

# V THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

**Holy and Reverend**  
Page 12

Are We Alone?  
Page 14

Malnutrition  
Page 25

**Controlled  
by Fear**  
Page 27

**Lost!**  
Page 36

**The Kingdom  
of Heaven**  
Page 39

Why Do You Observe  
the Lord's Supper  
*Every Sunday?*  
Page 60

**ATTENTION  
VISITORS!**  
Page 75

**Remember  
Your Creator**  
Page 79

**Today,  
in the Evening**  
Page 88

**LIBERIA**  
Page 102





## The Rose

It is only a tiny rosebud  
A flower of God's design;  
But I cannot unfold the petals  
With these clumsy hands of mine.

The secret of unfolding flowers  
Is not known to such as I —  
The flower God opens so sweetly  
In my hands would fade and die.

If I cannot unfold a rosebud,  
This flower of God's design,  
Then how can I think I have wisdom  
To unfold this life of mine?

So I'll trust in Him for His leading,  
Each moment of every day,  
And I'll look to Him for His guidance  
Each step of the pilgrim way.

For the pathway that lies before me  
My heavenly Father knows —  
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments  
Just as He unfolds the rose.

Submitted by Charles Salmon

# THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

## STAFF:

**Editor-in-Chief:** J.C. Choate  
**Managing Editor:** Byron Nichols  
**Layout Editors:** Betty Burton Choate  
Barbara A. Oliver  
**Typesetting:** Gay Nichols  
Eulene Ramsey  
**Art Consultant:** Steven B. Choate  
**Computer Consultant:** Bradley S. Choate  
**Promotion:** Dale Grissom, Oran Rhodes,  
Mark Posey, Buck Davenport, James Warren,  
Ken Willis, Don Hinds, Roy D. Baker, Chuck  
Forsythe, Alan R. Henderson, C.O. Patterson,  
Roger Mills.  
**Distributors for Foreign Editions:**  
Sunny David, **India**  
Roger Dickson, **South Africa**  
Reuben Emperado, **Philippines**  
Reggie Gnanasundaram, **Sri Lanka**  
Henry Kong, **Singapore**  
Ong Chong Fatt, **Malaysia**  
George Funk, **All-Africa**  
Parker Henderson, **Trinidad and Tobago**  
Stephen Randall, **Australia**  
Keith Sisman, **United Kingdom**  
John Thiesen, **Malawi**  
Rod Kyle, **New Zealand**  
Dan McVey, **Ghana**  
Mike Nix, **Caribbean**  
Robert Martin, **Pacific Islands**  
J.C.Choate, **All-Asia**  
Bob Dixon, **Nigeria**  
Loy Mitchell, **Zimbabwe**  
T. Guite, **Northeast India**  
Doyle Goodspeed, **Liberia**  
Sher Bahadur Karki, **Nepal**  
Cy Stafford, **Tanzania**

## STAFF WRITERS:

George Akpabli	Jack Harriman
W.T. Allison	John Harris
Robert Ball	W. Douglass Harris
Rex Banks	Parker Henderson
Leon Barnes	Gordon Hogan
Wayne Barrier	Al Horne
Roy Beasley	Wayne Jackson
Maxie B. Boren	Ancil Jenkins
T. Pierce Brown	Jerry Jenkins
Ron Bryant	Jimmy Jividen
Salvador B. Cariaga	James Judd
Jack W. Carter	Dayton Keesee
Ron Carter	Dalton Key
Frank Chesser	Michael L. King
Betty Burton Choate	Mack Lyon
Jeril Cline	Joe Magee
Charles E. Cobb	Cecil May, Jr.
Glenn Colley	Colin McKee
Willard Collins	Jane McWhorter
Owen Cosgrove	Hollis Miller
Sunny David	Loy Mitchell
Jerry L. Davidson	Kevin Moore
Hans Dederscheck	Peter Mostert
David Deffenbaugh	Bill Nicks
Clarence DeLoach, Jr.	Fenter Northern
G. Devadanam	Don L. Norwood
Roger Dickson	Owen D. Olbricht
Bill Dillon	Basil Overton
Bobby G. Dockery	Frances Parr
Hershel Dyer	Max Patterson
Earl Edwards	Clayton Pepper
Demar Elam	David Pharr
Reuben Emperado	G.F. Raines
Allan E. Flaxman	Keith Sisman
Al Franks	John Thiesen
Royce Frederick	Betty Tucker
Albert Gardner	Ken Tyler
E. Claude Gardner	Don W. Walker
R. Gnanasundaram	Bobby Wheat
Gary C. Hampton	Jon Gary Williams

**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: 662-283-1192; Fax: 662-283-1191; E-mail address: Choate@WorldEvangelism.org.

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.**

23 EDITIONS

**"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).**



# THE BLESSING OF PERSECUTION

J. C. Choate  
Editor-in-Chief

Persecution is a form of oppression, opposition, rejection, and punishment. It is directed to those who may not believe and practice things that others do. It is to hurt, punish, frighten, and to discourage its acceptance and practice. It is not something you want but

something you may have to tolerate. The Bible has a lot to say about this.

In the sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, *"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted the prophets which were before you"* (Matthew 5:10-12).

Jesus said that many of the prophets were killed and the Hebrew writer talked about all of the faithful of God and of the many things they suffered for the Lord. He said, *"Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not*

worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect” (Hebrews 11:33-40).

Even though Christ lived a good life and went about doing good, still there were those who opposed him, even the religious leaders of His day. This resulted in Him being betrayed, given a false trial, abused and mistreated, and finally crucified upon a cruel cross (Matthew 27,28).

After the Lord’s death, burial, and resurrection, and His return to the Father in Heaven, the Apostles gathered in Jerusalem as instructed by the Lord Himself (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). They received the power of the Holy Spirit and preached the gospel to the masses that were gathered there on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4; Acts 2:38). As a result, some 3,000 obeyed the Lord and the saved were added to the church (Acts 2:41,47).

It didn’t take long for the enemy, even the religious leaders of the day, to take note of the Apostles’ work and the growth of the church. They responded with threats, having Peter and John beaten, and then by putting them in prison. The Lord was with them, however, and they continued to preach Christ and the church continued to grow (Read Acts 3 and 4). Stephen was martyred for the Lord (Acts 7) and by the time we get to Acts 8 we read about a man by the name of Saul who took the lead in persecuting God’s people. As bad as this was, it only added fuel to the fire. We read that even though the disciples were scattered abroad that they went everywhere preaching the word (Acts 8:4).

In Acts 9 we read of Saul himself being converted to the Lord and he spent the rest of his life spreading the cause of Christ. He was persecuted, as were the other Apostles, and the Christians in general, but in spite of this, within less than 30 years the gospel was taken into all the world (Colossians 1:23). Actually, the persecution itself went a long way in making it possible for the gospel to spread so rapidly to all mankind. That does not mean that the Apostles and the disciples as a whole were mean and ugly and purposely did things to provoke the enemy to react as they did. They were not looking for trouble, wanting to suffer, and to die. Neither were they trying to force Christianity on their neighbors. Rather, their desire was to do good only and to live at peace with their fellowman. Those who chose not to follow Christ, how-

ever, struck back with a viciousness that was unbelievable. They did everything they could to wipe out Christianity but they were not successful. The Lord was with His people and the persecution only caused them to be more determined to follow the Lord and to spread His cause.

What about today? There is some persecution in different parts of the world. There are those who will not allow freedom of religion. There are others who do all they can to slow Christianity down or to give it a bad name. There are numerous other forms of persecution and opposition. But in spite of that, we generally live in a world where we can easily move about and preach Christ. The enemy of Christianity today is materialism, worldliness, and ourselves in that we do not do more than we do to spread the Lord's cause.

We may be assured, however, that when we believe in the Lord enough, and we as the Lord's people go throughout the world preaching, and converting, and doing good works, then that will get attention. And if we do enough of that in any one country, even in our own country, and the other countries of the world, then there will be opposition. That opposition will take many forms, but it can also become violent. It is not that we would want to do anything bad to bring about such persecution, and it is certainly not that we want to be persecuted, but when we do the Lord's will, and we teach enough, baptize enough, start enough new congregations, then that will automatically bring opposition.

What will be the result of all of this? If we will remain faithful to the Lord, and be determined to continue to do the work the Lord has given us to do, then it will result in the strengthening of the church, evangelizing the world, converting more souls to Christ than ever before, and changing the world for Christ. With persecution, the news media will help to spread the word. It will be in the newspapers, on the radios, and TV's of the world. This will result in people coming to know of Christ and His church that would have never known about it otherwise. And those who are doing the persecuting themselves will be helping to spread Christianity instead of wiping it out.

Because of the foregoing, as bad as it is, and the suffering that it brings, still persecution is a blessing in the end. Remember, that if we will be faithful to the Lord, He will be with us, bless us, and in the end, will give us and His people victory. Don't forget that Paul said, "*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*" (2 Timothy 3:12).

†



# SHARING THE FEEDBACK

**Byron Nichols**

I decided that it might be well for me to use my space in this issue to let you see for yourself the kind of feedback that we continually receive regarding this work. As you read the following excerpts, please understand that you are seeing only a very small portion of the comments that come in regularly.

*"TVOTI is such an attractive book that it makes you want to open and start reading, and the subjects are so timely and to the point. It has caused me to think more seriously about the mission field and the true love of the truth of God's Word." (Georgia)*

*"TVOTI just couldn't be improved upon any way you tried. I just couldn't wait to write you for additional copies to share with others." (Oklahoma)*

*"I believe it is one of the finest publications to be found anywhere. Having spent ten years overseas, I can readily see how appealing it is to those in other lands." (Florida)*

*"I want to tell you that you are doing a marvellous job in the world, especially to some of us who have been deprived from getting resources to improve upon a spiritual development in the Lord." (Ghana)*

*"Recently we have had some family members go into denominationalism. These publications have been of great value in trying to bring them back." (Tennessee)*

*"We in the church here are so grateful to you for an easy to read, easy to understand publication. We look forward to each issue with much enthusiasm." (Texas)*

*"After picking up your book, **The Voice of Truth**, I knew I had to have it. It is so plain, honest, true, and spiritual." (Michigan)*

*“We like what you are doing with **TVOTI**. We believe there definitely is a need for quality literature such as you are producing. We see a great potential with using **TVOTI** in our outreach here.”* (elder, Kansas)

*“Keep up the good work. I’m still putting copies in seatback pockets of airlines we fly.”* (Texas)

*“I do enjoy reading each issue so much. I think every congregation should provide these. I feel it would be worthwhile.”* (Mississippi)

*“I have received so many comments of praise for your quarterly publication. Thank you for making it available to us. We surely do appreciate you.”* (Tennessee)

*“I am a brother in the church of Christ, and after studying from your publication I saw the actual truth you are proclaiming in the ministry of Christ. I shall be very grateful if this application could be considered. Kindly send me useful magazine.”* (Nigeria)

*“I appreciate the hard work you put into this effort. I know from my mission activity and some of the responses I get from individuals that this publication is making an impact.”* (missionary from Alabama)

*“We are delighted to renew our subscription. The magazine has indeed been a blessing to us. We appreciate the soundness of the articles and the variety of topics they cover. Thank you for such a useful, high-quality magazine.”* (Oklahoma)

*“Without a doubt in my mind, **TVOTI** is the best publication by our brethren.”* (retired director of school of preaching)

*“The articles are outstanding. I appreciate the commitment to the truth and the evangelistic fervor of this great publication. Every home could well use this book.”* (preacher, Alabama)

*“These magazines are very helpful to us in teaching the saving Gospel to local people, and we use some materials for strengthening newborns in their faith. Some of articles are translated into Russian and Latvian and used while preaching the Gospel.”* (Latvia)

*“For worldwide soul-winning and evangelizing efforts, your publication is the best in the brotherhood. **TVOTI** is an idea whose time was long overdue.”* (editor of a gospel publication)

*“I have never enjoyed a church publication so much. I love the way it teaches the Gospel with every page.”* (Wisconsin)

*“We just got several copies of the latest issue of the magazine and are using them here in our work. It continues to be a great tool.”* (New Zealand)

Brethren, please help **TVOTI** to have an even greater impact in the world.





---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>GOD</b>		<b>DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING</b>	
No Substitute for God .....	9	Following Jesus .....	67
He Is His Father's Son .....	11	Things Greater Than Sacrifice .....	69
Holy and Reverend Is His Name..	12	There Are Annas Among Us .....	71
Did God Send the Storms? .....	13	Holiness from Humility .....	72
<b>EVIDENCES</b>		Attention Visitors! .....	75
Are We Alone? .....	14	<b>PROVERBS 17:22</b>	
Our Young Earth .....	17	Humor .....	77
<b>THE WORD OF GOD</b>		<b>THE CHRISTIAN HOME</b>	
God's Word Should Guide. . .	23	Remember Your Creator.....	79
God's Word .....	24	Building Christian Families.....	81
Malnutrition .....	25	Affair-Proof Marriages .....	83
<b>DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY</b>		I Married a Christian.....	86
Controlled by Fear. . .	27	<b>COMFORT AND REASSURANCE</b>	
God's Answer to Sin .....	30	Happiness Is Seeing God .....	91
<b>SALVATION</b>		This Mortal Will Put on. . .	92
The Abundant Life.....	34	<b>CHARTS AND OUTLINES</b>	
Lost! .....	36	What Is the Christian Life? .....	94
<b>THE CHURCH</b>		Action in Acts — Then and Now ..	95
The Kingdom of Heaven .....	39	<b>BIBLE CHARACTERS</b>	
The Kingdom Must Be 1st.....	42	Elijah: A Worthy Example .....	98
<b>CHURCH GROWTH</b>		Said of Job .....	100
Bible School: Key to. . .	46	<b>POEMS AND WRITINGS</b>	
To Him that Overcometh.....	50	Coping.....	10
<b>CHURCH HISTORY</b>		A Nation that Has Forgotten. . .	16
Early Christians in England.....	53	God Has Spoken.....	20
<b>WORSHIP</b>		Divine Consolation .....	29
Dynamic Worship.....	56	The Lord Is My. . .	68
Special Music .....	57	Have We Produced. . . ? .....	76
Mary's Worship .....	58	Today, in the Evening .....	88
Why Do You Observe. . . ? .....	60	How to Solve Disagreements.....	99
<b>CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION</b>		<b>FEATURES</b>	
Letting the Harvest Go to Seed....	63	Bible Word Power .....	21
The Vine and the Branches .....	65	Jude Puzzle .....	26
		Verse Search .....	33
		Quick Commentary .....	38
		How Do You Measure Up? .....	55

SpotLight.....	62
Who Am I? .....	97
Walking by Faith .....	101
Puzzle Answers .....	Back Page

### FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Liberia .....	102
Window of History .....	102
The Church in Liberia .....	103
"And They Were All. . ." .....	106
"How Shall They Hear?" .....	109

### THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

What a wonderful opportunity **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** offers for sharing the truth with others! How many times in the course of a month do we, personally, meet or talk to someone and have the thought, "I want to give a copy of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH** to So-and-So."

It is such a wonderful tool for staying in spiritual touch with those we love, with contacts, with some new person we've met and with whom we want to share.

**Have you thought about how much good you could do with a \$25 a month investment?**

For such a small amount, you could have a box of 35 copies of the magazine delivered to your door each quarter. We recommend dividing the box, keeping some copies at home and some in your car, and then they will be "at hand" when you want to give one to someone. Try it for a year and see if you're not thrilled, as you build on the foundation being laid by its succinct words. **JCC**

## The Chapel

The deep-down desperate need for a little time alone with God was overwhelming, but *where* — in the crowded corridors of a hospital world — could such a private place be found?

**Oh, but it was there!** A little chapel in a quiet corner, complete with stools to kneel, and solitude for prayer. . . and I went there and rested and drank of the living waters, and all my fears and needs and hopes and tears spilled from my heart at God's feet.

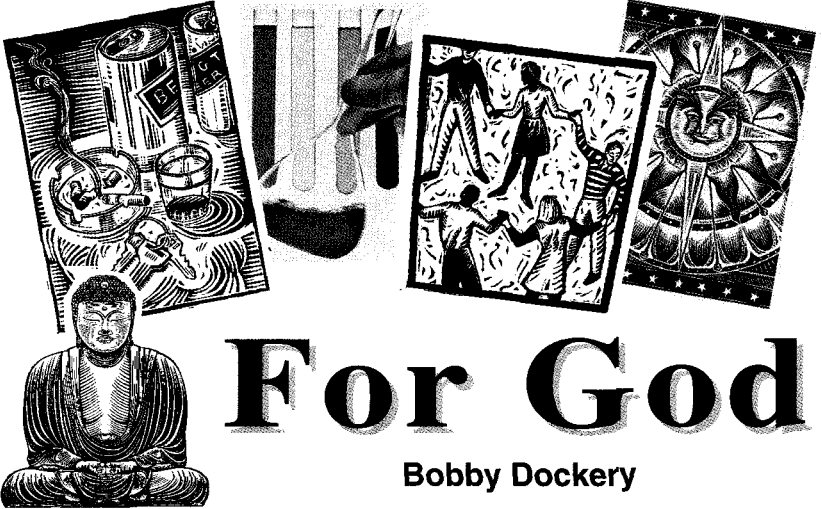
Reluctantly I rose and turned to leave that quiet place with *Him*, going back to hurting hearts who needed me.

But I wondered in unanswered puzzlement as I slowly walked away: How can it be that, in this place, countless ones face sickness, pain, and death, yet so very few seem to need this place of prayers and strength, and time to be alone with God?

How can that be?

— Betty Burton Choate

# *No Substitute*



# For God

**Bobby Dockery**

In a thought-provoking article which appeared in *Readers Digest* a number of years ago, David Raphael Klein noted that the world has been looking for a substitute for God for a long time. He wrote: "Somewhere along the way, Western man began to lose his belief in God as a personal force, as the decider of his fate, as the ultimate judge of his actions. The idea that God created man became old-fashioned; we evolved. The notion of hell was picturesque, but no longer compelling. Life began to be seen as more or less accidental; sin became a relative sociological matter, and to many a pure fiction."

People today are trying all sorts of ineffectual and destructive substitutes for God: Astrology, philosophy, paganism, alcohol, drugs, science, money, pleasure, etc., etc. *But whenever people turn away from God, life turns to chaos. Families disintegrate, the social order collapses, and people make a mess of their lives!* There is no substitute for God!

**1. Without God there is no basis for decency and morality.** If God is not there, all things are permitted! If Hitler decides to murder 6 million Jews, or terrorists blow up a plane full of women and children, how can we say they are wrong, if *God has not spoken?* If we no

## GOD

longer believe God created man, then we are forced to say there is nothing sacred about human life. If life is not sacred, then there is no logical argument against murder, rape, assault, or any other *crime!*

**2. Without God there is no meaning in life or reason for existence.** Man becomes, as one eminent evolutionist expressed it, merely a biological accident created by nature, without purpose, to be obliterated without regret.

**3. Without God we are left without an explanation for the universe.**

How can anyone contemplate the eye of a horsefly...the mechanics of human finger movement...the intricacy of the nucleus of a cell...or the complexity of the universe and say all of these things happened by sheer, blind chance?

**4. Without God we are without hope and are of all men most miserable.** David Klein noted, "In freeing himself of the terror of hell, (modern man) gave up the hope of heaven; you live, you die, that's the end of it..."

God is the God of all hope (Romans 15:13). Without Him there is no

hope in the world (Ephesians 5:12). Belief in God is the only thing that can keep us from despairing about our world and our lives.

Nothing else can take the place of God. Nobody else can fill His shoes. For life to have meaning, God must be at the center (Matthew 6:33). There is no substitute for God! †

**Bobby Dockery preaches for the Baldwin Church of Christ in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.**

### COPING

Weary day and endless night,  
With no escape from pain,  
Wrong prevailing over right,  
And loss exceeding gain.

Coping with such tragic plight  
Is not a simple deed,  
Knowing not which path is right  
Nor what we really need.

There's no hope but in God's grace,  
Helping us bear the load,  
Giving us strength to run the race  
And light to see the road.

Faith and hope will guard the soul,  
In love our Lord will lead,  
Aimed forever toward the goal,  
Just as our Lord decreed.

—Ardron Hinton

# "He Is His Father's Son"

Robert Moss

The expression "He is his father's son" is one that is commonly heard. Sometimes this statement has reference to some not-so-good action. Maybe through his actions the father has influenced the son in the wrong way. However, it may also be used in reference to some admirable trait that is characteristic of a son which may have been learned from the father.

It would be great if it could be said of a son that there was no sin in his life (taking into consideration that the son was of accountable age), even though people had searched diligently to find some. How good it would be if the son were not involved in deception of any kind, by word or deed, a son whose thinking, speech, and actions were always for the good of others.

The Bible speaks of one such son: "*For he received from God the Father honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*" (2 Peter 1:17). The characteristics mentioned earlier are noted of Jesus — "*Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again;*

*when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*" (1 Peter 2:22-23). Yet this is not the end of the story. Verse 21 notes, "*For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.*" Why should we follow His steps? Because in obedience to Him we become "*children of God*" (John 1:12; Roman 8:14; Philip-pians 2:15; 1 John 3:1).

No, we are not perfect as was Jesus, yet His blood was shed for that reason. "*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ*" (Ephesians 2:13). "*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty*" (2 Corinthians 6:17-18).

What a most grand opportunity we have in being able to be children of our heavenly Father. †

**Robert Moss is the preacher for the Hillcrest congregation in Neosho, Missouri, USA.**

# “Holy and Reverend Is **HIS** Name”

Mack Lyon

“*Holy and Reverend is His name*” (Psalm 111:9). He is the one, the unique and only absolutely Holy One. In His presence Isaiah said, “*Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips . . .*” (Isaiah 6:5).

“*Reverend*”? That is the King James Version of the Bible. The New King James Version says “*Holy and awesome . . .*” The Revised Standard Version has it, “*Holy and terrible . . .*” Since we commonly associate “reverend” with men; and since we have trivialized “awesome” as in “The pizza was awesome,” perhaps “terrible” really is the more appropriate word. Yet, we express more “awe” in the presence of an athlete or a rock star than we do in the presence of God in worship.

God is not a man. He demands more honor and respect than a man. However, man has forced Him into the position of saying, “*A son honoreth his father, and servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear. . .*” (Malachi 1:6). He wants to be a friend, but He will not be a “casual” friend (Matthew 10:37,38).

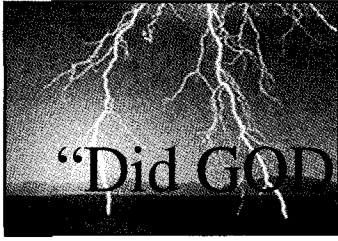
“*God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence of all them that are about Him*” (Psalm 89:7). Yet, how much fear and reverence do you witness in the worshiping assemblies of the saints? We would dress and behave with more reverence and awe (Hebrews 12:28) at a dinner for the governor, than we do at the table of the Lord in the worship of God. If we didn’t, we would probably be ushered out. The spirit of casualness has driven the spirit out of the modern worship of God “*in spirit and in truth*” (John 4:24).

There is no doubt that the rejection of God in our social order and the disrespectful perception of God in the religious community are the two strongest causes for the moral chaos in which we are forced to live.

We have come to our Mount Carmel. If God is God, follow Him. If casualness is our god, let’s go casual. **But, we must make a choice.** Maybe we can reverse this condition. †

**Mack Lyon is the speaker on the television series, *Search for the Lord’s Way*, sponsored by the church of Christ in Edmund, Oklahoma, USA.**

## God



It seems strange that when anything good takes place we are quick to think we were responsible. Even the weather men laughingly claim the credit if we have beautiful

# “Did GOD Send The Storms?”

**Leon Barnes**

weather for a few days. Yet I've never heard them take credit for storms or a tornado. They only want credit for the good. Usually we hear people looking at the devastation and destruction of a storm, declaring these to be acts of God. It is common to hear the question, “Why did God bring this storm on us? Is He angry with us for some reason?”

