

# V THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

*Who Is the Holy Spirit?*

Page 14

**3 Ingredients for Unity**

Page 22

**The Jewish Passover**

Page 24

**Make Disciples**

Page 28

**What Shall We Call "The Church"?**

Page 35

*What Makes the Church Grow?*

Page 38

*Simply Singing*

Page 43

**Last Martyr in England**

Page 51

*Which Is More Important?*

Page 62

**Why Do All Suffer?**

Page 64

**GREECE**

Page 102



## Butterfly Wings



One day a small opening appeared in a cocoon. A man sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no further.

So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.

The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand, to support the body which would contract in time. Neither happened. In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It was never able to fly.

What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.



Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our own development. If God allowed

us to go through life without any challenges, we would be weak and crippled. We would not have the spiritual muscles that would have come through effort and exercise. And we would never be able to fly.

— Submitted by Sheila Gibson

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



# MAJORITY OR MINORITY?

**J. C. Choate**  
**Editor-in-Chief**

People like big things, large numbers, majority rule. They like big churches, meeting houses, hospitals, and schools. Because the church of our Lord is small in comparison to the denominations, people often point out that the religious groups around them have all of these big things but the church of Christ doesn't. It is as though size determines if a thing is right or wrong, but this logic is not biblical. Of course large numbers, and all of their side benefits, appeal to human beings, but we must go beyond human reasoning to find the truth.

The only time in the history of the church that it was ever the largest group of believers was in the first century, after it had been established in Acts 2, and for the first two or three hundred years afterward. Even during those days, though, it was in the minority in comparison to the world and the other religions of that time.

Within thirty years after the church's beginning, the apostle Paul warned that there would be an apostasy and that there were erring brethren already at work, bringing this about. Elders of congregations in one area eventually recognized one man as the chief elder over those congregations. Others recognized chief elders or bishops in their areas. This, in turn, led finally to the recognition of one of these chief elders as the head or "pope" of the entire church. Through this departure from the biblical pattern, the majority of the church fell into apostasy. That apostate church, as we know it today, is called the Catholic Church.

But what about those brethren or those congregations that did not go off

into error? What happened to them? Did they eventually die out? No, they did not die but even as *a minority* they went on, and Christians in churches of Christ have continued through the years right on down to our present day.

But after the apostasy, which church did the Lord recognize as being the one He had established? Neither? Both? For sure, He did not endorse those that had gone into apostasy, even though they were in the majority. Rather, He stayed with the faithful — the minority — and will always remain with them as long as time stands, and for all eternity.

Those who have read through the Bible are aware that, in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, God's people were always in the minority. And we should remember also from reading the scriptures that there has never been a time when the Lord did not have faithful people in this world to represent Him.

The Old Testament writers said that God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed, but that it would stand forever (Daniel 2:44). John the Baptist and Christ came preaching that the kingdom of God or the kingdom of heaven would soon be established (Matthew 3). Christ said His kingdom would come in the lifetime of some who heard Him speak (Mark 9:1). With the beginning of His kingdom, He would give the apostles the keys of the church or kingdom, to open it for the admittance of the obedient (Matthew 16:18,19). It was said that *of that kingdom there would be no end* (Luke 3:33).

True to His promise, Jesus established the church or kingdom in Jerusalem approximately A.D. 33, and we are told that when the Apostles preached the gospel for the first time, around 3000 believed, repented, and were baptized for the remission of sins. The result was that the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved (Acts 2).

That church grew and spread rapidly throughout the world, and as pointed out earlier, even though the *majority* later fell away, the *minority* continued faithful, so that even now *that same church* exists in most countries of the world.

Contrary to this, some believe that all of the true church was swallowed up in the apostasy, and that only in recent years has it been restored. They explain that *the seed of the word* was never destroyed and that, in that sense, neither has the church been destroyed. They further explain that when the seed was planted anew during the "Restoration" period, it brought forth fruit — meaning Christians — that this brought about the restoration of the Lord's church among humanity. Certainly this explanation is true of some parts of the world, but it is absolutely false for us to conclude that the church

everywhere died. If there has ever been a time when the church did not exist, that would have contradicted the Lord's promises that it would never die and that there would be no end to it. Moreover, had there ever been a time in which the Lord was left without representation on the earth, why would He have allowed the world to continue? On the other hand, we are told that when the Lord comes again, He *will* find faith and that He *will deliver up his kingdom to God* where it will forever reign with him (1 Corinthians 15:24).

But if the church has existed somewhere in the world ever since its establishment, where are the records? How do we *know*? One answer is simple: for the believer, the promise of God is enough. The very fact that the scriptures say that the church would never be destroyed is all the proof we need.

Surely one of the reasons we do not have a lot of information about the Lord's church down through these hundreds of years of its existence is because *it was a minority group*. The apostate majority got the attention of the world in ages past, and that continues to be the case right on up to our present day.

Because the majority of the church went off into apostasy, becoming the Catholic church, that church has been in the spotlight of history from that time to this. We know of practices that were introduced, when sprinkling became baptism and when mechanical music was added to worship. We know of the split in the Catholic Church, when it became The Roman and The Greek Orthodox Catholic Churches. The Roman Church was the larger group, so it has gotten most of the world's attention since that division. We also know of the Reformation Movement brought on by Martin Luther in his desire to reform the Catholic Church. When this failed, Luther continued to preach his beliefs and this led to the Protestant Movement and the beginning of literally thousands of denominational churches.

Up to this time the Roman Catholic Church continues to be the largest group of believers in the world. As a result, the Pope and the Catholic Church get most of the attention and publicity among "believers". Wherever the Pope goes, he gets the Red Carpet treatment. The Press, T.V., radio, and every type of media is there to cover every word he says and every move he makes. Why? Because he represents the majority.

But what about all of the Protestant and denominational churches? Even though some of them may number into the millions, and altogether they represent a large group of people, yet in comparison to the Catholic Church they are in the minority and most of them get very little attention. History, a thousand years from now, will have even less to say about them.

And what about the church? Even though all of us know it exists wide-

ly in the world today, though we know it is the one true church, the same one He established and the one He will return to receive and to take to heaven where it will live forevermore with Him, and even though it claims several million members around the world, because it is so small in relation to the Protestant Churches, and especially the Catholic Church, for the most part it goes unnoticed. A hundred years from now or 1000 years from now, if the world continues to stand, what will history say about the church of Christ of the 1900's and early 21st Century? Not much, if anything. It probably will not even be mentioned. Does that mean that it did not exist during this period? No! *It obviously does exist, and is found throughout the world.* But it will not get enough attention in comparison to the Catholic Church to even be mentioned in major historical records.

Looking back, the same has also been true of history down through the hundreds of years since the majority of the congregations went into apostasy. But just because major history books do not mention the church through this period of time does not mean that it did not exist in many places in the world, even as it exists in most countries today. In fact, there have been studies made of library archives of letters, books, and other records which do tell of the church in Europe and Asia, and of the persecution of those who would not submit to the dictates of "majority" groups. Quiet testimony is there; it's just that history's magnifying glass doesn't focus on it because history is not overly concerned about minorities.

Christ made an important observation about majorities and minorities when He said, "*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for **wide** is the gate, and **broad** is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and **many** there be which go in thereat: Because **strait** is the gate, and **narrow** is the way, that leadeth to life, and **few** there be that find it.*" (Matthew 7:13,14). Based on this statement, if the Lord's church was the largest group of believers in Christ in the world today, I would have to question whether it was really the true church or not.

Certainly I am not advocating that we should *not* go out and evangelize and bring more souls to Christ, in order to keep the church small. But, regardless of our own efforts, we will still end up being the minority group because *most people* are going with the majority and Jesus says the majority will always be on the broad way.

Don't be ashamed of being with the minority, spiritually. Don't reject the Lord's church because it is small in comparison to other churches. Look at its teaching. Investigate it. Put the truth and the strait way above the physical and material things of the world. Remember, too, that when we are with God, we may seem in the minority numerically, but spiritually we are in the majority after all.

†



# TRUE WORSHIP

Byron Nichols

The subject of worship is currently the center of a great deal of attention and controversy in the Lord's church and in many of the denominations. Certainly this matter of worship should be of serious concern to all who desire to please God and who want to be His children.

Surely any study of true worship must include consideration of the

words of Jesus in John 4:23,24, where the Lord said, *"But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such doth the Father seek to be his worshippers. God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth."* True worship thus involves both the **attitude** of the worshipper (*"worship in spirit"*) and the **content** of the worship (*"in truth"*).

Romans 15:4 states that *"whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning ...."* With that in mind, we see from Genesis chapter 4 that the first record of worship contains the fact that one of the two worshippers did not worship acceptably. God prescribed acceptable worship, and Cain dared to change it. Abel's worship was *"by faith"* (Hebrews 11:4), and his faith came from heeding the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Instructions for worship during the time of the tabernacle and the temple were outlined in detail by God. Nothing was left to personal preference or guesswork. The New Testament makes it clear what God regards as acceptable worship now.

Please note that from the beginning God has looked upon violation of His revealed will regarding worship as a very serious matter. As examples, let me refer you to Cain's unacceptable worship (Genesis 4), Nadab and Abihu's offering of strange fire (Leviticus 10), the Pharisees' making a show of their worship and religion, and the worship abuses by the Christians at Corinth (1 Corinthians 11,14).

The purpose of biblical worship is to exalt God. It is not intended to put



attention on any man, nor is it designed primarily to provide blessings for the worshippers. Edification occurs, but it is not of first importance. Those who truly worship are indeed blessed, but this is a by-product, not the planned result.

I fully understand that those in favor of unwarranted changes in worship are in the majority in some situations, but this very good advice from someone outside the church is appropriate in such circumstances: **“Never confuse the will of the majority with the will of God.”** It is imperative that we remember that worship is not done *to us*, and it is not done *for us*, but it is done *by us*.

## The Lordship of God and Christ

We will come nearer offering up acceptable worship to God when we understand the greatness, the Lordship of God and Jesus. When the Bible calls God or Jesus “Lord” it is using a word which was one of authority, a word designating a master as opposed to a slave. The word “Lord” is a one-word expression of complete devotion, of reverence and adoration and submission.

David showed an understanding of the appropriate attitude of those who would worship the Lord when he wrote in Psalm 89:7, *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be held in reverence by all those around Him.”* The writer of Hebrews also understood, saying that we are expected to *“serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear”* (Hebrews 12:28).

## Contemporary VS Traditional Worship Styles

Some in and out of the church are saying that “we cannot reach modern man with the traditional style of worship.” The problem with that idea is that it is not the purpose of worship to “reach modern man.” **We are to reach modern man with the Gospel! We are to be trying to reach GOD with our worship!** I believe that it is noteworthy that the New Testament nowhere indicates that worship assemblies were or are for the purpose of attracting unbelievers. The focus of acceptable worship is not the unbeliever, but the Lord God Himself.

There is nothing inherently right or wrong with either traditional or contemporary styles of worship. The problem with either one is if and when it incorporates activities and intentions that are not authorized by God’s Word! As we deal with worship styles and related matters, it is very important that we remember the purpose of worship and who is to please whom in worship.

## Conclusion

In times like these, when there is so much confusion, conflict, and disagreement over a matter of such importance as worship, it is critical that we understand that right is always right, and wrong is always wrong, regardless of who or how many agree or disagree. If God said it, that should settle it for all of us. Let us carefully and prayerfully consider His Word on the matter. †

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

### GOD

The Father of All .....	10
“Behold the Goodness . . .” .....	11
The Footprints of Jesus .....	12
Who Is the Holy Spirit? .....	14

### THE WORD OF GOD

Distinguishing Between. . . . .	18
The New Testament.....	20

### DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

3 Ingredients for Unity.....	22
The Jewish Passover.....	24
Thoughts on the Sabbath.....	26
There Is a Right Way .....	27
Make Disciples.....	28

### SALVATION

Future Assignment.....	31
The Savior of All Does Not . . . . .	32
What Plans Are You . . . ? .....	33

### THE CHURCH

The Tie that Binds .....	34
What Shall We Call . . . ? .....	35
Terms for Elders .....	37
What Makes the Church Grow? ...	38

### WORSHIP

To Worship or Not to Worship.....	41
Participation in Worship .....	42
Simply Singing .....	43

### CHURCH GROWTH

Love: The Key to Growth . . . . .	44
How Men’s Training Classes. . . . .	47
How Should the Church . . . ? .....	49

### CHURCH HISTORY

Edward Wightman . . . . .	51
---------------------------	----

### CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

Evangelism .....	53
------------------	----

The Church and the World.....	54
-------------------------------	----

### DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

Not Who but What.....	57
The Upward Calling .....	58
Christians Need to Grow.....	60
Which Is More Important? .....	62
Why Do All Suffer?.....	64

### THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Things No Father Can Afford! .....	68
Do You Want Your . . . ? .....	70

### COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

Does Jesus Really Care? .....	74
How to Stay on Top of the . . . . .	76

### PROVERBS 17:22

Humor .....	79
-------------	----

### TEXTUAL STUDIES

No One Took My Part .....	81
Moses’ Last Birthday.....	83
As Your Soul Prospers.....	85

### CHARTS AND OUTLINES

“Unto What Were You Baptized? . . .	86
What It Means to be “In Christ” . . .	87
Read It All the Days of His Life . . .	89

### BIBLE QUESTIONS

What Is Meant by “New . . . ?” .....	91
Three Vital Questions .....	93
Do Angels Minister . . . ? .....	94

### BIBLE CHARACTERS

Jeremiah: A Study in . . . . .	96
Jephthah .....	99
The Uncompromising . . . . .	100
More Like Barnabas.....	101

### POEMS AND WRITINGS

The Sin of Doing Nothing.....	17
I Have Found the Way to . . . . .	36

Who? ME? .....	48
A Check-up on Myself .....	50
Jesus .....	59
Hurry the Baby .....	71
Rain .....	72
If We Only Knew .....	82
Do Not Look Forward . . . ..	84
Whoever Heard of a Man .....	90
The Artist .....	92
The Difference Between .....	99

**FEATURES**

Puzzle Page .....	21
Verse Search .....	30
Quick Commentary .....	40
How Do You Measure Up? .....	56
Walking By Faith .....	67
Who Am I? .....	95
Puzzle Answers .....	Back Page

**FROM THE HEART OF . . .**

Greece .....	102
The Gospel of Christ .....	102
A Return to First Century . . .	107

**THE VOICE OF TRUTH  
INTERNATIONAL**

You are helping us to climb toward our goal of making **The Voice of Truth International** available for Christians and non-Christians throughout the world. Your subscriptions as individuals and your monthly support as congregations are enabling us to enlarge the overseas reading audience with each issue. This is bringing the Gospel to people who have not had opportunity to know it before. God bless you for your involvement. We pray that you are also using TVOTI for evangelism among your contacts. — JCC

**There Is a Kingdom**

My friend, there is a kingdom  
Where no day or night  
is known  
Where no distances  
are measured  
And no heart must walk alone;  
Where the burden of  
your sorrow  
Fills another's eyes with tears,  
And the echo of your laughter  
Falls from lips forever dear;  
Where each dream you dare  
to father  
Grows within another heart,  
And those hands in strength  
support you  
As you reach for goals afar;  
Where no triumph or disaster  
And no havoc wrought by time,  
No poverty or fortune  
Could affect the love sublime;  
Where the one so gently  
cherished  
As the years have swiftly flown  
Only glows with deeper beauty  
When the youthfulness  
is gone;  
Where two hearts upon  
the mountain  
Can survey the coming end —  
Dear one, there is a kingdom  
In the heartbeat of a friend.  
— Betty Burton Choate

There is no image of God found in human language that is more comforting and reassuring than the word "father".

It is true that some do not feel the same emotional impact from such usage as most of us do. A person growing up in a home where the father is shiftless, a drunkard, an abuser, or in other ways despicable can hardly associate the word with anything good or pleasant. This should be a reminder to all fathers that their behavior may have very much to do with how a child grows up to think of God.

Fathers are taught by the Bible to love their wives even as they love their own bodies, abhorring any cruelty toward them as they would shield themselves from violence (Ephesians 5:28,29). They are taught by the same blessed book to "not provoke their children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4).

Hence, fathers are set forth as men who love their families, who not only work to provide for their

physical needs (1 Timothy 5:8), but who oversee their spiritual training and growth as well.

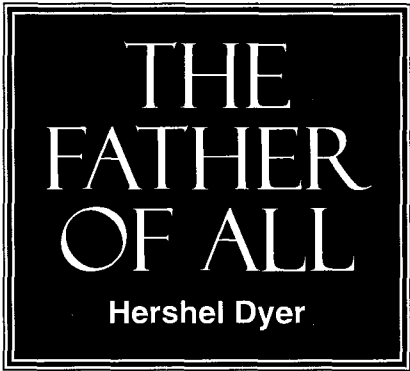
With the Bible kind of father in mind, how blessed it is to perceive of God our Creator as also *our Heavenly Father*. David, a man who knew much of God's longsuffering and forgiveness, in blessing or praising his divine benefactor,

compared Him to a loving father. "As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He

knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust" (Psalm 103:12-14).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, in teaching us to pray, urged the addressing of God as "*Our Father in heaven*" (Matthew 6:9). His own prayers suggest again and again that this is the proper and acceptable way to address God in prayer (John 11:41f; 12:28; 14:16; 17:1ff; Matthew 26:39ff). †

**Hershel Dyer is the preacher for the Tenth & Rockford Church of Christ in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.**



# “Behold the Goodness and the Severity Of God”

**Max Patterson**

The remarkable statement that forms the title of this article was made by Paul in his letter to the Romans (Romans 11:22). We love to preach on the **goodness** of God, but we are reluctant to speak on the severity of God. People love to hear sermons on the goodness of God, but had rather not listen to those on the **severity** of God.

Well, God *is* good. He made available the paradise of Eden for Adam and Eve (Genesis 2:8-15). He rescued Noah and his family from the old world (Genesis 8:1-4). He led His people out of Egyptian bondage (Exodus 3:7,8; 34:6,7). He was especially good to send His Son to die for mankind (John 3:16). This was a supreme sacrifice.

Yet, there *is* the severity of God. The word severity has to do with being stern, strict, demanding, exacting, serious. One sees this as manifested against Adam and Eve when they sinned in the Garden of Eden. Peter uses three illustrations to point out the severity of God in 2 Peter 2:4-6. He says that God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell. He says that God spared not the old world, but saved Noah. Finally, he says

that God turned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes.

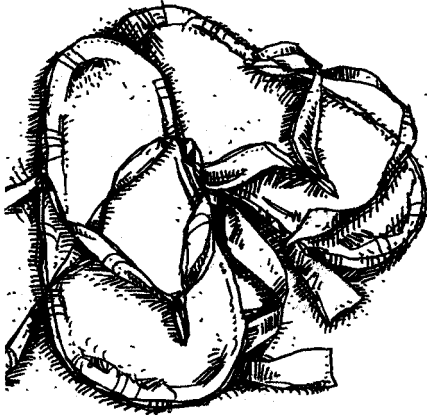
In the wilderness, when God’s people sinned, they fell, and many times they were destroyed (1 Corinthians 10:8-10). During the time of the judges, when the people “*did what was right in their own eyes,*” God allowed them to fall into oppression (Judges 2:14).

Only the **disobedient** will be in the lake of fire.

We must recognize that the goodness and severity of God are conditional. *Now* God exercises love and mercy, but *in the day of judgment* He will mete out severity and justice to those who did not believe and obey Him. Just as God was not severe toward the angels *until* they fell, and destroyed the antediluvian world only because of its sinfulness, and destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah only because of their immorality and inhuman practices, just so only the disobedient will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.

God pleads with man to come to Him and do what is right (Matthew 11:28-30). †

**Max Patterson is a gospel preacher living in Neosho, Missouri, USA.**



# The Footprints of Jesus

**E. Claude Gardner**

Jesus is “our everything” and we also sing, “O what a Savior!” He is our “prophet, priest and king” and also, our example. Jesus wants us to follow in His footprints.

Jesus is the model to follow. He left us an example of suffering, but truly He is an example in everything good. *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps”* (1 Peter 2:21).

The world idolizes (and some Christians do also) Elvis Presley, Michael Jordan, Charles Barkley, Mickey Mantle, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jerry Garcia, O. J. Simpson, and other celebrities. However, the only perfect model is Jesus. He is perfect and honorable in every aspect of His life. The more we read of Him the more readily we agree with the centurion at the cross

— *“Truly this was the Son of God”* (Matthew 27:54).

In the classic, **In His Steps**, Charles Sheldon tells of a person who was confronted with a problem and resolved it by asking, “What would Jesus do?” This is solid advice when faced with any decision or dilemma.

We should sing the little song:

“Be like Jesus this my song;  
Be like Jesus in the home or in  
the throng;  
Be like Jesus all day long.”

We can go wherever Jesus would go, read whatever Jesus would read, see whatever Jesus would see, and try to do whatever Jesus would do.

He is *“the way”* (John 14:6). Also, Christianity is called *“the way”* — it is the way of life as we follow Jesus (Acts 9:2, 24:14).

## GOD

Can we follow others? Can we imitate the example of others? Yes, conditioned on their pointing us to Jesus (1 Corinthians 11:1; Matthew 5:16).

Why do we need the footprints of Jesus? It is imperative for us because we are not wise enough to choose our changes. Men ignorant of God or rebellious toward Him are groping in this world of darkness (Jeremiah 10:23).

Also, we need Jesus because He is the only way to God (Matthew 11:27). Without Him none can go to heaven to be with God. Jesus said, "*No man cometh unto the Father but by me*" (John 14:6).

The way, the narrow way, is made plain by the big footprints of Jesus. The way of holiness is prepared for us (Isaiah 35).

When we accept the call of the Gospel we follow the Master who makes us useful, as He did Peter, Andrew, James, and John (Matthew 4:18-22; John 12:26).

How are we to follow Jesus? We should follow Him in prayer, service, love, obedience, holiness, and self-sacrifice. Jesus taught self-

denial and the development of the spirit of sacrifice. This means we must make a complete surrender of our lives (Luke 9:57-62; Matthew 10:28-31).

