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I Met the Master
Face to Face

I had walked life's way
with an easy tread,
Had followed where com-
forts and pleasures led,
Until one day, in a quiet
place,
I met the Master face to face.



With station and rank and
wealth for my goal,
Much thought for my body, but none for my soul,
I had entered to win in life's mad race,
When I met the Master face to face.

I met Him and knew Him, and blushed to see
That His eyes, full of sorrow, were fixed on me;
And I faltered and fell at His feet that day
While castles melted and vanished away.

Melted and vanished, and in their place
Naught else did I see but the Master's face,
And I cried aloud, "Oh make me meet
To follow the steps of Thy wounded feet!"

My thought is now for the souls of men;
I have lost my life to find it again
E'er since one day, in a quiet place,
I met the Master face to face.

— Anonymous

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THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL is published by churches of Christ as a non-profit effort. **J.C. Choate (editor)** P.O. Box 72, Winona, MS 38967, U.S.A.; Phone: 601-283-1192; Fax: 601-283-1191.

In lieu of a subscription rate, a gift of **\$4.00** is suggested for single issues, **\$12.00** for four issues. Make checks payable to **World Evangelism Foundation**, and mail to **Byron Nichols, (Managing Editor) 2148 N. National, Springfield, MO 65803**; Telephone: 417-833-5595.

Please send articles for publication and changes of address to **Byron Nichols** in Springfield, including both old and new addresses so that our records can be corrected.

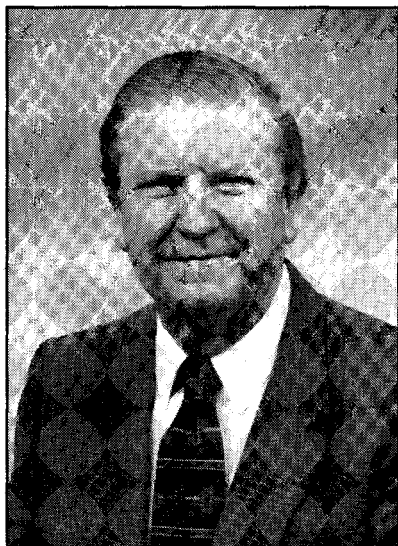
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“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

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



**CHANGING
TRUTH
INTO A LIE
AND
CHANGING
A LIE INTO
TRUTH**

J. C. Choate
Editor-in-Chief

Paul spoke of people in his day “*who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Crator, who is blessed for ever. Amen. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections...*” (Romans 1:24-26). The same Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians, “*I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.*” (Galatians 1:6-9).

From the foregoing scriptures, and many others that could be cited, we can see that they certainly had their share of false teaching in the days of Christ and the Apostles. Paul said there were those who changed truth into a lie and others who preached another gospel. If they were doing such things back then, is it any wonder that there is even more of that done today than ever before?

The truth is clearly set forth in God's word. It is simply stated and easy to read and to understand. Yet, there are those who are unwilling to abide by God's will. They want to do it their way. Therefore, they end up changing the truth into a lie. Think of the many today who preach that it is a lie to teach that one must believe and be baptized to be saved (Mark 16:16), that there is but one church (Matthew 16:18), that the day of worship is the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), that one must partake of the Lord's Supper each first day of the week (Acts 2:42; Acts 20:7); that the Lord wants us to sing only in our worship to the Lord (Ephesians 5:19), that there is but one way to heaven (John 14:6), and so on with thousands of other truths.

At the same time, these same people have changed lies into truth. How many times have we heard that the thief was saved without being baptized, and for that to be used as an example of one being saved without baptism? Think also of the many times that we have heard that baptism is sprinkling or pouring as well as immersion, that faith only saves, that one can be saved by saying the sinner's prayer, whatever that is, that there are many churches and that one is as good as another, that the name is not important, that it doesn't matter how we worship just as long as we are honest and sincere, that there are many ways to heaven, and on and on we could go with thousands of other things.

We are living in a time when error has been taught so much, for so long, and by so many, that when the truth is taught, most automatically pass it off as a lie and the majority accept and preach error as truth. When all of this is constantly being done by the majority by means of radio, television, and literature, and in pulpits and stadiums throughout the world, then you can see why the majority accept error and reject truth.

In spite of all of this, please keep in mind that just because the majority accept something and preach it, that does not make it right. Also, keep in mind that the truth is the truth and a lie is a lie. Jesus said, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*" (Matthew 7:13,14) †



THE POOR IN SPIRIT

Byron Nichols
Managing Editor

When Jesus, in Matthew 5:3, says, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit . . .*," of whom is He speaking? What are characteristics of such a person?

I am told that the Greek word used here and translated "poor" is a word that describes utter and absolute poverty. It doesn't describe the man who does not have luxury; it describes the man who has nothing at all. Jesus then is saying, "Blessed is he who is completely poverty-stricken."

The Lord actually spoke the beatitudes in Aramaic rather than Greek. The word He spoke here that we read as "poor" was to the Jews a description of a man who had absolutely no earthly resources and who thus placed his entire trust in God.

I assume that we all understand that Jesus intended a spiritual application of His words, not a literal physical application. As we put the Greek and the Aramaic backgrounds together we see that Jesus is talking about the man who completely trusts in God because he realizes that he himself is totally helpless and that God can help him to become something meaningful.

Let me say here that I don't believe that this just "happened" to be the first of these beatitudes spoken by Jesus. At the very heart and core of being "poor in spirit" is humility. I believe that the Lord would have us to understand that possessing and displaying humility is absolutely essential before we can develop the other attributes that depict the life of one who is striving to please and honor Him.

There surely is some validity to the idea that humility is "the most beautiful flower in the Christian garden." We all admire and appreciate humility — in others. Demonstrating it in our own lives is another matter, however. The presence of humility requires the absence of ego, and that is difficult for most of us. It's not easy for us to really accept the wisdom of Jesus spoken

in Matthew 23:12 — *“And whoever exalts himself will be abased, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”* As always, though, Jesus paved the way for us by setting a divine example of humility. In so doing, He also provided us with proof that humility really does bring about exaltation.

Let’s read again the wonderful words of Philippians 2:5-11 — *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”* If these words are true, and they are, then we should be ready and willing to “follow in His steps” by emptying and humbling ourselves. In so doing, we will also be exalted ultimately.

Seeing ourselves as we really are can make it much easier to humble ourselves, to be “poor in spirit.” The story is told about an elderly Scotswoman who came from the Highlands into the city of Edinburgh for the first time, and while there had her photograph taken. Gazing at the result, she handed it back and exclaimed, “My, but it’s a humbling sight!” How true for us all! To be able to see ourselves as God sees us would undoubtedly rid us all of every shred of conceit and pride that stands to hinder our achieving the exaltation and honor that can only come from Him.

At least some of the thinkers of the past were successful in recognizing and advocating the tremendous importance of being “poor in spirit.” Erasmus said, “It is vain to gather virtues without humility; for the spirit of God delights to dwell in the hearts of the humble.” Augustine strongly advised the pursuit of humility as he said, “Should you ask me, ‘What is the first thing in religion?’ I should reply, ‘The first, second, and third thing therein is humility.’”

We all need to individually look closely at our attitudes toward ourselves and toward God. Do we really view ourselves as being totally helpless without God? Is it our spirit or attitude that we put God first, that we acknowledge our own lack of significance and brilliance, that we “seek first His kingdom and His righteousness”?

May God grant us the spiritual fortitude and humility necessary to be “poor in spirit.” †

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THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

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Would I Be Called a Christian?

Would I be called a
"Christian"
If everybody knew
My secret thoughts and feel-
ings
And everything I do?
Oh, could they see a like-
ness
Of Christ in me each day?
Oh, could they hear Him
speaking
In every word I say?

Would I be called a
"Christian"
If everyone could know
That I am found in places
Where Jesus would not go?
Oh, could they hear His
echo
In every song I sing?
In eating, drinking, dressing,
Could they see Christ, my
King?

Would I be called a
"Christian"
If judged by what I read?
By all my recreations
And every thought and
deed?
Could I be counted Christ-
like
As now I work and play,
Unselfish, kind, forgiving
To others every day?

— Mrs. J.F. Jones



“And God Spoke . . .”

Hans J. Dederscheck

“I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Genesis 17:1). *“Is any thing too hard for the Lord?”* (Genesis 18:14).

“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” (Psalm 27:1).

“Delight thyself in the Lord; and he shall give you the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust in him; and he shall bring it to pass. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him . . .” (Psalm 37:4-7).

“My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God . . .” (Psalm 42:2).

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God” (Psalm 42:11).

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psalm 46:1).

“Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15).

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved” (Psalm 55:22).

“Let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and

GOD

knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the Lord” (Jeremiah 9:24).

“Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty: For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole. He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee” (Job 5:17-19).

“Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15).

“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not cast off for ever: But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies” (Lamentations 3:22,23,25,26,31,32).

“. . . For your Father knows what you need before you ask him” (Matthew 6:8).

“Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore, do not worry about

tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself” (Matthew 6:33,34).

“Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30).

“And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly” (Luke 18:7,8).

“Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?” (John 11:40).

“Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name” (John 15:16).

“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!” (John 16:33).

“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him . . .” (Romans 8:28).

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen” (Ephesians 3:20,21). †

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



God - My Helper

Allan E. Flaxman

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1,2).

Do we sometimes forget that we live in a God-cursed world (Genesis 3:17)? Yet, the sinfulness of man, which led God to "curse the ground" for, remember, "man's sake," is presented to us daily through the media.

Wickedness is rampant! Newspapers, radio, television, hour by hour bring us reports of murders, kidnappings, robberies, rape, licentious behavior, sodomy, riots, wars, and threats of wars! The picture is

far from pretty! Yet it is no exaggeration.

Are these reports calculated to improve our health, either physically, mentally, or spiritually? To ask the question is to answer it with a resounding "No!" To dwell on these reports must surely ruin our appetites and utterly destroy our happiness. Yet, to ignore them is to cover our eyes and block up our ears in a childish game of make believe. And, the "thinker" does not practice his art for long before concluding that something is basically, radically, and terribly wrong.

In search of a solution, some yearn for a return of the "good old

GOD

days.” But is such a return possible? Even suppose it to be possible, is it really desirable? After all, were those “old days” really “so good?” Go back to the early years of this century and consider World War I for just a moment. Oh, we forget so quickly, don’t we! Think of the carnage, butchery, and horrors of the trench warfare for which that war was noted, and it can only sicken us and fill us with loathing, disgust, and repugnance. Are these “good old days?” Would we return to these days?

Go back a little further. My country, Australia, as recently as 1788, got under way when a fleet of sailing ships brought to our shores a cargo of “convicts” and some stores and founded a British colony. Many of these convicts experienced inhumane floggings while lashed to a triangle, their backs often torn to ribbons with the “cat-o-nine tails,” and were subject to other cold-blooded brutality and abuses. These are things we would like to forget! Would we like to return to these “good old days?”

But go back still further in search of better times with less evil. The search is in vain. We come to Roman times and look upon the Christ Himself. Without any reservation whatsoever, He is declared to be innocent of “*any crime at all*” (see Matthew 27:19,23,24; John

18:38). Yet, in the face of this He is mocked, flogged, tortured, and then mercilessly crucified! And we find that, during the church’s infancy, His followers were treated with similar shocking inhumanity, simply to provide, we are told, a Roman Holiday! We find this kind of public wickedness to have been commonplace in every generation and among all nations. Closing our eyes and blocking our ears make the facts no less real.

Where then shall we go?

The Psalmist has the answer. Not to the “hills,” but to God Himself (Psalm 130:1,2). God loves you (John 3:16)! God cares (1 Peter 5:7)! “*Come unto me all ye who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28). Faith in Christ and genuine repentance, coupled with one simple act of obedience, and God not only forgives our sins, but He forgets them forever! Read Hebrews 8:12; 9:11-14; 4:14-16 and Romans 6:3-5. These verses will do your heart good in this troubled world.

Yes, the Psalmist says, “*God is my helper.*” God makes it possible for us to live in this world of sin and maintain our sanity. But more than this, He provides for us the “key” to eternal life with Him. †

Allan E. Flaxman is a gospel preacher in New South Wales, Australia.

Recognizing God's Signature



Michael L. King

Most everything that we do or have in this life carries with it a name. Whether we are opening a bank account, borrowing money, making a major purchase, or getting married, a signature is required. This gives credibility or validity to an agreement or contract. Paperwork is often returned because it is lacking a necessary signature. It, too, shows proof or validity of ownership. A painting that is signed costs more money than one that is not, due to the personal touch.

God has a signature that is inscribed on His handiwork. Two names appear in the Bible; **Elohim** is usually translated **God** and means “strength” and often appears in the short form, **El**. This use is found in **El-Shaddai**, meaning God Almighty. The patriarchs of old knew God by this name (Genesis 28:3; Exodus 6:3). This term represents God to the world as Creator, ruler, and He who controls the operations of nature. **Jehovah** is used to represent God as He relates to His chosen people in a special way through dwelling with, guiding, extending grace, salvation, and covenant keeping (Psalm 9:10; 91:14).

“Signature” seems to indicate that something or someone is designated by making a mark. A name, as is the case with God’s name, is a sign of ownership or one’s workmanship. Skilled and talented people are particular about the quality of work upon which they allow their name to be placed. Signatures are sometimes forged to something without the consent of the one to whom the name belongs. Cattle owners often brand their herd to dis-

GOD

tinguish or mark them to prevent their being confused with other herds. God has placed a "signature" upon His workmanship to distinguish it from the work of an imposter. Obviously, we are not speaking of a literal handwritten signature placed upon something, although God's work can be detected and is discernable by virtue of contrast with the work of the devil or mere men.

When one becomes a follower of God and enters into a relationship wherein he is God's possession, God's child, he bears the distinctive name "Christian" (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16). He is permitted to do so by God's authority because he has been born into the Family through obedience culminating in baptism (Matthew 28:19).

Actually, the entire godhead "signed" or allowed the distinction, "Christian", to be made. As a result of the act of baptism, God signed the "birth certificate" because a believer exercised an obedient faith, thus becoming His child (Galatians 3:26-29). As a child of God, there is an entitlement to those who are heirs. God has ordained that this be so, and with the stroke of His authoritative pen of inspiration, He made all who would be "*led by the Spirit of God*" and "*mortify (kill) the deeds of the body*" become recipients of His eternal possessions along with Christ (Romans 6:6-8; 8:14-17).

God signed a "promissory note" with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:17), which was renewed many times to Abraham's descendants, that "*through his seed, all nations of the earth shall be blessed*" (Galatians 3:6-9). This "*seed*" was Jesus the Savior (Acts 13:23; Galatians 3:16), and God's will was signed into force by the signaturing of Christ's "death warrant" on the cross of Calvary (John 3:16). Upon the death of Jesus, the "testator," all previous arrangements were made obsolete and the new covenant (will, or testament) was activated, making the above promises accessible (Hebrews 9:16,17). God was then free to signature the "ordination papers" enabling those who were obedient to His Word to receive eternal life, even the Gentiles (Acts 13:48)!

Those who are the children of God bear His signature, His mark of distinction, which makes them peculiar to all others because of their zeal for that which is good and right (Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9). This peculiarity is manifested by Christians and validates the fact that they bear God's holy name (signature, mark) upon their lives through the observance of the Spirit-inspired Word (2 Timothy 3:16,17). The fruit of that word in their lives is ". . . *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness,*

meekness, temperance . . . and they who have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Galatians 5:22-24). Too, those who would bear the stamp of God’s “signed lifestyle” or bear His “divine nature” will be found “giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:4-8).†

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

GRACE — For those who merit, or do not merit, our favor.

COMPASSION — For those who are hurting.

FORGIVENESS — For those who repent and ask.

RECONCILIATION — With those who are forgiven.

— Betty Burton Choate

Do I Have A Soul?

Evolution teaches that there is no God and that humans are only highly developed animals; that there is no such thing as an immortal soul.

Do I have a soul? What does the Bible say? In Genesis 2:7 we read of the creation of Adam: *“And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.”*

Ecclesiastes 12:7 explains concerning man and death, *“Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.”*

We are warned, *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28).* The promise is made, of the evil and the good: *“And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”*

NEXT: What is ‘Resurrection’?



After Jesus was raised from the grave, the apostle Peter said that God made Him “*both Lord and Christ*” (Acts 2:36). In many places in the Bible, Jesus is called “Lord.”

The word “Lord” in the Scriptures means “master...the possessor and disposer of a thing, the owner” (**Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**). We still use the word in this sense today when we say that someone is the “landlord.” We mean he owns the property. He can do with it as he pleases because it belongs to him.

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS

John Thiesen



CHRIST OWNS ALL THINGS

Jesus said of Himself, “*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth*” (Matthew 28:18). Here on earth **all governments and civil powers are under His authority**. He can do with them as He pleases. When God raised Jesus, He “*set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named,*

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not only in this world, but also in that which is to come..." (Ephesians 1:20,21). So, Jesus is not only over all rulers on earth, He is also above all orders and ranks of angels and beings in the spirit world.

Christ is the rightful owner of **all things** because He made them in the first place. God did not make a single thing without Christ. John said that in the beginning Jesus was with God, was God, and that "*all things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made*" (John 1:1-3). As the maker of all things, He has the right to be Lord of them and to rule over them.

THINGS OF WHICH JESUS IS LORD

Jesus is Lord of **life**. In order to live again, we must come to Him. The heavenly Father has deposited in the Son all authority to give life. It will be Jesus who will on the last day raise us from the grave. He has also been made our judge, the one who will decide where each of us shall spend eternity. The Father personally will not be doing the judging, but

has committed that authority to His Son.

The Father also made Jesus the Lord of **the church**. He purchased it with His own blood on the cross, and is therefore the owner of it. The church, made up of the saved, is His kingdom, over which He now reigns and will continue to reign eternally when He comes to take it home at the end of time.

Is Jesus your Lord, and does He reign in your life? †

John Thiesen is a former missionary to Malawi and now preaches for the church of Christ in Buffalo, Missouri, U.S.A.

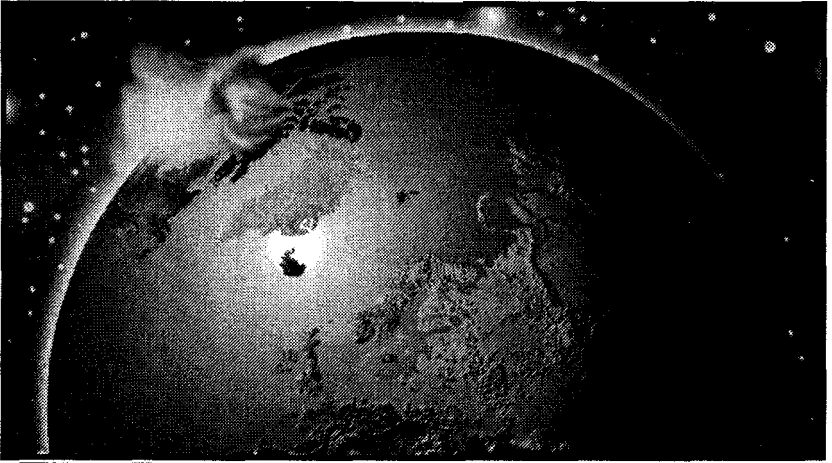
"The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

And He said, *"Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."*

From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

But Simon Peter answered Him, *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"* (John 6:63-69).



Earth's Fate

Owen D. Olbricht

Not many years ago some in the unbelieving world were very skeptical of biblical statements that the elements of the universe would burn up with intense heat. They made fun of Scriptures which asserted that the earth and heavens would pass away and be dissolved. They asked, "How can our vast oceans, the dirt, and mountains of rocks be burned up?"

Even though scientists are not purposefully trying to show that recent discoveries substantiate Bible statements, such is the case. An article in the **Arkansas Democrat**

Gazette, Thursday, December 18, 1997, page 3A, "*Dying-Star Photo Suggests Earth's Fate*," does just that.

The article began, "Photos of dying stars, glowing like Christmas tree ornaments against a black velvet sky, give a preview of what will ultimately happen to the sun and how Earth may be burnt to a crisp in about 6 billion years, astronomers say.

"The new images, taken by the Hubble Space Telescope, show the death throes of stars about the size of the earth's sun and illustrate,

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astronomers say, how the sun will one day exhaust its nuclear fuel, flare into a red giant and then collapse to a white dwarf that cools and perhaps even disappears.”

The article also states, “One theory about the sun’s future suggests that its final sphere of hot gas could expand outward enough to envelope Earth, draw it toward the center and completely vaporize the planet.”

Under that scenario, Balick (astronomer at the University of Washington, Seattle) said, “We wouldn’t go to hell — it would come to us.”

Later Balick stated, concerning pictures taken by the Hubble telescope, “These pictures will change the textbooks.”

