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If Jesus Came . . .

If Jesus came to your house to stay with you awhile
Would you be glad to see Him and greet Him with a smile?

Or when you heard the summons of His knock upon the door
Would alarm and consternation petrify you to the core?

Would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in?
Or hide some magazines, and put the Bible where they'd been?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?
Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?



And I wonder . . . If the Savior spent a day or two with you
Would you go right on doing the things you always do?
Would you go right on saying the things you always say?
Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you go?
Or would you maybe change your plans for just a day or so?
Would you be glad to have Him stay, forever on and on?
Or would you sigh with great relief when He, at last, was gone?

It might be interesting to know the things that you would do
If Jesus came in person to spend some time with you.

Author Unknown

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"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

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



TRUTH AND UNDER- STANDING

J. C. Choate
Editor-in-Chief

When Jesus stood before Pilate, He said, *“My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.*

“Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then?

“Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

“Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all” (John 18:36-38).

Pilate asked the age old question, **What is truth?** Man has forever been searching for the answer but it seems hard to come by. Watch the evening TV news, read the daily newspaper, as well as the weekly magazines, and you will discover that in the secular world it is difficult to get the truth on anything. Spiritually, listen to the preachers of our day and read their

writings, and you will find them to be contradictory on almost every subject.

What is the truth then? How may we know what it is?

First of all, we must go to the right source — to the Bible, to the Scriptures, to the word of God — and to that authority alone. We read that **God hath spoken** (Hebrews 1:1,2) and that **all the scripture is inspired of God** (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Finally, the Lord Himself says that we will be judged by **His word** (John 12:48). We therefore cannot add to it, subtract from it, or substitute for it. (Revelation 22:18,19). We must leave it alone, accepting it as it is. The Lord has told us in His word what He wanted us to know, and we cannot improve on that.

Christ said, *“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (John 8:32). Again, He said, *“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth”* (John 17:17). Then the Lord declared, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me”* (John 14:6).

But how can we know the truth? By hearing it proclaimed and by reading the Scriptures. Christ said, *“Go ye therefore and teach all nations...”* (Matthew 28:19). *“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature”* (Mark 16:15). Paul said, *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”* (Romans 10:17). Again, he said, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Timothy 2:15). Then he said, *“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine”* (2 Timothy 4:2).

Why is it so necessary to read and study the word of God and to hear it faithfully proclaimed? So that we might know God’s will and understand it. We need to know and understand who our Creator is, who died for us, what the gospel is, the

importance of the church, what the Lord requires in worship, and how to live the Christian life, what is involved in repentance, baptism, the saved being added to the church, the kind of music God wants in worship, the role of the woman in the church, and on and on with many other important matters.

Read through the book of Acts and *observe the role that preaching played*. For example, read of Philip asking the man of Ethiopia if he understood what he was reading in Isaiah 53, and read of this man's response as he asked, "*How can I except some man should guide me?*" Philip proceeded to **teach** him and only then did he obey the Lord (Acts 8:26-39). Paul said to the Ephesians, "*Wherefore be ye not unwise but understanding what the will of the Lord is*" (Ephesians 5:17).

How can one obey the Lord, be scripturally baptized, become a member of the Lord's church, and abide by the many other truths, if he doesn't know and understand what the Lord requires? One doesn't haphazardly obey God. Salvation is not granted to one who doesn't know the truth well enough to comply with God's will. If it were, why would the Scripture even talk about the need for *hearing the word of the Lord, studying the scripture, being taught God's will*? Salvation is not based on *ignorance* but on **teaching, understanding, faith, and compliance with what the Lord requires**.

Once one comes to know God's will, understands it, and obeys His teaching, God saves that person and adds him to His family, the church. It is only then that he is saved, is a child of God, and has the hope of eternal life.

But even after one has been saved from his past sins, he must continue to read, study and learn how to worship, how to serve the Lord, and how to live the Christian life. One must *practice truth*. †

THE KEY TO SUCCESS



Byron Nichols

I never knew him at all. In spite of the fact that thousands of people had come to know him through the years, his name was still unknown to me and to most other folks in the church. Yet he was a Christian who was more actively involved in serving the Lord than most of us ever have been or ever will be.

The passing of C. W. Peacock over twenty years ago brought sadness to many, many people. But you may ask, "Who in the world was C. W. Peacock? Is this some kind of a joke? I've never even heard his name before."

You might never have heard of this man, but let me assure you that multitudes of people have and are grateful for having met this dedicated Christian.

Let me tell you a little bit about C. W. Peacock. A member of one of the congregations in Little Rock, Arkansas, he died at the age of 90. Now get this — for 25 years this old soldier of the cross rode city buses to four major hospitals in Little Rock, visiting 100 patients per week!

Now, let's do some arithmetic together. One hundred visits per week for 52 weeks equals 5,200 visits per year, and 5,200 visits per year over the span of 25 years equals the utterly amazing figure of 130,000 hospital visits! Can you feature such a thing? In spite of the fact that I have known of this man's accomplishment since shortly after his death, I still can hardly fathom the reality of what he did.

Do you suppose that brother Peacock ever said to himself, "It's so rainy and cold today, I think I'll just not do any visiting today"? Or, might he have said to himself, "I don't feel all that great today myself — somebody ought to be visiting me instead of me going out all over the city to see others like I do"? Just think about all of the sadness and heartache that he wit-

nessed in those 130,000 hospital visits. Surely there were occasions when he became weary of being around so much sickness and misery. Undoubtedly he struggled at times as he saw firsthand the problems of others and was unable to keep them from becoming somewhat his own problems.

I'm confident that C. W. Peacock was just as human as the rest of us, resulting in his feeling unqualified, without much to offer to the Lord, unappreciated, neglected, and overlooked by others. However, a desire to serve the Lord through serving others enabled him to overcome his times of disappointment and his feelings of inadequacy.

I truly believe that a great many Christians would become more active in their service in the church if they could only become convinced that they are needed and have something of significance to offer. But many say to themselves, "What can I do in the church? I don't have any real talent; I can't preach; I could never serve as an elder. I'm just not a leader."

Friends, most people are not leaders. Furthermore, that is good — very good. There must always be many more good followers than good leaders. Good leaders are indeed of great importance, and are usually hard to find, but the fact remains that faithful and supportive followers are the backbone of every organization and society.

We all have something to give, whether we recognize our talents or capabilities or not. Most, if not all, of us have had the experience of surprising ourselves by accomplishing something that we didn't really think we could do. We undertook the task with serious doubts about our ability to be successful, but with the attitude of at least giving our best effort, and somehow that which we thought within ourselves was impossible became possible. This same thing has happened countless times in spiritual matters, too. Every day there are Christians around the world who are discovering that the Lord is true to His word, that He will indeed be with us in our efforts to serve Him.

Let there be no doubt whatsoever — the real strength of the church will never lie in those few who are in leadership roles that put them in a position of being well-known and recognized as prominent and prestigious. While the church will never be successful in accomplishing the Lord's will in this world without godly leaders, the ultimate success of the church of Christ is dependent upon those soldiers in His army who are daily dedicating themselves to doing whatever they can to glorify Him and cause His name and His fame to be spread throughout the earth.

Do you suppose that Jesus will one day say, "C. W. Peacock, I was sick, and you visited Me"?

I wonder what He will say to me . . . and to you.

†

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THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

We're aiming for a goal of 50,000 copies printed of each issue of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** by the year 2000! We need your help in spreading the word about the value of this quarterly.

But more importantly, we want to know that each person who is receiving the magazine is reading and studying the material contained in its pages. It is imperative that Christians grow in knowledge! JCC

You Tell On Yourself

You tell on yourself by the friends you seek,
By the very manner in which you speak,
By the way you employ your leisure time,
By the use you make of dollar and dime.

You tell on yourself by the things you wear,
By the spirit in which your burdens you bear,
By the kind of things at which you laugh,
By the records you play on the phonograph.

You tell on yourself by the way you walk,
By the things of which you delight to talk,
By the manner in which you bear defeat,
By so simple a thing as how you eat.

By the books you choose from the well-filled shelf,
In these ways and more, you tell on yourself;
So there's really no use or particle of sense
In an effort to keep up false pretense.

— Author Unknown

“And God . . .”

Peter Mostert

“In the beginning,” the Bible says, “God created the heavens and the earth.” Since no one, except God, was at the creation, Christians believe this to be so by faith in what the Bible says. There are many people, however, who believe that the earth and everything in it came about by chance.

If life just happened, and we live and die without purpose, existence would be miserable. It is both logical and reassuring to believe in God, and also in His Word! *The Oxford Dictionary* says that “God is a being worshiped as having power over nature and control over human affairs.” A Bible encyclopedia says that “God is intelligent, eternal, true, good, pure, just, merciful, most free and of infinite power and wisdom.” Believing in God makes a whole lot of sense.

A second consideration is a belief that the Bible alone is God’s Word for people today. Many books have been written by religious people claiming that God has given them a special message. The

Bible says, however, to “*Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3). Peter adds, “*His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us*” (2 Peter 1:3). To this Paul says, “*Continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of . . . all scripture is inspired of God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that every man may be adequate, equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:14-16).

There are many appeals to entice a person away from a belief in God and the Bible. These attractions may look inviting, but are actually “clouds without water.” They make promises that cannot be filled. Only God, who is above all creation, can give a promise and keep it — His Word alone is faithful and true. †

Peter Mostert preaches for the church in Yucaipa, California, U.S.A.

Who Is Jesus?

Bobby Wheat



For almost two thousand years, people have been asking the question, “Who is Jesus?” Matthew tells us that “*when Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, ‘Who is this?’*” (Matthew 21:10). Once Jesus was with His disciples in a boat on the Sea of Galilee. They were caught in a terrible storm, in danger of being capsized, and Jesus rebuked the wind and the waves, and the storm stopped. Those men asked the question, “*Who is this?*” They had seen that “*even the wind and the waves obey him!*” (Mark 4:41).

So, who is Jesus? Let us attempt to find an answer from the Bible about this very important person.

Jesus Is The Son Of God

John begins his account of Jesus’ life with an affirmation that Jesus is none other than God Himself. He tells us in John 1:1, “*In the beginning was the Word.*” This “Word” is Jesus (see verses 14 and 18), and He was not only *with* God in the beginning, but also “*the Word was God*” (John 1:2).

John also tells us that he wrote down information about Jesus' miraculous signs so that those who read his book *"may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God"* (John 20:30,31). Indeed, the testimony of those miracles is overwhelming. John tells of Jesus raising the dead, casting out demons, healing blind and lame people, walking on the water, and more.

Further testimony to the deity of Jesus comes from John the Baptist. He said of Jesus, *"I have seen and testify that this is the Son of God"* (John 1:34). He had seen the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus in the form of a dove at His baptism, and he had heard the voice from heaven proclaim, *"You are my Son"* (Mark 1:9-11).

Finally, as we have seen from Mark 1:9-11, God Himself testifies to the deity of Jesus. Thus, Scripture clearly shows us that Jesus is the Son of God.

Jesus Is Our Ransom

John tells us something of the scene he saw in heaven. *"And they sang a new song: 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation'"* (Revelation 5:9). Jesus, by shedding His blood on the cross, purchased men from sin.

Jesus Himself told His disciples that His purpose in coming to earth was to be an atoning sacrifice. He said, *"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many"* (Mark 10:45). When Jesus died on the cross, He became a ransom, using His own life to pay for ours.

Jesus Is Our Judge

The fact that Jesus died for us also brings a serious responsibility to each of us. We no longer belong to ourselves, but to Christ (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). If we belong to Him, then we must be willing to obey Him — not an unrealistic expectation from one who died for us and who will be our judge.

We learn in 2 Corinthians 5:10 that *"we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad."* What we do today will be recounted before Jesus, our Righteous Judge.

A standard has already been established by which we shall be judged — the Word of God, the Bible.

"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the

GOD

thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Hebrews 4:12,13).

The writer tells us two things here. First, the Word of God is an instrument of judgment. Second, it is Jesus who wields the instrument; He is the one "to whom we must give account." This picture of Jesus as judge is reinforced by John's description in Revelation 1:16, where he tells us that Jesus has a sharp, double-edged sword coming out of His mouth. It is the sword of judgment; it is the Word of God.

Obviously, the New Testament has much more to say about Jesus than just these three points. A person cannot, however, understand more about Jesus if he is not convinced of the truth of these three statements. Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the one who paid for our sins. Jesus will be our judge.

"Who is Jesus?" If

that is your question, an answer has been given. Search the Bible for yourself and examine the truth it reveals about Jesus. Then answer this question — "Do you *know* Jesus?" †

Bobby Wheat has returned to the United States after having served as a missionary to Zimbabwe.

Quietness

Be still and know that J am God,
That J who made and gave thee life
Will lead thy faltering steps aright,
That J who see each sparrow's fall
Will hear and heed thy earnest call.
J am God.

Be still and know that J am God
When aching burdens crush thy
heart,
Then know J form thee for thy part
And purpose in the plan J hold.
Trust in God.

Be still and know that J am God
Who made the atom's tiny span
And set it moving in My plan,
That J who guide the stars above
Will guide and keep thee in My love.
Be thou still.

— Doran

God With Us:

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Thomas R. Dohling

It is being taught in some quarters that the apostles **only** were sealed with the Holy Spirit. If God “set His seal of ownership” on and “put His Spirit” in the “hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (i.e., eternal life with God forever) (2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5) of the apostles **only**, then the apostles **only** are owned by God and they **only** are guaranteed eternal life! Is this what the Bible teaches (especially the New Testament)?

While it is agreed that Jesus, salvation, eternal life are the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is incorrect to say that God deals differently with **Christians** of different ages. Moreover, the implication of Acts 2:38 is **not** that those who are baptized will receive a gift from the Holy Spirit (i.e., salvation, etc.), but that they will receive the **Holy Spirit** as a **gift** from God as an earnest (i.e., a deposit), as the first installment (Gk. *arabon*) guaranteeing our future salvation (inheritance) which will be consummated

when “*what is mortal*” has been swallowed up by life (2 Corinthians 5:4ff) and God has guaranteed this by “*giving us the Spirit as a deposit*” (2 Corinthians 5:5). This salvation is already in progress, set in motion by the sacrificial death of our Lord Jesus and His glorious resurrection by the power of God!

The Bible teaches that it was not the apostles only who were marked/sealed with the Holy Spirit! Let the Bible speak. “*You also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession — to the praise of His glory*” (Ephesians 1:13,14).

The “you” here implies Ephesian Christians and, by extension, all Christians, who are God’s possessions. From these passages we understand that the Holy Spirit is

the gift given by God to those who believed and obeyed the Lord Jesus (cf. Acts 5:32).

The fact that the Bible is consistent and self-supporting is also evident from the passages in Acts 6:3-6. Here we find that the seven men chosen by the Jerusalem church for waiting on saints were already full of the Spirit before the apostles laid their hands on them. In Acts 13:52 we find that the **disciples** were filled with the Holy Spirit. Who are disciples? Every follower of Christ is His disciple.

The Holy Spirit is God's gift of grace to the Christian. Paul says to the Ephesian Christians, "*Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption*" (Ephesians 4:30). **The "you" here signifies the Ephesian Christians and not the apostles** (cf. Jude 17-20).

We often quote Acts 2:38 but neglect verse 39. Let us see what these two verses together signify. Verse 38, "*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" contains two parts of a very precious promise. While we emphasize the first part, baptism for the forgiveness of sins, we miserably neglect the second, more vital part — the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The promise is applicable not only to the first century Christians but to Christians today as well (and always). Listen to Peter, "*The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off; for all whom the Lord our God will call.*" For whom? "*For all whom the Lord our God will call.*"

Isn't it wonderful? Nay, amazing! How often people try to limit God and His wondrous ways! Our Lord Jesus said in John 3:5, "*I tell you the truth, unless a man is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*" Isn't Peter echoing the same thing in Acts 2:38? He is saying, be born of the water and of the Spirit.

Paul says (through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) in Titus 3:5ff,6, "*He saved us through the washing of rebirth (baptism) and renewal (made anew) by the Holy Spirit, whom He (God) poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*" He also says in 1 Corinthians 12:3ff, "*...No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit.*"

And how is the Spirit received? Paul in Galatians 3:2 said, "*...Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?*" (To us who have the written word of God He would say, "You received the Spirit by believing what you read and heard.")

GOD

Wonderful!

What about "...the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him" (Acts 5:32ff)? If that was true for the first century Christians, isn't it true for us, the twenty-first century Christians? Do we dare to question God's ways? Does He deal differently with us today after we have obeyed Him?

It is conceded that the **miraculous work** of the Holy Spirit through the apostles has ceased with the writing down of God's revealed will and the death of the eye witnesses (apostles), but He does give us to drink of the same Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), i.e., He gives us the **common gift** of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5-7). Who continues to stamp the revealed will (the new covenant, the new testament) of God on our hearts (2 Corinthians 3:3) until we all "*become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ*" (Ephesians

4:13ff) and "*all are transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit*" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

To the extent that we eat of and drink from God's word and to the extent that **we allow Him to dwell in us**, to that extent will He be able to produce His fruit in us (Galatians 5:22). The fruit of the Spirit will be evident in the lives of those who "*live by the Spirit*", keeping "*in step with the Spirit*" (Galatians 5:25). The fruit will be diminished in the lives of those who limit Him or deny His indwelling. The word of God is "*the sword of the Spirit*" (Ephesians 6:17). It is He who makes the word living and active, not only in the life of the devoted, committed Christian, but also in the whole world. †

Thomas R. Dohling is a Christian from Manipur State, East India, worshipping and working with the Lord's church in New Delhi, India.

"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)

"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?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)

"It is the Spirit who gives life..." (John 6:63)

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11).



Who was Sennacherib? The name of Sennacherib is not well known to most people. It does, however, mean a great deal to Assyriologists and diligent students of the Old Testament.

Assyriologists recognize Sennacherib as one of the great kings of Assyria. He reigned from Nineveh during the eighth century before Christ. Students of the Bible know him as the king who tried to conquer Judea in

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722 B.C., during the reign of Hezekiah. The biblical account is found in 2 Kings 18 and 19, and complementary material is in Isaiah 36 and 37.

Students of biblical archaeology are interested in this kind of corroborative material. It should be noted that the Bible is the only one of the world's many religions that can be verified historically by comparing the records of the peoples and nations who touched the lives of the people of the Bible.

The Bible tells us that Sennacherib succeeded his father, Sargon, on the throne of Assyria. Sargon's name is also in the sacred record. From the account in 2 Kings we learn that Sennacherib made great bas-reliefs (sculpture in which the figures project slightly from the background) of limestone for his palace in Nineveh. These large stone carvings are 110 feet long, covering the palace walls and depicting events of his conquest of Judea. They are now in the British Museum.

There are three inscribed prisms, telling of Sennacherib's battles in Judea, describing his victory over Lachish and his siege of Jerusalem. The Bible states that God did not permit Sennacherib to take Jerusalem or King Hezekiah. Isaiah, the prophet, said that Sennacherib "*would not set foot in*

Jerusalem."

Sennacherib had recorded on each of these prisms that he "shut up Hezekiah in his own city like a bird in a cage." Notice that he did not say that he captured Hezekiah or Jerusalem. These three records by Sennacherib are in the British Museum in London, in the Oriental Institute in Chicago, and in the State Museum in Berlin. They serve as remarkable confirmation of this historical event of 722 B.C.

The biblical account goes on to relate Sennacherib's murder by two of his sons when he returned home. The Bible even names the two sons who killed him, Adrammelech and Sharezer. God's Word then names another son, Esarhaddon, who followed him on the throne. In both the biblical and secular accounts we find the same places, names, and events, and the same time frames. This is absolute confirmation.

We have to accept the spiritual truths of the Bible on faith, but the historical sections of the Bible which have been found recorded on clay and stone tablets, stone buildings, statues, and even papyrus, give confirmation no other religion can claim. Indeed "the stones cry out—that the Bible is accurate." †

Harvey Porter died suddenly in March, 1998, after having served almost 40 years as the preacher for the Montgomery Boulevard congregation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, U.S.A.

The Days of Genesis

ONE

Max Patterson

In an attempt to make Genesis fit the theory of evolution, there are some who claim that the days of Genesis chapter one were long geological ages. True Bible believers have pointed out sound arguments why this could not have been the case. I list just a few here:

1. These days were half darkness and half light. What other days except 24-hour periods have ever been like this?
2. When a definite number precedes the Hebrew word for day, "Yom," in the Scriptures, a 24-hour solar day is always meant (see Genesis 8:3; Numbers 13:25; Jonah 1:17).
3. God Himself settles the question in Exodus 20:11, "*For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day.*"
4. These days had "evening and morning" just as our 24-hour days do. The literal translation of the Hebrew is: "and evening was, and day was, day one."
5. Adam was created on the sixth day, lived in Eden on the seventh day and at least into the eighth day. If the day-age theory is correct, then Adam lived in a portion of one long geological age, through the whole of another, and into a portion of a third. How old would he have been?



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6. How is the miracle of Eve being produced explained?

7. How is the fact that everything was created full-grown explained?

In 1984, Dr. James Barr, a professor of Hebrew and Interpretation of Scripture at Oxford University, wrote a letter to David Watson, a British scholar. In this letter Barr addresses the above question. He writes:

“Probably, so far as I know, there is no professor of Hebrew or Old Testament at any world-class university who does not believe that the writer of Genesis 1-11 intended to convey to the readers the idea that (a) creation took place in a series of six days which were the same as the days of 24 hours we now experience, (b) the figures contained in the Genesis genealogies provided a simple addition of chronology from the beginning of the world up to later stages in the biblical story, (c) Noah’s flood was understood to be worldwide and extinguished all human and animal life except for those in the ark.