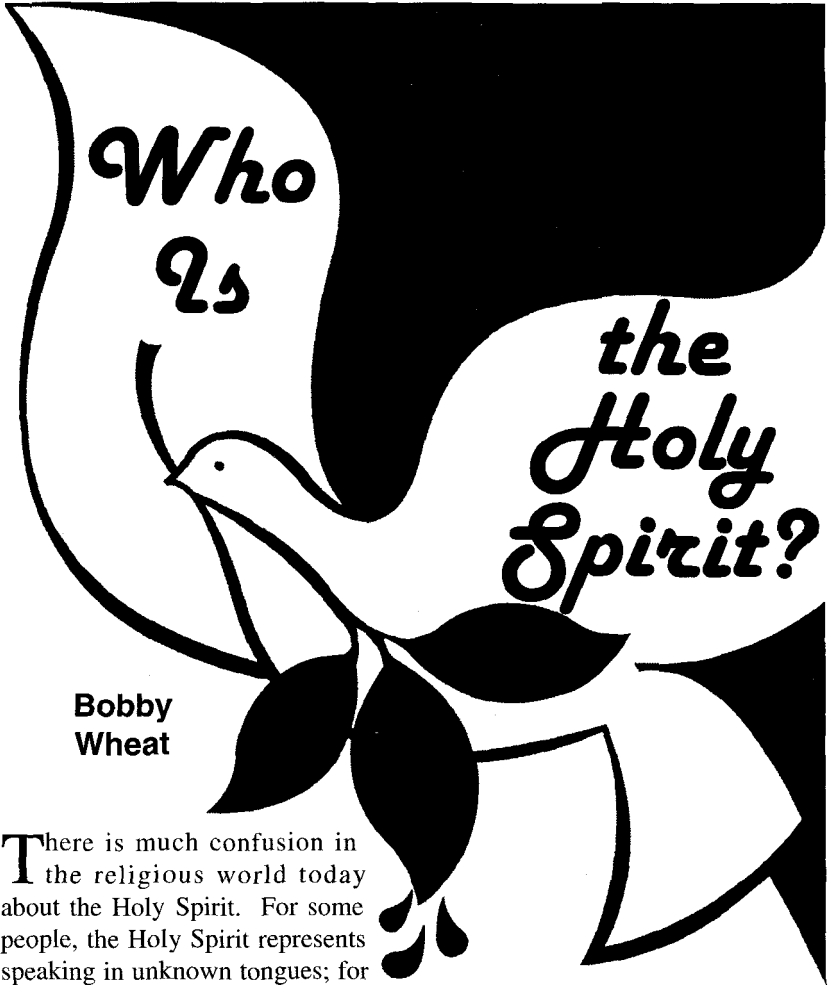
The redeemed ones are those who follow Jesus (Revelation 14:3-5). They are the ones who have heard the voice of Jesus (John 10:4,5,27). His voice teaches: "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*" (Mark 16:16). He said we must do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21). If we "*follow afar off,*" as did Peter, we will get into difficulty as did he (Luke 22:54).

Satan makes footprints, too, but to follow him will lead us to eternal destruction. We must always be on guard so that he cannot deceive us.

The "*good man*" will be blessed for following the Lord (Psalm 37:23). Our Shepherd leads us in paths of righteousness (Psalm 23:3). The Psalmist prayed, "*Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me*" (Psalm 119:133). †

**E. Claude Gardner is President-Emeritus of Freed-Hardeman University in Henderson, Tennessee, USA.**

Most footprints in the sands of time  
were made by work shoes.



**Bobby  
Wheat**

**T**here is much confusion in the religious world today about the Holy Spirit. For some people, the Holy Spirit represents speaking in unknown tongues; for some, the Spirit means miraculous healings; and for still others the presence of the Spirit means comfort, assurance, and assistance in Christian living.

In all of the confusion, we hear the voices of many people asking,

from a simple desire to know the truth, "Who is the Holy Spirit?" As with any question of a religious nature, our best course of action is to go to the Bible so that we can find an answer that truly comes from God.



## GOD

From the Bible we learn many things about the Holy Spirit. In the time of the early church, the Spirit did cause many wonderful and miraculous things to happen. However, the Scriptures also demonstrate to us that the need for those miracles, such as speaking in tongues and miraculous healing, has long passed. This does not mean, however, that the Holy Spirit has stopped working in the lives of God's people.

Among the many truths we learn from the Bible about the Holy Spirit, five things stand out as being "timeless." That is, these are things which the Spirit does, or is, in all times. We want to emphasize three things that the Spirit "is", and then two important things that the Spirit "does".

### **The Holy Spirit Is God**

*"Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51:11).*

These are words we understand to have been written by King David after he committed adultery with Bathsheba. David's greatest fear was that God would leave him as He had left King Saul. Therefore, he prays, *"Do not cast me from your presence."*

An interesting feature of ancient Hebrew poetry is its use of "parallelism" in which an idea in

the first phrase or line is restated with different words in the second phrase or line. The second line of Psalm 51:11 is a request that God not take His Holy Spirit from David's presence. We understand from this verse that for God to take His Holy Spirit from a person is the same thing as God Himself leaving that person. Therefore, the Holy Spirit is God Himself. We must recognize, then, that the Spirit "is" everything that God "is", and that He "does" only what God Himself would "do".

### **The Holy Spirit Is a Gift**

Peter replied, *"Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).*

Speaking to the crowd in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection, Peter tells of two things that happen when a person is baptized. Assuming that true repentance has occurred, that person receives forgiveness of sins and *"the gift of the Holy Spirit."* Some would interpret this last expression to mean "a gift given by the Holy Spirit." However, it is more natural to understand this as "a gift **which is the Holy Spirit.**"

This passage assures us that when a person becomes a Christian

he immediately receives the Holy Spirit. It is not necessary to seek additional “experience” as proof of the Spirit’s presence in the life of a Christian. God has placed Himself, in the form of the Holy Spirit, into every person who has been baptized into Christ. The Holy Spirit is God’s gift to us.

### **The Holy Spirit Is a Seal of Ownership**

*“Having believed, you were marked in Him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance...”* (Ephesians 1:13,14).

Have you ever written your name inside a book cover? Why did you do that? It was to indicate the fact that you own the book, that it belongs to you. God does the same thing with a Christian — He writes His name on that person to indicate His ownership. But God does not do His writing with pen and ink as we would. Rather, He marks us with His Holy Spirit. So Paul speaks in the above passage from the book of Ephesians, telling Christians that their belief in Jesus as the Son of God has caused God to mark them with the Spirit, to write His name on them.

We also learn from this passage that the Holy Spirit is the Christian’s **guarantee** that he will receive the promised inheritance,

which is eternal life in heaven with God. God has left the Spirit with us as a deposit which proves that He will keep His promise to us.

### **The Holy Spirit Helps in Prayer**

*“In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us...”* (Romans 8:26).

Every Christian has at some time experienced the feeling that his or her prayers were not being heard by God. But the Word of God teaches very clearly that God is listening any and every time a Christian approaches Him in prayer. In fact, God Himself is present within us in the form of the Holy Spirit, and He understands our needs and desires. The Spirit of God takes our prayers before God, and this happens whether or not a person “feels” right about his prayer. This knowledge should be a great source of comfort to a Christian. **God hears every prayer!**

### **The Holy Spirit Helps Us Grow**

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”* (Galatians 5:22).

The desire of every Christian

## GOD

should be to become more like Jesus with every day that passes. Every characteristic demonstrated in the life of Christ should be reflected in the life of every believer. But this is no small task, and many have given up their Christian walk in discouragement over their failure to be like Jesus.

Paul's words in Galatians 5:22 should give the encouragement we need to continue striving for spiritual perfection. These characteristics are the result of the Spirit's presence and work in the life of a Christian! God has not given us a difficult task to accomplish all by ourselves. He has given us the task, and He has given us the perfect helper: the Holy Spirit.

God did not send His Holy Spirit to confuse mankind. He sent the Spirit to

help, to guide, and to comfort those whose desire is to follow Christ.

All we need to know about the Holy Spirit is presented in the Bible. Search the Scriptures so that you can understand who the Spirit is and what He does for a Christian. This knowledge will strengthen you. †

**Bobby Wheat is a former long-time missionary to Zimbabwe now living back in the USA.**

### The Sin of Doing Nothing

He made no mistakes and took no wrong roads;  
Not once did he fumble the ball;

He never went down 'neath the weight  
of the loads —

He simply did nothing at all.

He lost no hard fights in defense of the right;  
Nor bled with his back to the wall.

He never felt faint in his climb in the light —  
He simply did nothing at all.

So life passed him by, and death came nigh,  
And he feared for the Judgment call.

When they asked him why, he said with a sigh:  
"I simply did nothing at all."

The Father will pardon your blunders, my friend,  
And lift you up when you fall,

But the sin to condemn your soul in the end  
Is to simply do nothing at all.

—Anonymous

# Distinguishing Between the Testaments

David Pharr

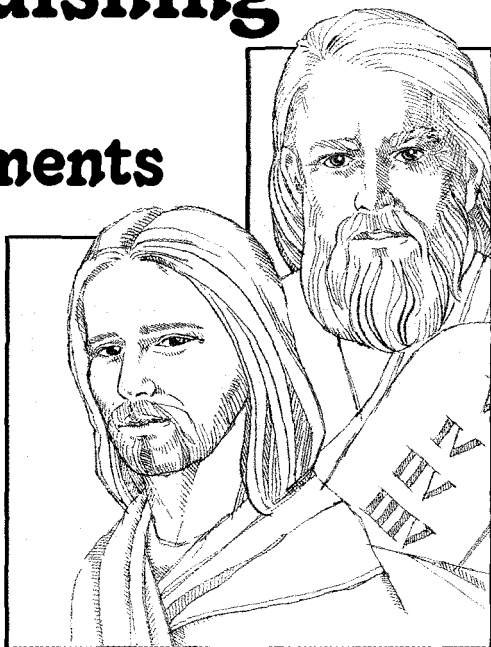
In your study and use of the Bible you must learn to "rightly divide" (2 Timothy 2:15). This means making the right application of the various parts of Scripture.

As you continue to study you will become more and more accustomed to determining from the context what is the application of a passage. Beginning Bible students frequently feel discouraged because the Bible seems hard to understand. But remember that it takes time to develop skill. Everyone else has had to start their study when it was also difficult for them.

One of the most important divisions to recognize in the Bible is the difference between those things which are a part of the Old and New Testament laws. Failure to make this distinction causes much confusion. Many of the errors of modern denominationalism have developed because the dividing line between the Old Testament and New Testament was not recognized.

All of the Old Testament was written during the time when the law given through Moses was in force. This law pertained especially to the Israelite nation. John 1:17 says, "*The (Old Testament) law was given by Moses...*"

The law of Moses continued in force during the earthly lifetime of Jesus. It was the law under which He lived (Galatians 4:4 says He was



## THE WORD OF GOD

“made under the law”). It is important to remember that many things connected with Jesus’ earthly life were things that pertained to the law of Moses, such as keeping the Jewish feasts, the Sabbath, etc. Remember, though, that during His earthly ministry Jesus was teaching things which would later be incorporated into His New Testament.

**But when Christ died He took away the law of Moses and replaced it with His New Testament law.**

Some of the numerous passages that teach this are Colossians 2:14; Galatians 3:24,25; and Hebrews 8:8-13; 10:9. We understand, therefore, that we today live under the law of Christ, *not* the law of Moses. Listed in the two columns below are a few things that are differences between these two important laws.

Old Testament		New Testament
Given to Israelite nation only	↔	For all nations
Sabbath (Saturday)	↔	Lord’s Day (Sunday)
Instrumental music	↔	Singing only
Animal sacrifices	↔	Blood of Christ
Levitical priesthood	↔	Priesthood of all believers
Tithing	↔	Giving as prospered

Do you remember to pray in conjunction with Bible study? Pray for strong convictions based on the truths you learn. Pray not only for the ability to understand, but also for the faith to rely absolutely on all that God says. Pray for the strength, then, to obey what God in His word asks you to do. †

**David Pharr is the preacher for the Charlotte Avenue Church of Christ in Rock Hill, South Carolina, USA.**

- A knowledge of God’s word should give us big HEARTS, not big HEADS!
- How can you have faith in the Bible unless you know what’s in it?
- It is one thing to show a man he is in error, and quite another thing to put him in possession of the truth. God’s word, rightly divided, does that.

# *The New Testament*

**Don Walker**

In Matthew 26:28 Jesus said, “*For this is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*” The New Testament is a power indeed. That “*everlasting covenant*” (Hebrews 13:20) provides the marching orders for New Testament Christians. That New Testament provides a blueprint for the New Testament church. No child of God should be without a working knowledge of this powerful section of Holy Writ (Hebrews 5:12-14).

The New Testament is a fulfillment of the Old Testament (Matthew 5:17) and stands as the reality that cast the shadow of that first covenant (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:17). Concerning this truth, the Hebrews writer recorded this point regarding the high priest, “*who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: For, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount*” (Hebrews 8:5).

The New Testament’s message is really quite clear. The proclamation that Christ is coming again rings forth from Acts, chapter one, through the end of Revelation. Realizing this point, righteousness and temperance should mark our lives, for one day we will be judged by the very testament (the words of Christ) that we speak of now (Acts 24:25; John 12:48). Its division is truly quite logical when we read it in this light. Notice how the New Testament is divided:

**Matthew — John ...The life of Christ**

**Acts ...The history of the Church**

**Romans — Jude ...How to *live* as a Christian**

**Revelation ...How to *die* as a Christian**

Truly the New Testament is a great blessing for men. Sealed with the blood of Christ, it will shine a light, enabling us to follow in the footsteps of our Lord, Jesus Christ. May we each thank the Father for such a bountiful gift. May we ever keep the importance of this New Testament before our minds as we study our Bibles much more, and much more seriously. †

**Don Walker preaches for the Shenandoah Church of Christ in San Antonio, Texas, USA.**

# GENESIS

*The True Beginning of Salvation for Men*

**Genesis 1:1**

**Stephen D. Eckstein, Jr.**

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

CREATED

ADAM

EVE

CAIN

ABEL

ENOCH

METHUSELAH

NOAH

ARK

RAINBOW

GOPHER

SERPENT

ARARAT

BABEL

ABRAHAM

ISAAC

JACOB

ESAU

JUDAH

SARAH

HAGAR

MELCHIZEDEK

ISHMAEL

CIRCUMCISION

GOSHEN

LADDER

PROMISE

EGYPT

SODOM

LOT

JOSEPH

ISRAEL

PHARAOH

GOD

# 3 Ingredients for Unity

Royce Frederick

---

In Ephesians 4:1-16, we find three ingredients necessary for unity. Each of them occurs several times in these verses.

---

## 1 WORK

We should be “*endeavoring* (earnestly trying) to *keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*” (4:3). Unity does not happen by accident. Without working for unity, people in any group tend to drift apart.

If no energy is going into a part of the natural world, that part will decay. It will go from order to disorder. The same is true in the Lord’s church. **Great effort is required to maintain unity.** Therefore, the gifts in Ephesians 4:11 were “*for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry* (service), *for the edifying* (building up) *of the body of Christ*” (4:12). Those gifts were not merely for beauty, like jewelry. They had a higher purpose. They were tools to use **in labor, in unselfish service, in building up the church.**

Today, our blessings from God

are not for our selfish pleasure. Every Christian has abilities and responsibilities. We must all do our part: “*...according to the effective working by which every part does its share...*” (4:16).

## 2 STUDY

Every gift in Ephesians 4:11 involved knowing and teaching the will of Christ. He made some Christians “*apostles...prophets...evangelists...pastors* (shepherds) *and teachers.*” Anyone who teaches, preaches, or shepherds (as one of the elders in the local church) must study God’s will. To truly follow Christ, we must study and obey His commands and teachings. Ephesians 4:4-6 reminds us that there is:

“**ONE BODY**” — We should all become members of the same “body”, His church (Ephesians



## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

1:22,23). Jesus promised to build *one* church (Matthew 16:18; see Ephesians 2:16), not *many* churches with different names and teachings. A sinner who obeys Christ becomes only a Christian, a member of the church of Christ (see Acts 11:26; 1 Peter 4:16; Romans 16:16).

**“ONE SPIRIT”** — The same Spirit lives within everyone who obeys the Gospel (1 Corinthians 6:19,20; Galatians 3:26,27; 4:6).

**“ONE HOPE”** — Instead of selfish motives, we must set our hope on eternal life in heaven (James 5:28,29; Colossians 3:1-4).

**“ONE LORD”** — We must not follow men, but obey Christ as our only “Head” and Lord (4:15; Matthew 7:21).

**“ONE FAITH”** — We must not follow different “faiths” or “beliefs” (see 1 Corinthians 1 :10-13; Galatians 1:8-10). The majority would lead us to destruction (Matthew 7:13,14). Jesus delivered “*the faith*” (the set of beliefs for salvation) once for all (John 16:12,13; Jude 3). We need to grow stronger in “...*the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...*” (4:13) so that we will not be “... *carried about with every wind of doctrine...*” (4:14), but speak “the truth” (4: 15).

**“ONE BAPTISM”** — To be saved, a sinner must believe in Christ, repent of his sins, confess his faith

in Christ, and be baptized into Christ. The “*one baptism*” is immersion (burial) in water (Acts 8:38,39; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12) for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16).

**“ONE GOD AND FATHER”**  
— We must turn our hearts away from everything else to serve the one, true, living God (1 Thessalonians 1:9; Colossians 3:5).

## 3 LOVE

Jesus allowed evil men to torture and kill His physical body to save us in His spiritual body, the church. He prayed for it, then paid for it — with His life (John 17:20,21; Ephesians 2:16; 5:25; Acts 20:28). By His Gospel, He calls us to become children of God and inherit eternal life. “*I...beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love*” (4:1-2). We should love the Lord’s church as Jesus does (1 John 3:16), always “*speaking the truth in love*” (4:15). We must help the church grow, not divide. Loving the church and doing our part “...*causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love*” (4:16). †

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

# The Jewish Passover

Roy Beasley

Each year the Jews celebrate the Passover. This ancient observance dates back to the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. It begins on the 14th day of Abib, the first month of the Hebrew calendar. This corresponds to our month of April. Although we do not live under the Law of Moses, it is important for us as students of the Bible to understand the significance of the Passover.

In the book of Exodus, the Children of Israel were nearing the end of 400 years in the land of Egypt. Much of this time was in slavery. They turned to God in their distress, and God heard their prayers. He sent them a deliverer, Moses. Moses petitioned Pharaoh to let the people go, but he refused. God sent ten plagues on the Egyptians, the last of which was death to the firstborn of both man



and beast throughout all the land.

Moses was commanded to prepare the Children of Israel by giving them certain specific instructions. They were told to kill a lamb, one for each household. They were to paint the blood on the doorposts and lintels of their homes. They were to roast the lamb and eat it that same night. Any left over to the next morning had to be burned. They were also to eat unleavened bread. There was to be no leaven in their houses. While they were eating, they were to have their sandals on and staff in hand ready to begin the march out of Egypt on short notice.

That night the Destroyer did

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

pass over Egypt. He passed over all neighborhoods, over the shacks of the poor, the mansions of the rich, and tents of the sojourners. The firstborn of both man and beast did die. Even Pharaoh's eldest son and heir to his throne died. All died except for those who had the mark of the blood on their houses. *"And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead"* (Exodus 12:30). God had told Moses that there shall *"be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it anymore"* (Exodus 11:6).

It is unfortunate that the Jews do not understand the full significance of the Passover. They do not understand it because they reject Jesus Christ and do not accept the New Testament as the Word of God. The Passover foreshadows the coming of Christ. The Passover lamb in Exodus 12 was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God. (A type is a thing in the Old Testament which foreshadows something in the New Testament.) In 1 Corinthians 5:7 Paul says that Christ is our Passover. Just as the Passover lamb had to be without spot or blemish, Jesus had no sin. As the blood of the Passover lamb on the houses saved the first-

born of the Hebrews from death by the Destroyer, the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin and saves us from eternal death. Just as the blood of the Passover lamb had to be applied to the door posts, the blood of Christ is applied to our hearts when we are baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6:4). We are baptized for or unto the remission of our sins (Acts 2:38).

Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper during a Passover meal with His disciples. It consisted of the fruit of the vine and the unleavened bread which was used in celebrating the Passover. However, the Passover celebrated the deliverance from Egypt; the Lord's Supper celebrates our deliverance from sin and Satan. The Passover was celebrated annually; the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated each first day of the week, which we call Sunday.

When the Jews celebrate the Passover they discuss the events of the Passover with their children. They explain the meaning of the Passover in Jewish terms. We, as Christians, need to discuss the themes of the Bible with our children. We need to tell them about Christ our Deliverer, and explain to them the meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper. †

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

# Thoughts On The Sabbath

Gary C. Hampton

**First**, we should note there is but one sabbath each week. It falls on the seventh day (Exodus 16:26). No one can change that fact. Despite what many say, Sunday is not the sabbath.

**Second**, the sabbath was bound by God upon the children of Israel at Sinai (Nehemiah 9:13,14). It had not previously been known or kept by *their fathers* (Deuteronomy 5:2,3). The children of Israel were to keep the sabbath as a continual sign of their covenant with God (Exodus 31:12-17).

**Third**, the law of the sabbath was a part of the law of Moses. It was delivered only to those who lived under that law (Romans 3:19). Jesus died to take the law of Moses out of the way because it was against man (Colossians 2:14). Like the wife whose husband has died, we are no longer bound to the law (Romans 7:1-4).

**Fourth**, the blessings we enjoy do not come from the law, but the Seed of Abraham, who is Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:8-14). Just as Jeremiah had foretold, God made a

new covenant. Instead of writing it in stone, He wrote it on hearts (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

**Fifth**, the first day of the week was important to Christians in the first century. Jesus was raised from the dead on the first day (Mark 16:1-8). About three thousand souls were added to the church on Pentecost, which was always on the first day (Acts 2; Leviticus 23:15,16). The church in Troas, along with Paul and his companions, assembled to partake of the Lord's supper on the first day (Acts 20:6,7). The Corinthian brethren were to "*lay by in store*" on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1,2).

Christians understand the sabbath was to be faithfully kept by those living under Moses' law. However, we are not bound to keep it today. Under Christ's reign, we remember the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week. †

**Gary C. Hampton is a writer and preacher working with the Central Avenue Church of Christ in Valdosta, Georgia, USA.**

Religious teachers disagree over many vital questions regarding the identity of the Lord's church, what is acceptable worship, and the way of salvation; but there is a way that is right and cannot be wrong.

An important principle which helps us find the right answers to these and other Bible questions is clearly illustrated in Genesis 4:3-5. Here, we are told,



tion in the New Testament book of Hebrews. The Hebrews writer says, "**By faith** Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous..." (Hebrews 11:4). The words "by faith" are key words in this passage, for we read from Romans 10:17, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*"

Since faith is the

## There Is A Right Way

Jimmy Young

*"...in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell"* (Genesis 4:3-5).

