidance is being sought. With the increase of media network, both printed and electronic, people are getting the wrong type of education. Immorality in every form is being exalted. Things which God hates, such as divorce, homosexuality, pride, lying, killing, abortion, covetousness and revelries, are being glorified. Morals are being corrupted, to the extent that we are reminded of the days of Jeremiah when God looked down from heaven and spoke such shocking words: *"Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed; not did they know how to blush"* (Jeremiah 6:15)

Time was when people were ashamed to discuss some things even privately, but now those very things are spoken publicly, without embarrassment. Intimate topics are not only discussed but they are even shown in our homes through television. The same types of mate-

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rials are also available in the form of literature everywhere in all languages.

God won't reach down from heaven and force people to stop watching television or reading whatever literature they want to read. Neither is He going to prevent people from doing what they want to do. He didn't do that in the garden of Eden. When God created Adam and Eve and placed them there, He gave them the freedom to choose between good and evil, obedience and disobedience. He knew that He was granting the potential for sinning, but He didn't take away their ability to choose. Rather, He warned them that they must not go beyond His will; and that in the day they disobeyed Him they would die; that is, they would be separated from Him spiritually and would begin to die physically.

But man did sin and God didn't prevent him from making his own decision, even though it was a wrong one.


Evil is present even today; in much more vigor and variety; and

God is not going to prevent us from choosing evil. But He has told us what we should do and what we should not do. It is our responsibility — not God's — to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. (James 1:27)

Counseling the young people of his time, the wise old Solomon advised: *"Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes."* And then, notice, what the wise man said next: *"But know that for all these God will bring you in the judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from your heart, and put away evil from your flesh, for childhood and youth are vanity. Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth"* (Ecclesiastes 11:9,10; 12:1).

What is the motive source of your life? What controls your life? Is it God's will as is found in His Bible? Or, is it the world? †

Sunny David is a radio speaker, writer, and preacher of the Gospel in New Delhi, India.

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- * Christians are the salt of the earth, and should be sugar, too.
 - * There are no traffic jams on the strait and narrow way.
 - * A torn jacket is soon mended, but hard words bruise the heart of a child.



Use the Opportunity

**David
Deffenbaugh**

and seize an opportunity. Certainly he made plans and he had intentions, but they didn't always work

As Luke records the end of Paul's third missionary journey, he tells us that Paul spent seven days with the saints in Tyre. It was apparently a time of sweet fellowship: when it came time for Paul to leave, these brethren and their families escorted Paul from the city, they all knelt on the beach, and prayed. Now one might assume that Paul's visit was part of his plan on this journey. However, apparently the only reason he stopped here was, as Luke writes, "*for there the ship was to unload its cargo*" (Acts 21:2). It was an unplanned stop. He even had to look up the disciples. The point is, Paul used an opportunity.

One thing that seemed to always characterize Paul was his ability to accept his circumstances

out. He wasn't one to get frustrated and complain when that happened. He just made the best of the situations that presented themselves, and he was not easily deterred. Consequently, he preached in synagogues, a school, and on fortress steps; he addressed hostile mobs, anxious Bible students, and philosophical inquirers; he spent some time in nearly constant travel, some time in one location, and even many months completely immobile as a prisoner. But in it all, he spread the Gospel through every available means.

We need to learn much from Paul, and not just doctrine. †

David Deffenbaugh preaches for the Northside congregation in Harrison, Arkansas, U. S. A.

Go with the Gospel

Max Patterson

The World is the field, therefore preaching can be and ought to be done anywhere and everywhere. Really, in the Bible, there is not foreign work and home work, but the work of the Lord.

The two greatest missionaries ever worked very differently. Jesus stayed in His own homeland, an area about 40 miles wide and 140 miles long. Paul went throughout Turkey, Greece, and many other countries during his work, especially on his missionary journeys. Paul, and others who worked so untiringly during the first century, had the proper missionary motive to go (Romans 1:14-16). Motivation for preaching should be in all the church, not just in a few preachers, elders, and members.

Lack of missionary zeal and dedication hampers the work every-

where. We do not have enough enthusiasm (this word literally means "God in us"). The average member gives only about 3% of his income to the most important work in the world.

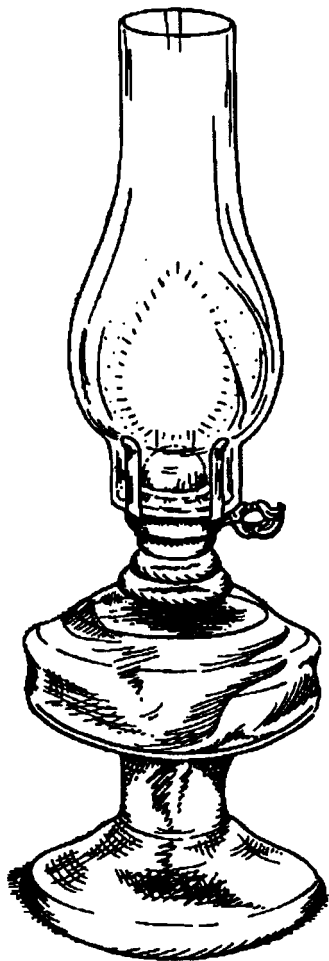
The Bible is a missionary book, from Genesis to Revelation. Many of the great men and women of the Old and New Testaments were missionaries. Mission work is so important today because no one can become a Christian without some degree of human participation.

The source of zeal is from the Bible. The real reason the world keeps moving in its orbit is for men to repent. Actually, one could say that the history of the world is the history of God as He tries to save men. The church should not be looked upon as a reservoir for storing up blessings, but a channel through which blessings must flow.