Or, to put it negatively, the apologetic arguments which suppose the “days” of creation to be long eras of time, the figures of years not to be chrono-

logical, and the flood to be a merely local Mesopotamian flood, are not taken seriously by any such professors, as far as I know.”

Everything Was Created Full-Grown

Isn’t it interesting that these Hebrew scholars, who would not view the Bible as inspired or authoritative, would say, purely on the basis of their scholarly analysis of what is said in the Scriptures, that the writer of Genesis one was certainly intending to give an account of what God did on *seven 24-hour solar days*? These men cannot be accused of imposing their views of the Bible on others, but merely stating, as *scholars*, what they believe the *text* says.

So, arguing from the standpoint of what God says in the text, and from what Hebrew scholars say about what the text says, one comes up with the clear understanding that the days of Genesis one are 24-hour periods. If men had not felt compelled to try to mesh the Bible into the evolutionary hypothesis, there would never have been imposed upon the Bible an interpretation called “theistic evolution”.

It is always safer and wiser to go with what God says. †

Max Patterson is the preacher for the Hillcrest Church of Christ in Neosho, Missouri, U.S.A

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The modern world is constantly bombarding our minds with thought-twisting propaganda of all descriptions. Political, economic, and psychological "bombs" drop on us from every direction. One such bomb is composed of the skepticism toward Christian faith that daily flows over the airways, and voices itself through the printed page.

The many wonderful accomplishments of the scientific community have transformed science into an idol to be worshiped by modern man. But like all idolatry, the idol is frail and hopelessly limited. In

which might explain how its growth occurred.

Unlike much of the propaganda being poured out upon us, Christian faith stands firmly on facts from out of the past. Jesus lived! He is as much a part of world history as are the Pharaohs of Egypt, the Emperors of Rome, and the philosophers of Greece. The church Jesus founded exists. It had a datable beginning that was based on certain events that were known to have transpired in Judea a few days before the Jewish festival of Pentecost.

Right Thinking

Hollis Miller

every accomplishment science must utilize existing realities that were present when the first individual wondered *why, what, or how*. Were there no airwaves, science could not harness them; were there no insects, science could not study them; and were there no stars, science could not theorize about their origin. Without a grown universe no scientist could develop a hypothesis

The prophets of ancient Israel who spoke and wrote about a coming kingdom were real people who walked the earth, delivered their messages, and died. The apostles of Jesus who spread the good news of the Messiah were as real as any other personality of the past. Their written records of Jesus and the early church are real literature, authenticated by hundreds of extant

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manuscripts.

A moment's reflection will reveal that skepticism toward the things of God has always existed. Why? The Bible's answer is that mankind is in rebellion against God.

factors of human welfare.

Christian faith as it is taught in the New Testament produces good. (One should not confuse the evils of apostate Christianity with the teaching of the New Testament.) For

In every accomplishment science must utilize existing realities that were present when the first individual wondered *why, what, or how*. Were there no airwaves, science could not harness them; were there no insects, science could not study them; and were there no stars, science could not theorize about their origin. Without a grown universe no scientist could develop a hypothesis which might explain how its growth occurred.

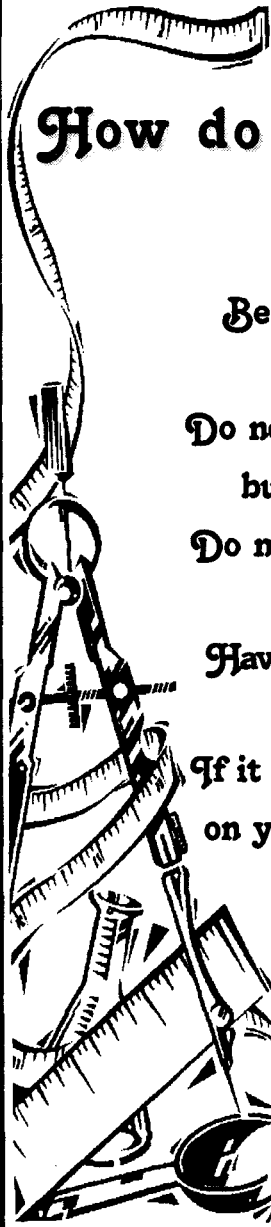
Part of sin's activity in men is its perpetual effort to persuade them that God is not needed, that He is excess baggage being carried about by deceived and unenlightened individuals who wish to hold on to what a world come-of-age deems antiquated relics from out of the past.

It is an accepted axiom that the ultimate worth of a thing is determined by what the thing produces. If good is produced, the thing is good. If evil, the thing is bad. Bigotry, slavery, and despotic governments usually produce evil. Therefore, they are generally considered less than desirable as bene-

hundreds of years rational men have praised the teaching of Jesus for its beneficial worth to mankind. Yes, Jesus makes demands, but they can be likened to the mother who insists that her child eat healthy food. The demands of such a mother are a blessing to the child, not a curse. So it is with the demands of Jesus. Every individual who follows His words is only made better.

Christian faith corrects the imbalance brought into the world by sin. It does so because it is true, and it will never be proved false. †

Hollis Miller is a gospel preacher living in Cadiz, Kentucky, U.S.A.



How do you measure up?

Be of the same mind toward one
another.

Do not set your mind on high things,
but associate with the humble.

Do not be wise in your own opinion.

Repay no one evil for evil.

Have regard for good things in the
sight of all men.

If it is possible, as much as depends
on you, live peaceably with all men

(Romans 12:16-18).

The Need for a Revelation

John Thiesen

From the earliest times of human history, men have sought God. There seems to be in humankind an innate need to look to a higher power and to know the Creator.

In this search for God, people do not have to look far to see that God exists. Nature is a great teacher in this respect: *"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse"* (Romans 1:20). God's creative power, benevolence, order; and love of beauty are all painted on the canvass of nature.

Nature Is Limited

However, there are many things about God which nature cannot show us. For example, it does not reveal God's plans for us, nor His will for us. Nature does not tell us what to do to be saved from our sins or how to worship God. It does not reveal God's past dealings with our forefathers; neither does it tell about future things such as heaven, hell, or the judgment day. To know these things about which nature is silent, we need a revelation from God.

Many attempts have been made to find God in various ways, all of which have failed. Some have turned to worshipping nature itself, but that is serving the creature rather than the creator (Romans 1:25). Others have carved, molded, or engraved images to worship, but these have no breath in them and are unable to see, hear, speak, walk, or to do anything to help the worshippers. Others have tried philosophy and meditation, but these have also failed because *"it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* (Jeremiah 10:23).

God Had Revealed Himself

At various times in history God has revealed Himself through inspired prophets and apostles by miracles, dreams, visions, and signs. These men of God spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21).

In the fullness of time, God sent His own Son, who is the ultimate revelation of the invisible God. God *"was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory"* (1 Timothy 3:16). In times

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gone by, God spoke to the fathers by the prophets, but now *“hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son”* (Hebrews 1:1,2).

This revelation has been deposited into permanent, written form in the Holy Scriptures. The Bible contains the history of God’s appearances and work in the world, His laws, His teachings, and the life story of His Son and Savior of the

world, Jesus Christ the Son of God. When we read, believe, and obey these Scriptures, eternal life will be ours. *“But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name”* (John 20:31). †

John Thiesen is a former missionary to Malawi and is now the preacher for the church of Christ in Buffalo, MO, USA.



AND HE DIED....

Bruce Buckley

The story is told of a man who had very little interest in things religious and rarely attended any religious service. One day his niece was so persuasive that he agreed to go with her to worship. But she was very disappointed when the preacher read from Genesis 5:8-20. The genealogies listed seemed to be such uninteresting verses to read at that time. She thought it could not have any good influence with her uncle. Time after time the reading said, **“and he died.”**

Returning home, both were very quiet but the man was thinking. The sound of his own footsteps seemed to say, **“and he died.”** That night and the next day he thought of the words, **“and he died.”** He finally took a Bible and read the entire fifth chapter of Genesis. It was said even of Methuselah **“and he died.”**

This caused the man to think as he never thought before. In John 11:26 he read, *“And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”*

Finally, he too died to sin and the world as he obeyed the gospel.

“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” This means that the whole world needs to die to sin and the world, through birth into His family, the church.

“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord” (Jeremiah 17:7).

Great

Evangelistic Preaching

Cecil May, Jr.



If we are to preach with evangelistic power and achieve evangelistic results, we must preach with conviction and faith founded on the following facts:

Without Christ, no one can be saved. Jesus said, *"No one comes to the Father except by me"* (John 14:6). *"There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved"* (Acts 4:12). J. M. McCaleb wrote in his famous hymn, "Unless they hear, they cannot live; the gospel is for all." If the world is all right like it is, why tell them anything? If we do not passionately believe that we know something the world does not know, we will not fervently proclaim the One who can save.

The Gospel is God's power to save. *"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but to us who are saved it is the power of God"* (1 Corinthians 1:18). *"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation"* (Romans 1:16). God's love, demonstrated in the sacrifice of His Son, is what will draw us to God (John 12:32-33) and cause us to love (1 John 4:19). The Gospel can make the drunk and the stoned sober and the carouser and profligate pure. It instructs the teacher of error in the way of the Lord more perfectly. It turns the selfish materialist into a joyful giver. The word of the Gospel, *"the voice of the Son of God,"*

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brings eternal life out of death, and justification from condemnation (John 5:24-25).

Preaching is God's chief instrument for saving man. The Gospel is in earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:5). Jesus commanded, "*Go...preach the gospel; ...he that believes...shall be saved*" (Mark 16:15). "*After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*" (1 Corinthians 1:21). The Bible does not here elevate one method of communicating the Gospel over another; it does make communicating the Gospel the means to salvation. Preaching is communicating the Gospel.

Great things happen in the act of preaching. Peter's preaching pricked 3000 with conviction of sin and desire for salvation (Acts 2:37). Phillip's preaching brought one man an understanding of the work of Christ and joyous acceptance of salvation (Acts 8:27-39). Paul's preaching at Athens brought mockery and procrastination, but it also brought faith to some (Acts 17:32-34).

Trite repetition of outworn traditions

will empty church buildings. "Nattering nabobs of negativism," to whom the Gospel consists entirely in unrelenting condemnation and exposure of others, drive their hearers to look for positive light elsewhere. A diluted Gospel, soothing syrup for itching ears, that never reproves, rebukes, or teaches, may attract some, but will save none. Preach "*all the counsel of God*" (Acts 20:27) with Christ always at the center (1 Corinthians 2:2). Imbibe and live the Word of God. Love the people to whom you preach. Weekly lay open the Gospel to the people. Apply it pointedly and lovingly to their problems and needs. That kind of preaching usually reaches people. It always glorifies God. †

Cecil May, Jr. is Dean of the Bible Dept. at Faulkner University in Montgomery, Alabama, U.S.A.

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Feelings come and feelings go,
And feelings are deceiving;
My warrant is the Word of God;
Naught else is worth believing.
I'll trust in God's unchanging Word
Till soul and body sever;
For though all things shall pass away
His Word shall stand forever.

— Unknown

By What Authority?



Rod Kyle

Jesus had just driven the moneychangers from the inner court of Herod's Temple in Jerusalem. Approached by the Chief Priests, He was asked, "*By what authority are you doing these things?*" (Mark 11:28).

That really is a valid question. Authority makes life functional. We face it at every turn in our lives.

Let's be honest. How can we know if anyone's moral or religious authority is valid if it originates only from the heart of fallible man? Why should someone else's idea be any more valid than mine? Necessity demands an objective standard handed down to fallible man by an infallible God!

There is such a standard. The Bible states, "*Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God...which things we (inspired men) speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but those taught by the Spirit,...*" (1 Corinthians 2:11,13.) This passage tells us that God's mind has been made known to us through the inspired writers of the Bible. Here are a few of the many other passages that teach this essential truth — 2 Timothy 3:15-17, Romans 10:17, Ephesians 3:3-4. Read them, because here is the standard you must follow.

Jesus put it this way in John 12:48, "*He who rejects Me, and does not receive my sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.*"

Is your authority God's authority?



Rod Kyle preaches the Gospel in New Zealand.

The Wizard of Oz Syndrome

Bill Dillon

In the classic tale, **The Wizard of Oz**, a young lady named Dorothy was told to follow the yellow brick road which would lead her to the great and mighty Wizard of Oz, who could send her home again. In the expectation of having all her fears relieved and all her hopes realized, Dorothy traveled down the yellow brick road — but at the last — the Wizard was a fake, and the yellow brick road was misleading.

Unfortunately, the world of today is filled with souls who are searching for a God like the Wizard was supposed to be. They look for churches and religious groups who will serve as their yellow brick road. In the end, they suffer the multiple heartache of disillusionment, discouragement, and deception.

On May 3, 1993, *U.S. News & World Report* ran a story captioned "The Final Days of Ranch Apocalypse." It was the story of David Koresh and the fall of the Branch Davidian cult in Waco, Texas. This, and other stories, remind us that religious deception is as much a part of our present day as it was in the 1st century.

Bible warnings about false teachers are in abundance:

"Little children, let no man deceive you" (1 John 3:7).

"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God"

(1 John 4:1).

The church at Ephesus was commended because they had *"tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars"* (Revelation 2:2).

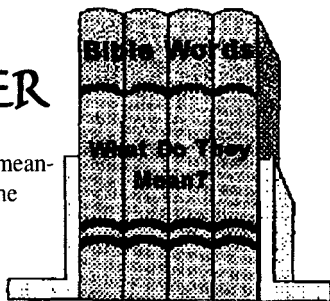
Paul, the apostle, admonished early believers to *"prove all things; hold fast to that which is good"* (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

It is good to be reminded that truth is to be held in importance above all things. Jesus said that only the truth will set us free (John 8:32). It is also essential to place our confidence in the strong cord of God's Word (John 17:17), and not in the teachings of men, which are but wispy webs, blowing in the winds of life. †

Bill Dillon is editor of *Gospel Gleaner* and preaches for the Lord's church in Mountain Home, Arkansas, USA.

It Helps to Enrich Your BIBLE WORD POWER

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 Romans 2 (KJV). After making your choices, turn the page for the correct answers.



1. **judgest** *v.* – (Gk. *kree no'*) A: to correct B: to determine; to assume the office of a judge C: to endorse as acceptable D: to censor.
2. **hardness** *n.* – (Gk. *sklay rot' ace*) A: an attitude of opposition; trying, exacting B: conviction C: certainty D: unwillingness.
3. **impenitent** *adj.* – (Gk. *am et an o' ay tos*) A: weak B: awkward C: angry without a cause D: without change of mind.
4. **eternal** *adj.* – (Gk. *ahee o' nee os*) A: of endless duration B: internal C: secure within one's commitment D: a measurement of time.
5. **indignation** *n.* – (Gk. *thoo mos'*) A: an undignified response B: quarrelsomeness C: fierceness, wrath D: impatience.
6. **tribulation** *n.* – (Gk. *thlip' sis*) A: affliction, torment B: a contribution C: a severe irritant D: persuasion against one's will.
7. **anguish** *n.* – (Gk. *sten okh o ree' ah*) A: anger with justification B: sorrow C: distress of soul D: regret because of a loss.
8. **justified** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. *dik ah yo' o*) A: pardoned B: to deem to be right or righteous, by God C: being treated justly D: welcomed home.
9. **conscience** *n.* – (Gk. *soon i' day sis*) A: the brain B: a feeling of guilt C: that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God D: condemnation.
10. **accusing** *v.* – (Gk. *kat ay gor eh' o*) A: cursing B: singling out C: appointing D: to speak against.
11. **gospel** *n.* – (Gk. *yoo ang ghel id' zo*) A: lecture B: the good news C: salvation D: a message sent in haste.
12. **instructor** *n.* – (Gk. *pahee dyoo tace'*) A: explanation of a procedure B: one who teaches C: a judge D: a university professor.
13. **abhorrest** *v.* – (Gk. *bdel oos' so*) A: to detest, to turn oneself away from B: to oppose mildly C: to reject D: to accept with reluctance.
14. **breaking** *v.* – (Gk. *par ab' as is*) A: transgression or going against B: ignoring C: to shatter a utensil D: the ending of a thing.
15. **blasphemed** *v.* – (Gk. *blas fay meh' o*) A: rejected B: questioned C: to speak evil of D: to sanction the use of.
16. **transgress** *v.* – (Gk. *par ab at' ace*) A: trespass B: to repudiate C: to refuse to accept D: to overstep the limit.
17. **letter** *n.* – (Gk. *gram'mah*) A: written commandments B: a greeting C: the alphabet D: binding decisions of lawyers.

1. **judgest** *v.* – (Gk. *kree no'*) **B:** to determine; to assume the office of a judge; to separate, select, choose, to pronounce judgment.
2. **hardness** *n.* – (Gk. *sklay rot' ace*) **A:** an attitude of opposition; trying, exacting.
3. **impenitent** *adj.* – (Gk. *am et an o' ay tos*) **D:** without change of mind; unrepentant; the Scriptures often warn of the dire consequences that will befall those who have impenitent hearts.
4. **eternal** *adj.* – (Gk. *ahee o' nee os*) **A:** of endless duration; used in 66 places in the New Testament.
5. **indignation** *n.* – (Gk. *thoo mos'*) **C:** fierceness; wrath; sore displeasure.
6. **tribulation** *n.* – (Gk. *thlip' sis*) **A:** affliction, torment; to suffer ill, to be maltreated.
7. **anguish** *n.* – (Gk. *sten okh o ree' ah*) **C:** distress of soul; as though wedged into a very narrow place so that extreme distress arises from that straitened condition.
8. **justified** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. *dik ah yo' o*) **B:** to deem to be right or righteous, by God; the condition of a sinner who has been cleansed and forgiven by God, as a result of his penitent obedience to God's will.
9. **conscience** *n.* – (Gk. *soon i' day sis*) **C:** that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God; the consciousness of right and wrong, good and evil, which is intended to govern our lives.
10. **accusing** *v.* – (Gk. *kat ay gor eh' o*) **D:** to speak against; to witness against, as the conscience points the internal finger of guilt against the transgressor.
11. **gospel** *n.* – (Gk. *yoo ang ghel id' zo*) **B:** the good news, particularly having reference to the good news of the salvation made possible through Jesus Christ.
12. **instructor** *n.* – (Gk. *pahee dyoo tace'*) **B:** one who teaches, informs; one who imparts knowledge or skills.
13. **abhorrest** *v.* – (Gk. *bdel oos' so*) **A:** to detest, despise, to turn oneself away from.
14. **breaking** *v.* – (Gk. *par ab' as is*) **A:** transgression or going against, as the violation of a law.
15. **blasphemed** *v.* – (Gk. *blas fay meh' o*) **C:** to speak evil of; to rail at or revile; to slanderously report; to defame.
16. **transgress** *v.* – (Gk. *par ab at' ace*) **D:** to overstep the limit; to go beyond God's law so that one becomes a sinner.
17. **letter** *n.* – (Gk. *gram'mah*) **A:** the written commandments of the word of God, as on the tables of stone, in contrast to the work of the Holy Spirit maintaining life in the heart of the penitent Christian; following only "the letter of the Law" could not bring life.

Vocabulary Scale

- 7-10 correct.....Good
 11-13 correct.....Bible Student
 14-17 correct.....Bible Scholar

SHOULD WOMEN SPEAK IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH?

Sunny David



As the apostle Paul discussed the order in the meetings of the church at Corinth in 1 Corinthians 14, he first mentioned those who spoke in tongues, or different languages, instructing that they should keep silent if there was no interpreter (verse 28). Then he mentioned the prophets and said that they should speak by turns, the first speaker keeping silent if there was another one who also wanted to speak (verse 30). His reasoning was: Let all things be done for edification; let there be no confusion; and, let all things be done decently and in order (verses 26,33,40).

In view of these instructions, he said specifically, "*Let your women keep silent in the churches, for they*

are not permitted to speak; but they are to be submissive, as the law also says. And if they want to learn something, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is shameful for women to speak in church [assembly]" (verses 34 and 35).

When Paul wrote to Timothy, he told him, "*Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence"* (1 Timothy 2:11,12). In the next two verses, he also gives the reason why women should not speak, teach, lead, or exert authority over men in meetings of the church. "*For,*" he said, "*Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being*

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

deceived, fell into transgression."

But what about women being appointed as elders (or bishops or pastors) and evangelists in churches today? Are they going to keep silent? Are they going to sit in the assembly in submission? Evidently those who are making such appointments and those who are accepting such positions are doing so in direct contravention and violation of God's written will.

We need to remember that God is our creator. He made both man and woman. He knows them better than they themselves know about their own personalities or abilities. Not only has God made humans, but He also has revealed His will for them, how they should live with one another. Those who honor God in their lives and accept Him as their Heavenly Father will surely abide by His will in everything.

Instructed by the Holy Spirit of God, Paul, in 1 Corinthians 11:3, wrote; "*But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man and the head of Christ is God.*" Is there anything wrong with this stated order of authority? If God is the head of Christ, does this mean that God is going to mistreat Him or use Him as His slave?

Where is my head, I mean the physical head of my physical body? Well, it has been placed on my

body. What does it do to my body? It protects my body; loves my body, looks after the welfare of my entire body. This is the meaning of 'head'. It exercises the control or authority over the body, supervising and directing.