We are made to wonder why God accepted the sacrifice of Abel and rejected the sacrifice of Cain, unless we read God's own explana-

result of hearing God's Word, and since Abel offered his sacrifice by faith, it is evident that God had told both Cain and Abel what and how to sacrifice. Abel offered precisely what God had commanded, with the right attitude of heart, and thus he was acceptable unto God. Whereas, Cain, through human wisdom, offered a substitute, and did wrong. Human wisdom is often wrong. God's way is always right! †

**Jimmy Young is the preacher for the Nettleton congregation in Jonesboro, Arkansas, USA.**

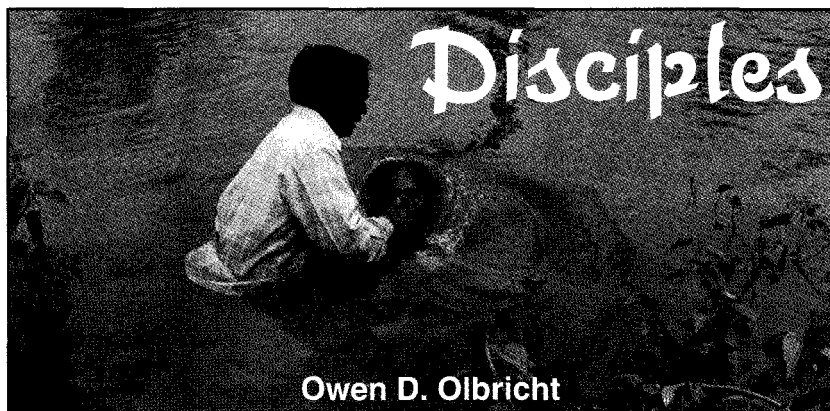
## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

*“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”* (Matthew 28:19; KJV). The New King James, New American Standard, New International, and many others translate “teach” as “make disciples”. The

# Make

be willing to follow Him; that is, to be His disciple. Commenting on Matthew 28:19, J.W. McGarvey wrote, “Not baptizing the nations, but baptizing the *disciples*” (**The New Testament Commentary**, Vol. I).

If baptism were enough, preaching the gospel would not be necessary. Paul’s mission was not only to baptize but also to preach



Greek is *matheteusate*, an imperative, aorist, active, second person, plural, meaning Jesus commanded them to *go make disciples*.

### Our Mission Today

What is our mission if we seek to reach the lost? Clearly our mission is to *make disciples*. Does this *exclude baptism*? No, it *includes* baptism but not just baptism, for the one who is to be baptized is first to be convinced that Jesus is Lord and

the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:17). *Obedience* to the gospel (Romans 1:5; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 4:17) *includes* baptism, but is *more than* baptism.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter presented his evidence, then drew the conclusion that Jesus is Lord and Christ. He told those who believed that they must repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:36-38). Repentance would

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

include a commitment not only to *accept* Jesus as Lord but also a resolve to *live* for Him as Lord (Romans 6:4).

### Spiritual Circumcision

Baptism is the spiritual circumcision of the Christian (Colossians 2:11), which includes both physical and spiritual aspects. A baptism involving only the physical form without a transformation of the spirit will not bring about the new life.

Concerning physical circumcision Paul wrote, "*For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men but of God*" (Romans 2:28,29).

What does Jesus want, *a physical act without inward dedication*? If God did not accept the physical act of circumcision without inward correct qualities of the heart, He must also not accept the physical act of baptism without a change of heart resulting in a new life.

Paul's statement to the Galatians confirms this, "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision avails any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature*" (Galatians 6:15). What is meaningful to Jesus is our being *a new spiritual person*.

The goal is not baptism *alone*

but that of making a disciple who, when baptized, will serve Jesus. Jesus stated that we cannot be His disciples unless we are willing to bear our cross and follow Him (Luke 14:27).

Our effort should be to persuade people to be followers, disciples, of Jesus. The person who is convinced that he should follow Him will want to obey Him by being baptized; however, the reverse of this is not necessarily true: that the person who is "baptized", as an empty form, will want to follow Jesus anymore than that a circumcised person would necessarily want to obey God.

### Conclusion

Jesus sent the apostles into all the world to make disciples who, in turn, would be baptized so that they could be forgiven. Our effort today should be that of persuading people to become disciples of Jesus and to trust the cleansing power of His blood. If they are willing to make that commitment then they are ready to be baptized so that their sins can be forgiven. Jesus does not want *just baptized people*. He wants *disciples*. Our duty is to persuade people to become disciples of Jesus and then baptize them into His body, His family, which is the church. †

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

# Verse Search

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

1. Chapter 7 of Acts is a good review of what?
2. When God spoke to Abraham in Mesopotamia, what did He tell him to do? (V. 2,3)
3. God promised that He would give what to Abraham and his descendants? (V. 5,6)
4. What would happen to Abraham's descendants? (V. 6)
5. What important covenant did God make with Abraham? (V. 8)
6. \_\_\_\_\_ begot \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ begot \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ begot the twelve \_\_\_\_\_. (V. 7)
7. Even though \_\_\_\_\_ was sold into slavery in Egypt, the Scriptures say, "But \_\_\_\_\_." (V. 9)
8. When the time of the promised deliverance drew near, what happened in Egypt? (V. 17-19)
9. Who was born at that time, and how was he reared? (V. 20-22)
10. What does verse 25 tell us?
11. Instead of using that power, where did God send Moses to train him for the work he was yet to do? (V. 29)
12. Who appeared to Moses in a burning bush? (V. 30,31)
13. What prophecy had Moses made to the children of Israel? (V. 37)
14. During the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, what had some of the Israelites done? (V. 42,43)
15. Stephen said that throughout Israel's history, they had done what? (V. 51,52)
16. At the end of Stephen's account, he said that they had done what? (V. 52)
17. What did Stephen see as the people were stoning him? (V. 54-60)

[See inside of back cover for answers.]



# Future Assignment

Charles E. Cobb

“Tomorrow may never come.” But, there will be a *future*. Our tomorrow on earth may never come to pass because we may die. Eternity, however, is in the future and this future is going to be witnessed by us all. An assignment will be made.

Jesus has called upon His followers to look to the future and not be unduly bound to the present. “*Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal*” (Matthew 6:20).

A glorious future of joy beyond compare, of rest beyond description, of life that never ends is promised for the faithful Christian, the servant of God, who lives today.

When sorrows come, sickness intrudes into our lives, disappointments seem to multiply, and dark-

ness appears to ever prevail, the faithful Christian can look beyond these hurts to the future that Jesus has promised.

There is, however, another future that will be in store for a growing multitude of people. “*And these shall go away into everlasting punishment*” (Matthew 25:46). Sent away to punishment in infamy and shame, away from all that is holy, all that is good, all that is joyful and pleasant will be the future that awaits all who “*obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Men look to the future for different reasons. There *is* a future awaiting all of us, without exception. What will be your future? What will be your assignment? †

**Charles E. Cobb is editor of *Tennessee Valley Christian*, and he lives in Scottsboro, Alabama, USA.**

# The Savior Of All Does Not Save All!

Basil Overton

Writing of our wonderful Savior, the beloved apostle John wrote, "*And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world*" (1 John 2:3).

The Holy Ghost said that by the grace of God, Jesus Christ tasted death for every lost person (Hebrews 2:9).

If Jesus is every lost person's Savior, why isn't every lost person saved? The answer to this question is very easy. The Lord Jesus saves only those who respond to His call to salvation, which is in the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14). He saves

only those who get into Him and put Him on in water baptism (Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27).

Baptism that puts one *into* Christ, and by which one puts on Christ has to be preceded by one's faith in Christ as God's Son, the Savior who came down from above (John 8:21-24). Baptism must also be preceded by repentance of sin, and by confession that Jesus is God's Son (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:9,10). †

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

## Later Than You Think

Life is paved with good intentions, simple things we plan to do —  
Like visit with a friend or neighbor; everyone should have a few.

Good intentions are soon forgotten while we're young, and in the pink;  
Scatter sunshine along life's pathway. It may be later than you think.

Why delay until tomorrow things that should be done today?  
Ask our God to walk beside you; He can always find a way.

— L. L. Weatherly

# What Plans Are You Making *for Eternity?*

Ken Tyler

We live in an age where great emphasis is placed on making plans for the future. I am sure that many of you work for a company that provides a retirement benefit so that when you reach a certain age you will be able to retire and still receive an income. Most people who have reached an adult age have been approached at one time or another by someone who sells life insurance, and most of us have life insurance. Also, many of us have fire insurance on our homes and possessions, we have hospital insurance, we may have cancer insurance, and even a burial policy. On and on it goes about the things you and I do to take care of our future. We put great emphasis upon the preparation that needs to be made for the years before us.

Why have a retirement plan or life insurance? The answer, of course, is to provide for the food, clothing, and housing our bodies will need as long as we live.

But when I think of such things, I am mindful of the fact that these provisions place emphasis on the material and not the spiritual. Of course, there is nothing wrong

with providing for our material needs in the future, but the point I want to make is that the majority of emphasis is on the physical, with little or none on the spiritual. A person will make all kinds of sacrifices to have a retirement and the proper insurance so he and his family will be taken care of physically, yet to forget about the spiritual needs will result in him and his family going to hell. Friends, *that doesn't make sense*. Jesus asked, "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mark 8:36,37).

We would say that a person is foolish if he does not prepare for his future **physical** needs. What would we say about the individual who does not prepare for his future **spiritual** needs? It goes without saying that spiritual preparation is far more important than physical. Eternity is everlasting. Isn't it the supreme tragedy not to prepare? †

Ken Tyler is a gospel preacher working with the church of Christ in Arab, Alabama, USA.



# The Tie That Binds

Maxie B. Boren

The tie that binds Christian hearts together is the most wonderful thing in this world! The comradery of kindred spirits so closely bound together by like-precious faith is indescribable. Sweet fellowship in Jesus Christ — praise and thanksgiving to God for it!

The Bible teaches that Christians have been called “*into the fellowship of God’s dear Son!*” (read 1 Corinthians 1:9). When we are in fellowship with Him who is our Savior, we are in like manner in fellowship with the Father. And this fellowship extends to our fellow human beings who are also in Christ...who have been translated from darkness into the kingdom of light. Consider 1 John 1:1-7, Colossians 1:13, Ephesians 1:3, etc.

Almighty God designed and purposed this “tie that binds” to be a “little bit of heaven on earth!” And it is just that! As hearts and minds are blended together in Christian love and service, the joy forthcoming defies words to adequately describe! It is a marvelous thing to experience!

But my heart aches for those who do not know this joy — the

**vast majority** of the world’s population are floundering in sin and spiritual misery. How terribly sad! These have never known the way of righteousness...they are still walking in darkness. But even sadder, if such is possible, is to think of those who have known the Way and have left it...choosing to go back into darkness and forfeit the precious “tie that binds.” This tears at my heart, to think of friends and loved ones who have done this very thing. It pains me ever so deeply because I know what they are missing!

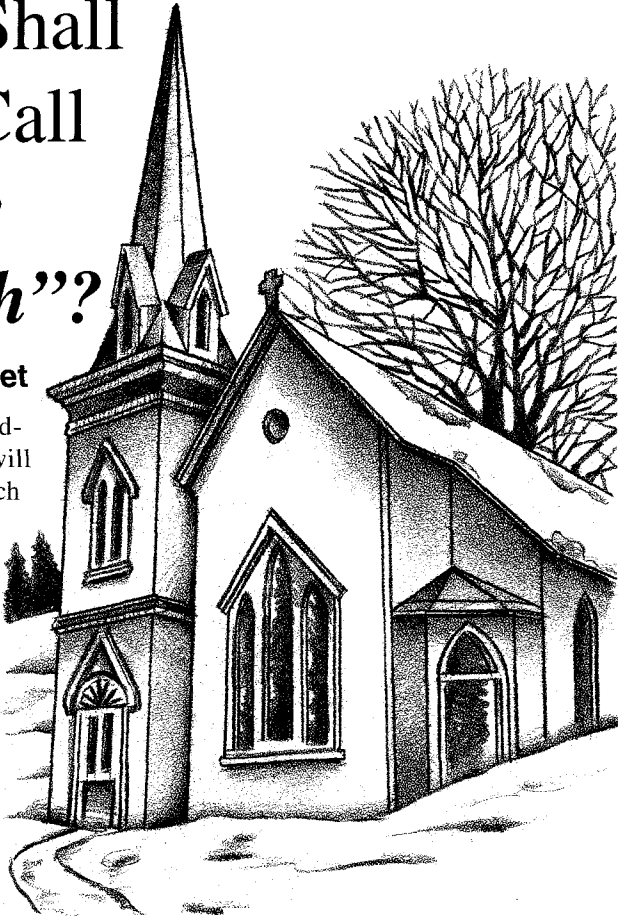
So to those who might read this little article who have drifted away — I plead with you — **come back Home** — *come back to Jesus Christ and His church* — **come back and know the preciousness of “the tie that binds” together the hearts of God’s people.** Please read Luke 15:11-32. †

Maxie B. Boren serves as the preacher for the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Bedford, Texas, USA.

# What Shall We Call “*The* Church”?

David Tarbet

A careful reading of the Bible will show that the church Jesus established did not have a name, at least not in the sense we are accustomed to think about church names — denominational names, separating believers into various groups. Early Christians, however, did have some descriptive phrases for themselves. When they thought of *the plan of the Father to reveal His wisdom*, they described it as **the church of God** (Ephesians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 1:2). When they thought of themselves as believers in *Christ, who is the way*



to the Father, they referred to themselves as **the Way** (John 14:6; Acts 9:2). When they considered how *Jesus purchased the church with His blood*, they called themselves **churches of Christ** (Acts 20:28; Romans 16:16). When writing to *Christians in a specific city*, they

## THE CHURCH

wrote to **the church of the Thesalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ** (2 Thessalonians 1:1). When they wanted to emphasize the *church's relationship to God*, they spoke of it as **the church of the living God** (1 Timothy 3:15). If early Christians referred to the church in these ways, it is right for us to do the same today.

There is no "patented" name for God's church. But whatever we call it, we ought to use phrases which speak of the church's relationship to God or Jesus Christ. It is not appropriate to refer to the church with man-made names which divide believers into different sects. We should drop all divisive names, such as Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc., and in the interest of doing things the Bible way, use Bible phrases to describe the Bible church. Martin Luther had the right idea:

"I pray you leave my name alone and call not yourselves Lutherans but Christians... How does it befit me, a miserable bag of dust and ashes, to give my name to the children of Christ? Cease, my dear friends, to cling to these party names and

distinctions; away with them all; let us call ourselves only Christians after Him from whom our teaching comes."

There is nothing more worthy of praise than the name of Jesus Christ. If the congregation where you worship wears His name, it should never be ashamed, but glorify God in this name (1 Peter 4:16).✠

**David Tarbet preaches for the White Rock congregation in Dallas, Texas, USA.**

### "I Have Found the Way to Heaven"

Long I walked the ways of mortals  
Seeking Heaven's golden strand  
But I never found its portals  
Till I found the Lord's command.

In His everlasting kindness  
God restored my sight for aye  
When His Word removed the blindness  
That was leading me astray.

By the precious gospel story  
Light Divine revealed the way  
To that everlasting glory  
In the land of endless day.

In that word Divinely given  
To instruct the soul aright  
I have found the way to Heaven  
And I'm walking in the light.

- Harry Prestley

# Terms For Elders

Jimmy Jividen

***“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want”*** (Psalm 23:1). Our Lord leads His sheep, Himself, beside the still waters of life and in the abundance of green pastures, through His providential care and by the guidance of His written word.

But, knowing that the sheep of His fold need, also, physical care and direct guidance, He has appointed human shepherds to be His hands and feet and eyes — and, yes, His heart. With what awe should elders in the Lord’s church shepherd God’s people!

Three terms in the New Testament are used to refer to the shepherd leaders of the congregation. These terms are used together in Acts. Paul called the **elders** of the church together (Acts 20:7). Part of his exhortation to them was:

*“Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to **shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood”* (Acts 20:28).

- \* An **overseer** (bishop) is one who watches over our souls.
- \* An **elder** (presbyter) is one whose age, wisdom, and experience qualify him to lead.
- \* A **shepherd** (pastor) is one who leads, feeds, and protects those under his charge.

There is more involved in being a shepherd leader of the congregation than:

- receiving an honorary title
- being a board member to make corporate decisions
- being a boss to tell people what to do.

Elders are the spiritual leaders of God’s people and are worthy of great respect. Paul urged the church to *“...appreciate those who diligently labor among you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work”* (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13). †

**Jimmy Jividen is a writer and preacher working with the Oldham Lane Church of Christ in Abilene, Texas, USA.**

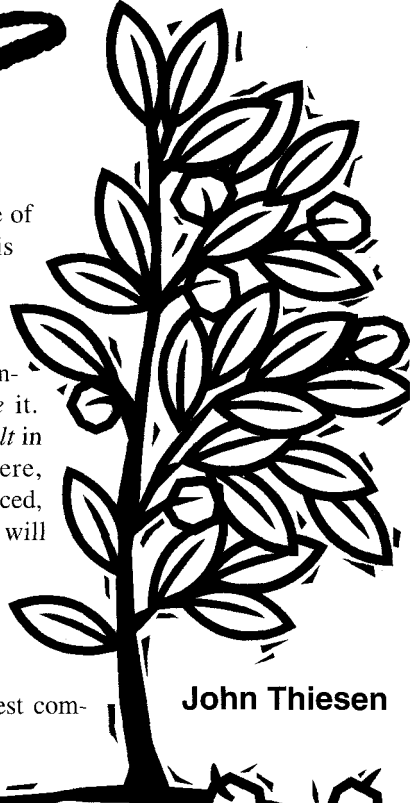
# What Makes The Church Grow?

What brings about the happy state of a growing, thriving church? There is no deep, mysterious secret involved. God has told us repeatedly in His Word the ingredients that will ensure growth. Certain spiritual laws and principles of life *automatically produce* it. Failure to observe these laws *will result* in a stagnant or declining church. Here, below, is a list of things that, if practiced, will guarantee spiritual progress and will result in more people being added to the Lord.

*Loving God  
And Putting Him First*

Jesus said that the first and greatest commandment is: "*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul,*

John Thiesen





## THE CHURCH

*and with all thy mind*" (Matthew 22:37,38). If we love God with our whole being, we will automatically put Him and His kingdom first in our lives, fulfilling Jesus' words to "*seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness*" (Matthew 6:33).

If every member loved God supremely and put Him first, the growth results would be immediate and dramatic in our assemblies. Instantly, attendance would double on Sunday and Wednesday nights. People who previously put other things before the Lord and His church during those times would now be attending. They would also be praying more, studying the Bible more, and giving more. Therefore, elders and preachers should concentrate their efforts on building greater love for God in the membership. It will pay off in personal and congregational growth.

### *Loving One Another*

Jesus said that the second great commandment after loving God with all our heart, and which He said is like it, is: "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*" (Matthew 22:39). When brothers and sisters in Christ love one another as the family of God, Jesus said that a tremendous impression is made on those outside Christ who are observing this love. He said, "*By this*

*shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another*" (John 13:35). This has the power to attract some of them to come to the Lord. Jesus said, "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good words, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*" (Matthew 5:16). Meanwhile, the congregation is also made to grow spiritually because their brotherly love causes them to be patient, merciful, tenderly forgiving of one another, and careful to cause no offense to any member, so that the number of people falling away from the Lord is greatly reduced. The same love inspires members to visit the sick and comfort the bereaved. This atmosphere of care "*maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love*" (Ephesians 4:16).

### *Evangelism and Prayer*

If we add an active program of personal and public evangelism to these elements of love for God and for one another, and pray earnestly that God will bless our efforts, we will have a winning combination for growth. In fact, there is nothing in this world powerful enough to stop us from growing. †

**John Thiesen divides his time between mission efforts in Malawi and preaching for the church of Christ in Buffalo, Missouri, USA.**

## Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

## Matthew 7:21

Though all 'religious' people will expect to be accepted and approved by God in the day of judgment, Jesus says that some will be mistaken and disappointed.

**Luke**  
6:46: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord' and do not do the things which I say?" – a parallel verse which shows that 'calling on the name of the Lord' definitely involves more than saying the words.

***Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord", shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.***

The 'kingdom of heaven' is one of the descriptive expressions used to identify God's family. In Matthew 16:18,19, 'church' and 'kingdom' are used interchangeably.

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3) "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). We must desire always to do the will of God, if we hope to enter the kingdom of heaven.

'Does' is an action word, not an attitude of mind or heart. Whatever God asks of us, we must be willing to 'do' if we are to please Him. James 2:14-20 and 1 John 5:2 show that we must DO, OBEY, KEEP...

# TO WORSHIP OR NOT TO WORSHIP - THAT IS THE ANSWER!

Jerry Jenkins

In a recent edition of *U.S. News and World Report* there is an article entitled, "CAN CHURCHES CURE AMERICA'S ILLS?" Reference is made to Mississippi's governor, Kirk Fordice, stating, "If each of Mississippi's churches would help just one poor family back on it's feet, welfare could end." This fascinating concept and challenging article was very enlightening, but four side comments were of greater interest to this writer.

**First, there is strong evidence that teens who worship regularly will be less likely to do drugs.** The article stated: "The two most reliable predictors of teenage drug avoidance: optimism about the future and *regular church attendance*."

**Second, "Faith is essential to preventing relapse into criminal behavior."** Federal prisoners who receive spiritual leadership training were 11 percent less likely to be rearrested after 14 years. Duke University Medical Center found over 30 studies "that show a correlation between *religious participa-*

*tion* and avoidance of crime and substance abuse."

**Third, it is important to be involved in the church to keep the family together.** Surveys show that "the divorce rate for *regular churchgoers* is 18 percent; for those who attend services less than once a year 34 percent." On a personal note, it has been this writer's experience of more than 40 years that couples who pray together do not seek divorce.

**Fourth, it is healthier to attend.** "*Frequent churchgoers* are about 50 percent less likely to report psychological problems and 71 percent less likely to be alcoholics."

The greatest reason to worship is that **God knew the value of individuals and families attending services to worship Him.** He knew long before researchers and psychologists that peoples' lives are enriched by worship. For this reason, He exhorted us not to forsake the assembly (Hebrews 10:25). †

**Jerry Jenkins is the preacher for the Roebuck Parkway congregation in Birmingham, Alabama, USA.**

# Participation in Worship

Clarence DeLoach

Christians are living stones built upon one another to form the body of Christ (1 Peter 2:5; 1 Corinthians 12). We can worship God anywhere; however, worship in privacy will not substitute for the assembling of God's people together to "*stimulate one another to love and good works*" (Hebrews 10:24).