Certainly, God is capable of sending the storms. He sent the flood, which destroyed the old world in the days of Noah. He sent the earthquake that swallowed up the sons of Korah when they rebelled against Moses and his leadership. God sent the fire and brimstone from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah when their wickedness became so great He couldn't bear it any longer.

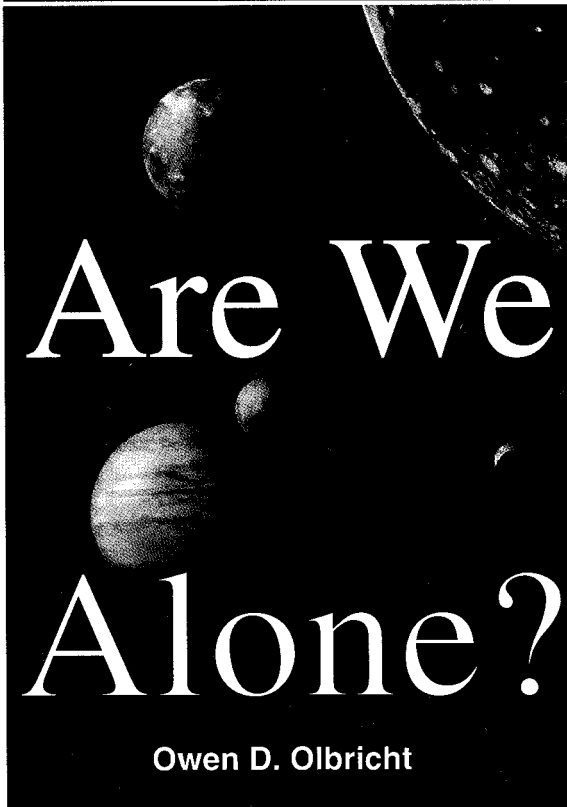
We also know God sometimes allows Satan to bring storms upon people. In the book of Job God allowed Satan to send the tornado on the house where Job's ten children were gathered for a party.

But, it is equally true that many things happen in the world which are simple acts of nature, where God has not stepped in to intervene. The storms fall on the good and evil alike. They hit houses of worship the same as they do homes and businesses. Instead of this being a judgment of God upon us, it is far more likely an action of nature due to the world being corrupted by sin.

Even in times when nature has brought devastation, we must remember that God is able to bring good from the bad. He promises that all things will work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). The storm was not good, but God is able to bring many good things from it. He has opened the hearts of people toward each other. He has used the destruction to allow all of us to see the frailty of our own existence. Life is truly a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

We can escape the tragedies of this world only by going to heaven, the home of the soul, where there is no more death, decay, or devastation. Let us live daily for that goal. †

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



The Bible confidently affirms: “*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth*” (Genesis 1:1). The rest of the first two chapters of Genesis are concerned with life on earth and say nothing about God placing life on other planets. Based on Bible teaching we cannot confidently affirm that there is life elsewhere in the universe, and scientific investigation may indicate that the probability of life anywhere other than on earth is very unlikely.

Dr. Peter D. Ward  
of the University of

Washington, a paleontologist who specializes in mass extinctions, and Dr. Donald C. Brownlee, a noted astronomer of the same university, in the book **Rare Earth** (Springer-Verlag, 2000), present evidence that points to the unlikelihood of life except here on Earth. Though not stated by the authors, arguments against life in other parts of the universe also may indicate the difficulty of life spontaneously beginning and evolving on planet earth.

These authors, according to an article written by William J. Broad of New York Times and carried in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette, “*Perspective*,” p. 1J and 8J, give evidence that Earth may be the only planet in the universe that can support complex life.

Their thesis contradicts Dr. Frank D. Drake who in 1961 developed the



## EVIDENCES

Drake Equation that suggested that the Milky Way provided the capability of 10,000 civilizations. Later Dr. Carl Sagan raised the estimate to “a million alien worlds” and the probability of 10 trillion in the cosmos!

The authors of **Rare Earth** counter by pointing out problems with this theory. “Drawing on new findings in astronomy, geology and paleontology, the two argue that humans might be alone, at least in the stellar neighborhood, and perhaps in the entire cosmos. They say modern science is showing that Earth’s composition and stability are extraordinarily rare. Most everywhere else, the right chemical elements are too rare in abundance, the hospitable planets too few in number and the rain of killer rocks too intense for life ever to have evolved into advanced communities.” (1J)

Various problems are presented to uphold this conclusion:

1. The giant planets outside our solar system could not support complex life and have eccentric orbits that would create destructive chaos for smaller planets rather than shield them.
2. Jupiter is in the right position in the solar system to absorb or fling into space killer rocks that could bombard the earth. Another such planet in another solar system would be rare.
3. A planet closer to the center of a galaxy where the star population is far denser would make life impossible because of cascades of comets, intense radiation, and explosions of galactic interiors as well as the presence of X-rays, gamma rays, and ionizing radiation.
4. Complex life would also be impossible at galactic edges because of inadequate quantities of elements like iron, magnesium, and silicon.
5. A planet bigger or smaller than earth would rule out plate tectonics which keep planetary temperatures even enough to recycle carbon that makes life flourish.
6. “Whole galaxies are metal-poor and therefore probably devoid of animal life... Only spiral galaxies like the Milky Way and its nearby neighbor in Andromeda appear rich in metals, and even then, only in their inner regions. In contrast, elliptical and irregular galaxies...are barren.” (8J)

7. An exact orbit of a planet the right distance from its star is necessary to ensure it will retain water as liquid and not vapor or ice.

8. A inhabitable planet must have a moon the right size and distance to minimize change in tilt of the planet to ensure climatic stability.

9. An adequate amount of carbon must be available to maintain life but not an excessive amount that would cause a planet to be overrun with life.

10. A proper balance of ozone and oxygen is necessary to make complex life possible.

These are some of the many factors essential for life as we know it here on earth. The proper combination of all these on a planet somewhere in the cosmos would be very rare.

Except for the heavenly realm where life is different than here, there may not be life elsewhere in the universe and especially life as we know it here on our planet Earth. †

**Owen Olbricht is a writer and gospel preacher living in Sherwood, AR, USA.**

**Evolution teaches people to deny God. We have become:**

### **A Nation that Has Forgotten God!**

**Kenneth McClain**

1. We have murdered 30 million unborn babies in the last twenty years. We call it abortion; the Bible calls it murder.

2. The Bible speaks of drunkenness. We call it alcoholism, sickness, or disease. The Bible calls it sin.

3. The Bible says that homosexuality is contrary to nature and God (Romans 1:27). We call it gay or alternate lifestyle — the Bible calls it an abomination.

4. The United States uses more grain to make alcohol than to make bread. For every dollar collected from alcohol taxes, it costs \$11.64 to only *try to repair* the damage done by drinking.

5. Crime in our country costs taxpayers 2 billion dollars per year — 53% of all crime is caused by alcoholic drink.

6. The Bible calls lasciviousness unbridled lust — shameful. We call it modern and liberal art, and we support it with tax money.

7. Addiction to drugs is at a high. Heroin alone has 500,000 addicts.

8. There are 1.3 million couples living together out of wedlock. The Bible calls it fornication (Matthew 5:28).

# Our Young Earth

Betty Burton Choate

---

---

Though the Genesis account does not tell us the age of the earth, the genealogical records in the Scriptures would lead us to conclude that it was only a few thousand years ago — possibly 6000 to 10,000 — that

the monumental Six Days of Creation took place. Evolutionists continually pronounce

ages of billions of years, yet many of their own studies contradict this figure.

But the Scriptures have a corroborating testimony concerning the age of Creation: *Scientists themselves* make observations on various points, and though most would not use their logic and numbers to reach the conclusion that the earth is young, yet the fact is proved even without their verbal admission.

Consider these points:

**1. Interplanetary Dust.** Both the earth and the moon steadily collect cosmic dust. Because of erosion, little of this dust remains on the earth's surface. But if cosmic dust has been collecting and then washing into the rivers and oceans for **billions of years**, the ocean should have been silted up by now.

The moon has no erosion, however, so Evolutionists expected to find great depths of cosmic dust there. NASA experts thought that the moon's dust would be more than **50 feet deep!** What a surprise when Neil Armstrong stepped from Apollo 11 and discovered that the dust measured only 1/8 inch to 3 inches! The moon must be very young!

## EVIDENCES

**2. Earth Erosion.** Annual erosion of the earth's surface has been measured *by scientists*. If the earth was only **one billion years old**, the present rate of erosion would have deposited at least 30 times more sediment in the ocean than is actually there.

At the present rate of erosion, the continents should have been worn down to **sea level** in only 14 million years. Though the earth is pronounced to be about 5 billion years old, the sea is not yet washing across the entire land mass! In fact, the sharpness of peaks and valleys throughout the world attest to a young earth.

**3. The Mississippi River Delta.** The River deposits silt at its mouth at a known rate, *according to scientific studies*. Even if it has always been its present size (and scientists acknowledge that it was larger in the past), only about 5000 years would have been required to build up the entire Mississippi River delta — about the length of time since the Flood of Noah! What happened to the silt during all of those billions of years in the Evolutionists' calendar? Or does the River tell us that those years are a gross exaggeration?

**4. Population.** Man has supposedly been on the earth for one million years. Starting with two people, if they had had only 2 1/2 children per family for 25,000 generations, the resulting population would be 10, followed by 2100 zeros! People would literally be standing on top of each other! Where are all of those masses???

And if one million years of man's existence had resulted in only the present living population, at least **3000 billion people** would have lived and died — two dozen or more graves for every acre of land on the earth! Yet, only about 4000 to 5000 fossils of human bones have been found. What happened to the thousands of billions?

And that is saying nothing of the thousands of thousands of billions of animals that would have lived and died, and whose bones would be filling the earth's surface! The earth should literally be a graveyard, so that it would be impossible to dig anywhere without finding remains from the past. Yet it is very uncommon to find ancient bones and skeletons.

In fact, a single family could have developed into the present

## EVIDENCES

population in only 4000 years, at the rate of only 2 1/2 children per couple! The earth must be young!

**5. The Magnetic Field.** The Second Law of Thermodynamics (that everything is “running down”) also applies to the earth’s magnetic field, which causes compasses to point North. Since the field was first measured in 1835, its decay has been measurable and regular — *by scientific accounts*. According to physicist Thomas Barnes, “The Earth’s magnetic field would have been equal to that of a magnetic star as little as 10,000 years ago.” (**Origin and Destiny of the Earth’s Magnetic Field**) Life would not have been possible on the earth under those circumstances, which means that there has been life on the earth for less than 10,000 years.

**6. The Moon in Relation to the Earth.** *Scientists* tell us that by their measurements, the moon is moving away from the earth about two inches each year. If that is the case, only two billion years ago the earth and the moon would have been touching each other! Or, look at it this way: If the moon is moving away from the earth at the rate of two inches a year, in the five billion years of Evolutionists’ history, the moon would long ago have passed out of sight of the earth!

**7. The Shrinking Sun.** *Scientists* have announced the astonishing discovery that the sun seems to be burning up at the rate of about one tenth of one percent each century, or about 5 feet per hour! Considering its tremendous size, that’s not a noticeable difference to the naked eye.

But, at the burn rate announced *by scientists*, only 100,000 years ago the sun would have been double its present size, and any struggling life on the earth would have been burned to a blackened crisp!

And only twenty million years ago the sun would have been actually touching the face of the earth! And what would have been the sun’s proximity to the earth **200 million** years ago, during the “age of dinosaurs”, *according to scientists*?

If the believer in the Scriptures pays careful attention to the various scientific announcements that are made, to the theories that are put forward, and to the presumptive and yet often vague language used to explain how things came to be as they now are, the contradictions will be glaringly evident. Why

## EVIDENCES

don't Evolution-espousing scientists see these conclusions that must be reached from their own studies? Could it be that the only other explanation for all that exists is God and divine creation? And could it be that they do not want to be answerable to any supremacy other than themselves? †

(This information has been drawn from numerous sources, written by authoritative men. For further study, consult **Unlocking the Mysteries of Creation, Vol. 1**, Dennis R. Peterson; **Science, Scripture and the Young Earth**, Henry M. Morris, Ph.D. and John D. Morris, Ph.D.; **Scientific Creationism**, Henry M. Morris, Ph.D.; **The Age of the Solar System**, Harold S. Slusher, Ph.D. and Stephen J. Robertson, M.S.; **A Scientific Analysis of Genesis**, Edward F. Blick, Ph.D.; **The Age of the Earth's Atmosphere, Ice Cores and the Age of the Earth**, and **Sea Floor Sediment and the Age of the Earth**, all by Larry Vardiman, Ph.D.; also, a catalog of books distributed by Apologetics Press, Inc., 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117, many of which were written by brethren Bert Thompson, Ph.D. and Wayne Jackson, M.A.)

Betty Burton Choate is a Christian writer, the wife of J.C. Choate, living in Winona, MS, USA.

### **God has spoken . . .**

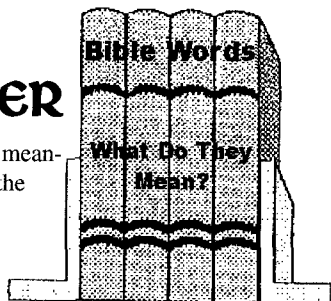
*For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.*

*Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man — and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.*

*Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 1:20-25).*

# 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 as they are used in the context found in Romans 8 (KJV). After making your choices, turn the page for the correct answers.



- Spirit** *n.* – (Gk. *pn̄yoo´mah*) **A:** an angel **B:** a ghostly character **C:** one’s attitude **D:** according to the context, one of the Persons of the Godhead.
- dwel** *v.* – (Gk. *oykeh´o*) **A:** to inhabit, as one’s abode **B:** to stay over for a time **C:** a residence **D:** to loiter.
- debtors** *n.* – (Gk. *ofi let´ace*) **A:** thieves **B:** addiction to borrowing and lending **C:** those who owe something to others **D:** those who are offensive.
- deeds** *n.* – (Gk. *prax´is*) **A:** a practice, function, work still in the process of being done **B:** intentions **C:** commitments **D:** lawlessness that is called sin.
- led** *v.* – (Gk. *ag´o*) **A:** type of alloy **B:** to lead, by implication, to bring forward **C:** forced against one’s will **D:** enticed with cunning.
- adoption** *n.* – (Gk. *hwee oth es ee´ah*) **A:** to change according to need **B:** to accept a situation **C:** the placing as a son **D:** care for a homeless child.
- joint-heirs** *n.* – (Gk. *soong klay ron om´os*) **A:** participant in common **B:** loss of inheritance to another **C:** division of wealth **D:** to disinherit
- glorified** *v.* – (Gk. *soon dox ad´zo*) **A:** to boast about **B:** to exalt to dignity in company with; to glorify together **C:** flattery **D:** object of human pride.
- manifestation** *v.* – (Gk. *ap ok al oop´sis*) **A:** manifold **B:** seeing with difficulty **C:** excuse of faults **D:** an uncovering, laying bare, revealing.
- maketh intercession** *v.* – (Gk. *hoop er en toong khan´o*) **A:** special favor **B:** to make a petition on behalf of another **C:** to speak **D:** to argue the case for.
- foreknowledge** *n.* – (Gk. *prog in oce´ko*) **A:** to know a thing beforehand **B:** fortunetelling **C:** predestination **D:** to cause a thing to happen.
- predestinate** *v.* – (Gk. *pro or id´zo*) **A:** to warn of danger beforehand **B:** freedom of choice **C:** to ordain, to determine before **D:** to impose one’s presence.
- conformed** *v.* – (Gk. *soom mor fo´o*) **A:** to render of like form **B:** controlled **C:** forced into a likeness **D:** to work with a chisel.
- firstborn** *n.* – (Gk. *pro tot ok´os*) **A:** the favorite **B:** the child chosen for special inheritance **C:** firstbegotten **D:** a figure of speech with nebulous meaning.
- justified** *v.* – (Gk. *dik ah yo´o*) **A:** judged **B:** deemed or shown to be righteous **C:** one whose argument has been accepted **D:** forgiveness.
- elect** *n.* – (Gk. *ek lek tos´*) **A:** the winner **B:** to be forced by God into a certain path **C:** to walk around **D:** one who has been chosen.
- accounted** *v.* – (Gk. *log id´zom ahee*) **A:** to reckon, whether by calculation or imputation **B:** to count again **C:** of a certainty **D:** to be judged.

1. **Spirit** *n.* – (Gk. *pn̄yoo' mah*) **D:** the wind, breath; according to the context, one of the Persons of the Godhead.
2. **dwel** *v.* – (Gk. *oy keh' o*) **A:** to inhabit, as one's abode. When people are baptized, Acts 2:38 says that they receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, the indwelling of God's Spirit to give them spiritual life (1 Corinthians 6:19; 2 Corinthians 3:6).
3. **debtors** *n.* – (Gk. *of i let' ace*) **C:** those who owe something to others; delinquents; transgressors.
4. **deeds** *n.* – (Gk. *prax' is*) **A:** a practice, function, work that is still in the process of being done.
5. **led** *v.* – (Gk. *ag' o*) **B:** to lead, by implication, to bring forward.
6. **adoption** *n.* – (Gk. *hwee oth es ee' ah*) **C:** the placing as a son; God's placing of humans as His own children, when they have been washed in His Son's blood, being born into His family, the church, as in Galatians 4:1-7.
7. **joint-heirs** *n.* – (Gk. *soong klay ron om' os*) **A:** participant in common; fellow-heir; heir together; heir with. Jesus promised in Revelation 2:21 that all who overcome will sit with Him on His throne, thus sharing in His eternal glory, as He prayed in John 17:20-24.
8. **glorified** *v.* – (Gk. *soon dox ad' zo*) **B:** to exalt to dignity in company with; to glorify together. This eternal glory has nothing to do with earthly and carnal pride.
9. **manifestation** *v.* – (Gk. *ap ok al oop' sis*) **D:** an uncovering, laying bare, revealing, appearing, coming.
10. **maketh intercession** *v.* – (Gk. *hooper en toong khan' o*) **B:** to make a petition on behalf of another, as the Holy Spirit makes intercession with God for us.
11. **foreknowledge** *n.* – (Gk. *prog in oce' ko*) **A:** used in reference to divine knowledge, to know a thing beforehand.
12. **predestinate** *v.* – (Gk. *pro or id' zo*) **C:** to ordain, to determine before; to limit in advance.
13. **conformed** *v.* – (Gk. *soom mor fo' o*) **A:** to render of like form with another person or thing; to model one thing after another.
14. **firstborn** *n.* – (Gk. *pro tot ok' os*) **C:** firstbegotten; used of Christ in relation to God.
15. **justified** *v.* – (Gk. *dik ah yo' o*) **B:** deemed or shown to be righteous; rendered just or innocent; free.
16. **elect** *n.* – (Gk. *ek lek tos' ^*) **D:** one who has been chosen; by implication, the favorite one. We become the elect of God by our obedience to Him and our subsequent birth into His family (John 3).
17. **accounted** *v.* – (Gk. *log id' zom ahee*) **A:** to reckon, whether by calculation or imputation; to conclude, number, esteem, reason.

---

### Vocabulary Scale

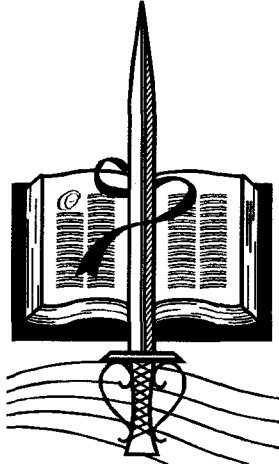
- 7-10 correct .....Good  
 11-13 correct.....Bible Student  
 14-17 correct.....Bible Scholar



# God's Word Should Guide the Conscience

Conscience is the faculty of one's being that approves and disapproves of matters that come to his mind. Conscience is developed through teaching. One's feeling, or conscience, on any matter comes as a result of what he learns. If one hears that which is untrue, and believes it, thinking it is true, his conscience will accept it as true, even though it is false.

Jacob was told by his sons that their brother, Joseph, was evidently slain by an animal. To make their lie sound more like the truth, they showed Jacob Joseph's coat of many colors, which they had dipped in the blood of an animal. Jacob believed the lie; for twenty years he felt that Joseph was dead. But, Joseph was very much alive! He was in Egypt, and prospered rapidly in that great land (Genesis 39-50). Jacob felt the same during the twenty years as he would have felt had Joseph actually been dead. His feel-



**Basil Overton**

ings deceived him because he believed something that was not so! His conscience misled him because it was misled by a false report of his own sons.

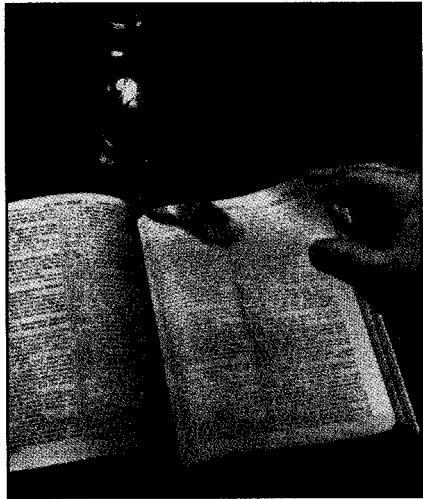
Likewise, some think they are saved from their sins when they are not. Some are told they can be saved from past sins and become Christians without being baptized. If they believe

this, they believe something that is not so. But, because they believe it, they feel that they are all right. Their consciences thus mislead them, because their consciences are misled by doctrine that is not in keeping with God's Word. God's Word teaches that those who believe that Christ is God's Son must repent of their sins and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:36-41). Let God's Word guide your conscience. †

**Basil Overton is editor of *The World Evangelist* and lives in Florence, Alabama, U.S.A.**

# God's Word

Jerry Jenkins



There are now telescopes that are extremely powerful, but we have not yet invented one that could see the earth if that telescope were located on our nearest star. Yet there is an instrument that can see not only the earth, but it can see much beyond. It is so remarkable that it enables man to look into the past and also peer into the future. That tool which enables man to see such great distances, and to look backward and forward, is the Word of God. Through the Word we can see God as He created the world and all living things (Hebrews 11:3), we can see His love for us (John 3:16), and we can learn of the Savior who died for our sins (Romans 5:6-11).

Some have wealthy relatives who can will them an estate worth millions, but no family member is

able to offer an inheritance among the redeemed, which God's Word can do for us, if we are obedient and faithful to its Gospel (Acts 20:32).

Recently the Challenger was able to dock with a space laboratory and retrieve some men and bring them back to earth. The Word of God is able to lift one into the very presence of God.

No wonder the Sweet Singer of Israel said: *"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes. The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver"* (Psalms 119:71). And again, *"O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day"* (Psalms 119:97). †

**Jerry Jenkins is the preacher for the Roebuck Parkway Church of Christ in Birmingham, Alabama, USA.**



# Malnutrition

Mike Kouba

The church is full of anorexic, undernourished, hungry and malnourished people. Think about it. We feed our physical bodies two, four, even up to six times a day (if you're a teen). A snack here, a meal there; a bite whenever we can sneak one. You can certainly tell when someone has been eating well. It shows. They have energy. They are able to sustain the day's activities. And they grow, literally.

What happens when someone skips a meal? They are grouchy, irritable, restless, and "starving". Miss enough meals and the physical body goes into shock. Sickness sets in and the disease of malnutrition clearly shows.