These Hubble pictures help confirm previous predictions concerning the end of our universe made by astronomers Fred Adams and Greg Laughlin, as reported in **The Arkansas Democrat Gazette**, January 16, 1997, page 2LA: “The stars, the sun, the Earth. . . . will evaporate into radiation. There will be no light, just a vast soup of subatomic particles.”

These recent discoveries confirm what almost two thousand years ago the Bible had taught, which until recently was thought by many to be absurd and unscientific. The destruction of the universe was

accepted as a matter of *faith* by believers because *they could not explain how non-flammable matter could be burned up*. Their best explanation was that if God created it, He could destroy it.

Now it is evident that what the Bible stated *would happen can happen*, though not in the time-frame suggested by scientists, nor as the result of a “natural” process. The same Scriptures which tell us it *will happen* also tell us that God Himself will determine the time, and that the word of His power will herald the end.

“But the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!” (2 Peter 3:10-12).

The fate of the Earth and the rest of the universe has already been scientifically described in the Bible. †

Owen D. Olbricht is a writer and gospel preacher living in Sherwood, Arkansas, U.S.A.

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There are many who talk in terms of evolution being a *fact*. Many want the public to think it is a fact. Organic evolution is not only *not a fact, it isn't even good theoretical science*. A recent AP news story by science writer Paul Recer is all I need to prove my point.

The article referred to above is entitled, "*Researchers Trace Beginning of Animals*." One would think, "Those fellows have discovered something the rest of us didn't know." Then you read the first sentence, and the story sounds concrete: "*A new study pushes back by hundreds of millions of years the start of the evolutionary process*

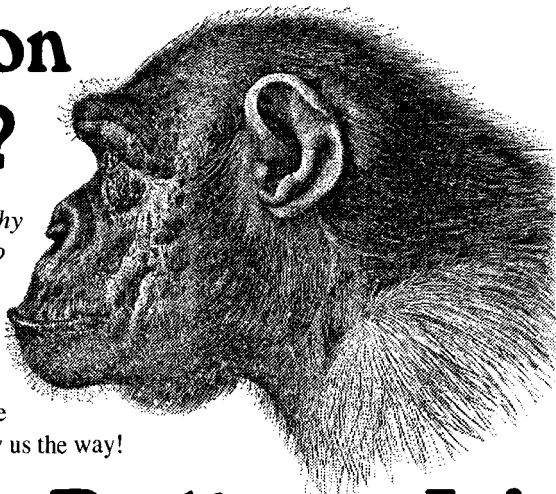
Uh-oh! Big disappointment. No Facts. Only speculation. Listen to the following samples from a five-inch, two-column article:

1. "...when the variety of animals now living **may have** shared a common ancestry."
2. "The **theoretical start** of genetic change..."
3. "The early representatives of the animal groups were **probably** very small and soft bodied and not very preservable."
4. "It is **probable** that what existed were little squishy things..."
5. "Those changes **may have occurred** relatively rapidly, **perhaps** over eight million years."

Evolution a Fact?

that led from tiny, squishy creatures in the ocean to the wide diversity of species, including humans, now in the animal kingdom."

Oh, my, bring on the facts! Tell us more! Show us the way!



Don't Believe It!

Max Patterson

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6. "All the animals a billion years ago lived in the ocean, **probably** migrating up and down the water column."

7. "Life is **thought** to have started about 3.5 billion years ago..."

8. "Plants **probably** appeared next and the early primitive 'squishy' animals later."

Now those are **THE FACTS**. Some set of facts, isn't it? Look at all the *probablys* and *maybes*, and *thought-to-have-beens*. And this is what many call "science." Science has to do with facts and knowledge. The word "science" comes from a word that means, "to know."

But, in reference to the theory

of evolution, nobody knows much of anything. If they did, they would do a better job of writing, and wouldn't have to use all those maybes, and probablys, etc.

One has to have more faith to believe the theory of evolution than the Bible. In addition, one must have a good imagination.

It is still true that "*the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows his handiwork.*" Psalm 19:1. Indeed, "*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.*" (Genesis 1:1). †

Max Patterson preaches for the Hillcrest congregation in Neosho, Missouri, USA.

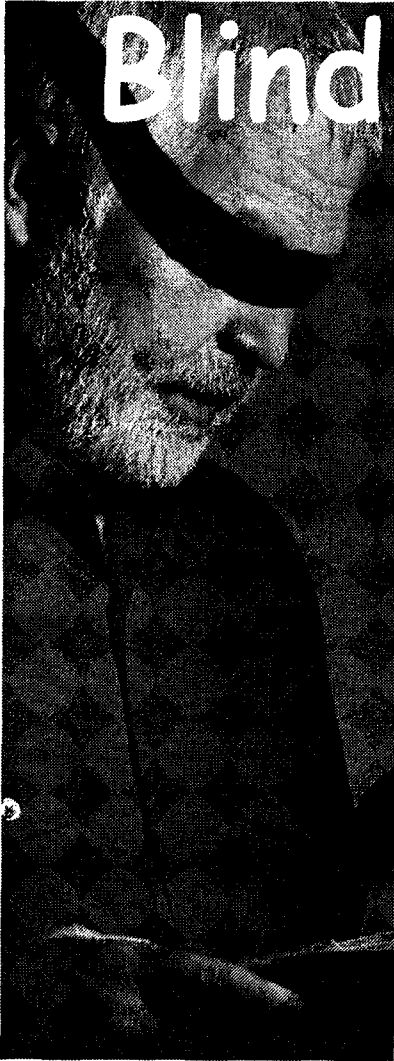
"Critical thinkers will always question the theory that life developed spontaneously from non-life."

— Mildred Kavanaugh

The Crux of the "origins" debate is faith. Neither evolution nor creation is proven or provable. The habit of the evolution camp is to preach its message authoritatively and dogmatically, hiding behind a ruse of conjecture and sheer imagination, but claiming the mantle of "scientific objectivity". This will often convince those not inclined to think or investigate for themselves.

I have a graduate degree in the sciences and have studied both evolutionary theory and creationism. It takes more faith to believe in the hopelessly flawed (and ever-evolving!) evolutionary model than the one espousing the intelligent design of a Creator.

— Michael Webb



Blind Faith?

David Stewart

dation or basis for Christianity. They would think that in order for a person to be a Christian he would have to be naive or superstitious. Yet I propose that *not* being a Christian is actually the blind stance. One must ignore or brush away all the evidence that has been preserved and laid before us.

What evidence is there for Jesus and the religion that He established?

Historicity

The evidence testifies that Jesus was indeed a historical person. Jesus is no cartoon character like Superman or a fictitious hopeful like the Easter Bunny, Tooth Fairy, or Santa Claus. He was born into this world at a specific time (during the reign of Caesar Augustus, Luke 2:1) and in a specific place (Bethlehem of Judea, Luke 2:4).

Eyewitnesses surrounded Jesus and some left records of His life. The 27 documents of the New Testament bear witness of Him. The apostle John wrote from his close association with Jesus: *“That which was from the beginning, which we have **heard**, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we*

Is New Testament Christianity *blind* faith? By using the adjective “blind” some people would likely assume that there is no foun-

EVIDENCES

have looked at and our hands have touched — *this we proclaim concerning the Word of life*” (1 John 1:1). Even historians outside the New Testament (such as Tacitus, Seutonius, and Josephus) wrote about Jesus and the Christian movement, confirming their historicity.

Prophecy

Jesus fulfilled the prophecies that spoke of Him several centuries beforehand! In the New Testament we repeatedly read quotations from the Old Testament in which Jesus is the fulfillment of what God had promised long ago. A few prominent examples will illustrate the testimony of prophecy.

1) Jesus would have a Spirit-empowered ministry. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor”* (Isaiah 61:1,2; Luke 4:18,19).

2) Jesus would sacrificially die. *“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth”* (Isaiah 53:7,8; Acts 8:32,33).

3) Jesus would be raised from the dead. *“You will not aban-*

don me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay” (Psalm 16:9,10; Acts 2:26,27). These things were fulfilled in the days of the Roman Empire as it was spoken: *“The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed”* (Daniel 2:44). God accomplished this through Jesus by establishing His church (Matthew 16:18,19).

Character

Jesus lived the only perfect life that has been lived on the face of the earth. Even those with hypocrisy in their hearts recognized that Jesus was different from the normal man: *“Teacher, we know you are a man of integrity. You aren’t swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are”* (Mark 12:14).

Jesus refused all the temptations to take shortcuts in establishing His kingdom (Matthew 4:8,9; John 6:15; 18:10). He did not bow to the carnal messianic expectations of the Jewish nation. Rather He came to serve, even stooping to the task of a slave by washing His disciples’ feet (Matthew 20:28; John 13:1-17).

Unlike other religious teachers who have come and gone, Jesus never fell for the lures of the Evil One. Jesus *“knew no sin”* (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 2:22). Through suffering and obedience

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He was “*made perfect*” (Hebrews 5:9). Jesus was “*holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners*” (Hebrews 7:26). Jesus went the distance, having “*been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin*” (Hebrews 4:15).

Teaching

Jesus’ teaching transcends that of all the philosophers and sages of the past, present, and future. He taught God’s truth as one who had come from the Father (John 7:16,17). He emphasized not only performing the right action, but having the right kind of heart (Matthew 5:7).

Jesus presented Himself and His way of living as the *only possible means of salvation* (John 14:6). He left His words to sound forth as the standard of judgment in the final day (John 12:48).

His teaching shocked people: “*The crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law*” (Matthew 7:28,29).

Miracles

Jesus demonstrated that He was no ordinary individual. He performed many miracles, which are recorded by the Gospel writers. The apostle John calls these miracles “*signs*” because they point to the greater reality of who Jesus is.

John did not record very many

of Jesus’ miracles, but enough to produce faith in the hearts of his readers (John 20:30,31). Jesus himself appealed to the miracles as a basis for faith (John 14:11) and they were also used as proof in early gospel preaching, that Jesus was the Messiah: “*Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know*” (Acts 2:22). Jesus’ miracles were common knowledge among the masses.

Resurrection

Jesus ultimately overcame death, being raised never to die again! The stone was rolled back, no body was found in the tomb, and the grave clothes had been left lying there (John 20:1-9).

The apostle Paul wrote concerning Jesus’ resurrection appearances: “*He appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time...Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me also*” (1 Corinthians 15:5-8; cf. Acts 2:32). Jesus is “*the resurrection and the life*” (John 11:25).

What will you do with the evidence for Jesus? †

David Stewart preaches for the Northside Church of Christ in Harrison, Arkansas, USA.

Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

Romans 1:17

The preceding statement in verse 16 is verified because “being right with God” is made possible by the good news of the Gospel of Christ.

The righteousness of God mentioned here is the manner in which one enters a “right relationship” with God.

For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

The way to enter the right relationship is revealed (made known) from faith (i.e., believing His word, Romans 10:17) to faith, i.e., as the Word is believed, faith multiplies itself. (See 1 Peter 1:7).

An eternal principle stated in Habakkuk 2:4. Before the law of Moses, people were justified by faith in God’s Word. Abraham did this (Genesis 15:2-4). He believed in the promises of Christ and was justified. By faith he saw the day of Christ when he believed God would resurrect Isaac to fulfill His promise (John 8:56). We believe and are justified when we believe in the resurrection also and act upon it in baptism (Romans 6:3,4).

Fenter Northern

Warring Sides Found in Revelation

G. Devadanam

1. Lord God Almighty (4:8-10).The great red Dragon (12:3,4,9).
2. Throne of God (4:1-4).Throne of the Beast (16:10).
3. The Lamb of God (5:5-14).Beast of the sea (13:1,2).
4. God and Christ work together Dragon and Beast work together
(7:17).(13:4-7).
5. Lamb slain, yet alive Beast wounded to death, yet was
(1:18; 5:6). healed (13:1-3).
6. Worshippers of God (5:14).....Worshippers of Dragon (13:4).
7. Followers of the Lamb (14:1-5).Followers of the Beast (13:3).
8. Adoring the Lamb (5:9-13).Adoring the Beast (13:4).
9. Name written on foreheads Seal on hands or on foreheads
(14:1).(13:17).
10. Woman clothed with the Sun Woman sitting on the Beast
(12:1).(17:1,7).
11. Every kindred, tongue (5:9).Every kindred, tongue (13:7).
12. Slain Lamb (13:8).....Lamb-like Beast (13:11).
13. Those who worshiped not Those who worshiped
the Beast (20:4).the Beast (13:4).
14. Redeemed from the earth They that dwell on the earth
(14:3).(13:14).
15. The earth was reaped Clusters of the wine — reaped
(14:16).(14:16,18-20).
16. Not defiled by woman (14:4).Defiled by the woman (17:1-4).
17. Sealed from Second Death Sufferers of Second Death
(20:6).(21:8).
18. Heavenly city (21:2,3).Imperial city (18:18).
19. The Bride (21:9).The Harlot (17:1,7).
20. The bright and morning Star Fallen stars from Heaven
(22:16).(9:1).
21. Reign forever and ever Tormented forever and ever
(22:5).(20:10).
22. Names written in the Names not written in the
Book of Life (21:27).Book of Life (20:15).

THE WORD OF GOD

23. The King of Kings (19:16).Kings of the earth (19:19).
24. New Heaven and new Earth First heaven and earth destroyed
 (21:1).(21:1).
25. River of Life (22:1).Lake of fire (21:8).



The Book describes two warring parties. They are engulfed in a battle, the results of which have eternal consequences.

On one side in this mighty battle is the Lamb with His people, the church, fighting for and on behalf of Him who sits on the throne and rules the Universe. Opposing Him is the Beast, fighting on behalf of the Dragon with his imperial power and all the forces of evil.

The message of Revelation is that, ultimately, the Rider on the white horse — the Son of God — (19:11) will prevail, and Satan with his followers will be cast into the lake of fire (20:10). †

G. Devadanam is a preacher of the Gospel in Chennai, India.

Reading the Law of God

Loy Mitchell



Moses is about to die. Joshua will become the new leader and bring the people into the promised land. What did Moses desire for the people of God? He wrote down this law of God and gave it to the priests and to all the elders of Israel. He then gave the following instructions concerning this law. Read Deuteronomy 31:10-13.

**It was to be read
at a religious feast
(V.10,11).**

“At the end of every seven years, in the year for canceling debts, during the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel comes to appear before the Lord your God at the place He will choose, YOU SHALL READ THIS LAW BEFORE THEM IN THEIR HEARING” (vs. 10,11). What better time could be found to read the message of God? Weekly we meet around the Lord’s table; is that not a good time to listen to His word?

**It was to be read
publicly (V. 11).**

It is right to read the word of God in private, but many fail to do this. The reading of the law was for instruction. Verse twelve tells us it was so they could LEARN to “*fear the Lord your God.*” The public reading of the Scriptures is an important means of building up the saints of God. Many have Bibles, but so few take the time daily to read them.

**It was to be read
for the benefit of the young
and the old (V. 12,13).**

“Assemble the people — men, women, and children, and the aliens living in your towns— so they can LISTEN and LEARN TO FEAR the Lord your God and FOLLOW CAREFULLY ALL THE WORDS

THE WORD OF GOD

OF THIS LAW. Their children, who do not know this law, must hear it and learn to fear the Lord your God as long as you live in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess” (vs. 12,13). We err today when we fail to address the young with God’s word. The Bible has a message for those who are old, but this book also speaks to those who are young. We suffer today because the reading of this holy book is done by so few.

**It was to be read
so that men and women**

would be able to obey it.

“Follow carefully all the words of this law. Don’t leave out any part. Man does not live by bread alone, but by EVERY word that comes from God.” Bread does no good to satisfy hunger unless it is eaten. God’s word avails nothing when it is unread and thus not obeyed.

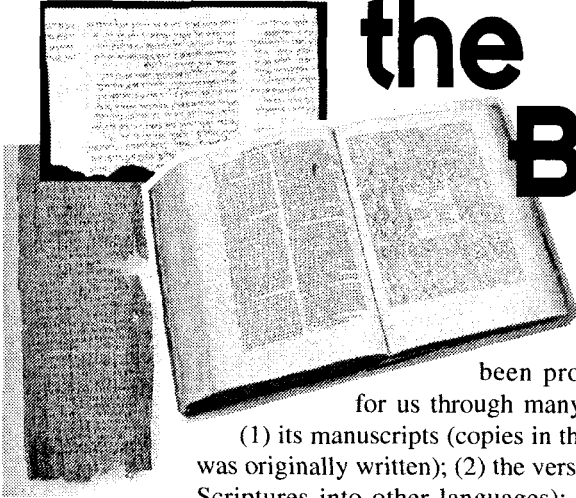
**Let us resolve today that we
will read and obey His word. †**

**Loy Mitchell, former missionary to
Zimbabwe, now preaches for the
church in Topeka, Kansas, U.S.A.**

THE BIBLE contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers.

- Its doctrine is holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable.
- Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.
- It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you.
- It is the traveler’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the Christian’s charter.
- Here Heaven is opened, and the gates of Hell disclosed. Christ Jesus is its grand subject, our good its design, and the glory of God its end.
- It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet.
- Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.
- It is a mine of wealth, health to the soul, and a river of pleasure.
- It is given to you here in this life, will be opened at the judgment, and is established forever.
- It involves the highest responsibility, promises reward for faithful labor, and condemns all who trifle with its sacred contents.

The Preservation of the Bible



G.F. Raines

The Book of God, the Holy Bible, has been providentially preserved

for us through many turbulent centuries in (1) its manuscripts (copies in the languages in which it was originally written); (2) the versions (translations of the Scriptures into other languages); and (3) the quotations from the Bible in the extant writings of the early church scholars.

It is said that if every copy of the Bible were to be destroyed, it could be nearly reproduced from the ancient quotations alone. Let us consider a few examples:

Theophilus: "Thus he teaches those that do good not to boast, that they be not pleasers of men. *'Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.'*" (Matthew 6:4).

Tatian: "*All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made*" (John 1:3).

Clement of Alexandria: "*'Behold,' says Paul, 'the goodness and severity of God.'*" (Romans 11:22).

Tertullian: "Paul himself writes to the Philippians, *'If by any means I may attain to the resurrection of the dead.'*" (Philippians 3:11).

Irenaeus (pupil of the apostle John): "And on this account the apostle, in the first Epistle to the Thessalonians, speaking thus, *'May the God of peace sanctify you wholly; and may your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.'*" (1 Thessalonians 5:23).

THE WORD OF GOD

We should be very grateful to God for the preservation of the sacred writings, because, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”* (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Jesus says, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matthew 24:35).

Peter says, *“For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord abideth for ever”* (1 Peter 1:24, 25).

**Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith’s door
And heard the anvil ring the vespers chime;
When looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.**

**“How many anvils have you had,” said I,
“To wear and batter all these hammers so?”
“Just one,” said he; then said with twinkling eye,
“The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.”**

**And so, I thought, the anvil of God’s Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed — the hammers gone.**

—Anonymous



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



There Are Rules!

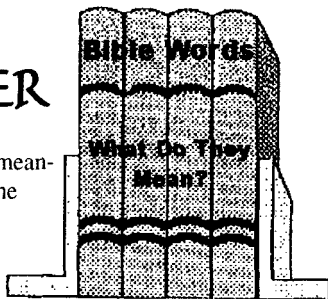
Life on planet Earth came with a Book of instructions:

- ◆ Do not steal anything, anywhere, anytime.
- ◆ Do not believe the booze baloney; do not get drunk.
- ◆ Wait until you marry and then sleep only with your spouse.
- ◆ Women should wear modest apparel.
- ◆ Be honest in everything; do not lie or deceive.
- ◆ Do not do what you *want*; do what you *ought*; it specifies which is which.

And that book is still the best blueprint for living.

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



- advantage** *n.* – (Gk. *per is sos'*) A: service B: unjust use of C: prior acceptance D: what is over and above.
- committed** *v.* – (Gk. *pist yoo' o*) A: to be entrusted B: convicted C: awareness of need D: bonded.
- oracles** *n.* – (Gk. *log' ee on*) A: a divine response or utterance B: a legal statement C: miracles D: the prophetic statements of a soothsayer.
- righteousness** *n.* – (Gk. *dik ah yos oo' nay*) A: the state of being forgiven B: perfection C: penitence D: the characteristic of being right and just.
- vengeance** *n.* – (Gk. *or gay'*) A: wrath B: spite C: accusation D: an act of provocation.
- slanderosly** *adv* – (Gk. *blas fay meh' o*) A: to speak profanely, injuriously B: gossip C: immorally D: to question one's sincerity.
- damnation** *n.* – (Gk. *kree' mah*) A: condemnation; to be sent to hell B: lacking legal approval C: an evil conclusion D: doubt.
- just** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. *en' dee kos*) A: only B: that which has been decided righteously C: not in excess D: without appeal.
- sin** *n.* – (Gk. *ham ar tee' ah*) A: missing of the mark B: mental or emotional sickness C: a philosophy D: old fashioned disapproval.
- righteous** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. *dik' ah yos*) A: good B: spiritual C: dedicated D: just and true, without prejudice or partiality.
- sepulchre** *n* – (Gk. *taf' os*) A: a place for a burial, a tomb B: a French word for sulphur C: a warning D: a massive ledge of rock.
- cursing** *n.* – (Gk. *ar' ah*) A: bad language B: blasphemy C: angry words D: a malediction, pronouncement of evil.
- fear** *n* – (Gk. *fob' os*) A: phobia B: cowardice C: internal quaking D: awe and respect, with reverence, for God.
- law** *n.* – (Gk *nom' os*) A: a rule B: democracy C: internal moral operation D: decree passed by government as standard of conduct.
- grace** *n.* – (Gk. *khar' ece*) A: unmerited favor B: beauty C: sincerity D: God's requirements concerning obedience and salvation.
- redemption** *n.* – (Gk. *ap ol oo' tro sis*) A: the ransom price; forgiveness and justification B: opening a wound C: cancellation D: going the second mile.
- remission** *n.* – (Gk. *par' es is*) A: the absence of mercy B: re-doing a mission C: to be washed D: a passing by of debt or sin.