We must preach the Gospel because our marching orders are "*Go preach the Gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15). Since "*all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (Romans 3:23), and "*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23), everyone needs the Gospel. The Gospel is the only power that can save from eternal destruction (Romans 1:16, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). †

Max Patterson proclaims the Gospel in Neosho, Missouri, U. S. A.

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION



From ancient times, God has worked through His people to spread His knowledge to unbelievers. When God chose ancient Israel as the vehicle for bringing the Christ into the world, He told them to be a *"light to the nations"* so that they might be His *"salvation unto the ends of the earth."* Jesus left this world telling His disciples that *"repentance and forgiveness of sins must be preached in his name among all the nations . . ."* (Luke 24:47). To *"seek and save the lost"* is at the very heart of God's eternal plan for mankind. Therefore, since Jesus is the only answer for lost mankind, we are called to be instrumental in bringing souls to Jesus. Acknowledging this divine call results in evangelistic living.

Evangelistic living arises out of true belief. If we are sincerely convicted that Jesus is the only way to God, we will reflect that conviction to others. When a person finds Jesus and the wonderful grace, peace, and power that He brings, such a person will feel that others need Jesus too. Paul said, *" . . . We believe, and therefore do we speak"* (2 Corinthians 4:13). Evangelistic living comes from a strong sense that others really need to know about Jesus.

Evangelistic living is intentional. Christians who understand their God-given role in the world intend to be an

Evangelistic Living

Dan R. Owen

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

influence for Christ in the lives of other people. These people are convicted that they should be "*fishers of men*," the "*salt of the earth*," and that they must let their "*light shine before men*" so that others may see their good works and glorify their Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:13-16). They know that they manifest "*the sweet smell of Christ*" (Ephesians 5:2) wherever they go, and that each Christian is an "*epistle of Christ, known and read by all men*" (2 Corinthians 3:2). Being conscious of these things creates a mindset in which one intends to be a Christian influence on those around him/her. We are most effective when we seek to influence particular people for God through intentional behavior.

Evangelistic living involves developing genuine friendships with unbelievers while being open about our Christianity. When we love and serve unbelievers, they grow to love and respect us. We practice our Christianity around them, and when opportunity arises, we talk about our faith in God and what it means to us. We introduce our non-Christian friends to other Christians

socially and invite them to church events like fellowships, life group meetings, and Bible classes. When the soil is prepared, we either study God's Word with them ourselves, or introduce them to others who will study with them. We are not pushy, and we never make their compliance with the Gospel a condition of our friendship. In such cases, people are very often led to the Lord through the patience, love, and the consistent example of genuine Christians.

The church needs to be filled with Christians who live their lives evangelistically. If every Christian will intentionally live so that he/she might influence those at home, school, work, and those in the community for Jesus, we will see many more souls brought to Jesus. Let's not hide our lights under the bushel basket (Matthew 5:15). Let your light shine for Christ, and together we will bring souls to Jesus. We have God's promise that He will bless us as we do His will. †

Dan R. Owen preaches for the Broadway church in Paducah, Kentucky, U. S. A.

The true saint delights to spend himself for God's interests in other people, and he does not care what it costs.

— Anon

The Human Hunger

Avon Malone

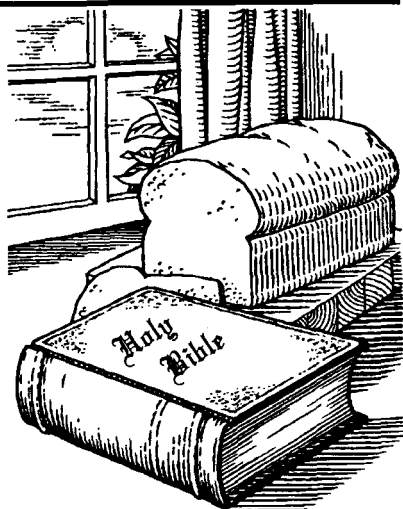
It is true — though terribly tragic — that many go to bed physically hungry. However, it is incomparably more tragic that there are untaught billions in our world who hunger for the bread of life while not even understanding the cause or nature of their hunger.

The Bread of Life

He who alone can satisfy our heart-hunger said, *"I am the bread of life"* (John 6:35). No wonder Paul would say, *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord..."* (2 Corinthians 4:5). This great soul winner gave expression to the consuming passion of his life when he said, *"I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified"* (1 Corinthians 2:2).

Telling The Message

All Christians can play a part in communicating this message. God forbid that we wrap our robes of respectability and professed piety about us while we withhold the



bread of life from hungry souls. Convincing the world that we are a cultured, respectable people — as though dignified sobriety is proof of piety — will not save us or the world.

Christ and His cross is the power that saves souls (1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:2; 15:3,4; Romans 1:16). This simple, saving message is best shared by each Christian in his own sphere of influence. It is very likely that there are some people who have great respect for you. There may be someone you can teach that no one else can. Seize the opportunity while it is yours, that the soul might be saved.†

Avon Malone teaches Bible at Oklahoma Christian University in Edmond, Oklahoma, U. S. A.

A Walk Around The World

Betty Tucker

A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me." So he divided to them his livelihood.

And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living.

But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything.

But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants. . . .'" **Luke 15**

There was a young man, said the Master Teacher, who longed to see the world that was away from home (Luke 15).

He asked his father to give him his inheritance, that he might indulge his fantasy. The father was like many fathers of the 20th century: he gave his son what he asked of him (verse 12)

We can imagine the haughty young man swinging down the road, money in his pockets, singing joyfully. He resents the restraints of home, and he is off on his great exploration for pleasure.

This youth engaged in sensual pleasures, and was overcome by the lust of the flesh (verse 13). His long party ended when he reached the

TEXTUAL STUDIES

bottom of the money bag. Those who were supposed to be his friends departed, leaving him alone and lonely.