**Try it. Go seven days between meals.** On that seventh day, gorge the entire day until you are so stuffed you can't take any more. You'll feel good, I promise. Until the second day. The physical body is just not designed to undergo this kind of routine.

Then **why do we force that practice upon our spiritual bodies?** We seem to be accustomed to feasting on the Word of Life only once or twice a week. And that only by the preacher or Bible class teacher. Is it boredom? Is it something we just don't think about? Is it intimidation of not knowing how? Put those same questions to the art of feeding the physical body. That might help change your perspective concerning the spiritual.

Nutritionists claim balance is the key word to a good diet. Christians don't seem to even have a diet. We are hungry, skinny, bony, pale and weak. Even more sad is the fact that we have the "food" right before us but many choose not to eat it until the seventh day. Aren't you hungry? Look into the mirror of God's word to discover the answer. It's not a "try it" type of thing. It's a must for survival. †

# PUZZLE PAGE

## Jude

ABANDON  
ADAM  
ADMISSION  
ADVANTAGE  
ANGEL  
ANIMALS  
AUTHORITY  
BALAAM  
BELIEVE  
BLEMISH  
BROTHER  
CAIN  
CALLED  
CONDEMNATION  
EGYPT  
ENOCH  
ETERNAL  
EXAMPLE  
FAITH  
FEASTS  
FLESH  
FRUITLESS  
GENERATION  
GLORIOUS  
GLORY  
GOMORRAH  
GRACE  
GRUMBLERS  
HOLY  
IMMORAL  
JUDE  
KORAH  
LOUDMOUTHED  
LOVE  
MAJESTY  
MASTER  
MERCY  
MICHAEL  
MOSES  
PEACE  
PERISH  
PUNISHMENT  
REBELLION  
REJOICING  
SAINTS  
SALVATION  
SAVIOR  
SEA  
SERVANT  
SHAME  
SODOM  
STAR  
UNDERSTAND  
UNGODLINESS  
WANDERING  
WAVES  
WILD

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

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

The two most powerful forces within relationships are love and fear. Unquestionably the more powerful is love. Husbands and wives want a spouse who loves

# Controlled by Fear

them, not fears them. Parents want children who obey in love, not fear. Adults want friends who love them, not fear them.

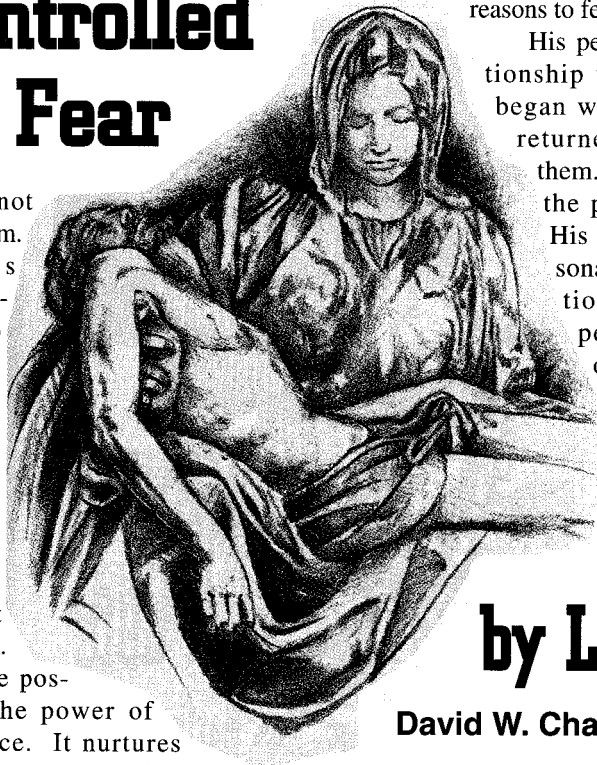
Love possesses the power of endurance. It nurtures and adds meaning to life. It sustains and develops. Fear does none of that. In human relationships, love is always more constructive, beneficial, and valued than fear.

What about the human-divine relationship? Does God seek to

control Christians by love or fear?

As God formed and attempted to govern the nation of Israel, He often used fear. He wanted Israel to love Him (Deuteronomy 6:4,5), but He also gave Israel significant reasons to fear Him.

His personal relationship with Israel began when Moses returned to lead them. God used the plagues for His initial, personal introduction to these people (Exodus 7-11). Through the plagues, God established



## OR by Love?

David W. Chadwell

the reality of His existence. He demonstrated that He was the living, independent God with superior power. The message was unmistakable: "I, the living God, am a powerful God to be held in awe. Do not rebel against me!"

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

In Deuteronomy, Moses urged Israel to obey God. He clearly utilized fear as a motive for obedience. If a person's brother, son, daughter, wife, or best friend enticed him to commit idolatry, he was to report them and help execute them (Deuteronomy 13:6-11). This would cause all Israel to be afraid to commit idolatry.

If a man expressed disrespect for the court ruling of a priest or

often the result of fear.

This same powerful God revealed Himself in Jesus' life, cross, and resurrection. In this self-revelation, you see love, not fear. The cross and the resurrection are more awesome than the plagues in Egypt. The plagues revealed the power to destroy; the cross and resurrection revealed the power to give life. With the plagues, God delivered Israel from slavery. With the

***“For the Lord is great and greatly to be praised;  
He is also to be feared above all gods”***  
(1 Chronicles 16:25)

***“If you love Me, keep My commandments”***  
(John 14:15).

judge, he was to be killed (Deuteronomy 17:8-13). All Israel would hear and be afraid to express disrespect.

If a false witness testified, he was to serve the sentence for the crime of his false accusation (Deuteronomy 19:15-21). Israel would hear and be afraid to be false witnesses.

Parents who had a stubborn, rebellious son were to have him executed (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). All Israel would hear and be afraid.

The law used fear as a primary means of control. Obedience was

cross, God delivered us from sin.

God's love was at work in the plagues. However, God used fear because of the wickedness and ignorance of those people. God's love is at work in the cross and the resurrection. No longer does He seek to control His people by fear. The controlling power at work in the life of Christians is love, not fear.

God's controlling love is as clearly revealed in the Gospel as fear was in the law. Because of His love, God sent Jesus to be our Savior, not to condemn us (John 3:16-21). He demonstrated His love

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

for us by allowing Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:5-8). The love of Christ controls us because one died for all (2 Corinthians 5:14,15). It was God's great love for us that revealed the grace that saves us (Ephesians 2:3-5). God's love has given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace (2 Thessalonians 2:16,17). The incredible thing is not that we love God, but that He loves us. In that love He gave us His only Son so that we could live through that Son (1 John 4:9-11).

The contrast of the objectives in the law and in the Gospel is astounding. The law's objective: make people afraid to commit evil. The Gospel's objective: open people's eyes to God's awesome love in the cross and in forgiveness, and they will want to obey and serve.

Christians treat other people as they wish to be treated. They are honest and honorable. They show mercy to those who fail and forgive those who hurt them. They help the least significant people. They humbly serve fellow Christians. Why do they live **daily** in this manner? Because of fear? No! Because they love Jesus and the God who sent Him. Only people controlled by love behave in those ways for a lifetime.

Can you grasp what God did for you in the cross and the resur-

rection? Can you appreciate the significance of forgiveness? Can you respond to the privilege of being God's son or daughter? Are you capable of loving God and Jesus more than you love yourself? Can you allow your love for Christ to direct your thinking, to determine your emotions, and to structure your behavior?

Fear can *turn* you to God, but fear cannot *bond* you to God. Only love will bond your heart, mind, and life to God. Are you capable of being controlled by love? †

David Chadwell preaches the Gospel in Fort Smith, Arkansas, U.S.A.

### Divine Consolation

***Nobody came,  
Nobody called,  
Nobody cared,  
And I cried.***

***Now I have found Jesus  
And He cares for me  
And with His help  
I'll make it.***

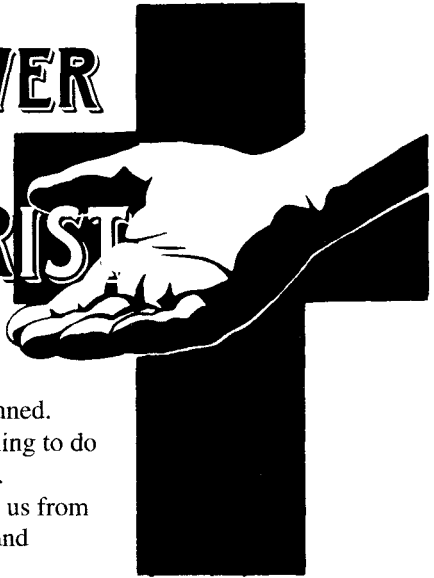
***Now I can help someone  
Who needs a friend  
For I have been there  
And I know.***

***Thank You, God,  
For caring for me.***

***— Mamie McGovern Corley***

# GOD'S ANSWER TO SIN - JESUS CHRIST

Loy Mitchell



## Introduction

- A. We have learned that all have sinned.
- B. Sin is breaking God's law or failing to do the good we know we should do.
- C. Sin is destructive for it separates us from God, makes us a slave to Satan and brings death.
- D. Those who die in sin perish and are cast into the everlasting fire (John 8:24; Matthew 25:41).

## Read the Scriptures before you answer the questions

- 1. Hebrews 10:1-4
  - A. The sacrifices offered under the Law of Moses made the worshippers: perfect or removed all sin, or did not make them perfect.
  - B. The blood of bulls and goats could or could not take away sins.
- 2. Colossians 1:19,20
  - A. Reconciliation is possible by: Jesus Christ, or John, or by being very good.
  - B. Peace with God is possible through the: keeping of the law, or the blood of the cross, or by helping other people.
- 3. Hebrews 2:17
  - A. Who is our faithful and merciful high priest? The pope, or Jesus Christ.
  - B. Jesus Christ made atonement for the: priest, or the good moral people, or for all men.



## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

4. Ephesians 1:3-7
  - A. All spiritual blessings are found in: Christ, or by being generous, or by living a moral life.
  - B. Name three spiritual blessings found in Christ
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.
  
5. 2 Corinthians 5:21
  - A. Who knew no sin? David, or Peter, or Jesus?
  - B. Who became sin for us? Paul, or Mary, or Jesus Christ.
  
6. Hebrews 5:8,9
  - A. Who learned obedience by what he suffered? Jesus, or Apollos, or Moses.
  - B. Jesus Christ is the source or author of eternal salvation to all who: have faith, or who obey, or who meet for worship each Sunday.
  
7. John 8:32-34
  - A. What can make man free? Truth, or education, or physical strength.
  - B. What is truth? John 14:6 and John 17:17.
  - C. Only Jesus Christ and His word can make man free from sin!
  
8. Romans 6:16-18
  - A. The Roman Christians had been slaves to: sin, or Greece, or Asia.
  - B. These Romans had: acknowledged sin, or prayed, or obeyed.
  - C. They had obeyed from the heart: a form of teaching, or doctrine, or a creed book, or the laws of the church.
  - D. They were now freed from sin and had a new master!
  
9. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
  - A. What message or teaching had Paul taught the Corinthians? Law of Moses, or the gospel.
  - B. Give the three parts of his message or gospel.
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

- C. The form of teaching the Romans and Corinthians obeyed was the gospel of Christ.
10. Romans 6:3-7
- A. How does a person get into Christ? Belief, or confusion, or repentance, or baptism.
  - B. Just as Christ died, was buried and then was raised so the Romans died to \_\_\_\_\_, were buried in the waters of \_\_\_\_\_ and were raised to walk in a \_\_\_\_\_ life.
  - C. When we are baptized into Christ's death we gain the benefits of His death, His blood given on the cross.
11. Romans 6:23
- A. The wages of sin is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - B. What is the gift of God? \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. Salvation is a gift which we receive when we obey His word or teaching the gospel.
12. 2 Timothy 1:10
- A. Who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel? The king, or the governor, or Jesus, or Paul.
  - B. Thus those who obey Jesus have the promise of life eternal in heaven.
13. Matthew 7:21-23
- A. Who can enter the kingdom of heaven? Those who say "Lord, Lord", or those who do the will of God.
  - B. All who say they have done many wonders in the name of the Lord will enter His kingdom? Yes or No

**Conclusion:** Have you had your sins removed by Jesus Christ?



**Loy Mitchell, missionary for many years in Zimbabwe, currently works with the Lord's church in Topeka, KS, USA.**

*God's mercy and justice  
intersect at the cross.*

# Verse Search

Supply the missing information from the book of Acts, chapter five, NKJV.

1. Who sold a possession? (V. 1)
2. To whom was he lying when he said he was giving the full price to the church? (V. 2,3)
3. Were the Christians in Jerusalem required to sell what they had and donate the proceeds? (V. 4)
4. What effect did the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira have on the church and others (V. 11)
5. "And through the hands of \_\_\_\_\_ many \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ were done among the people..." (V. 12)
6. What effect did this working of miracles have on the religious leadership in Jerusalem? (V. 12-17)
7. What did they do to the apostles? (V. 18)
8. When an angel released them, what did he tell them to do? (V. 20)
9. Did the high priest realize from the report of the officers that the apostles must have been released through a miraculous work of God? (V. 23)
10. Why did the captain of the officers apprehend the apostles without violence? (V. 26)
11. What accusation did the high priest make? (V. 28)
12. What did the apostles answer, when they were commanded not to continue preaching in the name of Jesus? (V. 28,29)
13. They explained that God had exalted Jesus in what way? (V. 30,31)
14. "And we are His \_\_\_\_\_ to these things, and so also is the \_\_\_\_\_ whom God has \_\_\_\_\_ to those who \_\_\_\_\_" (V. 32)
15. Did this convince the Jewish religious leaders? (V. 33)
16. One of the leaders, named Gamaliel, urged them to do what? (V. 35)
17. "...if it is of \_\_\_\_\_, you cannot \_\_\_\_\_ it — lest you even be found to \_\_\_\_\_" (V. 39).
18. In what did the apostles rejoice? (V. 40-42)

[See inside of back cover for answers.]



# The Abundant Life

David Macy

Every year in the United States, about 20,000 people commit suicide and about 525,000 attempt self murder (or one every minute) because they do not think life is worth living.

Life is worth living if you are in Christ and He is in you. Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). The abundant life in Christ brings abundant grace. "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one, much

*more they which receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).*

Because of the sin of one man, death reigns over all mankind. Those who receive the abundant grace of God by believing in Jesus and obeying His commandments will reign in life with Christ. We will receive the free gift of eternal life and reign with Jesus throughout eternity because He made it possible by His righteous life and His death on

## SALVATION

the cross as atonement for our sins.

We die because of the sin of Adam, but if we believe and obey we shall live because of the righteousness and sacrifice of Christ. This is the supreme manifestation of God's grace or unmerited favor. We did nothing to deserve our rescue from death and destruction, but God sent His Son to save us because He is a loving and merciful heavenly Father.

The obedient, who are faithful until death, will dwell in those beautiful mansions in the Father's house because of the grace of God. This is the reason the apostle Paul wrote the saints in Ephesus, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast*" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

We cannot be saved without believing in Christ, repenting of our sins, confessing Christ before men, being baptized for the remission of our sins, and doing good works until death. But **we do not earn** a place in Heaven by our obedience and good works. Salvation and eternal life are free gifts from the hand of a loving God, and *we receive these gifts by our obedience and faithful service until death.*

*"Though he were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of*

*eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him"* (Hebrew 5:8,9). "*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life*" (Romans 2:70).

The word abundance means an overflowing fullness. The cups of the righteous are overflowing with grace, and for this we should praise and thank our heavenly Father, both night and day. The hopelessness that causes people to take their own lives should never characterize the Christian, who has already died to sin and has been resurrected to a new life in Christ. †

**David Macy preaches for the Murphy Church of Christ, Blue Ridge, Georgia, USA,**

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . . to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.*

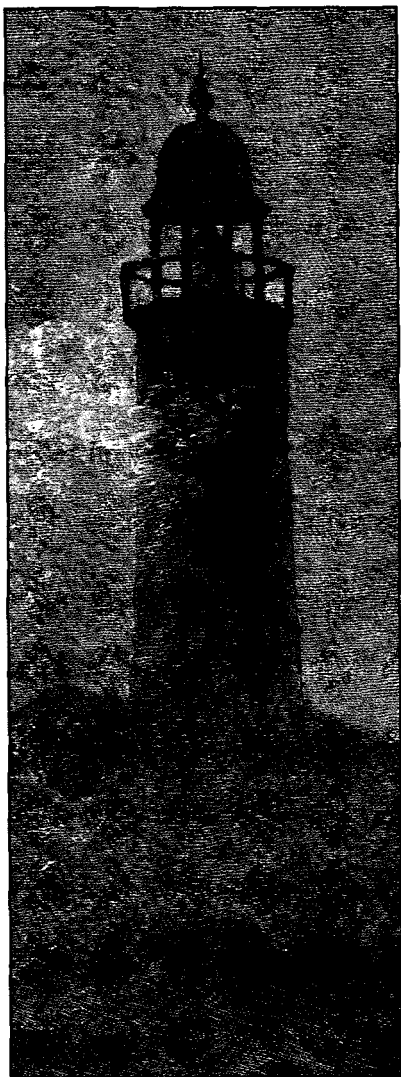
(Romans 3:23,24,26)

# Lost!

**Allan E. Flaxman**

**I**n the late 1920's or the early 1930's, when aviation was still very much in its infancy and the art of navigation fell far short of the sophisticated methods in use today, a pioneer aviator took off from the west coast of the U.S.A., bound for Sydney, Australia. Not long before this event, a very similar flight route had been pioneered by that other great pathfinder in the field of aviation — Sir Charles Kingsford Smith. The man of whom we speak, however, wanted to cover the route in a smaller plane. He set course for Hawaii.

The minutes and then the hours ticked away. The expected group of islands failed to appear. By this time darkness was overtaking him and cloud cover hid the stars. Any hope of checking his course by those stars was being denied to him. He was sending out Morse code radio signals to the mainland, but, if my memory is serving me faithfully, he was not able to receive their replies. It was becoming painfully clear that he was lost! Unable to take a bearing from the stars, and with his fuel supplies rapidly running out, any hope of finding land and saving his life was diminishing by the minute.



## SALVATION

I was just a boy at that time. Quite a few years later (1947), my family and I traveled on a so-called “converted troop ship,” the “Marine Phoenix,” from Sydney, Australia, to San Francisco, California, U.S.A. I was greatly impressed by the immensity of that Pacific Ocean. Hour after hour and day after day we seemed to sit in the middle of a massive saucer, with nothing but ocean in every direction. At one stage of the journey we traveled for eleven days, at what I’m told would have been about twenty-five knots, without once seeing land!

That’s an enormous expanse of water. Our “flier” was lost somewhere above that mighty ocean. He had no idea where he was and had no way of finding out. One of his last radio signals said in effect, “I’m hopelessly lost. Fuel tanks are almost empty. Am preparing to ‘ditch’ (crash land in the ocean).” What would have been the thoughts that raced through his mind in those last minutes of hopelessness before he crashed into that vast empty ocean? We’ll never know.

However, men can face something far worse than being hopelessly lost in a small plane, about to run out of fuel above the lonely waves of that huge Pacific Ocean. Too many, by a long way, fail to adequately equip themselves to meet their Maker! They “fly,” as it were,

unprepared, and have left it “too late” to make preparations for that great event. Eternity extends endlessly before them — an eternity away from both God and Heaven.

When we read the Bible description of the place to which those who are unprepared will go, the prospect of “ditching” in the Pacific Ocean, far from land and human help, becomes rather mild, rather tame. “...*everlasting fire, punishment...*” “...*wailing, weeping, gnashing of teeth...*” “...*blackness of darkness forever...*” “...*where the worm does not die and the fire is not quenched...*” “...*the lake of fire and brimstone...*” “...*tormented day and night forever.*” (Matthew 25:41,46; 13:41,42; Jude 13; Revelation 19:20; 20:10)

Don’t you know that the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) was glad he had repented — glad, too, that he had done so “in time!” And how very glad he must have been to hear his Father say, “*This my son was dead and is alive again. He was lost and is found*” (verse 24).

How vital it is that we all make sure that we don’t become spiritually lost! We must make certain that we are never faced with “ditching” in the ocean of eternity, separated forever from God and from Heaven.✠

**Allan E. Flaxman established the Lord’s church and preached for about thirty years in the Sydney suburb of Lakemba, Australia.**

# Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

## John 12:42

Regardless of the blindness of those of whom He had just spoken, there is the following comment the writer wished to note.

These 'chief rulers' were members of the 'Sanhedrin', the supreme court of the Jews.

Because of the indisputable sign of Jesus resurrecting Lazarus, many secretly believed. See 12:11,17.

***Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on Him;***

***but***

***because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:***

The tragedy of 'but', an exclusion that prevents anyone from receiving the blessings of faith in Christ.

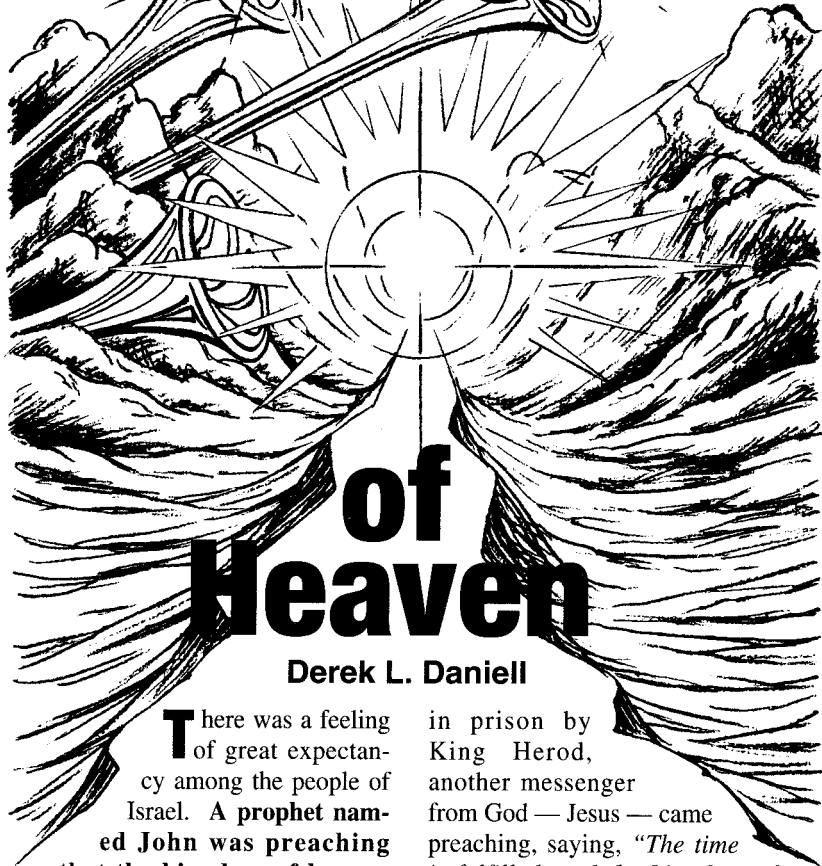
People haven't changed much, as there are still those who believe the truth but fear criticism so much that they will not make a public confession of what they truly believe. Such is here condemned. See Matthew 10:32,33; Romans 10:9,10.

The self-righteous Jewish sect that had sufficient power to excommunicate anyone from the synagogue whom they judged as sinners.

Fenter Northern



# The Kingdom



# of Heaven

Derek L. Daniell

**T**here was a feeling of great expectancy among the people of Israel. A prophet named John was preaching that the kingdom of heaven was at hand! John is the prophet referred to by Isaiah as “the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ready the way of the Lord, make his paths straight” (Matthew 3:1-3; Isaiah 40:3). After John had been put

in prison by King Herod, another messenger from God — Jesus — came preaching, saying, “*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel*” (Mark 1:14,15).

