

# THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR ENEMIES?

Page 4

The Fruit of Humanism

Page 17

Waiting Room Bible Study

Page 20

Our Precious Possession

Page 24

Hearing the Call

Page 29

God's Avil

Page 56

Trinidad Tobago

Page 102






## Three Views of Life

Owen Cosgrove

One lived because he was afraid to die —  
No hope inspired his soul;  
Life in this world was all he sought;  
He had no other goal.  
He had no thought of Hell's dark depths  
Or Heaven's glory bright;  
He stepped from this life's lowly scene  
Into eternal night.

Two died because he was afraid to live.  
Life's heavy burden's store  
Weighed greatly on his weary soul —  
'Till he wanted life no more.  
He took the life he could not bear  
And snuffed the candle out,  
And walked death's valley, dark and deep,  
Because of fear and doubt.

Three lived because he sought life's hope  
And thought of God's great love,  
And treasured all Christ's blessings here  
And Heaven's home above.  
And when the death call bade his soul  
To Heaven's golden shore,  
He went to live with God above  
In peace forevermore.



## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

*Verse Search* — 33 (from page 40)

Who Am I? (page 91)

1. He was a Gentile, not a Jew.
2. Christians (who had a Jewish background) challenged him about going into a Gentile home and teaching.
3. *"What God has; you must not call..."*.
4. Yes, six brethren went along with him.
5. The Holy Spirit fell on Cornelius and his household, as He had fallen on the Jewish believers on the day of Pentecost, *"in the beginning"*.
6. *"Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized you with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"*
7. *"If therefore God gave them the same gift as He gave us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, **who was I that I could withstand God?**"*
8. They became silent and then they glorified God, saying, *"Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."*
9. They were scattered as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, and they preached the word wherever they went, but to Jews only.
10. Cyprus and Cyrene; Antioch; Hellenists [Grecians]; Lord Jesus.
11. They believed and turned to the Lord.
12. Barnabas.
13. He was glad and he encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord.
14. Believed = cut to the heart; turned to the Lord = obedience in repentance and baptism; added to the Lord = the Lord added to the church those that were being saved.
15. They assembled with the Antioch church for a year.
16. In Antioch of Syria.



Amos

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## 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).**



## *An Invitation*

**Samuel A. Matthews**

We invite you to read the short self-teaching outline, looking up the Scriptures to provide the appropriate answers in the blanks. After completing the study and being totally convicted about your answers, we pray that with an honest heart (Luke 8:15) you will humbly obey these teachings so that the Lord can save you (Mark 16:16) and add you to His family, the church of Christ (Acts 2:47; Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 4:4; 1:22,23).

We are simply a body of Christians (Acts 11:26) who are living for (yet ready to die for) Jesus (Philippians 1:21). Whenever sincere, penitented people obey the gospel, God adds each one to the family, world-wide.

- **Faith** comes by hearing the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Romans 10:17).
- Without \_\_\_\_\_ you cannot please God (Hebrews 11:6).
- One comes to Jesus by **believing** that He is the Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Matthew 16:16).
- However, even a believer must \_\_\_\_\_ (turn away from) of sins or perish (Luke 13:3).
- Only those who **repent** and are \_\_\_\_\_ will receive the **gift of the Holy Spirit** (Acts 2:38).
- Only the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus can wash away our sins (Revelation 1:5).
- His **blood** washes away our sins when we are \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 22:16).
- Are you, as a **penitent believer**, ready to \_\_\_\_\_ your belief in Jesus? (Romans 10:9,10).
- If so, you are ready to be \_\_\_\_\_ **into Christ** (Galatians 3:27).
- Jesus commanded the **taught** (convicted) to be \_\_\_\_\_ (Matthew 28:19).
- A **believer** is **saved** when he is \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 16:16).
- When is the **day of salvation**? \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Corinthians 6:2).
- When does **baptism** save the **believer**? (1 Peter 3:21). Salvation is in \_\_\_\_\_ (2 Timothy 2:10).
- A **taught penitent believer** must be \_\_\_\_\_ into Christ (Romans 6:3).
- The Lord will \_\_\_\_\_ the **saved (penitent, baptized believer)** to **His church** (Acts 2:47).
- You must then **live** a \_\_\_\_\_ life unto **death** (Revelation 2:10).