Speaking about His head, Christ made the point when He said: "*Therefore my Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again*" (John 10:17). It was the will of God that Christ should lay down His life for sinners; which He did, showing His submission to His head, God. Then He said, "I am doing this because My Father loves me."

We observe from God's will that He placed man over woman. Man is the head, the leader of the household. From Ephesians 5:22-25 and 1 Peter 3:1-7 we learn that wives should be submissive to their own husbands; and husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.

Again, while the woman is called to be submissive and obedient to her own husband, at the same time the husband is commanded to treat his wife with honor and understanding, realizing that she is a weaker vessel. When God said in His Book that woman is a weaker vessel, He didn't mean by that that she is an inferior person, or that she is of less importance than man.

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

God loves all humans equally, both man and woman; and Christ died for all. In heaven, Christ said they all will be like angels of God, that is, they will not be as husband and wife, marrying and being given in marriage (Matthew 22:30).

But *God* is the creator. He created them both, male and female. He knows, therefore, who is stronger and who is weak. He created them in that fashion. Man needs woman and woman needs man; and God has created them differently. In comparison to man, a woman is usually more affectionate and tender; she could be easily shattered, broken, melted, and conned. Even the devil knew this fact, and so he approached Eve in the garden and was successful in deceiving her.

So whether it is the home or the church, God has specified how men

and women should live in their respective spheres. At home, woman is the homemaker, and man is the head. He is responsible for looking after the welfare of the wife and children, protecting them and guiding them in the fear of the Lord.

And, in the church, men ought to take the leadership; to lead worship services, preach and exhort, lead prayers, singing, and serve the Lord's Supper. But let women keep silent in the assembly of the church, for they are not permitted to speak.

Of course, this does not mean that women cannot sing in the public assembly or take part in the informal Bible study, under the leadership of a man. †

Sunny David lives in New Delhi, India, and is a radio evangelist for much of India.

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

— excerpts from Ephesians 5:22-33

Where Are Our Children?

Roger E. Dickson

In the context of death, the destiny of children who die always arises. What we believe to be the destiny of children who die is based upon our theology concerning sin and the spiritual nature of children. Some believe the concept that children are born with sin, or that they have a sinful nature. But this is not the picture we understand when studying some statements of Jesus concerning the nature of children.

The nature of children was referred to by Jesus in Matthew 18:3 when He stated, *"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven."* The nature of children



is not arrogance and pride, which was characteristic of those in the context of Matthew 18 who were seeking greatness. The nature of children is humility. In conversion, one must become as this nature in order to enter the kingdom. Why would Jesus refer to this pure nature if children actually have an impure nature, one that is totally depraved or stained with original sin at birth?

The nature of children is again explained by Jesus in Matthew

19:14 — *“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”* Jesus also said, *“Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it”* (Mark 10:15).

Those who have submitted to the kingdom reign of Jesus are walking in the light. And since they are walking in the light, *“the blood of Jesus Christ”* keeps on cleansing them of all sin (1 John 1:7). The kingdom is of a sinless nature because of the cleansing blood of Jesus. Through the cleansing blood of Jesus we are able to be presented perfect before God (Colossians 1:28). Such it is with children. They are sinless because they have not reached the age to be able to make a negative moral response to God’s law.

Children, therefore, are pure. They are safe when they die, simply because they have not knowingly or willingly walked in transgression of the law of God. At the time of physical death, accordance to the assurance of the Scriptures, the spirits and souls of children are safe with God. They are not lost to hell, but are in the care of God, who will secure them for eternal glory. †

Roger E. Dickson is the director of International School of Biblical Studies in Cape Town, South Africa.



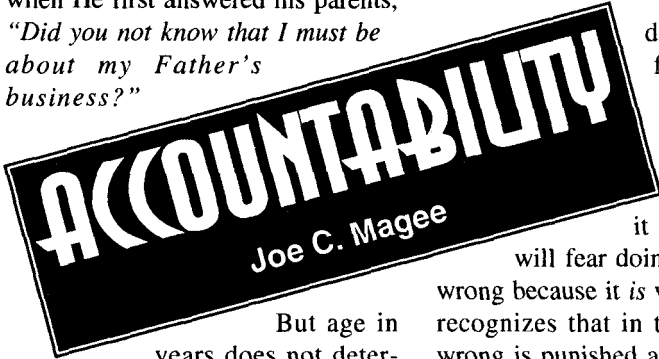
Gather the Children

Some would gather money
Along the path of life;
Some would gather roses
And rest from worldly strife,
But I would gather roses
From among the thorns of sin;
I would seek a golden curl
And a freckled, toothless grin.
For money cannot enter
Into that land of endless day,
And roses that are gathered
Soon will wilt along the way
But, oh, the laughing children
As I cross the Sunset Sea,
As the gates swing wide to Heaven,
I can take them in with me!

— Author Unknown

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

The question has often arisen about the age of accountability for children. Some have agreed that twelve years should be accepted because this was the age of Jesus when He first answered his parents, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?"



But age in years does not determine one's level of maturity or his ability to comprehend. Many twelve-year-old school boys will tell you that their main interests are sports, recess, summer vacation, and girls, not necessarily in that order.

At a very early age one learns that some actions are rewarded and others result in punishment. The child's determination concerning an act is often prompted by his experience of whether that action is acceptable or not. He does that which is good because of the ensuing rewards and he avoids that which is bad because of the fear of punishment. He may or may not agree that the act itself was good or bad.

I think many today build a relationship with God on the same principle. They do that which is good to

gain favor with God and a hope of heaven, while they avoid that which is bad to escape hell. But is this real accountability or it just following certain rules?

As the child develops, hopefully, he will come to appreciate doing that which is right because it is right, and he will fear doing that which is wrong because it is wrong. He also recognizes that in this life not all wrong is punished and not all good is rewarded; but this is not the determining factor in his behavior.

While he does not discount the promise of heaven or the horrible thoughts of hell, he is governed in his every day life by what he knows to be right or wrong. The daily reward for doing right is *in the right itself*, while the punishment for doing wrong is *within the knowledge of having done wrong*. He no longer lingers on the possibility of the results of his actions. He contemplates the right or wrong ahead of time.

This is real and mature accountability. From this day forward he need not live in fear; but through love of the truth and righteousness he goes about his daily activities with a determined attitude to do that which is right and avoid that which is wrong.

The apostle John writes, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18)

When we love the right and

despise the wrong we have reached that plateau of accountability which displays maturity (perfection) in Christ. †

Joe C. Magee is the preacher for the Lord's church in Berryville, Arkansas, U.S.A.



12 Rules for Raising Delinquent Children

Below is a satirical list prepared by the Houston, TX police department for parents who did not discipline their children. How do the rules fit?

1. **Give the child everything he wants.** In this way, he will grow up to believe that the world owes him a living.
2. **When he picks up bad words, laugh at him.** This will make him think he's cute. It will also encourage him to pick up cuter phrases that will blow off the top of your head later.
3. **Never give him any spiritual training.** Let him wait until he is 21 when he can "decide for himself".
4. **Avoid using the word "wrong".** It may develop in him a guilt complex. This will condition him to believe later when he is arrested for stealing that society is against him and he is being persecuted.
5. **Do everything for him** so that he will be experienced in throwing all responsibility on others.
6. **Let him read and watch anything he wants to.** Be careful that the silverware and drinking glasses are sterilized, but let his mind feast on garbage.
7. **Quarrel frequently in his presence.** In this way he will not be too shocked when his own home is broken up later.
8. **Give him all the spending money he wants.** Never let him earn his own. Why should he have things as tough as you had them?
9. **Satisfy his every craving.** Denial may cause harmful frustration.
10. **Take his part against neighbors, teachers, policemen.** They are all just prejudiced against your child.
11. **When he gets into real trouble, apologize for yourself** by saying, "I never could do anything with him."
12. **Prepare yourself for grief.** You will be likely to have it.

The Holy Spirit's Use of the Word in Conversion

Gary C. Hampton

A lumberjack cuts down a tree. An axe is the instrument used by the lumberjack to cut down the tree. Similarly, it might truthfully be said that the Holy Spirit converts a man from sin. The Bible is the instrument He uses to convert.

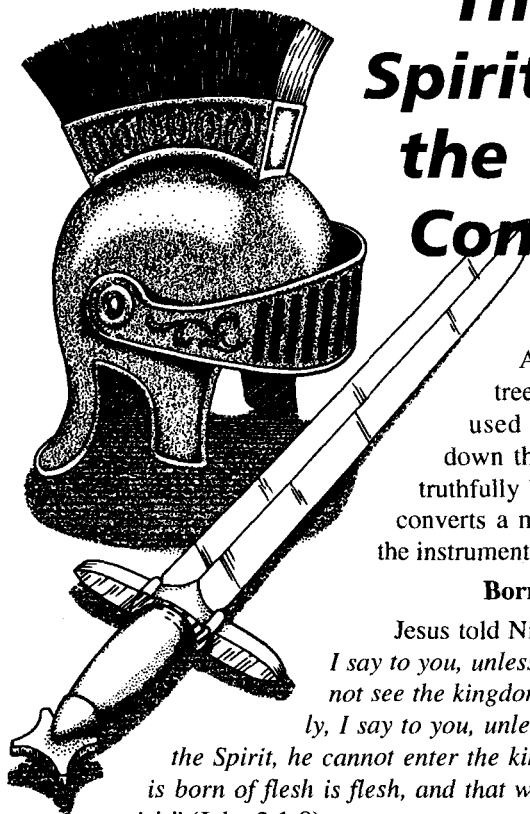
Born of the Word

Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God . . . Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"* (John 3:1-8).

The Holy Spirit inspired Peter, Paul, and James to tell us by what means that birth occurs. Peter said Christians are born of the incorruptible seed, which is the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23). The Corinthians were begotten *"through the gospel,"* according to 1 Corinthians 4:15. James wrote, *"Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures"* (James 1:18). Clearly, the Holy Spirit uses the inspired Word as an instrument to change the hearts of men.

Given Life Through The Word

Prior to becoming a Christian, one was dead in his sins. *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1). The



only way out of that state is by being made alive again by God, which is a work of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, *"the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life"* (2 Corinthians 3:6).

The Comforter uses the Word as an instrument to make one alive. *"This is my comfort in my affliction, For Your word has given me life . . . I will never forget Your precepts, For by them You have given me life"* (Psalm 119:50,93). The Lord said, *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life"* (John 6:63).

Hearts Cut With The Sword

Paul instructed Christians to put on the armor of God. *"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God"* (Ephesians 6:17). The Word of God is described as *"living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12).

Peter used that very sword on the day of Pentecost. He quoted from Joel 2:28-32; Psalm 16:8-11; and 110:1. He used those verses to show that God had planned for Jesus to die and had raised Him from the dead. Then, he said,

"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." His hearers were cut to their hearts with the truth and asked what they must do to be saved. Instead of telling them to wait for a direct operation of the Spirit, he told them what they must do. Those that gladly obeyed that truth were baptized and added to their number (Acts 2:41,42).

The Conversion Of The Samaritans

After the death of Stephen, the church at Jerusalem began to be greatly persecuted. *"They were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles."* Those who were scattered preached everywhere they went.

Philip went to Samaria and *"preached Christ to them."* The people heard what he said and noted the miracles he worked which confirmed that he was a spokesman from God. *"But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized"* (Acts 8:1-12).

The Spirit's Role In Lydia's Conversion

If ever there was a case calling for direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of a sinner, Lydia

would seem to be that case. She lived far from the nearest preacher. She was devout, as is evidenced by her regularly going to the riverside on the Sabbath day for prayer. Yet, the Holy Spirit remained consistent by choosing to send men to bear the message.

In a vision, Paul learned of the need for Macedonia to hear the Gospel. Paul concluded the "*Lord had called*" them to preach the Gospel to the people of Macedonia. While in Philippi, they went to the prayer-gathering by the river. Lydia's heart was opened by the Lord through the preaching of Paul. Notice, Luke says she gave heed to "*the things spoken by Paul.*" She was baptized as a result of hearing the words of the Spirit (Acts 16:6-15).

Conclusion

One must be born of water and Spirit to enter the kingdom of God. That birth is a result of one's obeying the words of the Spirit, which are the seed of the kingdom. Spiritual life is also found in God's Word. The Holy Spirit has never revealed Himself directly to a sinner to tell him what to do to be saved. Instead, He has always used men, like Peter, Philip, and Paul, to proclaim His Word. †

Gary C. Hampton is the preacher for the Central Avenue Church of Christ in Valdosta, Georgia, USA.

Who Will Go?

There is someone out there
waiting

Who has never heard of
Christ.

There is someone out there
dying

Who must face eternal loss.

Can I sit in easy comfort
And ignore the plaintive cry?
Can I live for self and safety
When the world's about to die?
Can I spurn the blood of
Calvary

And seek the easy way,
When He died for me and
saved me

Changing all my night to day?
No! I have got to face the task
Of the work yet to be done.
Yes! I have got to take my
cross

Until the victory is won.

So hold on, Oh child of sorrow
For the Word is drawing nigh!
You shall hear the gospel story
And no longer shall you die!

—Anonymous

Verse Search

Supply the missing information from the gospel of John, chapter nineteen, NKJV.

1. What did Pilate and the soldiers do to Jesus? (V. 1,2)
2. "Then they said, ' _____, _____ _____!' And they _____ Him with their _____" (V.3)
3. Why did Pilate bring Jesus out, in such a pitiable state, to show Him to the people? (V. 4)
4. The Jews said, "We have a _____, and according to our law _____, because _____" (V.74)
5. Jesus said that Pilate would have no power over Him at all, " _____" (V. 11)
6. What title did Pilate write and put on the cross? (V. 19)
7. What did the soldiers do with Jesus' robe? (V. 23,24)
8. What had the prophet said in Psalm 22:16? (V. 24)
9. From the cross, what did Jesus say to His mother about John? to John about His mother? (V. 26,27)
10. Why did Jesus say, "I thirst?" (V. 28)
11. After saying, "It is finished!" what did Jesus do? (V. 30)
12. Why did the soldiers break the legs of those who had been crucified? (V. 31)
13. Because Jesus was already dead, what did the soldiers do to Him? (V. 33,34)
14. This fulfilled the Scripture, " _____" (V. 36)
15. Zechariah 12:10 was also fulfilled by the piercing of His side. What did it say? (V. 37)
16. Name two prominent Jewish leaders who took responsibility for Jesus' burial (V. 38,39)
17. What was used in the preparation of the burial of Jesus' body and where was He buried? (V. 39-42)

[See inside of back cover for answers.]

YOU CAN'T DO IT THAT WAY

T. Pierce Brown



In Exodus 8:25, we find, *“And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron and said, Go ye, sacrifice to your God in the land.”* Many in bondage would have decided at that point to try to make a compromise with Pharaoh if he would just lessen their burdens a little. However, God does not want to simply lessen your burden and leave you in slavery. He wants you to be free. In order to be free, you have to *“come out from among them and be separate, and touch no unclean thing”* (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Satan, with all of his devices,

does not let go easily. He will make whatever compromises he has to make as long as he can cunningly keep you in his service. He is even willing to let you be baptized, attend church services when you feel the urge, and give a little of what you think you own, as long as *you do not make a full commitment to let Christ be the Lord of your life.*

It is really depressing to realize that there are multiplied millions who are willing to make a sacrifice to God in the land, so to speak, but are unwilling to leave the land of bondage and march under God's

orders all the way. If you do not submit and act on the belief that Christ has **all** authority in heaven and on earth, you have actually compromised on Pharaoh's terms.

If, on the other hand, you sincerely act on the fact that Christ has all authority, then you will attempt to let all you do in word or deed be done by His authority. That means you will not demand of anyone that which God did not demand, nor will you attempt to release anyone from the obligations He has given. You will not only *"obey from the heart the form of doctrine delivered to you"* (Romans 6:17) but you will worship God in spirit and in truth, doing only what He authorized. Then, *"as much as you have opportunity, you will seek to do good unto all men, especially to those of the household of faith"* (Galatians 6:10). This includes teaching the lost the way of salvation, and urging

the saved to continue in the faith, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left.

You cannot properly sacrifice to God *in the land*. Come out! You can do this by repenting of your sins, confessing your faith in Christ, and being baptized for the remission of your sins. This is how the Bible describes being called out of darkness into His marvelous light. We have come out of the world and have been baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27). †

T. Pierce Brown lives and preaches in Cookeville, Tennessee, USA.

WHAT IS A SQUARE?

Everybody knows a few squares. I know one. He's that strong, polite, God-fearing young fellow who freely admits that he prays, weeps for joy, plays with little kids, kisses his mother, goes to Dad for advice, thinks old folks are beautiful, and blushes. He wears jeans he can bend in, puts savings in the bank, cuts his hair, likes school, can't imitate all the television comics, avoids dirty discussions about sex, goes to worship, drinks milk, drives 30 miles an hour in a thirty mile per hour zone, is in bed by ten, won't smoke, doesn't dance, and expects purity in girls.

As a result of his odd and outlandish behavior, he suffers the loss of gang companionship; but he gains the gratitude and devotion of his parents, school honors, family respect, unjaded imagination and spiritual security. I know him; he is a strange fellow, but I like him.

— Selected

CONVERSION

Dan R. Owen

While people often embrace minor, surface changes, they usually resist fundamental change. Conversion is radical, fundamental change. It is a pervasive change in an individual brought about by the hand of God.

We may think it is impossible for some people to change. We may even feel that we could never really change. But things which are impossible for men are well within the range of God's ability. God can change anyone. Witness the case of Saul of Tarsus.

Saul of Tarsus was one of the most confident, self-assured persons one could ever meet. He was confident in his superior education, his recognized status in Israel's hierarchy, and in his reputation of zeal in keeping the law. Saul was passionate and deliberate, and he was actively committed to what he believed. He was so sure of himself that the appearance of the risen Lord on the Damascus road hit him like a ton of bricks. Like a bolt from the blue he was confronted by a truth he had dedicated his life to denying. Jesus of Nazareth was alive, the

risen, living Christ. Everything Saul had been doing was wrong, terribly wrong.

For three days following this life-shaking experience, Saul of Tarsus was anything but self-assured. He was blind, helpless, weak, and afraid. He fasted and prayed for direction, knowing how misdirected he had been. Real conversion takes place when the helpless call out to God for help and the weak cry out for strength.

Ananias was reluctant to go to Saul. He was compelled to go, however, and when he arrived at that house on Straight Street, he found not an arrogant persecutor, but a helpless, humble, open, seeker of God's will. Ananias shared the Gospel with Saul and challenged him, "*Why do you wait? Get up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name!*" (Acts 22:16).

When Saul obeyed, he was no longer trusting in himself, but calling on the name of the Lord Jesus. He began to preach what he had once persecuted. He allowed Jesus to change his thinking, his behavior,

SALVATION

his commitments, his associations, and his mission in life. Saul of Tarsus was converted. It took a traumatic experience to bring him to his knees, but God changed him completely.

What about you? What kind of experience will it take in your life to show you how blind, helpless, ignorant, and sinful you are and how much you need the grace of Jesus Christ? Will you have the courage to start trusting God and stop believing only in yourself? Remember, God can cause conversion or radical change in anyone. Will you let God change you? †

Dan R. Owen works with the Broadway congregation in Paducah, Kentucky, USA.

If They Knew

*If they knew
About His birth
Being born in a stable,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About the storm
And how He calmed it,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About the hungry
And how He fed them,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About the lame
And how He healed them,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About the blind
And how He gave them sight,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About the cross
And Him dying for us,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew
About heaven and hell
And how real they are,
Would they believe?*

*If they knew . . .
But they will never know
If we don't teach them
So that they can believe.*

— James Seaman

Circumcised And Raised

Owen D. Olbricht

The apostle Paul uses two descriptive terms, "*circumcised*" and "*raised*," to express what takes place when one is baptized (Colossians 2:11-13). Both of these would have been understood by the Colossians in the physical sense and should have helped them understand the spiritual realities implied by these terms.

Physical circumcision to them would suggest a removal of flesh and in the spiritual sense the removal of their fleshly passions. Since this was done without hands, the implication is that the operation taking place was on the inner person through the working of God.

God did this when they were **buried and risen** with Jesus in baptism. Because of a heart response (Romans 6:17, 18) through their association with Jesus in His burial and resurrection in baptism, the spiritual result should be a new life. If they were involved with Jesus in this way, then they received the **forgiveness of all their trespasses**. No longer were they dead in sin and controlled by fleshly passions. Now that they had been baptized they were: (1) "*circumcised*," i.e. freed from the domination of the flesh; (2) "*made alive*," i.e. given new spiritual life; and (3) "*forgiven of all their trespasses*," all of which had taken place because of their response through faith in the working of God.

They had heard the gospel (Colossians 1:23) which revealed Jesus' death for sin and the power of God as manifested in His raising Jesus from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:1-3). When they came to believe in God's work in raising Jesus, they trusted that the same power could also raise them to a



SALVATION

new spiritual life if they were buried and raised with Jesus. In their baptism they did not have faith in the water, the preacher, their own act, or their own goodness. They had faith that the same **working of God** that raised Jesus could also work in their lives to give them new spiritual life.

Karl Braune correctly stated, "God is then characterized: *who hath raised him from the dead*, because the syllogism runs: As God raised Christ, then can He also bring me to new life (comp. Ephesians 1:19, 20). It is precisely through faith in such an 'operation of God,' that this is experienced." Commentary of the Holy Scriptures, **Colossians**, Vol. III, new edition, Peter Lange, edit. translated by M. B. Riddle (Michigan: Zondervan) 1969, p. 46.