We cannot survive by ourselves and on our own. God knew this and provided for us the assembly where we can participate one with another as living stones building up the habitation of the living God.

In the assembly of the redeemed, there is the fellowship, affirmation, and stimulation we need to survive in this world. As "*living stones*" built upon one another, cemented, glued, and tied by a common bond in the presence of God, we are equipped to live and serve in this present world.

To forsake the assembly means sure spiritual death. An old preacher once visited a man who wasn't attending faithfully. It was a cold winter day, so they sat by the fireplace and warmed themselves as they talked. The preacher said, "My friend, I don't see you at worship on the Lord's Day. You seem to come

only when it's convenient or only when you feel like you need to come. You miss so very often — I wish you'd come all the time." The man just didn't seem to get the message, so the old preacher said, "Let me show you something." He took the tongs from beside the fireplace, pulled open the screen, and began to separate all the coals so that none of them were touching each other. In a matter of minutes, the blazing coals had all died out. "My friend," he said, "that's what's happening in your life. As soon as you isolate yourself, the fire goes out."

Has your fire gone out? It will if you refrain from the assembly. Living stones are built upon one another as each stone is built upon Christ, our foundation. As embers, we must touch each other to keep on burning.

The forces of evil are too powerful, disheartening, and deceitful for the Christian to battle alone. We need spiritual energy, emotional encouragement, and constant motivation as we face the opposition of the world system. †

**Clarence DeLoach preaches for the Walnut Street Church of Christ in Dickson, Tennessee, USA.**

# Simply Singing

Jack W. Carter



Christians are enjoined to sing as a form of worship. I enjoy singing praises to God, and I try very hard to concentrate on the words I express while singing. I do this whether in a kind of corporate worship or when I am alone.

Of late, so much has been said about singing as a form of worship. "Our song services are dead!" "We need to put more life into our singing." These and so many other indictments have surfaced, charging that something must be done. As a result, many innovative ideas have been initiated.

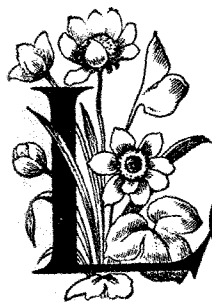
I guess I never have felt that my singing was a matter for anyone other than God to judge. In fact, I guess it bothers me a little when someone other than God feels justified in casually measuring the sincerity of another by their outward appearance while they worship.

In his **Evolution of Church Music**, page 42, Frank Landon Humphreys states, "One of the fea-

tures which distinguishes the Christian religion from almost all others is its quietness; it aims to repress outward signs of inward feeling. Savage instinct, and the religion of Greece also, had employed the rhythmic dance and all kinds of gesticulatory motions to express the inner feelings . . . The early Christians discouraged all signs of excitement, and from the beginning, in the music they used, reproduced the spirit of their religion — an inward quietude. All the music employed in their early services was vocal."

I am convicted to worship the Father in quiet reverence. I am enjoined to simply sing, and in the simplicity of singing I not only adhere precisely to Divine direction, I feel that I also worship my God as enthusiastically and as meaningfully as anyone else on this earth. †

**Jack W. Carter works with the church of Christ in Castle Rock, Colorado, USA.**



# Love: The Key To Growth Today

**Clayton Pepper**

“No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care,” is a statement that will always be true. People are drawn to people who care about them. They are drawn to organizations where they find a caring fellowship, though sometimes they may be with the wrong kind of people and in the wrong places.

If the Lord’s church, anywhere in the world, attracts and holds people it will be because it is a loving church. I believe that often those who occupy the back seats in the assembly are those who do not have many close friends in the church. They may represent some of the most lonely members and may be nearest to falling away. One writer reports on a wide-ranging study in which he interviewed members who had recently dropped out of the assembly. The majority said they left the church because they did not feel needed, wanted or loved. Christians need, first and foremost, to be loved by preachers and leaders. Those in leadership roles should demonstrate the beauty and strength of love. The members will learn to love each other as they should when they receive love as they should.

Consider the following statements:

- ✿ *“Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love ...”*  
(Romans 12:10).
- ✿ *“Let brotherly love continue”* (Hebrews 13:1).
- ✿ *“And above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins”* (1 Peter 4:8).
- ✿ *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another”* (1 John 4: 11).

## CHURCH GROWTH

- ✿ "...with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2).
- ✿ "And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more..." (Philippians 1:9).
- ✿ "That their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love..." (Colossians 2:2).
- ✿ "And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another..." (1 Thessalonians 3:12).

Love means that we do things for those who have special needs. Think of the acts of love that we are to perform:

- \* Help lift or bear burdens. "*Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*" (Galatians 6:2).
- \* Pray for each other. "*Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another*" (James 5:16).
- \* Be helpful to each other. "*Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms*" (James 5:13).
- \* Visit and personally encourage. "*Therefore comfort each other and edify one another...*" (Thessalonians 5:11).
- \* Invite people into your home. "*Be hospitable to one another without grumbling*" (1 Peter 4:9).
- \* Visit the sick and pray for them. Jesus said, "*...I was sick and you visited Me...*" (Matthew 25:36). The sick may call for Christians to come pray for them. James mentions the elders: "*Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord*" (James 5:14). (The healing that James speaks about is thought to be miraculous, but since the end of the first century miraculous age, God still hears and answers prayers through His providential care.
- \* Restore the erring. "*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted*" (Galatians 6:1).
- \* Provide food, clothing and shelter. Jesus in the judgment scene said, "*For I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me...*" (Matthew 25:35,36).

## CHURCH GROWTH

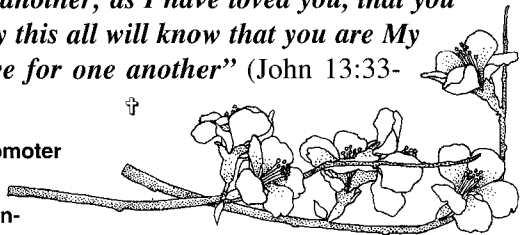
- \* Visit those in prison. *"...I was in prison and you came to Me"* (Matthew 25:36).
- \* Encourage Christians in good works. *"And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works"* (Hebrews 10:24).
- \* Visit those who neglect their salvation. *"How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation...?"* (Hebrews 2:3).
- \* Visit to win the lost souls. *"...Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mark 16:15).
- \* Visit to invite people to church services. *"Then the master said to the servant, 'Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled'"* (Luke 14:23).
- \* Elders must shepherd God's flock. *"Therefore take heed to your selves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood"* (Acts 20:28).

Love brings warm handshakes, smiles, people who listen, statements of love and appreciation, welcomed visitors, provision of meals during illnesses, transportation to church services, help for family members who are in trouble, sharing of vegetables from the garden, baking a pie for a neighbor, helping care for the sick, etc. With all of these benefits, it is easy to see that love enables the Lord's church to truly be as a light of a city that is set on a hill that cannot be hidden (Matthew 5:14).

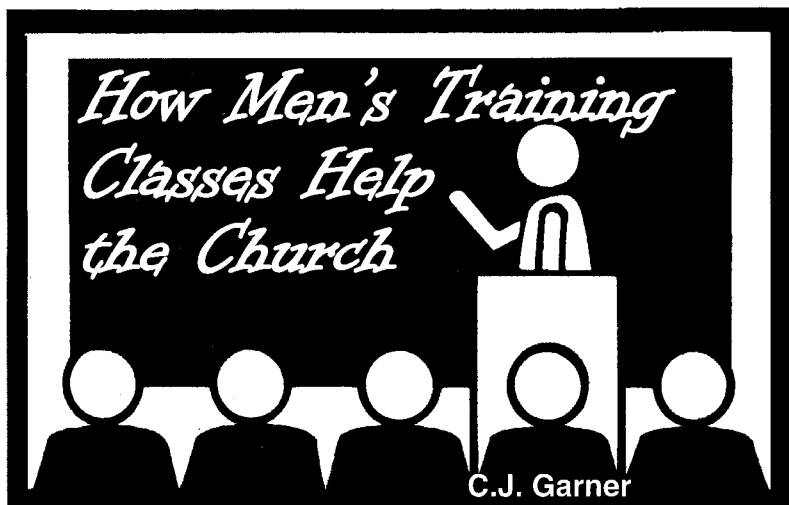
In anticipating His death and ultimate physical departure from His disciples, Jesus spoke from the depth of His heart when He said:

***"Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another"*** (John 13:33-35).

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







It was discovered, during my early ministry, that very few men were able to take a part in the public worship. I learned this while preaching for a comparatively new congregation, composed of working young people. Because of lack of training of the majority, the same few men were called on repeatedly. The desire to remedy this became the cause of a new class, for instruction in taking part in the public worship. Thus a "Mens' Training Class" was begun, meeting on Monday nights, since not many other activities took place at that time.

The first rule of this class was that no matter what one was called on to do, he was to make the effort. The items to be practiced were: reading the Scriptures, leading pub-

lic prayer, leading singing, making announcements, and speaking in public.

The group was told that a person could tell anything he really knew in a public speech. Each member of the class was instructed to give a speech in that first class telling: place and time of birth, former home, place and time of baptism, by whom baptized and what school attended. This was done while standing before the class.

Next, each man was to try to lead one verse of a song. All were to participate in a prayer, each one, in turn, leading a sentence prayer, and then while standing before the class to read not less than five verses of Scripture.

The classes were limited to 15 or 20 persons. Our planned pro-

## CHURCH GROWTH

gram was followed for a few weeks. Sometimes the periods of training would last an hour and a half. But since each person was actively doing his part, there was no time to be bored. Each member was asked to make a one-minute speech, subject of his own choosing. At the conclusion, various members offered constructive and helpful criticisms of each speech.

After about three month's training, an announcement was made to the congregation that these men would be taking a public part in the mid-week service. At first, only volunteers participated. Later, the more timid ones were assigned their parts in the service.

Soon, men who had never before had a part in the Lord's Day worship were reading the Scriptures, leading prayer, and making announcements at both the Sunday morning and Sunday evening services.

In the years since, men from these classes have become Bible class teachers, elders, and Gospel preachers, some of whom are outstanding in the brotherhood.

Some who became elders in the churches were very successful and dedicated men. Other men of this group kept their jobs and began taking monthly appointments preaching and helping in the work and worship of small congregations in the surrounding area.

We are not suggesting a Mens' Training Class for the purpose of producing preachers (however, such courses are also needed), but rather to add to the interest, enthusiasm and growth of the members of the local congregation. If preachers come as a by-product, well and good — and they will. However, the great achievement in having these training classes is to bring out the underdeveloped talent of the men of the local church. Leaders, and leadership, in the work of the congregation will be enhanced, and the congregation will be strengthened. †

**C.J. Garner, minister in the Lord's church for more than 60 years, is semi-retired and works as assistant minister with the Madison Church of Christ in Madison, Tennessee, USA.**

*Who?  
ME?*

*When the church seems dead and the work is slow...  
When the attendance is off and the songs too low,  
When the prayers of the saints lack fervor and power...  
When the preacher's sermons seem stale and sour,  
Why not pause with self-examining eye, and ask...  
"Lord, is it I?"*



# TRAINING TO TEACH

Jane McWhorter

## How Should the Church Raise Money?

The Christians of the first century were very sympathetic to the needs of others. Many of the early converts were from other locations (Acts 2:9-11). When a need arose among these people, those who had possessions sold them and shared with those who had nothing. Their generosity and concern were so great that "... *neither was there any among them that lacked*" (Acts 4:34,35).

As time went by, the saints in Jerusalem were again in need of financial aid. Paul instructed the church at Corinth to lay by for this purpose on the first day of the week. "*Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come*" (1 Corinthians 16:1,2). Evidently the first day of the week was a logical time for the collection of money since the disciples met for worship on that day.

We find examples of individuals giving to another individual whenever a need presented itself. This is the tenor of Matthew 25:31-46. The

## TRAINING TO TEACH

Samaritan helped his fellowman when the injured man was found (Luke 10:29-37). Dorcas saw those about her in need of clothes and busied herself with sewing (Acts 9:36-39).

The Scriptures give two kinds of examples for giving. An individual has the responsibility to help whenever he sees someone in need and can handle the situation. The Corinthian letter gives the example of the church's having some sort of general fund or treasury. The Christians were to "*lay by in store*" as God had prospered them.

If we are to follow the New Testament pattern, there is only one way that a congregation may receive its funds. There is NO authorization for selling any commodity. A freewill offering is the only scriptural example.

Aside from lack of authorization for cake sales, bazaars, car washes, yard sales, and other money-raising schemes, common sense will tell an honest seeker that the buyer of such commodities receives the value of his money. He gains nothing spiritually. The donor of a freewill offering, on the other hand, receives a spiritual remuneration. We should not go beyond God's plan.

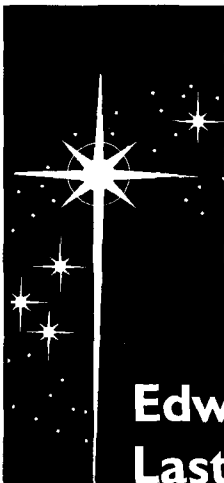
(To make a chain reference on this subject, write the word GIVING in the front of your Bible. Under that word list the first scripture reference. In the margin of that verse list the second reference and continue until all have been marked: Acts 2:9-11; Acts 4:34,35; 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:29-37; Acts 9:36-39). †

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

---

### A Check-up on Myself

- ❖ How many times a day do I pray?
- ❖ What percentage of my family income is given to the Lord?
- ❖ How many hours (or minutes) per week do I spend studying the Bible?
- ❖ How many persons am I NOW trying to win to Christ?
- ❖ How many negligent members of this congregation have I won back?
- ❖ How many midweek services did I deliberately miss last year?
- ❖ How many times did I choose to miss the Lord's Supper last year?
- ❖ What percentage of the 52 Sunday nights did I miss last year?
- ❖ Do I ever let unimportant things prevent me from attending services?
- ❖ Just what do Christ and His church mean to me?



**T**he last person to be burnt alive in England for his religious beliefs died three hundred and eighty nine years ago. Edward Wightman was burnt alive on April 11, 1612. His crime? Practicing New Testament Christianity. The Wightman family had been Christians for many generations, going back to the time of the Tyndales and possibly earlier. These Christians proclaimed the true Gospel throughout Europe and England, and often died cruel deaths for their efforts. First they were persecuted by the

# Edward Wightman: Last Person to be Martyred In England

Keith Sisman

Catholics, then later by Protestants, both Calvinists and Lutherans, and in England by the Anglicans.

So what did Wightman teach that was so offensive? He taught that *'Original Sin' was not found in the Bible*, and that *all men need to obey the Gospel*. Rejecting both Armenianism and Calvinism, and proclaiming free will, *he and his brethren baptized believers upon confession, by immersion, for the remission of sins, whereby the candidate was added to the one and only true church*. They proclaimed rightly against the apostasies in both the Protestant and Catholic churches. They taught that *the Bible was all-sufficient*. They taught that *all Christians were ministers and priests* and that *each congregation was autonomous, being ruled by a plurality of elders*.

Wightman was caught preaching and baptizing in Burton-upon-Trent. He was arrested by the constabulary and charged on December 14, 1611. He appeared before the bishop of Coventry and Litchfield. He refused to recant and was found guilty. He was burnt at Litchfield on April 11, 1612, two hundred and eleven years after William Sawtre was burnt in 1401.

## CHURCH HISTORY

Sawtre (or Santree), a baptized believer, served first as a married priest in the town of Lynn (now King's Lynn), Norfolk but later of St. Osyth, London. He was burned alive on March 2, 1401, condemned by the Act for the Burning of Heretics, *De Comburendo Hæretico*, which was passed by the king but not by Parliament! Whilst the commons and several of the nobility objected to this law (in fact the commons rejected it altogether), it was approved by the bishops and abbots (who had proposed the law), so the king gave his assent. This new cruel law was passed eight days after the burning of Sawtre! It was finally repealed in 1732.

Wightman's son continued in the faith, and later his grandson also. In the 1600s and 1700s, churches of Christ, as dissenters from the main body of the Anglican church, were often grouped by outsiders with the various Baptist and anabaptist fellowships. With the greater divergence between doctrines and the influence of other dissenters, some of these congregations departed from the faith, becoming Calvinistic Baptists who flourished in ever-growing numbers. During the late 1700s, this onslaught of Calvinism within the various British independent and organized fellowships brought about a four-way separation of main groups with differing doctrines: the Baptists (Armenian and Calvinist), the continental Anabaptists, and churches of Christ. These latter churches continued until they found the American Restoration Movement in the 1800s, when both recognized each other as faithful brethren.

The Catholic, Protestant and Anglican churches today fail to recognize and apologize for the immense cruelty shown towards these faithful men and women of God over many hundreds of years. Many innocent people died at the hands of these apostate churches. The very first crusades, under the banner of 'The Holy Inquisition', took place in Europe, with the purpose of obliterating those who objected to Catholicism! Today there are some who deny the holocaust in Germany. Please remember that the start of the holocaust in the 1930s is now one-quarter of the time since the true church was legalized in 1689. *The holocaust of Christians prior to that legalization, is now forgotten. No one remembers those souls who died, or blames the perpetrators of the crimes. Furthermore there are men within the Lord's church today who even advocate fellowship with these churches that once killed our brethren because of their commitment to the truth!* †

**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.**

# Evangelism

David Marube

In Jeremiah 20:9 we read, *“Then I said, ‘I will not make mention of Him, nor speak anymore in His name.’ But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not.”*

When our Lord died on the cross, He provided a way of salvation for all mankind. However, people of the world will remain in darkness unless we who are Christians convey this message of the cross, the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, to them.

God uses human beings to tell the message of salvation. As Paul wrote, *“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?”* (Romans 10:14).

The reason we have not evangelized the world effectively is because, unlike Jeremiah, we are willing to hold inside ourselves God’s Word, the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, we simply are willing to keep quiet!

## **We need to realize that:**

- ★ The world is lost.
- ★ What the lost world needs is the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ★ We are the ones to proclaim the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the lost world.
- ★ We are also lost unless we proclaim the saving Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to the lost world.

May the Lord help us to have a holy passion for lost souls, to proclaim His saving Gospel to every person we are able to reach, and may we never be willing to keep quiet! †

**David Marube is a preacher of the Gospel in Kisii, Kenya, East Africa.**



# The Church

## and the World

Ardron Hinton

A statement in Romans 1:22 sums up the root cause of the moral and ethical decline in our world: "*Professing to be wise, they became fools.*" A majority of the people living in the world at this time would seem to be among the guilty regarding this accusation. What we want to notice are some of the dangers which *human conceit* and *claim to wisdom* have caused.

**1. Under a banner labeled "freedom" numerous groups have pushed laws and rules that are rapidly eroding genuine freedom.** The family, the church, educational entities, and traditional standards are all taking blow after blow. National organizations actually fight against parental rights and against restrictions on freedom of access regarding libraries, the internet, etc. These same people then turn in the opposite direction and seek to

restrict, even silence, any who do not share their viewpoints. Churches are far more vulnerable today than most people realize. The same regulations of government bureaucracies or rulings by courts that have proved to be a threat to many organizations and businesses are at the door of the church building also. Even meritless lawsuits could ruin a congregation financially.

**2. Under a banner labeled "progress" we are being dragged into the same excesses of self-indulgence, sexual licentiousness, and senseless violence that destroyed other nations in the past.** Biblical morality may be out of style to this generation, but it is still the only protection we have for avoiding the total ruin produced by these "politically correct" notions of our day. And the astounding expansion of the communication industries which has fueled this



“progress” creates the most dangerous social climate the world has ever faced.

3. Under a banner labeled “scholarly wisdom” we see the role of God in human affairs being either ignored or completely denied in educational circles. Humanism, with its claim to superior wisdom and knowledge, holds onto power in political, educational and social realms, even as evidence mounts that its ideas are more damaging than helpful. Throughout human history, we see how human

conceit and vanity led to the pursuit of policies and practices that undermined the social or political structure of the time *until it collapsed*. History is repeating itself under our very eyes.

**How shall we respond?** Not with apathy but with resolute determination and commitment to righteousness. Not with blindness to the facts but with a dedication to truth and to truth-seeking. †

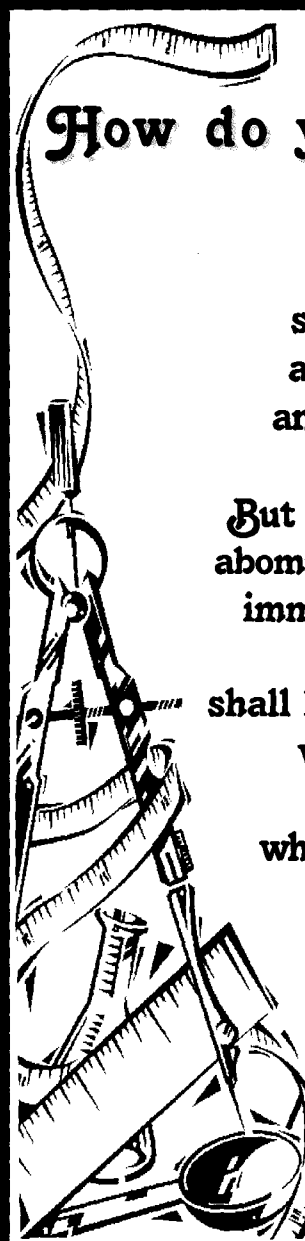
Ardron Hinton lives in Blair, Oklahoma, USA, and is the editor of *Mountain Echos*.

*“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.*

*“For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.*

*“For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools”*

*(Romans 18:22).*



# How do you measure up?

**He who overcomes  
shall inherit all things,  
and I will be his God  
and he shall be My son.**

**But the cowardly, unbelieving,  
abominable, murderers, sexually  
immoral, sorcerers, idolaters,  
and all liars  
shall have their part in the lake  
which burns with fire  
and brimstone,  
which is the second death.**

**Revelation 21:7,8**

# Not Who But What?

Frank Chesser

*"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil"* (Exodus 23:2). Thus did God inform man that it is not **who** is right, but **what** is right that counts. The *crowd* does not make a thing either *right* or *wrong*. If a particular thing is wrong, it is still wrong even if *everybody* does it. If it is right it is still right even if *nobody* does it.

Cain and Abel offered sacrifices in worship to God (Genesis 4). God accepted Abel's offering, but rejected Cain's. Was Cain wrong because of *who* he was? Was Abel right because of *who* he was? No. Abel offered his sacrifice "*by faith*" (Hebrews 11:4). Faith comes by hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17). Thus, Abel took God at His word and did what He said. Abel was right because of *what* he did, not because of *who* he was.