### **The Kingdom in Prophecy.**

Was the kingdom that had been promised down through the cen-

## THE CHURCH

turies really near? Was their King coming? God had made a covenant with King David that one of his descendants would establish the throne for ever (2 Samuel 7:16; Psalm 89:35-37). Now the time prophesied was to be fulfilled, the kingdom was at hand.

This promise had given the nation hope in its darkest hours. One such time had been when Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had destroyed their temple, burned Jerusalem and taken the nation into captivity. It was to this pagan king that God had revealed His plan for an everlasting kingdom. We read of the dream and its interpretation by the prophet Daniel, in chapter 2 of the book that bears his name.

When John and Jesus came upon the scene, three great kingdoms — Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Grecian — were history, and the fourth — Rome — had come to power. It was to be in the days of this fourth empire that God would set up a kingdom which would never be destroyed. This kingdom would not be left to another people, and would stand forever (Daniel 2:36-45).

### **The King Arrives**

The angel Gabriel had told Mary, *“Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord*

*God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end”* (Luke 1:30-33).

Jesus sent out the seventy disciples to proclaim **“The kingdom of God (heaven) is come nigh unto you”** (Luke 10:9). After He chose twelve special men to be His apostles He sent them out with the same message, as we read in Matthew 10:7. Jesus told His disciples that some of them would actually see the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1). As the enemies of Jesus sought to have Pilate put Him to death, they accused Him of claiming to be a king, in opposition to the emperor of Rome (Luke 23:1-3). Jesus agreed that He was a king, but He said His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:33-37). Though the people had attempted at one time to make Jesus their earthly king, (John 6:15), the religious leaders would not accept Him (John 19:12-15 and John 1:11).

And, contrary to what people thought in those days and still think, even today, Jesus’ kingdom was to be spiritual; it was never intended to be an earthly organization set up in the city of Jerusalem (Romans 14:17). His kingdom was not to be like those of earth with positions of power for humans (Luke 22:24-30).

### **The Kingdom Established**

Following His resurrection,

## THE CHURCH

Jesus spent 40 days with His apostles, *“speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”* They were instructed to remain in Jerusalem until they received *“power, after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you.”* With the coming of the power would come the kingdom (Mark 9:1; Acts 1:1-8)

The Holy Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost, (Acts 2:1-4), when Peter and the other apostles used the keys of the Gospel to open the kingdom (Matthew 16:19).

In his speech, Peter reminded his listeners of the promise God had made to David, that *“He would raise up Christ to sit on his throne... that God hath made that same Jesus...both Lord and Christ”* (Acts 2:22-36). Later, about 3,000 were *“added to them”* as they were baptized for remission of sins and they entered the Kingdom (Acts 2:41).

Jesus had told Nicodemus that in order to *enter the Kingdom*, he must be born of water and the Spirit (John 3:1-5). That is what these people did, on the day of Pentecost.

Following the beginning of the persecution of the church, Philip went down to Samaria, *“preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ”* (Acts 8:5-12).

In like manner, Paul preached the same message, in Acts 14:22, 19:8, 20:25, and 28:23,31. It was Paul who

wrote to the Christians at Colosse, reminding them that they had been translated **into the Kingdom** of His dear Son (Colossians 1:13).

### **The Pearl of Great Price**

The Christian's citizenship is in heaven, their inheritance is described in Philippians 3:20,21. *“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”* (Hebrews 12:28; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5). Though some will be found worthy of their inheritance, many will not, according to 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 and Galatians 5:21.

The value of the kingdom of heaven is *“like a merchant man seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all he had, and bought it”* (Matthew 13:45,46).

How important is the Kingdom of heaven to you? Do you seek it? When you have found it, will you be willing to give all you have to obtain it? When the kingdom is yours, *“give diligence to make your calling and election sure ... for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Peter 1:10,11). †

**Derek L Daniell preaches for the Tunbridge Wells Church of Christ in Kent, England.**

# The Kingdom Must Be 1st

Neal Pollard

In the middle of the greatest sermon ever preached, Jesus commanded, "*But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you*" (Matthew 6:33). It was then, and is now, one of the most neglected commands disregarded by an overwhelming majority who seek something else *first* (Philippians 2:21; 1 Corinthians 1:22). But, the Kingdom of Christ is of primary importance.

Jesus emphasizes the Kingdom's importance particularly in Matthew 13, where He utters several parables about it. In the midst of this teaching He explains to His disciples the meaning of one of them (36-43). In it, He clearly delineates all the components of the parable of

the tares. Set in opposition to each other are the wheat and the tares. With the rest of the New Testament, this parable emphasizes that *there is but one institution which is eternally important* so there is only *one* place it can occupy in the hearts of any who desire to be pleasing to God. As Jesus said, *the Kingdom must be first*.

## **It must be first because of what it is.**

Around 600 B.C., an eighteen-year-old young man of royal descent found himself in Babylonian captivity, with the nation of Judah. In addition to other divinely-ordained insights, Daniel "*even understood all kinds of visions and dreams*" (Daniel 1:17). In chapter two, Daniel prophesies the rise and

## THE CHURCH

fall of four empires — Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and then Rome. In the time of the fourth kingdom would arise another Kingdom, one which would never be destroyed but would itself endure forever (Daniel 2:44). Daniel describes an indestructible, irreplaceable, invincible, infinite institution!

But what is the Kingdom to which Daniel refers? It is discussed in Matthew 16:13-19, where Jesus speaks of *the church* and *the Kingdom* as being **synonymous**. Getting into the Kingdom requires the same things as getting into the church. As only those in the church will be saved, so it will be with

zens (Christians), and laws (doctrine of Christ). The Kingdom is no ordinary or earthly-devised institution! When a Christian's actions say that he can "take" or "leave" the church, that he does not want to be involved, that he does not want to follow Christ and His rules, he says he does not care about or realize what the kingdom is.

### **It must be first because of Whose it is.**

The Kingdom belongs to Christ (Acts 20:28), and it is a divine and heavenly Kingdom (John 18:36). It exists in this world, but its authority is in Heaven. For that reason it should be first in the Christian's life.

**He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed [transferred] 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).**

those in the Kingdom. Therefore, the Kingdom is the blood-bought institution of Christ (Acts 20:28), the precious body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22,23), the very family of God ( I Timothy 5:1,2), and the only vine producing the right kind of fruit (John 15:1-4)

Because the church is a Kingdom, it has a specific King (Christ), territory (the church), citi-

If a stranger gave you a list of instructions to follow, you would probably pay very little attention. It might mean more if a neighbor or friend gave you that list of things to do. If it was your spouse, you would heed it even more. The *consequences* would increase if under threat of penalty, a policeman or government official gave out the list of things to follow. But the list of

## THE CHURCH

instructions Christians have for their responsibilities in the Kingdom was not given by a stranger, a friend, a loved one, or even an earthly authority. The Kingdom belongs to Christ — the one who saves man by His precious blood, who loves him with His penetrating love, and leads him with His perfect Word. Since the Kingdom belongs to Christ, it must be first!

### **It must be first because of why it exists.**

Consider the reasons for the kingdom's existence:

◆ *God created the Kingdom as a safe haven for all who wish to avoid perishing* (John 3:5). The only good seed in the field of the world are the children of the Kingdom. One who is not in the Kingdom is a worthless, harmful weed. God created the Kingdom to benefit the individual who wants personal salvation.

◆ *God created the Kingdom as a life-saving station.* The children of the Kingdom are to broadcast the good seed sown by Christ. One saved from sin cannot selfishly keep salvation to himself. Jesus needs laborers in His harvest (Luke 10:2). He commands all His children to teach the world (Mark 16:15).

◆ *God created the Kingdom as a hospital for the hurting* (James 1:27; Galatians 6:10). The primary pur-

pose of the church is *not* to be a social service agency, but we are to be benevolent and help as many needy people as possible. We can then use such opportunities to introduce the gospel to these people in need. Jesus often healed the sick and fed the hungry before He taught them the gospel. Why would He change His approach in His Kingdom? He thus warns that seeing without helping the needy is a practical demonstration of "*faith without works*" (James 2:14-18).

◆ *God created the Kingdom as a way to glorify God* (Ephesians 3:21). When the church, with its members, follows the laws and fulfills the purposes of the Kingdom, God is glorified. Basically, the Kingdom exists to meet physical needs, to save souls, and to build up the saved. When we fail to engage ourselves in these areas of responsibility, we are not putting the Kingdom first.

The areas of responsibility outlined by the Lord are not like a buffet bar from which churches can choose involvement in the one or two that suit them. Likewise, in a church which is striving to do all its God-given work, there may be individuals who are not personally carrying any of the responsibility. This is not acceptable to God. Just being in a congregation that is working will not automatically punch one's

## THE CHURCH

ticket to heaven. If the individual is not producing fruit himself, he will be cut off the vine (John 15:2); if he is not laboring in the vineyard, he cannot inherit eternal life (Matthew 21:31). If an individual or church loses sight of the mission, he or it must repent or completely disassociate from Christ (Revelation 3:14-19).

### **It must be first because of where it is going.**

Paul indicates that the kingdom will be turned by Christ over to God in "the end" (1 Corinthians 15:24). While one lives, he must work for the King. Every faithful Christian says with Christ, "*I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work*" (John 9:4). Every person on earth is given one life, one set of talents and opportunities. Once life is over for a person, the time for labor is past. But there will come a resurrection morning (John 5:28,29). Then, all will stand before the King (Matthew 25:31-34).

1 Corinthians 15 reveals that the Kingdom will be delivered to God, but *not all in the Kingdom will be saved*. The weeds will be separated from the wheat. Earlier, in Matthew 13, Jesus tells the parable of a man who sowed good seed in his field, only to have enemies sabotage his efforts by planting weeds among the wheat. It is said that a

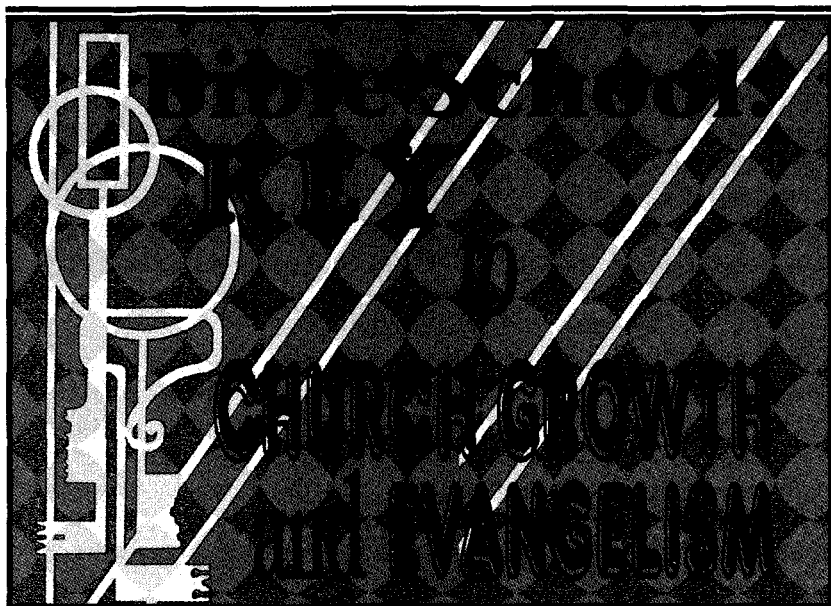
certain weed known as darnel grass looked just like wheat until it was full-grown. By then, when it stood tall, its weight caused the wheat to wilt over. You could tell the two apart only by their fruit. That is what Jesus warned in Matthew 7:16.

The angels will gather the tares out of the Kingdom and they shall be burned with everlasting fire. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun — i.e., they shall be granted eternal life. **The Kingdom cannot be moved** (Hebrews 12:28). **It will never be destroyed** (Daniel 2:44). The book of Revelation promises that they that overcome through the blood of Christ can enter that heavenly city. Because only the faithful in the Kingdom shall triumph, the Kingdom must be first with every Christian!

The Kingdom must be put first because of **what** it is, **Whose** it is, **why** it is, and **where** it is going. Therefore, if one is not in the kingdom, he is not in the right place. He is not serving the right Master. He is not living for the right reasons. And, he is not going in the right direction. How tragic that one would fail to gain entrance into the Kingdom when the King Himself wants all to become citizens in it (2 Peter 3:9)! †

**Neal Pollard works with the Lord's church in Mechanicsville, Virginia USA.**

## CHURCH GROWTH



### Clayton Pepper

In the 1700's there was an Englishman of great compassion whose work would become known by thousands and whose influence would ultimately touch millions.

He began early in his adult life to visit the prisons. He wanted to get an insight into the horrors of prison life and to try to reform prisoners. When he saw that his efforts to reform adult criminals were almost totally unsuccessful, he turned his attention toward the neglected children of the city. He said, **“Vice is preventable if we begin with the child, for idleness is the parent of vice, and ignorance is the cause of idleness; therefore, we must begin with instructing the child.”** The man of whom I speak was Robert Raikes.

It was said of him, “Out of compassion and interest to reform the boys who roamed the streets on Sunday, Raikes opened his first Sunday school in the kitchen of a home in Gloucester, England, in July, 1780, and hired a Mrs. Meredith to teach. This date marks the day that worked a miracle on the young people of England and extended throughout the United Kingdom.”

The school began serving a secular purpose, then spiritual. William Fox is given credit for bringing the Bible into the Sunday school and making a study



## CHURCH GROWTH

of the scriptures its chief purpose. This was the birth of the “Sunday school”.

When Robert Raikes died in 1811, there were an estimated 400,000 people attending Sunday schools in Great Britain.

This movement spread to America where protestant churches received it with open arms. They saw it as an opportunity to meet both sacred and secular needs. In 1800, according to the U.S. Census Bureau of Education, the average American received only **82 days** of formal education in his lifetime. The Sunday school could then both educate and edify the semi-illiterate. Between 1827 and 1860 most denominations, as well as the Lord’s church, adopted the Sunday school. The movement continued to grow as its value was discovered.

During the first two-thirds of the 20th century Sunday school growth skyrocketed in unprecedented numbers. It seemed to happen with little or no effort. These first 60 years of the 20th century have been called the “Golden Age of American Sunday Schools.” Churches also enjoyed unprecedented growth.

### Change in the 60's

As the century moved into the 1960's, growth patterns began to change. In many Sunday schools enrollment plateaued. Worship attendance stabilized and started to decline. This did not happen in every congregation at the same time. The “great depression” of growth of many Sunday schools and churches had begun. Today, after some 200 years as a growing institution, the Sunday school is in a desperate struggle for its existence. Overall church school attendance in the U.S. dropped some eight million between 1970 and 1980.

### **Time, experience and research have shown these reasons why the Bible school is important:**

- A.** Moral values, Biblical values are under severe attack. Bible schools provide correct values for a good life here and eternal life in the world to come.
- B.** The holy state of marriage has been treated as though it were unholy — as divorce rates skyrocket and the number of couples living together without the benefit of marriage increases. Divorce rates decrease drastically in religious families over non-religious couples.

## CHURCH GROWTH

C. The blight of crime threatens to engulf our society. The happiness and well-being of everyone is affected by the problem of crime today. We all have much at stake. The late Judge Sam Tatum, a Christian juvenile court judge, said, "There is one thing that will end delinquency and will end it forever and that is the gospel of Christ." It is a true statement that a child brought up in church is seldom brought up in court.

D. The teachings of two Jews, Karl Marx and Jesus Christ, will continue colliding in many parts of the world. Atheistic communism enslaves men, and Jesus sets men free. Where there is a void in the heart for the Word of God, there is fertile soil for communist doctrine. Bible schools help keep our nation free.

E. Bible schools help turn men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God... the very purpose of the church and the purpose of the Bible School.

F. It helps fulfill the part of the Great Commission that teaches the taught to teach others to observe all things that Jesus has commanded (Matthew 28:18-20).

## Training Members for Evangelism

### The Task of the Bible School Goes Beyond the Teaching of Moral Values.

Our goal must be to bring the unsaved to Christ and not simply to teach. Unserved subjects under the sound of the gospel must be brought into a saved relationship with Christ. A personal concern for the eternal destiny of every student must grip the heart of the Bible teacher. His or her objective cannot simply be to teach a Bible class and convey facts without a heart of compassion and concern for those who are lost. Solomon said in Proverbs 11:30, "*The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he that winneth souls is wise.*" And Daniel 12:3 says, "*And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*" We must grasp that the eternal purpose of Christ was to seek and save that which is lost, then we know the purpose of the Sunday school and the church (Luke 19:10).

Every Bible school class should not only be a center of sound teaching of the Word of God; it should be a center of evangelism, where men and

## CHURCH GROWTH

women, boys and girls are brought and won to Christ. In many instances this can only be done through a personal confrontation on a private basis, perhaps in the home of the person who needs to obey the gospel of Christ.

One religious group reported that on one Sunday there were 200 people who made a profession of faith, and **90% of this resulted from the Sunday school teachers visiting in the homes.**

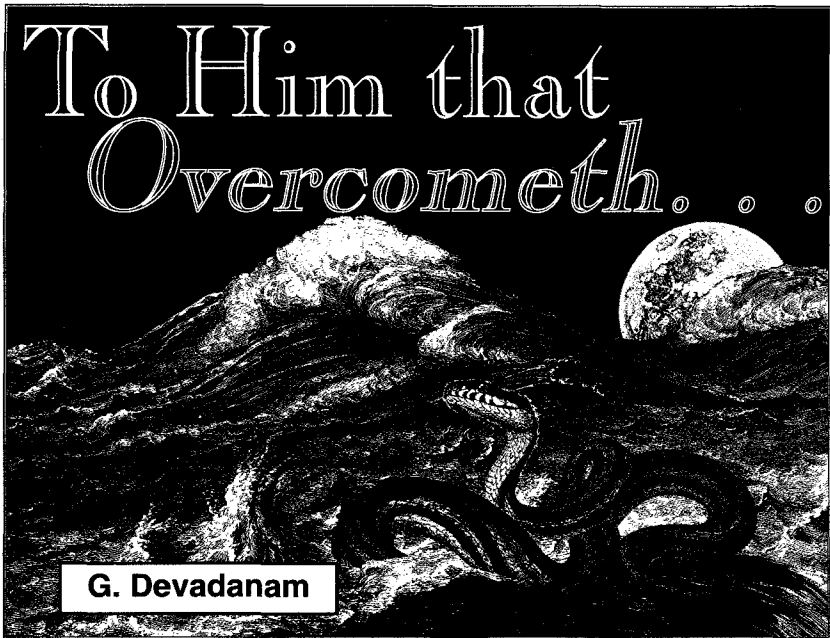
*Getting people to Bible classes is not the same as getting them to Christ.* I know of a man who was not a Christian who said he attended classes for 16 years with his wife and no one spoke to him about obeying the Gospel.

Unfortunately, many Bible teachers do not see themselves as soul winners as they should and as they must. We have been wrong in applying scripture relative to winning the lost to only a select group that we have called "soul winners", while failing to apply the same emphasis to Bible teachers. The fastest growing Bible schools teach teachers that they must be soul winners. †

**Clayton Pepper, long-time promoter of church growth, works with Restoration Network International in Nashville, TN, USA.**

A new report ought to refresh parental concern about letting children spend unsupervised time in front of the TV set. Entitled "What a Difference a Decade Makes: A Comparison of Prime Time in 1989 and 1999", the report by the Parents Television Council shows:

- **Offensive language on TV increased more than 5.5 times within that decade.**
- **References to homosexuality increased more than 24 times.**
- **The incidence of sexual content, rough language and violence nearly tripled in the decade.**
- **On-screen sexual situations more than tripled.**
- **References to genitalia were over seven times as frequent.**
- **The rate of foul language was 5 1/2 times higher than in 1989. How many times more than 1959?**



Battle lines have been drawn. Combating sides have taken their positions. The opposition, being the offensive side, planned for a serious effort to subdue its foe!

This, however, is no physical fighting. It has been the spiritual warfare of principles: whether of obedience or disobedience *"to Him that sitteth upon the throne"* and reigns the universe for ever and ever. It is a struggle between the forces of righteousness and of wickedness in general; and between the *"seed of the woman"* and the serpent in particular.

A brief review of the past:

Ever since enmity was declared when Satan led man to disobey God (Genesis 3:15), the Serpent, first of all, tried to prevent the advent of the *"man-child"*, but miserably failed in his attempts. He then endeavored relentlessly to wipe out the child by using Herod the Great, but could not succeed (Matthew 2:1-10). The Devil later put forth the best of his efforts to win the Lamb of God to his side by tempting Him (Hebrews 4:15), but he was thoroughly defeated (Luke 4:1-10).

No alternative was left for Satan. Therefore, instigating his seed against Jesus, he plotted to

## CHURCH GROWTH

attack Him with all his fury and cruel hate (John 8:38,39). The day came when Jesus was humiliated, physically assaulted, falsely accused, and finally put to an open shame and death on the cross. In spite of all this, Jesus demonstrated absolute obedience to God Who sits upon the throne, submitting to death in payment for the sins of mankind. Death, however, could not hold Him for He had lived sinlessly before the Most High! Therefore God raised Him from the dead and proved Jesus to be His own Son, for which claim He had been crucified (Mark 14:60-64; Romans 1:4; Acts 2:22-26).

The resurrection testified to the most glorious of Christ's victories over His most dreadful enemy (Colossians 2:13-15). Our Lord Jesus is the conqueror.

Present scenario: The *conquering Christ* set out to conquer! The *gospel*, the DUNAMIS of God, which the work of the cross produced (Romans 1:16), has been the major weapon used against the stronghold of the diabolical powers (2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Colossians 2:12,13). The use of this power to cleanse and save the soul has the most devastating effect on the dominion of darkness (Colossians 1:13). With this power over the guilt of sin, the Devil is proved twice vanquished. He began to lose

his ground of control through the life and death of Christ. Satan's second defeat is credited to the work of the church, as it began from the day of Pentecost, approximately A.D. 30, to reach out with the power of the Gospel to snatch lost souls from his hands.

In his strategy to prevent the expansion of Christ's "church-kingdom" by using the Jewish religious leaders (Revelation 2:9; Galatians 4:29,30), Satan could achieve little. He was desperately in need of keeping his defeat concealed, and he used every possible means to shield it, using persecution and injury of the Saints to appear to be victorious. His ultimate choice in this venture was to use Rome, with its imperial power, idolatrous religion, and insensible wickedness as a demonstration of his continuing control. Therefore, the power which the Lamb had rejected in the wilderness (Matthew 4:8-10), the Devil offered to this dreadful beast, which came out of the sea (Revelation 13:1,2).

In his last-minute bid, Satan, by the strong hand of imperial Rome, began to persecute the church beyond measure. Though torturing and killing the saints, the Devil knew that he was fighting a losing battle. But having lost the power of sin and death over the Saints, he had no weapon left, after all, other than to frighten his victims by his tactics, or

## CHURCH GROWTH

to lure them to his side with deceit, as he had tried to do with the Lamb.

For the human eye, however, facts concerning those early years have been presented differently. The scene has appeared to be the invincible, cruel and wicked hand of Rome warring against and destroying the church, the harmless, guileless and innocent people of God. Faith in God, faithfulness to Christ, and patience of saints were being tested in a crucible of fire. This was the time when a special message was heralded — *“to him that overcometh”!*

Out of eight promises in Revelation to the victorious saints, seven are from Christ Himself (Revelation 2:7; 2:11; 2:17; 2:26-28; 3:5; 3:12; 2:21). The last but not the least is from the occupant of the Eternal Throne (Revelation 21:3-7), God the Father: *“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son”* (V. 7).