Herbert W. Carson well worded the same idea, "The mighty working of God as already demonstrated in the resurrection of Christ is thus the object of the believer's confidence.

The argument would then be as follows: They had accepted the fact of Christ's resurrection. This was the signal demonstration of the power of God, and in reliance upon that power they had known a spiritual resurrection in union with Christ."

The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and Philemon, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1979, p. 66, 67.

The conclusion is impressive. God will work in the lives of those who are being baptized, who put their faith in His working as was made known by His raising Jesus from the dead. He will remove their fleshly passions, make them spiritually alive, and forgive all their trespasses. He will do this for them because of their response of baptism with faith in His working, as was demonstrated in His raising Jesus from the dead. †

Owen D. Olbricht is a gospel preacher and writer, and he presently lives in Sherwood, Arkansas, USA.

TIME RUSHES ON

Time rushes on, unchecked, unaltered, carrying every material object to its inevitable end. Rust, decay and death are its perpetual companions. We are all running out of time. The only thing that really matters is: **Are you prepared to meet God?** Are the books of your life balanced? Are you ready to go? When time is swallowed up in eternity, **where will you be?** "*Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation*" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

— **Frank Chesser**



SpotLight

on Edmond, Oklahoma

Eighteen years ago the church of Christ in Edmond, Oklahoma had the vision and foresight to begin a television ministry, featuring Mack Lyon in a series called, "In Search of the Lord's Way".

Beginning with only one station, the telecast is now seen on seventy-three stations throughout the USA. In addition, the programs are being shown on Odyssey Channel, which reaches 30,000,000 homes in the USA and Canada. The 73 broadcast stations represent **congregations at work evangelizing local communities**. In this way, the church in Edmond is providing a priceless tool to acquaint the masses with the Lord's church and with the message of the Gospel.

Through the new affiliation with Odyssey (**over 30,000,000 subscribers**), combined with the Inspirational Network (**11,000,000 subscribers**) and Family Net (**34,000,000 homes**), SEARCH can potentially reach most of America. The new affiliation with Odyssey, Inspirational, and Family Net is

mission work, taking the message of the cross into communities where the church is weak or does not exist.

Brother Lyon began preaching as a teenager. He spent some years in mission work in Australia, but after returning to the USA he became the featured speaker for the SEARCH series. Being very gentle in speech and personality, brother Lyon presents the Gospel clearly and lovingly, without compromise but also without harshness.

The programs themselves are very positive in impact, because of the love and sincerity evident in brother Lyon's presentation, because of the beauty of the congregational singing, because of the contrast between these lessons and those so commonly produced by other religious groups, because of the tapes and printed lessons offered without charge, and also because there are no appeals to the audience for financial support. Only eternity will reveal the tremendous good being done by this outstanding program and this church of vision.

Addresses for further information are: Church of Christ, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK, 73083; *Internet*: Searchtv@aol.com; *Web site*: www.ionet.net/~searchtv. †



Many believe the answer to the above question is *change*. But change from what? There are those who are dissatisfied with brethren they have labeled as “Traditionalists” or “Conservatives.” In their opinion, these fellow Christians teach a doctrine that is too confining or restrictive. So a move toward changing the “old ways” into “new ways” has a certain appeal to many people. One thing remains clear to me. God will not tolerate, from either side, the preaching of anything but **His** word (Galatians 1:6-8). The pursuit of truth, above all else, should be the constant goal of all Christians.

Does the Church Need Now?

Mike Yates

What is the **change** that many are searching for? My observations tell me that the change desired is a “revolution.” Webster’s dictionary partially defines **revolution** as “the overthrow or renunciation of one government or ruler and the substitution of another by the governed.” Though we are not discussing governments, the parallel should be obvious. The dictionary further defines **revolt** as “a movement or expression of vigorous dissent,” or simply, in verb form, “to overthrow.” I can’t help but conclude that this

THE CHURCH

seems to be the goal of many who are preaching and teaching change. It is not merely a matter of making some “non-doctrinal” changes, but is rather to an attempt to completely “overhaul” the church.

I realize that the church has had its weak moments, and that congregations vary in their strengths and weaknesses. Sometimes we get sidetracked from evangelism and edification. There have also been times when some brethren could have been more loving and understanding. It would be great if many of us would just admit that we do make mistakes.

In spite of these shortcomings, it is the intention of the church to put God first above all else. Our commitment to His word is beyond question. We realize that only God’s will is relevant, and nothing else will suffice. We stand before our critics, answering their charges with book, chapter, and verse. We implore all people of the world to submit to the Gospel of Christ. Does the church need a “revolution”? Does it need to be overthrown, renounced, or substituted for by vigorous dissenters? Absolutely not!

The church doesn’t need a **revolution**, it needs a **revival**. A revival is “a period of renewed religious interest.” The word also carries the idea of “flourishing again.”

This we can easily change if we have the heart to do so.

If there is to be change, let it be in the direction of the cross. The church of the 20th century can be as exciting as the church of the first century. This will happen only by *increasing the interest of all people in the church that Jesus built.* The same gospel principles taught by Christ personally and then through His inspired writers are the only workable formula for the church now and forevermore. †

Mike Yates preaches for the Lord’s church in Dexter, MO, USA.

Single File

It’s unbelievable, but if all the unsaved people in the world were to line up single file at your front door, the line would reach around the world 30 times! And horror of horrors! This line would grow by twenty miles each day!

If you were to drive 50 miles an hour for 10 hours a day, it would take you 4 years and 40 days to get to the end of the line of lost souls. And by then it would have grown by 30,000 miles!

Look out your front door!
See lost souls!

— unknown

One-Man Pastor System

Frank Chesser

The organization of the church of the Bible is a divine arrangement. No man can improve upon God's system. The slightest human variation in God's organizational blueprint mars its perfection. Such tampering is a manifestation of man's contempt for God's way and his determination to have his own way.

God's pattern for the organization of the church is set forth in child-like simplicity. There is no justification for misunderstanding. There is only *one head* of the church, and that is **Jesus Christ** (Ephesians 1:22-23). The idea of exalting some weak, fallible man as the head or spiritual leader of the Lord's church is obscene. Only the most misguided and arrogant of men would dare usurp such a position.

On the local level, God has ordained that each local congregation be overseen by *qualified men*, with deacons, preachers, teachers, and members working and worshipping under their oversight. There are three Greek terms used to describe these men and these terms are translated by six English words. The term "*episcopos*" is translated "bishops" and "overseers." The

term "*presbuteros*" is translated "presbyter" and "elder." The term "*poiman*" is translated "pastor" and "shepherd."

These words are not religious titles, but simply terms God chose to describe the nature and work of these men. All of these terms apply to the same men and are used interchangeably in the Bible. For instance, in Acts 20:17, Paul called for the "elders" of the church at Ephesus, but then referred to them as "overseers" in verse 28. In writing to Titus, Paul referred to these men as "elders," in verse 5, but "bishops" in verse 7.

Certain qualifications must be met before men can function as elders, bishops, or pastors over the local church. These qualifications are set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. These traits are not optional. Modifying God's way to coincide with some denominational peculiarity will be accounted for at the judgment bar of God.

Only a "plurality" of men can function as overseers or pastors of the local church. Acts 14:23 speaks of "elders" of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17). Paul spoke of the

THE CHURCH

“bishops” of the church at Philippi (Philippians 1:1). Timothy was to aid in the appointing of “elders” in every city (Titus 1:5).

Denominationalism is permeated with the “one-man pastor system.” The New Testament portrayal of human leadership in the church, from start to finish, is never of “the elder,” “the bishop,” or “the pastor.” Rather, a plurality is always shown in the texts. The “one man pastor arrangement” is purely human in its origin. It is man’s system, not God’s. Man has

repudiated God’s system and installed his own.

One of the best descriptions of man’s general attitude is set forth in Judges 2:19: “*They ceased not from their own doings, nor from their stubborn way.*” The “one man pastor system” is just one of many examples of man’s rejection of God’s way and his stubborn insistence on his own way. †

Frank Chesser preaches for the Panama Street Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, U.S.A.

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a **bishop**, he desires a good work.

A bishop then must be

- * **blameless**
- * **the husband of one wife**
- * **temperate**
- * **sober-minded**
- * **of good behavior**
- * **hospitable**
- * **able to teach**
- * **not given to wine**
- * **not violent**
- * **not greedy for money**
- * **gentle**
- * **not quarrelsome**
- * **not covetous**
- * **one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence** (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)
- * **not a novice**, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil
- * **have a good testimony among those who are outside**, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

— 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Example

It is all vain to preach of the truth
To the eager ears of a trusting youth
If, when the lad is standing by,
He sees you cheat and hears you lie.
Fine words may grace the
 advice you give
But the youth will learn from
 the way you live.

Honor's a word that a thief may
 use.

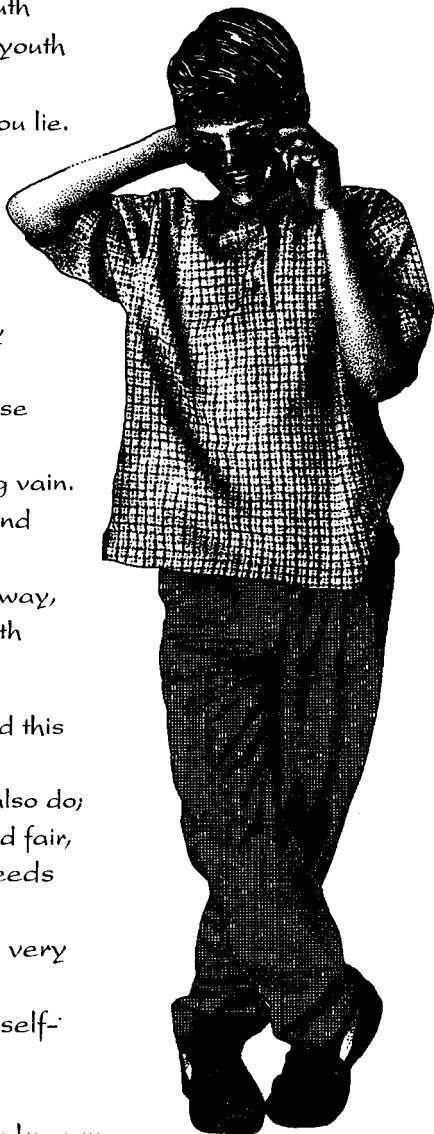
High sounding language the base
 may choose.

Speech is empty and preaching vain.
Though the truth shines clear and
 the lesson is plain,
If you play false, he will turn away,
For your life must be square with
 the things you say.

The longer you live, you will find this
 true:

As you would teach, you must also do;
Rounded sentences, smooth and fair,
Were better not said if your deeds
 aren't square.

If you'd teach him to live his very
 best,
You must live your life to the self-
 same test.



—Author Unknown

CHURCH GROWTH

Did you know that recently published figures show that 2,756,000 religious people drift into nominalism and unbelief each year? Most of them probably began with a zealous commitment to Christ and His teachings as they understood them. This same thing happens to us that occurs with other religious people. At the time we become Christians our salvation is great, but for many its greatness diminishes and they begin to neglect it (Hebrews 2).

It is like what happens too often in marriage. After the honeymoon is over and the couple settles down to the responsibilities of marriage, the glow begins to fade. Sometimes they are held together by children and legal ties, not by love. Did you every buy a car that meant so much to you that you kept it polished and clean? Then after a while you lost pride in it, and you did not care whether it was clean or not.



A Wake Up Call!

The Ephesian Christians had renounced worshipping idols and burned their books worth thousands of dollars, making a sacrificial commitment to Christ (Acts 19). Within a 40 year period they had left their first love (Revelation 2). Some of the members of the church at Sardis were dead, and Laodicea was luke-

How Is Your Zeal for Christ Holding Up?

Clayton Pepper

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warm (Revelation 3).

When Zeal Diminishes Evangelism Stops

The early chapters of the book of Acts record the beginning and growth of the Jerusalem church where we see zeal at a high level. They were worshipping, eating, fellowshiping together, and evangelizing daily (Acts 2:46,47). Rapid growth was occurring. There is a direct connection between zeal for the cause of Christ and evangelism. When our zeal for Christ and the spread of the good news of the gospel declines, then nominalism occurs.

Today, nominal Christians largely fill our pews. This has now become the accepted standard of faithfulness. Vance Havner wrote in his book **Repent or Else**, "What we call revival is simply a return to normal New Testament Christianity. Most of us are so subnormal that if we ever become normal, we would be considered abnormal!" A very zealous person sometimes is a misfit in an indifferent church. The churches mentioned in Revelation 2

and 3 were told to repent and were warned of the consequences if they did not.

The church needs to be warned of the consequences of nominalism. Webster defines the word to mean, "Existing in name only; not real, so called." In most churches about 50 percent of the Sunday morning audience returns Sunday evening. Because of nominalism, the Bible school is unevangelistic. Because

of nominalism, some elders work more as business managers than shepherds and feeders of the flock.

Nominalism can remove the preacher from the work of evangelism and make a "pastor" of him.

Based on an article by Dr. Win Arn of the Church Growth Center in Monrovia, California, believers in Christ have declined from two-thirds of the world population in 1900 to one-third! In 1900 there were 27 churches (all kinds) for every 10,000 people. In 1987 there were 12 churches for every 10,000 people. Today between 80 and 85 percent of all churches in America are either plateaued or are declining. I believe that nominalism is the

Webster defines the word 'nominal' to mean, "Existing in name only; not real, so called."

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major cause.

Only six states in the U. S. have a congregation of the Lord's church in every county. Nominalism is killing the church! Can we be revived? Robert Coleman wrote in his book **Dry Bones Can Live Again**, "What we may fail to comprehend is that the *fruits* of revival can endure only as the conditions for revival are *maintained*."

One Helpful Solution

A friend of mine has worked several years with his elders trying to get people more involved in the work of a congregation of 800. After some two years he made what was a startling discovery. They had been so unsuccessful in reviving and re-involving people who had been uninvolved for five years or more that they discontinued interviewing them! They determined to go only to those who had been a part of the congregation less than five years. I am sure that the most likely time to get Christians involved is soon after they become members of the congregation.

Conclusion

King David's own experience caused him to reach the same conclusion that many Christians need to reach today, so that they can pray the prayer he prayed: "*Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salva-*

"What we may fail to comprehend is that the *fruits* of revival can endure only as the conditions for revival are *maintained*."

— Robert Coleman

tion; and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee" (Psalm 51:10-13). †

Clayton Pepper is the director of listener communication for Restoration Network International, and is an advisor to the Clayton Pepper Center for Church Growth Studies at Ohio Valley College in Parkersburg, WV.

OBEY



THE LORD

Dale Grissom

Christians sometimes try to excuse their lack of involvement in personal evangelism by saying they are unable to get prospects to study with. Perhaps they are looking in the wrong places, *if indeed they are looking at all.*

There are many who will be willing to study if they are approached in the right way and at the right time. Friends, fellow workers, and those who are hurting physically or emotionally make good prospects

for Bible studies. A member of a family in which there are other Christians makes a good prospect. Those who visit church services may very well be searching for the Lord and would welcome an invitation to study. There are some who have visited the church for years and have never obeyed the Gospel, perhaps because no one has taken the time to study with them and encourage them.

Winning lost souls may be the hardest work you ever do, but it will be the most rewarding. Just think of it: You can help someone to be obedient to the gospel of Christ! You can help someone prepare to live with Christ forever in heaven! There is not a more important work than this!

Winning lost souls can be the most loved work you will ever do. What a wonderful feeling it is when the one you've taught comes to an understanding of the gospel plan of salvation, obeys his Lord in baptism, and arises to a new life in Christ.

We must realize that we are the earthen vessels to whom God has committed the gospel, and that we have the responsibility of teaching it to the world (Matthew 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16). If we are to be pleasing to the Lord, we must busy ourselves with His work. †

Dale Grissom is a working member of the Lord's church in Dexter, Missouri, USA.

Step Forward, Please

Once, when five volunteers were needed to undertake a dangerous mission, a general lined up his men and asked that all those willing to volunteer take one step forward. During the process he said he would turn his back. When he faced his men again, the line was intact. As he expressed disappointment that not a single man of the entire group was brave enough to volunteer for the task, a corporal interrupted him saying, "We all stepped forward, sir."

Think what it would mean to the church if this was the attitude of the Lord's people! In spite of all the good that is being done in congregations throughout the brotherhood, know that it is still being done by a very small percentage of those who are members. Perhaps this is why Jesus said, "Many are called but few are chosen." Too many people wish just to be counted as 'a member of the church', but they do not want to be counted as a *worker* in the church. For that reason, someone else must carry the load that they should be carrying.

Only a few are willing to really work for the Lord. Others allow weeks to pass into years without doing more than worshiping once a week, and not even once a week if something comes up that they desire to do instead. They neither advertise nor attend gospel meetings, much less invite and bring visitors. Thousands die every day without the gospel, but it is not any of their concern. Religion has never meant anything to them, except as an escape from hell, and they are not using it enough to do that.

But suppose all of the Lord's people should step forward at once! The story would be much different. It is our hope and prayer that some day all of us will desire to be really loyal and to work as the Master has commanded.

Have you stepped forward for the Lord?



— Selected



Tips for an Effective Visitation Program

Compiled by Clayton Pepper

Training is essential to a successful soul-winning program. Preparation eliminates fear, gives confidence, and assures success. All this helps to keep the workers happy and working. A failure to prepare means to start, stumble, falter and fail at last.

A. Workers need to know some simple do's and don'ts.

1. Workers must learn to look and act like soul winners. This involves your personality and dress.
2. You must know the importance of tact; the ability to say the right thing at the right time and in the right way.
3. You need to know how long to stay on the first visit, what to discuss and what not to discuss.

B. Rules to observe when you visit:

1. Appreciate the value of a soul.
2. Make your first visit brief.
3. Be pleasant.
4. Avoid any kind of argument.
5. Be interested in the interests of the person you visit — not yours.
6. Don't ask personal questions that could possibly embarrass the host.
7. Have initiative — be not easily discouraged.

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8. Never become impatient.
9. Know and like people.
10. Talk about something in common.
11. Size up the situation and be alert for ways to reflect a Christ-like interest.

C. Ministering to spiritual needs through visitation.

Workers need to know:

1. Why is the visit being made?
2. What do you do in this type of visit?
3. What is to be accomplished?

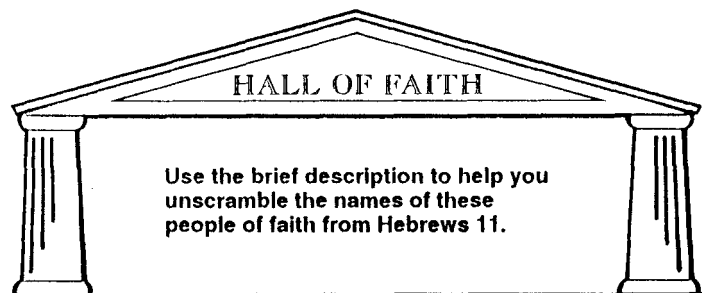
Let us apply these three questions to the various types of visits that are to be made.

D. Visits to Non-Christians:


1. *Why should you visit the non-Christians who visit our services? Or other similar prospects?*
 - a. To demonstrate personal interest and concern — make them feel welcome.
 - b. To answer any questions that they might have about the church.
 - c. To arrange to study the Bible or show filmstrips in the home.
2. *What do you do in this type of visit?*
 - a. Express appreciation for their attendance to the service.
 - b. Begin to develop a warm personal friendship.
 - c. Invite the family to your home for a visit or meal.
 - d. Leave appropriate tracts, carefully chosen, with each person's needs in mind.
 - e. Describe the visualized Bible survey and sell the prospect on seeing these; offer Bible correspondence course; enroll in Bible classes.
 - f. Be careful not to overwhelm them on the first visit.
3. *What are you to accomplish?*
 - a. Create a feeling of good will in the prospects toward the church and yourself.
 - b. Make them feel wanted and appreciated.
 - c. Develop their interest in God and spiritual things.
 - d. Lead those souls to Christ.



PUZZLE PAGE



- _____ **LEAB** — offered an acceptable sacrifice
- _____ **CHONE** — never saw death
- _____ **HAON** — builder of the ark
- _____ **MAHABAR** — offered his son, Isaac
- _____ **SHAAR** — became a mother in her old age
- _____ **ACAIS** — invoked blessings on his twin sons
- _____ **CAOBJ** — blessed his grandsons when dying
- _____ **PJEOSH** — expected the exodus of
Israelites
- _____ **SOMES** — hidden as a baby, became a great
leader
- _____ **AEEIISR TL** — crossed the Red Sea on dry
land
- _____ **ABRAH** — a rescued harlot
- _____ **VIADD** — put foreign armies to flight
- _____ **GONEID** — conquered many kingdoms
- _____ **NOSSAM** — won strength out of weakness



Many people are unaware of the history of the Lord's church, of how it was begun in Jerusalem in A.D. 33 and has continued somewhere in the world since that time. They do not know how the many divisions among believers in Christ developed, forming the Roman and Greek Catholic Churches as well as Protestant churches, *in addition to the original church begun by Christ.*

Historical Traces of the Kingdom that Would Never Be Destroyed

It is our conviction that if more people knew more of the history of the development of so-called "Christendom", they would be more concerned about Christ's plea for unity as recorded in John 17:20,21: *"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me."*

Yes, there are currently many hundreds of denominations which claim to be rooted in the Scriptures, though their names and many of their practices and doctrines are not found there. **And, yes, that original church of Christ (Matthew 16:18, Romans 16:16) still exists in this world, and has continued to exist somewhere among some people ever since its beginning.** Throughout history, it could be identified by the doctrine it taught and by its commitment to God and truth. It exists today, as physical, identifiable congregations of people. Anyone, anywhere in the world, can become a part of Christ's church by obeying His Gospel, as recorded in Acts 2. God will then add that soul to His church, to the body of believers called the kingdom, which will never be destroyed but will one day be delivered up to God the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24).