When God destroyed the world with the universal flood, only Noah and his family were saved (Genesis 6). Was Noah right because of *who* he was or because he and his family constituted the minority? Was the world wrong because of *who* they were or because they composed the majority? No. Noah was right

because of what he did. "*Thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he*" (Genesis 6:22).

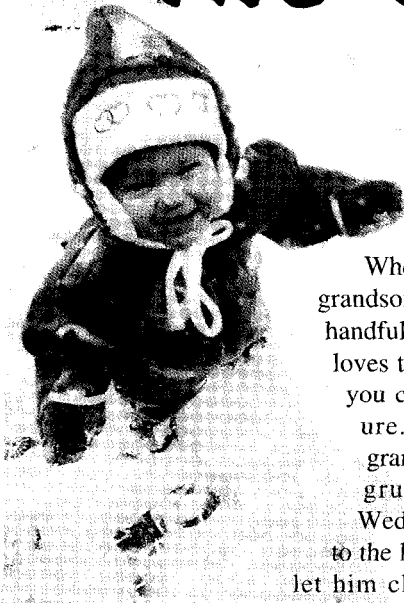
Moses commissioned twelve men to spy out the land of Canaan (Numbers 13). Upon their return, a conflict arose between them, arraying ten against two. The ten were soon joined by the entire nation of Israel. Who was right? What difference does it make **who** was right? It is **what** is right that counts. Joshua and Caleb, the two faithful spies, were able to enter Canaan, not because of *who* they were, but **because they believed and obeyed God**.

When a particular doctrinal position is mentioned, some begin looking around in order to ascertain who or how many believe it. They count hands. This is folly. **Only divine revelation can establish right and wrong, truth and error**. Let us cease quoting preachers, professors, and progenitors, and leave legislative matters to God. †

**Frank Chesser is a gospel preacher working with the Panama Street Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama, USA.**

# The Upward Calling

Mike Hinton



Where do toddlers get all that energy? My grandson, Adam, is sixteen months old and a handful. He's firmly into that stage where he loves to climb, but not yet to the stage where you can watch him do it without heart failure. Since I am a dutifully indulgent grandfather, he knows that if he points and grunts long enough on Sundays and Wednesday nights that I will go with him to the long staircase behind the baptistry and let him climb to the top, over and over. Of course that means that my tired old body must make the climb each time right behind him lest he miss a step and fall. I've never been able to stay with it long enough that he didn't want to go one more time.

It's such a pleasure to watch a child Adam's age. They're filled with the joy of living. Every experience is new and exciting, and each is a door to information that is soaked up like rain on parched soil. Every challenge is met with exuberance, and each small victory is summarily celebrated.

And then, somewhere along the way, we lose those feelings. Time and tragedy steal from us that overpowering optimism with which we were born and leave us with doubt, fear, and sometimes despair. We become afraid of the uphill climb, and instead look for a plateau where we can feel comfortable.

How often have we seen a spiritual "babe in Christ" exhibit that same sense of thrill at the new challenges of Christian servitude. Perhaps you can remember the optimism that comes with the realization that you now have a

## DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

clean slate before God! The burden of sin has been lifted and every new experience is a fresh challenge that will teach us lessons to aid our spiritual growth. We race toward that "upward call" that Paul speaks of in Philippians 3:14. We are unafraid of falling because we know that a loving hand is always undergirding us, ready to catch us if we stumble.

And then somewhere along the way we lose that trust. Apathy and neglect of duty promote suffocation of the spiritual sense of optimism we gained at the new birth. We begin to fear each new challenge as a threat to our comfort zone, and we look for smooth, level planes on which to rest. The only problem is that there are **no spiritual plateaus**. There are only gradual slopes that lull us into a false sense of security while we slowly gain momentum in a downhill slide.

For the servant of God there can be no complacency. Our tasks are filled with urgency for there are thousands dying each day, alienated from Christ. Paul urges us to be *transformed by the renewing of our minds* (Romans 12:2), finding

anew each day that bulletproof state of mind which will let us run headlong toward the battle lines, confident that whatever happens, the strong hand of the Lord will "*deliver us from every evil work and preserve us for his heavenly kingdom*" (2 Timothy 4: 18).

May we all daily seek to be more like those precious toddlers who so aptly express the joy of living that each child of God should feel in his everyday of life. †

**Mike Hinton is a Christian writer and teacher living in Hobart, Oklahoma, USA.**

### Jesus

Whatever the **question**,

He is the **Answer** (John 14:6).

Whatever the **problem**,

He is the **Solution** (Matthew 11:28,29).

Whatever the **hurt**,

He is the **Healer** (Luke 4:18).

Whatever the **bondage**,

He is the **Liberator** (John 8:32).

Whatever the **burden**,

He is the **Overcomer** (John 16:33).

Whatever the **need**,

He is the **Supplier** (Matthew &:7,8).

Whatever the **sin**,

He is the **Forgiver** (Hebrews 10:12-17).

— Author Unknown

# Christians Need To Grow

Hans J. Dederscheck

The New Testament emphasizes urgently the spiritual growth of God's children. Peter insists on growing up into salvation (1 Peter 2:2 NIV). Christians have to grow in God's grace and knowledge (2 Peter 3:18).

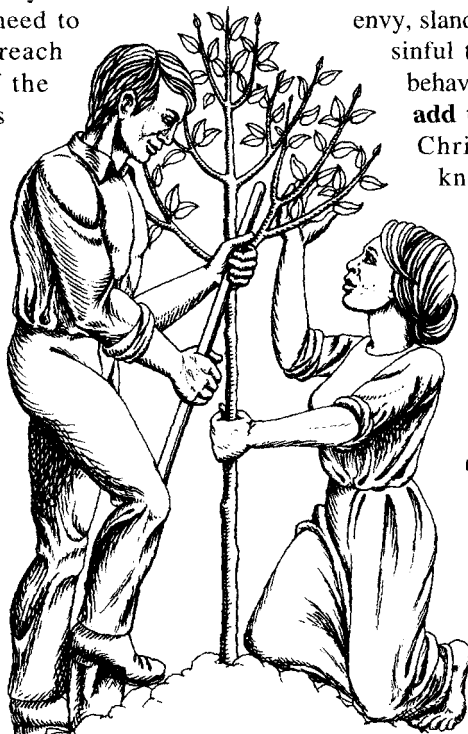
Growing is a natural thing in creation. Everything grows and must reach maturity. Christians likewise need to grow till they reach the fullness of the stature of Jesus Christ. We all understand that a Christian should become more beautiful with the passing of the years. Paul said that "...the inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Corinthians 4:16).

There is no such thing as an *optional* growing of Christians.

Without spiritual growth, Christians would remain as spiritual babies and would die. Paul refers to that growth when he says: "*if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old has gone, the new has come*" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

In the process of their growth, Christians need to **rid themselves** of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy, slander and all these sinful traits of fleshly behavior. They must **add** to their faith in Christ, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love (2 Peter 1:5-7).

People grow toward Christ as they **drink abundantly** of the spiritual milk of the Scriptures (2 Peter 2:2). The word of God has to be in



## DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

Christians, richly (Colossians 3:16). The Bible should be studied, if possible, daily. We have to show an earnest effort to learn the will of God. Paul told Timothy to be approved to God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, handling correctly the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

**True worship** to God builds up the inner person. Singing, praying, partaking the Lord's Supper, giving and listening to God's word lifts up our souls. When we study the Scriptures we learn more how we can serve Him.

As we grow in our love toward the Lord, we learn to **give** with generosity. On the other hand, not giving freely shows that we are not growing spiritually.

We must also **encourage** each other and to **be faithful** to the services and work of the church (Hebrews 10:25). When we fail to meet with Christians to worship God, even though we could have been present, we sin against our God and fellow Christians.

David said: "*My soul thirsts for God, for the living God*" (Psalm 42:2). What about you? Do you hunger and thirst for spiritual food? Solid food, the **serious study** of the Word, is for the mature (Hebrews 5:14).

There are Christians who have been a part of the church for 30 or 40 years but have never taught any

one. This is not pleasing God because He requires us to **bear fruit** (John 15:5).

We need to **do good** to all people, but especially to those who belong to the family of believers (Galatians 6:10). As we do this, we grow and feel satisfaction in our souls.

When children do not grow properly, they certainly cause a great sorrow in the hearts of their parents. God, too, must be unhappy as He sees His children living on and on without showing any kind of growth.

We may check on our own life to see if we are growing as we should. Childish things must be behind us (1 Corinthians 13:11). Others need to see in us spiritual growth and maturity. Our good and honest example is of utmost importance to others. Paul thought he still needed to grow (Philippians 3:12). We must continue growing spiritually as long as we live. When a living thing stops growing, it begins to die. We cannot allow that to happen to our souls.

Each one of us has to make sure we are in Christ, and then we must continue to do everything necessary to go on to maturity in Him. This is our responsibility before God! †

**Hans J. Dederscheck is an evangelist in the country of Austria.**

# Which Is More Important?

David Sain

---

**To help you set and keep your priorities straight, take the following personal inventory.**

---

**1. Which is more important to you?**

- Making sure your dog (or cat) gets fed every day or
- making sure that your child gets daily spiritual nourishment?

**2. Which is more important to you?**

- Watching television or
- taking time for prayer and Bible study every day?

**3. Which is more important to you?**

- Speaking out on current political issues or
- speaking out to help someone understand Bible truth?

**4. Which is more important to you?**

- The time you spend playing tennis (or fishing, hunting, golfing)
- or the time you spend with your children?

**5. Which is more important to you?**

- The time you spend adorning your body or
- the time you spend improving the inner man?

**6. Which is more important to you?**

- What you think of last Sunday's sermon or
- what God thinks of your response to the sermon?



## DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

### 7. Which is more important to you?

- The condition and appearance of your house or
- what goes on inside your house?

### 8. Which is more important to you?

- The preacher speaking to you at the door after worship or
- the preacher speaking to you through the sermon?

### 9. Which is more important to you?

- The temperature in the church building or
- the spiritual temperature of the church which meets in the building?

### 10. Which is more important to you?

- The number of people who show an interest in you or
- the number of people in whom you show an interest?

### 11. Which is more important to you?

- The number of people who speak to you at church assembly or
- the number of people to whom you speak?

### 12. Which is more important to you?

- The appearance of your face and clothes or
- your spiritual image in the eyes of your neighbors?

### 13. Which is more important to you?

- The salary your children make or
- their effectiveness in sharing the Gospel with others ?

### 14. Which is more important to you?

- The money you have accumulated in the stock market or
- the treasure you've laid up in heaven?

### 15. Which is more important to you?

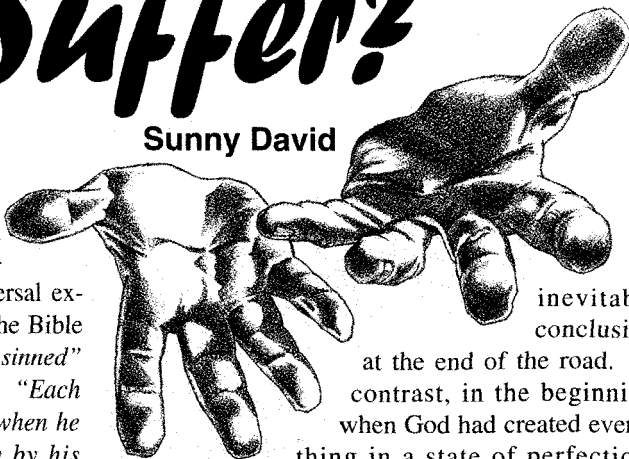
- The approval of God or
- the approval of your boss?

†

David Sain is a Gospel preacher working with the Wood Avenue church in Florence, Alabama, USA.

# Why Do All Suffer?

Sunny David



Just as sin is universal, so is human suffering. Speaking of the universal existence of sin, the Bible says, "All have sinned" (Romans 3:23). "Each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15). So we must admit that all humans are sinners, not because God created sin, or because He forces humans to sin, but simply because mature humans are tempted by their own desires and choose to sin.

## But why do all suffer?

As with sin, God is not the author of human suffering. He did not create man to suffer, and neither does He punish man by sending suffering on him. Built into sin itself are the **innate results** which bring grief, pain, and eventual death. This is not a *punishment*, per se, but an

inevitable conclusion at the end of the road. In contrast, in the beginning when God had created everything in a state of perfection, including humans, man and woman, He said, "It was very good" (Genesis 1:31). Suffering came into existence as a result of man's sin, not as something God had created (Genesis 3).

The ironic thing is that, even though mankind is the cause of his own sufferings, it has always been his tendency to blame God. Even in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, Adam indirectly accused God for his sin and the consequences of that sin by saying, "The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate" (Genesis 3:12). In the same mindset, people tend to ignorantly say today when they suffer in any manner,

“Why did God do this to me?” Or some others say, “It is God’s will”.

No, God did not create man to suffer. It is not *God’s desire* that man suffer in any way. He is not causing man to get ill or old and die. He is not punishing man for his sins. In fact, He has already taken care of that by punishing His own Son, Christ, who through His death became the propitiation for the sins of the world (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10).

But then **why** do all suffer?

Go back to that scene **in the beginning**. Before sin entered the world there was perfection which meant that there was also life, because life is the innate result of perfection. In God is wholeness, goodness, righteousness and perfection — no death at all. This state of man, in perfect accord with God, meant that life permeated the entire creation.

But when man sinned and **broke that life-sustaining tie** between the creation and the Creator, decay, death, and the Second Law of Thermodynamics (the ultimate deterioration of all things) took the place of life. The whole world was cut off from God’s sustaining life and brought under this result of sin — death. Everything began to wear out, to break down, to suffer sickness, aging and eventual death. As sin compounded itself over and over with every human and every passing generation, its con-

sequences have also continued.

Think of all the terrorism, wars, and crimes that cause death and destruction all over the world. Think of all the alcohol and drugs in various forms which bring diseases to people and kill and maim and destroy. Not only is it true that man suffers much on account of **his own wrong doing**, but so often the innocent are also caused to suffer. This is because we all belong to a great human family on earth, and therefore we cannot escape the consequences of good or bad done by others. For instance, who among us invented airplanes, automobiles, telephones, computers, and a number of other things which we use every day and enjoy their benefits in various ways? We also receive the blessings of many of the discoveries and findings of the medical science which others through much labor and pain brought to us. Now when we are willing to enjoy the benefits of the good things done by others, we should also be prepared to suffer the consequences of the bad things done by others. These are two sides of the same coin.

Just as there are joys and pleasures in life, so are there sorrows and pain. The very thing that brings joy and pleasure could also be the cause of pain and suffering. As a matter of fact, every possible pleasure in life carries within itself the very possibility of suffering, sor-

row, and pain.

A friend once told of a tragic incident that took place in his neighborhood. The parents of a twelve year old boy had bought membership for swimming in the local club. This privilege brought the family a great deal of pleasure. But one day their son did not return home from the club because he was drowned while swimming. God wasn't punishing the boy or his parents. Neither did He take the boy away as though He needed him. But the boy died either because he didn't know how to swim properly, or because he had gone into a deeper part of the pool than he should have been in. Perhaps poor judgment had also been involved because he was swimming without the supervision of an adult. But to ask, "Why did God do this?" or to conclude, "It was God's will" would be an unwarranted accusation of God.

Also, there are calamities or disasters which occur due to natural reasons, and since we live on earth, we are affected by them, too. Fires, floods, hurricanes, cyclones, earthquakes and various kinds of accidents cause much destruction and death. Nature works on law, and any imbalance in nature could be the cause of such disasters. Air is good and essential, but too much movement of air can cause hurricanes or cyclones. With fire we cook, but fire can also cause destruction. We can't

live without water, but too much can cause floods. God did not create nature for destruction, just as man did not make airplanes and automobiles for accidents. But at times, things go wrong, resulting in accidents and disasters. God is not responsible for the accident or disaster — it is caused by the law of nature or the breakdown of the original perfect law of nature.

God is not punishing people today by directly sending suffering, pain, sorrow, sickness and death. He is not taking some people away, as some believe, when someone dies. He is, in fact, mindful of even the falling of a sparrow, and is preparing a new place of perfection for His creation.

But God has appointed for all men to die once and then face Him in judgment, to answer for his sins (Hebrews 9:27). It matters not therefore as to when and how a person **dies**, whether because of sickness, old age, accident, or any other reason. What matters is how one had **lived** on earth. As Solomon said, "*Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13,14). †

**Sunny David is editor of *The Bible Teacher*, a preacher of the Gospel, and elder in the church in New Delhi, India.**

# Walking by Faith



## The Power of One Flavil Nichols

During the war between the states, a young woman learned the truth and obeyed the gospel. Her sweetheart, J. H. Halbrook, was a confederate soldier. He was captured by the union army and kept a prisoner in Michigan until the war was over. He was given a ticket to Nashville, Tennessee and \$2.50. From there, he returned to Centerville and found what was left of his home and family. He found his girlfriend and they were married. His wife studied the Bible with him, and he soon became a Christian. He thought the truth was so good and so simple that he began to teach and baptize many of his friends and neighbors. He began to preach, but he recognized his need for more training, so he came to the original Mars Hill Bible School, taught by T. B. Larimore. Upon completing his studies there, instead of going back to Tennessee, they moved farther south, coming into Walker, Marion, Fayette, and Lamar counties in Alabama. One of his many converts was Charley Alexander Wheeler. His wife taught him to read from the Bible. Along with his wife, C. A. Wheeler obeyed the gospel and soon began preaching to others. He started more than 100 congregations and baptized more than 6,000 people.

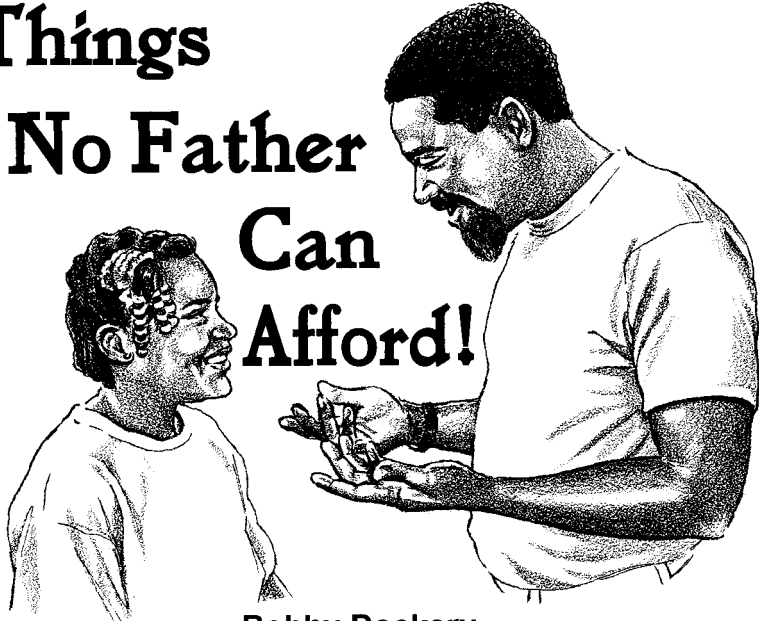
But wait, the story is not ended! One of those 6,000 was my father, the late Gus Nichols! Twelve thousand were baptized under his preaching.

Among those baptized by Gus Nichols, no one knows, nor can know, how many began to preach "*the glorious gospel of Christ*" (2 Corinthians 4:3,4); but I personally know several. I, Flavil Nichols, am ONE whom he baptized and whom he encouraged to preach the truth. And under my preaching, about three thousand have been baptized. A few among them preached the gospel, also!

Only eternity can reveal the total results of the conversion of that one girl nearly one hundred fifty years ago. The results are not yet all in! But this shows that TWENTY ONE THOUSAND people have become Christians through this single thread in the fabric of her influence.

*"Go, and do likewise"* (Luke 10:37). YOU are important, too! Dear reader, if you go to heaven, others probably will be saved by you! *"For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"* (1 Corinthians 7:16). *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven"* (Matthew 5:16). Each ONE is important.

# Things No Father Can Afford!



**Bobby Dockery**

Some things in life cost too much to be worth what we give for them. But, sadly, many fathers — and mothers — are buying them. Such things are not paid for in money! They are bought with pain and heartache and tears. And the day will come when those who purchase these things will bitterly regret the too-high price they have had to pay!

What are some of these things which no father can afford?

**1. No father can afford to build his career at the expense of his family.** It is essential that fathers provide for the physical

needs of their families (1 Timothy 5:8). But too many fathers see this as their only responsibility to their children. They think that if they bring home a paycheck, put food on the table, and shoes on the kids, they have done their duty!

But fathers need to provide so much more than their financial support. They need to provide emotional and psychological support. More than this, they need to provide spiritual and moral support (Ephesians 6:4). They must teach their children spiritual values and school them in the laws of God (Genesis 18:19). Being a “good provider”

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

goes far beyond material needs. No father can afford to stop at financial support alone.

**2. No father can afford to shortchange his children when it comes to his time.** It takes time to be a good father. One of the most basic responsibilities of being a father is just being there...being available to your children...being a part of their lives. There is no way to fulfill the duties of fatherhood in absentia.

Between birth and age 21, the average child will spend 105,000 hours awake. About 10,000 of these hours will be spent in school; 2,100 hours in church and Sunday School; and 92,000 hours in the home. But according to a survey taken a few years ago, the average father spends only about 6 hours a year (about 7 minutes a week) one-on-one with a pre-teenage son! Obviously, some children are being shortchanged. No father who takes his responsibilities seriously can afford to give so little of himself to his children.

**3. No father can afford to gamble with the souls of his chil-**

**dren.** The soul is more valuable than the whole world (Matthew 16:26). Jesus taught that it is a terrible thing to put the soul of a child in jeopardy! *"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to stumble, it is better for him that a heavy millstone be hung around his neck, and that he be drowned in the depth of the sea"* (Matthew 18:6). Tragically, many fathers are gambling with the souls of their children. They are doing so by failing to create a spiritual climate for them in the home...by failing to bring them to church regularly...and by engaging in questionable practices which their children will grow up to imitate! No father can afford to take chances where his children are concerned.

As parents, we all need to consider earnestly these "Things No Father Can Afford." Above all, we need to remember that none of us can afford to ignore or disobey God! *"God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, this will he also reap"* (Galatians 6:7). †

**Bobby Dockery is a writer and preacher in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.**



A parent's life is a child's guidebook.

A child may not inherit his parents' talent but he will absorb their values.