Enslaved!

What irony we see in this account. The young man started out to look for freedom . . . and ended up a slave! He was sent to feed the pigs (verse 15). He was starved physically (verse 16), and he was starved morally.

Sitting there in that pigpen, he came to himself (verse 17). He examined himself, and the awful realization came that he had indeed left the best place in the world to come to this lowly situation.

Repentance

In verse 18, we hear him declare, *"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee."*

He made no excuses, as we are so prone to do when our sins catch up with us. Instead of making excuses, he simply said, *"I have sinned."*

Reformation followed repentance. He took immediate action. He went back to his father, with a broken and contrite heart (verse 21).

This parable has a happy ending. The father had no doubt been looking down the road every day, hoping to glimpse his son returning

home. He received him gladly (verse 20). There was rejoicing, and merriment commenced (verse 24 and 32).

The young man took his walk around the world, only to find that the best of all places for him was right back where he started.

Several lessons can be learned from this parable:

⇒ The younger son could leave responsibility at home, but he had to face the penalty of living in the pigpen.

⇒ He had many insincere friends. As long as his money lasted, they flocked close beside him. When it was gone, those false friends disappeared.

⇒ He took his walk around the world and learned a valuable lesson about happiness and contentment. He learned that these precious commodities come from within. It matters little where we live in this world, be it a hut or a mansion. Our best hope for happiness lies close beside our Father, within the circle of His loving care.

⇒ The final lesson that this young man learned was an important one . . . *"Godliness with contentment is great gain"* (1 Timothy 6:6). †

Betty Tucker is a Christian writer living in Linden, Tennessee, U. S. A.

The Prayer of Jesus

William Woodson

John 17

Just a few hours before His betrayal and subsequent death on the cross, Jesus spoke with the Father, as recorded in John 17. This beautiful prayer is understood with deeper meaning when it is recalled that the Lord was asking not only for Himself, but for His apostles. Through His words He was also asking blessings for all who would follow Him by hearing and doing His will in the ages to come. Several aspects of this prayer are worthy of careful thought.

☛ Jesus prayed to return to the Father, sharing again the glory He had with Him before the world was (verse 3). The full import of this great theme lies beyond our understanding, but the incarnation was real, and the refusal to hold on to "*the form of God*" (Philippians 2:6) was evidence of His love. Now, as the completion of the plan of redemption through the cross, the resurrection, and ascension is at hand, the desire is to be with the Father again as before. How our minds stand in awe at the thought.

☛ Jesus prayed for the men through whom His will would be revealed to the world. He had made known the name of God to them, they had kept the Word He gave them. By receiving this Word they had come to believe and know that Jesus had come from God. Now they are to be left in the world, but are not of this world, and must be kept from its power and danger. As to the longing of their hearts, these men were "*not of the world*" as Jesus was not of the world (verse 16).

The departure of Jesus was to be painful in the extreme, but the result for the apostles would be their insight into the glory of the Lord and the proclamation that the Son came to this world by the will of God to deliver men from sin. As Jesus stated it, they were to behold His glory, and they would ultimately be with Him where He was (verse 24). These were to be men with a mission profound in its nature and scope, but a mission which they would rejoice to fulfill.

TEXTUAL STUDIES

✦ Jesus prayed for those who would come to believe in Him by means of the words He inspired His apostles to proclaim (verse 20). Those who were sanctified by the Word (verse 17) were to lead others to believe in Christ by their inspired Word. They were to be led to unity in and by their reverence for and submission to the Word — no other means of divine unity being disclosed (verse 21). The unity of such obedient believers was to reflect the unity which obtains between the Father and the Son.

As this combination of the proclamation of the Word, the belief and obedience to it, and the resultant unity of the followers of Christ

became a reality, the world would be made to know that Christ had been sent for this very purpose — that those in the world might be won to God by the revealed Word which centered in Jesus.

Centuries have gone by since that prayer was offered. Its ultimate meaning for Christ was attained in His ascension and kingship. Its meaning for us is realized as we hear, believe, are born into God's family through baptism, and as we abide with God's people in the unity which is made a reality by following this teaching. †

William Woodson teaches Bible at David Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee, U. S. A.

Following the Father

**As God's children, we learn to emulate Him.
The way He deals with us also becomes the way
we deal with each other:**

GRACE — for those who do or do not merit it.

COMPASSION — for those who are hurting.

FORGIVENESS — for those who ask it.

**RECONCILIATION — with those who are for-
given.**

— BETTY BURTON CHOATE

“When I Could Stand It No Longer”

Jack W. Carter

“... when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith...But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love...in all our distress and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith.” (1 Thessalonians 3:5,6)

There is no doubt about it. The apostle Paul really put his heart into his work, and he loved the people he worked with.

I appreciate the way he cared for the church in Thessalonica. The beginning statement in his epistle to them included, “*We always thank God for all of you*” (verse 2).

Their relationship together began with “*severe suffering*” (verse 6). But the church met this courageously and became a “*model to all believers*” (verse 7). He added, “*your faith in God has become known everywhere*” (verse 8).

A part of Paul’s reason for writing was to let them know that he missed them while he was away from them and that their spiritual state was foremost in his mind. He was afraid that somehow, in some way, the tempter might have tempted them, and that they had fallen away (3:5).

So he wrote, “*when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith*” (verse 5). Paul sent Timothy to learn about the situation in Thessalonica, and when Timothy came back with a highly favorable report, it is easy to see that the aging apostle was elated.