In this section of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**, we want

CHURCH HISTORY

to present quotes concerning Christians through the ages, drawn from numerous sources; and we want to acquaint you with vignettes of the history of the development of the denominational world.

Brother **Keith Sisman** of Peterborough, England, has submitted the following material, drawn from his research in the Cambridge Library and elsewhere, concerning historical accounts of Christians in England and Europe. These incidents have not been widely known or publicized, so few Christians today would be aware of the stories of these who were probably our brethren in the faith. But, based on the promises in the Scriptures, that the kingdom of God would never be destroyed (*“And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed...”* Daniel 2:44. *“And He [Christ] will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end”* Luke 1:33), we present brother Sisman’s research:

What Medieval Christians Taught

Keith Sisman

Many people today are confused about what they see as doctrines of free will and baptism. Should infants be baptized or not? Many are confused by different opinions, from different denominations. We want to investigate what faithful evangelists and preachers throughout the ages have taught, as they were guided by the Bible, the Word of God:

Gundulphus was opposed to the doctrines of the Catholic church and taught against infant baptism, **“Because an infant, that neither wills nor runs, that knows nothing of faith, is ignorant of its own salvation and welfare.”** Gundulphus was an itinerant traveling evangelist who established and strengthened congregations of the Lord’s people throughout northern France and Belgium during the early *eleventh century*.

Pierre de Bruis preached in Dauphine and Province, southern France. He seems to have been active from around *1100*. He appealed for a return to the authority of the Scriptures and believers’ baptism, quoting, *“Go out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”* Also he is quoted as saying, **“But we await a time suitable to**

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faith, and baptize a man, after he is ready to recognize God and believe in Him, we do not, as you charge us, rebaptize him, because the man who has not been washed with the baptism by which sins are washed away ought never to be called baptized.” He was burnt alive at St. Giles, near Nimes, southern France (about 50 miles from Marseille) by the local people infuriated by his teaching.

In 1118 **Gregory Grimm** of Ensisheim, France died after being tortured, because he had been baptized by his grandfather who in turn had been baptized (by immersion for the remission of sin) by a traveling merchant from Venetia who was from the **“only church of the saints.”**

Everinus wrote to Bernard, a Cistercian monk in 1146 about a ‘sect’ that had **“rejected infant baptism, churches are no longer conceived holy, nor the sacraments sacred, nor are the festivals any more celebrated. Men die in their sins, souls are hurried away to the terrible tribunal, without penitence or communion, baptism is refused to infants, who thus are precluded from salvation.”** Of course Everinus’ understanding of the teachings was wrong, but the basic truths of the Scriptures, underlying the false conclusions, can easily be detected.

Sometime between 1157 and 1166, depending on whose account is read, between **thirty and eighty men and women** (German religious exiles) were brought before Henry the Second at Oxford (where parliament was sitting). They used this opportunity to **proclaim the Gospel to king and parliament.**

In their beliefs they rejected the Roman Catholic church and its teachings. They said **“that infants are not to be baptized, till they come to an age of understanding.”** They believed in the Trinity. When asked who they were they replied that they were **“Christians”** and **their only teaching came from the Bible, being “orthodox believers”.** They were nicknamed Publicani or German hereticks. The expression Publicani was also used in France during this period against the Christians and it has been suggested is a mistaken form of the Macedonian designation Paulikanoi. †

Keith Sisman is a Christian living in Huntingdon, Cambs. England.

Let us, as Christians approaching the 21st Century, take courage from the conviction and examples of these who determinedly held to the truth through the centuries, in spite of the beliefs of the majority and the pressures brought to bear by those religious groups in power.

Shepherdless Sheep

David Deffenbaugh

"When Jesus went ashore, He saw a large crowd, and he felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things" (Mark 6:34).

A person who knows what to think and feel and do in any given situation is to be admired. Jesus is to be admired; yes, for many reasons, but for this reason too — He knew what to think about people, what to feel about them and what to do for them.

Searching for solitude for Himself and His disciples had only resulted in finding more people. Jesus had sought rest but He found more need. Jesus' response was compassion for these people because *"they were like sheep without a shepherd."* Knowing what to think about them, He knew how to feel about them.

Shepherdless sheep are to be pitied. They are vulnerable, susceptible, and clueless. It would not be



a stretch, even though the text does not specify, to think that the disciples' feelings about this multitude were not identical to Jesus'. Perhaps they were annoyed and irritated by the interference of such crowds. Unquestionably, people can, at times, be annoying. But, without Christ, without a shepherd, people are to be pitied. Their circumstance is precarious, at best.

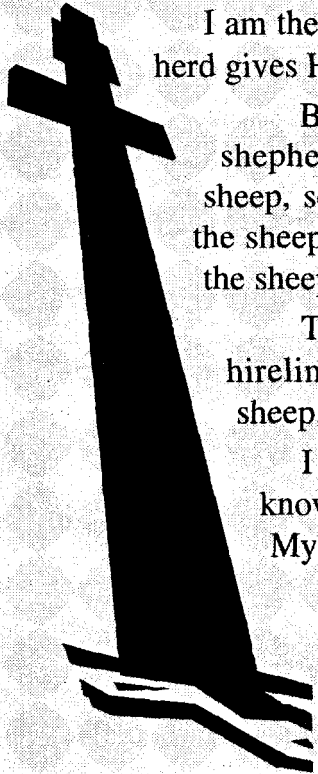
What did Jesus do for the shepherdless? He taught them. Jesus' response to shepherdless humanity is markedly different from modern Christianity's response. Jesus did not seek to provide an atmosphere

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in which these people could freely indulge their personal preferences, give expression to their spiritual inclinations as they chose, or seek assurance from a relationship with Him on their own terms. *Truth had to be known!* Truth was and is the answer for the shepherdless. Jesus did not attempt to make His message compatible and undemanding (read John 6 to learn the final outcome of this very multitude). He knew their need and He supplied it.

If such was the response of Jesus to the shepherdless, so it must also be the response of His church in every age. †

David Deffenbaugh preaches for the church in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, USA.



I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

— John 10:11-15



**You
Ought to
Be
Teachers**

Wayne Barrier

Jesus is described as the master teacher. The Gospel is spread by teachers today. Church leaders are the product of good teachers. Christians grow to maturity with the help of good teachers. The church needs more good teachers.

The Hebrews writer states in Hebrews 5:12, *"For by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food."*

As in the first century, many today who could and should be teachers have failed to develop properly. Instead of teaching oth-

ers, they have to require the time and attention of qualified teachers for themselves.

Time is spent teaching first principles to the same person over and over again, while the untaught move toward eternity without the benefit of any teaching. The Hebrews writer further states in Hebrews 5:13,14: *"For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."* It is each individual's responsibility to study,

feeding upon God's Word, so that growth and development occur.

Failure to grow and become a knowledgeable teacher can result in spiritual death. We read in Hebrews 6:4-6, "*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to open shame.*"

God wants us to be saved, and to help save others; but He demands that we do our part. Hebrews 6:11,12 states, "*And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*"

Are you a teacher? Should you be teaching others instead of requiring that someone teach you? How long have you been a Christian? How much do you study God's Word to obtain spiritual food for growth? †

Wayne Barrier is part of the World Evangelism team taking the Gospel throughout the world by means of radio and literature. He lives in Florence, Alabama, U.S.A.

Privilege

I'd rather teach a little child
To do his duty well,
Than to have the finest medal
known
Pinned on my coat lapel.

I'd rather help a little child
To overcome his fear,
Than to be a hero in a book,
Though lauded far and near.

I'd rather hold a little child
Securely by the hand,
And give the hope he's needing,
Than to possess the land.

I'd rather save a little child,
A few sad, bitter tears,
Than have a lot of fancy things
That fade with passing years.

I'd rather cause a little child
To wear a happy smile
Than wear the finest clothes
myself
Or keep the latest style.

I'd rather help a boy or girl
To keep the path that's straight
Than hear ten thousand voices
Shout my name among the
great.

— Ruth Carruth

Wouldn't it be great if everyone had a soul sparkling with love for God — a love that would hunger for the truth that God has revealed in His word for us? How dreary must be the life that is not actuated by the will of God! How bleak must be the soul that refuses to drink from the fountain of the "water of life" (Revelation 22:17)! *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths"* (Proverbs 3:5f).

Wouldn't it be great if everyone had a soul aglow with love for his fellow man, a love that would seek the highest good of his brother? If only that love for God could, by His grace, fill the hearts of men. It would expel all hatred, malice and ill will. This kind of love would reduce us to humility, to recognize the truth of Romans 12:2, that we can be *"transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*

If the mind is changed and attuned to the spiritual, then we could embrace all mankind in that

love, whether they be high or low, good or bad, simply because we all have a common Creator who requires us to *"love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another"* (John 12:34).

This is how we can prove we are His disciples (verse 35). *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one toward another."* This kind of love would impel us to take as many to heaven with us as possible, regardless of race or nationality. It would remove all bias and prejudice.

Now, follow the words of the beautiful song written by William J. Kirkpatrick, and think about its deep meaning!

O for a soul aglow with love,
With love for God and man;
Rejoicing every passing day
To follow God's own plan.

A soul so large that all mankind
Can be embraced therein,
The high, the low, the good, the bad,
Be counted all akin.

A soul so great that God alone
Can actuate its will;
That every pulse shall beat for Him,
His purpose to fulfill. †

Bill Nicks is a former missionary to Africa and is now serving on the island of Trinidad in the West Indies.



How Effective Is The Method?

Jerry Jenkins

The mission of the church is to preach the Gospel to those who are lost in sin. Jesus told His "band of twelve," *"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"* (Mark 16:15,16).

This is our mission. Occasionally we tend to forget what we are about. Common sense, as well as Biblical principle, would demand that we use the most effective method possible. To do otherwise would be a waste of time, effort, and money.

At times we raise the question, "How effective is the method?" It is a legitimate, fair, and logical question. That is, *unless* it is asked to avoid exertion on our part; then it becomes an evasive, deceptive, and even a hypocritical inquiry.

I once heard a brother say: "I like the way I am doing this better than the way you are not doing anything." Before we stop an outreach effort or a program, we would do well to have a way of improvement in mind.

Not all efforts for the Lord can be evaluated. How do you deter-

mine the effectiveness of knocking on a door and handing a person an invitation? Of course, if someone comes, it is obvious that good has been done, but how could one evaluate the non-interested person at the time the brochure was handed, who five years later begins to seek the Lord, starting with the church that long ago had given out pamphlets of concern?

One thing is very obvious — it was better to have made the effort, even as slow as it might have proved to be, than to have made no effort at all.

Also, how do you assess the role that God's providence plays in conversion? Does God bless the no-effort equally with the perhaps ineffective method? Does God bless equally the brother or sister who tries, and the lazy, excuse-laden person who rationalizes his way into doing nothing at all?

Personally, I had rather stand before God having used the best method I knew about, even if it proved ineffective, than to stand before God having used no method at all. What about you? †

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

Help Wanted

- Ambassadors** (2 Corinthians 5:20) — Must be willing to represent Christ honorably, honestly and faithfully.
- Bakers** (Matthew 13:33) — Must be able to add leavening properly.
- Farmers** (Matthew 13:3) — Must be willing to rise early and sow the seed in all kinds of weather.
- Fishermen** (Matthew 4:19) — Must be very patient and skilled.
- Guards** (1 Timothy 6:20) — Must be able to stay alert at all times.
- Harvest Workers** (Matthew 9:38) — Must be willing to work hard when the harvest is ready, without complaining.
- House Builders** (Matthew 7:25) — Must be skilled and knowledgeable of proper foundation work.
- Investment Bankers** (Matthew 25:14-23) — Must be willing to take risks for maximum returns.
- Merchants** (Matthew 13:45,46) — Must be honest and well respected.
- Messengers** (2 Corinthians 8:2,3) — Must be consistent through wind, snow, sleet, or hail.
- Priests** (1 Peter 2:9) — Must be the epitome of faithfulness and service.
- Soldiers** (2 Timothy 2:3) — Must be willing to fight to the bitter end.
- Stewards** (Titus 1:7) — Must be loyal and zealous in service.
- Students (disciples)** (John 8:31) — Must be dedicated to much study.
- Teachers** (Romans 12:6,7) — Must be patient and concerned toward others.
- Treasure Hunters** (Matthew 13:44) — Must be willing to look long and hard for the perfect treasure.
- Watchman** (1 Thessalonians 5:6) — Must be able to stay awake through the night, if necessary.
- Wrestlers** (Ephesians 6:12) — Must be tough and unyielding.

No experience is necessary. Pay and benefits are out of this world. Inquire within the New Testament for full details.

P.S. If you feel that you do not qualify for any of these positions, general labor positions are also available (1 Corinthians 3:9).

If
You

We laugh when we hear the varied and often outrageous answers given by Bible students regarding questions about those heroes who walked across the pages of Holy Writ.

One little boy said that Noah's wife was Joan of Ark. Another child said that Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day and a ball of fire by night (he had his stories mixed). Then, there was the small girl who answered that Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol.

Had Been
There

Betty Tucker

These funny answers lead us to ask, "What if you had been there and had had to face those same dangerous times that people in Bible times faced?" Would the answer have been different?

HOW ABOUT ESTHER?

Suppose you were the little slave girl chosen to be queen in a strange land. Suppose you had an opportunity to save your entire race, but at great potential danger to your own life.

Could you say, as did Esther, "...I will go in unto the king, which is not according to the law; and if I perish, I perish" (Esther 4:16)?

COULD YOU BE A JOSEPH?

Put yourself into this setting, and see what you would have done. You have been sold into slavery by your own brothers and taken into a foreign land.

You have been falsely accused by a prominent woman of high social rank and tossed into prison. A continuous series of events takes you through many years and many unpleasant circumstances.

Finally, you find yourself face to face with those very brothers who set off the series of mishaps that changed your life. You are now in a position

of prominence and power, and they have come seeking favors at your hand.

Could you find it in your heart to do as Joseph did? His cowering, cringing brothers fear for their lives when they realize that this man who is able to grant their request or to have them killed is the very brother they sold! We marvel as we hear Joseph say, "*Fear not...But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive*" (Genesis 50:20).

KEEP THE FAITH

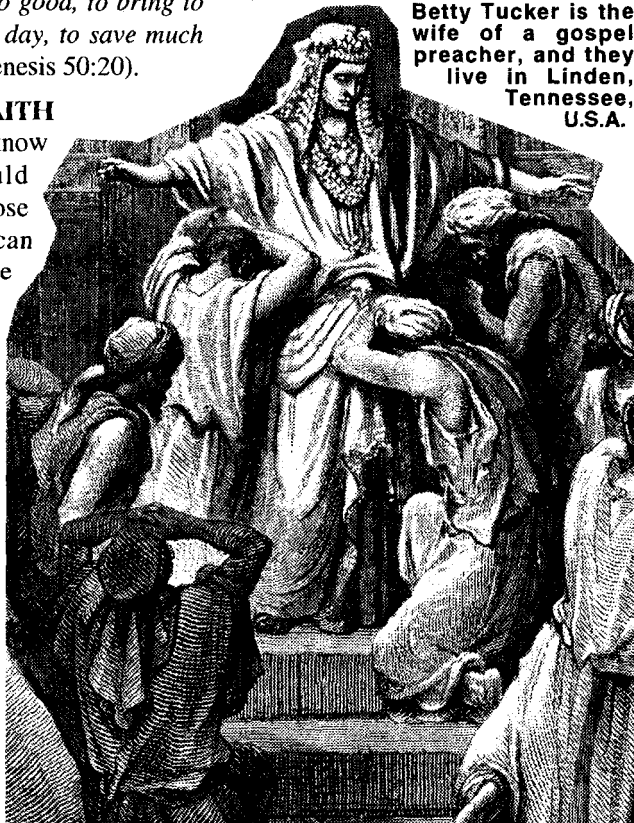
We cannot know what we would have done in those instances. We can only hope that we would have had at least a measure of the faith exhibited by our examples in the Bible.

What we can do is to do our best each day to live the Christian life. We must remember that, "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*" Philipians

4:13). Another good verse which will help us to get through the trying times is Romans 8:28 — "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord.*"

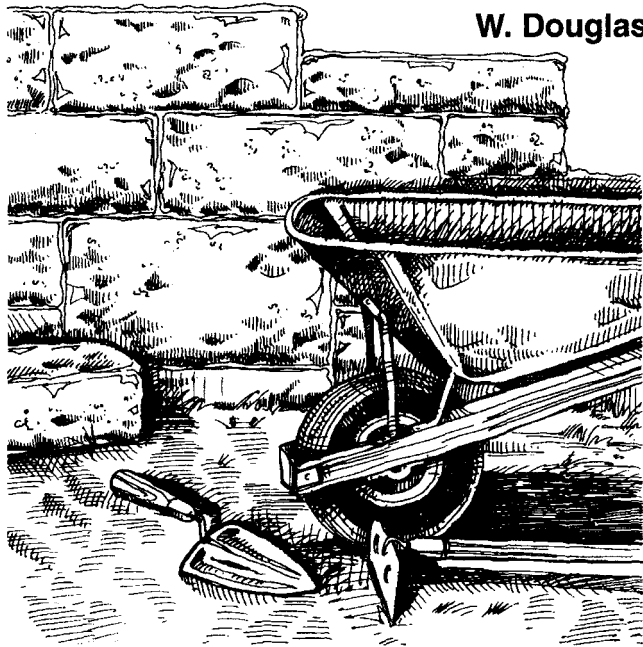
With these verses graven upon our hearts, let us go forward to face our difficult times. Perhaps we will be able to meet the challenge, and things will be better because we were there. †

Betty Tucker is the wife of a gospel preacher, and they live in Linden, Tennessee, U.S.A.



BUILDERS FOR ETERNITY

W. Douglass Harris



God has granted to us a little space in this thing called time. This space we call life. It is only a short interval between two eternities. Life is but a dressing room, as it were, in which to prepare for eternity. If we could only realize how important this interval is and that we pass this way only once, how careful we would be about the character that we are building! Day by day we shape our characters for eternal misery or eternal bliss. We have to make the choice while we

are here — it cannot be made after death (Hebrews 9:27). Christ described the alternatives as building on the rock or on the sand (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 6:46-49). Christ is the rock on which we must build our spiritual houses, if we expect them to

stand the test of judgment (Matthew 16:18; Isaiah 28:16; 1 Corinthians 3:11). How do we build on Christ?

First, **we must dig deep and build on the right foundation** (Luke 6:48). We must dig through **the doctrines of men** (Matthew 15:9), **denominationalism** (John 17:20,21; 1 Corinthians 1:10), **human creeds as guide books** (2 Timothy 3:16,17), **human names in religion** (Acts 4:12; 1 Peter 4:11), **additions, subtractions, and substitutions to God's Word** (2 John

DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

9-11), and **the concept that morality alone is sufficient.** Cornelius was a morally-good man, but that was not enough. Some may have to dig through all these things; others may not, but the digging **MUST** be done. No structure is more secure than its foundation, so in building our spiritual house we must dig until we build on the Rock of Ages.

Second, **How do we build on Christ?** We build on Christ when we do the following: **(1)** Build on the teaching of Christ and His apostles (Matthew 7:23; 16:18; Galatians 1:6-9); **(2)** Adhere to the unity enjoined by Christ (Ephesians 4:1-6; John 17:20,21; 1 Corinthians 1:10); **(3)** Respect the Bible as the all-sufficient guide in religion (2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:3); **(4)** Recognize the God-given designations for the church, its officers, members, and head (Romans 16:16; Isaiah 62:2; Acts 11:26; Philippians 1:2; Ephesians 1:22,23); **(5)** Observe strict obedience to God's Word (Matthew 7:21; Revelation 22:14; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-9). This would include the conditions with which man **MUST** comply in becoming a Christian, as well as worshipping God as commanded, and living the life that God's Word authorizes; **(6)** Build on the divine plan of salvation, the church revealed in the New Testament, and the divine system of worship authorized in the New Testament.

CONCLUSION: Too much care cannot be given to building a spiritual structure that will guarantee our eternal salvation. Striking are the words Jesus used to describe the fall of the foolish man's house: "*And the ruin of that house was great*" (Luke 6:49). In God's sight the fall of one immortal soul is a thought full of unspeakable sorrow and tragedy. How supremely important it is that we build our spiritual houses so that they will stand when the worlds are on fire!

Isn't it strange that princes and kings,
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,
And common folks like you and me,
Are builders for eternity?

To each is given a book of rules,
A shapeless mass and a bag of tools,
And each must make ere life has flown
A stumbling block or a stepping-stone.

— R. L. Sharpe

†

W. Douglass Harris is the editor of the *Caribbean Messenger* and lives in Decatur, Alabama, U.S.A.



You Are Valuable

Clarence DeLoach

"...what will a man give in exchange for his soul..." (Mark 8:37).