However, who is included in the phrase, *“to him that overcometh”*? Whoever is victorious over the diabolical powers of Satan, of course. But what does the word *“overcometh”* signify? It is translated from the Greek word NIKAO, which means *“to subdue”* (Strong’s), *“to conquer and bring into permanent subjection”*. When speaking of Christ, the word means

*“victorious over all his foes; has so conquered that he now has the right and power to open, etc.”*; when Christians are under consideration, it means that they *“hold fast their faith even unto death against the power of their foes, and their temptations and persecutions”* (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon: 3528; p 426).

So this victory of saints over their foes is not the kind of victory spoken of in *“Sports World”* where, losing some games and winning others could be counted for victory, either in time or in sequence. It is also not the kind of victory found in the battle fields, as one king or army defeats the other, leaving the possibility of revolt and recapturing of power.

When Christ won His battle He subdued His enemy and He now reigns as the victorious King. This is the kind of victory the church, His people, are challenged to win in order to obtain the reward. We today are facing the enemy in a different arena. Do you fight against your foes that you may be duly rewarded? Did you win over the world (1 John 5:4,5), over sin (Hebrews 12:4), over the flesh (Galatians 5:17,26), in your efforts to win over the most dreaded enemy, Satan? *“To him that overcometh...”* the Lord says. †

**G. Devadanam is a gospel preacher in South India.**



**F**our hundred years ago, on the 25 April 1599 in Huntingdon, Oliver Cromwell was born. Cromwell became a member of Parliament for Cambridge, head of the Army, and Chancellor of Oxford University before becoming Lord Protector of the Commonwealth. For those in the Lord's Church he is best remembered for the great tolerance shown to Christians at that time.

In Cambridge, during the 1550s the religious movement known as the Puritans started inside the Anglican Church of England. The term 'Puritan' was a name given by their opponents and refers to their return to the purity of the Gospel and Christian living.

## Early Christians in England

Keith Sisman

**I**n the *strict sense*, the Puritans were a party opposed to the Anglican party in the church of England. The Anglicans who were "high church" ultimately won, with the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, and from then on the Church of England returned to many Catholic beliefs and ceremonies.

In a *broad sense* the term Puritan was also applied to various independent groups of believers, such as the church of Christ, although no organization was ever established to publicize the views of the various dissenting parties.

The majority of the Church of England "Puritans" were Calvinistic and Presbyterian, their beliefs coming from the reformed churches of the continent. Their Bible was the Genevan version and they had a major influence on the 1611 King James Bible. They were opposed to the use of the altar for Communion and often used kitchen tables to serve the Lord's Supper. They attacked the use of costumes for the priests, the use of the sign of the cross, organs, ecclesiastical courts, the episcopacy, and religious days and holidays such as Christmas and Easter.

Under the Puritans much frivolity was banned, such as the pagan prac-

## CHURCH HISTORY

tice of dancing round the May Pole. The Puritans advocated preaching, and the Bible as being the sole authority rather than traditions developed by hierarchy. Under the previous Anglican system of preaching, a man needed to preach only four sermons each year to remain in office.

At this time in England and on the continent, **churches of Christ sought to propagate the gospel and were well known for their evangelism.** Looking towards the reformers, they too sought to separate Church from State. This was opposed by both the Puritans and the Anglicans. *Many members of the Lord's church would be burnt alive at the stake for their conviction on this point.*

**The last burning of believers took place during 1612 when Edward Wightman of Burton-upon-Trent was convicted on December 14, 1611 of heresies, including being a member of the Lord's church and preaching against infant baptism.** This was before the bishop of Coventry and Litchfield. He was burnt at Litchfield on 11 April 1612. Two hundred and eleven years earlier William Sawtre — also a Christian — had been burnt for the same offences.

At this time the Lord's church was given the derogatory name of

“Anabaptists”. This must not be confused with the continental Anabaptists who were of a totally different origin. Members of the Baptist church, which came about during the 1600s, were also known as Anabaptists. Therefore there were *three major groups in the 1600s who were labelled, together with others, as Anabaptists.* This can be confusing when reading various histories because most secular historians still make the mistake of classifying these different groups as the same.

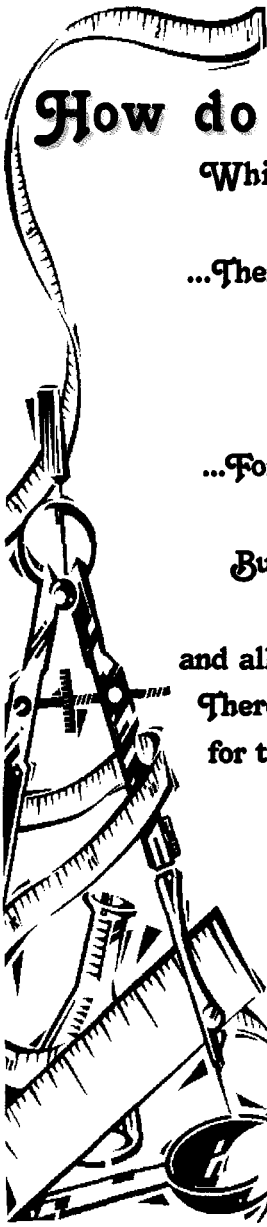
During the 1600s some of these three groups tried to meet together, but this resulted in even sharper lines of division. They came to realize that there was no common ground in some areas such as Calvinism and baptism (in regards to salvation) and the concept of the Universal Priesthood of Believers. The Lord's church at this time identified themselves as being the ‘church of Christ’.

All Anabaptists in England were preaching and meeting against the law. Under the Puritans from 1646 they were tolerated.

(Continued in Volume 28). †

**Keith Sisman preaches for the Peterboro Church of Christ in England. Having been given permission to use the ancient Cambridge Library, he is doing extensive research and writing on the records he is finding concerning the church in Europe, particularly in England.**





# How do you measure up?

Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?

...Therefore, do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?"

or "What shall we drink?"

or "What shall we wear?"

...For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness,

and all these things shall be added to you.

Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things.

Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 6:27-34



# Dynamic Worship

Clarence DeLoach, Jr.

What is dynamic worship? We mean active, empowering worship, worship that centers on God, that gives to Him honor, adoration, and praise! Worship that draws upon His strength and power for our lives! While worship is primarily giving to God, it results in blessings of receiving.

Have you ever heard someone say, "I just don't get much out of the worship service!?" Such a statement could be a reflection upon the worshiper rather than the service. Study these suggestions that could help put quality into your worship.

**1. Make Sunday worship a priority.** It is the most important commitment of the week. It is nothing less than meeting with God.

**2. Don't bring God leftovers.** God has always demanded "first fruits." He cannot be satisfied with scraps. Get plenty of sleep on Saturday night, and come to worship with an alert and refreshed mind.

**3. Prepare your mind.** Discipline begins in the mind, and so does discipleship. Train your mind to concentrate on spiritual things.

**4. Be on time.** Rushing in late makes it difficult for you to settle into meditation, and it disturbs the other worshippers.

**5. Bring your Bible.** Coming to worship without your Bible is like going out to drive your car without your keys.

**6. Open your mouth and sing.** Singing is not an option. It is a command. Those who violate this command are just as guilty as if they neglected the assembly in the first place.

**7. Be friendly.** Worship is enhanced when done as a family. Family members should know and love each other.

**8. Listen carefully to the sermon.** Taking notes will help. Follow along in your Bible. Take the message seriously; it will help you. It will encourage the speaker, and he will do a better job. It will show non-Christians that we are serious.

**9. Make your worship God-centered.** Worship is primarily a giving situation. It is in the giving of ourselves that we get. No giving, no getting. Think about it the next time you hear someone say, "I don't get much out of worship service!" †

Clarence DeLoach, Jr. preaches for the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Dickson, Tennessee, UsSA.

# Special Music

Curtis Dowdy

You hear much talk today concerning “special music”. Tragically, most of the talk is only “talk”. There is little study, less thought, little or no Bible. The very term “special music” alarms. Is other music normal, ordinary?



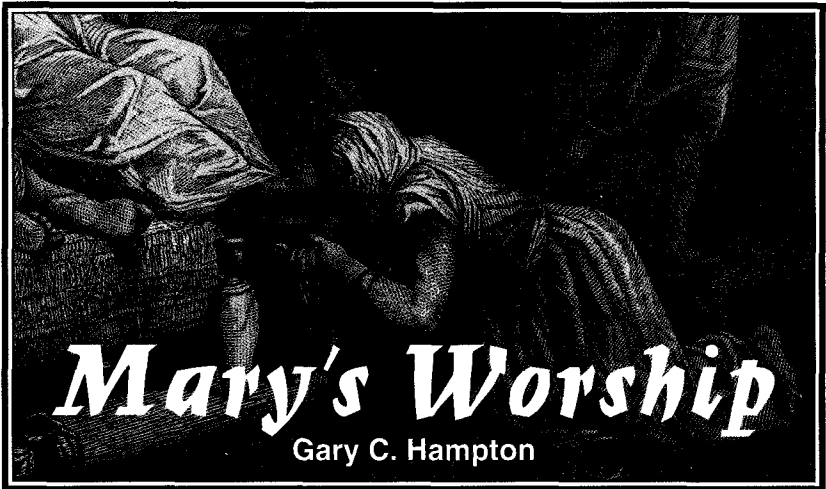
Dr. Gerald Bouma, a professor of music at Westmont College, arrested my attention. He strives to answer the question, “What is ‘Special Music’?” He notices that it is:

- \* **when the congregation is reduced to an audience.**
- \* **when church music is reduced to entertainment.** He recognizes entertainment **when the audience is moved to applaud, when the participants become performers.** He adds, **when the music is offered to the congregation, not by it.**
- \* **when the pressure to have such music is from people, not God.** He observes, **“People like it.”** He concludes that such music **amuses, impresses, satisfies the audience. Do not re-route the adoration from God to the performer.**

You see, “Special Music” focuses upon *emotions*, not **ideas**. Emotions are limited. They cannot discern between causes, reason, differences. Emotions seldom grasp the big picture. “Special Music” reduces worship to a TV variety show wherein the members of the audience are receivers, not givers. A mass of people with mass impulses will always avoid pain, sacrifice, and dedication. The holiness of God and the redemption of man are lost in the attitude of spiritual immaturity among the worshipers. In other words, “Special Music” is a mode of escapism.

Real, true worship is hard work. Only true worshipers actually worship. True worship demands preparation and participation. Paradoxically, “Special Music” allows members to avoid worship while thinking all the while that they are worshipping. †

**Curtis Dowdy works with the church in Lewisburg, Tennessee, USA.**



# Mary's Worship

Gary C. Hampton

While we should certainly involve ourselves in corporate worship, it is important to realize that God's acceptance of one's worship is ultimately dependent on the heart and practice of the individual. Each of us must prostrate himself/herself before the Almighty God who sent His Son to die that we might live. We must do so from the heart and in accord with His will (John 4:24). Hopefully, a review of the beautiful story of Mary's anointing of the Lord will highlight important facts about worship and help each of us to grow (John 12:1-8; Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9).

As W. T. Hamilton noted in his book, **Show Us the Father**, Mary's gift was *an expression of gratitude*. After all, she had been blessed with opportunities to sit at the feet of our Lord and hear His Word. Too, Jesus had raised her brother Lazarus from

the dead just hours before. It was fitting that she would anoint His head and feet with the sweet smelling oil called spikenard. Similarly, each who has recognized his own sinfulness and the terrible consequences of those sins must surely be drawn to express his thanks to the One who gave His life to redeem us (Romans 3:10,23; 6:23; 1 Peter 1:18,19)! As Paul put it, "*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you*" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Mary's gift was also *sacrificial*. Judas Iscariot said the fragrant oil could have been sold for 300 denarii. In Matthew 20, Jesus told the parable of the workers in the vineyard. The men hired by the landowner in the morning were promised a denarius a day for their labors. It seems logical to conclude that Mary's gift was equal to 300 days' wages! Significantly,

## WORSHIP

she did not just place a drop or two of the oil on her fingers and apply it to the head of Jesus, as would have been customary. Instead, she broke open the vial and used *all of its contents* on Jesus' head and feet. The flow was so abundant that she used her hair to wipe the excess off the Lord's feet. John reports "*the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.*" It would certainly be appropriate for today's worshipper to sacrificially give of himself to the Lord who gave His life to set him free from sin (Romans 12:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:15)!

Sadly, Mary's service was also *criticized*. Judas appears to have been the first to say that the expensive oil should have been sold and the money given to the poor. John lets his readers know that Judas was not really concerned about the poor, but selfishly sought a fattening of the money box which he used for his own purposes. Unfortunately, once the criticism had begun, others joined in, saying that Mary had wasted the oil (Mark 14:4,5). Critics and dissenters will often be joined, even by those who, like Barnabas, have formerly been great at encouraging others (Galatians 2:11-13). Yet, like Mary, the criticism should not keep us from offering our gift to the Savior!

Of course, Mary's worship was *unique*. According to Jesus, "*She has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have*

*always.*" In other words, Mary had actually come to anoint Jesus' body for the burial while He was still alive (John 12:4,5; Mark 14:8)! Nicodemus brought about a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes to use in wrapping the body of the Lord after His death, but only Mary anointed the Master while He could still smell the beautiful fragrance! While our worship may not be unique, it can show our desire to be a spiritual fragrance, drawing people to the Savior.

Most importantly, Mary's act of service was *accepted by the Lord*. This is evident from the statements recorded by Mark. Jesus said, "*She has done a good work for Me.*" He also said, "*She has done what she could.*" Then, in what has to be one of the most powerful compliments ever extended by the Lord, He told the disciples, "*Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached throughout the whole world, what this woman did will also be spoken of as a memorial to her*" (Mark 14: 6,8,9). It is important to observe that this comment came from the One to whom her act of worship had been directed.

For us, the objective should be the same. Worship is an individual's way of honoring the Lord, and finally, it should be done in a way that is acceptable to Him! †

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



# Do You Observe the Lord's Supper Every Sunday?

Jane McWhorter

Some have been puzzled over the observance of the Lord's Supper every Sunday. They ask, "Doesn't it become commonplace?" Others question, "Didn't Christ observe the Supper on a Thursday night?"

True, Christ instituted this sacred feast on the Thursday night before His death (Matthew 26:17-29, Mark 14:12-25, Luke 22:7-20). Luke's passage and Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 stress that it was to be a memorial: "*in remembrance of Me.*" The bread was to be a commemoration of the slain body of Christ, and the fruit of the vine was to be in memory of His shed blood.

Notice when the New Testament Christians met for this observance. Since it was a memorial of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, the first disciples assembled on the day on which Christ arose from His grave. The church at Troas came together on the first day of the week for the purpose of breaking bread. "*And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them...*" (Acts 20:7).

When is the first day of the week? How many days does a week have? Whenever the first day of the week comes, regardless of the system of reckoning time, then that is the time authorized by example for the observance of the Supper. The church at Corinth ate the Lord's Supper when they

## WORSHIP

assembled (1 Corinthians 11:20-29). It was their practice to meet together upon *“the first day of every week”* (1 Corinthians 16:2).

The breaking of bread (Acts 2:42) was a regular occurrence — *“...and they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.”*

If scriptural authority and example mean nothing to us in our worship, then one day of the week would be just as good as another. For those who are honestly seeking to practice New Testament Christianity, however, there can be only one divinely sanctioned time for the observance of the Lord’s Supper — the first day of every week. †

**Jane McWhorter is a writer and the wife of a gospel preacher, and they live in Fayette, Alabama, USA.**

### ***FURTHER THOUGHTS on Worship:***

● Jesus had said, concerning the memorial supper of His body and His blood, *“For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom”* (Matthew 26:28,29).

The New Testament says, *“Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread...”* (Acts 20:7).

Paul wrote the Corinthian church concerning the Supper, *“For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes”* (1 Corinthians 11:26).

● Paul wrote by inspiration to the Ephesian church: *“Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord”* (Ephesians 5:19).

● Jesus said, *“In this manner, therefore, pray...”*(Matthew 6:9).

The early church *“...continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers”* (Acts 2:42).

● By inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul wrote to the church at Colossae, *“Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea”* (Colossians 4:16).

● The church at Corinth was instructed, *“On the first day of the week, let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come”* (1 Corinthians 16:2).

● The Hebrews were urged, *“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, but exhorting one another...as you see the Day approaching”* (Hebrews 10:25).

● John wrote, *“I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day...”* (Revelation 1:10).



# SPOTLIGHT

on Ninth Avenue Church of Christ in Haleyville, Alabama

**N**ninth Avenue Church of Christ in central Alabama has a **mission**: The mission of Jesus, to seek and save the lost. It has a **goal**: To walk in Jesus' footsteps. It has **aims**: To reach out to the lost; to encourage the saved to hold fast the Faith; to help the hurting.

Who would think that a **paraplegic, the postal system, and a civil war** would be tools God could put into the hands to the Ninth Avenue elders (Harold Coan, Buster Burleson, Morris Hatton, Billy McNutt, Don Smith, and Nickey McCreless) to help them fulfill their mission, their goal, and their aims?

In addition to other works in which they were already involved, in 1985 the elders learned of the tremendous burden of work and expense being borne by Randy Green — a Christian confined to a wheel chair — as he dealt with a burgeoning group of World Bible School students. They took the oversight of Randy's work in 1985.

Within a few months they were

dealing with a group of WBS students in the country of Liberia. Their conversion opened the door to evangelism throughout the country and even in neighboring countries, when the new Christians were scattered as refugees from the violent civil war which began in 1990. It finally ended with new elections in 1997, after the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and the salvation of many souls!

The church in Liberia is stabilizing, with the coming of peace, and local Christians continue to take leading roles in evangelism. Twenty-eight congregations have been established in Liberia alone as an outgrowth of the work originally begun by Randy and the Ninth Avenue brethren. Preachers being supported include J. Abednego Dors in Liberia, Francis Musa in Guinea, and Joseph Elleason in Ghana. Work has spilled over from Liberia into Guinea, Ghana, Zambia, and Ivory Coast.

The Ninth Avenue elders have a vision for mass evangelism via the use of the printed page and personal work. They rely heavily on Bible correspondence courses, with follow-up work being done by local Christians and printed materials which they can leave behind. †



# Letting the harvest go to seed



Ancil Jenkins

Bill Monroe, the father of bluegrass music, was born and grew up in rural Kentucky. During his career he received numerous awards and much recognition, even a medal from the president of the United States. However, he never lost his country roots. Every year, even at the height of his popularity, he made a garden, using a mule.

I recently heard someone tell of visiting Monroe at his country home, shortly before the great musician's death. He mentioned to Monroe's secretary how well Mr. Bill's garden looked. "Yes," she replied, "but he doesn't harvest any more." Despite his physical weakness, he planted his garden but lacked enough strength for a harvest.

Our goal as the body of Christ,

as well as individual Christians, is to produce fruit for God (John 15:5,6; Romans 1:13; 7:4).

The seed of the Gospel must be sowed. Yet, *before the sowing comes the preparing of the soil.* Before spreading the Gospel, *the church must prepare for the sowing by earning the right to be heard:*

**\* This comes by the members living a consistent Christian life. We must practice what Jesus preached before the world. Today, in place of miracles, it is our works of love and compassion that confirm the truthfulness of God's Word (Mark 16:20).**

With this preparation we can then sow the seed of the Gospel. This can be done in numerous ways:

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

**\* Some can invite friends, associates, and neighbors to worship services or small group meetings. The Word is spread effectively by the printed page, Internet, and other media. Countless opportunities abound for sharing God's Word. We can and must open our eyes to these opportunities (John 4:35).**

The church, by and large, does a pretty good job of living and working to call attention to our good works. In recent years, Christian involvement in school, business, and community affairs has allowed many to see how Christ can mold and transform lives.

By the same token, our teaching is often widespread. By our efforts, many hear the Word. Yet, the growth of most churches is either static or declining. We must ask, *where is the harvest?*

What is the major reason for our failure to gather the harvest? Are we like Bill Monroe? We *prepare the soil* and *plant*, but we allow our harvest to go to seed.

We must not neglect the last part of the process. Bringing in the harvest for God involves *persuasion*. Even with the miraculous events of Pentecost, Peter saw the need to continue to *exhort people to obey the Gospel* (Acts 2:40). The joy and assurance of our own salva-

tion and our concern for the eternal fate of others should move us to persuade them (2 Corinthians 5:11). We cannot neglect the harvest and expect to bear fruit for God.

The late Batsell Barrett Baxter told a modern parable of a group of workers being hired to harvest a field:

**\* Upon arrival, the workers immediately saw the need to sharpen tools, repair fences, and to prepare a shelter for their place of rest. Finishing this, they saw it was now time for a good lunch. They then felt so unworthy of such a great work they all bathed and put on fresh clothing. As they prepared to enter the field, they discovered the day was spent and the sun was going down.**

Baxter concluded, "So these wonderful people (like us) turn back, sorrowing with guilty feelings, to meet the man who owns the field. He comes to meet them, expecting shoulders laden with heavy bags of grain, but instead, he finds only beautiful tools and the story of wonderful fences and fine clothes and a good dinner and a shelter to take care of those who work. He asks sadly, 'But where is the harvest?' They had no words to speak." †

Ancil Jenkins is a writer and preacher in Livingston, Tennessee, USA.

***“I am the true vine,***  
*and My Father is the vine*  
*dresser. Every branch in Me*  
*that does not bear fruit He*  
*takes away; and every branch*  
*that bears fruit He prunes,*  
*that it may bear more fruit.*

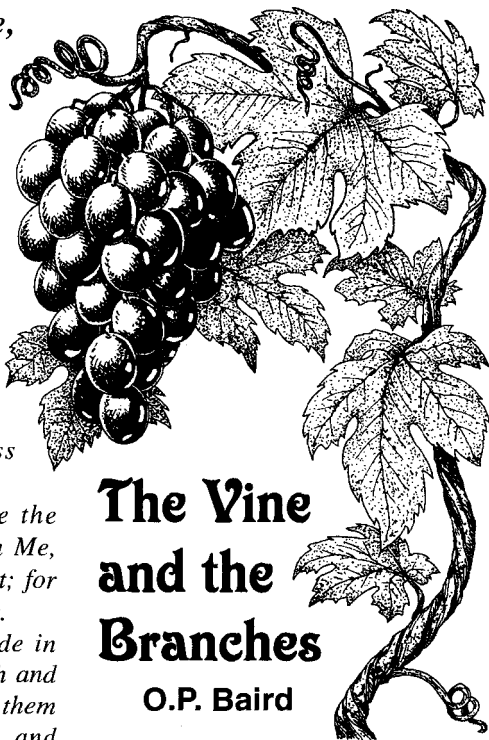
*“You are already clean*  
*because of the word which I*  
*have spoken to you. Abide*  
*in Me and I in you. As the*  
*branch cannot bear fruit of*  
*itself, unless it abides in the*  
*vine, neither can you, unless*  
*you abide in Me.*

*“I am the vine, you are the*  
*branches. He who abides in Me,*  
*and I in him, bears much fruit; for*  
*without Me you can do nothing.*

*“If anyone does not abide in*  
*Me, he is cast out as a branch and*  
*is withered; and they gather them*  
*and throw them into the fire, and*  
*they are burned.*

*“If you abide in Me, and My*  
*words abide in you, you will ask*  
*what you desire, and it shall be*  
*done for you. By this My Father is*  
*glorified, that you bear much fruit;*  
*so you will be My disciples”* (John  
 15:1-8).

The symbolism used by Jesus,  
 as recorded in this passage, is simi-  
 lar to the symbolism in several Old  
 Testament passages. God’s people  
 are referred to as His vine which He  
 brought out of Egypt and planted in  
 the land after driving the nations out



## The Vine and the Branches

O.P. Baird

(Psalm 80:8-11). In Isaiah 5:7 we  
 read, *“For the vineyard of the Lord*  
*of hosts is the house of Israel, and*  
*the men of Judah are His pleasant*  
*plant...”* The same symbolism is  
 found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. God  
 looked for fruit from His vine, but  
 the people were disobedient.