1. **advantage** *n.* – (Gk. per is sos’) D: what is over and above.
2. **committed** *v.* – (Gk. pist yoo’ o) A: to be entrusted with, as the Jews were given the law of God, to revere it, to practice it and to teach it.
3. **oracles** *n.* – (Gk. log’ ee on) A: a divine response or utterance, God-breathed messages and written records.
4. **righteousness** *n.* – (Gk. dik ah yos oo’ nay) D: the characteristic of being right and just, in this case, having reference to God’s nature, His faithfulness and truthfulness, His utter holiness in contrast to man’s sinfulness.
5. **vengeance** *n.* – (Gk. or gay’) A: hot anger, passion, wrath; the use in this case denotes God’s purposes in judgment, a wrath that is a settled condition of mind with a view to taking righteous vengeance.
6. **slanderously** *adv* – (Gk. blas fay meh’ o) A: to speak profanely, injuriously of a person’s character, behavior, or name.
7. **damnation** *n.* – (Gk. kree’ mah) A: condemnation; to be sent to hell.
8. **just** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. en’ dee kos) B: that which has been decided righteously by God, in retribution for all the evil committed by such people.
9. **sin** *n.* – (Gk. ham ar tee’ ah) A: missing of the mark; violation of the righteousness of God; the state of all accountable human beings, both Jews and Gentiles, unless they have been washed in the blood of Christ.
10. **righteous** *pred. adj.* – (Gk. dik’ ah yos) D: without prejudice or partiality; partaking of the nature of God in being just and true.
11. **sepulchre** *n* – (Gk. taf’ os) A: a place for a burial, a tomb often carved out of rock.
12. **cursing** *n.* – (Gk. ar’ ah) D: a malediction, pronouncement of evil.
13. **fear** *n* – (Gk. fob’ os) D: dread, terror, that which may cause flight, awe and respect for God, reverential fear, a wholesome dread of displeasing God, a “fear” which inspires constant carefulness.
14. **law** *n.* – (Gk nom’ os) D: decree passed by government as standard of conduct, and then as the known standard for the administration of justice when conduct has violated the law.
15. **grace** *n.* – (Gk. khar’ ece) A: unmerited favor; that which bestows or occasions pleasure, delight or causes favorable regard; kindly acts, graciousness, loving-kindness, goodwill.
16. **redemption** *n.* – (Gk. ap ol oo’ tro sis) A: the ransom price; forgiveness and justification; deliverance.
17. **remission** *n.* – (Gk. par’ es is) D: a passing by of debt or sin; a matter of forbearance in God’s dealings with man.

Vocabulary Scale

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

THE IMPORTANCE OF NAMES

Jerry Jenkins

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God . . ." (1 John 3:1).

Do you recall the time spent in choosing the name of that firstborn? Maybe suggestions were sought from friends and loved ones. Perhaps books were browsed to find just that right name. With the oft-quoted statement from Shakespeare and the repeated affirmation, "one name is as good as another," and "there's nothing in a name," from well-intentioned religious people, to the contrary: **names are important to all.**

It was alleged that Chrysostom advised parents, "Give your boy a great Spiritual name and tell him the story repeatedly, then maybe he will live up to his name." Such philosophy must have worked among the Native Americans, for their children often enhanced their names.

Books have been written which catalogue the number of times a

given name has been used. The use of names tends to be cyclical. Name a baby today an unusual name, and in a few years that name may be commonplace.

God has given names. He changed Abram's name to "Abraham," Jacob's name to "Israel," and He told Elizabeth and Zacharias to name their boy "John."

The most precious name God ever gave is one that each of His children can wear. God calls His followers "**Sons of God,**" or "**Children of God.**" Oh, what a glorious name! *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not" (1 John 3:1).*

This marvelous name is made available by faith which leads to

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

obedience. In the prologue of the Gospel of John, the writer declares: "*He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, (even) to them that believe on his name. . .*" (John 1:11,12).

The name is not bestowed on those who *inwardly believe* and *mentally* receive Jesus. To such He makes sonship *available*, but it is not *given* at that initial point.

One must turn to the writings of Paul for clarity: "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ*" (Galatians 3:26,27). It is not until one has been baptized — the act of spiritual birth into God's family, according to John 3:3,5 — that any human becomes a child of Almighty God. God gives us this marvelous, glorious name *after baptism*, and not before.

"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14,15).

Names are important, even more important when they are given by God! †

**Jerry Jenkins preaches for the
Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ in
Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A.**

Wearing the Name . . .

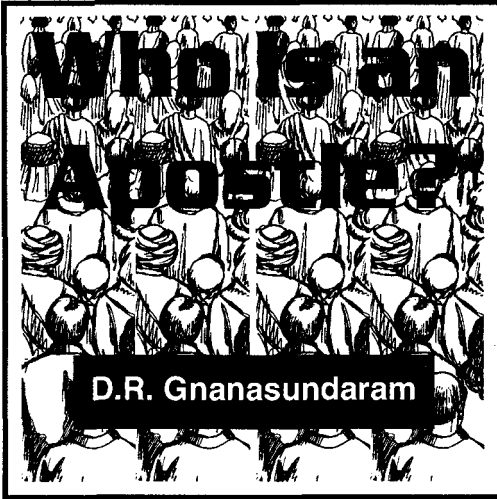
To each of us, our individual name is of particular importance. "*A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches*" (Proverbs 22:1). How shamed we would be if one of our family, wearing the family name, should be found guilty before the world of committing unspeakable crimes.

Think of the name of God! Think of the perfection, the goodness, the purity for which it has stood from eternity! Never, through an act of God, had there been one blemish on His name, not one mark against it.

Think of the tremendous thing He did in taking that spotless name and giving it to us, allowing us — men, sinners, but *new creatures, born* as His children — to wear it as though it were inherently our right!

How grateful we should be for this honor! How jealously we should guard the purity of the name 'Christian', being unwilling for our actions to bring one blot of shame upon it. How careful we must be to think, speak, behave, act, and react as "one of the Family", partaking of divine nature.

— Betty Burton Choate



In certain denominational churches the clergy claim that they are the successors to the apostles. The truthfulness and validity of this claim can be verified by reference to the New Testament.

The word apostle literally means "one sent forth" and was applied to twelve of the disciples whom Jesus chose to send forth to preach the gospel and to be with Him during the course of his ministry on earth. In

Matthew 10:1-5 we have a record of the appointment of the apostles. In verse 1 we find Jesus calling to Himself His twelve disciples. In verse 2 we read that these twelve were called apostles and their names were given in Matthew 10:2-4. Verse 5 reads, "*These twelve Jesus sent forth...*"

The apostles were promised miraculous power by Jesus, as will be seen from the following verses:

"But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26).

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come" (John 16:13).

The **miraculous powers** exhibited were the signs of an apostle, "*Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs,*

DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

and wonders, and mighty deeds” (2 Corinthians 12:12).

One of the **qualifications** of an apostle was stated by Peter in Acts 1:21,22 when selecting a successor to Judas who committed suicide (Matthew 27:5).

“Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection” (Acts 1:21,22).

In addition to the original twelve and Mathias who was appointed in place of Judas, the following are designated as apostles: **Barnabas and Paul** (Acts 14:14). In Acts 13:1-4 we find that Barnabus and Paul were selected and sent forth by the Holy Ghost; **James** (Galatians 1:19); **Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 3:1).

Apart from the above named there is no record of any person designated as an apostle. There is also no record of the apostles leaving behind any successor. It is not possible for any one today to have the qualifications stipulated by the Apostle Peter for the appointment of an apostle in Acts 1:21,22.

Further, there is no need to have apostles today, as the apostles chosen by our Lord made a full and complete revelation of our Lord's

will, confirmed the word with signs and wonders, and thus fulfilled the purpose for which they were chosen as will be seen from the following:

“And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following” (Mark 16:20).

“According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:3).

“But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:11,12).

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8,9). †

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Verse Search

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

1. When did these events take place? (V. 1)
2. "What did Mary see when she reached the tomb of Jesus? (V.1)
3. What did she run and tell two of the apostles? (V. 2)
4. What did they see when they entered the tomb? (V.5-7)
5. What had they not understood, up to this moment? (V. 9)
6. After Peter and John left, what did Mary do? (V. 11)
7. What did she see? (V. 12)
8. When she turned around, whom did she see? (V. 14)
9. When did she realize that she was seeing Jesus? (V. 16)
10. What happened the same day, in the evening? (V. 19).
11. What did Jesus show the disciples, and why? (V. 20)
12. He said to them, "Peace _____. As the Father has _____, _____." (V. 21)
13. Who was not present? (V. 24)
14. What did the other disciples tell Thomas? (V. 25)
15. How did Thomas answer? (V. 25).
16. When Thomas was convinced that this one was actually the resurrected Jesus, what did he say? (V. 28)
17. What did Jesus say about those who would believe down through the ages, though they had not seen Him as Thomas had? (V. 29)
18. Do we have a complete record of all that Jesus did while He was in the flesh? (V. 30)
19. What fact was being proved by the record of Jesus? (V. 31)
20. Why were these things recorded, concerning Jesus? (V. 30,31)

[See inside of back cover for answers.]

What Must I DO To Be Saved?

Ken Tyler

Jesus asked, *"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul"* (Mark 8:36,37)? These marvelous verses tell us of the importance of being saved. Though the devil wants to claim our souls in hell, obviously, Jesus wants us to live eternally with Him. He died on the cross to pay for our sins. The most important question to all of us should be, *"What must I do to be saved?"* The New Testament plainly teaches there are five steps to salvation:

1. Hear. Hearing of the word is what produces saving faith. Romans 10:17 tells us that *"...faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

2. Faith. Listen to Hebrews 11:6, *"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."*

3. Repentance. Repentance is a change of mind that brings about a change in a person's life. In repentance a person determines he is

going to serve the Lord regardless of anything else. Paul said in his sermon at Athens, Greece that God *"...commandeth all men everywhere to repent"* (Acts 17:30).

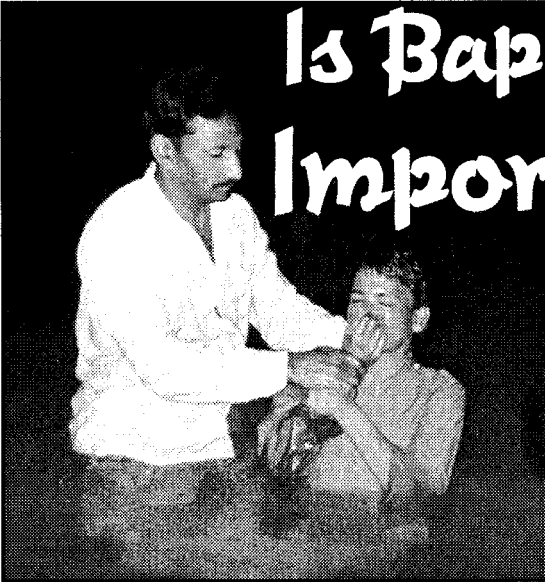
4. Confession of Christ as the Son of God. Paul said in Romans 10:9 *"...if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*

5. Baptism for the Remission of Sins. On the day the church began, when believers asked what they needed to do to be saved, Peter replied, *"...repent, and be baptized...for the remission of sins..."* (Acts 2:38). According to verse 41 about 3,000 were saved that day.

What's keeping you from being saved? Surely you do not want your soul to be lost. Please follow these five steps so you can go to heaven. Jesus is *"...the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him"* (Hebrews 5:9). †

Ken Tyler preaches for the Lord's church in Arab, Alabama, USA, and has preached in several gospel campaigns in Trinidad, West Indies.

Is Baptism Important?



Colin McKee

Without the Gospel no one can be saved, since the Gospel itself is God's power of salvation to all men (Romans 1:16). The Apostle Peter stated, "...Seeing you

have purified your souls in obeying the truth..." (1 Peter 1:22). Baptism is a part of the truth of the Gospel, for it was included in the Lord's own command when He sent the disciples out to preach the Gospel (Mark 16:15,16; Matthew 28:18,19). Baptism is not more important than any other Bible commandment, but neither is it less important.

I. Baptism is important because it is part of the message of Christ.

When Philip met the man from Ethiopia he taught Jesus to him and in doing so, he taught him baptism. *"Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, 'See here is water. What hinders*

me from being baptized?'" The subject of baptism was necessarily included in the teaching of Christ or else the eunuch would not have known to ask about it.

II. Baptism is important because it is directly related to salvation.

Peter states in 1 Peter 3:21, *"There is also an anti-type which now saves us, namely baptism."* Paul explained that the church is

SALVATION

sanctified and cleansed (saved) by the washing of water by the word (Ephesians 5:26). Our Lord Himself directly related baptism to salvation in Mark 16:16: "*He who believes and is baptized will be saved.*" How could anyone be so bold as to say, "He who believes shall be saved, even if he is not baptized"?

III. Baptism is important because in baptism one is cleansed from, forgiven of, sins.

On Pentecost day Peter told the questioners, "*Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38). Ananias told Saul, "*...arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins. . .*" (Acts 22:16).

IV. Baptism is important because by baptism one enters Christ.

Is it important to be *in Christ*? It is extremely important, because:

1. Only those in Christ are "*new creation*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Out side of Christ there is no new spiritual creation.
2. All spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). No true spiritual blessings are found outside of Christ.
3. We are brought near to God in Christ (Ephesians 2:13).
4. Salvation is in Christ (2 Timothy 2:10; Acts 4:12).

All these blessings are found **only in Christ**. Therefore it is highly important to be **in Christ** and the **only entrance into Christ is through baptism**.

According to the Bible the same action accomplished by the *blood of Christ* is attributed also to *baptism*.

1. "*...washed us from our sins in his blood...*" (Revelation 1:5); "*...be baptized and wash away your sins...*" (Acts 22:16).

2. "*...we have redemption through his blood the forgiveness of sins...*" (Ephesians 1:7). "*Which now saves us, even baptism...*" (1 Peter 3:21).

3. "*...blood... shed for many for the remission of sins...*" (Matthew 26:28). "*...be baptized ... for the remission of sins...*" (Acts 2:38).

Let us believe, teach, and practice the importance of baptism. †

Colin McKee is a missionary to Jakarta, Indonesia.

Have you ever wondered why the simple act of baptism — being buried in water for remission of sins — has been construed, confused, and denied by most religious teachers? Could it be because SATAN knows confusion can thwart the NEW BIRTH? — BBC

Where Grace and Mercy End

Betty Burton Choate

Always, it seems, men have freely promised God's grace. Certainly, the individual, regardless of his life, his religion, his sins or his failures, almost invariably believes that *somehow*, at the time of death, God's grace will cover his human failures and will open the gates of heaven so that he may go in.

Seldom is a funeral sermon preached that does not promise God's saving grace for the deceased.

Men look at other men — at the godly, at the ignorant, at the weak who wish to be strong — and they pronounce the covering of God's mercy and grace. "Surely such a godly man is saved." "God would not condemn those who have never been taught!" "God knows our human frailty — He would not condemn those who try."

Human judgments — human extensions of a grace which is not ours to command!

Is it true that God's grace is so

great that it can cover the entire world, every human who has ever lived? Of course it is! But does mercy so control God's heart that grace is extended indiscriminately? Since grace is God's gift, not man's, it is God who determines how it will be dispensed. What does He say?

In emphatic and clear words God pronounces, "*For the wages of sin is death...*" (Romans 6:23). Since all have sinned (Romans 3:23), all are under the curse of death. Without God's grace, there would be no salvation for anyone. What is the possibility of *escape* from the certain and eternal destruction? *Zero, zero, and Zero.*

But God's mercy and grace do come into the picture. How? All would agree, "Through Christ Jesus."

But before we look at God's mercy and grace for **ourselves** through Christ, we need to consider **God's mercy and grace toward Christ:**

SALVATION

◆ Did Christ need mercy? No, He had no sin.

◆ Christ was born, though, to make Himself the death offering instead of man. On the cross He took our sins as His own, and the Scriptures say, “*He made Him...to be sin for us...*” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

◆ Concerning Christ, Hebrews 5:7 says, “*He...offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death....*”

◆ Death was the wage of sin. Christ had taken our sins and had come under the curse of death. But He was *God's own Son!* In the garden He had cried out piteously, with tears, begging God to spare Him that bitter cup — begging for mercy and grace.

◆ No mercy was shown. No grace was extended. Instead, God closed His ears to the cries, forsaking His only begotten Son, and He let Him die. Why? *Because of the sin He carried which could be paid for only by death!*

What is the lesson for us? That there is a wall which can stop even God's grace, a wall over which His mercy cannot leap: the wall of sin. “*Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear.*” (Isaiah 59:2)

But we look again at the picture of Christ — no longer a dead sacrifice, but the resurrected and glorified Lord over all. What made the difference? Again, what do the Scriptures say? “*...He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore, God also has highly exalted Him...*” (Philippians 2:8,9).

Yes, God's mercy reached out to Him, and He was covered by God's grace. But when? As the result of His humble obedience, and only then!

Yes, the price for sin had been paid and now God's grace could be extended to all men — but how? Only in Christ, and only in His death. “*...Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*” (Romans 3:24). “*God...has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ*” (2 Corinthians 5:18).

Now we have two possible places for man to exist: (1) in himself, with his sins (2) in Christ, free of his sins.

All accountable humans exist in the first realm. They can live there and they can die there by simply doing nothing. And if they die in sin, they have totally and forever shut themselves behind the wall of sin over which *God's grace does not cross.*

SALVATION

No amount of *human godliness* is enough to take away sin; *ignorance* is no excuse for sin; *human frailty* and *good intentions* cannot erase sin. *No human, on his own, can stand before God.* Will tears and pleadings for mercy avail? **How can we think so, when God could not spare even His own Son** from paying in death for the sins He carried?

So we look to the second place in which we may choose to live: **in Christ.** How do we pass from the place of sin to the place of salvation in Christ? If the wages of sin is death, how does *His* death become *our* death, so that we can live in Him?

"...do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:3,4).

All humans must, like Christ, humble ourselves to become obedient. Only then can God's mercy reach out and cover us with His grace. Only then can we have salvation in the blood of Christ. †

Betty Burton Choate is a Christian writer and speaker, the wife of J.C. Choate, editor of The Voice of Truth International and missionary to India.

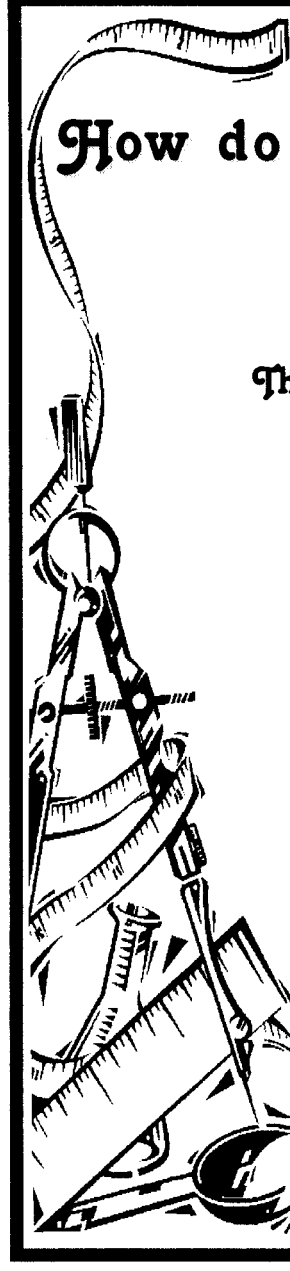
I WONDER

Sometimes
In my longing for a soul,
In my impatience
For the work You'd have
Your children do,
I cry deep hurting tears.
It's been such a long
time since He died . . .
So many souls have lived
and died
Untold
Since then.

I wonder

Do You ever
— watching us —
— watching them —
Cry deep hurting tears
Because we're slow
And unconcerned?
and because it's hard
and hurts so much —
This limiting Your power
to the size of tools
So slow
and unconcerned?
— These tears
falling in my heart —
Are they Yours, Father?
Thank You for giving
tears to me

— Betty Burton Choate



How do you measure up?