Sadly, many people have no sense of personal worth. There is no self-esteem, and therefore no self-respect.

There is a sense of self-worth that is wrong — it leads to pride, arrogance and deceit. On the other hand there is a self-esteem that is right — it views worth as God sees it. Paul said for us, *"not to think of self more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly"*

(Romans 12:3).

Sober thinking about self leads us to view self as God views it. You are of tremendous value to God! *He made you!* You are the crowning work of His creation. (Genesis 2:7) You are a soul and you have a body! You are not a chance accident of evolution! You are God's work of art!

And though the soul of man has been scarred and marred by sin, it still possesses infinite possibilities. God sees it for what it can become! When God reminded Paul, *"I have*

much people in this city", He was saying that a city given to vice like Corinth could become a city of saints (Acts 18:10; 1 Corinthians 1:2). God sees potential in the soul!

Sadly, many are searching here and there for some sense of value and purpose, when all along it is within themselves.

There was a man who lived at the turn of the century whose name was Russel Conwell. He founded Temple University. Conwell raised seven million dollars back when money was scarce, going across the country giving one speech. It is reported that he gave that speech six thousand times. He called it "**Acres of Diamonds**". He told of a man who lived on a farm in Africa. Seeing how many were coming to Africa and striking it rich in diamonds, he decided to sell his farm, and strike out in search of his fortune. He searched long and diligently, but never found what he was looking for. Finally in desperation he threw himself in a river and drowned.

But, the man who had bought his farm was crossing a stream one day and noticed a large and unusual rock. He picked it up and upon examination it proved to be a large and valuable diamond. More extensive searching revealed that the farm he had bought contained one of the largest diamond deposits in

all of Africa.

The thrust of this true story is evident: **the farm which the man sold to finance his search for diamonds was itself acres of diamonds!**

You don't have to search far and wide to find value! Your soul is that diamond! And you hold that priceless possession in your hands! Your soul is worth more than all the world! Don't sell it, and don't throw it away. †

Clarence DeLoach preaches for the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Dickson, Tennessee, U.S.A.

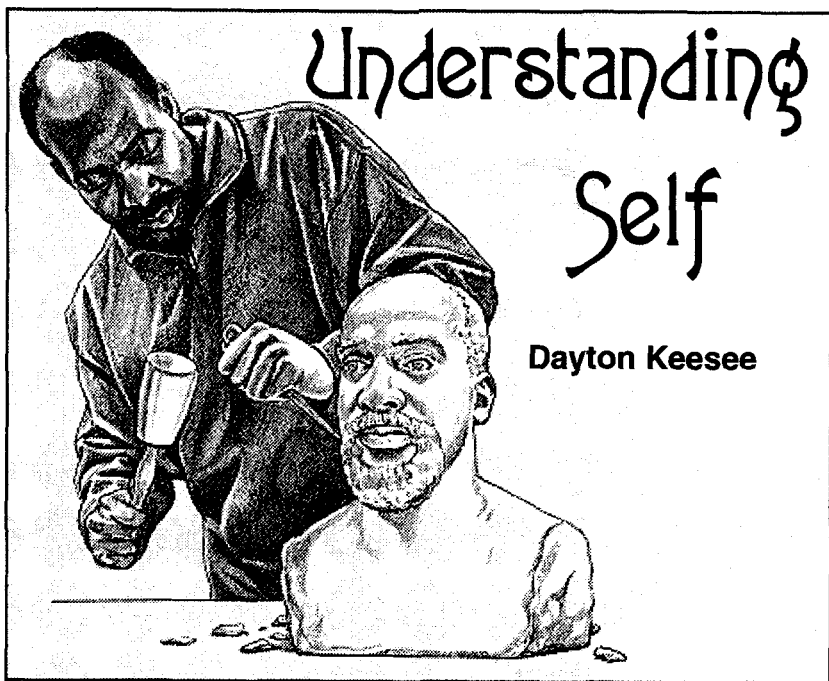
What is the soul? It is the immortal imprint of God in the human He made.

Into the still clay God breathed the breath of life, and man became a living soul, formed in the image of his creator. That image can think with God; it can act and react in response to Him; it can pour out love and adoration to Him, reaching out in longing. It is *immortal*.

But such is the power God has granted man that he can take that treasure, blacken it with sin, warp the love into hate, and destroy in hell what God intended to live eternally with Himself. — BBC

Understanding Self

Dayton Keese



What a profound message Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:23 — *“May your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Paul introduces us to the second coming of Christ, relates us as readers to the Lord’s return, pleads for an unblemished, blameless lifestyle, and summarizes the make-up of man! Note that Paul identifies each person as body, soul, and spirit.

What do the three parts — body, soul, and spirit — involve? As to their functions: one’s body is

his acting power, his soul is his will power, and his spirit is his knowing power. God’s Word establishes these conclusions.

We learn from 2 Corinthians 5:10 that we will be judged concerning the deeds *done in the body*. The body is our acting power.

The spirit is our knowing power. Paul wrote, *“For who among men knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man, which is in him?”* (1 Corinthians 2:11). We usually think of the brain as our source of knowledge. However, the brain is just the tool through which

the spirit in man functions. For example, if you cut off one's air passages, the brain and the rest of the body would still be there, but that body without the spirit is dead (James 2:26). Also, alcohol or an accident may cause a brain to be injured or reduced in function. The spirit's tool is damaged. That explains why some people who "know better" do strange things. The spirit's physical tool is not functioning properly.

Another thing that may keep the spirit from functioning properly is our soul, or will power. Read carefully Hebrews 4:12, which states that the Word of God can divide between the soul and spirit, and it is quick "*to discern the thoughts* (our knowing power) *and intents* (our will or deciding power) *of the heart.*" This principle is as basic as the oft-heard statement, "I knew better than that." Our soul (will power) just decided something different from our spirit (knowing power). Thus, God's Word divides between what we know and what we decide, determining if we have sinned or not sinned (James 4:17).

Note Matthew 10:28, where Jesus urges us to fear the One who can destroy both body and soul in hell. People who go to hell will have lost the chance to obey or decide about obeying (lost will power). The rich man, after death,

could not cross over the gulf that had been fixed (Luke 16:19-26). However, note that the rich man still had his "knowing power" after death. He could still remember (verse 25).

While body and soul may be destroyed, nowhere does the Bible teach that the spirit will be destroyed. Your spirit and my spirit are going to live somewhere forever and ever! What a sobering thought! You see, our spirits did not come from our earthly mothers and fathers. Our spirits came from God (Hebrews 12:9; Zechariah 12:1), and will return to God, who will determine where we will spend eternity (Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 25:31-46, especially verse 46).

All of this survey explains why Paul longed for his brethren at Thessalonica — body, soul, and spirit — to be preserved blameless at the coming of Christ. Christ can give us an immortal body (1 Corinthians 15:50-58), so that submissive souls who willed to do the Lord's will (Hebrews 5:8,9), can, by their spirits, come to know God and Christ, who truly grant to us eternal life (John 17:3). Are you going to be preserved body, soul, and spirit when Christ returns? †

Dayton Keesee makes his home in Midwest City, Oklahoma, U.S.A., but is involved in preaching and teaching the Gospel in Nigeria.

All of us desire to have as much happiness as this life can afford. But only a comparatively few people are really happy. Why are so many people unhappy? The great burden of unhappiness which mankind is struggling with is traceable to the fact that only a comparatively few people are familiar with the source of true happiness.

Pleasure is not the source of happiness. Dr. Viktor E. Frankl, president of the Austrian Medical Society of Psychotherapy, and professor of psychiatry and neurology at the University of Vienna, said: "When we set up pleasure as the whole meaning of life, we insure that in the final analysis life shall inevitably seem meaningless" (*The National Observer*, July 12, 1965, p. 22).

Money is not the source of happiness. King Solomon, the son of David, said: "*He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity*" (Ecclesiastes 5:10).

The source of happiness is peace of mind, and the source of peace is a clean conscience, which is the result of obedience to the commandments of God.

What Is the Source of Happiness?

G. F. Raines

Isaiah, the prince of prophets, says: "*And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever*" (Isaiah 32:17). "*But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked*" (Isaiah 57:20,21).

Peter says: "*For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil*" (1 Peter 3:10-12). †

G. F. Raines is a writer and preacher living in Celina, Tennessee, U.S.A.

Climbing Mount Chemo

Sylvia L. Camp

A valley separated two mountains in the land of Israel. God named Mount Gerizim as the mount of blessings when His people obeyed Him. He called Mount Ebal the mount of curses when they disobeyed Him (Deuteronomy 11:26-29).

Cancer took me to Mount Chemo, where I experienced both the blessings of Gerizim and the curses of Ebal. At Gerizim, I met many sweet people. I had the best of care from a group of doctors, nurses, and technicians, experts in their fields. I'm thankful for the prayers on my behalf that went to the throne. Hundreds of beautiful cards that expressed love and concern lifted the spirits of my family and me.

The curses of Ebal also brought strong effects. I could take it, because at this time chemotherapy is the best thing known to fight the monster, cancer.

My vanity suffered. I couldn't



get a perm. But, a blessing compensated for the straight hair; it didn't come out.

I couldn't wear nail polish, as I had done for years. It bubbled on my nails. My skin dried out like leaves after a freeze. Excess hair grew along the jaw line. That pushed my panic button.

During chemotherapy, my teeth felt like they were coated with paraffin. I can remember my mother pouring melted paraffin on preserves to seal them. For a treat, Mom allowed us children to chew some of it like gum. We enjoyed it,

although it coated and stuck to our teeth. Somehow, feeling that sensation as an adult wasn't the same as when I was a child. Also, I lost my sense of taste for several months.

Physically, my arms became very tired and felt heavy. I had difficulty walking. I couldn't always know just where my feet would take me. My sleep pattern underwent radical changes. I slept at odd hours for small bits of time. I'm thankful I've never required much sleep.

When the oncologist talked to me about chemotherapy and its effects, he said I'd either have a sore mouth — so sore I'd be unable to eat, or I'd have diarrhea. I did not have a sore mouth! I had several different prescriptions for my curse, but it continued just the same.

At Gerizim, I learned the importance of a good attitude with cancer. Helen Steiner Rice's poem, "Let Me Go Climbing," expresses my wish exactly. Although told the cancer will come back, I have no plans to sit and wait for its return. I think it's of utmost importance to stay busy, to always have something to do.

I've learned much from climbing my mountain. It has brought me even closer to my Heavenly Father, who has been my comfort throughout this journey. †

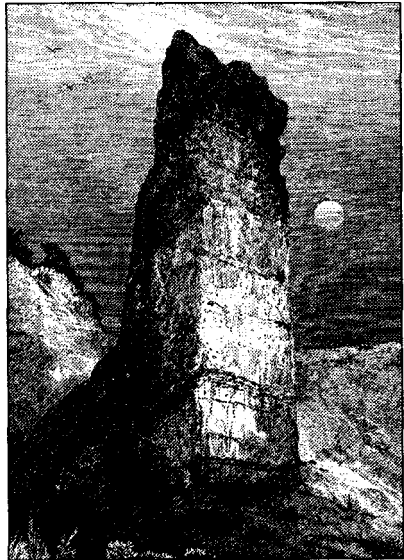
Sylvia L. Camp is a Christian writer who lives in Amarillo, Texas, U.S.A.

We Should Be Climbing

When our burdens are heavy and we are tempted to quit, Satan charges in and says, "Give up. It's too hard. You'll never make it." When we take our eyes off of Jesus and forget for a minute His power within us, we think, "You're right; it is too hard. I am too discouraged. I'll quit."

These are the times we need to remember the Jesus of Gethsemane — the Jesus who also had low moments. We cannot know when God will lift us from our mountain of responsibility into the fullness of life everlasting, but of this one thing we can be sure: We are made for the mountains, and whenever He calls, we should be found climbing.

— Author Unknown



Walking by Faith



Anniversaries Beat Divorce

Leslie and Ivynell Wyatt have celebrated fifty years of life together. To some they are Mom and Dad or Grandma and Grandpa; to others they are teacher and teacher's wife, preacher and preacher's wife, elder and elder's wife. To all of us they are mentors, examples, leaders and friends. A half-century of living, loving, working and sharing, of meeting challenges, seeking successes, building a home and building people. Fifty years of living hand-in-hand with the God they love and serve, and hand-in-hand with each other.

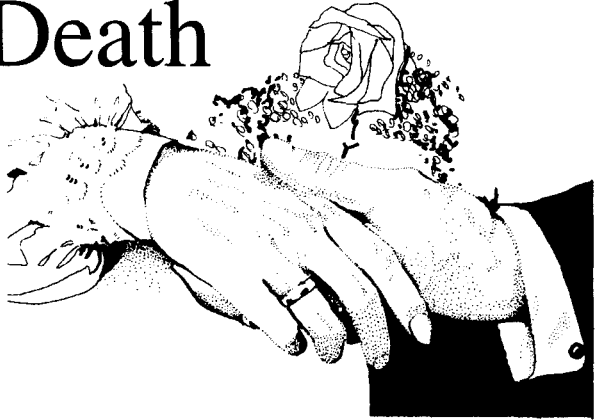
Actually, relatively few couples are privileged to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary. Some couples are robbed of the celebration by the premature death of a spouse; others are divorced after several years of marriage, abruptly ending their quest for the Big 5 - 0.

Of all the tragedies in this world, surely divorce is one of the worst, and it results in countless problems: broken vows, shattered hearts, neutered memories, crushed hopes, wrecked lives. Reputations are stained, morale deflated, self-worth questioned. There are no winners in divorce. Divorce also causes children to be robbed of security, separated from at least one parent, and perhaps from siblings as well.

No wonder the Bible teaches that God wants homes to be built on mutual love between husband and wife and on their loyalty toward each other; God intends that homes be for life. Divorce is not in God's plan for the home, or, as Jesus said, "*it was not this way from the beginning*" (Matthew 19:8). Leslie and Ivynell Wyatt know this truth, thus long ago they determined that "divorce" would not be in their marital dictionary. Through the years, as a teacher at David Lipscomb High School, in Nashville, Tennessee, a preacher at the Nolenville, Tennessee, Church of Christ, and an elder at Shelby Avenue Church of Christ (Nashville), Leslie Wyatt taught this truth both to young people and to adults; moreover, he and Ivynell are a living proclamation of God's standard for the home. Thank you, Leslie and Ivynell, for your example of what God intended a Christian Home to be!

— Edward Short

“Till Death Do Us Part”



Dalton Key

I remember hearing once about a preacher, who in the course of an otherwise normal marriage ceremony, had come to the point of saying, “Will you take this woman for better or for worse, in sickness or in health, for richer or for poorer?” The nervous groom, thinking it must be a matter of multiple choice, stammered, “I’ll take better, healthy, and richer!”

Too many spouses look upon marriage as did this addled groom — fine, so long as everything goes well. But when problems come; when the new wears off and the honeymoon is over; when there are dirty dishes in the sink and a crying baby in the crib, then, sadly, the back door seems the best way out.

When marriages become as disposable as diapers, something has gone terribly wrong.

God intends marriage to be cel-

ebrated by one man and one woman for a lifetime, “till death do us part.” While discussing marriage and divorce, Jesus referred back to Eden’s garden, when, “*He which made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh.*” Building upon this foundation of scriptural, historical fact, He continued, “*Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*” (Matthew 19:4-6).

Husbands, wives, listen closely: the vows we have made before God and to each other have been made for life. †

Dalton Key is the editor of *Old Paths* and preaches for the North Amarillo Church of Christ in Amarillo, Texas, U.S.A.

Daddy's Little Girl



Rick Cunningham

She is the apple of my eye, my only daughter, the girl who has had my heart since the doctor came out and said, "It's a girl."

I learned how wonderful a daughter can be. She was so sweet. From the earliest days, you could wake her up and her first response was to smile. I never smiled in the morning. She always did. And every night for years, without exception, before she went to bed she would hug my neck, kiss me, and say "I love you". Then I would say, "I love you more." Then she would respond, "I really love you more." Eventually she just said before I could respond, "I love you, I really love you more." She did that even when she was a teenager.

I watched this girl win hundreds of races. I recall her courage when she won the district 400 meter race, even though before the race

began she could not walk without limping due to an injury.

I escorted her to a horse-drawn carriage in front of the whole town the night she was crowned homecoming queen. I was also the guest speaker at her graduation. And I baptized her into Christ.

I once bought her a huge homecoming mum. Some boy was getting her one, too, but I wanted to lay claim to her first. I knew my days as her best guy were growing short.

Now, my time is up. I will perform her marriage ceremony this Saturday. She has chosen her mate for life. He's a special guy. She has been a wonderful daughter. I'm sure she will be a wonderful wife. But in my heart she will always be Daddy's little girl. †

Rick Cunningham is the preacher for the 14th & Main Church of Christ in Big Spring, Texas, USA.

5 Implications for Parents

Jack Harriman

First, there is a wrong way as well as a right way. Jesus talked about the narrow way that leads to life and the broad way that leads to destruction (Matthew 7:13-14).

Second, we must first know the right way. Jesus' statement about *"the blind leading the blind and both ending up in the ditch"* is applicable to parents too.

Third, if a child is to go the right way, he must be trained to go that way. Solomon said in another place, *"Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child"* (Proverbs 22:15), and *"A child left to himself will bring his mother to shame"* (Proverbs 29:15).

Fourth, we must be going that way ourselves. The old sayings "like mother-like daughter" and "like father-like son" are not far wrong. Where are we leading our children? We are leading them in the path we are traveling.

Fifth, training requires teaching and discipline. We must fill our children's minds with all that is right in respect to both God and man, lest they be destroyed for lack of knowledge. And we must see that they practice the same so long as they are under our charge. †

Jack Harriman preaches for the Center Street Church of Christ in Fayetteville, Arkansas, U.S.A.

How Do You Spell Love?

A class of little children was learning how to spell. They spelled a number of words such as cat, dog and cow. After each word they were asked to imitate the sound that the animal makes

When Mary was asked to spell love, she didn't stop to spell the word but ran and threw her arms around the teacher's neck and kissed her on the cheek. "We spell love that way at our house," she said. The teacher replied, "That's the best way!"

— via Central Bulletin, Norfolk, VA

PROGRAMMED To Do Evil

Maxie B. Boren

Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, was the 6th king of Judah during the days of the divided kingdom. The Bible tells us that during his short reign, “*he did evil in the sight of the Lord . . .*” (2 Chronicles 22:4). Tragically, he had been “programmed” to do so, and by his own



“He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab, for his mother counseled him to do wickedly. Therefore he did evil in the sight of the Lord, like the house of Ahab; for they were his counselors after the death of his father, to his destruction” (2 Chronicles 22:3,4).

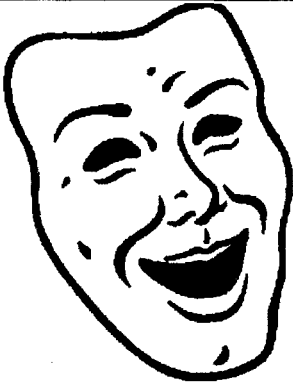
mother, of all people! The sacred record tells us “*his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly*” (verse 3)!

And who was the mother of Ahaziah? She was Athaliah, daughter of King Ahab (7th king of the Northern kingdom) and his infamous wife, Jezebel. Ahab, of course, was the son of Omri, the very wicked king that reigned before him. So, Athaliah was Omri’s granddaughter. (Read 1 Kings 16:16-33). With such a lineage of iniquity, it is no wonder that Ahaziah did evil, especially with his wicked mother (see 2 Chronicles

24:7) tutoring him.

What a contrast **Athaliah** is to such great mothers of the Bible as **Jochebed**, the mother of Moses (read Exodus 2:1-10; 6:20), **Hannah**, the mother of Samuel (1 Samuel 1), **Elizabeth**, the mother of John, **Mary**, the mother of Jesus (see Luke 1:5-80; 2:4-40), and **Lois** and **Eunice**, the grandmother and mother of Timothy (2 Timothy 1:5). There can be no doubt concerning the tremendous influence that a mother has with her children! †

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



Woman to her friend: "You've been telling your age as 35 for the last ten years!"

Friend: "Yes, I know, but I'm not one to say one thing one day and change the next."



A young man bought an expensive parrot as a pet for his mother. When he visited with her the following week, she invited him to dinner. Lo and behold, on the table she put the parrot, roasted to perfection. The man jumped up.

"Mother!" he said, not believing his eyes. "That parrot cost a fortune. It spoke seven languages. How could you roast it?"

His mother answered indignantly, "If it spoke seven languages, why didn't it say anything?"

A salesman driving through Nebraska got stuck in the mud. He walked to the nearest farm house and the farmer brought a horse, hitched him to the car, and out it came.

"Good boy!" said the salesman.

In a low guttural but distinctive voice, the horse said, "Thanks, but I wasn't always a work horse. I won ten races when I was a three year old.

"Wow!" the salesman said. "A talking horse!" He turned to the farmer and asked, "What'll you take for him?"

"I couldn't sell him to you, mister," the farmer replied. "He's an out and out liar. He never won a race in his life."



An elder knocked at the door of a church member, but received no response. He could hear footsteps and knew someone was there. He left a note with Revelation 3:20 written on it, "*Behold, I stand at the door and knock...*" The next Sunday, as the elder greeted the woman, she handed him a note with Genesis 3:10 written on it. Later he looked up the passage: "*I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.*"

PROVERBS 17:22

Bill and Jake were cousins. Bill was from Georgia and Jake was from Texas, where “everything is bigger,” according to Jake.