I wish all of God’s men (and women) would have that kind of concern for God’s people everywhere. Instead of casually and indifferently watching the faith of churches slip, we ought to have such regard for the souls of the people involved that we just couldn’t bear thinking that something might be wrong, especially since some of these churches might involve people that are very close to us.

I love the way Paul loved to love people. †

Jack W. Carter is Editor of *The Rocky Mountain Christian* and preaches in Castle Rock, Colorado, U. S. A.

“Not in Temples Made With Hands”

Perry Hall

Acts 22-34

There were found edifices built to the glory of Apollo, Athena the Bridler, and the most conspicuous temple complex containing the Temple of Aphrodite, built atop a craggy mountain called Acro-

corinth.

At the heart of the empire was the city of Rome. Just within the Roman Forum were located temples built in worship of Caesar, Vesta, Faustina, Castor, Pollux, and Saturn, to say nothing of shrines built in honor of many other gods and goddesses too numerous to mention, scattered throughout the city.

Into this world environment came the Good News of the “one God . . . and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him” (2 Corinthians 8:6). In addition to the oneness of Deity, there was revealed the one body, one Spirit, one hope, one faith, and one baptism. The one faith would lead to obedience in the one baptism,

When Paul stood in the midst

of Mars Hill in Athens and uttered the above words of our title, he was in plain view of the Acropolis, where sat the pagan temples of various mythological gods of the Graeco-Roman world. There stood

supposed home of the virgin goddess, Athena Parthenos. Beside this temple were several others. From his vantage point, Paul could have pointed out the temples of Apollo, Vulcan, Theses, Ares, and Zeus. These little temples made with human hands were woefully inadequate for the Lord of heaven and earth. Not even Solomon’s temple in Jerusalem could contain God, as Solomon was brought to realize (2

Chronicles 2:6; 1 Kings 8:27). Throughout the Roman Empire, every city would have a magnificently constructed temple erected to its patron god or goddess. Paul was soon in Corinth, where were located many temples that were quite old.

TEXTUAL STUDIES

which would bring men into the one Lord and His one body, or church, where they came to possess the one hope. As a result of this redemptive process through the Cross, men were reconciled to God in the one body (Ephesians 2:13-16), and thus became the temple or dwelling place of God, "*built together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*" (Ephesians 2:17-22).

One of the seven wonders of the ancient world was in the city of Ephesus — the great temple of Diana, or Artemis. It was the largest structure of the Hellenistic world and was constructed completely of marble. It was five times larger than the Parthenon in Athens. Yet, God did not dwell here. He dwelt in His people at Ephesus, the church. Both collectively and individually, God dwells in His spiritual temple, the church (1 Corinthians 3:16,17; 6:19,20). We are living

stones, built up as a spiritual house (1 Peter 2:5).

It is no wonder that Paul's spirit was stirred within him when he saw Athens wholly given to idolatry,

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:19,20).

reflected in their multiplicity of gods and temples. He plainly declared, "*God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands; as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all*

life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17:24,25).

What a glorious privilege for all of us to be living stones in the living temple of God, placed there by the hand of God, built together for the habitation of God through the Spirit. †

Perry N. Hall preaches for the University church in Tyler, Texas, U. S. A.

How Christ Is Magnified In His Saints!

"According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
—Phil. 1:21-22.

JESUS CHRIST

MAGNIFIED IN ME!

His Obedient Spirit
His Prayerful Spirit
His Spirit of Humility
His Spirit of Self-Denial
His Forgiving Spirit
His Spirit of Liberality

Dillard Thurman

“It’s Up To You”

(Deuteronomy 30:11-20)

Charles R. Rose

Introduction:

1. In the text Moses’ message to Israel was that they must make a choice whether to follow God or Satan.
 - A. God’s Word to Israel was not in some distant place where they could not get to it and learn what His law demanded.
 - B. *“But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it”* (verse 14).
 - C. God had set before them two things: *“ . . . life and good or death and evil . . . ”* (verse 15).
 - D. It was up to them to make their own choice as to which they would follow.
 - E. Heaven and earth would witness their decision.
2. Under every dispensation God has given man the same two choices, and it is no different today.
 - A. John 12:48-50.
 - B. Can apply Deuteronomy 30:11-20 to our society.
 - C. Not only near us — but will judge us in the last day (John 12:48).

It’s up to you to decide:

1. **Whether you live right.**
 - A. James 1:22-25.
 - B. If you would choose life and good, you must hear Christ’s words and do them.
 1. Matthew 7:24ff.
 2. The wise man chose life and good, the foolish man chose death and evil. The difference? One kept Christ’s Word, the other did not.
2. **Whether life is good or evil.**
 - A. Galatians 6:7-10; 1 John 2:15-17.

CHARTS AND OUTLINES

B. John 14:23.

1. If life is to be good, one must choose to keep (obey) the words of Jesus. Then, and only then, will the Father and the Son make Their home with that person.

3. Whether you serve God or Satan.

- A. Joshua 24:15, "And if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."
- B. Joshua is saying, "It's up to you whether you are lost or saved."
- C. Please note the words of the Lord Jesus in John 8:24; Luke 13:3,5; Matthew 10:32; Mark 16:16.

Will you resolve to obey His words today? **It's up to you!**



Charles R. Rose preaches for the Lord's church in Lincoln, Missouri, U. S. A.

Will Our Children Go to Heaven?

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it (Proverbs 22:6).

A SURVEY SHOWED:

- (1) When both parents were active in the work of the church, 93% of the children remained faithful.
- (2) When one parent was active, 73% of the children remained faithful.
- (3) When both parents were marginally active, their children remained faithful 53% of the time.
- (4) When both parents attended infrequently, only 6% of their children continued in the faith.

WHICH OF THE FOUR DESCRIBES YOUR HOUSEHOLD?
IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO CHANGE!