# Do You Want Your Children To Succeed?

Jason Jackson

The importance of family is the topic of many a conversation. Preachers, and not a few politicians, promote it. We are encouraged to have stronger families. We are reminded about the breakdown of the family in our nation. Our grandparents and great-grandparents found it unnecessary to advocate the family in the way we do. They had the luxury of taking it for granted. The institution of the family was not challenged then as it is today.

Direct teaching concerning the home is found in several passages of Scripture: (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Ephesians 5:21-6:8; 1 Timothy 5:8).

Indirect teaching about family is also observable. God's relation to His people is often viewed in family terms. God is Father (Galatians 1:1). Christians are God's children (1 John 3:1-2). They are brothers and sisters (Romans 8:29). Unfaithfulness to God is described as marital infidelity (Isaiah 1:21-23; James 4:4).

The family unit is a fit illustration of our relationship with God. In fact, the purpose of the earthly family is, in the final analysis, *spiritual*.

God, the author of the home, designed the family to facilitate our journey to heaven. Parents are given the responsibility to educate their children for life and eternity.

As parents, we want our children to do their math homework. We expect them to learn their spelling words, their history lesson, and the science project. We want them to succeed and do well. This is admirable. But, parenthood is more than educating our children to be productive and successful citizens.

God has given us a window of opportunity to influence and educate our kids for eternity. Do you read Bible stories to your children? Do you help them with their math assignments? Do you pray with your children? Do you take them to baseball or softball practice? Do you discuss their Bible school lessons with them, and check to see whether or not they did their assignments and memory verses? To which questions can you answer "yes"?

The importance of the family cannot be overrated. R. K. Harrison wrote, "The family has all the potential of being a small colony of



## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

heaven, a mini-communion of saints, a training ground for the Christian's life in the present and in eternity, provided that Christ's teaching, power, and love are known and experienced there."

It is tragic that not all children are taught the Bible. A little boy asked his father, "Dad, I want to learn about God. Don't we have to go to church to do that?" That sad refrain is all too common.

Jesus says, "*Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 19:14). Parents are responsible to teach their children about God and His Son and to take them to Bible school and worship.

How are you managing your window of opportunity? The most effective center for Christian education is still the home. God designed it. We must implement it. His plan is not faulty, though our administration of it sometimes is. You've passed by the billboard

that says, "The family that prays together, stays together." That saying means more than just on Sunday morning during worship. Remember, "*Children are a heritage of the Lord*" (Psalm 127:3), and they will be "successful" in life if we lead them to heaven. †

**Jason Jackson preaches for the East Main Street church in Stockton, California, USA.**

### Hurry the Baby

Hurry the baby as fast as you can,  
Hurry him, worry him, make him a man.  
Off with his baby clothes, get him in pants,  
Feed him on brain foods and make him  
advance.

Hustle him, soon as he's able to walk,  
Into a grammar school; cram him with talk.  
Fill his poor head full of figures and facts,  
Keep on a-jamming them in till it cracks.

Once boys grew up at a rational rate,  
Now we develop a man while we wait,  
Rush him through college, compel him to grab,  
Of every known subject a dip and a dab.

Get him in business and after the cash,  
All by the time he can grow a mustache.  
Let him forget he was ever a boy,  
Make gold his god and its jingle his joy.

Keep him a-hustling and clear out of breath,  
Until he wins — nervous prostration and death.

— Nixon Waterman



## Rain

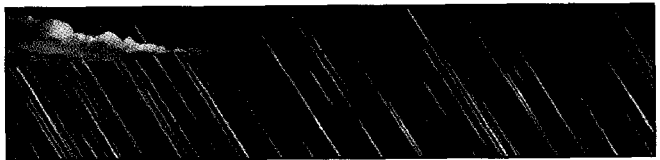
Betty Burton Choate

Oh God, the ground is dry and hard  
For want of rain;  
The heat, the heavy air  
Hold trees and flowers  
In a deadly stillness  
And they wilt,  
Smothering,  
Growing old and feeble  
In their want of rain;  
Even deep-down  
Where tap-roots grow  
Is parched. . . .

No light sprinkling of a system made by man  
can be enough:  
We pray for rain.

The wait seems long,  
Beyond the life of waiting things,  
Almost beyond the life of hope . . . .

Oh, God, How good to see the blackened sky,  
To hear the thunder  
Like a drum-roll, distant still,  
With its lightning flash and pledge of rain;  
How good the earthy sweetness of the smell  
As the droplets, with their little song,  
Bathe the waiting earth;  
How good to feel the spatter on my face  
And on my skin,  
To breathe the quickened air  
Grown fall-like in its coolness;  
How good to see again  
The greatness  
And the beauty  
Of Your work, oh God,  
Bringing all at once  
Over endless miles and acres of Your earth  
Water in abundance,  
Renewing life,  
Deep down where death had reached,  
Such as no system made by man  
Could ever do.





## Does Jesus *Really* Care?

**Owen Cosgrove**

The beautiful twenty-third Psalm of David has comforted and consoled God's people for nearly three thousand years. Many have turned to it for encouragement in life's darkest hours.

David may have composed this Psalm while he was yet a shepherd lad tending his father's flocks where centuries later an angelic chorus

announced Christ's birth with a song of peace on earth and good will to men.

David's life was not always serene and tranquil. His own sins and moral failures grieved him deeply (Psalm 51). But there were other things in life that brought him great sorrow. When he was fleeing from the envious King Saul, he took

## COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

refuge in a cave and cried plaintively, “*I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that cared for my soul*” (Psalm 142:4)

Perhaps every person at one time or another has felt utterly alone and helpless. One of the most mournful statements ever made by David is found in Psalm 22:1, and it was repeated by Jesus on the cross, “*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*”

Every life has its good times and its bad times. Even in the joy of the marriage vows are sometimes mentioned “...joy and sorrow, sickness and health, want and prosperity, and for better or for worse...” In the low points of life one may be tempted to ask, “Why Lord?” “Why are these things happening to me?”

Does Jesus REALLY care?

The Old Testament story of Job is an example of bad things happening to good people. Job’s friends assumed that all of his troubles were in direct retribution for some wrong he had done. Job knew that this was not true. In the end, right will prevail and all things will work together for good to those that love God and do His will (Romans 8:28). In the meantime, life’s burdens can be continuing tests of our faith and patience.

Adversity can, if we will let it, bring us closer to God. Even Christ learned obedience through the

things He suffered (Hebrews 5:8,9). Suffering can make us *bitter*, or it can make us *better*. Hardship is to faith what wind is to fire: *it blows the little ones out, but it fans the big ones into greater flames*. The apostle Paul wrote, “*Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong*” (2 Corinthians 12:10).

Does Jesus *really* care? Again and again in the New Testament He promises His love and concern for us. He has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us (Hebrews 13:5), that He will be with us until the end of the world (Matthew 28:18-20). We may have dark hours even as He did, but He knew that truth and love will conquer and He knew also that Heaven lay ahead. In that faith we, too, can bear life’s burdens and look forward to better days.

The words of the old gospel song still come forth in life’s darkest hours:

**O yes, He cares, I know He cares,  
His heart is touched by my grief.**

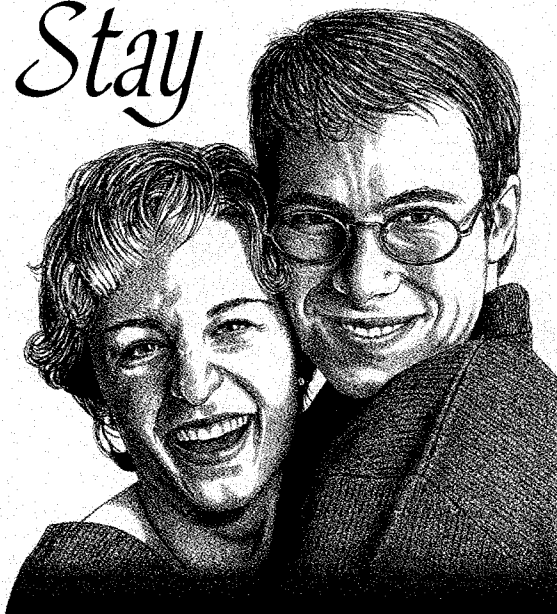
**When the days are weary,  
The long nights dreary,**

**I know my Savior cares. †**

**Owen Cosgrove is involved in printed evangelism in many countries and preaches for the Northside congregation in Waxahachie, Texas, USA.**

# How to Stay on Top of the World

J. A. Thornton



Being on top of the world is more of an *attitude* than an *altitude*. It is basically a positive attitude. Think of the positiveness of Paul's statement in Philippians 4:8, "*Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things.*" This truth should be translated into our lives by practicing it. We must bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

One's disposition and attitude are formed early in life. The older we become, the harder it is to change our attitudes. Parents should help children to form a good disposition. My mother never allowed us to be grumpy and my father often said, "Sing or whistle before breakfast and your day will go better." Remember when you complain, you are not helping your disposition. Psychologists say, "Act better than you feel and you will feel better" and I believe that. It is also true that if you act worse than you feel, you will feel worse.

"I am on top of the world" is an

## COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

expression I have been using for years. This expression is really a commitment. I am therefore committed to the premise of this day being a good day. Though I may face some difficulties and disappointments or pain, God is still in charge and I am His child. With that in mind, I am on top of the world.

### **Choose to be happy.**

Happiness is a choice. Abraham Lincoln said, "Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be." Many years ago a man who was very much uneducated somehow got on a national talk show. He stole the show from the MC with his zest and happiness. The MC, recognizing he had lost the show, said, "Sir, how is it you have all this exuberance?" The man answered, "Wal, you see it's this way. Each morning I get up and I have two choices. One to be happy and one not to be happy. And I ain't as dumb as you think. It's a lot more fun being happy so I choose to be happy." This is a choice that you and I can also make.

Writers of the *Declaration of Independence* said, "We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness." We cannot pursue happiness and catch it. It

comes upon us unawares while we are busy helping others. Happiness does not depend on a full pocket-book, but a mind full of rich thoughts and a heart full of rich emotions. Happiness does not depend upon what happens *outside* us, but what is *inside* us. Jesus tells us how to be happy in Matthew 5:1-12. It has His guarantee, for that is what "Blessed" means. Happiness puts a smile on your face (Proverbs 15:13). A smile helps your face value! One cannot be happy and discontent, self-centered or angry, at the same time.

The Christian has more to be happy over than anyone else. We have the forgiveness of sins, fellowship of brethren, hope of life eternal and a heavenly Father. Isn't it great to be on top of the world!

### **Attitude of Gratitude.**

Gratitude should be high on the list of reasons to be happy. Rough roads make one really appreciate the smooth, just as the black only accentuates the white. And diamonds seem to sparkle more on black velvet. Never lose sight of God's love and goodness and you will have an attitude of gratitude. Many a success came from learning from our difficulties.

*"In everything give thanks"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18). *"Giving thanks always for all things unto God"* (Ephesians 5:20). In the latter

## COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

reference Paul was in a Roman prison and yet he could give thanks for all things. He could give thanks that the imprisonment had "*fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel*" (Philippians 1:12-14). When we face difficulties, even painful things, there are things for which to be thankful. Count your blessings. When you are thankful you are on top of whatever you are enduring. Remember there is never a problem that God and you cannot handle. Never allow what you *don't have* to keep you from being thankful for what you *do have*. Therefore, an attitude of gratitude will help you to stay on top of the world.

### **Live in the Now.**

Do not live in the past by holding grudges. A grudge is a poison that does more harm to the vessel holding it than to the one for which it is felt. A person who can make you hate him is destroying *your* happiness. You cannot be on top of the world by worrying over mistakes. Get forgiveness of your sins and forget them. Trust God for the

future and do not worry about it. Learn to live one day at a time. Yesterday is a cancelled check, tomorrow is a promissory note and today is cash on hand. Remember, if life hands you a lemon, make lemonade. Often the things that appear bad can be used for good. Following these ideas is the way to stay on top of the world.

“One ship goes east,  
and another goes west,  
By the self-same winds that blow.  
Tis the set of the sail  
and not the gale  
That determines the way they go.  
Like the waves of the sea  
or the winds of fate  
As we voyage along through life,  
Tis the set of the soul  
that determines the goal  
And not the calm or the strife.”

If these truths are translated into our lives, then isn't it great to **be on top of the world!** †

**J.A. Thornton is an associate preacher of the church of Christ in Booneville, MS, USA.**

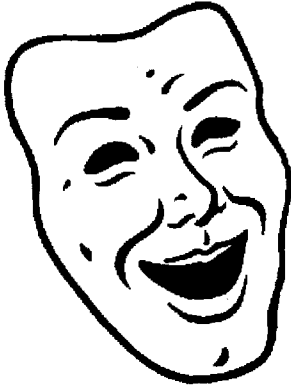
Yesterday is gone, tomorrow may never come  
but always there is today!  
And today is an ever-present opportunity  
to make ourselves and those around us  
truly happy.



---

## PROVERBS 17:22

---



**Overheard:** “They told me at the hospital that they’d have me walking soon, but I didn’t know they meant I would have to sell my car to pay the bill!”



Is it because light travels faster than sound that some people appear to be bright until they start to speak?



Some folks are like blisters — they don’t show up until the work is done.



It’s pretty hard being a farmer. You go to sleep with the chickens, get up with the birds, work like a horse, eat like a pig, and they treat you like a dog.

Quotes taken from job evaluations:

“This young lady has delusions of adequacy.”

“He would be out of his depth in a parking lot puddle.”

“He sets low personal standards and consistently fails to meet them.”

“This employee is depriving some village of an idiot.”

“This employee should go far, and the sooner he starts, the better.”



1st Man: “Does your wife drive?”

2nd Man: “Only in an advisory capacity.”



A scientist recently crossed a carrier pigeon with a woodpecker. This bird not only carries messages, but knocks on the door, too.



If a pig loses his voice, could you say he’s disgruntled?



A Sunday School teacher asked her little children, “Why is it necessary to be quiet in church?” One bright little girl replied, “Because people are sleeping.”

## PROVERBS 17:22

You know what they say — Don't work in an orange juice factory if you can't concentrate.



The audience was questioning the adventurer who had just spoken on big game hunting in Africa. "Is it true," asked one listener, "that the wild beasts in the jungle won't harm you if you carry a torch?"

"That depends," said the cautious lecturer.

"Depends on what?" asked the questioner.

"On how fast you carry the torch."



*Sign on pet shop window:* "Boxer puppy for sale. Housebroken, faithful, will eat anything. Especially fond of children."



A while back I joined a physical fitness club. It really worked, too. I now weigh \$1200 less!"



Would it be correct to say that all these diet book authors are living off the fat of the land?

The school teacher was an atheist, and he was having a mini-debate with one of his students.

The student professed unashamedly, "My parents are Christians, and I am too."

"If your parents were morons, what would you be?": the teacher challenged.

"If they were morons, I guess I'd be an atheist!" the student responded with a quick smile.



A little girl was drawing industriously. "What are you drawing?" her mother asked?

"God."

"But, Honey," her mother objected, "nobody knows what God looks like."

The pencil never stopped as she answered, "Well, they will in just a minute."

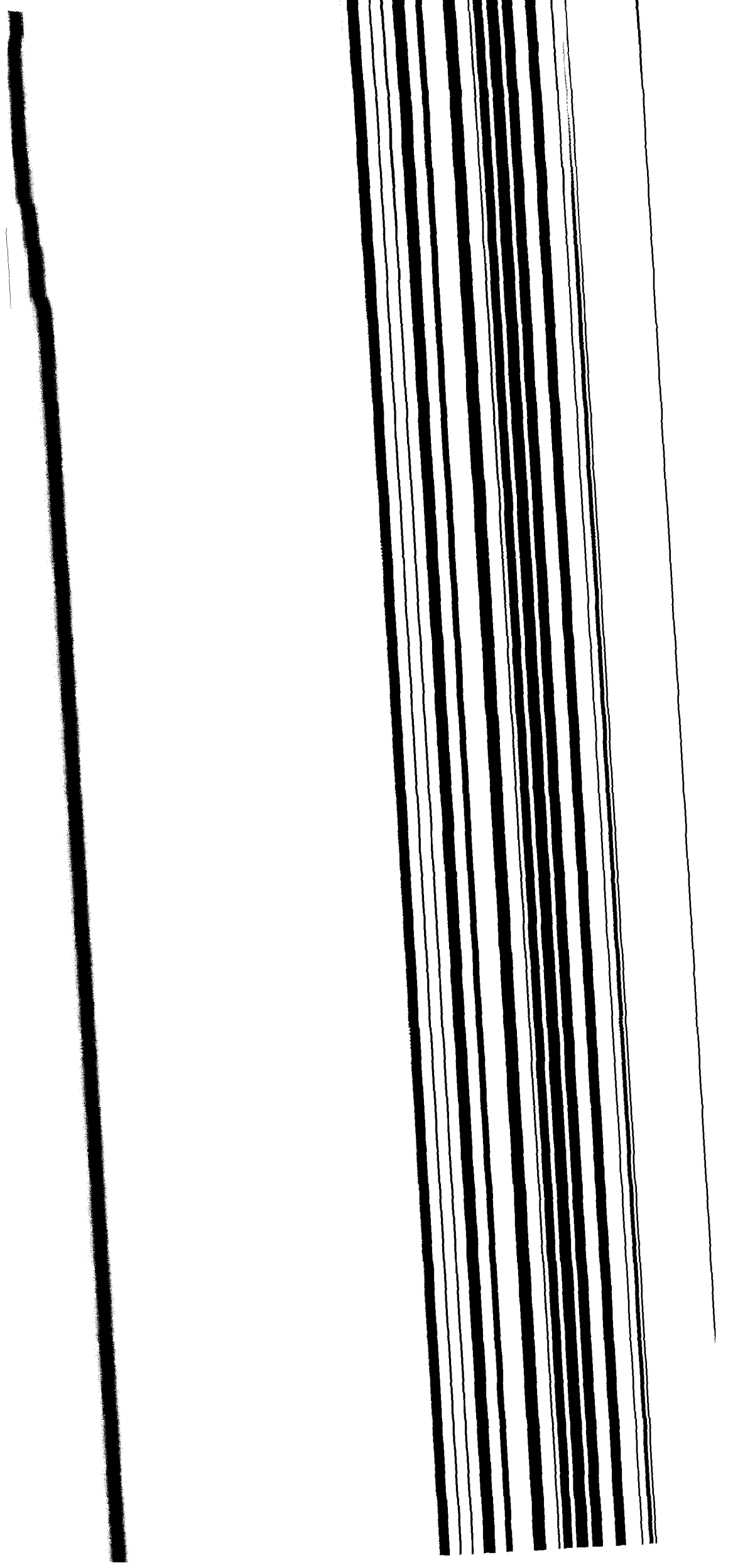


Little boy to woman holding a puppy: "Don't let him off your lap. He isn't housebroken yet."



Small boy's definition of a conscience: "Something that makes you tell your mother before your sister does."

**“No One Took My Dart?”**





# “No One Took My Part”

Harvey Porter

***“At my first defense no one took my part; all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!...But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength....” (2 Timothy 4:14,17).***

One of the most terrible feelings in all the world is that no one cares for us or wants to help us. Especially does this hurt if we have been a helper of others and have showed concern for all.

This was the case with the Apostle Paul. His three great missionary journeys were filled with self-sacrifice and hardship as he gave himself wholly in bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all, and in encouraging and helping others to be faithful. And yet, in 2 Timothy 4, he wrote, *“At my first defense no one took my part; all deserted me. May it not be charged against them!”*

*“No one took my part!”* What sad words. If he had been an evil doer, we could understand that, but he had done no evil, only good. And in the fellowship of the saints, he had a right to expect someone to stand up for him, to *“take his part.”*

But then, in verse 17, he says, *“But the Lord stood by me and gave*

*me strength....”* You are never alone if Jesus stands with you. There is probably a lesson for all of us here. We may be disappointed in mankind and even in the church; but we will never be disappointed in Jesus Christ. He will always take our part if we are faithful to Him.

Paul also writes, *“All deserted me.”* Notice though, he did not quit the church or his Lord. He did not say that there was nothing to Christianity. He knew that people have a hard time practicing the teachings that they believe in. It is easy to desert, but it is hard to stand by and take a part in danger and persecution, possibly even in death.

The greatest lesson of all, however, is in Paul’s next statement. He said, *“May it not be charged against them!”* He had no ill will or animosity toward any who had let him down. He had the same heart as our Lord had on the cross — *“Father, forgive them.”*

## TEXTUAL STUDIES

What a big person Paul was. How patient; how kind toward those around him. And even when they let him down, he did not feel sorry for himself, nor did he quit the Lord and the Lord's work, nor did he carry a grudge toward those Christians who wronged him. What a noble spirit! He truly had the mind of Christ.

The church needs more people like this today. We need to rise above petty differences. We need to stick with Christ no matter what others do. Remember, when "no one takes your part," Jesus always will! †

**Before his death in 1998, Harvey Porter had preached for many years in Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA.**

### If We Only Knew

If we only knew the burdens other people have to bear,  
And their heavy loads of sorrow and their weight of daily care;  
We would give them more compassion and more words  
of solace fair,

If we only knew the burdens that other people have to bear.

If we only knew the problems that are ever on their mind,  
And the peace of heart they long for, that they seek and cannot find;  
We would give more words of comfort and more expressions  
fair and kind,

If we only knew the problems that are ever on their mind.

If we only knew the loneliness of others that we know  
Who struggle with life's heartaches as along life's road they go;  
We would lend the greatest mercy and sweet understanding show  
If we only knew the loneliness of others that we know.

How often we judge others with conclusions quite unfair  
By some minor act unconscious or expression that they wear.  
Oh, how rather we would bless them in kindly deed  
and earnest prayer

If we only knew the burdens that other people have to bear.

— Owen Cosgrove

# Moses' Last Birthday

Leon Cole

*"I am one hundred twenty years old today. I can no longer go out and come in" (Deuteronomy 31:1).*

Several years ago I thumbed through a book entitled **Moses' Last Birthday**. I do not recall the name of the author or much of its contents. The title was based on the text of Deuteronomy 31:1, *"I am one hundred twenty years old today. I can no longer go out and come in."*

This is the beginning of Moses' farewell address. It consists of instruction, prophecy, and a song. Following the speech, God instructs Moses to make his way to Mount Nebo, where he will die. Moses pronounces **a final blessing on Israel**, and the record of his death is given by an unknown writer.

There are some important truths and lessons presented in this seldom-read section of the Old Testament. The expression used by Moses, *"I can no longer go out and come in,"* seems to have reference to something more than his age. One rendering has it, "I shall no longer be able to go out and come in." This leads us to believe that

Moses is anticipating his death.