God said, *“...I had planted a*  
*noble vine, a seed of highest quality.*  
*How then have you turned before me*  
*into the degenerate plant of an alien*  
*vine?”* (Jeremiah 2:21). The only  
 purpose of a vine is to bear fruit. If it  
 doesn’t bear fruit, it is fit only to be

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

thrown on the fire and burned. That is the thought in Ezekiel 15:1-8.

Under the old covenant the people of God were the vine of God. Christ was the Word who was with God and was God in the beginning (John 1:1). Being divine, He was possessor of the vine. After He "*became flesh*" (John 1:14) He said, "*I am the true vine and My Father is the vine dresser*" (John 15:1). He also said, "*I am the vine, you are the branches*" (John 15:5). Christians are in the vine because they are in Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27; Romans 6:3,4).

The life of the branches comes from the vine. If the branch is to bear fruit it must remain in the vine. If we are to bear fruit to the glory of God we must be in Christ and must remain in Him. That is why Jesus said, "*He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire and they are burned*" (John 15:5,6).

The purpose of a vine is to bear fruit, and it is as natural for that to happen as it is for the sun to shine. Those in Christ have experienced a new birth and are new and different in their nature from what they were before they were in Christ. "*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a*

*new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Christian is a "*partaker of the divine nature*" (2 Peter 1:3,4).

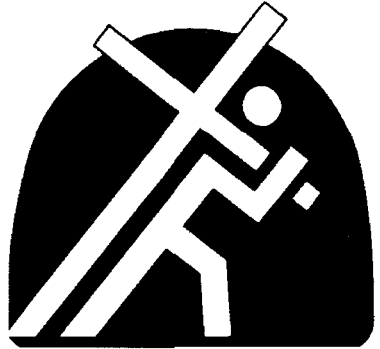
The fruit that God wants to see in us is obedience to all that He teaches us to be and do. This is described in many Scriptures. "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control*" (Galatians 5:22,23). Paul told the Christians at Colossae, "*We do not cease to pray...that you may have a walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God*" (Colossians 1:9,10).

Of course, a very important fruit is the salvation of souls through preaching of the Gospel. To the Christians at Rome, Paul wrote, "*...I often planned to come to you...that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles*" (Romans 1:13). Paul was a very fruitful branch, giving his life to the preaching of the Gospel, but *every branch — every Christian — must keep increasing in the knowledge of God's Word and then putting that knowledge into practice to produce fruit to the glory of God.* †

**O.P. Baird, a former missionary to Korea, is now deceased.**

# Following Jesus

Wayne Barrier



Many people believe themselves to be followers of Jesus. A person could make no better choice in living from day to day than to follow the example and teachings of Jesus. The way to eternal life is through following Jesus (John 3:15,16; 14:6). Although the way that Jesus leads the Christian is the best possible life, it is not described as easy. Consider the words of Jesus in Matthew 16:24,25, *"If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."* Jesus demands a degree of commitment and dedication from His followers that goes beyond most of our normal experiences with "following" a particular person's guidance, advice, teaching, or counseling. Consider again the words of Jesus recorded in Luke 9:57-62:

*"Now as it happened as they*

*journeyed on the road, that someone said to him, 'Lord I will follow you wherever you go.' And Jesus said to him, 'Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.' Then he said to another, 'Follow me.' But he said, 'Lord let me first go and bury my father.' Jesus said to him, 'Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God.' And another also said, 'Lord I will follow you, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.' But Jesus said to him, 'No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.'"*

Also consider the teaching of the apostle Paul in Ephesians 4:1-3 concerning our walk with Christ: *"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk worthy*

*of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”* Jesus will lead us through this life to everlasting life in heaven. The way is sometimes narrow and difficult,

(Matthew 7:13,14), but we are promised help along the way from Jesus (Matthew 28:20), and heaven is our reward for enduring until the end (Revelation 2:10). †

**Wayne Barrier lives in Florence, Alabama, USA, and is part of the World Evangelism team taking the Gospel throughout the world.**

## The Lord is my...

Provider — I am satisfied.

Teacher — I am instructed.

Shelter — I am covered.

Rock — I am secure.

Victory — I am triumphant.

Shepherd — I am cared for.

Captain — I am protected.

Encourager — I am built up.

Salvation — I am delivered.

Healer — I am whole.

Rest — I am comforted.

Guide — I am directed.

Confidence — I am assured.

Maker — I am loved.

Father — I am accepted.

Deliverer — I am free.

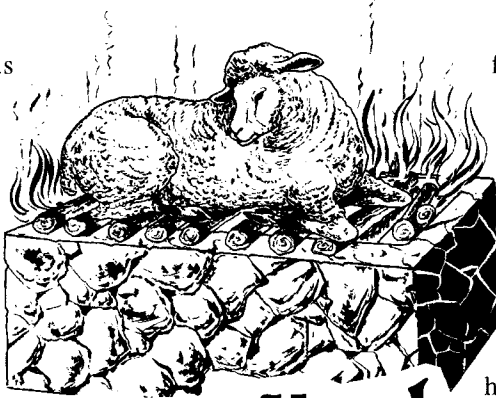
— Best to You

# Things Greater Than

God has always required sacrifice on the part of His people. First, it was a blood sacrifice of animals, which foreshadowed the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The stipulation was that the faithful were to give the best of the sheep, goats, and oxen. All others were rejected.

Now God requires the sacrifice of self. We are to give ourselves as "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is (our) reasonable (or, spiritual) service" (Romans 12:1). This would include the sacrifice of time, money, and everything we have, including our own lives.

But there are some things that are even more important than sacrifice. Back in the Old Testament **King Saul was commanded by God to go out and utterly destroy the Amalekites, including all their**



## Sacrifice!

**Roy Beasley**

**flocks and herds.** Saul did as God commanded and marched his army against the fearsome Amalekites, and God gave him the victory. Saul destroyed all the Amalekites — every man, woman, and child — *except for one: Agag, the king,* whom he brought back to display as a trophy of war.

Saul also destroyed all the flocks and herds, *except for a few of the best,* which he brought back to offer as sacrifice to God. When he and his army came marching home, Samuel the prophet, went to meet him. No doubt he was expecting congratulations from Samuel for a job well done. Instead, Samuel said, "What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" Saul replied that it was because **the people** wanted to bring

them back to sacrifice. Then Samuel spoke these remarkable words, "**Behold, TO OBEY is better than sacrifice, and to harken than the fat of rams.**"

*God has always required absolute and complete obedience.* Disobedience, or even partial obedience, is never acceptable to God. One may make great sacrifices. He may sacrifice of his time and money. He may even "give his body to be burned," but it is all in vain **if he fails to completely obey** the Lord from the heart.

The prophet Hosea tells us that there are two more things better than sacrifice. He wrote in Hosea 6:6, "*I desire **mercy** and not sacrifice, and **the knowledge of God** more than burnt offerings.*"

The people were meeting together and worshipping in the right way. But some of them — even the priests — were guilty of terrible sins against their fellowman. Some were robbers and murderers. There was no justice in the land; there was no mercy. This showed that they did not have the *knowledge of God* in their hearts. The lack of that knowledge was reflected in the lives they lived.

The same problem existed in

the days of Micah, the prophet, for he also wrote, "*With what shall I come before the Lord?...with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil?*" "No," he goes on to say. "That is not what God wants." What, then does He want, Micah? "*He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God*" (Micah 6:6-8).

To translate this into modern-day terminology, it is important to assemble on the Lord's Day with the saints, to sing, pray, preach the Word, and partake of the Lord's Supper. But, this will do no good unless we love God with the heart, mind, soul, and strength, and unless we love our neighbor as our self. We must seek to serve the Lord in humble obedience, treat others as we desire to be treated, and help those who are in need. Christianity is a life of faith coupled with action.

Yes, there are some things better than sacrifice: **obedience, mercy, and a knowledge of God.** †

Roy Beasley works with Restoration Radio Network in Nashville, Tennessee, USA.

*If you fear God, you need fear nothing else.*





## ***There Are Annas Among Us***

**Jane Maynard**

She was just an ordinary Jewish girl, heart beating with anticipation of a bright and beautiful future with this man she was wedding. Little did she know that only seven short years would pass before she would stand empty and broken as she would assume the role of a widow.

Luke introduces her to us in Luke 2:36-38 when she is eighty-four years old. His description is brief, not telling us anything about her sixty years of widowhood. But we can assume that Anna, in her loneliness and sorrows, had turned her heart and soul to God. The Anna to whom we are introduced is a seasoned, steadfast and unmovable servant of the Lord. Only time, tears and trust produce such a woman.

As Anna was waiting for her Redeemer, she passed her waiting time in service to God and others on prayerful knees. Oh yes, her physical strength had long ago faded. She may not have been able to hear so well anymore, or to see as she once did. Her steps had become much slower now, and may have even shuffled as she walked about the Temple. Her quiet figure may have appeared thinner and somewhat stooped as she went about her daily task. But there, peering out from that wrinkled face, were eyes that mirrored a soul of strength, wisdom, kindness and love. And yes, a heart of anticipation just waiting for Him.

How blessed we are in the Lord's church to have a host of Annas, women who have also seen their share of loneliness, tears and heartaches, but who have chosen to turn in their pain to God while they, too, wait for Him to come again. And, while they're waiting, they enhance our lives by their seasoned, steadfast and unmovable examples of service to God and others. How comforting to know that we are the benefactors of the prayers of such giant women in the faith. To all of you faithful widows, we love you and we thank God that "there are Annas among us." †

**Jane Maynard is a counselor for women for the College and North Church of Christ in Mountain Home, Arkansas, USA.**

# Holiness from Humility

Jeff Wealand

**Holiness...Humility....** One of them we get from God, the other we can get only from putting ourselves aside. Both of them are essential to have, or we will never be like our Saviour or even get to Heaven.

Jesus said, *“Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven,”* (Matthew 18:3,4). It was the inspired writer who said, *“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord”* (Hebrews 12:14). Humility and Holiness are equally important, without either of them we will not be saved from the awful consequence of our sins.

✓ Humility lets us desire to hear God’s word, which is essential for our salvation, Romans 10:17.

✓ Humility enables us to believe that what we are hearing from God’s word is true, Mark 16:16 & Hebrews 11:6.

✓ Humility gives us the ability to repent from our sin and start making a real change from the ways of the world that are in us, in order to get to Heaven, Luke 13:3 and Acts 17:30.

✓ A humble heart lets us confess that Jesus is Lord of lords. Without this we cannot be saved, Romans 10:9.

✓ Humility will let us accept the true reason for immersion in water for the forgiveness of our sin, Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21 and Romans 6:3,4.

✓ Humility will help us keep living active lives full of faith, in order to grow in our salvation, 1 Peter 2:11,12.

✓ Without humility, we will not be saved; it is the attitude which

enables us to take each step in God's plan of salvation for our souls.

There are so many things we need in order to be saved. Just thinking about them reminds me of that beautiful old song, "I Need Thee Every Hour". Why do people doubt the necessity of baptism? Why do so many people argue about what is real repentance? Could it be because we have forgotten that essential active ingredient, humility? Humility can be defined as giving God the credit instead of giving ourselves the honour of it. When we can push ourselves aside and admit that we are not self-made or self-taught — or self-saved —, we can then accept the truth of what we need in order to be saved by our Lord.

Only God can give our soul a sanctifying wash. When we do this with Him we are blessed with *holiness from God*, and our souls can then experience the answer to our prayers for a clean and pure heart. **Holiness is something God gives, after and only after, we have learnt the lesson of humility and we keep living it.** Holiness is not as elusive as it seems, we just need to keep our eye on the cross and remember to be willing to pick up our own, when daily we are called to carry it, Luke 9:23.

✓ Holiness is so precious and rare in this world, it may seem like a jewel hidden deep in the earth.

✓ The good news is that God graciously offers it freely to all of us who will humbly look into His word and count it as trustworthy to obey.

✓ God is holy and He gives holiness to us through the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38,39). That is how God makes us holy.

✓ It is only after we have adopted a humble attitude towards all of God's commands that He can make us holy and fit for Heaven.

✓ It is our cooperation with Him in trying to do what He wants, for the right reason, which leads Him to fill us with His holiness and on the last day graciously let us through the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven.

✓ Holiness is something that we are given, but it is also something that we need to live out in our daily walk of life. Peter says,

*"... but unto you, did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit sent forth from heaven; which things angels desire to look into.*

*"Wherefore girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as children of obedience, not fashioning yourselves*

*according to your former lusts in the time of your ignorance: but like as he who called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.*

*“And if ye call on him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear: knowing that ye were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, from your vain manner of life handed down from your fathers; but with precious blood, as of a lamb without spot, even the blood of Christ: who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of times for your sake,” (1 Peter 1:12-20).*

These words have been written to encourage each one of us to examine ourselves, looking for humility and holiness in our life. Are they present? Do they clearly

show themselves in the way we speak to our friends and family? Can people see them in the kind of clothes we wear?

Where is holiness in your life? Where is humility in your life? If you find it hard to see



humility, keep watching the little children, who are quick to say sorry and to learn a better way of living. Little children often find it easier to show love than adults do, and a child’s humbleness will

always let him trust parents to teach him what he needs in order to be safe and happy. These abilities little children have from their humbleness, and this is why Jesus said they belong to the Kingdom.

We have all lost the innocence of childhood, and the beauty of holiness is now absent as we look into the mirror of adulthood. But the good news is that God wants to give it back to us and help us grow in His holiness which comes from His Spirit through our humility. †

**Jeff Wealand is a preacher of the gospel living in Skelmersdale, United Kingdom.**

# Attention Visitors!

**Dewayne Spivey**

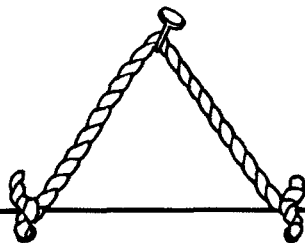
It was Thursday night and I sat alone in the guard room of our local jail. My Bible class had finished early and I was waiting for the other groups to finish so we could leave together.

Every person wishing to visit someone in jail must pass through this room. As I waited I glanced over the signs which were posted to give visitors various warnings and cautions.

One sign caught my attention because it was posted at least four different times in key locations while all of the other signs were posted only once. Obviously this was a message they wanted to make sure all visitors understood.

What message do you think jail authorities would want to make sure they got across to all of their visitors? It wasn't about bringing anything that could be used as a weapon.

The sign read as follows:



## **ATTENTION VISITORS**

*No person admitted unless properly dressed.*

- 1. Shorts must be knee length.**
- 2. No tank tops**
- 3. No short dresses.**
- 4. No sun dresses. No shirts with obscene language or pictures.**
- 5. No see-through clothing.**

*Any person that cannot abide by these rules will be refused visitation. (No exceptions).*

Why would this be such an important notice to visitors of a jail? Obviously the officials are aware

that the way someone is dressed could have an adverse impact on the people they are charged with housing and controlling. They are aware of the problems that improper dress can create and they want to avoid them.

Shouldn't Christians be even more concerned when it comes to the way we dress? Our appearance is to portray an image of godliness. We should be conscientious about

the problems our clothing may cause in the minds of others. Should a jail be more concerned with modesty than a Christian?

*“In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array”.*(1 Timothy 2:9). †

Have we produced a generation that knows not God, nor cares about the Bible principles of morality?

- We have murdered 30 million unborn babies in the last twenty years. We call it abortion. The Bible calls it murder.
- The Bible speaks of drunkenness. We call it alcoholism, sickness, or disease. The Bible calls it sin.
- The Bible says that homosexuality is contrary to nature and God (Romans 1:27). We call it gay or alternate lifestyle. The Bible calls it sin.
- The United States uses more grain to make alcohol than to make bread. For every dollar collected from alcohol taxes, it costs \$11.64 to only try to repair the damage done by drinking.
- Crime in our country costs taxpayers 2 billion dollars per year — 53% of all crime is caused by alcoholic drink.
- The Bible calls lasciviousness — unbridled lust — shameful. We call it modern and liberal art and support it (NEA) with tax money.
- Addiction to drugs is at an all time high. Heroin alone has 500,000 addicts.
- There are 1.3 million couples living together out of wedlock. The Bible calls it fornication (Matthew 5:28).

May God-fearing people everywhere pray that we may again be a nation that fears God; that we will be a land which the Lord cares for because of our righteousness; that the eyes of the Lord will always be upon us.

— **Kenneth McClain**

---

## PROVERBS 17:22

---



The old car wheezed to a halt at the toll booth. “A dollar seventy-five,” said the toll-taker. “Sold,” said the driver as he climbed out.



Aunt Matilda was astonished when the bank called and told her that her checking account was overdrawn. She offered this response as proof of her good standing:

“How can I be overdrawn? I still have checks!”



My friend Virgil told me that he woke up yesterday morning to the unmistakable scent of “pigs-in-a-blanket.” But, he was very philosophic about it. He said, “That’s the price you pay for letting relatives spend the night.”

I know a man who donated a loud speaker to his church – in memory of his wife.



The Super Bowl was over. The fanatic fan turned off his TV with a sigh, looked around the room, and discovered that his wife had left him in November.



Wife to husband: “No wonder you’re dog-tired tonight. You’ve growled all day long.”



A six-year-old boy told his pal: “Mom’s in the hospital, and me and Daddy and Timmy and the twins are here all alone.”



A man asked God how long a million years was to Him. God answered, “Like a minute.” The man then asked God how much a million dollars was to Him. God said, “Like a penny.” The man thought for a moment, and then asked, “God, will you give me a penny?” God replied, “In a minute.”

## PROVERBS 17:22

In spite of what some women may think, the reason Moses and the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for 40 years was not because, as a man, Moses would not stop and ask for directions.



I was talking with one of the politicians the other day, and he asked me if I had heard his last speech. I told him, "I sure hope so!"



Bill had a reputation for coming home with great catches of fish. One day he took his brother-in-law, Joe, fishing with him. It so happened that Joe was a game warden. They went to a lake that was known for poor fishing. The game warden sat there in the boat as his brother-in-law motored out to the middle of the lake and stopped. Fisherman Bob then, to the horror of game warden Joe, pulled a stick of dynamite out of a sack, lit it, and threw it overboard. In a moment came the boom, and then the surface was littered with stunned fish. Outraged, the game warden started to berate his brother-in-law, but Bill wasn't bothered by it. Instead, he simply picked up another stick of dynamite, lit it, and tossed it over to Joe with the words, "You gonna talk or fish?"

The current re-emphasis on education is typified by the university that ruled no athlete can be awarded a letter unless he can tell at a glance which letter it is.



A small boy looked longingly at his friend's dog. "My mother won't let me have a dog," he moaned. "Maybe you're not using the right strategy," his friend replied. "Don't ask for a dog. Ask for a baby brother. You'll get the dog."



Old teachers never die; they just lose their principals.

Old principals never die; they just lose their faculties.



Alex Hansen told about a pompous Congressman who was arrested for speeding and brought before a judge. The politician spoke in his best oratorical manner: "I'll admit I may have been speeding a little, Your Honor, but you see, I'm a Congressman and —"

"Ignorance is no excuse," interrupted the judge.





# Remember Your Creator

**Bobby Wheat**

King Solomon, writing in Ecclesiastes as *“the teacher,”* describes his search for meaning in life. His pursuits took him to many places, and he experienced many things in his attempt. At the end of his writings, Solomon makes two declarations which serve as landmarks for those in later times who search for meaning in life. In 12:1, he charges us to *“Remember your creation in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come.”* Then, in 12:13, he concludes that the *“whole duty of man”* is to *“fear God and keep his commandments”* because *“God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.”*

Solomon’s writings in Eccle-

siastes stand as a charge to young people to avoid the meaningless pursuits of life which only sidetrack and mislead. But I suggest to you that these words stand also as a charge to us parents who would have our children grow to be responsible, spiritually-minded adults. To a large extent, the direction of our children’s lives is determined by the priorities which we help them to set in the very crucial formative years. If my children grow up in a “Christian home,” but set aside Christian living when they leave home, I will have to question myself concerning the priorities established in our home.

Briefly, here is a suggested order of priorities by which we can evaluate our activities and those of

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

our children to determine whether or not those activities are leading our children to “remember their Creator.”

**1. Spiritual development.** This seems obvious, but we too often place Bible study, prayer, and Christian service behind homework, athletics, social activities, jobs, etc. Parents, we have an obligation, and a right, to insist that our children learn to read and understand God’s Word and put it into practice! If we don’t help our children limit their involvement in other things so that they have time for spiritual education and exercise, then we will watch them slip beyond our grasp and into the world.

**2. Family relationships.** How much time did you spend with your children last week? Watching T. V. together doesn’t count, nor does watching your child participate in some activity or event. I’m talking about time with your children, playing, talking, reading together, sharing joys and problems and worries and life. If we fail to communicate to our children that they are important to us, then they will pay little heed when we try to teach them values and priorities, nor will they regard family relationships as important for their own lives.

**3. Social relationships.** We do our children no favors by failing to teach them how to get along with

other people. Jesus’ instructions to His disciples in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) leave no doubt that God intends for us to treat our fellow man with love and respect, as someone created in God’s image.

**4. Other activities.** I include in this category things like education, the ability to work and earn a living, hobbies or pursuits which are based on talents and our children’s desires for entertainment, physical activity, recreation, etc. I do not downplay the importance of education or work by placing them fourth in order. Rather, I am suggesting that success in any of these areas which compromises spiritual development, family relationships and social relationships is not success, but merely an illusion of such.

It’s time to stop kidding ourselves about what it takes to raise spiritual children in an unspiritual world. It takes time, it takes supreme effort, and hours on our knees seeking the Father’s help and guidance. Our children are a blessing, a precious gift from God, and their souls are no less precious than their lives. Let’s help them remember their creator **now**, while they are young, so that they will always fear God and keep His commandments. †

**Bobby Wheat is a former missionary to Zimbabwe now living and working for the Lord in the USA.**

# Building Christian Families



**Charles Box**

The family is a divine institution designed by God to meet man's needs (Genesis 2:8-25). Society suffers when homes fail. Today's society is reaping the fruit of weak, ineffective, fractured and broken homes.

From the beginning God's plan was for one man to be joined to one woman for the duration of a lifetime. *"For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband"* (Romans 7:2). Home and family are serious matters to both the Father and the Son. Jesus said, *"So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate"* (Matthew 19:6).

It is within the home that the man and his wife find love, companionship, and also satisfaction for

sexual desires (1 Corinthians 7:2-5). God intended children be brought into the world and be brought up in a family with a father and a mother. Today the home is under attack by the Devil. In our fight against Satan, let's do what we can to save our families.

Christian families are built on commitment. There must first be commitment of life to God by both the man and his wife (1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Mark 16:16). There must also be a commitment to one another. It takes much commitment to the happiness and well being of other family members to build a strong, Christian home. You must give unselfishly of your time, your strength, your possessions, and yourself to build strong homes. Selfishness is the enemy of commitment.

Christian families are built on service to God. Christian families

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

are always in attendance at the services of the church. *“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”* (Hebrews 10:25). Missing even one church service or one Bible class you could attend sends the message to your children that Christianity really isn’t so important. Prayer and Bible study also play a major role in building Christian families. Families must recognize that God is: (1) eternal (Psalm 90:2); (2) all-powerful (Genesis 1:3); (3) good (James 1:17); (4) holy (1 Peter 1:16); and (5) present everywhere (Psalm 139). Strong, happy, and successful families can never be built without service to the one who established the first home — the Eternal God!

Christian families are built on appreciation for one another. The need to be appreciated is one of mankind’s greatest needs. Husbands, wives, and children all share this common need. Our goal should be to express appreciation to our spouses, children, and parents. *“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets”*

(Matthew 7:12). Expressing appreciation is simply the “Golden Rule” in action. It works!