Therefore, my beloved brethren,
be steadfast,
immovable,
always abounding
in the work of the Lord,
knowing
that your labor is not vain
in the Lord
(1 Corinthians 15:58).

Those in the Church
Are in the Kingdom!

Sunny David

It is highly noteworthy that when Christ made the statement about building His church, He made no difference, whatsoever, between "church" and "kingdom". That is, when He said that He would build His church, He also meant that He would establish His kingdom.

Reading from Matthew 16:18 and 19 we observe that Jesus told Peter that He would build His *church* on the rock, that is, on Peter's confession of Christ as the Son of the living God; and in the same breath Jesus told Peter that He would give him the keys of the *kingdom of heaven*, and that whatever he would bind on earth would be bound in heaven, and whatever he would loose on earth would be loosed in heaven. Of course, this promise was also made to the other apostles, as we read in Matthew 18:18, but in this case Christ was foretelling that Peter was going to

preach the gospel, with the other apostles, first, and that he would be the first one to let people know what they must do to enter *the church* or *the kingdom of Christ* (Acts 2:37-41).

True to the promise, on the day of Pentecost, Peter told those who had become believers in Christ to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins. This is what he and the other apostles, through the direction of the Holy Spirit, bound on earth and the same was established in heaven. Things he did not state or bind for receiving the forgiveness of sins, were loosed on earth and were loosed in heaven too. It is significant that it was Peter, again, who told the backsliding Simon what one must do to return to Christ, if he goes back into the world (Acts 8:22).

Those who believed in Christ as the Son of God, repented of their

THE CHURCH

sins and were baptized for the forgiveness of sins, were saved, and the Lord added them to *His church*, to the body of the saved ones, as He continues to do daily, even today (Acts 2:47).

which could be cited to prove the point is Mark 9:1. Christ said to the apostles: "*Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with*

As the apostle Paul conversed with the elders of the church at Ephesus, he told them, "*to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood*" (Acts 20:28).

Here the *church of Christ* is called the *church of God*, and Paul said that God purchased the church with His own blood, stating thereby that those in the church have been redeemed by the blood of their God, Jesus Christ.

To the saved ones, to Christians, Paul wrote: "*He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins*" (Colossians 1:13,14). Thus, those who were added to the church, at the time of receiving the forgiveness of sins, were in fact *put into the kingdom of the Lord*. Thereby we learn that *the church of Christ is the kingdom of the Lord*, or *the kingdom of Christ is the church of the Lord*. **Both are the same!**

Another remarkable passage

power." Christ was assuring His apostles that *the kingdom* would come during their life-time. They would not die till they saw *the kingdom of God* present with power.

The kingdom was to come with power, and the power, according to Acts 1:8, was to come with *the Holy Spirit*. The Spirit and the power came, as we read from Acts 2:1-4, on the day of Pentecost, when the apostles began to preach the gospel and as the listeners began to ask, "What shall we do?" They were told to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins, and as they did that the Lord added them to *the*

THE CHURCH

church, that is, He translated them or put them *into the kingdom!*

Notice, too, that both Acts 2:38, 47, and Colossians 1:13,14 talk about the “*forgiveness of sins.*” On the basis of receiving the forgiveness of sins they were *added to the church* or *put into the kingdom*; and the forgiveness of sins, which they had received by being baptized into Christ, was possible through the *blood of Christ.*

Yet, notice again, as the apostle Paul conversed with the elders of the church at Ephesus, he told them, “*to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood*” (Acts 20:28). Here the *church of Christ* is called the *church of God*, and Paul said that God purchased the church with His own blood, stating thereby that those in the church have been redeemed by the blood of their God, Jesus Christ.

Also, the *church of Christ* is the church of God and the *church of God* is the *church of Christ.* And, the same is true when the church is called kingdom. The *kingdom of the Son of His love*, as we read from Colossians 1:13, is the *kingdom of Christ* and it is also the *kingdom of heaven*, because both God and Christ are in heaven.

On the day of resurrection and judgment when Christ will appear, His kingdom or the church will be lifted up to meet with Him in the air

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18), and as Christ receives His kingdom, He will deliver the kingdom to the Father, so the *earthly* will become *heavenly* (1 Corinthians 15:24).

Yet, *on earth*, in the church could be both good and bad people, as God sees them. Speaking about the kingdom *heavenly*, John, the apostle, wrote in Revelation 21:27: “*But there shall by no means enter in anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.*”

While He was on earth, Christ taught, “*The Son of man will send out His angels, and they will gather OUT OF THE KINGDOM all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth*” (Matthew 13:47-50; 41,42).

The truth of the matter is that *God’s kingdom* exists today on earth in the form of *His church.* Those in the blood-bought church have the conditional assurance that if they will remain faithful to Him, (Revelation 2:10), they will receive the crown of life, the eternal life of heaven. †

Sunny David preaches the gospel in India through radio from Sri Lanka, and via a monthly magazine, *The Bible Teacher.*

What IS the Mission of the Church?

Frank Chesser

What is the mission of the church of Christ?



It is not to propagate a social gospel. Such a humanly oriented message may tickle man's ear, soothe his conscience, and bolster his pride,

but it will not save his soul.

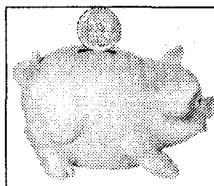
The church is not an entertainment medium.



It is a flagrant violation of God's design for the church to convert this spiritual entity into

an amusement park for fun and games.

The church is not a bank.



Some elders manifest more concern for the interest on their CD's than the spiritual welfare of the

flock. Thousands of dollars stored away in bank accounts with no planned objective is a misuse of God's money.

Moreover, the church is not a



school. Let the church support Biblical instruction in any educational institution on earth while keeping it independent of

the gym and secular education.

The mission of the church is to make known the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every accountable person on earth. "Go ye into all the world

THE CHURCH

and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). The urgency of this task defies articulation.

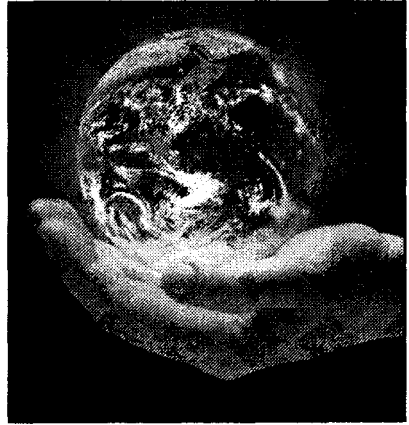
Man's problem is sin. Sin defiles the soul and robs man of God's presence. Sin severs the creature from the Creator and positions man on the road to ruin.

God's remedy for sin is the blood of His Son. Compliance with the Gospel in the obedience of faith appropriates the blood of Christ to the soul, thereby producing cleansing and reconciliation. "*Unto Him that loves us and washed us from our sins in His own blood ...*" (Revelation 1:5). Apart from Gospel obedience, man is "*without God, without Christ and without hope in the world*" (Ephesians 2:12).

Righteous zeal is one of the most powerful forces in the world. It moved David to face Goliath with a shepherd's sling, and it moved Israel against the giants of Canaan land. It drove Phinehas into the adulterer's tent with a javelin, and Jael to fasten Sisera's head to the ground with a nail. It compelled John to rebuke Herod at the cost of his life, and Jesus to cleanse the temple with a whip. Finally it brought Him to the cross where His blood was poured out as atonement for you and me.

That same righteous zeal will impel the church to herald the Gospel of Christ to every nation, clan, and person on earth. Any church that has lost sight of its mission is a dead church. †

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



Statistics

- ✓ 6 billion souls in this world.
- ✓ 175,000 added each day.
- ✓ Less than half have heard of Jesus.
- ✓ Only 1 in 5 own a Bible.
- ✓ In 1975, 30% of the population were believers in Christ.
- ✓ In 2000, only 15% will profess faith in Him.
- ✓ What is each soul worth?



Spotlight

on Central in Cleveland, Tennessee

The Central Church of Christ in Cleveland, Tennessee is located in the Southwestern part of the state, a congregation of about 370 Christians. Shepherds Max Pelley, Bill Turner, and Charlie Cantrell, with the help of 12 deacons, provide watchful care and leadership for the church. Each month in their bulletin is a message from "The Shepherds to the Flock", beginning, "We love you. We want you in heaven with us, without the loss of even one. Heaven is where we all want to go. . . ."

The youth program has been designed to develop the "church of the future" with sound knowledge of God's word, with enthusiasm for involvement in planned activities, and with training in *work* as well as *fellowship*.

Central also has a very active World Bible School program, and has students in 36 states enrolled in the USA Bible School.

Wayne Miller, as the minister, and Scott Griffith as the associate minister, provide Bible-centered lessons for the church, with the aim

of "doing things God's way and only God's way, and giving Him all of the glory." These are not simply good-sounding words, but are the sincere goal of all those in leadership.

Central is widely known as a mission-minded congregation. Her mission efforts consist of a 9-man mission committee which ministers to four men in New Zealand, two in Panama, one in Germany, one in South Africa, one in India and the US, and one in school at the East Tennessee School of Preaching. The first Sunday of each month a brief report is given to the whole congregation, drawn from reports submitted by the missionaries, thus keeping the church fully informed about what is being accomplished abroad through their prayers and contributions.

The second largest item in Central's budget is her mission program, \$94,000 each year. This emphasis has kept the church focused on the Lord's great commission, making Christians also conscious of teaching in Cleveland. The results have been stability, soundness, and growth, both spiritually and numerically, not only in the mission fields Central supports but also in the body at home. †



Friendship Evangelism

Clayton Pepper

The Kind Everybody Can Practice

I believe every Christian should learn to practice friendship evangelism. God's eternal purpose from the beginning has been the redemption of man (Ephesians 3:8-11). He gave His only Son to die on the cross in our behalf (Romans 5:8). There is nothing dearer to the heart of God than the salvation of lost souls (John 3:16). His people are commanded to go about sharing with others the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

People You Can Influence

Who are the people on whom we have the greatest influence? They are our relatives, friends and associates.

A. On the Job

I especially like to encourage everyday working people in the Lord's work. I grew up on a farm and learned to work hard; then I learned a trade as a meat cutter. Later, the Lord blessed me with the privilege to work full time for Him.

CHURCH GROWTH

I learned the importance of winning souls for Christ years ago from brother Otis Gatewood's book, **You Can Do Personal Work**. The first person I had a part in bringing to Christ was a General Foods salesman who called on the store where I worked. The second person was a lady who wrapped meat for me in the meat market. I was practicing *friendship evangelism*. That's how I got started.

ative led them to Christ. There are husbands and wives who have been won by their spouses; there are children — and perhaps grandchildren — who have been won by their parents. Older Christians have a wonderful opportunity for a positive influence upon their grandchildren.

Others have been won by their friends and associates on the job. Since this is such an effective way to reach out to the lost, and one in

I like to look for those who are looking. If you will just listen on the job or in other places, you will often hear people talking about religion. . . .

I like to look for those who are *looking*. If you will just listen on the job or in other places, you will often hear people talking about religion. Various views will be expressed, and you may hear someone say, "I'm really not satisfied where I go to church." You may turn that simple occasion into a great opportunity by getting that person's name and address, and seeking an opportunity to teach him the Gospel of Christ.

B. Friends, Neighbors, Family

Friendship evangelism is the most effective and the simple way for every Christian to bring people to the Lord. If we were to take a survey in most congregations, 75 to 90 percent would say a friend or rel-

which each Christian can participate, *it ought to be something the entire church wholeheartedly practices.*

Some Statistics

Church growth research says that on the average, each one of us has from seven to nine friends and relatives who are not Christians. If you have been a Christian for a long time, you may have only three or four friends who are not Christians, while a new Christian may have 11 or more. Suppose 50 percent of your congregation makes a list of six prospects each. These potential converts are called your "extended family." Members of that extended family become your potential congregation.

CHURCH GROWTH

Individuals and Whole Families Converted

Friendship evangelism was practiced in New Testament times. In John 4:53, there is a story about a man whose son is healed and he and his whole house believes.

Andrew followed Jesus and brought his brother Peter to Him (John 1:40-42). Philip introduced his friend Nathaniel (John 1:43-45).

loosed from their chains and the doors to be opened. The jailer came in and was about to take his life. Paul and Silas said, "Do yourself no harm: for we are all here" (Acts 16:28). Then the jailer invited them to his home. That very night he decided that he believed in Christ and he was baptized along with all his household (Acts 16:22-34).

I was in Virginia for some

I was in Virginia for some appointments and the preacher said, "I've been studying with a family, and there are seven people subject to obeying the Gospel. Would you go with me to see that family?" I did, and we baptized all seven of them that night.

In Acts 10 we read how Cornelius was instructed to send to Joppa for Peter to come and tell him words whereby he might be saved. When Peter arrived, Cornelius had gathered his friends and kinsmen together to hear what the teacher from God would have to say.

Paul, looking for prospects, went down by the riverside where some women were worshipping. One of them was Lydia, whose heart was opened, and she, along with her household, was baptized (Acts 16:15).

Paul and Silas were in prison for preaching Christ. An earthquake came causing the prison to be opened, allowing the prisoners to be

appointments and the preacher said, "I've been studying with a family, and there are seven people subject to obeying the Gospel. Would you go with me to see that family?" I did, and we baptized all seven of them that night. In New Testament times, and sometimes today, whole families are won to the Lord.

Making and Winning Friends

What about our friends and associates? In Mark 5:19, we read of a man from whom Jesus cast out demons and who then wanted to go with Him. But, Jesus replied, "*Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had com-*

CHURCH GROWTH

passion on you."

The Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well. Jesus was there waiting for His disciples to come back from buying food in the city. He engaged her in conversation, and she soon decided He was from God. She left her waterpot and went back into the city and brought her friends to hear Jesus. Many became believers because of her influence. Although she was not a disciple at that time, she did believe that He was sent from God, and she led others to believe upon Him (John 4)

Look For Opportunities

Years ago, I was at a barber shop getting a haircut. A policeman came into the shop trying to locate someone living in the community, whose family member in Alabama had died.

After the policeman left, the barber remarked, "It scares me to think about dying or any family member dying." I said, "That's something we've all got to do someday, and we just need to be ready." He said, "Well, I guess that's the problem, I'm not ready."

The barber remarked, "It scares me to think about dying or any family member dying." I said, "That's something we've all got to do someday, and we just need to be ready." He said, "Well, I guess that's the problem, I'm not ready."

When Jesus was going through Jericho, there was a little short man named Zacchaeus who climbed up into a tree to get a better view. Jesus saw him and said, "Come down, for today I must stay at your house" (Luke 19:1-10). Zacchaeus was a tax collector, an occupation that was despised among the Jews. I don't know what all Jesus said to him, but He made a friend of him very quickly, and the man showed repentance and a desire to change his life.

I asked him if he understood the Bible very well and he said he did not. It's hard to teach in a barber shop or a place of business, so I said, "Give me your name and phone number and I'll call you sometime. I have some films on the Bible that I go into homes and show."

The point is this: Keep your ear tuned and listen carefully. You will often find similar situations. I'm not suggesting that you try to teach everyone on the spot.

Sometimes that is not the wise place to do it. But, the interest is noticed, the information is gathered, and

Take Action

Often we never get around to doing what we know we ought to

Often we never get around to doing what we know we ought to do. We may wait until it is too late. I once called a man who had done some tree surgery work for me, and his wife said he had died, very suddenly, at the age of 38.

then you follow up on the lead.

Jesus had made a friend of Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night because he recognized that Jesus must be a teacher from God or else He could not do the things He was doing (John 3).

I have often wondered what the whole conversation was like. It appears that Jesus said abruptly: "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," or "Unless one is born of water and the spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." I do not know whether Jesus changed the subject abruptly like that or not, but sometimes, it is appropriate to go right to the heart of the matter.

One approach is to ask, "If the Lord were to come today, do you know for sure, nothing doubting, that you would go home to heaven to be with Him?" If the person is responsive, proceed to teach the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15:14; Romans 6:3-7; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).

do. We may wait until it is too late. I once called a man who had done some tree surgery work for me, and his wife said he had died, very suddenly, at the age of 38.

Since then, I have tried to give something with the plan of salvation in it to everyone who does a service for me. When I pay them, I hand them a tract along with my check, sometimes in an envelope, or I tell them that I want to give them a piece of literature that I hope they will read. For who knows whether that person is going to live another day? Who knows whether he will ever hear the gospel? I realized I needed to be ready to use every single opportunity to spread the gospel with everyone that came my way. There ought never to be a time when we are not soul-conscious. A lot of people would obey the gospel if they only knew it! †

Clayton Pepper works with Restoration Network International in Nashville, Tennessee.



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.

Visits to Newcomers

A. Why should you visit Newcomers?

1. The great shift in population is from rural to urban. This is happening all over the nation. Congregations that were once rural are in many areas being engulfed by the cities.
2. Roger Mills moved into the Belaire Housing Development at Bowie, Maryland to work with the church there. He stated that he moved during a snow storm and 21 salesmen called on them the first day. Business people know the value of calling on newcomers.
3. Roger states that in this city the Presbyterian Church grew from six members to 750 in three years by visiting newcomers. Only 30 percent of them were formerly Presbyterians.
4. Newcomers must change brands of milk and bread and make new friends. Many find that their denomination is not the same as the one back home.

CHURCH GROWTH

5. Many will begin worshipping with the church nearest them, or with the one that visits them first or is the friendliest.
6. We want to encourage them to attend our services, offer them a visualized Bible survey or a Bible correspondence course.

B. How do you make this type of visit?

1. Get a list of new residents from Chamber of Commerce, Welcome Wagon or utility companies.
2. Prepare a packet for new residents.
3. Set up a regular visitation with a check system.
4. Call back.

C. Presentation to new residents.

1. "Hello. This is _____ and I am _____. We are Newcomer Greeters from the church of Christ on _____. We just wanted to stop by and say, 'Welcome to _____.'"
2. Develop a friendly conversation at this point. This can be done by asking leading questions and then letting the newcomer talk about the things in which he is interested.

D. Suggested questions to lead into conversation.

1. How long have you been here?
2. Where are you from?
3. What line of work are you in?
4. How many children do you have? What are their ages?
5. (This would be appropriate at a new house.) I see you are having fun getting your lawn started.

Making Friends with Newcomers

You will be better able to set up a cottage meeting and convert a person when you make friends with him. Take whatever amount of time he desires. Let him set the pace.

CHURCH GROWTH

Just before leaving, give him an opportunity to have a home Bible study arranged for his family. Here is a good approach:

"We have something special to offer the newcomers to this area. I would like to tell you about it while I am here. You might be interested and would like to take advantage of it.

"We have a survey of the Bible on video (or filmstrips). There are more than 400 outstanding pictures in this series which is divided into five lessons. The lessons simply present what the Bible teaches. Because of this, almost all people find them profitable. Please understand that you are under no obligation whatsoever to us. We just want to show these valuable lessons to every family that we possibly can. Does this sound interesting to you?"

Wait for his answer. Then, if he says, "Yes", ask, "What night of the week would be best for your family?" If he hesitates, but seems interested, say to him: "May I schedule just one lesson, so that you can see what they are like, and if you find them profitable?"

Conclude with, "I want to give you this packet. You will find the contents interesting. We surely do appreciate your taking time to talk with us. Feel free to come and visit with us at any of our services. If we may be of any assistance to you or your family, please let us know." (From **Growth Through Personal Evangelism.**)

What are you to accomplish?

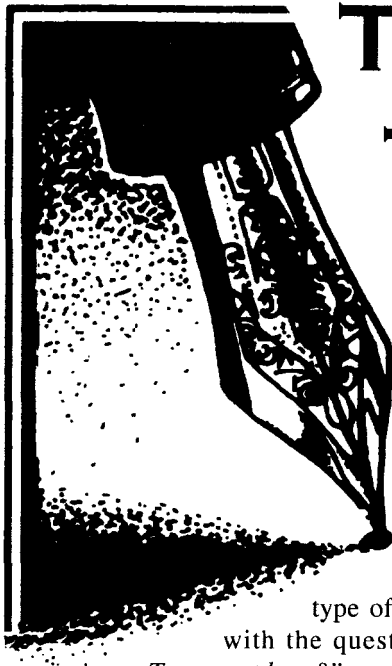
Get the family to commit themselves to attend services, see filmstrips, or enroll in a Bible correspondence course.

Make a note to call back or to pay additional visits to any who show interest, allowing the friendship and their spiritual interest time to develop. †

Results of Tract Giving

A man was giving out Gospel tracts on a steamer. One gentleman whom he approached accepted a tract graciously but said, "I haven't much faith in that kind of work." The Christian worker replied, "It was through a Gospel tract given to me in Glasgow twenty years ago that I was converted."

Asking for the particulars, the gentleman discovered that it was he who had given him the tract! He had ceased to do this because he saw so little results from his efforts. He added, "But by the grace of God I shall start again!"