— Via the bulletin of the Grant Street Church of Christ, Decatur, AL.

Elements of Faith

Jerry L. Davidson

Introduction:

1. Faith, as used in the Bible, is a very comprehensive word.
2. Generally speaking, it has to do with:
 - A. The body of truth given to the human race (Jude 3).
 - B. Individual response to the will of God for salvation (John 3:16, 8:24; Hebrews 11:6).
3. Personal faith is made up of several important elements.

I. Faith has AN OBJECT.

- A. Faith is not blind — it sees its object.
- B. Having Bible faith causes us to see Jesus as its object (John 8:27-30).
- C. *"Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith . . ."* (Hebrews 12:2).
- D. *"We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels . . ."* (Hebrews 2:9).

II. Faith has SUBSTANCE.

- A. *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"* (Hebrews 11:1).
- B. Faith gives substance (reality, confidence, assurance).
- C. Faith provides sufficient evidence for things we are unable to see, such as God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the blood of Jesus, the anticipated heavenly home.
- D. With a sure conviction in Jesus Christ, Paul says, *" . . . We walk by faith, not by sight"* (2 Corinthians 5:7).

III. Faith has TRUST.

- A. When Abraham's faith was tested, he put his trust in the Lord (Hebrews 11:17-19).
- B. Abraham *"did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God"* (Romans 4:20).
- C. Isaac, Abraham's son, asked his father, *"Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?"* (Genesis 22:7).
- D. Abraham trusted God as he answered his son, *"My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for the burnt offering"* (verse 8).

IV. Faith has the element of CONFESSION.

CHARTS AND OUTLINES

- A. Without confession of Christ, faith is void.
- B. *“Even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God”* (John 12:42,43).
- C. A sincere faith will cause us to confess Jesus in our lives (Matthew 10:32,33).

V. Faith manifests itself in OBEDIENCE.

- A. Through the Gospel is made known *“obedience of faith”* (Romans 16:26).
- B. We are saved through **obedient faith** in contrast to the **works** of the Law of Moses (Romans 3:28).
- C. When was the blind man healed at the Pool of Siloam — before or after his obedience to the Lord’s command (John 9:1-7)?
- D. Jesus: *“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned”* (Mark 16:16).
- E. Without obedience (works commanded by God), faith is dead. See James 2:14,24.

VI. Faith has PERSEVERANCE.

- A. Among several other things, faith is to have added to it **perseverance** (2 Peter 1:5-8).
- B. A **persevering faith** leads to the heavenly reward (1 Peter 1:3-9).
- C. *“O for a faith that will not shrink, tho’ pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink of any earthly woe.”* (Charles Wesley)

VII. Faith has LOVE.

- A. Faith and love go together: *“Hold fast to the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus”* (2 Timothy 1:13).
- B. 1 John 4:20 says, *“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?”* (See v. 21)

Conclusion:

Thus, true faith has an object, it has substance and demonstrates the element of trust. It manifests itself in a confession of Jesus Christ and in sincere obedience to His commands. It provokes steadfastness (perseverance) and an undying love for God and for those around us. †

Jerry L. Davidson is a preacher and teaches at International Bible College in Florence, Alabama, U. S. A.

A “Word of Exhortation”: **Persevere**

(Hebrews 10:19-31; 13:22)

Earl D. Edwards

To get to the “home of the gods”:

“Walk some every day and continue always onward.” (Socrates)

I. Persevere because we “have” something valuable — verses 19-21.

- A. A “*great high priest*” (Jesus) — verse 21.
- B. “Confidence” to enter the “*Holy Place*” by a “*new way*.”
 - 1. “*Confidence*” (or “boldness”) — discuss.
 - 2. Holy Place.
 - 3. “*New way*” that He inaugurated.

Application: Christians tend to forget the value of what they have.

- a. **Those** Christians then.
- b. **These** Christians now — “We never miss the water until the well runs dry.”

II. Persevere because that possession involves responsibility — verses 22-25.

- A. “*Let us draw near*” . . . “*in*” — “*faith*” (verse 22).
- B. “*Let us hold fast*” . . . “*our hope*” (verse 23).
- C. “*Let us consider how to stimulate*” others to “*love*” (verse 24).
- 1. We can’t do this and “*forsake the assembling*” (verse 25).

Application: Christians need to remember their responsibilities.

- a. **Those** Christians then — needed to draw near to God so as to help self and others (see 13:1-3).
- b. **These** Christians now — need to draw near so as to make our election sure and so as to serve the displaced/unloved in our mobile society.

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III. Persevere because if we don't we will be condemned — verses 26-31.

- A. There is no sacrifice for the deliberate sinner (verse 26, see also Numbers 15:27).
- B. Christ's law is (in one sense) more exacting than Moses' (verses 28,29, and 2:1-3).
- C. The disobedient loses that "*confidence*" and it is replaced with a "*terrifying expectation*" (verse 27).

Application: Christians must go all the way (persevere) to win.

- a. Those Christians then — even joyfully gave up property (verse 34), but are now faltering regarding the assembly.
- b. These Christians now — our enthusiasm at baptism/now?

Conclusion:

"One step won't take you very far;
You've got to keep on walking.
One word won't tell folks who you are;
You've got to keep on talking.
One inch won't make you very tall;
You've got to keep on growing.
One little deed won't do it all;
You've got to keep on going."