Christian families are built on kindness. Kindness is an essential quality for every Christian family. *“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you”* (Ephesians 4:32). “Tenderhearted” is a key expression. One who is gentle, warm, caring, and understanding will build up his family. Husbands are especially admonished to avoid harshness. *“Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them”* (Colossians 3:19). Simple courtesy and tenderness are necessary for strong families.

Christian families must: (1) practice being friends; (2) listen to each other; (3) love one another; (4) spend time together; (5) have strong commitment to the family and to God; (6) be kind and tenderhearted; (7) forgive one another; (8) appreciate each other; (9) listen to one another; and (10) help the other family members go to heaven. Strong families build strong churches. †

**Charles Box preaches for the Walnut Street congregation in Greenville, Alabama, USA.**

***Only as we follow Christ  
can we lead others in the right direction.***



## *Affair-Proof Marriages*

Randall Caselman

**On a dark rainy night, if you saw a sign, “detour — bridge out ahead,” would you resent the sign or be thankful for it? “*Thou shalt not commit adultery*” is such a sign.**

God created sex for procreation and wrapped it in enjoyment. But for it to be a blessing instead of a curse, He also placed it within the context, the limits, of marriage. Going beyond the limits, ignoring the warning signs in sexual relationships is the curse of our generation. It has led us to marital bankruptcy.

All of God’s gifts have limitations. Water is a great blessing. Life would be impossible without it, but misuse or abuse it and we drown. Fire is a gift, but we had better not abuse it. God’s warning signs are for our good. His commands are not burdensome.

We live in a society which not only accepts having affairs, but encourages them. Television is filled with premarital and extramarital sex. The entertainment media has little or no morals because they

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

have little or no convictions.

Jesus plainly taught that adultery is sin. God didn't create us to have affairs, but to be faithful to our spouse. God created man and woman, then placed them together in families. This is where we find our fulfillment, completeness. It is in family that life is enriched and blessed. Therefore, at all costs, we must protect our family from danger and destruction.

What are some things we can do to affair-proof our marriages?

**Make a commitment to live by God's standards.** David asked, "*How can a young man keep his way pure?*" (Psalm 119:9). The answer is to live according to cultural standards. Right? Wrong! The only way to keep oneself pure is by living according to **God's Word**. When tempted by Potiphar's wife, Joseph replied, "*I will not sin against God*" (Genesis 39:9).

**Don't compare your marriage to others.** Comparing ourselves to others always leads to coveting, (lusting after) our neighbor's wife, house, cars, job, etc. This is a violation of the last commandment from Sinai, "*Thou shalt not covet*" (Exodus 20:17).

**Meet the needs of your spouse exclusively.** "*The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband*" (1 Corinthians 7:3). Men,

you have a duty to your wife. Ladies, you have a duty to your husband. Our marriages cannot grow unless and until we meet one another's needs. And we must understand that her needs are not his needs and vice versa. Paul admonishes us to meet and fulfill one another's needs, not our own. Let me challenge you to ask your spouse, "What are your needs?" Then pay close attention to what is said. Just try it!

**Become the best of friends.** It's easy to leave a lover. It's tough to leave a best friend. Let me give you five ways to become the best friend of your spouse. **Time. Time. Time. Time. Time.** People get to be best friends by spending time together. Many affairs occur because people spend more time with others than with their spouse.

**Avoid sexual fantasies.** Control your mind! Sexual sins, like all others, begin in thought. We don't fall into immorality, we think ourselves into it! James says, "*But each is tempted when, by his own lust, his own evil desires, he is drawn away and enticed*" (James 1:14). Jesus said, "*The man who looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery (has had an affair with her) already in his heart*" (Matthew 5:28). Mental adultery is a sin.

**Never become emotionally involved with the opposite sex.**

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Never look to one of the opposite sex for emotional support, comfort, understanding, and sympathy. Emotional adultery, like mental adultery, leads to the physical act. Several years ago, in a counseling situation, a lady told me, "I have found a man who is so supportive of me. He is understanding and sympathetic. He is all the things I never found in my husband. He has never touched me, but if he does, I'm a goner." We must look to our spouse for emotional support.

**Watch your dress.** Modesty should be the goal of every Christian. Sensuous dress sends a message that we are open to sexual possibilities. Some dress sensuously because they want to send that message. Others are just naive. I know a woman who was super-critical of another for her dress, saying she was sending the wrong message. The next day I saw her at the post office in pants that looked as if she had been melted and poured into them. We must be careful of the message we send, intentionally or unintentionally. A good rule of thumb for Christian women is to ask your spouse. This certainly applies to men also.

**Watch your relationship with others.** Recent studies have shown that most affairs occur between close friends, co-workers, and family members. Here are some sugges-

tions: Never talk about your marital problems with the opposite sex. Never go fishing for compliments. Never be lavish with your compliments. Be aware of electricity between you and others. Avoid the extended look, the lingering touch. Paul tells us that there is not to be even the hint of sexual immorality.

**Minimize the opportunities.** Don't place yourself in situations where you'll be tempted; not mentally, not emotionally, not physically. "*Don't be misled, evil communications (evil companions) corrupt good character*" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

**Begin you own affair at home.** Renew the intimacy with your spouse. Become aware of his or her needs and work to fulfill them. Spend time together doing things you both enjoy. Send flowers. Take a weekend together. Leave the children with others. Ask God to refresh the relationship.

A recent survey among Christians who had had an extramarital affair revealed these common activities: They were not reading their Bible daily. They felt no accountability to the church. They thought it could never happen to them.

May God richly bless our marriages with renewed intimacy and commitment for life. †

**Randall Caselman is the preacher for the Bella Vista Church of Christ in Bentonville, Arkansas, USA.**

# I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN



**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because, even in the long ago, God warned of the danger of marriage to those who did not know and worship Him: *“You shall make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Nor shall you make marriages with them. You shall not give your daughter to their son, nor take their daughter for your son. For they will turn your sons away from following Me, to serve other gods; so the anger of the Lord will be aroused against you...”* (Deuteronomy 7:2-4).



## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because a godly wife/husband is a blessing to any man/woman. The genuine spirituality of a companion is worth far more than rubies or all the treasures on earth. Truth, mercy and loving kindness are her garments every day.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because of the hours of trial on the path of life. Her wise and understanding heart is a strength in moments of discouragement and despair. She is long-suffering toward human weaknesses and knows that victory comes from a bond of genuine Christian love. When the hour is dark and all seems hopeless, she shows me the silver lining in the cloud of trouble.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because I know my love will be returned a hundred-fold. She will love me as a wife and as a friend but, most of all, she will love me with God's type of spiritual love (agape) which covers all human weaknesses and faults. This love will be there to bridge the gaps between us, and to form a bond which will endure through every difficulty. In our life together, our aims, our hopes and our aspirations will be one. This will bring true happiness in our companionship.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because I wanted a companion with

a Christ-like mind and attitude to counsel the family. My children are blessed with a clean, comfortable home and a mother who will listen to their problems with a loving heart.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because her love looks beyond her own family to the sickness and needs of others. She seeks God's kingdom and His righteousness. She sets the proper example for our children.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because it would be a daily heart-break to love someone, to build a life with someone, but to know that that mate did not share Christianity, the most important part of life to me.

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because that means that both of us are living by the same rules: God's laws concerning commitment, love, forgiveness, faithfulness, and marriage (1 Corinthians 7:1-5; 1 Peter 3:7; Ephesians 5).

**I MARRIED A CHRISTIAN** because I want to go to heaven when this life is over and I believe she does too. We have a commitment to help each other reach that eternal home with God. †

— Selected —

**HUSBANDS, WIVES — DON'T  
BETRAY THAT NAME YOU  
WEAR AND ITS GUARANTEE  
OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!**

# Today, in the Evening

Betty Burton Choate

With hurried steps  
You've come in twilight hours  
    To kiss my cheek,  
        Apologetic,  
Sorry that your busy day  
Allowed no time for me.  
I can feel your thoughts:  
    That all the day I've spent  
    In loneliness  
    Inside this house,  
    Crying some — perhaps — with hurt,  
    Feeling your neglect.

Oh, my dear,

I wish that you could know:

    You see a woman

    Old

    And lonely,

    Passing empty days

    Within an empty house

    Once over-filled

        with life. . .

    But eyes deceive.

    For awhile today

    I was fifteen again

    And with beating

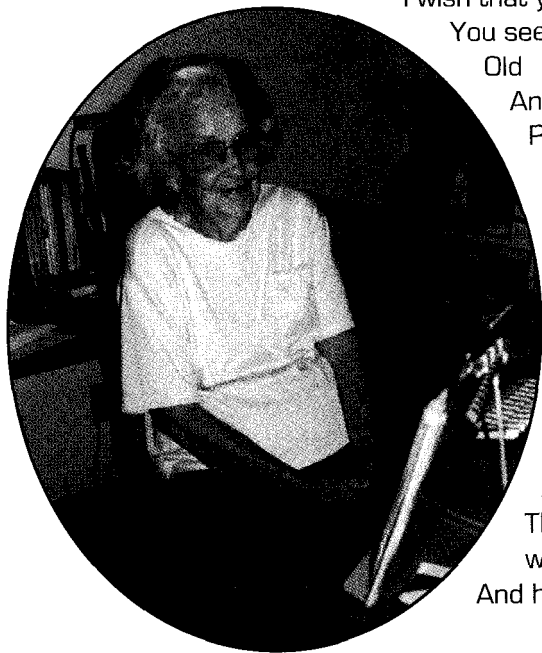
        heart I listened

    As your father said

    Those first sweet

    words of love

    And held me close.



And later in the day  
I read again  
A Child's First Book of God,  
And felt your warmness  
As you cuddled on my lap  
In childish joy.

You'd never guess:  
I spent an hour, then,  
In Egypt  
In the Valley of the Kings;  
And I sat  
— I don't remember just how long —  
Beside the Garden Tomb  
And thought of Him.

I found some dogwood blooms  
And — amazingly —  
Some leaves bright red with fall!  
(The seasons never came so close before . . . )  
And I smelled the roses  
In the sun.  
My feet were light,  
Running through the woods  
Across the mossy path  
And I relished stillness all around,  
Sitting on my special rock  
With God.

More soberly perhaps  
I started home  
And Mother walked awhile with me,  
Talking of the flowers on the way.

Blue skies  
And golden sun

Brought Baalbeck's ruins to view  
And I wandered even further  
To the Taj and Simla's heights.  
Then I remembered  
That there's writing yet to do  
And so I worked awhile  
Till other thoughts came rushing in  
And pushed the words away.

I had some lunch  
— Not the scrappings scattered there —  
But Mongolian Barbeque  
And Thanksgiving dinner  
And cake — Italian Cream —  
With curried chicken  
And Grandmother's best sweet corn!  
— All of us were here!  
We talked and laughed  
And rocked our baby, and the time stood still. . .  
. . . Cherished time.

Friends have dropped by, too —  
Dearest ones who came from far away  
To fill my heart.

And now, my dear,  
You've come and found me tired.  
You see,  
I've had such busy hours,  
And I've done so many things  
Today;  
It's no wonder that I droop  
And feel a little worn  
And ready, now, to rest . . . .

# Happiness Is *Seeing God*

Bill Dillon

Do you want to be happy? In what does true happiness consist? It may be defined and described in various ways, but the Psalmist put it this way:

*“In Thy presence is fullness of joy;  
at Thy right hand there are pleasures  
for ever more”* (Psalm 16:11).

When John wished to describe the blessedness of the saved in the heavenly city, he summed it up by saying, *“and they shall see His face”* (Revelation 22:4). What a glorious conception — to see God! It was John who expressed the hope,

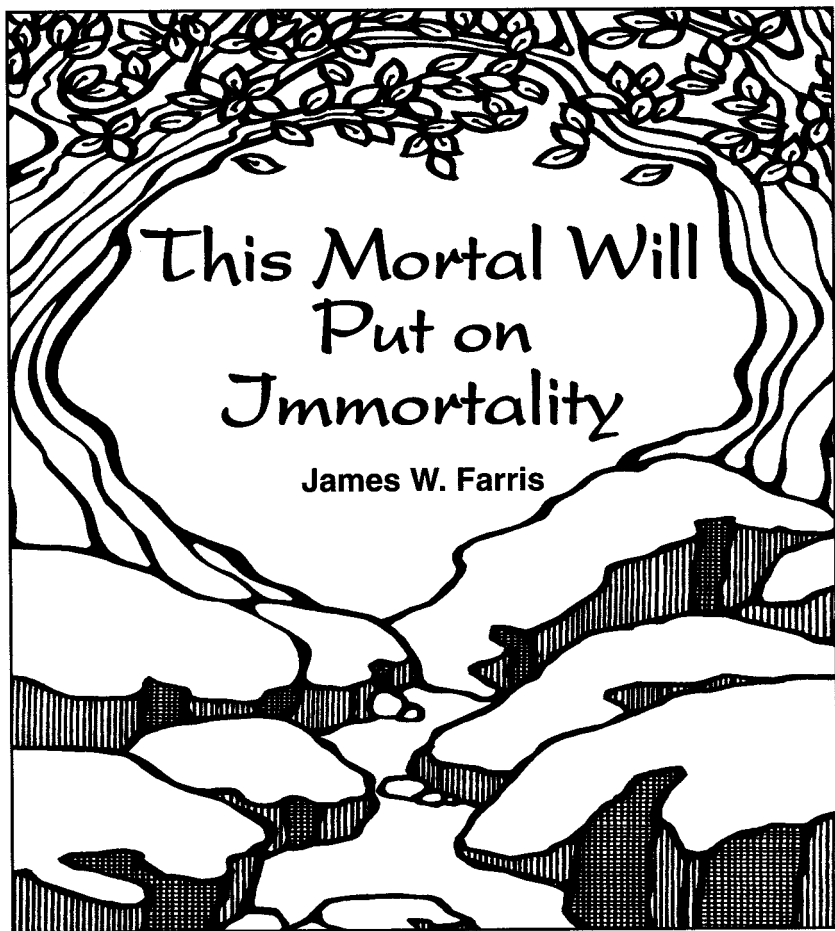
*“Beloved, now are we the sons of God,  
and it doth not yet appear what we shall be:  
but we know that, when He shall appear, we  
shall be like Him; for we shall see Him  
as He is”* (1 John 3:2).

As it will be joy for the people of God to be in His presence and behold Him face to face, so it shall be a terrible experience for the ungodly. Wicked men trying to flee God’s judgment will say to the mountains and rocks:

*“Fall on us, and hide us from the  
face of Him that sitteth on the  
throne, and from the wrath of the  
Lord”* (Revelation 6:16).

It is the intention of God that we should become more and more like Him. As the transforming process continues throughout our lives here, we shall someday see Him as He is, hereafter. †

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



# This Mortal Will Put on Immortality

James W. Farris

Brother Thomas B. Warren makes a significant point in his recent book entitled, **All of Us Will Be Somewhere Forever**. The title of the book is not only an assertion but also a biblical teaching.

The chilling fact of eternity should cause each person now liv-

ing to evaluate his or her spiritual life in relation to the Word of God. The religious world has made many claims in times past regarding the eternal spiritual state of mankind. Some teach the notion of a place called purgatory where man can "pay off his sins" until God accepts

## COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

him into Heaven. Others claim that the souls of wicked men will be obliterated at the point of judgment. All such claims are based on man's opinions and should be denied by the Bible believing child of God. The Bible teaches there is only one of two places the spiritual portion of man will eternally reside.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said in John 11:25, *"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."* Paul declares in 1 Corinthians 15:13, *"But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen."* Following in 15:18, *"Then all those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished."* Yet, because we know Christ was raised from the dead, we also have this hope of immortality. Paul further presses in 15:54, *"So when this corruptible has put on incorruption and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"* Paul makes the conclusion that our hope of immortality is based on Jesus' resurrection from the dead and the promised return of our Lord.

People have long looked to an existence beyond this temporal, physical one. For example, the philosopher Plato remarked in his writings about the ". . . immortal, imperishable soul of man" and the

". . . Divine spiritual element that is forever."

Indeed as Brother Warren states in his book, there will be a "persistence of personality" for all people. However, there is only one person who is able to transform us, by means of that great resurrection, to the life of immortality: that person is JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God. The Christian has the hope of eternal life, while the alien sinner has only the everlasting destruction described by Jesus in Matthew 25:46.

**We are separated from eternity by a thin line called life.** Our life is as a vapor that appears for a short time and is gone away (James 4:14). As God's children, we meet every day with fascination and a spirit of humility and dedication to service. At the end of this life, God's child is gently lowered into an earthly tomb, but all the while that same hope Paul declared to the Thessalonians is very real. *"...and the dead in Christ will rise first"* (1 Thessalonians 4:16). So on that day, God's people will burst into one eternal day and greet the everlasting glory of newness. Let us all live so that our mortal will put on immortality. *"O Death where is thy sting?"* †

**James W. Farris preaches for the church of Christ in Saint Augustine, Texas, USA.**

# What Is the Christian Life?

It is a life of:

## SACRIFICE AND SERVICE

UNTO GOD AND  
MAN Amos 6:1ff;  
Rom. 12:1,2; 1 Cor.  
16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:5

## JOY AND GLADNESS

Acts 8:36-39;  
1 Pet. 1:7,8;  
Isa. 26:3

## SELF-DENIAL

DENY THE  
FLESH OF ITS  
LUSTS AND  
DESIRES.  
Tit. 2:11,12;  
Rom. 8:13;

## FELLOWSHIP

PARTNERSHIP  
WITH OTHER  
CHRISTIANS  
1 Jn. 1:7;  
Acts 2:42;  
1 Cor. 3:5-8

## GROWTH

SPIRITUAL  
GROWTH AND  
DEVELOPMENT  
1 Pet. 2:2;  
2 Pet. 3:18;  
Heb. 6:1

## FREEDOM FROM FEAR AND DREAD

Matt. 10:28;  
Ps. 23; Prov. 3:25

## ABSOLUTE TRUST

IN GOD  
Matt. 6:33; 34;  
II Cor. 9:6-12;  
Phil. 4:14-19

## HOPE

OF ETERNAL  
LIFE  
Rom. 6:22;  
Gal. 6:7-9;  
1 Tim. 6:12

## GOOD WORKS

1 Cor. 15:58;  
Tit. 3:1; Jas. 1:27  
Eph. 2:10;  
Gal. 6:10

## ABUNDANCE

A RICHER,  
FULLER LIFE.  
Jn. 10:10; Rev.  
2:9; III Jn. 2;  
Eph. 3:8

## CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

LIGHT, SALT,  
LEAVEN  
Matt. 5:14-16;  
Prov. 11:30;  
Dan. 12:1-3

## JUSTIFICATION

KEPT WASHED  
FROM ALL SIN  
1 Jn. 1:7-9;  
Rom. 4:7,8;  
Acts 8:22-24





# IN ACTS - THEN AND NOW

**Roger Mills**

## **Introduction:**

1. Algebra and Geometry textbooks copy the excellent teaching methods of the Bible. All three give axioms, principles and rules with vivid examples to clarify. Necessary inference

is logically concluded from these rules and examples.

2. One of many Bible examples:
  - a. The commands of Mark 16:15,16; Matthew 28:18:20.
  - b. An example in Acts 8:12,13. They believed Philip's preaching and were baptized. Simon also did this.
3. The New Testament is God's pattern for us. Note the action in Acts.
  - I. Powerful preaching on Pentecost with proper preparation and great results from seed sown.
    - A. Gladly received the Word, baptized, 3000 added (Acts 2:41).
      1. Continued steadfastly (vs 42), all things common (vs 44).
      2. Sold possessions and shared as all had needs.
      3. With one accord, gladness, single heart, praising God. He kept adding the saved to His church, daily.
    - B. The lame man was helped in Acts 3, many believed and the number came to be 5000 men (Acts 4:4).

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

1. They spoke the Word with boldness and continued to be of one heart and soul (vs 31,32), no one was in need.
  2. Great power was given and great grace was on them all (vs 33).
  3. The people in the area esteemed the Christians highly (held them in high honor — Acts 5:13).
- II. The disciples rapidly increased in number — multiplied (6:1-7).
- A. When much seed is sown there will be blessed results.
  - B. Grecian widows neglected, but better organization solved the problem.
  - C. Stephen's preaching and death, a powerful influence (7,8).
    1. On a powerful enemy (Saul) who helped scatter saints.
    2. Undaunted, the Christians spread the seed everywhere.
  - D. Next noted — Saul's conversion brings peace and edification.
  - E. Many were turned by this, and by Dorcas's restoration to life (9:31,35,42).
- III. Cornelius' coming aboard, plus mission journeys, expanded the horizons of the faith even more.
- A. Acts 14:27, "*When they were come and gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done for them and how He opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*"
  - B. Christians were accused of turning the world upside down (17:6).
  - C. God's Word grew and prevailed mightily (19:21).
  - D. Paul told, one by one, the things God had done through him and his companions in the spreading of the Gospel, and when the Christians in Jerusalem heard it, they glorified God (21:19,20).
  - E. The Lord encouraged Paul, saying he would preach also in Rome (23:11).
  - F. While in Rome for two years, Paul was allowed to live under house arrest in a rented house and to teach quite openly and unhindered, an encouragement to Christians (28:16,30,31; Philippians 1:14).

**Conclusion:** In all of these cases, encouragement was a great power for strengthening and spreading the Gospel. Can we use that power today? Let's hear reports and be excited by what brethren are doing in His vineyard! †

**Roger Mills is a co-worker in World Evangelism, living in Florence, Alabama, USA.**

# Who Am I?

Can you identify me? Read each clue and think carefully. If you guess my name after the first clue, give yourself a score of 100 points. If you know who I am only after the fifth clue, your score is 60, etc.

When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify the facts from God's word.

1. **100** I was one of Jesus' chosen twelve (Matthew 10:2-4).
2. **90** I was with Jesus, hearing Him teach for three years (Acts 1:21,22).
3. **80** A prophecy about me said that I would act as a traitor against one who trusted me (Psalm 41:9).
4. **70** As with all prophecies, this was spoken through God's foreknowledge, not that He *made* me do the wrong (Deuteronomy 30:19: *all people are given the choice to do good or evil, to obey God or disobey*).



5. **60** I objected to the "waste" of perfume on Jesus, saying that it could have been sold and given to the poor (John 12:4,5).
6. **50** I was the treasurer for my group, and I took money for myself — a thief (John 12:6).
7. **40** At the last supper we shared, Jesus gave a piece of bread especially to me (John 13:26).
8. **30** I made an arrangement with the chief priests in the temple to identify Jesus (Matthew 26:47,48).
9. **20** Realizing what a terrible thing I had done, I tried to give back the 30 pieces of silver, but they refused to take "blood money" (Matthew 27:1-10).
10. **10** I went out and hanged myself; the money was used to buy a field which came to be called "The Field of Blood" (Matthew 27:5; Acts 1:18,19).