TRAINING TO TEACH

Jane McWhorter

As Christians, we want to learn better ways to have Bible verses at our fingertips when we are asked questions by our friends. We are suggesting a miniature chain reference type of study. The following references deal with the question, "*Why do you not obey the Old Testament laws?*"

On a blank page at the front or back of your Bible, write the words **Old Law Abolished**. Under this, write the first verse. In the margin by the first verse, note the second passage and on until the last reference is reached. You may also find it helpful to note in the margin either part or all of the statement concerning the reference. This makes a logical progression through the Scriptures as you are studying with your friend.

Purpose

Romans 15:4	The Old Testament was for our learning.
Galatians 3:24	It was our schoolmaster.
Galatians 3:19	It was temporary.

Imperfections of the Old Law

Hebrews 8:7	The first covenant was not faultless.
Hebrews 7:19	The old law made nothing perfect.
Colossians 2:16-17	It was a shadow.
Hebrews 10:1	It was a shadow.

TRAINING TO TEACH

New Covenant Foretold

Jeremiah 31:31-33 A new covenant would come.

Christ's Death Took Away the Old Law

Colossians 2:14	The old law was nailed to the cross.
Galatians 3:13	Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.
Romans 7:4	Christians are dead to the law by the body of Christ.
Romans 8:2	We are free from the law of sin and death.
Hebrews 8:13	A new covenant made the first old.
Hebrews 10:9	Christ took away the first law to establish the second one.
Ephesians 2:15	Christ abolished the law of commandments.
2 Corinthians 3:6	We are ministers of the new testament.
John 1:17	The law was given by Moses: grace and truth came by Christ
Hebrews 9:16	The death of the testator made the New Testament effective.


†

Jane McWhorter is a writer and the wife of a gospel preacher, and they live in Fayette, Alabama, U.S.A.



Old Testament — New Testament

- | | |
|--|---|
| ◆ Law given through Moses (John 1:17). | ◆ Grace and truth given through Christ (John 1:17). |
| ◆ Was dedicated with the blood of animals (Hebrews 9:18-22). | ◆ Was sealed with the blood of Christ (Hebrews 9:14-17) |
| ◆ Was a shadow of Christ's law which was to come (Hebrews 10:1). | ◆ Was the heavenly plan of God (Hebrews 8:4,5). |
| ◆ Animal sacrifices made continually (Hebrews 10:1-4). | ◆ Christ's blood was offered once, for all (Hebrews 9:24-28). |
| ◆ Was added because of transgressions (Galatians 3:19). | ◆ Was the plan of God for the salvation of the faithful, from the beginning (Galatians 3:16). |
| ◆ Was nailed to the cross (Colossians 1:14). | ◆ Is the new covenant which replaced the old (Hebrews 8:13). |



Through inspiration, God had promised in the writings of Old Testament prophets that His glorious kingdom would never be destroyed. "...the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed" (Daniel 2:44). But the apostle Paul also wrote plainly, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

Historical Traces of the Kingdom that Would Never Be Destroyed

Part 2

speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving ..." (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

That "falling away" from carefully following God's word resulted in the formation of many "denominations" among believers in Christ. Because these groups have been larger than the remnant of the true church, they have received the attention; it is about their history that records have been written. The church of Christ, though established by our Savior in Jerusalem on Pentecost Day, A.D. 33, has been small and unnoticed by most historians through the ages.

Yet, just as had been promised, the church was not destroyed by the digression of many from the faith. Some records remain, allowing us brief glimpses of those Christians who lived and died before us.

The Persecution of Innocents

Keith Sisman

In the severe persecution that took place during this time (11th to 16th centuries) many true Christians were burnt at the stake, across Europe and later in England. Evangelists came to support the churches that were being

CHURCH HISTORY

forced out of existence, from the Balkans and in particular Bulgaria so that the term **Bulgare** became the equivalent of “**Heretic**”, as these who refused to follow the man-created doctrines of Catholicism were perceived to be — heretics of the “true faith”. Mutilation of the word **Bougre** is still used as an insult

Scultetus writing against the Bohemian brethren in 1528 accused them of baptizing adults.

In the year 1549 Bishop Burnet said, “There were many Anabaptists in several parts of England who say that *infant baptism is no baptism.*” Dr. Smith said in 1587 that several Anabaptist congregations were in

Hercules Collins, minister of a church of Christ in Bapping denies that England received baptism from Smith and states that believers baptism was being practiced in England prior to Smith.

(sodomite) and has found its way into middle English, continuing today as the word “**Bugger**”.

Rainerius, a Friar, in the year 1250, complained that certain ones whom he mistakenly called “Waldenses” were “withholding their children from baptism.”

An interesting letter was written to Erasmus by Johannes Slechta Costelecicus, dated October 10, 1519 referring to some followers of **Wycliffe** in Bohemia who were known as “Hussites”. This letter refers back to the time of Huss (around 1410) and says of his followers that *they called themselves brother or sister, they had no other authority than the Scriptures, opposed infant baptism, teaching believers baptism by ‘dipping’ and elected officers from the ‘laity’.*

London and other places. In the book, **Believers Baptism from Heaven and of Divine Institution**, published in 1691 by **Hercules Collins**, minister of a church of Christ in Bapping, denies that England received baptism from Smith and states that believers baptism was being practiced in England prior to Smith. It was Smith who introduced *Anabaptist* baptism into Britain, who baptized “*an outer sign* (profession of faith) *of an inner faith.*”

In October 1538 there was a commission sent to Cranmer, Stokesly and Sampson to inquire after Anabaptists; to proceed against them. At this time and much later English Baptists were known and confused with the Anabaptists.

The teaching of William Tyn-

CHURCH HISTORY

dale (died 1536) on baptism was that “the washinge preacheth unto us that we ar clensed wyth Christe’s bloud shedyng which was an offering and a satisfaction for the synne

religion, and his brother was also a faithful member of the church.

One of the most famous preachers of the church of Christ in the seventeenth century was

The teaching of William Tyndale (died 1536) on baptism was that “the washinge preacheth unto us that we ar clensed wyth Christe’s bloud shedyng which was an offering and a satisfaction for the synne of al that repent and beleve consentynge and submyttnye themselves unto the wyl of God. The plungynge into the water syngnyfyeth that we die and are buried with Chryst as coserning ye old life of synne which is Ada. And the pulling out again syngnyfyeth that we ryse again with Christe in a new lyfeful of the holye gooste which shal teach us, and gyde us, and work the wyll of God in us; as thou seest Rom 6.”

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Henry Denne (died 1658), who was educated at Cambridge. Henry Denne was at first Calvinistic but later changed, teaching biblically that all men have free will. Two statements he made have come down to us, “*all men were put into the possibility of salvation through Christ*” and “*those that choose to perish do so at their own choice.*”

Henry Denne, like those before him taught that *baptism was for believers, who upon confession and repentance could wash away their sins by immersion in water. They taught that infants are innocent, that a loving God is not going to*

CHURCH HISTORY

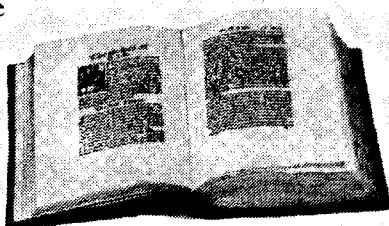
punish a little one because its parents did not have the innocent baptized. They taught that those who have been baptized following the apostolic pattern are added by the Lord Himself into His church, the only church, the church of Christ,

Though error was taught by the majority, still there were Christians who stood for the truth, even in the face of severe persecution.

Were these evangelists right in what they taught? Check the following scriptures and see for your-

William Tyndale's English translation of the New Testament was published in Germany, in 1525. He translated from the original Greek, not from the Latin Vulgate. Six thousand copies of this first edition were printed. Tyndale suffered a martyr's death in 1536 near the city of Brussels, Belgium.

The Tyndale Bible



and then they could partake each first day of the week of the Lord's Supper, which was a memorial communion..

Churches in which Denne taught and preached continued to the time of Alexander Campbell. When he visited England he met with and recognized them as being part of the Lord's body.

Then, as now, the teachings of these courageous men, taken directly from the New Testament, were in direct conflict with the doctrines believed and practiced by the Roman Catholic Church, as well as by the various Protestant groups that were in the process of forming.

self: Ezekiel 18:1-32; 1 Timothy 2:4; Romans 2:6-9; Acts 10:34; 2 Peter 3:9; John 3:16; Hebrews 5:8,9; James 2:14-26; Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30,31; Matthew 10:32,33; Romans 10:14-17; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27,28; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 10:47,48; Acts 22:16.

You, too, can be just a Christian, and worship the same way Christians have been worshipping for nearly two thousand years. †

Keith Sisman is a Christian living in Huntingdon, Cambs. England. Having been granted permission to do research in the huge and ancient library of Cambridge University, Keith is writing a history of the Lord's church during those dark and silent years.

PUZZLE PAGE

Circle these words from the book of James. They may run sideways, backwards, up, down, or diagonally.

ANGER	FRUIT	LOVE	RUDDER
ASK	GENTILE	MERCY	SHIP
BELIEVE	GIFT	MIRROR	SIN
BRIDLE	GRASS	MISTAKES	SLOW
COMPASSIONATE	HARVESTERS	NEIGHBOR	SPEAK
COMPLETE	HEAR	PATIENT	STEADFASTNESS
CROWN	HEARERS	PEACEABLE	SUN
DEATH	HONORABLE	PERFECT	TEACHERS
DOERS	HORSE	PERSEVERE	TEMPTED
ENDURES	HUMBLE	POOR	TEST
EVIL	HUMILIATION	PRAYED	TONGUE
EXALTATION	JOY	PURE	TREASURE
FAITH	JUDGMENT	PURIFY	TRIALS
FIRE	LAUGHTER	RELIGIOUS	TRUTH
FLOWER	LIBERTY	RICH	WISDOM
FORGIVEN	LIFE	RIGHTEOUS	WORKS

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



Prescribed

It should be sufficient to say that the worship of God is **prescribed**.

“Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands!

“Serve the LORD with gladness; Come before His presence with singing.

“Know that the LORD, He is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, And into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His name” (Psalm 100:1-4).

God has decreed the content, the action, and the attitude of worship. Consequently, there is no room for self-will. If the course followed is to be “holy,” the elements of personal pleasure, of personal preference, of mere self-will must be excluded. What abides as valid is that which God has ordained.

Pure

Additionally, it should be evident that the worship of God is to be

pure. *Pure devotion* without admixture of motive, *pure moral lives* without the contamination of willful transgression, *pure adoration* without thought of self — these describe the condition of the will in the context of true worship.

“Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?”

“He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully.

“He shall receive blessing from the LORD, And righteousness from the God of his salvation” (Psalm 24:3-5).

That worship cannot be acceptable in which the suppliant’s voice is one way and his heart is another (Matthew 15:8f). It is but an empty routine or ceremony unless the heart is involved. Purity of heart and life, of motive and action, are part and parcel of true worship. Worship serves to make the worshipper purer.

Purposed

Worship cannot be entered into apart from noble **purpose**. It is a

WORSHIP

deliberate purposed action. In worship one chooses to “bow the knee,” to “pay obeisance,” to “do homage.”

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.

For He is our God, And we are the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand” (Psalm 95:6,7).

“...at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,

“and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:10).

It is with resolve of heart that one can come, humbling the heart, seeking after and adoring the Father. It is in devotion that is with singleness of purpose that the believer is able to pay tribute, to give himself, and to praise his Maker.

Patterned

Worship is the desire of the redeemed, and it is also the **pattern** of their lives. Apart from a life yielded to the Savior, longing to honor Heaven’s purpose, acts of worship are just that — acts. The moments of specific outpourings of worship, either public or private, are to flow out of lives yielded to the holy purposes of God. Those moments empower and enrich the life of the redeemed, yet times of

worship are not a substitute for righteousness.

“He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray. Now when evening came, He was alone there” (Matthew 14:23).

“...present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:1,2).

The life that is a living sacrifice must delight in and desire to join in the deliberate praise and homage of the Almighty. The worshipper of God finds compatibility between the aspects of his *praise* of the Father and his *life* for the Savior.

Praise

No aspect of worship is more intriguing than the aspect of **praise**. The joyousness of worship is beautiful. It excites the soul. It lifts the believer to holy delight, as he senses the *“beauty of holiness”* (Psalm 96:9). To worship is to revel in the majesty and honor of the Almighty. It is to delight in His beauty and strength. It is to offer *“the sacrifice of praise...giving thanks to His holy name”* (Hebrews 13:15). †

Ron Bryant preaches for the Camelback congregation in Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A.

Gaining the Most from Worship

Fenter D. Northern

“God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth” (John 4:24).

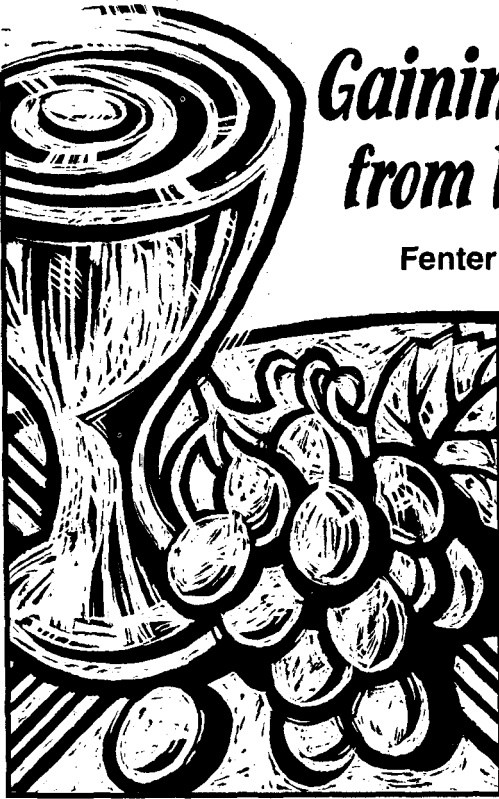
Each Christian is commanded to grow spiritually (2 Peter 3:18). Worship is an essential part of the spiritual growth experience. With the right approach and attitude, worship can progressively elevate the child of God into ascending levels of knowledge and communion with the heavenly Father.

A Refreshing Time for the Soul

Worship is a drawing near to God (Hebrews 10:22). It is an opportunity to come into the refreshing air of those things which are eternal. When entered into fully, it presents a climate away from the dry, suffocating environment of secularism and materialism. It lets one breathe deeply the refreshing spiritual atmosphere that invigorates the soul. There is no closer place to God on earth than in the worship assembly when it is entered into in spirit and truth.

A Confrontation with Jesus

While comfort is certainly forthcoming to the penitent worshipper, it is not the only aspect of worship. Worship is not a mere sentimentalism where



WORSHIP

one talks only of personal experiences with a sweet Jesus who responds through His word with what one wants to hear. Rather, the true Jesus can be very disturbing, for true worship forces one into a self evaluation of his spiritual condition (2 Corinthians 13:5).

“But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

“For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord’s body” (1 Corinthians 11:28,29).

Jesus is always asking, “Do you love Me more than anything else?” One engaged in true worship cannot lie. True worship may make us admit at times, “No, Lord, I don’t,” and in good conscience, we may well add, “*Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.*”

How Worship Helps

God knows every Christian needs to worship regularly. That is why He commands us to not forsake the assembly and reminds us what a terrible condition we can fall into if we do (Hebrews 10:15ff).

“...not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

“For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

“but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries” (Hebrews 10:25-27).

Worship provides an atmosphere which greatly assists us in keeping our conscience alive and well. The conscience, when in harmony with the Word, is our best ally in helping us to be faithful. Close fellowship with others of the redeemed who love God also strengthens our faithfulness.

When a Christian decides to return to the world, the first thing he will do is to forsake worship. Those who willfully return to sin feel a great need to place much distance between themselves and anything that reminds them of God. This shields the conscience from being afflicted. To the erring Christian, the sermon is “hell fire and brimstone” preaching, and he wants none of it.

Rewarding Worship Needs Preparation

One realizes the greatest gains from worship when lost in wonder and praise during the assembly. It is a spiritual event which enables us to overcome the trials of the week.

We can experience a rewarding

WORSHIP

worship service by entering into it with great and careful preparation. One who is mentally occupied with the cares of the world and the latest sports scores right up to 10:00 o'clock on Sunday morning cannot soar to the level of worship achieved by the soul who disciplines himself/herself prior to the event.

Saturday evening is a good time to get things out of the way which could cause Sunday mornings to be a hectic time, spoiling our opportunity to arrive at worship in the best spiritual frame of mind.

Expectancy is Important

Coming to worship with the same old ho-hums, not expecting to receive anything important, is usually disastrous and helps dwarf the growth-process of a Christian. One must approach the worship period with an expectation of receiving something uplifting from the singing, praying, the sermon and even his/her giving. While it may help to have a talented song leader, one skillful in the choice of words in prayer as well as a wonderful orator in the pulpit, these are not the most essential things for receiving what one should from the worship experience. God is able to use quite an ordinary song leader and preacher to uplift a hungry soul, while even the most talented leaders are unable to communicate much to the

inattentive.

In any assembly, worship is individual. Each of us should be careful to provide an environment that is respectful of others — to be reverent, quiet, attentive and participating. Read the admonitions of Paul about worship in 1 Corinthians 14:40, "*Let all things be done decently and in order.*" †

Fenter D. Northern is the retired Academic Dean of Magnolia Bible College in Kosciusko, Mississippi, USA.

In Thee Possessing All

Make me, O Lord, a child again
So tender, frail, and small:
In self possessing nothing,
And in Thee possessing all.
Oh, Saviour, make me small
once more,
That downward I may grow,
And in this heart of mine restore
The faith of long ago.
With Thee may I be crucified
— No longer I that lives —
O Savior, crush my sinful pride
By grace which pardon gives.
Make me, O Lord, a child again,
Obedient to Thy call,
In self possessing nothing
And in Thee possessing all.

— Anonymous



True Worship

Jimmy Jividen

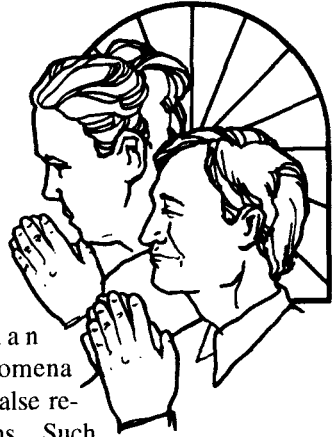
Worshipping God is more than saying the right word at the right time and place. Jesus corrected such a misconception with the woman of Samaria.

"...Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall you worship the Father....God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:21,24).

Worshipping God is more than giving a pleasing performance to show your devotion. Jesus corrected such a perverted view of worship in the Sermon on the Mount.

"And when you pray, you are not to be as the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners, in order to be seen by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full" (Matthew 6:5).

Worshipping God is more than stirring the emotions. Emotional feelings can be caused by



human phenomena and false religions. Such emotions can confuse the mind and overpower the will. Paul described it thus:

*"You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the dumb idols; however, you were led" (1 Corinthians 12:2).
"...we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting" (Ephesians 4:14).*

True worship is my spirit seeking communion with God's spirit in praise and thanksgiving. Our wills, as well as our words, become living sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God. These — our will and our words — are the only things we really own. True worship is giving ourselves to God. †

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

Walking by Faith



Imprisoned for Christ

Ten Christians have been in prison for more than six months. Until further notice, the courts of that land have decided not to have a new hearing of their appeal to be released. "It's O.K.," came the word from the prison. "If God wants us here, we don't mind. Why should we be sad when we're doing His will. We should rejoice in every situation."

That morning, one of the wives had taken food to her husband who, like Joseph, has been given the position of warden in the prison. The other Christians have also been appointed as his helpers, because, as the guards reported, "Their conduct is super." The wife found her husband at the front of the compound, taking the parcels of food from family members and recording the names of the prisoners for whom they were brought. *He had a song book and was singing praises by himself.*

As is the custom in jails around the world, inmates in this land are used as cheap labor in the production of handicrafts and items that are of value on the outside. One day last week, brethren got word that one of the imprisoned brethren would be selling baskets outside the jail. They hurried to the site, and for over an hour they haggled, bargained, and shopped for most of the items on the little stand. An observant person standing nearby could have seen the tears and heard the prayers as Christians shared their love and faith with a lone brother who represented nine others inside the prison walls. Thanks be to God for that brief time together!

More ominous news involves Christians from the southern part of the country. Brethren crossed over the border to meet with Christians in the neighboring country, with documentation showing that the district police chief has permission to arrest Christians without further directive from the capital. The names of the local preacher and his wife were specifically mentioned in the document.

Most of us have never faced the threat of suffering and imprisonment because of our commitment to Christ. Most of us have never known this kind of fear and challenge to our faith. Let us not forget these brothers who are being refined and purified through these trials of fire.

The  Vision
of the Church

John Gipson

Someone has called Acts 20:20 the 20-20 vision of the church.