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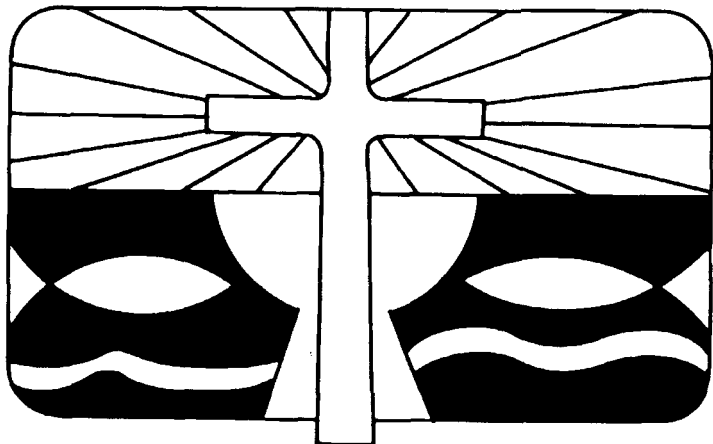
"MOREOVER IT IS REQUIRED IN STEWARDS THAT ONE BE FOUND FAITHFUL" (1 CORINTHIANS 4:2).

"WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT; YOU WERE FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS, I WILL MAKE YOU RULER OVER MANY THINGS. ENTER INTO THE JOY OF YOUR LORD" (MATTHEW 25:21)

"... BE FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE YOU THE CROWN OF LIFE" (REVELATION 2:10).

How Does God Draw The Sinner?

Grady Miller



All of us surely recognize and confess that God has provided salvation for all through Jesus, His only begotten Son. If we place our trust and obedience in the Lord, we are promised salvation full and free. Jesus testified that God the Father, who wants all men to be saved and to come unto a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4), draws men unto Him and salvation. Our question, then, is this: **How** is it that God draws the sinner unto Himself?

Not surprisingly, the religious world offers different answers to this question. Generally speaking,

there are two major views. Some think that God and the Holy Spirit work upon the sinner's heart directly and immediately, convicting him of sin and saving him by a direct operation. Still others, however, believe that God and the Spirit work through an agency or by "means" upon the sinner's heart and **not directly**. But, what do the Scriptures say?

Notice Jesus' words in John 6:44 — "*No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" Now, look at

BIBLE QUESTIONS

the very next verse for the answer to our question. Jesus said, "*It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.*" Here, then, is *how* men are drawn to the Father through Christ: they *hear* the testimony and *learn* of God the Father, they *believe* in Jesus as Savior and Lord. The testimony or **the Word of God** is the means by which God draws sinners unto Himself.

The truthfulness of this can be seen in Romans 10:13,14. Paul said, "*For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?*" Here Paul has charted the orderly and natural progression of salvation.

(1) A messenger proclaims the good news of God's saving grace and the story of Jesus' mission to earth.

(2) The sinner hears the testimony of the Gospel and is convicted of his sin.

(3) He believes on Jesus because of the testimony of the Gospel declared unto him.

(4) The sinner calls upon the name of the Lord by faithful obedience for salvation.

Were it not for the testimony, or the Word, or the Gospel, however, the sinner could not be saved. Paul continued in verse 17, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*" Faith is the result of hearing and believing the Word of God; take away the Word of God and you remove the agency by which faith comes.

Saving faith, therefore, is **not** a direct and miraculous gift from God. It comes, instead, through and from the Word of God. The Holy Spirit will not convict the sinner's heart directly, but He will act or operate through the Word. It was because of this that Paul declared, "*I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation . . .*" (Romans 1:16). James exhorts us to "*receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls*" (James 1:21).

My friend, do not wait for a miraculous working of God's Spirit upon your heart, and do not deceive yourself into thinking that you have experienced one. Do not depend upon dreams, visions, or feelings. Instead, determine to be "*born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever*" (1 Peter 1:23). †

Grady Miller preaches for the Lord's church in Arnold, Missouri, U. S. A.

Should A Preacher Be Called "Reverend"?

Maxie B. Boren

Throughout the religious world of "Christendom," those who are recognized in the various religious groups as "pastors," or "priests," are addressed by the title "Reverend." Most people have never stopped to consider whether this is right or not. Have you ever wondered if God is pleased with such title-wearing? And remember, some "clergymen" do not stop at just "Reverend" but insist on being called "Right Reverend," or "Very Reverend," or even the "Most Right Reverend"!

One can read the New Testament completely, and nothing such as that can be read! Where in it, I ask, can you read of "Reverend Paul," or of the "Right Reverend James"? And where in it does one find "The Holy Father Peter"? The New Testament **nowhere** teaches nor authorizes the wearing of any religious titles whatsoever.

In fact, Jesus plainly taught against such. His denunciation of the Pharisees, recorded in Matthew 23:1-12, is a plain condemnation of their vain pretensions and their desire to be exalted of men. Jesus said, *"But be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call not man your father upon the earth, for one is your Father, even he who is in heaven"* (verses 8,9). It should be obvious, to even the most casual reader, that Jesus is talking about religious titles in verses 8 and 9. **People who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and who want to obey Him, will refrain from wearing such religious titles, or calling others by them.**

Should a preacher be called "Reverend"? Absolutely not! †

Maxie B. Boren is a gospel preacher living in Bedford, Texas, U. S. A.

"... holy and reverend is His name" (Psalm 111:9).

Brazil

The initial work of the Churches of Christ in Brazil dates from 1927, when the O. S. Boyers and Virgil Smiths arrived in the state of Pernambuco. In 1929 they were joined by the George Johnsons. By 1935 there were 20 congregations established in that state and in neighboring Ceara and Alagoas states. These churches, however, largely disappeared or turned pentecostal.

In 1948 the David Sanders family represented the instrumental churches in the city of Goiania. Acapella Churches of Christ again entered the scene in 1957, when the Arlie Smiths launched a mission in São Paulo. Four years later, a team of 13 families arrived in São Paulo to add much impetus to the work. At present there are five missionary families in São Paulo, 18 congregations, and about 1,000 members. Over 20 other groups meet within the state of São Paulo.