Jake was visiting Bill on his farm in Georgia.

“My property line runs across those hills, down that creek, and through that grove of trees,” boasted Bill.

“That’s pretty big,” said Jake. “But back home in Texas, we get into our pickup and drive and drive from breakfast until sunset, and we still haven’t reached the other side of the property. What do you think of that?”

“Yep,” said Bill. “We used to have a truck like that, too!”



Teacher: “Well, Joey, how do you like your new little sister?”

Joey: “I guess she’s O.K., but there are lots of things we needed worse.”



“Deacon Brown” was repainting the little country church building. He soon realized that there was more building to cover than there was paint in the bucket, so he added some water to stretch the supply.

After he finished painting and

was cleaning the brush, it suddenly began to rain, and the diluted paint ran down the walls of the church building. There was a loud clap of thunder, followed by a voice from above that boomed, “Repaint, you thinner, and thin no more!”



Bob: “I’m getting stronger.”

Helen: “Why do you say that?”

Bob: “Because a few years ago I couldn’t carry \$25.00 worth of groceries; now it’s easy!”



Highway sign: “SPEED LIMIT 65 for most cars and some trucks under 8,000 pounds — only if they are empty, unless you weigh over 300 pounds — then divide by six. For additional information call the IRS, which helped write this.”



Virus is a Latin word used by doctors to mean, “Your guess is as good as mine.”



Obesity in this country is widespread.

Quick Commentary On Crucial Verses

2 Cor. 5:17

Since Christ has died for all, all spiritual blessing are available only in him (Eph. 1:3)

The blessings in Christ are clearly conditional

Christ died for all. The Great commission is to every creature (Mk. 16:15) and all nations (Matt. 28:18ff.)

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

In Christ—state of relationship where all spiritual blessing are obtained. Note how one get "into Christ" in Rom. 6:3-4; Gal. 3:27)

The old man of sin and the old way of living for the lusts of the flesh are put off as old filthy clothes. The new spiritual garments of Christ are put on (See Col. 3:1-25)

The old creature (man of sin) has been put to death in repentance, buried in baptism and the new creature is resurrected in the spiritual body of Christ (Col. 2:11-13)

—Fenter Northern


Where God Has Placed Baptism

Before Baptism

The Alien Sinner Is...

Condemned Romans 3:10,23
Dead in Sins Ephesians 2:1
Without God and Hope . . Eph. 2:12

The Alien Sinner Must...

Hear the Gospel . . . Romans 10:17
Believe in Christ John 8:24
Repent of Sins Luke 13:3,5
Enter into Christ by 

Don't Reject the Counsel of God
Luke 7:30

**B
A
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After Baptism

Blessings Obtained...

Saved Mark 16:16
Remission of Sins Acts 2:38
Wash Away Sins Acts 22:16
Into Jesus Christ..Galatians 3:27
Into One Body 1 Cor. 12:13
Into His Death Romans 6:3,4
Newness of Life Romans 6:4
Renewing of Spirit Titus 3:5
Now Saves Us 1 Peter 3:21

"Gladly Receive His Word"
Acts 2:41

The Call Of Isaiah

Isaiah 6:1-13

Kevin L. Moore

Introduction:

1. Isaiah is among the great Old Testament prophets.
 - a. His name means "Jehovah is Salvation."
 - b. He was called to be a prophet in about 740 B.C.
2. As his call is examined, what implications are there for God's people today?

Discussion:

I. God's Majesty (Isaiah 6:1-5)

- A. The Greatness of God (verses 1-3)
 1. "High and Lifted Up" (verse 1)
 2. "Holy, Holy, Holy" (verse 3a)
 3. God's Glory filled the earth (verse 3b)
- B. The condition of Man before God (verses 4-5)
 1. God is high & lifted up, but man is lowly (Romans 9:20).
 2. God is holy, but man is unclean (Romans 3:10).
 3. God is glorious, but man falls far short of His glory (Romans 3:23).

II. God's Grace (Isaiah 6:6,7)

- A. We are unworthy to be in God's presence. Psalm 5:4-5; Habakkuk 1:13, Isaiah 59:2.
- B. God has given us a second chance. Romans 5:8, Hebrews 8:12; Acts 2:38; 1 John 1:7-9.
- C. With these blessings come responsibility.

III. God's Expectation (Isaiah 6:8-13)

- A. The Need (verse 8a), "*Whom shall I send...?*" (Luke 10:2).
- B. The Response (verse 8b), "*Here am I! Send me.*" (Romans 1:14-16).
- C. The Task (verse 9a), "*Go and tell...*" (Mark 16:15; Matthew 28:18-19).

CHARTS AND OUTLINES

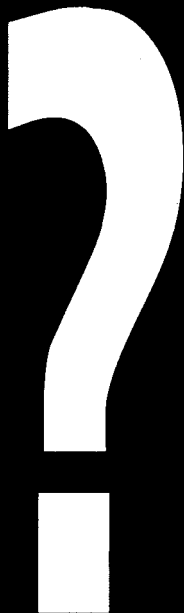
- D. The Obstacle (verses 9b-10). Stubborn, unreceptive hearers (Luke 8:4-18; Matthew 7:13).
- E. The Duration (verse 11,12). "How long?" (Matthew 28:20; 2 Peter 3:9).
- F. The Hope (verse 13). A righteous remnant (Matthew 7:14).

Conclusion:

1. From Isaiah 6 we learn of:
 - a. God's Majesty and our unworthiness before Him.
 - b. God's Grace and His willingness to forgive and to reconcile.
 - c. God's Expectation and His call for those who will respond to the need.
2. May our response correspond to Isaiah's obedient faith. †

Kevin L. Moore works with the church of Christ in Wellington, New Zealand.

Are You Faithful?



- ✘ If your car starts one out of three times, do you consider it faithful?
- ✘ If you miss a couple of house payments a year, would your mortgage holder count you faithful?
- ✘ If you fail to come to work two or three days a month, would your boss consider you faithful?
- ✘ If your refrigerator quits a day now and then, do you excuse it by saying that it works most of the time? Would it be faithful?
- ✘ If you miss worship and Bible class once or twice a month, are you faithful?

— Via *Bulletin Digest*

What Is Truth?

John 18:37,38

J.C. Choate

INTRODUCTION:

1. Pilate asked this question of Jesus.
2. Many others have asked it — some sincerely and some otherwise.
3. Every human must be concerned with this question.

DISCUSSION:

I. Truth defined:

- A. Honesty.
- B. State of being true.
- C. Body of real events or facts.
- D. Correctness, agreement with fact or reality.
- E. A standard of authority.

II. What is truth?

- A. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).
- B. Christ is truth (John 14:6).
- C. *"Thy word is truth"* (John 17:17).
- D. Truth of the gospel (Galatians 2:5).
- E. The truth, the word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 1:13).

III. Facts about the truth:

- A. Will not divide but unites.
- B. Always the same, does not change.
- C. Guides and blesses.
- D. Saves and makes free (John 8:32).
- E. It limits.
- F. It is clear and plain (Isaiah 35:8).
- G. Truth never contradicts itself.

IV. Truth that is corrupted ceases to be the truth.

- A. When added to or subtracted from (Revelation 22:18,19).
- B. When substituted (Galatians 1:7-9).
- C. When falsely interpreted (2 Peter 1:20).

V. Not all people love the truth.

- A. Those in sin (John 3:18,19).
- B. Some receive not the love of the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10).
- C. Many have turned their ears from the truth (2 Timothy 4:4).
- D. Some are never able to come to a knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3:7).
- E. Those who believe not the truth will be condemned (2 Thessalonians 2:12).

VI. The Bible reveals the truth concerning:

- A. Sin and its consequences (Romans 6:23).
- B. The gospel of Christ (Romans 1:16).
- C. The one church of the Bible (Ephesians 4:3-6).
- D. How to worship God (John 4:24; Acts 20:7).
- E. The Christian life (Revelation 2:10).
- F. How to be faithful.
- G. All things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

CONCLUSION:

1. You can know the truth and obey it, through a knowledge of God's word.
2. Do you want the truth? †

J.C. Choate does printing and radio work in mission efforts in India and Asia, in addition to being editor-in-chief of *The Voice of Truth International*.

The Preciousness of Truth — The Necessity for Truth

IN HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS: We read of the past, trusting that the chroniclers wrote TRUTH and not their own biases.

IN HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: Between humans and nations, trust that is broken by lies is most difficult to resurrect to life.

IN BEHAVIOR: Hypocrisy — speaking one thing while practicing another — is abhorred by all people of integrity.

IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS: When God's word was sealed by the blood of Christ, it became the binding force of grace and law, for both God and man. As that TRUTH stands, it will judge all men (John 12:48).

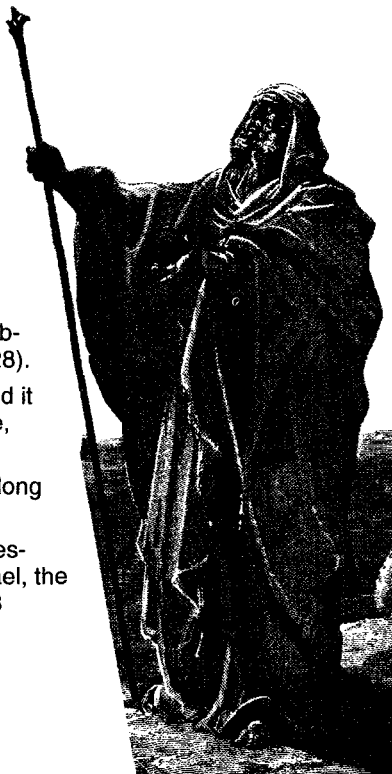
Who Am I?

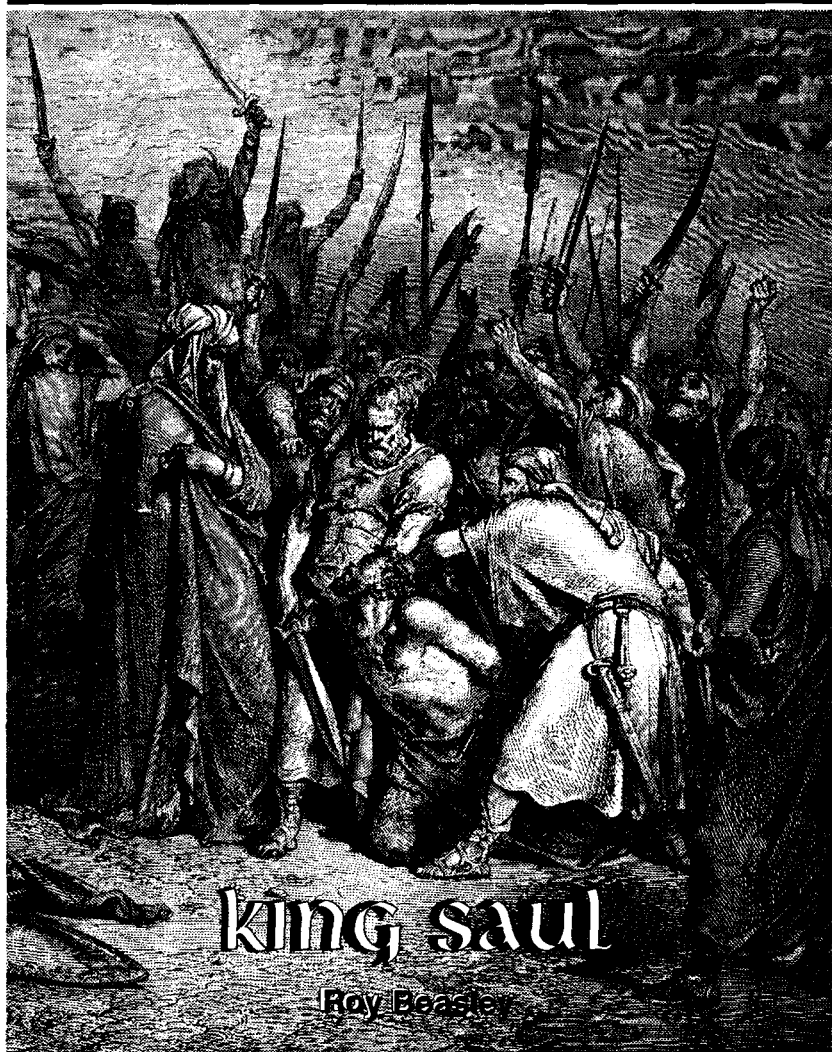
Can you identify me? Read each clue and think carefully. If you guess my name after the first clue, give yourself a score of 100 points. If you know who I am only after the fifth clue, your score is 60, etc. When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify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

1. **100** I was from the Kohathites, of the tribe of Levi (1 Chronicles 6:33).
2. **90** To my family (the Kohathites) was given the responsibility of taking care of the Ark of the Covenant and the other furnishings of the tabernacle (Numbers 3:27-31).
3. **80** My grandson, Herman, was named in the Scripture as *a singer* who ministered before the tabernacle (1Chronicles 6:32,33).
4. **70** Two books in the Bible bear my name.
5. **60** I was born as the answer to prayer (1:27).
6. **50** Through my faith and leadership, God brought a victory to Israel over the Philistines at Mizpah, by thundering with a loud thunder and confusing the enemy (7:10).
7. **40** I had begun to minister in the tabernacle as a young child (1:24-28).
8. **30** I was the last judge of Israel, and it was to me that the people came, asking for a king. (5:1-10).
9. **20** God scolded me, asking, "How long will you mourn for Sau?" (16:1).
10. **10** I anointed the first one in the messianic lineage of kingship in Israel, the ancestor of Jesus Christ. (16:13)

My Score _____

See answer on inside back cover.





king saul

Roy Beasley

King Saul was the first king of Israel. He reigned for forty years. He is described as being a head taller than other men of Israel. At first he was humble and submissive

to the will of God. He was reluctant to be thrust into such a position. When the day came for him to be anointed, they had trouble finding him. He had hidden himself among

BIBLE CHARACTERS

the baggage. He then went back to his work. When the first crisis arose they had to go out into the field to find him.

But, Saul changed. In time he became a pretty good king, as far as the world's standards were concerned. On-the-job training paid off. He got the hang of it. He liked being king. God was on his side and blessed him. He was prosperous. It was better than farming. He became a military genius. He won some important victories. He was considered a national hero. He became very popular. His name was a household word. His approval rating continued to rise. Saul became proud and arrogant.

On one occasion God commanded Saul to go out and destroy the Amalekites. He was to destroy them all. He was also to destroy all their flocks and herds.

The Amalekites were to be destroyed because of the harm they had done to the children of Israel during the time they were in the wilderness. On one occasion while the children of Israel were moving from one place to another the Amalekites had attacked. The way that they traveled was in a long column. The soldiers were up front. Then came the priests who bore the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle. Away behind came the women and children and the old people.

The Amalekites waited in ambush. They waited until the main column including the soldiers had passed. Then they attacked the rear column, consisting of the women and children and the old people. They killed as many as they could before the soldiers could come to their rescue. They then ran away. Moses wanted to go in pursuit right then, but God said, "No". They would be punished later. That is the reason why God had commanded Saul to destroy the Amalekites.

Saul marched his army out against the Amalekites. He fought against them and destroyed all of them except for Agag. He destroyed all their flocks and herds except just a few, which he brought back with him.

Agag was a title, like Pharaoh. He was the king of the Amalekites. It was customary for the victorious king to return home displaying the spoils of battle. If possible, he would bring back the king or leader of the opposing army. Everything was done to humiliate the enemy. He would be stripped naked. A chain would be placed around his neck. He would sometimes be displayed in a cage like a wild animal. He would be cursed and spit upon.

This was why Saul brought him back. But, this was not what God had told him to do. God had said that he was to destroy all the

Amalekites. He failed to do that.

Samuel, the prophet, went out to meet Saul. No doubt Saul was expecting congratulations from this spiritual leader. He said to Samuel: "I have done what God said." "I have destroyed the Amalekites." I can imagine that Samuel must have paused for a minute and looked him squarely in the eye. It must have made Saul quite uncomfortable. Then he said to Saul: "*What is the meaning the bleating of the sheep and the lowing of the cattle?*" In other words, "Where did all these cattle come from?" Saul said, "Oh, it's the people. The people wanted to bring these back to offer as sacrifice." Then Samuel replied: "*To obey is better than sacrifice and to harken, than the fat of rams.*" (1 Samuel 15:22).

Because of this sin Saul lost his throne. Not long afterwards, his sons were killed in battle and he died a suicide on the bloody slopes of Mt. Gilboah. He made the mistake of partial obedience. He did only a part of what God commanded.

That is the mistake that many make today — *partial obedience*. But, God has always required *absolute and complete obedience to His will*. †

Roy Beasley is the Executive Director and speaker on Restoration Radio Network International in Nashville, Tennessee, USA.

The Insect that Stings

There is an insect that stings, burying its stinger in the flesh of its victim. In doing this, it inflicts a two-fold injury: it inflicts an injury to its victim, and it inflicts an injury to itself, for when it stings, it immediately dies. Thus the insect by stinging inflicts a greater injury to itself than it does to its victim.

Some people are like this insect. They sting and hurt their fellows. By the same sting they inflict a greater hurt to themselves. They fill their hearts with the bitterness of hatred and they suffer a deterioration of character. They bring upon themselves a painful isolation, for they lose the respect of their friends.

Life is action and reaction. When we violate the law of brotherly love, we do injury to our brother, but a greater injury is done to ourselves.

—Bulletin Digest

The Furious Charioteer

Frances Parr

During the reign of King Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel, Ahab displeased the Lord more than any other king. Many prophets of God were slaughtered and other Israelites had been driven from their land and murdered. Jehu was a bodyguard for the king.

As God frequently chooses the most unlikely, He selected Jehu to become His prophet, and then king of Israel. In secret, Elisha hurriedly sent a messenger to anoint Jehu. The new king was given the commission of destroying the entire household of Ahab and the worshippers of the false god Baal.

Jehu lived his life on the fast track. 2 Kings 9:20 says that Jehu drove his chariot furiously; so wildly that Joram was able to identify him from afar by his style of driving.

On one occasion, in 2 Kings 10:15,16, Jehu used his chariot as a means to boast. He compelled Jehonadab to ride with him and observe his zeal for the Lord.

Since Jehu was anointed king of Israel and given his assignment

in secret, he allowed nobody to leave the city to spread the word regarding him, especially the inhabitants of Jezreel, the home of Ahab and Jezebel and their family.

As he and his followers rode toward Jezreel, Jehu used a cunning plan to lure the sons of Ahab, the kings of Judah and Syria, into battle, and both were killed. Jehu pursued and killed two other sons of Ahab, then returned to Jezreel.

It seems that by then not only was Jehu on fire for the Lord, but he had also developed a taste for bloodshed and violence. As his army entered the city of Jezreel, Jezebel, by then an old woman, had made up her face, put on fine garments, and stood in a window calling out insults. Jehu called for assistance from within. Two or three of her own eunuchs cooperated and threw her down to the courtyard. Her blood splashed on the wall and Jehu proceeded to run over the body with the chariots of his army. Later, after eating a meal, he gave orders for her burial. Men went to the courtyard and found that

BIBLE CHARACTERS

dogs had eaten her flesh, sparing only her skull, her feet, and the palms of her hands.

Jehu was a fearless executor of judgment, but the pitiless zeal, needless cruelty, and deceit with which he accomplished his mission cause one to have no sentiment regarding him.

The next deeds of Jehu reveal even more clearly his cruelty and ruthlessness. Samaria was the capital of the kingdom and the headquarters for Baal worship introduced by Jezebel. Samaria was reserved for the house of Ahab, and seventy sons or male descendants of Ahab resided there. Jehu appealed to the leaders of the city to proclaim one son as king and wage a battle against the city and the kingdom. The city leaders were well acquainted with Jehu's effectiveness and complied with his wishes. Jehu then ordered the sons of Ahab to be slain and their heads piled on either side of the city gate.

Jehu killed Ahaziah, the king of Judah, and forty-two of his kinsmen. They were buried in disgrace in the cistern of a shearing house. He returned to the city of Samaria, and much to everyone's surprise, proclaimed himself a follower of Baal. He organized a great festival, inviting all the priests, prophets, and worshippers of Baal, and gave them special robes to wear. Jehu, him-

self, led the sacrificial proceedings. Then he had the doors locked and his soldiers slaughtered the people inside and destroyed the temple of Baal. 2 Kings 10:28 relates, "*Thus Jehu destroyed Baal from Israel.*"

Jehu remained king for 28 years following this victory. One would think, after performing such a great task for the Almighty God, the man would continue to follow Him. Jehu tolerated the worship of a golden calf. In 2 Kings 10:31 the writer says, "*But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart; for he did not depart from the sins of Jeroboam, who had made Israel sin.*"

Can Christians today learn from Jehu's life story? How often are we caught up in a work for the Lord and fail to realize how much we are enjoying the personal satisfaction or glory?

Let us never forget that whatever successes we experience are from God through us. Galatians 6:1 warns: "*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*" Always beware for signs that we ourselves are sliding into the sin we are trying to correct. †

Frances Parr is a Christian writer living in Eldon, Missouri, U.S.A.