Remember the setting. The apostle Paul was at Miletus, and from there he sent a message to the elders of the church in Ephesus asking them to come to him. It was important that these leaders of the church be alert to the danger of fierce wolves coming into the flock of God. Paul begins his warning by reminding these men of how earnestly he had worked while he was in Asia. Then he makes a statement about how he went about his work, as recorded in Acts 20:20. *"I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house."*

The public proclamation of the Gospel is a pattern set in the first century which is still followed today. You can hear the Good News proclaimed from the pulpit, web sites, the printed page, and through the means of radio and television. It is public and powerful.

But Paul realized that not everyone would be reached by public proclamation. More needed to be done, and therefore he taught *"from house to house."* It was through a combination of public and private teaching that all Asia heard the Word of God. And it was done in such a short period of time that it still leaves my head reeling. Do you remember the time frame? *"This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks"* (Acts 19:10).

Just think — in two years! Twenty-four months! And that in a time when Paul didn't have all of our modern means of communication!

Could it be that we have not been as successful as the early Christians were because we have followed only one-half of Paul's pattern? †

John Gipson preaches for the Sixth & Izard Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, U.S.A.



Speak

A Good Word For Jesus

Demar Elam

Speak A Good Word For Jesus is the title of a book written by Joe D. Gray. Those words have made a profound impression in my mind. Just think! What if every Christian would "speak a good word for Jesus," at every opportunity?

I fear that our concept of soul winning may be too narrow. Some think that in order to be a soul winner one must be able to lead an individual from Genesis to Revelation. Granted, every Christian should study (2 Timothy 2:15) to the extent that he or she could properly instruct the sinner in the way of truth and righteousness. However, soul winning often begins simply with a word fitly spoken in behalf of Jesus Christ.

Just pause and think what could be done in every place where the

Lord's church exists if every member went about daily speaking a good word for Jesus! Our great God desires that all men be saved. This great desire of God is echoed in 1 Timothy 2:3,4, "*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.*"

Think how much our lives and the lives of those with whom we come in contact will be enriched when we learn to speak a good word for Jesus. Daily we are afforded the privilege of speaking out in behalf of Christ and daily we either use or lose those opportunities. If we aren't using our opportunities to the fullest extent, we need to take the time to change our thought processes to be on continual lookout for an

CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

opportunity to simply speak a good word for Jesus.

Jesus came into the world and lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:22) setting an example for us to follow (1 Peter 2:21). Jesus' very mission on earth was "...to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). He entrusted us with the ongoing thrust of the redemptive work He

good word for Jesus. Our buildings would already be running over if every saint had been daily practicing what we have spoken of in this article. Improvement should be the goal of every Christian. Let each member of the Lord's church learn to capitalize on every opportunity that comes our way to "Speak a Good Word for Jesus." The results

All the organized programs in the church will not replace the impact of every Christian in the body of Christ learning to speak a good word for Jesus.

had begun when He said, "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature*" (Mark 16:15,16; Matthew 28:19,20). Yes, the redemptive work was initiated by the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross of Calvary (1 Peter 2:24). However, we are responsible to proclaim the message that redemption has been provided and that it is available to all of humanity (John 3:15-17).

All the organized programs in the church will not replace the impact of every Christian in the body of Christ learning to speak a

will be simply phenomenal! Our love for Christ will increase; the love amongst brethren will increase; the love for others will increase and the building will fill up as the average man on the street becomes impressed with the name we wear.

"Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us; we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20)." †

Demar Elam is the Director of Mission Studies at Southern Christian University in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.

“I Am Not Interested in Excuses but in Action”

P.R. Swamy

I was at my friend's office the other day. He was pointing out some guidelines to his Junior Officer. Then the officer explained that he had not been able to perform the given task because of rain, traffic jam, etc.

My friend heard the explanations patiently. They sounded like the truth, but even though the excuses were justifiable, my friend was not happy. He said “I am not interested in excuses, but only action. I want the work to be done, even if it requires sacrificing something.” To my mind, he was right.

God is also not interested in excuses however reasonable they may seem. He wants action. He is interested in work being done. His commands must be obeyed, regardless (Matthew 8:21, Luke 14:17-20). To serve God faithfully requires sacrifice on our part (Matthew 16:24). That is to say, we must give first preference to God and to obedience to His will, under any circumstance or in any situation. Only then is He pleased. God will never compromise with this principle. Throughout the history of the Old Testament and the New Testament, we can see this rule.

If we look around us, millions

of souls are perishing day by day without Christ. We who are enlightened should feel our duty to preach the gospel to those who are still groping in darkness. Many think that it is all right to be a good Christian and attend the worship regularly. That's not enough. In our lives we must think and act like Christ Jesus (Philippians 2:5).

Christ came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). When He saw the crowd, He was moved with compassion on them because they were sheep without shepherds (Matthew 9:36).

Dear reader, do you have the mind of Christ? Do you have the same compassion as Jesus towards sinners? If so, you will not live on excuses. You must do something to preach the gospel and save souls before it is too late. What a tragedy to go and meet the Lord in judgment with empty hands!

Must I go, and empty handed?

Must I meet my Savior so?

Not one soul with which to greet

Him,

Must I empty handed go?

Think it over brother, sister.
Let's be *doers*, not *excuse makers*. †

**P.R. Swamy is the Tamil radio speaker
for India over Radio Sri Lanka.**

My Friend Buddy



Sylvia L. Camp

(Managing Editor's note — While we do not usually publish a series of articles by a writer, it was felt that sister Camp's writings concerning her experience with cancer and its treatment would be helpful to many. This is the third article in the series, and the final one will appear in the next issue.)

Following the fifth week of treatment, a strange reaction began. My oncologist and other specialists had no answer when consulted. The oncologist went so far as to say he'd never heard of it. Noises — yes, but not music.

A man's voice began singing in my right ear. He had a trained bass voice and sang the lead beautifully. His was the only voice I heard. Acappella, he sang day and night for a few days. He had perfect pitch. Some of the hymns I couldn't recall having heard. Some I'd known always. The volume never varied — loud enough to hear every word, but not loud enough to keep me from sleeping. No one else could hear it. How I wished I could

tape it.

He went away for a short while. Then he returned for one hundred sixty days of singing around the clock. His repertoire now included patriotic songs, Irish lullabies, Christmas carols, Negro spirituals, and religious songs. I knew every one of them. One Sunday morning, as worship began, to my amazement he started singing, "Here Comes the Bride."

I named him Buddy because he was my friend and buddy. My husband had to leave me when he preached or ran errands. But Buddy never left me. What else could I call him?

Buddy began to sound fainter. Sometimes I could not recognize

what he sang. But I had to be put to sleep again for another colonoscopy. By the next morning, Buddy began singing again as clearly as ever.

I began to wonder if Buddy had a connection with the anesthesia. I called a good friend and anesthetist. I asked if there could be anything in the anesthetic which could cause Buddy to be with me.

Immediately he asked, "Have you ever taken any Valium?" "I've never had a dose of it in my life," I replied. "That's what you think," he answered. "Now, we start surgical patients with Valium before we begin the anesthetic. It's much easier for them to get to sleep."

He knew how many times I'd been in the operating room for surgery as well as tests, so he had the answer I'd been searching for. Nerve-racking noises, constant sounds like the chirping of crickets, roaring, etc., are the usual reactions. None of my doctors had ever heard of a patient hearing music. We've all agreed I was blessed indeed to have had such a pleasant reaction.

The oncologist continued to remind me that I had only one day at a time. But, that's all anyone has. My answer is a daily prayer of "just one more tomorrow." †

Sylvia L. Camp is a Christian writer who lives in Amarillo, Texas, USA.

An Inward Prayer

*I ask not, Lord, a famous name,
Of wealth that plays a roulette
game.*

*I ask for strength of limb and hand,
And thoughts that turn to
understand.*

*I ask a heart that shares its hope;
A patient will that dares to cope,
I ask for love that gleans the husk,
And faith that pierces every dusk.*

*I ask for sight to take the path
That lifts my soul in aftermath;
And grace to keep a pleasant smile
When life demands its second mile.*

*I ask You, Lord, to lend a song
When skies are dark, and hours,
long,*

*I ask for bread upon my board,
With grateful praise for common
horde.*

*I ask for peace at my day's end,
The love of Thee — my one true
friend*

—Roxie Lusk Smith



*"Ye that love the Lord,
hate evil"* (Psalm 97:10).

It is quite fashionable these days to be tolerant of evil. Multitudes pride themselves in being broad-minded toward every perverted and depraved manner of conduct imaginable. We are inundated constantly by the entertainment world (movies and TV) with filth, and though some few of us protest, the majority seems to be brainwashed into accepting whatever comes along. The "in thing" is to be "tolerant" of adultery, fornication, homo-

The Case For

INTOLERANCE

Maxie B. Boren

sexuality, drunkenness, reveling, etc. Except, of course, toward those of us who speak out against the moral degradation taking place. There is "ZERO" tolerance toward us. The "big guns" of the media that have such influence on public opinion fire hateful salvos at every opportunity toward those they call "the religious right."

But regardless of the "tolerant climate" toward evil today in our society and the insults thrown our way, Christians must continue to stand up for

DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

what is right and against what is wrong. The Bible still declares, "*Ye that love the Lord, hate evil*" (Psalm 97:10). The Sacred Word instructs us to "*abhor that which is evil*" (Romans 12:9). And again, "*abstain from every form of evil*" (1 Thessalonians 5:22). And too, "... *resist the devil . . .*" (James 4:7).

While Christians are taught to be tolerant of some things, evil is not one of them! Concerning it, we are to be most intolerant! Iniquity is of the kingdom of Satan, the realm of spiritual darkness. It is in stark contrast to the kingdom of our Lord, which is the realm of light, goodness, truth, righteousness. One is the antithesis of the other. Allegiance to Christ demands an attitude of hostility toward evil! To love the Lord is to hate evil. There is no room for tolerance on the part of the Christian toward evil and wickedness!

Satan is the king of the abyss, the leader of all that is contrary to God's will. He is called by the Greek name "Apollyon," which means "Destroyer!" (see Revelation 9:11). As the "Destroyer," you can be assured that he seeks the spiritual ruination of us all. He is our avowed enemy, and no amount of "sugar coating" can change that fact! Therefore, **there can be no compromise with the devil!** He must be resisted at all cost, with the

utmost resolve. It is a matter of eternal life or death!

This is the reason that it is so painful to realize that many Christians have unwittingly imbibed the philosophy of tolerating the evil that is rampant in this spiritually bereft society in which we live. A lenient attitude toward false ways and sin in general has permeated our ranks, and has lessened their distinctive stand for truth and right which once was the "number one" identifying characteristic of the church of the Lord. How urgent it is that we regain the strong stand we once took!

Brethren, with the Bible clearly informing us to hate evil, abhor evil, and abstain from evil, it seems to me that this is a strong case for the **INTOLERANCE OF EVIL!** Our stand must be an unequivocal stand for what is right, and against what is wrong! **Nothing less will do.** Let the world call us the "religious radicals" all they want to. The world is not going to judge us in the last day — the Lord will (read 1 Corinthians 4:4 and 2 Corinthians 5:10). Thus, we need only to be concerned with pleasing Him, and to do so, we must stand up and be counted as individuals and as a collective body of His people. †

Maxie B. Boren preaches for the Brown Trail congregation in Bedford, Texas, U.S.A.

The difference between a wise man and a fool is "doing". The foolish man *"hears these sayings of mine,"* Jesus says, *"and does not do them; the wise man hears...and does"* (Matthew 7:26,24).

Jesus tells His followers to listen to the scribes and Pharisees and to **do** what they say, but, *"Do not do as they do, because they say and do not"* (Matthew 23:3).

Jesus emphasizes the point to a lawyer (Luke 10:25-37). Jewish society was a theocracy, as far as Roman occupation allowed, so religious law and civil law commingled. Jewish law was made up of the Old Testament and a large body of oral tradition and case law. Lawyers, also called "scribes" and "teachers of the law", were experts in these matters. Like some preachers and theologians today, they enjoyed fine distinctions, arguing minute points, "splitting hairs".

The lawyer asked Jesus, *"What shall I do to inherit eternal life?"* Jesus turned the question, which involved the law, back to the lawyer, *"What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"* The lawyer responded correctly, *"Love God."* *"Love your neighbor."* His

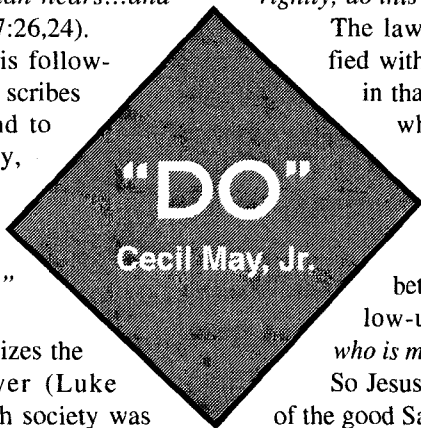
problem, therefore, was not in his understanding. His doctrine was correct. Jesus then went to the heart of the matter, *"You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."*

The lawyer was not satisfied with how he came out in that exchange. Those who tempt Jesus, as he intended to do, rarely are pleased. He tried to make himself look better by asking a follow-up question, *"And who is my neighbor?"*

So Jesus told him the story of the good Samaritan and asked, *"Who do you think was neighbor to him who fell among thieves?"* The lawyer could not bring himself to say the words, "the Samaritan," but neither could he miss the point. He said, *"He who showed mercy to him."* Once more Jesus made His point: *"Go and do likewise."*

One of Jesus' highest compliments was, *"She has done what she could"* (Mark 14:8). He said, *"do good"* (Luke 6:27); *"do his (the Father's) will"* (John 9:31); *"do what I command you"* (John 15:14).

If we are to hear Jesus say, *"Well done, good and faithful servant,"* we must **do** well. †



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

The Twilight Years



There is happiness
When someone very old
And near to death
Finds God
But there is sadness, too:

With heavy heart I see
The wrinkled face,
The trembling hands;
Time has come
Already
And has stolen
All he had to give —
His years,
His mind,
His strength.

With sight impaired
How can he learn God's word?
With memory worn and dim
How can he grow?
The shortness of remaining
years
Leaves little time
To live past babyhood in God,
And often, oh too often,
With his new-found life
There's nothing he can do
But hug it to himself

Alone

And wish in vain for words,
For knowledge,
And for time
To share with someone else . . .

Time has come already and has stolen
All he had to give?

No. Not all . . .

One thing is left:

The voice of what he does.

Can you fathom what it meant

To those who watched him

As that snowy head

Was buried in submission

With his Lord?

Can you weigh the impact

Each time he braves the cold

Or rain or heat,

Defying age,

Ignoring pain,

To worship with the saints?

And sitting here beside him,

Sensing his devotion,

Listening to his trembling voice

As it seeks to praise its God,

Knowing in my heart his thankfulness,

His hope

Where there was none before,

It makes me think . . .

Yes,

Much was lost

With wasted time and stubborn will

But the voice of what he does

In these, the twilight years,

Will speak in soberness,

with conviction and with love

To all who cross his path.

— Betty Burton Choate



What About the Children?

Carroll Sites

"And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

"Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged" (Colossians 3:21).

". . . that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children" (Titus 2:4).

How do we feel about our children? How interested are we in our children? Do we love our children? How concerned are we about them? Are we more interested in money — jobs — pleasure — self — than we are about our children? I recently read, **"Some families can trace their ancestry back 300 years, but can't tell you where their children were last night. It is said that the reason so many children are found on the streets at night is that they don't want to be left at home by themselves."**

How is your home life? How much quality time does your family spend together? How often are your children left at home by themselves?

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

We parents are the ones who bring children into this world. Is it not reasonable that we should be responsible for them? A farmer was asked how he got such beautiful *sheep*? He replied, "I take good care of the *lambs*!!"

I took a piece of plastic clay
And idly molded it one day.
And as my fingers pressed it still,
It moved and yielded to my will.
I came again when days were past.
The piece of clay was hard at last.
The shape I gave it still it bore,
But I could change it nevermore.

I took a piece of living clay,
And gently formed it, day by day.
I molded it with power and art —
A young child's soft and yielding heart.
I came again when years were gone —
It was a man I looked upon;
He still that early impress bore
But I could change him nevermore.

Let's guard and guide children. They are the world — the society — the citizens — and the church — of the future. †

Carroll Sites preaches the Gospel of Christ in Higden, Arkansas, USA.



The Best Sermon

As the mother was completing the purchase of two new suits for her boys, Charles proudly said to Arthur, "Won't I look nice in Bible class Sunday?"

A friendly lady standing near overheard him and asked, "Do you go to Bible school?" The smaller brother, Arthur, only five years old, answered indignantly with a withering glance, "Where else would we go on Sunday morning?" Blushing, the lady remarked, "That's the best sermon I ever heard."

The most precious gift we can give our children is not a trip to the beach, a shiny new toy, or a new suit of clothes, but the opportunity to study the God in whose image they are created. Plan to be present *with* your children for all Bible classes. In this you can give them a gift that will neither grow old nor wear out.

— Selected

"As Did Their Fathers, So Do They"

Charles Pugh III

In describing a certain period in the history of the Israelites, the Bible says, "*So these nations feared the Lord, and served their graven images, both their children, and their children's children: as did their fathers, so do they unto this day*" (2 Kings 17:41).

It is a tremendous blessing to be a father. "*The glory of children are their fathers*" (Proverbs 17:6). Thus it is good to honor fathers and fatherhood.

With the privilege of being a father comes an awesome responsibility. This responsibility is reflected in the influence of a father. "*As did their fathers, so do they. . . .*" The famous poet, Edgar Allen Poe, said, "I learned to love the flavor of good wine sitting at my father's table." Poe died an alcoholic. On the other hand, there is the infidel who said, "The one argument for Christianity which I cannot get around is my father's life." Billy Sunday said, "Every man is some boy's hero . . . If every man lived right today, no boy would go to hell tomorrow."



His little arms crept 'round my neck
and I heard him say
Four simple words I shan't forget —
Four words that made me pray.
They turned a mirror on my soul,
On secrets no one knew.
They startled me, I hear them yet;
He said, "I'll be like you."

†

Charles Pugh III preaches for the Bridge Street Church of Christ in New Martinsville, West Virginia, U.S.A.

THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Recently, I heard a speech that I enjoyed. The speaker had been married forty years. He told of a visit to his doctor and of mentioning this fact to him. The doctor questioned, "How have you managed to stay married so long?" The reply: "Well, for us, there was no other option!"

I thought in my mind, "That's how I feel," because I know what God says about divorce. Fortunately, (or unfortunately) my mind began to work on that phrase "no other option" as the speaker continued. I confess, I didn't hear much for the next few minutes, because I was caught up by "no other option."

There are many who live by this "no other option" rule. But, I decided that isn't enough! I have seen people living by that rule who were miserable and grumpy with one another. I have seen them withhold conversation, money, affection, and physical relationships. I have seen them develop separate checking accounts, separate friends, separate dreams, and separate private lives. I have seen them stay together, although both would say that if it weren't for heaven and hell, they would have said their "good byes" a long time ago!

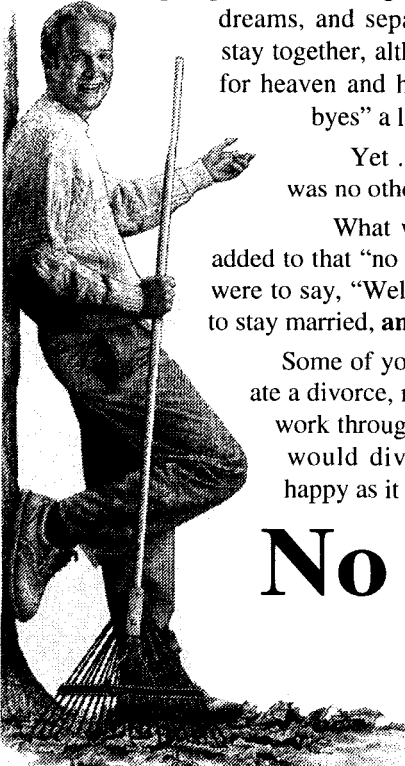
Yet . . . both could say, "Well, for us, there was no other option!"

What would happen if a second phrase were added to that "no other option" rule? What if the couple were to say, "Well, for us, there was no other option but to stay married, **and make it work for the both of us**"?

Some of you who read this article would not initiate a divorce, no matter what! You would even try to work through an affair. You would die before you would divorce. But, your marriage is not as happy as it could be.

No Other Option!

Bill Keele



THE CHRISTIAN HOME

What would happen if, beginning now, you would say, "Well, for us, there is no other option but to stay married, **and make it work for the both of us**"?

Sure, it will take some work, perhaps more work than you ever imagined.

Sure, it will require reviewing God's rule for man and woman in marriage.

Sure, it may require some forgiving and a lot of healing. But, *there is more to marriage than refusing to divorce.*

"And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery; and whoever marries her who is divorced commits adultery" (Matthew 19:9).