Each of us leaves a **heritage** behind when we reach the end of our lives. It would behoove us all to live in such a way that we would leave such a heritage as Moses left. Consider his legacy: a generation prepared for victory, a law for Israel to live by, and the memory of the God who keeps His promises.

An outstanding principle of truth in this section is that **though some changes occur, some things are never to be changed**. There was soon to be a change in leadership, from Moses to Joshua, but God was still over all. There are frequent cries, even in the church, for change. A new and young generation has now come to the front, but just as Joshua did not change God's law, but enforced it, so must God's law yet be treated.

**The precept of continued teaching is also presented**. A command is given to see that the whole nation hears the reading of God's Word. There is good reason for

## TEXTUAL STUDIES

such a reminder to be made. Then, as today, **the threat of apostasy hovered over the people.** Ignorance of God's Word is the breeding ground for backsliding. One way this can be prevented is by hiding the Word in one's heart. Consequently, there was an expectation placed on Israel to memorize the song of Moses.

The final blessings pronounced could be called the "Last Will and Testament of Moses." In those days the blessings of a dying father were viewed as legally binding. It is easy to see that in Moses' heart there was a desire for the very best for his people. And as the blessings conclude, there is a reminder that "*the eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.*"

Following the pronouncement of blessings, Moses' death is recorded. The grief felt by Israel is acknowledged. The fact that life goes on, even after the passing of a great one, is seen in Deuteronomy 34:9. But, also, that unknown author adds an epitaph in verses 10-12: "*But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face, in all the signs and wonders which the Lord sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, and by all that mighty power*

*and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Egypt.*" Yes, Moses was a special servant to God.

All of us admire and respect Moses, and we know he was deserving of everything that was said of him. Yet, *all of us are special*, so let us live in such a way that our life, too, will be deserving of a glowing epitaph when we reach our last birthday. †

Leon Cole preaches for the Broad Street congregation in Scottsboro, Alabama, USA.

Do not look forward to what might happen tomorrow. The same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day.

Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then, and put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations.

1 Peter 5:7 is our guide.



# “As Your Soul Prospers”

Dalton Key

***“The old one to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I pray that in everything you may be prosperous, and be healthy even as your soul prospers” (3 John 1,2).***

An aged apostle John began a brief letter to his friend, Gaius, with these arousing words; *“The old one to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I pray that in everything you may be prosperous, and be healthy even as your soul prospers”* (3 John 1,2 — McCord).

From John’s inspired choice of words, we may infer that Gaius was blessed with neither wealth nor the best of health. But he was a faithful child of God. John’s desire was for Gaius to fare as well physically as he was faring spiritually.

Gaius had much in common with Paul, who, in considering his persecutions, his physical adversities, and his rapidly deteriorating body, wrote, *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day”* (2 Corinthians 4:16). Paul, like Gaius, enjoyed a

paradoxical life. His body was failing but his soul was flourishing. Physically, he was drawing ever closer to life’s end; spiritually, he was becoming more and more alive with each passing day!

Think with me for a moment. Imagine John taking pen in hand to write a letter to you. He begins the letter by expressing his desire that your financial and physical life might prosper to the same extent which characterizes your spiritual life.

Imagine now that the apostle’s desire for you is realized. Are you wealthier or poorer? Healthier or sicker?

Would you really want your physical self to be in the same condition as your spiritual self? †

**Dalton Key is the editor of *Old Paths* and is a gospel preacher in Amarillo, Texas, USA.**

Some people have plenty to live on but nothing to live for.

# “Unto What Were You Baptized?”

## CHRIST

2 Tim. 2:10  
Col. 1:14  
Eph. 1:3

INTO

Gal. 3:27

## BAPTISM

INTO

1 Cor. 12:13

## BODY

1 Pet. 2:24  
Eph. 2:15-16  
Eph. 5:23

## DEATH

Rom. 5:10  
Col. 1:22  
Eph. 2:13

INTO

Rom. 6:3

INTO

Mt. 28:20

## NAME

Luke 24:47  
Acts 4:12  
Acts 10:43

Dillard Thurman

# What It Means to Be “In Christ”

Jerry Davidson

## Introduction:

- A. Every religious group, whether large or small, requires some kind of conversion experience in order to be a part of that group.
    - 1. The question is, “Is the conversion experience based on human teaching or upon the Word of God?”
    - 2. Jesus has said, “*He who rejects me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him — the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day*” (John 12:48).
      - a. True conversion involves “receiving the words” of Christ.
      - b. “Receiving the words” of Christ puts us in spiritual harmony with Christ.
  - B. In this lesson we are examining what it means to be “in Christ”.
- I. First, let us notice what the New Testament says about being in a lost condition — thus separated from Christ the Saviour.**
- A. Paul shows us that we are spiritually “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1).
  - B. In this condition we “*wrestle against the rulers of darkness of this age*” (Ephesians 6:12).
  - C. Read Ephesians 2:11-13. Three things stand out about those who are lost:
    - 1. “Without Christ”
    - 2. “Without hope”
    - 3. “Without God”
  - D. Therefore, we must carefully consider those things that are necessary to put us “into Christ”.
    - 1. Hear — Ephesians 1:12,13
    - 2. Believe — Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24
    - 3. Repent — Acts 17:30
    - 4. Confess — Romans 10:10
    - 5. Baptism — Galatians 3:27

## II. Specifically, what does it mean to be “in Christ”?

- A. In Christ we have **eternal life** (1 John 5:11).

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

- B. There is no **condemnation** (Romans 8:1).
- C. In Christ **barriers are broken down** (Galatians 3:26-28).
- D. 2 Corinthians 5:19: “...*God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself.*” As sinners, we become the enemy of God — being reconciled to Him, we enter into fellowship with Him (see Romans 5:10,11).
- E. “*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*” (Ephesians 1:7).
- F. With redemption there is also **forgiveness**.
- G. In Christ we become a **new creature** (2 Corinthians 5:17).
- H. “**Every spiritual blessing**” is “*in Christ*” (Ephesians 1:3).
- I. In Christ we are **sealed** by the Holy Spirit (read Ephesians 1:13,14). Having the gift of the Holy Spirit we are given a **guarantee** of our eternal inheritance.
- J. In Christ there is **salvation** “*with eternal glory*” (2 Timothy 2:10).

### III. In Christ we are made complete.

- A. Paul writes, “*You are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power*” (Colossians 2:10).
- B. As a body of unified Christians we come “*to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*” (Ephesians 4:13).
- C. Just as husbands and wives are made complete in giving themselves to each other, individually we are made complete in Christ.

### Conclusion:

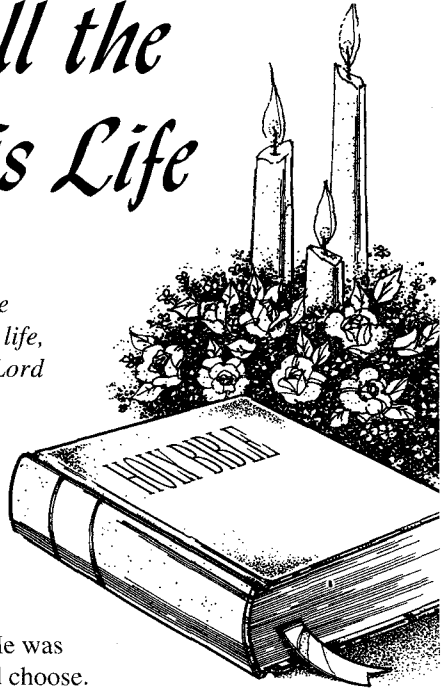
- A. When we come to know of the tremendous blessings we have in Christ, surely no sacrifice is too great to receive these blessings. There is:
  - 1. Reconciliation with God
  - 2. Redemption
  - 3. No condemnation
  - 4. Newness of life
  - 5. Salvation with eternal glory
- B. There is nothing greater than being “in Christ”. †

Jerry L. Davidson is a professor at International Bible College, Florence, Alabama, USA.

# *Read It All the Days of His Life*

Loy Mitchell

*“And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes”*  
(Deuteronomy 17:19).



## **Introduction:**

When God would choose a king for Israel this king was to heed strict teachings of God. He was not to live in any way he would choose.

## **I. These were the prohibitions to the king:**

- A. Do not multiply horses for yourself (Deuteronomy 17:16).
- B. Do not multiply wives for yourself lest your heart be turned away (v 17a).
- C. Do not multiply silver and gold (v 17b).

## **II. There were several positive commands for the king:**

- A. He shall have his own copy of the law of God (v 18).
- B. He was to read from this law of God all the days of his life (v 19).
- C. He was to fear the Lord his God (v 19).
- D. He was to be careful to observe all the words of the law of God.
- E. He was to be humble (v 20a).
- F. He was not to turn away to the right or left from the commandments of God (v 20b).

## **III. Blessings would come to the king if he obeyed.** *“that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandments to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong*

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

*his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel”*  
(Deuteronomy 17:20).

### IV. These are good commandments for Christians today.

- A. Do not multiply automobiles, wives and money. Life consists of far more than these items.
- B. Have your own personal copy of the Bible and be a daily Bible reader!
- C. Learn to fear God and keep His commandments.
- D. Be humble toward God and your fellow man.
- E. Do not turn to the left or right, but strictly follow the teachings of God.

### Conclusion:

When we observe these things we will be blessed. *“Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”* (Matthew 25:34). †

Loy Mitchell preaches for the Northside congregation in Topeka, Kansas, USA.

---

## Whoever Heard of a Man....

- Who preferred to drown rather than get into a boat with a hypocrite?
- Who quit going to the movies because the manager did not speak to him?
- Who always quit on the second day of a job because he made a mistake on the first?
- Who never did anything about his illness because he wasn't interested in the subject?
- Who refused to eat because he couldn't understand how it could give him physical strength?
- Who was too busy to breathe?
- Who refused to pay his taxes because he was “good enough” or refused government aid because he was “not good enough”?
- Who refused to obey the law of his nation because his parents might object?
- Who failed to improve himself because someone might laugh at him?
- Who renounced his citizenship because he didn't like the current leader?

**In the world — never!**

**In religion — often!**

— Selected



*What Is Meant by  
"New Heavens and a  
New Earth"?*

**Kevin L. Moore**

What is meant by "*new heavens and a new earth*" (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1)?

The Jews considered three "heavens" (Deuteronomy 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; 2 Corinthians 12:2). The *first* heaven is the atmosphere, where the birds fly and the rain falls (Genesis 1:20; Psalm 147:8). The *second* heaven refers to outer space, where the sun, moon, and stars have been placed (Psalm 8:3; Ezekiel 32:7). The *third* heaven is the spiritual realm, the **habitation of God**

and His angels (Ecclesiastes 5:2; Mark 13:32; Ephesians 6:9).

The word "earth" is also used in different senses: of the planet on which we live (Genesis 6:1; Ezekiel 3 8: 20); of the ground, dirt, or soil (Exodus 20:24; Nehemiah 9:1; Psalm 146:4); a metonymy for the inhabitants of the earth (Jeremiah 6:19; 22:29); and a descriptive term for physical/worldly-mindedness (John 3:31; Philippians

3:19; James 3:15).

When the words "heaven(s) and earth" are used together, this phrase refers to the physical place of man's inhabitation; the only portions of God's creation where man dwells (Isaiah 51:6; Jeremiah 51:48; Joel 3:16; Matthew 24:31,35; Hebrews 1:10-11). Man does not merely live on the earth, but he also relies on the air, the rain, etc. contained in [the first] heaven.

What will eventually happen to the present heavens and earth? "*Lift*

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

*up your eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner”* (Isaiah 51:6). The physical heavens and earth will pass away as they are burnt up (Matthew 24:35; 2 Peter 3:7-12). They will perish and be discarded like an old garment (Psalm 102:25,26), and will be replaced by something new.

The “new heavens and new earth” cannot be the same as the present ones, since the *new* is not the same as the *old*, and the present heavens and earth will be destroyed (Revelation 20:11; 21:1). The current dwelling place of God’s people serves as a figure of the future dwelling place. Since God’s faithful children are to live with Him eternally in [the third] heaven (Matthew 5:12; Philippians 3:20; Colossians 1:5; 1 Peter 1:4), the “new heavens and new earth” figuratively represent the spiritual (not physical) dwelling place of the righteous (compare 1 Corinthians 15:48-54). This is one of the many examples in the Bible where physical symbols are used to illustrate spiritual concepts (see 1 Corinthians 15:22,45; 2 Corinthians 6-16; Hebrews 12:22,23; 1 Peter 2:5-9; 3:20,21). †

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

### The Artist

I love to watch God  
paint the dawn  
In scarlet flush  
and gold.

I love to watch  
Him touch the sky  
In colors bright  
and bold.

I love to watch  
God paint the dusk  
In purple  
shadowed gray.

Then leave His name  
upon it all —  
Artist of night  
and day!

—Anonymous



## BIBLE QUESTIONS

# Three Vital Questions

Roger E. Dickson

The Bible does not seek to prove the existence of God. His existence is simply assumed and revealed in the Bible. However, as the revelation of God to man, the Bible was given to us in order to answer the most important questions we have in reference to our existence.

**From where did we come?**

**What are we to do in reference to God, our Creator?**

**What will happen when we die and where will we go?**

At one time or another, everyone has asked the above questions. In answer to the first question, the Bible simply states that the first two people on earth were created in the **image** of God (Genesis 1:26,27). We are thus the product of the God who created all things.

Since we are God's creation, we should be concerned about what the duty of man is in reference to his Creator. The Bible says, "*Fear God and keep His **commandments**, for this is the whole duty of man*" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). This statement answers the second question. It is our duty, as God's created beings, to obey our Creator.

The Bible also answers the third question. Concerning our death, the Bible says, "*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the **judgment***" (Hebrews 9:27). For the Christian there is hope of eternal **life** beyond death (John 3:16). But for those who have not submitted to God, there is the destiny of eternal destruction (1 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

The Bible thus answers the most important questions that we can ask. We came from God. We must obey His laws. When we die, we will be held accountable in judgment for our obedience or disobedience of His laws (2 Corinthians 5:10). †

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

Can people tell that Christ is in you  
before you tell them?

# Do Angels Minister to Christians Today?

Wayne Jackson



The inspired passage poses this question: “*Are they (angels) not ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?*” (Hebrews 1:14). There are several points worthy of note here. First, the query, as framed in the Greek New Testament, implies an expected affirmative answer.

And so, yes, angels are spirits who minister to the Lord’s people.

Second, the participle “*being sent forth*” is a present tense form. It suggests that angels are continually being sent by God, as human needs correspond to the divine will. They function as servants on behalf of those who are to inherit salvation, i.e., enjoy it in its *final* phase — in heaven.

Third, but **how** do angels accomplish these missions? One may not conclude that this phenomenon is miraculous, because the New Testament clearly teaches that the age of miracles has been terminated (1 Corinthians 13:8-10; Ephesians 4:8-16). Since the supernatural era is gone, and only God’s providential activity (i.e., the divine manipulation of natural law) remains, one must conclude, I think, that somehow God employs angels in the implementation of His providential will on behalf of His saints in today’s world. This seems to be a reasonable conclusion, but beyond this we should not speculate. †

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

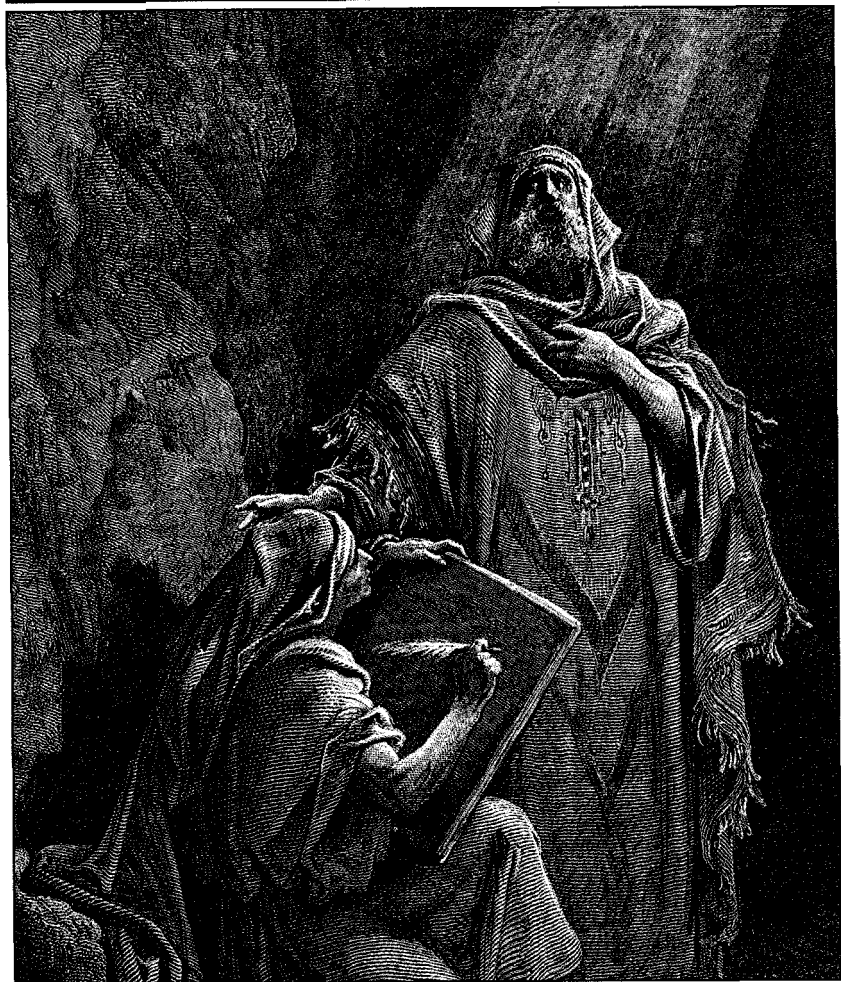
When you are sure of my identity, look up the passages of scripture following each clue to verify the facts from God's word.

1. **100** During my lifetime, Israel had been unfaithful to God and was under bondage to Jabin, king of Canaan, and Sisera, captain of his army (Judges 4:2).
2. **90** For twenty years he oppressed my people, having a mighty army with 900 chariots of iron (4:3).
3. **80** Things were so bad that village life had ceased and everyone avoided traveling the highways, because of the danger (5:6,7).
  4. **70** The oppression was so great that there was not a shield or a spear among the men of Israel under his rule (5:8).
  5. **60** God called a man named Barak to lead men of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun to fight Sisera (4:6).
  6. **50** Barak said, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go" (4:8).
  7. **40** In my song after the battle, I gloried in God's deliverance through the elements of nature — the Kishon River flooded and swept away the horses (5:20-22).
  8. **30** Sisera ran on foot from the battle scene and hid in the tent of Heber, in-law of Moses (4:17).
  9. **20** God gave the victory to Israel through Jael, wife of Heber, who killed him while he was sleeping (4:18-23).
  10. **10** I was the only female judge and prophetess in Israel's history, filling a void left by men who would not lead [as Barak himself declared] (4:8,9).



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

*See answer on inside back cover.*



# **Jeremiah:** **A Study in Overcoming Discouragement**

**David Deffenbaugh**

## BIBLE CHARACTERS

Ever been discouraged? It might as well be asked if one has ever breathed. So common and prevalent is this deadly weapon in Satan's arsenal that none are exempt. Given its common presence, knowing how to handle discouragement becomes supremely important. What better way to learn how to handle this persistent problem than to follow the Bible's suggestion (James 5:10) and look to the prophets? In particular we will consider Jeremiah.

Jeremiah gave bitter expression to the depth of his discouragement in these words: *"Cursed be the day when I was born; Let the day not be blessed when my mother bore me! Cursed be the man who brought the news to my father, saying, 'A baby boy has been born to you!' And made him very happy. But let that man be like the cities which the LORD overthrew without relenting, and let him hear an outcry in the morning and a shout of alarm at noon because he did not kill me before birth. So that my mother would have been my grave, and her womb ever pregnant. Why did I ever come forth from the womb to look on trouble and sorrow, so that my days have been spent in shame?"* (Jeremiah 20:14-18).

Why was this man of God so discouraged? The reasons are many. The people who had re-

ceived every advantage and blessing from God were living lives of wickedness (4:4,18; 5:1,28). This discouragement was only intensified when it appeared the wicked were prospering in the process (5:25-28; 12:1). And, as if to add insult to injury, they continued to practice an empty and pretentious form of religion. God would not even allow Jeremiah to pray for them in this condition (7:16; 11:14).

There was a reason for these religious failures. The people were simply following the lead of the prophets and priests who were *"polluted"* (23:11; see also 2:8; 6:13). Finally, and perhaps most significantly, Jeremiah faced nearly constant, and sometimes severe, opposition. He was threatened, arrested, beaten, put in stocks, imprisoned and left in a muddy cistern (18:18; 20:1,2; 26:8; 32:2; 37:13ff). False prophets opposed him directly and a corrupt king cut and burned his written message (28:1ff, 36:23).

In spite of all the opposing influences, Jeremiah endured. Just as there were several sources of discouragement, there were several means of overcoming that discouragement.

**First, Jeremiah was committed.** *"But if I say, 'I will not remember Him or speak anymore in His name,' Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up*

## BIBLE CHARACTERS

*in my bones; And I am weary of holding it in, And I cannot endure it*" (Jeremiah 20:9). Jeremiah could not cease to proclaim the word of God. There are times when the positive motivations to do what we ought are all gone and the only thing to prompt us to carry on is our commitment.

**Secondly, Jeremiah overcame discouragement through hope.** Jeremiah's message of impending judgment and punishment at the hand of God was not a popular message. While we tend to live in a "fairy tale" world where we expect every story to end with "and they lived happily ever after," Jeremiah's story does not end that way. After most of the nation of Judah is deported to Babylon, he was allowed to remain in Jerusalem. Soon, though, he was kidnapped and taken to Egypt. But his story is not a failure. Things may not have "worked out" in his day, but he prophesied of glorious days to come in God's plan for many things "not seen" to sustain us in dark days (2 Corinthians 4:17,18).

**Thirdly, Jeremiah's trust**

**rested securely in God.** A challenge for every generation is to not put its confidence in its own might and ability. It is a genuine mark of faith to be able to place one's confidence in God. Thus says the Lord, "*Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and know Me, that I am the Lord who exercises lovingkindness, justice and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things,*" declares the Lord" (Jeremiah 9:23,24; see also 17:5-8).

It is not a question of "if" but "when" discouragement will come. So, if we are to not lose heart in doing good (Galatians 6:9), if we are going to remain "*steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*" (1 Corinthians 15:58), we must learn to handle that discouragement. Jeremiah shows us how. †

David Deffenbaugh preaches for the South College Church of Christ in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, USA.