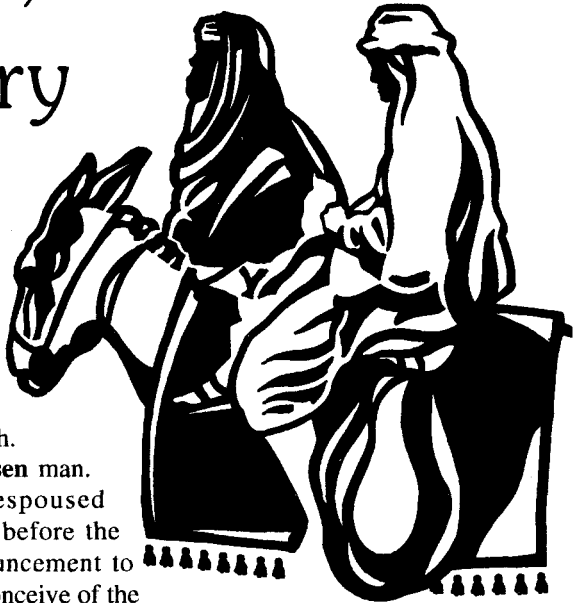
Joseph, Husband of Mary

Royce Frederick

The Bible tells us much more about Mary than about her husband, Joseph. However, there are a few very interesting facts given about Joseph.

Joseph was a **chosen** man. Mary was already espoused (promised) to Joseph before the angel made the announcement to Mary that she would conceive of the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:27-35). So, in choosing Mary to be the physical mother of Jesus, God did not choose Mary alone. He also chose the man who would serve as head of the home into which Jesus would be born.

Joseph was a **troubled** man when we first read about him. It must have been a crushing blow to the heart of Joseph when he learned that Mary had conceived (Matthew 1:18). He knew that he was not responsible for her conception. Therefore, it seemed certain that she had been unfaithful.



Joseph was a **righteous** man, "*Being a just (righteous) man*" (Matthew 1:19), he considered how to properly dissolve his marriage agreement. This indicates that he believed in moral purity. He had apparently kept himself pure, and he expected the same purity from the one who would be his wife.

Joseph was a **merciful** man. Although he did not intend to consummate his marriage to Mary, neither did he intend to retaliate and hurt her. Instead of disgracing her publicly, he intended to dissolve his

marriage agreement privately (Matthew 1:19).

Joseph was an **obedient** man.

"But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins'" (Matthew 1:21). Joseph obeyed this

command and all the other commands which he later received from God.

No person will ever face the exact same dilemma which Joseph faced, but we all face many other troubling situations in life, which require decisions and action. Like Joseph, may our decisions demonstrate righteousness, mercy, and obedience to God's Word. †

Royce Frederick is the editor of *International Gospel Teacher* and lives in Lufkin, Texas, USA.

The World Is a Better Place Because:

- . . . Moses didn't say,
"I don't do rivers."
- . . . Noah didn't say,
"I don't do arks."
- . . . Mary Magdalene didn't say,
"I don't do feet."
- . . . Paul didn't say,
"I don't do letters."
- . . . Jesus didn't say,
"I don't do crosses."

BARNABAS — SON OF CONSOLATION

Don W. Walker

Certainly one of the unsung heroes of the Bible is "*Joses, who by the Apostles was surnamed Barnabas.*" Barnabas, when interpreted is, "*The son of consolation*" (Acts 4:36), meaning literally, "one who encourages or comforts." Perhaps less literally, yet the thought is still present, Barnabas was one who would "tend to the need." From our very first introduction to this man, we will see this point to be true.

When we turn to the close of Acts, chapter 4, we see the possibility of great need in the Lord's church. However, the text reads, "*Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need Barnabas . . . having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet*" (Acts 4:34-

37). Here we see those in the church who had financial need, and this one who "tends to the need" is there with others meeting that need. Barnabas must have experienced in reality what Paul stated in Acts 20:35 from the mouth of our Lord, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive*" (Acts 20:35).

Another great example of this man's "tending to the need" is found in the ninth chapter of Acts. This is the great chapter which records the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. When Saul was converted, he preached Christ powerfully and confounded the Jews (verses 20-22), thus causing them to want to put him to death (verse 23). Saul, having thwarted their hellish plan by escaping, desired to join himself with the disciples. However, they were afraid, because they did not believe that he was a disciple of Christ. "*But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that*


he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus" (Acts 9:27). Saul, of course, would come to be known as the apostle Paul, and would be one of the greatest servants our Lord has had, writing half of the New Testament. Yet, it stands out boldly that Barnabas saw a need in this man's life and met that need.

As we continue to study the Book of Acts, we turn to Acts 11 and see persecution arise about Stephen, and the brethren are scattered abroad. Those that were scattered abroad "*went as far as Phoenicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only*" (verse 19). Because of this great evangelistic thrust, many believed and turned unto the Lord (verses 20,21). "*Then the tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*" (verses 22,23). Here we see new converts who need to be strengthened and encouraged and Barnabas, the one who tends to the need, is the one who is sent and willing to go. Thank God for men like Barnabas

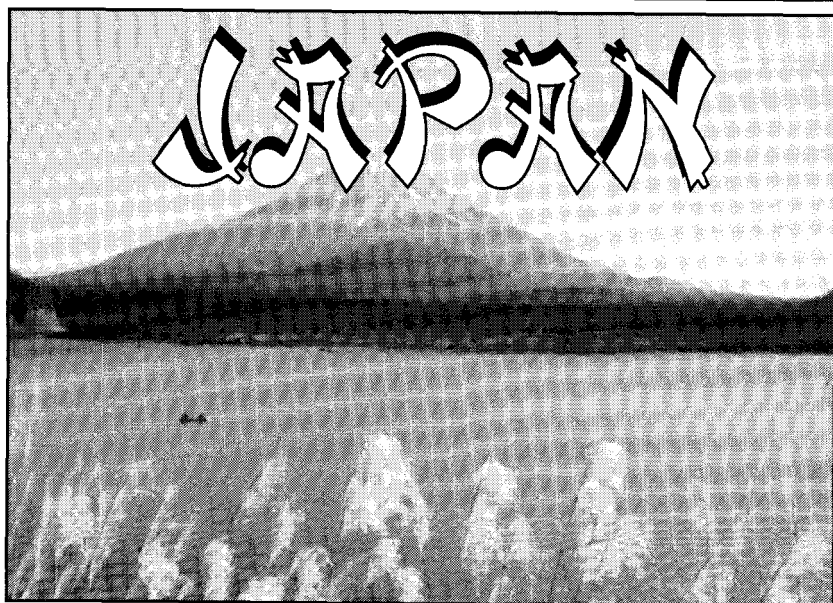
— The Son Of Consolation.

Space does not allow us to go into detail concerning Barnabas standing side by side with Paul in the bold proclamation of truth (Acts 14), or his standing up for John Mark when Paul had lost confidence in him (Acts 15:39). Time and time again this great first-century brother would be the answer to the needs that would arise. What an example of strength he has set for all the generations since and for those to come! May we all be encouragers and comforters as we rise to tend to the need. †

Don W. Walker preaches for the Shenandoah congregation in San Antonio, Texas, U.S.A.



**You may not be
able to do as
much as some,
though you likely
can do more than
some others, but
for sure, you can
do your best.**



The Gospel in Japan 1890-1998

Joe D. Betts

Probably the statement can be made that the gospel was first brought to the Japanese via undenominational, non-instrumental, independent Christians (that is: no missionary alliance) when J.M. McCaleb, his wife, two single ladies and Roy Azbil came in January of 1892. Others of undenominational persuasion were already there but were sent by an alliance of some sort. At that time English Bible

classes were used as most effective although it was very difficult to gain believers. Brother McCaleb went one full year without one convert.

These missionaries were joined by several others over the next 20 odd years. Some of these stayed a few years while others kept on teaching for several years. Their field of work spread south to Shizuoka and north to Ibaraki Prefecture. This was the situation

when World War II war clouds came and these workers had to return to the States.

After World War II some of the former missionaries came back to Japan and continued their efforts. Two ladies, Misses Ewing and Andrews, returned to the Shizuoka area, while Bixler, Rhodes and Fox settled in Ibaraki and Tokyo. George Gurganus centered his work in Tokyo, working mainly with the military congregations. With him were Ed Brown, Bill Carroll, and Colis Campbell. Others came to that area but generally worked on their own in the surrounding areas.

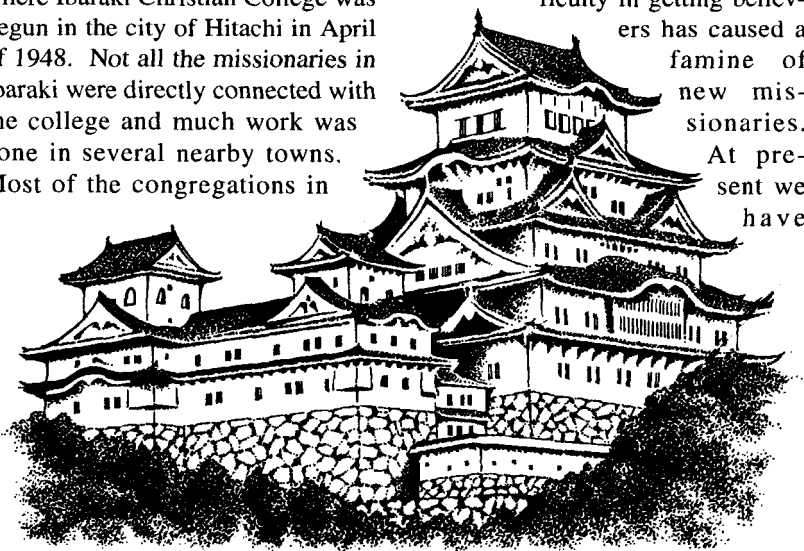
The biggest concentration of workers went to Ibaraki Prefecture where Ibaraki Christian College was begun in the city of Hitachi in April of 1948. Not all the missionaries in Ibaraki were directly connected with the college and much work was done in several nearby towns. Most of the congregations in

the country are located in that area.

Methods have changed in Japan, as they have in other countries, because of changes in style of living. Television has wiped out the week-long gospel meeting. It has been replaced by one-night meetings. Preaching on the streets or public places is practically unheard of.

The one method that still gets listeners is teaching the Bible through English lessons. Japanese are avidly interested in English and don't mind, generally, if the Bible is used as the textbook. **This is where the program "Let's Start Talking" (LST) gets its strength.**

The high cost of living and difficulty in getting believers has caused a famine of new missionaries. At present we have



Osaka Castle, Japan

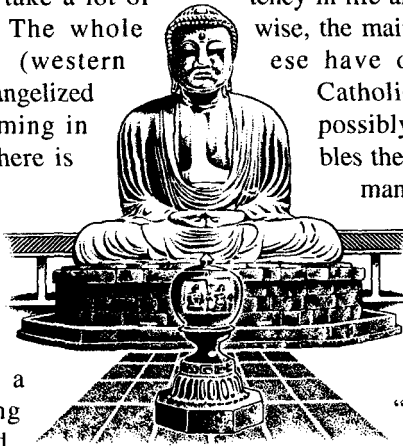
five who would qualify for the definition of full-time missionaries and at least three who are married to Japanese women and are teaching full time in Ibaraki Christian College but also preaching in the churches. Also there are some who are working in the LST program. The need for missionaries is still great but it does take a lot of determination. The whole Japan Sea side (western seashore) is unevangelized and no one is aiming in that direction. There is also no work being done for the hearing impaired.

The Japanese Christians have started a school for training preachers and church workers and named it "Japanese School of Evangelism". So far we have graduated two students and they are working full time with local congregations. We have two more men and one woman taking the courses. We are now thinking of how we can offer the courses for auditing. This school is completely "grass roots" and seems definitely to have a future.

The Japanese people are not

against Christianity and we enjoy perfect freedom to preach without being disturbed. Visas are easy to come by. *The main problem in evangelizing Japan, as in America, is apathy.*

The Japanese people have respect for the Mormon missionaries because of the zeal and consistency in life and message. Otherwise, the main picture the Japanese have of Christianity is Catholic Church oriented, possibly because it resembles the Buddhist system in many ways.



***Buddha statue (Daibutsu),
Kamakura, Japan***

Religion, as such, has a possibility in Japan since cultism seems to take hold easily. The "Moonies" have been able to come in, Jehovah's Witnesses are also here. In recent

years the AUM religion has developed. This is the group which used very poisonous gas to try to take over the government. They have been stopped, at this point, but this does show that at least some of the Japanese people are searching for something better.

The "Boston" group came in via the Yoyogi Hachiman congregation of the Church of Christ because

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

George Gurganus had gone over to that group and he had the official seal of the church property. It is now called "Tokyo Church of Christ." This has caused some problems as some of those members, referring to themselves as members of the Church of Christ, went to one of the colleges in Tokyo and were over-zealous in pursuing converts. The school put out a warning against "members of the Church of Christ." One of our members wrote to the school to explain that we weren't the same.

Because conversions to Christ

are so difficult to achieve, we sometimes question whether the time and money would be better spent in some other field, but we also understand that even Jesus made few real converts. The Japanese people are part of the world that Jesus said His people must evangelize, so we press on. We try to develop the faith of those who have put aside traditions and followed the lead of Christ. We plant, water, and leave the increase to God. No one can do more. †

Joe D. Betts is a long-time missionary to Japan.



Masa and Mari Nonogake are working with the Yokota church of Christ. Their goal is to establish a Japanese congregation using the facilities of the Yokota Air Force Base military congregation.

ENGLISH, “LET’S START TALKING”, AND THE MITO CHURCH

James and Menda Lippe

Mito church is home to a diverse body of believers, each adding his or her own talents and abilities in a way that God can use. In particular, Mito Church has several American members who are working together with the Japanese Christians in an English outreach ministry. This ministry began in the early 1990’s when Mito City Board of Education began hiring one native English speaking teacher for each of its 15 junior high schools. At first a few of the AETs (Assistant English Teachers) who were hired were graduates of Oklahoma Christian University. Over time more and more of the foreign teachers came from OCU. By 1993, several of the AETs began making Mito church their home church.

In January of 1992 six of these AETs began teaching free English Bible classes on Sunday evenings. These classes continued for one year, then in the summer of 1993, Mito church invited a four-member “*Let’s Start Talking*” team. This LST group was a trial team, the first to come to Japan. They worked for 4 weeks and had about 40 readers. After this summer program, several of the new LST readers began coming to Mito Church to study on Sunday night. As a result the Sunday night attendance started to grow.

Also in the spring of 1994, Bob and Sandy Jackson, parents of Menda Lippe, an AET, came to Mito Church for a month-long English Bible class campaign. The Jacksons had a productive campaign that first year and have been back every year since then. In addition to the English Bible Campaigns by LST and the Jacksons, in 1997 Mito Church worked with LST to begin an English Christian camp. The idea behind this camp is to give the readers from the Sunday night classes and from the summer LST project a chance to learn more about Jesus in a camp atmosphere.

From its beginning in 1993, the English Bible Class ministry grew every year. By 1996, Mito Church saw that the English ministry was too large to continue without a full time worker to lead the effort. So in July of 1996, Mito Church hired James and Menda Lippe to work as missionaries.

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

James and Menda had both spent two years working as AETs in Mito and had returned to America for a year, but they came back to work full time for Mito Church with an emphasis in evangelism through the English Bible classes.

At present, there are about 100 non-Christians enrolled in English Bible Studies at Mito Church, on Sunday night or through the week. Also, there are now 16 classes on Sunday night for all age groups and English levels. The classes began six years ago with six foreign teachers and four Japanese Christian helpers, but now there are 17 foreign teachers who work together to team-teach with 25 Japanese Chris-

tian teachers. Many of the Japanese Christians who are now team teaching on Sunday nights first came to these classes as non-Christians.

God has been working at Mito Church for the past 50 years, but we can see that during the past 6 years, he has used the English Bible Class ministry in a powerful way to reach out to the people in this area. This same ministry has spilled over into the Taga church, 20 miles north of Mito, where there are two families working full time and also having conversions. †

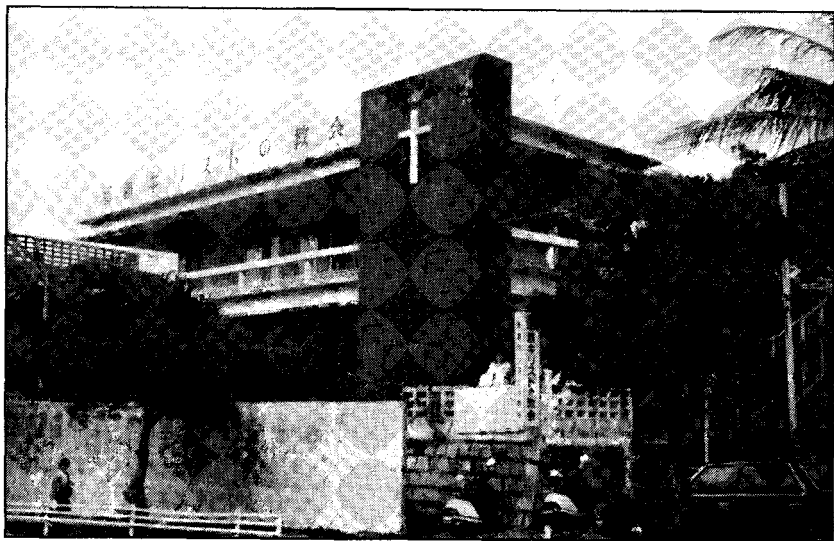
James and Menda Lippe are missionaries, working full-time with the "Let's Start Talking" program in the Mito church, Japan.



Members of the Tomobe church in Tomobe, Ibaraki. Pictured also are Dwight and Josephine Albright, who make mission trips each year to Japan. A "Let's Start Talking" team from Harding University is currently working with this congregation.



Leaders' Study conducted at Numadzu church by Dwight Albright.



The meeting place of the Naha church of Christ, Naha, Okinawa. Ryuichi Tomoyose, the minister, has his residence on the first floor and the church meets on the second floor.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

Verse Search — 19 (from page 41)

1. Pilate scourged Him; the soldiers put a crown of thorns on His head and clothed Him with a purple robe.
2. *'Hail, King of the Jews!'* struck, hands.
3. To appeal to their sympathy, because he said, "I find no fault in Him."
4. Law; He ought to die; He made Himself the Son of God.
5. *"Unless it had been given you from above."*
6. Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.
7. They cast lots (gambled) for it, rather than tear it apart.
8. *"They divided My garments among them, and for My clothing they cast lots."*
9. *"Woman, behold your son!" "Behold your mother!"*
10. That the prophecy in Psalm 22:15 might be fulfilled: *"My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue clings to My jaws...."*
11. He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.
12. To hasten their deaths, that they might be removed from the crosses before the Sabbath Day.
13. They pierced His side with a sword, and blood and water came out.
14. *"Not one of His bones shall be broken."*
15. *"Then they will look on Me whom they have pierced...."*
16. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus.
17. One hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, wrapped in the strips of burial cloths. In a new garden tomb.



Samuel

Who
Am
I?

(from
page
96)

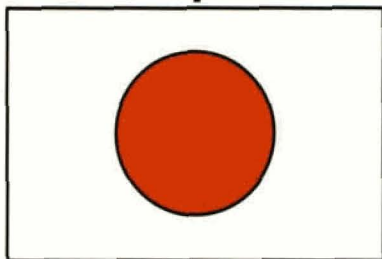
The Book of Hebrews
Abel; Enoch; Noah;
Abraham; Sarah; Isaac;
Jacob; Joseph; Moses;
Israelites; Rahab; David;
Gideon; Samson.

(page 61)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:



Japan



Government: Democratic
Constitutional Monarchy
Emperor: Akihito
Prime Minister: Ryutaro Hashimoto

Secular Facts:

- Location:** An archipelago located off the east coast of Asia, extending 1744 miles from the northeast to the southwest, bordered on the west by the Sea of Japan.
- Land Mass:** 145,874 square miles, roughly the size of Montana.
- Population:** 125,000,000.
- Major Cities:** Tokyo, Yokohama, Osaka, Nagoya, Sapporo, Kobe.
- Language:** Japanese.
- Ethnic Groups:** Japanese.
- Literacy:** 99.99%.
- Religion:** Non-religious/atheists: 12-60%; Shinto/Buddhist: 20-60%; Believers in Christ: 2%; Many claim no personal religion, but follow the customs of Japan's traditional religions.
- Economy:** *Agricultural Products:* rice, vegetables, fruits, sugar beets; *Industrial Products:* Machinery and equipment, metals, textiles, autos, consumer electronics, chemicals; *Natural Resources:* Fish. *Major trading partners:* U.S., Middle East, Western Europe, Southeast Asia.
- Monetary Unit:** Yen.

The Church:

- Congregations:** Approximately 65 congregations, served by 38 preachers.
- History:** The church was begun in Japan in the late 1800's, through the efforts of Eugene Snodgrass and Loduska Wyrick, the J.M. McCalebs, and the Roy Azbils. Others who came in the early 1900's included F.A. Wagner, Hattie Lee Ewing, E.A. Rhodes and B.D. Morehead. By the end of WWI there were 21 congregations in the country.
- Missionaries were expelled during World War II, but the close of the war brought a new wave of workers: O.D. Bixler, Charles W. Doyle, Joe Betts, Joe Cannon, Dwight A. Albright, and others.
- During the 50's over 5,000 Japanese were baptized. However, secularism and other materialistic-related problems have greatly reduced the number of faithful and the rate of growth. At the present time, active membership is around 1,000.
- A most promising work being done by the Mita church, under the "Let's Start Talking" program is creating much interest and new contacts. James and Menda Lippe lead this work, with 17 foreign and 25 Japanese Christians now participating in the teaching.