We **know** how God feels about divorce! Have we ever stopped to ask how He feels about a *miserable marriage*?

"Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband" (1 Corinthians 7:3).

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her . . .

"So husbands ought to love

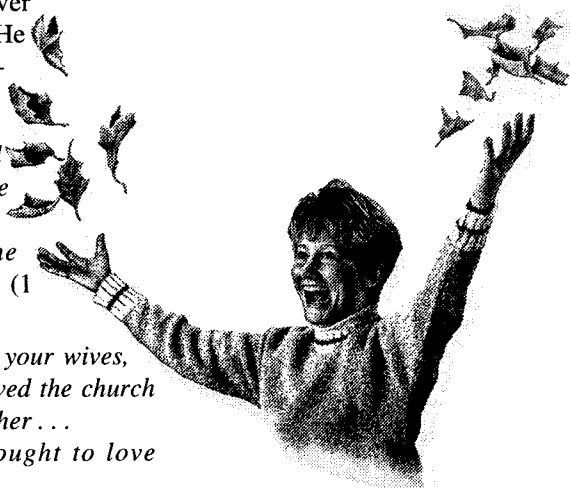
their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. . .

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Ephesians 5:25,28,31).

"Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7).

The greatest gift some can give themselves and their mate is an **addition** to their "no other option" rule. †

Bill Keele preaches for the church of Christ in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, USA.



PROVERBS 17:22



A man found a bottle, rubbed it, and out popped a genie. The genie said, "Ask me what you wish, for I can grant it."

Man: "I fear flying. Would you make a bridge to Hawaii for me?"

Genie: "Oh, that's really hard. Is there not another wish?"

Man: "I've never understood women. Can you explain them to me?"

Genie: "Did you want a two-lane or a four-lane bridge?"



Following a speech, the preacher said to the young reporter covering the event: "When you do your writeup, please don't mention the anecdotes I used. I might want to use them in other speeches." The newsman obliged by inserting this

line: "The minister told several stories which cannot be repeated here."



Give a man a fish and he will have dinner. Teach a man to fish, and he will be late for dinner.



We offer this question for the deep thinkers to ponder: "Should vegetarians eat animal crackers?"



A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk I have a work station . . .



If quitters never win, and winners never quit, what ignoramus came up with, "Quit while you're ahead"?



Cousin Elmo came to the place on the employment application

PROVERBS 17:22

where it asked who should be notified in case of an emergency. He wrote, "A very good doctor."



You may not have heard about the congregation that had a new loudspeaker system installed in the auditorium. It was donated by one of the members in honor of his wife.



Student: "Teacher, do you know who was the shortest man in the Bible?"

Teacher: "Would it be Zachaeus?"

Student: "No. Bildad the Shuhite."



This ad appeared in the Morning Sun, Mt. Pleasant, Michigan: "Models needed. Have your hair done by our world-renounced artists."



Used car dealer to customer: "This one has very low mileage. The former owner drove it only when he could get it started."



Some folks can be so kind, polite, and sweet-spirited — until you try to sit in their pew.



My friend really tries to diet religiously — he never eats during church services.



Bobby: "Your sister sure is spoiled, isn't she?"

Jimmy: "Naw. That's just her perfume."



Recipe to Retard Baldness

Take half cup of green persimmon seeds, well crushed. Mix in half a cup of powdered alum and enough water to make a paste. Rub this all over your head.

This really won't grow new hair, but it makes your head pucker up to fit what hair you have left.



Many people aim to do right, but they are notoriously poor shots.

Are You Religious?

Leon Barnes

If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world" (James 1:26,27).

"Religion" isn't a bad word. It can refer to the outward actions of one who believes. It also can be used of the worship of an individual. Perhaps the most positive meaning is the piety or devotion of a believer.

Two verses in the book of James stand out in giving us a clear concept of religion. In James 1:26, 27 we read, "*If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.*"

A religion which does not change our speech is worthless. The tongue always needs a bridle on it. The hardest member of our bodies to control is the tongue. It is all too easy to use our speech for say-

ing good and godly things one moment, then to use it for evil the next. Since it is "*Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks,*" our use of the tongue is an open book to our hearts. Filthy language comes from a filthy mind. Lying lips have a direct link to deception in the heart. A mouth set on gossip has a pipe running straight from a slanderous heart. To stop the tongue from using the wrong language will require changing the thinking behind it.

A religion which doesn't change our actions isn't from God. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God causes us to do something more than just come to worship and sing the right songs. Too often religion is something we put on Sunday morning and take off as soon as we leave the church building. One of the easiest things in the world to do is talk religious. We

TEXTUAL STUDIES

can pray good prayers, say nice words, and even give our money on Sunday morning without being one who cares about those around us. But the religion God wants us to have is one that acts. It causes us to “*Visit the orphans and the widows in their trouble*” (James 1:27).

To visit means to care for the needs of the other. This isn’t about social calls. It is about seeing the needs and setting out to meet them. Notice the fact that James said the person with a pure and undefiled religion visits the orphans and widows **in their trouble**, or in their affliction.

People’s needs seldom come in neat packages. If we could just get every needy person to fit a profile sheet and a pre-packaged bundle of benefits, help would be easy. But every person’s needs and hurts are his very own. I know we often say, as another describes the troubles he is dealing with, “I know just what you mean. The same thing happened to me three years ago.” But the other person is saying to himself, “They must not be listening. What they dealt with is nothing like the problems and hardships I’m going through.”

We would become many times more helpful to the hurting if we stopped trying to tell how much worse our problems are than theirs and really listened to what is going

on in their lives. It would also help if we took time to pray to God about the hurts of others before we offered quick, easy-to-follow, three-step guides to them on how to solve their problems. I’ve never been very impressed with the doctors who started writing a prescription for me before I told them what was wrong. Have you?

The other thing, which is necessary for our religion to be pure and undefiled, is for us to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. Nothing shouts to the watchful world that our religion is all a matter of convenience more than our own moral and ethical failures. The cause of Christ has suffered untold harm by those who tell others how to live and the right kind of life, while being involved in immoral or dishonest activity themselves. As preachers and teachers of the Word of God, it is imperative that we read the Bible and apply it to our own lives before we make it into another lesson or sermon to preach to others.

When we practice a pure and undefiled religion, the value is tremendous both for this life and the world to come. Let’s all make certain our religion is the real thing before God. †

Leon Barnes preaches for the Barrow Road Church of Christ in Little Rock, Arkansas, USA.

Questions About Marriage

Gary C. Hampton

"Now concerning the things of which you wrote to me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman" (1 Corinthians 7:1).

Should a Single Christian Marry?

Paul turned from dealing with problems he had heard about to questions the Corinthians had asked. The first question, as seen by McGarvey, was, "Is marriage to be desired or avoided by Christians?" Paul answered that it was better not to touch a woman. He was referring to sexual relations, which for the Christian would be confined to marriage (see Genesis 20:6; Proverbs 6:29). Due to circumstances at the time (verse 26), the apostle's answer was an exception to God's rule, or plan (1 Corinthians 7:1; Genesis 2:18).

Yet, to avoid sin brought on by natural desires, some should marry. God gave the marriage bed as a special place of joy to fulfill man's desire. Marriage was also given by God to provide a helper specially suited to man and a means of procreation (1 Corinthians 7:2; Genesis 2:18; 1 Timothy 2:15). Paul said marriage partners should satisfy one another's desires to help each other avoid great temptation. Neither one

has the right to refuse the other the privileges of marriage (1 Corinthians 7:3-4).

He further instructed that they should not deprive one another, except upon agreement during a special time of prayer. After that time of denial, relations should be resumed, lest one, or both, be tempted to sin. Paul was not commanding them to refrain from relations during special seasons of prayer. Those matters are to be decided by individuals at home (1 Corinthians 7:5-6).

Some have enough self-control in the area of sexual desires to allow them to live without marriage (Matthew 19:11-12). Not everyone has the same gift, so all could not remain single as Paul did. Under the circumstances at the time of writing this letter, Paul said it would be better for those who had never married, or were single again because of death, to remain single. However, if one could not control his desires, it was better to marry than to burn with passion (1 Corinthians 7:7-9).

**Should Married
Christians Separate?**

The second question would seem to be, "Should a Christian, who is joined to Christ, separate from the union of marriage?" Jesus had answered this question (Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18). Generally, they should not ever separate. Lipscomb commented, "If she and her husband cannot live harmoniously together let her remain unmarried. She is not permitted to marry again. That would be adulterous." Further, "If the wife who has separated from her husband finds that, after all, she cannot live a single life in purity the only course open to her is to be reconciled to the husband whom she has injured." The rules of this verse apply to a husband, too (1 Corinthians 7:10-11).

Paul wrote the Lord's commandments (1 Corinthians 14:37), but the Lord had not spoken of this matter while on earth. By inspiration, Paul spoke the Lord's will in the matter. To this point, Paul has instructed believers married to unbelievers. If the unbeliever is willing to live with the believer and allow him to be faithful, the believer should not separate. The principle applies to believing wives as well as husbands (1 Corinthians 7:12-13). †

Gary C. Hampton labors with the Central church in Valdosta, Georgia, U.S.A.

Six Divorce Myths

Myth #1: The grass is greener outside my marriage. The conflict you are in may give you that impression. That is seldom the case after the divorce. **The truth:** What looks so green is usually the weeds.

Myth #2: The kids will be better off. The truth: Divorce, even under the best of circumstances, has a devastating effect on children. Kids will always want their mother and father to be together.

Myth #3: Divorce is justified in my case because I'm not in love anymore. The world has taken over your thinking. **The truth:** The same God who commanded people to love their enemies will gladly help couples who want to learn to love each other again.

Myth #4: Divorce will make me happy. Happiness is determined by one's attitude, not by circumstances. **The truth:** While some people are happy after a divorce, most feel guilt, loneliness, anxiety.

Myth #5: Divorce will set me free. There are many kinds of prisons. **The truth:** Divorce doesn't really free you; it shackles you in a different way.

Myth #6: It is God's will for me to divorce. Satan has told that lie millions of times. **The truth:** God has declared that He hates divorce (Malachi 2:16).

— Gerald Elliot

“Think On His Name”

Clarence DeLoach, Jr.

“You offer defiled food on My altar, but say, ‘In what way have we defiled You?’ By saying ‘The table of the Lord is contemptible.’ And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?” Says the Lord of hosts” (Malachi 1:7,8).

The book of Malachi brings to a close Old Testament revelation. In many ways it is a dismal picture of God’s covenant people. The people, as a whole, had wearied God!

The priests (leaders) had despised His name (1:6).

They offered polluted bread upon the altar (1:7).

They offered the blind, lame, and sick as sacrifices (1:8).

They robbed God by withholding their tithes and offerings (3:8-10).

God said, “You have wearied me” (Malachi 2:17). God can be wearied by the apathy, indifference, and abstinence of His people. He still is!

But, there are some bright spots. There was a remnant! The prophet said, *“Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another — and the Lord hearkened and heard it and a book of remembrance*

was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name” (Malachi 3:16).

From this verse we gain numerous insights:

— In tough times the righteous need each other.

— In dark days those of like precious faith need to **often** speak to one another.

— The Lord hearkens and knows those who fear Him.

— He owns them, spares them, and considers them His jewels (3:17).

Now, what relevance does this message from ancient Malachi have for God’s people — Christians — now? Just this: we live in tough times! Pressures abound! God put us in a family! The church is that family! We need to stick together! †

Clarence DeLoach, Jr. is the preacher for the Walnut Street congregation in Dickson, Tennessee, U.S.A.

Water Too Precious To Drink

Jack Harriman

“And David said with longing. Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate” (2 Samuel 23:15).

David was on the run from King Saul. He was hiding in a cave near Bethlehem. This is where he grew up. Memories of his youth come flooding back. *“And David said with longing. ‘Oh, that someone would give me a drink of water from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate’” (2 Samuel 23:15).*

Over in Bethlehem is a garrison of the Philistines who had invaded the land. With David is a small troop of loyal and daredevil warriors. Three of David’s warriors fought their way to that well, drew water and fought their way back, and presented David with water from the well by the gate for which he longed.

But David would not drink it. He poured it out as an offering unto the Lord saying, *“Far be it from me, O Lord, that I should do this! Is not this the blood of the men who went in jeopardy of their lives?”* (verse 17). This would seem to indicate David had no intention of sending these men on this perilous mission, and was not aware of their going.

While we really admire the love and devotion of these warriors to David, it is David’s act that gets our attention. I believe David was longing more for his childhood than for a drink of water. O, for those wonderful carefree days of childhood when it seemed everyone loved one another and life was simple and secure. We can all identify with that longing.

Thank God for the memories of childhood, but God did not create us to be children. And even if David could have gone back, he would not have been satisfied. That water was not as good as he remembered and no one loved him in childhood as these three men demonstrated they did.

Do you have something that is too precious to use on yourself? Then give it to the Lord! †

Jack Harriman preaches for the Center Street Church of Christ in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.

Sayings of Men Vs. Word of God

Ye Have Heard it Said:

1. *One church is as good as another;
One can be saved outside the church.*
2. *All folk are trying to go to Heaven;
Honesty and sincerity assures salvation.*
3. *Creed books make the Bible plain;
Creed books help give us our identity.*
4. *Salvation is by "faith only;"
One is saved at the point of faith.*
5. *Once saved, you're always saved;
The saved can't fall from grace.*
6. *One is saved without baptism;
Baptism is really non-essential.*
7. *Any mode of baptism is all right;
Choose sprinkling, pouring or immersion.*

But The Word of God Says:

1. *Matt. 16:18; Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:23,25;
Acts 20:28; Col. 1:18; Eph. 3:21*
2. *Prov. 14:12; Matt. 7:21-23; 16:6,12;
2 Tim. 2:5; 1 Jno. 4:1*
3. *Isa. 35:8; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; 2 Pet. 1:3;
Matt. 11:25; Jno. 20:30,31*
4. *Jas. 2:20-24; Acts 2:36-38; 9:6;
Compare Jno. 3:16 & 3:36 A.S.V.*
5. *Gal. 5:3,4; Matt. 25:14-30; Lk. 8:13;
1 Cor. 9:27; 10:6-12; Heb. 6:3,4.*
6. *Mark 16:15,16; Acts 2:38; 10:47,48;
Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26,27.*
7. *Eph. 4:5; Rom. 6:3,4; Col. 2:12;
Acts 8:38.*

Often idioms of expression are accepted as God's Truth, although they may contradict all the Lord has said on the subject. It is the better part of wisdom to hold up these human opinions before the searchlight of God's Word to see if truth abides in them. If it does not, then discard them!

Personal Evangelism

Dale Grissom

I. Real Church Growth

- A. Comes as a result of evangelism.
- B. Is not the same as “swelling,” which can occur when Christians move into a community.
- C. Is the result of converting sinners to Christ — the only way overall numbers of Christians increase.

II. Involvement Results in Growth

- A. Need large percentage of membership involved in order to be effective.
- B. Those actively involved in teaching need network of support from membership.

III. Needs of a Growing Congregation

- A. Unity — Elders, deacons, preachers, and teachers must be committed to the goal of being what God would have them to be.
- B. Vision — Leadership must be able to visualize and plan for desired long-range accomplishments.
- C. Balance — In evangelism, education, benevolence. Must avoid extremes, either to the left or to the right.

IV. Evangelistic Education Program

- A. Bible class students of all ages should be encouraged to invite others to services, always looking for opportunities to teach the Gospel.
- B. Funerals and weddings offer opportunities to set up studies.

V. Christian Counseling

- A. Affords great opportunity for teaching the Gospel.
- B. Needed in every congregation; ideally, someone in leadership needs to prepare for the opportunity.
- C. Means by which the world can be reminded that Jesus is the greatest counselor who ever lived, and the Bible is the greatest book on counseling ever written.

†

Dale Grissom works with the church of Christ in Dexter, Missouri, U.S.A., giving much of his time to personal evangelism.

God's Missionary Program

Acts 1:8

J. C. Choate

Introduction:

1. This is a study of the missionary program of the church of the first century.
2. The definition of a missionary program:
 - a. A program of work that has a specific mission.
 - b. The mission is the preaching the gospel.
 - c. There are two kinds of mission work:
 - (1) Local.
 - (2) Foreign.
3. The importance of the church:
 - a. The manifold wisdom of God is made known through the church (Ephesians 3:10).
 - b. The Lord works only through the church in preaching the gospel to others (Ephesians 2:10; Mark 16:15,16).
4. First we will consider the missionary program of the first century and then the missionary program for the twentieth century.

Discussion:

A. God's missionary program for the first century (Acts 1:8).

1. The gospel was to be preached first in Jerusalem.
 - a. The Lord promised the apostles that repentance and remission of sins should be preached first in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). The first gospel sermon in fact was preached in Jerusalem (Acts 2).
 - b. The sermon at the temple (Acts 3).
 - c. Stephen and his preaching (Acts 6,7).
2. The gospel was next preached in Judaea.
 - a. This took place in Jerusalem (Acts 2,3).
 - b. This also included the small villages, etc., around Jerusalem.
 - c. After the gospel was preached in Jerusalem it spread throughout Judaea.

CHARTS AND OUTLINES

3. Then the gospel was preached in Samaria.
 - a. Philip took the gospel to Samaria (Acts 9).
 - b. He also preached the gospel to the eunuch (Acts 8).
4. And finally, the gospel was taken to the uttermost parts of the earth.
 - a. After Paul's conversion he did much to bring this about (Acts 9).
 - b. The gospel was preached to both the Jews and the Gentiles (Acts 10:34,35).
 - c. The gospel was preached in Corinth, Ephesus, Antioch, Rome, Berea, etc. (1 Corinthians 1; Ephesians 1; Acts 11; Romans 1; Acts 17).
 - d. The gospel was preached throughout Asia, Europe, and over the earth (Acts 2; Romans 1).
 - e. Even in Paul's day the truth had been made known throughout the world (Colossians 1:5,6).

B. God's missionary program for the twentieth century (Mark 16:15,16).

1. Christians are still responsible to take the gospel to the world (Mark 16:15).
 - a. To every nation (Matthew 28:19,20).
 - b. To every creature (Mark 16:15,16).
2. As in the first century, the gospel should be preached locally and then spread everywhere.
3. If all would but endeavor to carry out the Lord's plan of doing mission work it would not be long until the world would know the truth.
4. Each member can do his part of the work.
 - a. By living the Christian life.
 - b. By preaching the gospel to others.
 - c. By cooperating with the local congregation.
 - d. By giving to such a cause.
5. Each congregation can do its part of the work.
 - a. By keeping each member faithful.
 - b. By preaching the gospel at home.
 - c. By reaching out to other fields.
 - d. By cooperating with other congregations in such work.
 - e. By giving as much as possible to these program.
6. The church as a whole body will have impact.

CHARTS AND OUTLINES

- a. By remaining true to the will of God.
- b. By continually concentrating on evangelism.
- c. By involving new Christians in teaching others.

Conclusion:

1. It is the Lord's will that all should hear the truth and thereby be saved (1 Timothy 2:4).
2. Let's consider the first century plan for mission work and keep in mind that the Lord would have us preach the gospel to the whole world even in this age.
3. We should not rest until we have accomplished His will. †

J.C. Choate, Editor-in Chief of *The Voice of Truth International*, also works with radio and literature programs in India and Asia.

What Does a Passion for Evangelism Do?

- * It makes us appreciate the fact of our own salvation even more than we formerly did.
- * It helps to impress us with the urgency of the tasks of saving the souls of men, because we are constantly reminded of our mission to share the Gospel with every creature.
- * We actually become burdened with the thought of lost people around us and begin praying about them.
- * It opens our eyes to the power of God's Word to change lives.
- * It builds a new fire or helps to rekindle an old flame in the eyes of Christians.
- * It makes an impact upon the entire community as they see so many putting forth an effort to devote themselves to seeking the lost.
- * Most of all, it glorifies the Father who is in Heaven. He sees His people at their best, working for His cause.

— Bob Crass

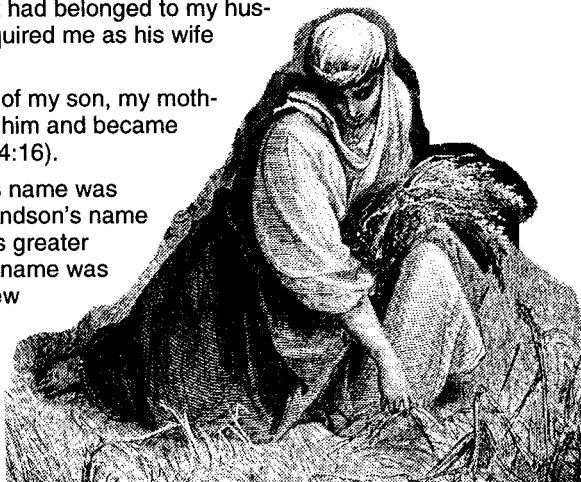
Who Am I?