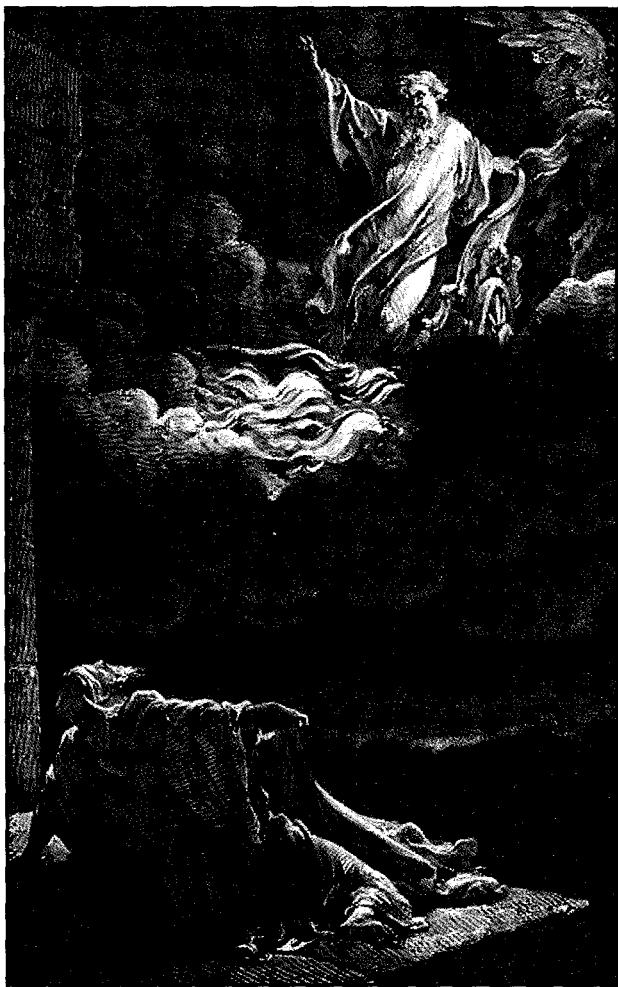
**My Score** \_\_\_\_\_

*See answer on inside back cover.*

**O**n Sunday evenings our congregation is following the story of the Bible. Last Sunday we arrived at the point where the prophet Elijah is giving his mantle of succession to Elisha before he is taken up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Having crossed the Jordan river, Elijah said to Elisha, *“Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you”* (2 Kings 2:9).

I like that! It's a revelation of the great character of Elijah. He is still seeking to minister right up to the time of



# Elijah: A Worthy Example

John Gipson

his departure.

When many come to the close of life's journey, they are concerned only about how others can serve them. They fail to think of the good they can do.

The question, "*Ask what I shall do for you, before I am taken from you*" should be taken up by every preacher, teacher, parent, and Christian. What more can I do for my children, my friends, my family, for the church, even for my enemies? Do I need to speak a word of encouragement, consolation, or per-

haps of reproof? Is there some deed of kindness which needs to be performed?

As you come to the close of your life, ask not what others can do for you. Ask what you can do for them. In that way you will be following the worthy example of Elijah — and a greater One than Elijah. You will be walking in the footsteps of Jesus, who, even on the cross, was still thinking of others. †

**John Gipson is the long-time preacher for the Sixth & Izard Church of Christ in Little Rock, AR, USA.**

### How to Solve Disagreements

**ONE CHRISTIAN BROTHER HEARD ANOTHER TALKING ABOUT HIM IN A DEROGATORY MANNER. SO HE WENT TO THE TALEBEARER AND SAID, "PLEASE BE KIND ENOUGH TO TELL ME MY FAULTS SO THAT I MAY TRY TO CORRECT THEM." THE TALEBEARER AGREED.**

**THE CHRISTIAN WHO HAD BEEN INJURED SAID, "FIRST LET US KNEEL AND PRAY THAT MY EYES MAY BE OPEN TO SEE MY FAULTS AS YOU REVEAL THEM TO ME. WILL YOU LEAD IN THE PRAYER?"**

**WHEN THE PRAYER WAS OVER, THE MAN WHO HAD SOUGHT THE INTERVIEW SAID, "NOW PROCEED, MY BROTHER, WITH WHAT YOU HAVE NOTED IN MY LIFE WHICH HAS DISTURBED YOU." BUT THE OTHER ANSWERED, "AFTER PRAYING OVER IT, IT LOOKS SO LITTLE THAT IT IS NOT WORTH TALKING ABOUT. I REALIZE NOW THAT BY GOING AROUND AND TALKING ABOUT YOU, I HAVE BEEN SERVING THE DEVIL MYSELF, AND HAVE NEED THAT YOU PRAY FOR ME AND FORGIVE ME FOR THE WRONG I HAVE DONE TO YOU."**

**THE DISAGREEMENT DISAPPEARED.**

**AUTHOR UNKNOWN**

*“So Job died, being old and full of days” (Job 42:17).*

*“Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death passed unto all men, for all have sinned” (Romans 5:12).*

---

Regardless of how we live or how long we live, all will die. Death is inevitable, and we have no control over whether or

not we will even-

tually die. But

from the

biblical

teaching,

we do have

something

to say about

*the condition of*

*our heart at death.*

This is clearly to be seen in the account of Job.

After Job had lost his wealth and his family, his wife told him that he should curse God and die. This is just what Satan wanted him to do, for then he would have suffered with Satan eternally. Job was sorely tried, but the case was with him as is said of us in 1 Corinthians 10:13, that God will not permit Satan to tempt one more than he is able to bear.

We know that some righteous people die young, while some who are wicked live to be very old. Saying that Job was full of days does not describe his longevity, as the record had just been said that he died, being old. It may have meant

that at one time he wished for death as an end to his suffering.

Job died, being full of days. We

are not told his age at death,

but he did not live

as long as

Methuselah

and some

others early

in history.

We are told

that in the end

he was given

twice as much as he had

before. This included family and wealth, and may have included living twice as long as before his troubles began.

This is encouraging to us. In ignorance and immaturity, we too may, like Job, argue with God and complain that we are being mistreated, but may still recover and be greatly blessed. We are already blessed more than we often admit.

May we, like Job, die, being old and full of days. In all dispensations God has demanded an obedient faith. †

**Bruce Buckley served for many years as an elder in the Chapel Avenue congregation in Nashville, Tennessee, USA before his death.**



Said of Job

Bruce Buckley

# Walking by Faith



**Randy Green —**

## *He Walks with God!*

Randy Green was not a Christian in 1969. He was involved in a serious automobile accident and was left paralyzed for life. How could he know, in that darkest hour, that he would soon learn to walk in an entirely new way?

In 1971, through the help of a loving family and Christian friends, Randy was born into the family of God. But it was not until 1980 that Tim Aaron and his parents, Carl and Jean, involved Randy in World Bible School correspondence. Suddenly, Randy had an active way of reaching out to people who were interested in studying the Bible. As they studied, he studied; as they grew, he grew. A new purpose for living, a new meaning to his days, had begun.

As often happens, the number of students grew astronomically, and the financial burden of buying materials and paying overseas postage for many hundreds of students — as well as the time and effort of correcting the lessons and packaging the materials for mailing — became more than Randy could manage alone. In 1985 the Ninth Avenue Church of Christ began helping with the work.

Through a request for a correspondence course in 1986, a group of Liberians began studying the Scriptures with Randy. In a campaign later that year, sixteen souls were baptized in the town of Tubmanburg, and in the intervening years more than 300 have been obedient to the gospel in that city alone. Though Randy and the Ninth Avenue church have students in several countries in West Africa, most of their work has been done in Liberia. A close relationship has been established with individual preachers and leaders, and that contact has been maintained in spite of the fact that many converts have been scattered into neighboring countries because of the terrible civil war which began in 1990. New churches have sprung up in many places as a result!

Randy cannot walk, but the preachers he has converted and helped to train through the printed page are his legs to “*go into all the world and preach the gospel.*” Thank God.



## A SMALL WINDOW OF LIBERIAN HISTORY

### Doyle Goodspeed

Modern-day Liberia was born with one end of its umbilical cord rooted solidly in African soil and the other extending across the Atlantic to America. A movement was begun in 1822 by U.S. philanthropists to form a nation for freed American slaves in territory that is now Liberia. In 1848 a constitution was adopted and a government formed that was molded after that of the U.S.

Liberia is thus Africa's oldest republic and became an important model for other African states seeking independence. The sixteen tribes in the nation also came under the constitution in time. At present, about 5% of the population is Americo-Liberian tracing their lineage to ancestors from



## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

America. There is a special feeling of kinship with the U.S. Many Liberians whom I encountered spoke of this.

The tribal Liberians are a spiritually inclined people, having a background, along with other West Africans, in animism. These things, plus the terrible hardships the people have been subjected to from civil strife make Liberians especially receptive to the gospel. Experience has taught us that they are much more receptive in their land than after they have migrated to the U.S. Our affluence and fascination with materialism rub off on them and distract them from the truth. Our efforts to convert them are much more effective when expended across the ocean.

## BY THE GRACE OF GOD: THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IN LIBERIA

In Liberia these days, with no jobs available and food difficult to come by, when you ask, "How are you making it?" the standard reply is, "By the grace of God!"



*With 75-100 congregations scattered throughout the country, Liberia claims several with a membership of 300 to 550. This particular gathering was for graduation of Bible College students.*

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

The hand of God is dramatically seen in the establishment of the Lord's church. In 1966 a denominational preacher, Robert Gibson, heard a Herald of Truth broadcast that spoke of the Churches of Christ. Since his independent group called itself "The John Joseph Church of Christ", he wrote asking about the church — by the grace of God! John Allen Chalk and Roosevelt Wells went to Liberia and baptized Gibson and 47 members of his group. Roosevelt Wells and A.J. Hairston returned, baptized others and the new members, in turn, were zealous for the Lord's work. The church grew!

In 1967 Billy Nicks began his first tenure as a resident missionary. Otis Gatewood had challenged a group of young preachers to put a pin on the map and commit to either go there or find someone to go. Brother Nicks stabbed a pin into Liberia. He intended to find someone to go but his efforts failed. So, faithful to his promise, he and his family went! — by the grace of God! The baptism by Nicks of Charles G. Paegar was another



*Doyle Goodspeed pictured with students in the Bible College in Monrovia, re-established after the end of the civil conflict in 1997.*

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Providential blessing. Brother Paegar has been a source of strength and stability to the church.

Today there are possibly 20-25 congregations in the Monrovia metroplex. The largest of these has over 550 in Sunday morning worship. At least two others have an attendance of 300-350. These would be Smythe Road, Chicken Soup Factory, and West Point. The Monrovia Church of Christ (formerly Central Sinkor) is also a strong church. The preachers in most of the churches are capable, hard working, and serious about their work and training. There are 75 to a 100 congregations throughout the nation. Some, in isolated places, have retrogressed into near-denominationalism due to lack of contact with sound preaching. Some take two hours of four wheel drive travel and an additional two hours of hard walking to reach.

By the grace of God, there are now eight Christian schools, six are elementary, two also have high schools. These are doing a good job with limited resources. The Bible College, re-begun by Brother Arthur Davis is doing well. No article about the church in Liberia would be complete without mention of Randy Green's work through World Bible School. At least 25 churches have been started as a result of this beginning with Tubmanburg in



***Children in the Ford-Madden School operated by the Smythe Road Church of Christ in Monrovia. Enrollment is 286.***

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

1986. There are efforts underway to bolster and build up a Children's Home which Macanthy Siakar has tried to get underway. These accomplishments are examples of the fantastic grace of God!

The grace of God moved the Nicks, the Drinnens, Sarah Young, the Jerry Langfords, the David Underwoods, Willie and Clay Orange, Mike Yarborough, the David Phillips, the Crohns, the Littlejohns, the Hardisons, and the Hayhursts to live and work for the Lord in Liberia. Many other dedicated Christians have done short-term campaigns there.

We have a solid, rapidly growing base from which to work in Liberia. Liberian Christians, scattered by the civil war, have already established churches in Sierra Leone and Guinea in refugee camps. We have good men in the field who are doing a good job. The nation is small, and the poor economy and favorable exchange rate provide an open door of opportunity. The people are religious by nature. In spite of the ten years of devastating civil war and the extreme poverty — or maybe because of it — there is enormous receptivity for the Word of God.

On a recent trip to Liberia, I was interested to find that when I said, "Good morning! How are you?", the inevitable reply was, "Thank God!" You have to think about that for a minute for it to make sense! If you ask me how the work is doing there, I know of no better reply than, "Thank God!" †

*"And They Were All Scattered Abroad"*

(Acts 8:1)

**Arthur David**

The church in Liberia has lagged behind its West African counterparts in Nigeria and Ghana. There are many reasons for this situation. However, the church has made and continues to make strides in its effort to fulfill the great commission of Jesus Christ.

The gospel was taken to Liberia in 1966 by American preachers. Since that time, some missionary families have lived and worked there. Other missionaries from the States have visited the country for shorter periods of time. These efforts helped to strengthen the church and trained Liberians to carry on the work.

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Between 1985 and 1990, the church experienced tremendous growth, from about 20 churches to about 45 congregations. Instrumental in this rapid growth was E. Collins Wesley, a native Liberian. He returned to Liberia from the U. S. in 1985 after successfully completing his biblical studies at the International Bible College in Florence, Alabama.

It was during this same period that a congregation was started in Tubmanburg, Bomi County, situated in the western part of Liberia. It is 45 minutes drive from Monrovia, the capital city.

Randy Green, of Haleyville, Alabama, a World Bible School teacher, was studying and corresponding with some students in Tubmanburg. All of these students, at the time, belonged to a Pentecostal church. As a result of these studies, the students decided that they were ready for baptism. Randy contacted the church in Monrovia concerning their request.

Several campaign teams worked in the city of Tubmanburg. During these visits, we were involved in door to door evangelism and nightly preaching. The WBS students were baptized along with others during these initial visits. That was the beginning of the Tubmanburg Church of Christ in 1986, and it was an amazing thing to see how the church could be begun without the presence of the one(s) who had done the initial teaching. The story of this congregation vividly illustrates what is said in 1 Corinthians 3:6: *"I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."*

In December 1989, Liberia was plunged into a brutal civil conflict by individuals who saw political power as the means of acquiring wealth, fame, and power. This armed struggle has been referred to as a war, but in reality, it was nothing but a calculated effort on the part of some to seize power, with its attending benefits, and for others it was an opportunity to rob, plunder and loot.

After eight years, 250,000 killed, and millions of dollars worth of property and infrastructure destroyed, Liberia had an election in July 1997. The nation is slowly recovering from the ashes of war. It is going to be a very slow process. The situation as a whole is still fragile.

The church was not immune from all of this. Members lost their lives. Some lost all of their earthly possessions. Many were internally and externally displaced. Families were separated.

The brethren from the church in Tubmanburg were scattered as a result of the fighting in the country. They went into neighboring countries and into other parts of Liberia, and guess what? They took the gospel of Christ with them. Because of their work, churches have been established in

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Monrovia, Buchanan, Republic of Guinea, and Ivory Coast. Information is still being received about their efforts. Some of these men are Michael Khanm, Paul Gueh, Mussa, Moses Beh, and Abednego Dors — all World Bible School students of Randy Green. This reminds me of a similar event recorded in Acts 8:1, when great persecution caused the brethren to be scattered in regions abroad.

Liberia is a small country whose official language is English. The church in Liberia is blessed with strong and dedicated Christians who are willing and ready to carry out the great commission of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. However, the economic realities in the nation today severely limit the efforts of the church. A few years of committed and sustained assistance to the Liberian work will have a great impact on the church in many places. A Liberian, Isaac Daye, is presently in the nation of Gambia doing a good work for the Lord. Out of the evil of war and persecution can come untold good. †



**CHILDREN** — *displaced, disrupted, and disadvantaged, because of the war. Brother MacAnthony Siakar is trying to make a home for such children. He is committed to buy 30 acres of land and to try to find the additional funds to build the required facilities. At present, this is the lunch room.*



*The skeletal remains of a multi-storeyed building in Monrovia — typical of so many homes and businesses throughout the country.*

*"How Shall They Hear?"*

**(Romans 10:14)**

**Randy Green**



The partnership in World Bible School work between Ninth Avenue and myself began in 1985. Shortly thereafter we received a request from J. Abednego Dors for World Bible School Courses for himself and twenty-seven others. Within the next three years, more than 300 were baptized in Tubmanburg alone. When the civil war broke out in 1990 and the Tubmanburg brethren were scattered

throughout Liberia and other countries, they took the gospel with them. As a result, other congregations were started by our WBS converts in other parts of Liberia, and even in other countries where they had fled as refugees. A thrilling example of this work is Francis Musa who has helped start thirteen congregations in Guinea, West Africa, where he now resides as a refugee.

Through the years, as the cost of our mission efforts in Liberia in time and money has grown, other congregations in the USA — Cottondale, Double Springs, South Haleyville, and Thornhill, all in Alabama — have helped carry the load. Others have also helped with special projects such as relief efforts and funds for Bibles and literature. Through the years we have sent six relief containers of food and clothing to our Christian brothers and sisters.

Efforts to spread the gospel were greatly boosted when Jake Coppinger of WBS, Visalia, CA sent thirty thousand WBS courses in one of the relief containers. In 1998 we were able to send several thousand Bible courses and more than 3,000 of J.C. Choate's study books in another container. In August of this year we hope to send another container of materials when Arthur David, a native evangelist who has recently completed a Master of

Education degree at Freed Hardeman University, returns to his homeland to work. We are needing funds to help with these materials and the shipping costs.

We currently have students and try to supply study materials to congregations in nine African countries and the Philippines. The particular method we use with WBS work is as follows: When we receive a request for a course, we turn the grading of the courses and the follow-up work over to our WBS converts in those countries who have been tried and tested and are now faithful preachers and teachers of the gospel. This is good for two reasons: 1) It teaches the Liberian brethren to be evangelistic. 2) Automatically, it puts the WBS student in touch with a local Christian.

This year, in a continuing effort to improve our efforts in Liberia, we have changed over to a new system that was worked out by our Liberian brethren. They have divided the country into thirteen zones, with follow-up workers in each zone. Paul Gueh, G. Moses Beh, and J. Abednego Dors, three of the first sixteen converts in Tubmanburg, are the coordinators who are implementing this new program. The leaders of the Smythe Road church have agreed to verify all WBS reports under the new system. We thank God for dedicated Liberians. †



**Dear Sirs:**

I want to subscribe to the quarterly magazine, **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**. Enclosed is my check for \$12.00 for four issues, or \$20.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume \_\_\_\_\_. **My address is given below.**

I want to order the complete set of volumes in print (27 issues) for the reduced price of \$67.50. **My address is given below.**

Please send special prices for WBS teachers and their students.

I want to **MAKE A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION** of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**. Enclosed is my check for \$12.00 for four issues, or \$20.00 for eight issues, starting with Volume \_\_\_\_\_. **The address is given below.**

The church has agreed to send \$25.00 per month (or a multiple), for a box of 35 copies (or multiples) of each issue of the magazine as they are printed. These are to be used in the work of the local church.

Please use my special contribution to send more copies of this issue to the mission fields of the world.

Please accept my check to send a bundle to our missionary. **The address is given below.**

As a congregation we want to help print and circulate 100,000 copies of each issue of this magazine by making a special contribution to this effort. We can specify where the copies we pay for will be used, whether in our personal work, in jail ministry, overseas, or . . .

This congregation wants to have 1000 copies (for \$1000 plus shipping) special-printed of the next issue, with our (our missionary's) address, to be shipped directly to us or to him, as per instructions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_



Suggested uses for individuals and churches for

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL:**

- Use them for family devotionals at home.
- If you own a business, dealing with the public, present copies regularly to your best customers whom you would like to convert.
- Give them to patients in hospitals and nursing homes.
- Use them in your personal work and in visiting newcomers; give to workers in banks, post offices, restaurants, and other business offices.
- Give a copy to each member of the congregation.
- Draw from them for bulletin articles.
- Keep them on display in libraries, hospitals, doctors' offices, barber shops, beauty parlors, and other public places where there is a magazine rack.
- Send them to your WBS students.
- Use them in jail ministries and campaigns.
- Give subscriptions as birthday, anniversary, etc., gifts.
- Encourage the young men in the congregation to draw materials from them for their public devotionals.
- Special order for overseas campaigns.

(Return this form in an envelope, along with your check, to the following address)

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL**  
**2148 N. National**  
**Springfield, MO 65803**

**Att. Byron Nichols**



## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

### *Verse Search — 27* (from page 33)

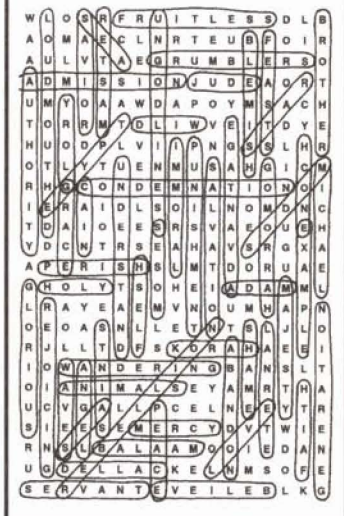
1. Ananias and Sapphira.
2. To the Holy Spirit.
3. No.
4. Great fear came on all who heard of it.
5. *The Apostles; signs; wonders.*
6. They were filled with indignation.
7. They arrested them and put them in the common prison.
8. *"Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life."*
9. Since the prison doors were still securely locked and guards were outside, what other explanation could there have been, for god-fearing men?
10. They feared the people, because they believed the apostles were of God.
11. *"...you have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this Man's blood on us!"*
12. *"We ought to obey God rather than men."*
13. To His right hand, to be Prince and Savior, and to give repentance and forgiveness.
14. *Witnesses; Holy Spirit; given; obey Him.*
15. No; they became furious and plotted to kill them.
16. To take heed, be careful, because others had previously arisen, claiming to be from God, yet they had come to nothing.
17. *God; overthrow; fight against God.*
18. That they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.

**Who Am I?**  
(page 97)



**Judas**

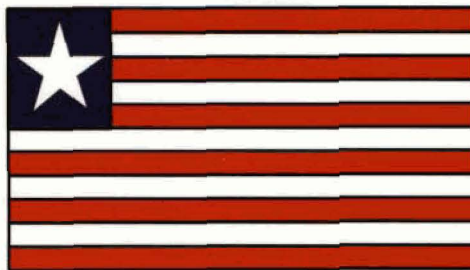
### **The Book of Jude** (page 26)



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**



## Liberia



**Government: Republic**  
**President: Charles Taylor**

Our appreciation to Doyle Goodspeed for the information supplied below:

### Secular Facts:

**Location:** On the west African coast, bounded by Sierra Leone (NW), Guinea (N), Ivory Coast (E), and the Atlantic Ocean (W).

**Land Mass:** 38,250 square miles, slightly larger than Tennessee.

**Population:** 3,000,000; one-third of the population lives in Monrovia.

**Major Cities:** Monrovia, Buchanan, Harper, Greenville, and Robertsport.

**Language:** English and tribal languages.

**Literacy:** 10%; public, mission and private schools; one university.

**Religion:** Christianity, 10%; Muslim, 20%, animism, 70%.

**Ethnic Groups:** 26 tribal groups, descendants from freed slaves from many parts of Africa.

**Economy:** Almost non-existent at present, due to ten years of civil war. Rice, cassava, sugar cane, palm trees (oil), and sweet potatoes are grown for home use. Rubber is grown for export. Plantations and industry maintained by American firms.

**Monetary Unit:** Liberian Dollar.

### The Church:

**Congregations:** 75-100 congregations; approximately 100 preachers.

**History:** An attempt to establish the church in the 1800's failed due to the death of the missionary sent from the U.S. In 1966, Robert Gibson who preached for the John Joseph Church of Christ wrote to the Herald of Truth, intrigued by mention of Churches of Christ. John Allen Chalk and Roosevelt Wells went to Liberia. Gibson and 48 members of his group were baptized, including Paul Williams who took a leading part in the development of the church.

In 1967 Billy Nicks and his wife became the first resident missionaries. Others who followed included Dr. Tom Drinnen, David Underwood, the David Phillips, and Jim and Judy Hardhurst. The civil war drove out the Kent Hayhurst family, the last of the resident missionaries.

The baptism of Charles G. Paegar in 1967 was a significant event, because of his influence for stability. There are many hard working, well grounded preachers and Christians, with several churches numbering into hundreds of members. There is one Bible college and several elementary schools.