Arlie Smith moved to Rio de Janeiro in 1965 to plant the church there. Two years later Belo Horizonte became the focus of a team sponsored by the Central

church in Portland, OR and the Richland Hills church in Fort Worth, TX. Porto Alegre in southern Brazil was entered in 1967 by the Allen Duttons. The Walter Kreidels moved to Curitiba in 1968 to begin the work in Parana state.

The work in the Northeast commenced through baptisms by the São Paulo group in Recife in 1975. Then a team arrived to launch a permanent work in 1980. A church started in suburban Salvador in 1974 and a congregation in Salvador proper in 1984. The North Central region was opened about 1978 with the meeting of a church in Brasília in the home of Vina Hall. In 1981 a new work began in Manaus. A team arrived in Campo Grande in 1981. In addition to this effort, several scattered churches meet throughout the western region.

Active membership in Brazil tops 4,000 in 89 congregations. About 100 Americans work with the churches. Most of the work has been concentrated in large cities. †

Churches of Christ Around the World, Mac Lynn, Gospel Advocate Co., Nashville, TN, 1990, p. 25.

Missions Begin in the Local Church

Bryan Jay Bost

The local church is God's missionary entity. It is equipped to fulfill the task of world evangelization. So it was in the book of Acts, and so it is in our days.

The love of God conceived the mission of seeking and saving the world. Jesus commissioned His disciples to make other disciples in every nation. The book of Acts relates the exciting history of the first wave of missionary activity. It was always the local church which converted, trained and sent missionaries. Each congregation was a center for the propagation of the gospel.

Today, congregations need to reacquire the courage and vision to be missionary churches. Maintaining the local work is necessary, but to do only this falls short of the Lord's plan. Each church needs to be a launching pad for missionary activity. Also, each congregation needs to raise up and train workers for the harvesting of souls.

The local church is the source of missionaries. Those who make disciples of Christ locally are those

who should go to other locations to perform the same work.

The Example of Antioch. The modern church should look carefully at the model of the work of the church of Antioch of Syria in the book of Acts. Like the modern church, Antioch began thanks to missionary activity and, as should the modern church, afterwards, she participated dynamically in the rapid numerical and geographical growth of the church.

In Antioch, the arrival of the disciples scattered by the persecution in Jerusalem resulted in the evangelization of Jews and pagans (Acts 11:19-26). The direct preaching to pagans (for the first time in the history of the church) contributed to the rapid growth. The arrival of Barnabas consolidated this growth and Saul's coming gave it even greater impetus.

The local victory prepared the way for missionary victory. The dynamic local growth made it possible for the sending of missionaries, recruited among its own workers, to

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

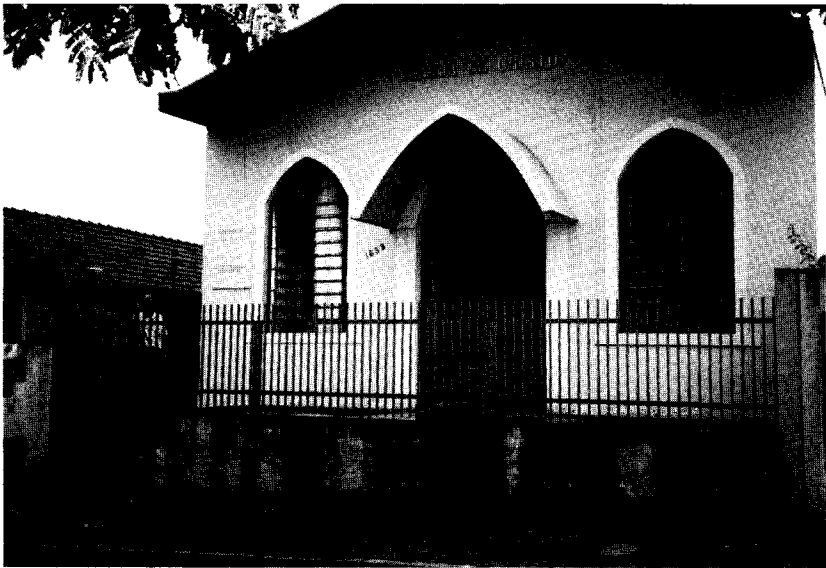
the rest of the world (Acts 13:1-4). Three times the congregation sent Paul and his companions on missionary trips to Cyprus, Asia and Europe. Each time, the subsequent report encouraged the church to do more and to set aside the resources needed for more missionary work.

The modern church learns from Antioch to strengthen the local base and, later, with boldness, send her workers to other locations. The strong base of the local church provides missionaries and their spiritual and material support.

Home Recipe. Missions begin at home: making disciples is the

principal goal of the congregation. The new converts, which are many because the evangelistic activity is intense, are trained from the beginning to make other disciples. The lifestyle of the brotherhood is already missionary, even without leaving its city.

Soon, some are ready to depart for new places, either in the same city or state or even to other countries. The vacancies they leave in the local work are quickly filled by the new converts. Therefore, the local church grows in size and activity and has great influence in the geographical expansion of the



***Church building in the city of Presidente Prudente
interior of São Paulo State, Brazil.***

FROM THE HEART OF . . .



***The city of São Paulo: Anhangabaú Valley,
Tea overpass and tunnel.***

church.

Considering that the missionaries came out of the local church (as Barnabas and Saul were from Antioch in Acts 13), brotherly love facilitates communication between congregation and missionaries, as well as prayer and material care. However, only churches strong in the Lord are capable of missionary work. Congregations that feel sorry for themselves or that are afraid of losing their workers to other places will never be missionary churches.