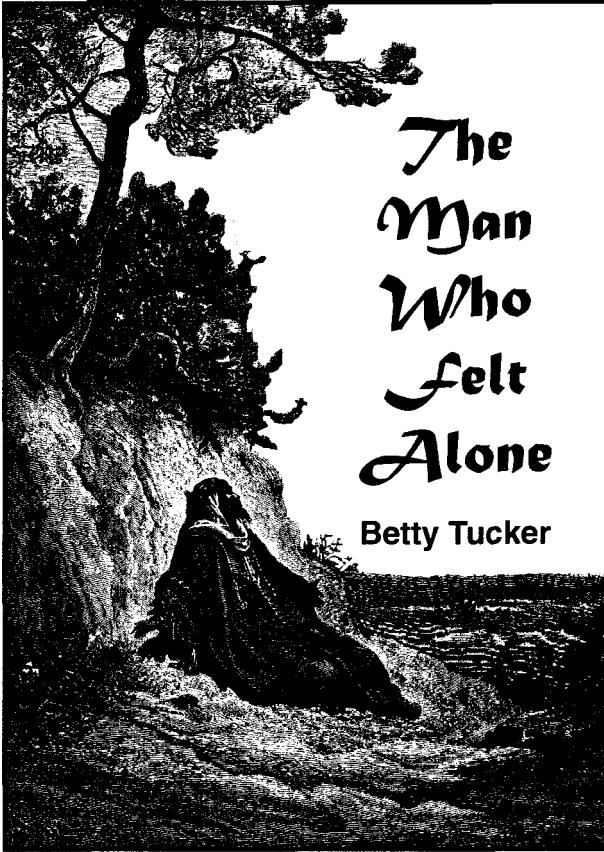
Can you identify me? Read each clue and think carefully. If you guess my name after the first clue, give yourself a score of 100 points. If you know who I am only after the fifth clue, your score is 60, etc. When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify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

1. **100** I lived during the time the judges ruled Israel (1:1).
2. **90** My story actually began with a famine in Israel which caused my future in-laws to leave their home in Bethlehem and come to the land of my birth (1:1).
3. **80** Though I was married to the younger son, he died early in our life together, leaving me with no children (1:5).
4. **70** In deep grief, my mother-in-law decided to return to Israel. She told me to return to my parents' house and to find happiness with a new husband (1:8,9).
5. **60** I cried because of what she said but I refused to listen (1:14,16,17).
6. **50** A rich man from the family of Elimelech was kind to me and allowed me to gather grain from his fields, so that we would not starve (2:3,8).
7. **40** There was a custom in Israel for confirming anything: one man took off his sandal and gave it to the other, to "seal the bargain" (4:7).
8. **30** Before the elders of the city, and by this symbol, the rich man bought all that had belonged to my husband, and acquired me as his wife (4:9-11).
9. **20** After the birth of my son, my mother-in-law took him and became nurse to him (4:16).
10. **10** His ancestor's name was Perez; his grandson's name was David; his greater descendant's name was Jesus (Matthew 1:3,5,1).

**My
Score** _____

*See answer on inside back
cover.*





The Man Who Felt Alone

Betty Tucker

Elijah, so recently a hero, became discouraged and afraid.

He ran out into the wilderness to hide. James tells us in the fifth chapter of his little book, verse 17 that Elijah "was a man subject to like passions as we are." He ran almost 100 miles over the hills of Samaria and on through the pasturelands of Judea.

We feel ashamed as we see Elijah sit down to rest under a small juniper tree. Our shame deepens when we hear

Elijah won a great victory over multitudes of Baal's prophets on Mount Carmel. His God proved once and for all, in a mighty show of fiery strength, that He was superior to Baal.

Queen Jezebel was furious because her prophets had been killed. She sent a message to Elijah that she would kill him within twenty-four hours (1 Kings 19:2).

this man of proven valor beg to die (verse 4).

Why was Elijah afraid of Jezebel? Because he had taken his eyes off the Lord. He looked instead at the sinful wife of King Ahab, and his courage deserted him.

God sent an angel to give food to His exhausted prophet. Twice, Elijah ate the food furnished by the messenger of God (verse 5-7).

BIBLE CHARACTERS

A Still, Small Voice

Reaching Mt. Sinai, Elijah found no place to go. He took refuge in a cave to escape the heat of the burning desert sun. God spoke to him and asked why he was there, rather than with the people of Israel. Elijah replied that he had done his best for God, but all had forsaken him.

The despairing prophet felt totally alone. We feel his anguish as we hear him say “. . .I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away” (verse 10).

God told Elijah to go and stand upon the mountain before Him. Then God sent a great wind that split the rocks and mountains, but the Lord was not to be found in the wind. Next, God sent an earthquake, but Elijah did not feel God's presence in the earthquake. Finally, God sent a fire, but He was not to be found in the fire.

At last God spoke to Elijah in a still, small voice. God and Elijah had the same conversation as before. God told the prophet to go to Damascus and to anoint Elisha to take his place as prophet.

Then, God told the weary one who had worked so diligently for Him that there were 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal (verse 18). For a little time, Elijah had forgotten the power of the Lord.

Where Do We Find God?

Christians who live today have to fight the forces of evil, even as did Elijah. We sometimes get discouraged and we feel pitiful and alone.

When we do our best to live holy lives, we figuratively find our “juniper tree”. We sit down in the small shade, bow our head and say, “Poor little me! Nobody understands how hard I try! Everybody is against me!”

God does not exhibit a grand and glorious display of nature to remind us of His power. He does not even speak to us in a still, small voice. He speaks to us through the written Word.

Hear His magnificent promise in Romans 8:28, “. . .all things work together for good to them that love the Lord.” He tells us again in 1 Corinthians 10:13 that we will “not be tempted above that (we) are able to bear. . .” and that He will “make a way to escape.”

When your work gets wearisome. . .health begins to fail. . .your friends desert you. . .when life gets burdensome. . .remember Elijah. He is the man who felt totally alone, until he heard the still, small voice of the Lord. †

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

BIBLE CHARACTERS

Apollos was obviously a man of great learning and knowledge, being very familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures and also with the life of Christ (Acts 18:24-25). He did not, though, let his knowledge go to his head or think himself above the instruction of others. He had been taught the way of the Lord, yet his teaching was incomplete in that he knew only of the baptism of John (Acts 18:25). For this reason, when Aquila and Priscilla heard him speak in the synagogue, they took him aside and explained to him more accurately the way of God (Acts 18:26).

Apollos

A Man Who Used Criticism to His and the Lord's Advantage

Kent O'Donnell

Apollos did not act defensively or abusively toward Aquila and Priscilla, but rather, he gladly took their instruction and used it, continuing to teach with enthusiasm. He became a real asset to the church through his teaching in Achaia (Acts 18:27-28), and his work in both Corinth and Crete (1 Corinthians 16:12; Titus 3:13), some even believe he may have been the human writer of the book of Hebrews.

I think we can learn a valuable lesson from Apollos. Too often we look at *constructive* criticism as *destructive* criticism and fail to see the good intention behind it. As the name suggests, constructive criticism is designed to build upon our good points so we can improve them and use them more effectively. Sometimes improvement might require that we change the view we have on a certain Bible subject, sometimes improvement might require us to deal with people differently. Sometimes improvement might require us to stop doing something in the way we have always done it.

The key is humility. *"You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble"* (1 Peter 5:5). Let us be humble enough to accept constructive criticism, to be thankful for it, and to grow from it.

"Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be still wiser, teach a righteous man, and he will increase his learning" (Proverbs 9:9). †

Kent O'Donnell preaches for the Lord's church in Palmerston North, New Zealand.

FROM THE HEART OF ...



One of the beautiful canals of Holland, located in Holli-Village.

Holland

Land of Windmills, Canals, and Tulips

Bill and Carol Richardson

Holland is one of the most picturesque countries in the world. It is joined by Belgium on the South, Germany on the West, and the North Sea on the East and North. Its total land area is about one fourth the state of Missouri, and yet it has a population of nearly 15 million.

This is the land of windmills, canals, flower fields, dairy cattle, cheese markets and native costumes. The Dutch have a saying: "God made the world, but the Dutch made Holland." A large part of the country was once under water, but the ingenious use of windmills, canals, sluices and dikes has enabled them to drain the water upward and out to the sea. Once drained, the land goes through a period of treatment until it is free from salt

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

and ready for farming. Where lakes once covered the land there are now farms and towns.

Holland — so-called after the two densely populated provinces of North and South Holland of The Netherlands — is also known for its beautiful flowers, and during the spring the colorful fields of tulips, hyacinths and other flowers are among the many tourist attractions. There are large areas of farm land and the dairy industry thrives. Edam and Gouda cheeses form a major export.

The Netherlands is a country of contrasts. There are old cities such as Schiedam, which celebrated 700 years as a city while we were living there.

There are brick buildings with quaint gabled ends, narrow cobble-stone streets, many canals with bridges which must be opened for boat traffic — sometimes holding up traffic for several minutes. Streets are often narrow and unsuitable for anything but European models of cars.

And then there are modern highways with several lanes of traffic. Architecture also changed after World War 2. Rotterdam was almost destroyed by bombs. It was re-built with buildings of concrete and glass, including large supermarkets and department stores. There are many multi-storied buildings, but due to the porous soil they are



Holland is known for its beautiful gardens and exquisite flowers. Bulbs from those gardens are grown in many parts of the world.

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

limited in how high they can go. Amsterdam is called “the city built on piles” — heavy beams driven into the ground before the foundations are laid.

The Dutch people are well educated — most of them speaking several languages. They have excellent schools and missionary children returning to the States are usually ahead of children their age in this country. The two main religions are the Roman Catholic and the Dutch Reformed churches. The latter is the state church with the queen as head. However, the country is well sprinkled with a large number of smaller religious groups — Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, etc. Religious freedom exists and churches are free to carry on their activities. However, it has become extremely difficult for our missionaries to obtain visas.

CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN HOLLAND

The background for our work in Holland, in this century, begins in 1922 when Jacob Vandervis and his invalid wife became Mormons. In a short time they immigrated to Salt Lake City where Mr. Vandervis made rapid advancement in the Mormon Church.

About 1942 there was a debate between brother Otis Gatewood and Elder Farnsworth. Mr. and Mrs. Vandervis received an invitation from a young man passing out fly-



Bill and Carol Richardson began to work in Holland in 1943.

ers inviting people to the debate. They went and during the debate became more and more interested. Later, they studied with brother Gatewood and were converted to Christ.

Within a year sister Vandervis died and brother Van decided to return to Holland with the true message of Christ. He went to Abilene Christian College to form a group to go with him. At one time there were several who planned to go, but the number diminished until only

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

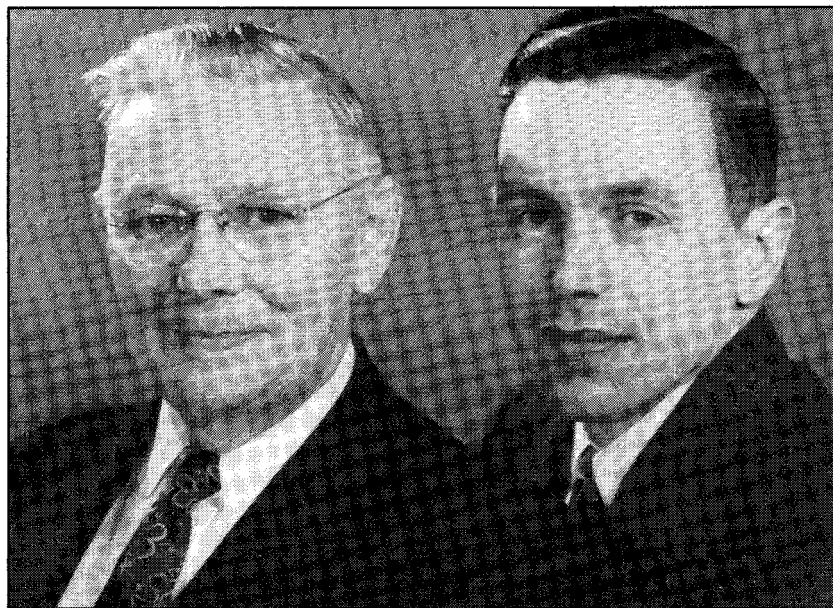
Bill Philips and myself were left. Bill and brother Van went to Holland in 1946 — the year Otis Gatewood and Roy Palmer entered Germany. A year later I joined them. Brother Van had just baptized Bob and Alie Bakvis.

This was a time of deep poverty in Holland. During the war their industrial and farm equipment had been confiscated and farm animals used for food. The economy was struggling to get a foothold. American Christians, learning of this situation, sent huge numbers of care and clothing packages to be distrib-

uted as needed.

Working with the social organizations, we received addresses and mailed boxes of food and clothing to all parts of the country. In the meantime Bible classes were set up in Haarlem and Amsterdam.

In 1948 there were four baptisms, including brother and sister de Jong, who remained faithful throughout their lives. The next year seemed to be our banner year as there were 29 baptisms. In a short time congregations were established in both Haarlem and Amsterdam.



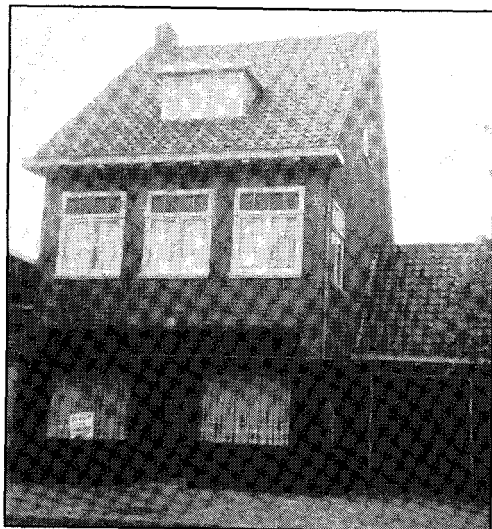
Jacob Vandervis and Bill Phillips, pioneers in beginning the Lord's church in Holland soon after the end of World War II.

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

The Harry Payne and Gary Adams families joined our work force and the early fifties saw good growth. A church was started in Utrecht, and Gary Adams moved to a nearby town to lead the work there.

Support had been found for brothers Bakvis and Quint. This support turned out to be temporary, which created bitterness in the hearts of our two Dutch preachers. They left the church and caused several other members to drop out.

Those were difficult years. Several members



Meeting place of the church of Christ in Haarlem.



The Schiedam congregation, now combined with the church which meets in the Hague.

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

were lost, but a faithful remnant remained. Frank Worgan, an outstanding preacher from England, joined us with his family. Soon Ralph and Clara Aycock, Wil and Lee Goodheer and Bill and Bonnie Philips (who had earlier returned to the States) joined us in Haarlem.

Once again the churches in Holland began to move forward. In the early sixties our missionary work force reached an all-time high. Jim Krumrei, Tom Schulz, Bobby Bates, Lon Jones, Ray Evans, Herb Hahn, Dan Boyd and their families joined those already there. A thriving congregation was established in The Hague.

For unavoidable reasons missionaries began returning home,

seriously hindering the work. Jim Krumrei remained with his family and in the late sixties Lon Jones returned to The Hague. After an absence of 11 years my family returned to Holland in 1974 and remained 6 years, making a total of 20 years of work in Holland. Rudy and Pam Schellekens joined the work in Schiedam. A little later the Phil Krumrei family and Craig and Debbie Richardson joined the Schellekens in Schiedam. Phil and his family are still there — largely self-supported.

At present there are congregations in Haarlem, The Hague, Groningen, Eindhoven, Maastricht and Soesterberg, with a total membership of 159. There are a number



Taken at the camp in Solwaster. Christians from Holland and Dutch-speaking Belgium attend these sessions.

FROM THE HEART OF . . .

of encouraging signs in the Dutch work, although there are only three American families working there now — including Scott and Shirley Raab in Maastricht. Dutch Christians — the late Cor van Ewijk, Henk Rog, Rudy Schellekens and others — have made, and are making, a positive impact on the work.

There are a number of outstanding young couples who are very active in the church. The youth camp in Solwaster, Belgium is used by both Dutch and Belgium churches and is having a tremendous impact on the work in both countries.

Through the years, group campaigns — mostly college students — have provided encouragement and help for congregations in Holland. Though methods may differ, the same one-on-one teaching of the gospel message continues to convert sinners to Christ.

Special credit for the continued progress and soundness of the Dutch work should be given to Jim and Ruth Krumrei and their family. They have been in Holland since 1962 and have provided leadership, encouragement and teaching for all the congregations. Their son Phil lives in Schiedam and is working with the church in The Hague

and their daughter Carla and her husband, Rudy Verheijen, are living in Maastricht and working with the young church there.

Over the 51 year period of our history in Holland Carol and I have had the privilege of either working in Holland or working to maintain support for Dutch and Flemish mis-



Jim and Ruth Krumrei have done much to promote soundness and growth in the church among the Dutch people.

sionaries. We want to express a very warm and much deserved thanks for all who have so generously supported the Dutch work. May God richly bless you. Bill and Carol Richardson.

Bill Richardson is a preacher of the gospel living in Jay, Oklahoma, U.S.A.

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ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

Verse Search — 20 (from page 37)

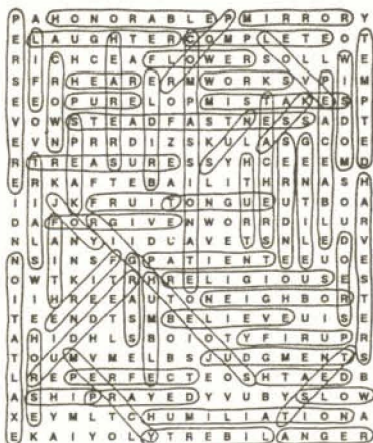
Who Am I? page 102)

1. on the first day of the week.
2. that the stone which had sealed the door had been taken away!
3. "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."
4. The linen cloths lying there and the handkerchief that had been around His head.
5. that He must rise again from the dead.
6. She stood outside the tomb, weeping, then stooped and looked inside.
7. Two angels sitting at the head and feet where Jesus' body had been.
8. She saw Jesus.
9. When He called her by name.
10. Jesus came and stood in the midst of the disciples, and said to them, "Peace be with you."
11. He showed them His hands and His side, so they would know Him.
12. to you! sent Me, I also send you.
13. Thomas, called Didymus.
14. "We have seen the Lord."
15. "Unless I can put my hands in His wounds, I won't believe!"
16. "My Lord and my God!"
17. That they would be blessed.
18. No, He did very many more things.
19. That Jesus is the Christ (Messiah, promised Savior), the Son of God.
20. That we might believe, and have life through His name.



Ruth

The Book of James, page 65



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:



Kingdom of The Netherlands



Government: Constitutional Monarchy
Sovereign: Queen Beatrix
Prime Minister: Wim Kok

Secular Facts:

- Location:** In Western Europe, on the North Sea; bordered on Belgium to the South and Germany to the West.
- Land Mass:** 15,750 square miles, one-fourth the size of Missouri, no more than 170 miles across in any direction.
- Population:** 15,400,000; density per square mile, 960.
- Major Cities:** Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, and Haarlem.
- Language:** Holland Dutch and about 20 dialects.
- Literacy:** 99%.
- Religion:** Dutch Reformed Church, Roman Catholic, other Protestant groups.
- Economy:** *Agricultural Products:* wheat, barley, sugar beets, potatoes, meat and dairy products; *Industrial Products:* metal fabrication, electrical machinery and equipment, chemicals, petroleum, fishing. Illicit drugs: transit country for illicit narcotics from neighboring countries. *Major trading partners:* Germany, Belgium, U.K., France, U.S.

Monetary Unit: Guilder.

The Church:

- Congregations:** 6 churches, 159 members.
- History:** The work of churches of Christ in Holland was begun in 1946 when Jacob Vandervis and Bill Philips entered the field. Holland has proved to be an extremely difficult field, but through it all the work has continued and the outlook for the future is excellent.
- The churches in Schiedam and The Hague now meet together in The Hague with a membership of 41. Phil Krumrei is their minister. He is largely self-supported.
- Eindhoven now has a membership of 32, after years of struggling there alone by Hans and Ans van Erp. Troy and Amy Albers have been there a year, but still do not have a permanent visa.
- Groningen has 13 members. Jim Krumei goes there once a month to preach and give them encouragement.
- Haarlem, where the work in Holland began, has 31 members. This is where Jim and Ruth Krumrei have lived for 36 years. They have divided their time and service with the other congregations in Holland. At present the church there is blessed with young couples who are very active in the work.
- Maastricht has 27 members. Scott and Shirley Raab are doing full-time work with the help of Ruud and Carla Verheijen who are not supported.
- Soesterberg has 15 members, including Henk and Celia, and Karsten and Sandy Rog. Both Henk and their son Karsten have studied here in the States and are giving good teaching and leadership to the work.
- Many faithful Christians have served the Lord and gone on to their reward.

Front Cover: One of the picturesque windmills for which Holland is famous.