---

Life doesn't have to be perfect  
to be wonderful — Annette Funichello

# Jephthah

Jack Harriman

Jephthah is remembered, first and foremost, as the man who made a rash vow. He vowed that "*whatever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me...it shall be the Lord's, or I will offer it up as a burnt offering*" (Judges 11:31). We all know the rest of the story, and Jephthah will forever be remembered as a result of that vow. But he ought to be remembered as a man who overcame a very poor childhood.

The day he was born, he already had two serious problems. He was the son of a father who was unfaithful to his marriage vows. His mother was a harlot. Jephthah was absolutely blameless, yet he bore the consequence of their sins. He grew up an outcast in the community and in his own home. When his father died, his brothers disinherited him and drove him out of the community. This is a young man who had every excuse to be filled with hatred and bitterness, and desirous of an opportunity to get even.

And the opportunity comes. The powerful Ammonites are about to invade, and Israel has no proven leader. In desperation, they beg

Jephthah to return and be their military savior. We would expect him to rejoice at their peril and to laugh at their request. But instead, he leads Israel in victory and becomes the judge of Israel for six years.

Jephthah did not let a bad childhood ruin the rest of his life, and you don't have to either. Put the past behind you. Turn off the replay machine. Stop fantasizing about what might have been, and start planning and working toward what *can* be. †

**Jack Harriman is the preacher for the Center Street congregation in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.**

*The difference between average and top people can be explained in three words...and then some. The top people do what is expected of them, and then some. They are thoughtful of others; they are considerate and kind, and then some. They meet their responsibilities and obligations fairly and squarely, and then some. They are good friends to their friends and can be counted on in an emergency, and then some.*

—Bulletin Digest

# The Uncompromising Loyalty of Naboth

P. R. Swamy

In 1 Kings 21 we have a heart-touching story of Naboth, who died as a martyr for his loyalty to God. He was a just man suffering with dignity and patience. He was a Jezreelite. Josephus in his Antiquities 8:13 says that Naboth was of an illustrious family. He had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, 25 miles from Samaria. Ahab, king of Samaria, wanted to purchase this property. And Ahab spoke to Naboth saying, *"Give me thy vineyard that I may have it for a garden of herbs because it is near unto my house, and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it or if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money"* (v.2).

It seems that it was a fair deal. In all probability, Ahab was making the kind of offer that would have appealed to himself, personally. But Naboth said to Ahab, *"The Lord forbid it me that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee."* He did not want to do anything in violation of God's law (Leviticus 25:23; Numbers 36:7). Naboth had too much respect for the Law to yield. He flatly refused to accept the king's offer.

Anyone else in Naboth's position would have normally agreed to a

request being made by so important a person as the King. And it was a profitable deal: a better vineyard or enough money to buy a better vineyard. Who would miss such an offer?

But Naboth was a different man. He wanted to please God more than men. Knowing the kind of man Ahab was, and the harshness of Jezebel, Naboth probably had some idea of what could happen to someone who angered the king. Jezebel took matters into her own hands and held a "kangaroo court" before the elders. With the help of false witnesses, they accused and executed Naboth, thereby gaining possession of his vineyard.

Because of his loyalty to God, Naboth was killed. He died as a martyr. We have examples of others throughout the Old Testament, as well as the New, whose love for God brought them to their deaths, rather than deny or disobey Him.

Brethren, do we have such a loyalty for our God, like Naboth? In these changing times, it may be that Christians will be brought to such a point of persecution that we will have to choose between obedience to God or man. Which will it be? †

**P.R. Swamy preaches the Gospel in Bangalore, India.**



# More Like Barnabas

Mike Vestal

Barnabas was known as an exhorter. The Jews spoke of a man as being the “son” of a given thing in which he excelled, and Barnabas was known as the “*son of exhortation*” (Acts 4:36). It is a great gift to be able to encourage others to live better in God’s eyes, to infuse hope, joy, and character in others. And nearly every time we read of Barnabas in the New Testament, this is precisely what he is doing.

**By his example, Barnabas encouraged others in the grace of giving (Acts 4:36,37).** He deeply loved the cause of Christ and generously contributed of his means to further it (2 Corinthians 9:7; Acts 20:35). He had given Jesus the top priority in his life, and his giving reflected that Lordship (2 Corinthians 8:5).

**In the case of Saul of Tarsus, Barnabas exhorted the brethren at Jerusalem to receive him (Acts 9:26,27).** How difficult it probably was for the saints to embrace as a brother one who had earlier sought to destroy the church (Acts 8:3; 9:1), but Barnabas exhorted the saints to give Saul a chance. Think of the impression this must have made upon Saul, and consider the tremendous impact for good which Saul (Paul) had because Barnabas believed in him and encouraged the brethren to accept him.

**Barnabas encouraged the disciples at Antioch to cleave to the Lord (Acts 11:22-24).** Barnabas was a great encourager of mission work. When he arrived at Antioch he was glad to see people obeying the Gospel. He encouraged them to ever remain faithful to God. What a great lesson for us to apply to ourselves (Hebrews 10:22-25)! Do we make it a point to encourage those who are new in the faith to keep on keeping on?

**He encouraged John Mark by not giving up on him, although Mark had made some serious mistakes (Acts 15:36-40).** This is an extremely rare ability, for often we become impatient with those who fail us and never give them another opportunity to make things right. It is evident that Barnabas saw something special in John Mark, something that could be most valuable to the kingdom of God if properly nurtured. One can see the fruits of Barnabas’ efforts as Paul spoke of Mark’s being “*profitable*” in the work of ministry (2 Timothy 4:11). Are you like Barnabas? †

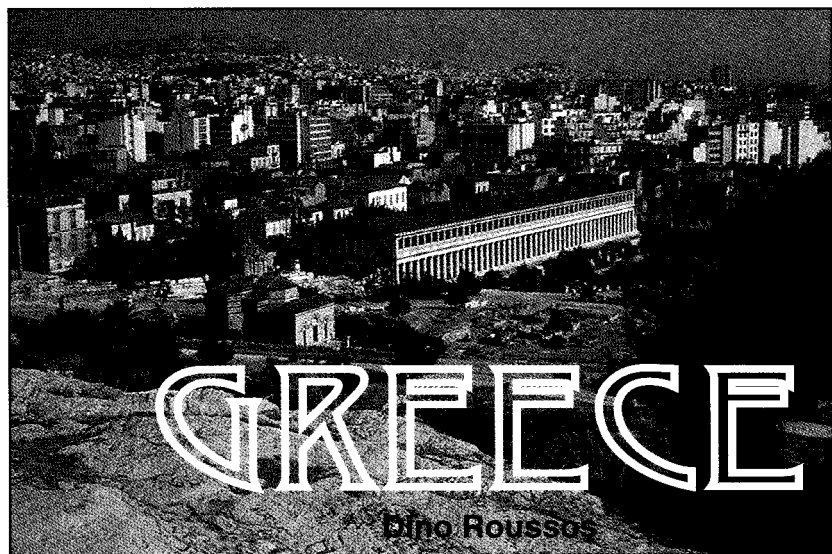
Mike Vestal preaches for the University Church of Christ in Tyler, Texas, USA.

---

FROM THE HEART OF ...

---

# The Gospel of Christ in



***Standing on the outcropping of rock known as Mars Hill, the apostle Paul would have seen the bustle of the ancient market place, much as it appears in this reconstruction in the center of the photograph.***

In today's world Greece is a small European country of 11,000,000 people, but it has had a long and monumental history. It is a crossroad between Europe, Asia and Africa. Athens, the capital, has a population of almost 6,000,000 people. It was a famous and powerful city-state during the classical period of time. In the 5th century B.C. democracy originated in this city which was home to the great philosophers, Socrates, Aristotle and Plato. Athens was also the center of education and knowledge during "The Golden Age of Pericles". The Parthenon, an awesome masterpiece of architecture, sits at the top of the Acropolis in the heart of the city.

Paul, the great apostle of Jesus Christ, came to Athens and gave one of his most dynamic sermons on Mars Hill. He challenged the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers, testifying that Jesus Christ is alive and can provide salvation to humanity.

Paul established churches of Christ in the Grecian cities of Phillipi,

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth. He preached the Truth in love, serving as an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ not only to the Jews but also to the Greeks.

Churches of Christ flourished during the first centuries in Greece. Unfortunately paganism and Judaism influenced the true church and slowly, through the introduction of human traditions, many Christians and congregations of the Lord's church were led away from the faith.



***Debbie and Dino Roussus work with the church in Athens, aware of Paul's presence in the 1st century.***

Infant baptism, prayers to Mary and the saints, worship of icons, confessions to the priests, prayers for the dead, reestablishing the Old Testament priesthood, etc., are a few of the many teachings and beliefs that were added to the biblical doctrines being taught in the church. The result was the emergence of an apostate church which eventually claimed most of the believers.

Through the centuries there were many attempts to return to the Apostolic church, and we thank God because the restoration movement had as its goal to restore once again the true church of Christ as it was in the first century.



***The Omonia Square congregation in Athens, shortly after the baptism of a young woman named Comfort from the country of Ghana.***

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Today, we preach the Gospel of Christ in Athens, Greece where Paul came 2000 years ago, and we are establishing churches of Christ with the same teachings of Jesus Christ and His Apostles. In Athens there are three congregations: one in Glyfada, one in Ambelokipi and one in Omonia Square. These are spiritual homes to members from 15 nationalities and we all work together in harmony with one common goal, to bring Jesus to the nations. Alexander Melirrytos and I are the ministers of the Omonia Church of Christ.

We also have a Bible school, the **Athens International Bible Institute**, a branch of the Sun-set International Bible Institute in Lubbock, Texas. We train gospel preachers from Russia, Romania, Albania, Bulgaria, Nigeria, Sudan, Greece, and Japan. Jim and Steve Stamatias are the instructors, teaching a full program of



***Students of the Athens International Bible Institute, pictured with Nell and Jim Stematias.***



***The Athens International Bible Institute serves students of eight nationalities. They are learning the Scriptures in preparation to teach others, in Greece as well as in their home countries.***

## FROM THE HEART OF ...



***Refugees from many countries live in Athens: 100,000 from Bulgaria, many from Iran, Kurdistan, Afghanistan. The church helps with distribution of food, and is especially concerned about supplying spiritual food.***

courses in English. The students study the scriptures in a systematic way, learning how to carry the message of salvation to their own countries.

From Athens, I often take missionary evangelistic journeys to Albania, Bulgaria and Romania. I thank God as I see Churches of Christ being established in these ex-communist countries.

Brethren, I was born and raised in Greece by a devoted Greek Orthodox family. I thank God because He sent us faithful and dedicated Christians and through the study of God's Holy Word, we came to the saving Knowledge of the Truth. Now we share this precious message of salvation with the Greeks, Romanians, Albanians, Bulgarians, Russians, etc. Today more than ever before we should share the Gospel of Christ with the nations. It can be done if we have faith and dedication to the will of God.

### **POINTS ABOUT GREECE**

Greece is a lovely country to visit. You can see many sites mentioned in the Bible:

- You can stand on **Mars Hill** where Paul preached to the ancient Athenians.
- You can visit **Corinth** where Paul had his trial in the judgment seat in front of the Roman Governor Gallio.

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

- You can visit Thessalonica where Paul wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians.
- You can visit the prison of Paul in Phillipi.
- You can see the river where Lydia was baptized.
- Yes! Archaeology proves the historicity and authenticity of the Bible.



*Christians in Thessalonica have recently rented an auditorium for public meetings in this city of one million souls.*

*The harbor of the island of Rhodes. Leaving mainland Greece and traveling down the western side of Asia Minor, Paul passed through this port during his final journey to Jerusalem.*



*Patmos, off the coast of Miletus, was one of the Aegean Islands used as places of banishment by the Romans. John was exiled here, and it was here that he was given the Revelation of Jesus Christ while he was "in the Spirit on the Lord's day".*

# A Return to First Century Christianity

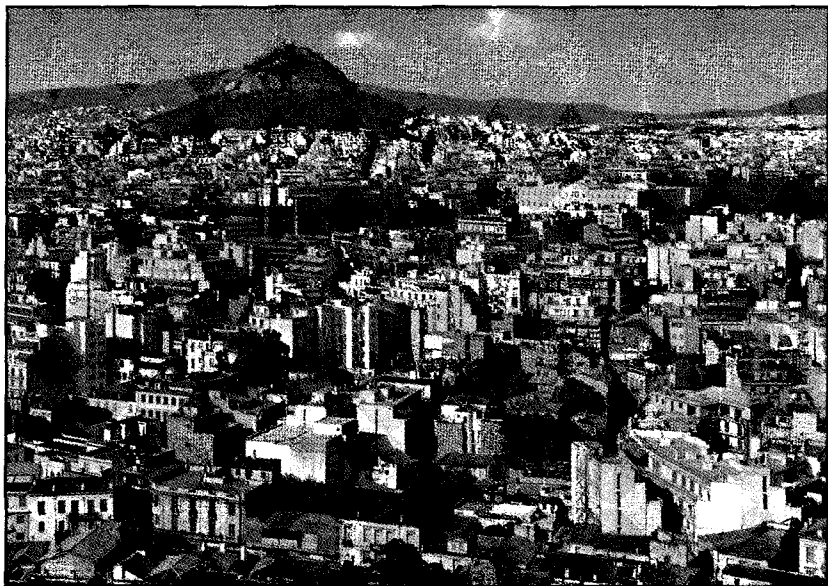
Dino Roussos

*This article, written in Greek by an outstanding young Greek preacher for the Greek magazine "Human Relations", is here translated for your reading.—Ed.*

The unity of Christians is a basic demand of Christian teaching. It is a vital need of the church of Christ —the oxygen of Christianity. Without it the church's teaching is dead and ineffective. If unity was of vital importance in apostolic times, today it is especially needful to put

Christianity back on the road toward a fulfillment of the great commission of unity in Christ.

If Christianity, after almost 2,000 years, hasn't succeeded in bringing peace to all men and in erasing inhumanity and violence from the world, one important reason is the



*The modern city of Athens is the location of the ancient Parthenon, Mars Hill, and the restored market place. It was here that the apostle Paul preached the gospel about "the Unknown God" and established the church of Christ in the first century, according to Acts 17.*

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

lack of unity among Christians.

The Christian world today is divided into hundreds of separate churches. Man's egoism must take the blame for this situation. Only when we can exhibit a selfless spirit, only when we can liberate ourselves from self-centered ambitions, egoism, and the love of "the chief seats", will we be able to make progress on the subject of Christian unity. If everyone insists on maintaining his honored position and his vested interests, then the idea of unity cannot move forward.

no other way except an immediate return to the inexhaustible wellspring of Christianity, the New Testament."

It is encouraging that some have begun to feel the need, even at the last hour, for a return to the source of Christianity, so that today's world which is headed for the bottomless pit of unbelief may see the church that is ". . . *the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*" (1 Timothy 3:15), and be brought to the ". . . *way of salvation*" (Acts 16:17).

Today's divided churches pre-

For centuries now, man, instead of bringing his life into harmony with God's law, has adjusted the teaching of the gospel to fit his own standards and needs.

The apostle Paul states clearly the need for unity. "*Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.... Has Christ been divided?*" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

In a recent interview in the Athens Daily *Apoyevmatini*, Professor Theodorakopoulos, in reference to people's disillusionment with Christianity today, says, ". . . the church suffers and many people remain spiritual orphans. There is

sent an empty picture. Their ministers and priests do not speak the word of the living God, but rather man-made theories, fitted to the specifications and requirements of various individuals and peoples. For centuries now, man, instead of bringing his life into harmony with God's law, has adjusted the teaching of the gospel to fit his own standards and needs. As a result, what should be *the one church* is divided into hundreds of separate bodies, according to the needs and interests of varied peoples and places.

We repeat, it is encouraging to



## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

see responsible persons openly recognize these facts, but we must not stop there. Our efforts must not be confined to *recognition* of the situation. It is essential that we *proceed with action*. No partial re-examination of the church's affairs will do, because the divided structure is rotten from top to bottom. It

solution, the only road that will give us a claim to the grace of God, from Whom we have wandered so far. We must be both wreckers and builders, working to destroy all the man-made, mutually hostile churches and to build up the *one* church of Christ.

Back, then, to the *source* from

Nothing short of a submissive and complete return to the church and pattern of the New Testament will suffice.

can't be repaired on half measure; it can't be patched up. The "Reformation" attempted to do that and was unsuccessful. Nothing short of an abandonment of human divisions and creeds will correct the problem. Nothing short of a submissive and complete return to the church and pattern of the New Testament will suffice. Divided "Christendom" must be torn down and a new building — which is actually the *original* building, the original church of Christ of the first century — must be built up again in its place on the solid foundation of the word of God.

We know the many difficulties that must be overcome, the many battles that must be fought, the sacrifices that must be offered, but this is *the only road* that will lead us to a

which the evangelistic message springs! Back to the apostolic times!

Already, right-thinking individuals, throughout the length and breadth of the world, are speaking out for the unity of Christians. They all believe that fragmentation and division constitute a deadly blow to the church of Christ, but we must not stop at the theoretical point. *We must make the idea of unity a reality, with the revealed word of God as our basis.*

Whatever is not essential, whatever is detrimental, whatever Christianity has accumulated from the human factor must be set aside. We must free the church of Christ from everything of human inspiration, from the veils that hide her true

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

facts, from all the distortions that human weaknesses have brought upon her body.

Many people throughout the world are already working for a return of the church of the first century. Their aim is not to establish *still another church*. They are not trying to infringe upon the interests and rights of any of the existing churches. Quietly and with unshak-

believe that only a sincere and complete return to the Source will raise to new heights the body of the church and guide the ship of humanity to safety must join together in this effort. Both individuals and nations have everything to gain and nothing to lose. We are in the front lines of this noble endeavor. Our watchword is the return to New Testament Christianity. Join with

We are in the front lines of this noble endeavor. Our watchword is the return to New Testament Christianity. Join with us, whoever you are. Look to Christ for strength, welcome Him as your Saviour and work for His church, for the unity of all Christians.

able faith in Him they labor to restore the church of Christ just as it was founded by the apostles.

The statement of Mr. Theodorakopoulos has already been put into action by those who have returned to the wellspring and offer its clear pure water to today's thirsting world. *"But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life"* (John 4:14).

All those who agonize for the plight of the world and long for a better tomorrow, all those who

us, whoever you are. Look to Christ for strength, welcome Him as your Saviour and work for His church, for the unity of all Christians. *"I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost"* (Acts 21:6).

In this way the saving truth of Christ will be revealed, and every person can kneel before His cross and seek salvation. Then all together with one accord we may *"with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Romans 15:6). †

**Dino Roussos is a preacher of the Gospel in Athens, Greece.**

**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 (29 issues) for the reduced price of \$72.00. ***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

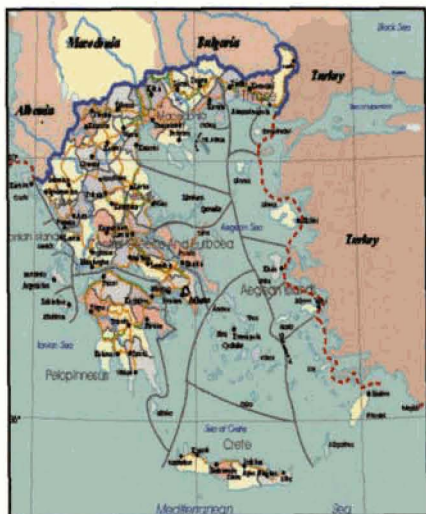
### *Verse Search* — 29 (from page 30)

1. The history of the Israelite nation, and God's work in bringing the Messiah into the world through them.
2. "Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you."
3. All the land on which he and his family traveled.
4. They would sojourn in a foreign land in which they would be in bondage and oppressed for 400 years.
5. The covenant of circumcision.
6. Abraham; Isaac; Isaac; Jacob; Jacob; patriarchs.
7. Joseph; "...God was with him."
8. A king arose who did not know Joseph, and he decreed that the male babies be killed.
9. Moses; he was reared as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians.
10. That he knew something of the promise of deliverance, and supposed that he had been put in the king's house to use that position of power to free them.
11. To Midian, to work as a shepherd for 40 years.
12. One of the Godhead, called "the Angel of the Lord", but also identified as God.
13. "The Lord your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear."
14. Sacrificed to idols.
15. They had killed the ones whom God had sent.
16. They had betrayed and murdered the Just One.
17. Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

### Who Am I? (page 95)



**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**



## Greece



**Government:** Parliamentary Republic

**Head of State:**

President Costis Stefanopoulos

**Head of Government:**

Prime Minister Costas Simitis

### Secular Facts:

**Location:** Occupies the southern end of the Balkan Peninsula in SE Europe, in the Mediterranean Sea. Neighbors: Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria and Turkey.

**Land Mass:** 50,942 square miles, slightly smaller than Alabama.

**Population:** 11,000,000; density per square mile, 210.

**Major Cities:** Athens, Thessaloniki.

**Language:** Greek, English.

**Literacy:** 93%; Nine years of education are compulsory.

**Religion:** Greek Orthodox Church, 98%.

**Ethnic Groups:** Greek; refugees from many nations.

**Economy:** *Industries:* Tourism, textiles, chemicals, wine, food processing. *Chief crops:* Grains, corn, olives, grapes, citrus and other fruits. *Arable land:* 19%. *Livestock:* Sheep, cattle, chickens, pigs, fish. *Labor force:* 52% services, 25% industry, 25% agriculture. *Infant mortality rate:* 7 per 1000. *Life Expectancy:* 75.8, males; 81, females.

**Monetary Unit:** Drachma.

### The Church:

**Congregations:** 5 congregations with a total membership of approximately 300.

**History:** The history of Christianity in Greece dates back to the first century when Paul and his company landed in Philippi. On that journey churches were started also in Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth. Though not all of the Christians fell away from the purity of the Gospel in the following centuries, the larger portion did.

In 1960, George Dumas, son of a Greek immigrant to America, made the commitment to restore the Lord's church to the land that had figured so richly in its early history. Working with Antoni Roussos and other Christians, churches were planted in Athens and Thessalonica, and on the island of Rhodes, with a scattering of Christians on Crete and Cyprus.

Alexander Merylittos, Dino Roussos, Dino Tzanetos, and Babis Evdoxiadis continue with an evangelistic outreach in the country and in surrounding countries. Jim and Steve Stamatis work with the Athens International Bible Institute, currently with students from eight nations.