Confidence and Action. The

modern church needs to lose its bashfulness and fear and preach with boldness to its city, state, country and to the world! It needs to be fearless and trust more in Him who promised to be present "*always, to the end of the age.*" By God's rich grace, it is time to be true disciples of Jesus, knowing that "*we are more than conquerors through him who loved us*" (Romans 8:37). †

Bryan Jay Bost is the preacher and one of five overseers of the Nove de Julho church. He has written or co-written three books for the Brazilian church.

Perfection

Octávio Carvalho

An old man, about 70 years of age, goes by the name of Paul. His phrase, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

What a phrase! He was by now an old man, condemned for preaching the gospel in all the known world of his time. His life was hanging by a thread, and he knew it.

The feeling of total accomplishment, of work completely finished, emanating from this phrase is enviable. May God help us to be able to say the same when our hour comes!

There is another phrase, however, which expresses even more the feeling of accomplished work, of a complete life.

He started off by saying "I'm thirsty!" So they soaked vinegar in a sponge and, affixing it to a stick, brought it up to His mouth. Tasting it, He said, "It is finished," bowed His head, and gave up His spirit.

The message of this phrase is total fulfillment, perfection; what should have been done, was done. The Worker can rest now that the service was rendered in full.

After a whole life as a man, son of an extremely humble family, carpenter as was His father, Teacher

during three years, Jesus gave up His spirit. The perfect model of ending a perfect life.

The curtain closes, announcing the end of the first act. People rise from their seats, in a thoughtful mood. It is a long interval for a play for those who wait. Some begin to leave. They understood nothing, and, for them, the play ended here, on this dark and ugly Friday.

Suddenly, the orchestra re-announces the play with triumphal chords. The curtain is opening. Tears well up in the eyes of those who waited for the second act. From their seats they stretch for a glimpse between the opening curtains. Those who were leaving, perceiving that the play is continuing, run back to take their seats. Unfortunately, others were already far away when the orchestra started back up and lost the second act.

The curtain is now completely open. On stage, a tomb. In the tomb, nothing.

The protagonist is alive. He beat death and offered to those who understood the play the same possibility of winning and participating themselves as actors in the second act in the same complete and perfect way.

May God bless us.



Octávio Carvalho and his wife Valéria helped begin the church in São José, dos Campos.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

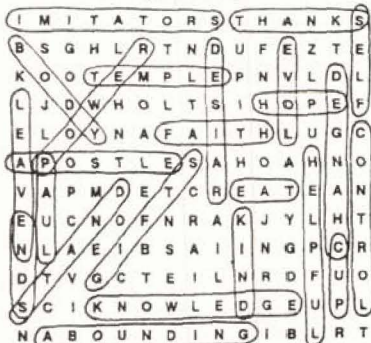
Verse Search - 7 (from page 76)

1. No.
2. Because "He had never studied."
3. My doctrine is; but His who sent Me.
4. To do His will; concerning the doctrine; God; I speak on My own authority.
5. Yes.
6. They were angry because He had healed a man on the Sabbath day. They classed this as "work", an offense punished by death under the Law of Moses.
7. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?
8. We know where this man is from; no one knows where He is from.
9. God.
10. Because of the miracles which He did.
11. Because many of the people were believing on Him.
12. If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.
13. The Spirit.
14. David; Bethlehem.
15. No man ever spoke like this Man!



The Book of 1 Corinthians (page 49)

1. Paul
2. Apostle
3. Thanks
4. Power
5. Leaven
6. Temple
7. Knowledge
8. Self-control
9. Helpful
10. Imitators
11. Eat; cup
12. Gifts
13. Body
14. Kind
15. Ends
16. Faith, hope, love
17. Raised
18. Changed
19. Abounding
20. Stand



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Brazil



Government: FEDERAL REPUBLIC
President: FERNANDO H. CARDOSO

Secular Facts:

Location: South America, eastern half of the continent.

Land Mass: 3,286,470 square miles; slightly larger than the continental U.S. Fifth largest country in the world. Half the land mass and population of South America.

Population: 165,083,000.

Major Cities:

São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Salvador, Belo Horizonte, **Brasília**.

Ethnic Groups:

Portuguese, Africans, mulattoes; some Italians, Germans, Japanese, Indians, Jews, Arabs.

Languages:

Portuguese (official), English, German, Italian.

Literacy:

81%

Religion:

Roman Catholic (89%).

Economy:

World's largest producer of coffee. Exports also include illicit drugs.

Monetary Unit:

Real (Pronounced "Hey AI").

The Church:

Congregations: There are about 100 congregations meeting in some 15 states and many capital cities. There are concentrations of churches in the states of São Paulo, in the Southeast, and Pernambuco, in the Northeast. About 50 national workers serve with the congregations.

History: Arley and Alma Smith entered Brazil in 1956, working first in São Paul, then Rio de Janeiro. The **São Paulo mission team** arrived in 1961, followed by the **Belo Horizonte team** (1967). Other teams arrived in **Recife** (1981), **Campo Grande** (1981), **Manaus** (1981), **Fortaleza** (1982), **Brasília** (1983), **Salvador** (1984) and other cities.

Modern History: Many churches have used evangelistic Schools of the Bible as a means of surfacing and teaching contacts. There are 4 Christian camps, and Alma Smith directs the Lar Cristão (Christian Home) orphanage. A Christian board of directors oversees three branches of a day-care program in the capital of São Paulo.

Other efforts to spread the Word include the National Bible Seminary, radio and television programs, a Christian publishing company, and numerous books and magazines.

Front Cover: "**Christ the Redeemer**", a famous statue located in Rio de Janeiro.

Information by: Randal Matheny, São José dos Campos, SP, Brazil