## HOW DO WE DEAL WITH OUR ENEMIES?

J. C. Choate  
Editor-in-Chief

All people have enemies. Even though Jesus Christ lived a sinless life, He had enemies. Not only did He have enemies, but they were **religious enemies** — men who hated Him because He was righteous and because He taught that all must be righteous in order to be acceptable to

God. The end result was that He was finally crucified on the cross. The Romans — **the secular government** — crucified Him, but His **religious enemies** were the ones actually responsible for His death.

We also have enemies. We who have obeyed the gospel and are members of the Lord's family are surrounded by people who oppose us. We are trying to live the Christian life so we can go to heaven but still there are those who resent us, find fault with us, and work against us. The world offers all of its temptations, trying to lead us away from the Lord. Unbelief, humanism, and materialism are tools of evil being used to destroy us, while the misplaced zeal of false religious bodies and false religious leaders is set in opposition to Christ and to us because we follow Him. And, always, there is Satan, our arch enemy, with his host of followers, working to see our souls condemned in hell. Peter warns, "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Peter 5:8).

So how do we deal with our enemies? Christ said that we should love our enemies and do good to them. He said, "*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great*

*is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you” (Matthew 5:9-12). Continuing, He said, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5:38,39). Then hear Him, as He says, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:43-45).*

But how can we love our enemies, those who hate us, despitefully use us, and persecute us? By human nature it would be impossible, but Christians are to grow in partaking of the nature of God, according to instructions given in 2 Peter 1:4: “...by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” The answer, therefore, is in having an agape love (the Greek word for the highest form of love) for our enemy. What kind of love is that? It is not an emotional love but, rather, it seeks what is best for that person, even though he would do us harm. Such a godly love prompts us to return good for evil. We would not try to hurt him or to cause him to be lost. Rather, we want that person to be saved. We want to help him and hopefully to change him. That is the kind of love the Lord had for us when he laid down His life for us — while we were still enemies and alienated from God by our sins. We didn’t deserve such love and mercy, but He loved us anyway. As members in His family, the church, we are to have that type of love for the lost, for the sinner, and for our enemies.

But what about the wicked, those who seek to harm us and others? Is their wickedness to go unpunished? If we who are wronged are forbidden to seek revenge, how will matters be righted? The Lord has not authorized us, as Christians, to take the law into our hands and to punish the wicked. Our work is to try to teach and change those who are wrong. But God has tools for retribution: the civil government of the land is authorized to judge and punish evil-doers in this world, and God Himself will judge and sentence the unrepentant on the day of judgment.

At the hands of evil terrorists several thousand people lost their lives in New York and Washington, D.C. on September 11 when the World Trade Towers and part of the Pentagon were destroyed. Men, women, and children of more than eighty nations were killed, and the whole world has suffered from



the destruction in many subsequent ways. As individuals who lost loved ones, we could take it upon ourselves to try to punish the terrorists. But that is not the job of individuals, and it is certainly not the responsibility of Christians. The law, “An eye for an eye...” was not given to Christians. “But,” you object, “that is in the Bible! Has God changed?” No, not at all. In the Old Testament, God gave both **civil** and **spiritual laws** to the nation of Israel, because it was a secular as well as a spiritual nation. Its civil leaders were instructed in the punishment of the wicked, and its spiritual leaders provided spiritual leadership. But under the New Testament law, which is binding on us today, Christians are a spiritual body living under spiritual laws, with instructions to leave the secular laws to the civil governments of the world to enforce.

**To individual Christians**, Paul was instructed by the Holy Spirit to write, *“Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good”* (Romans 12:17-21).

On the other hand, **God says to civil governments**, *“You are my sword to execute wrath on evil doers”* Therefore, governments of countries around the world are God’s agencies to control lawlessness and to punish those who would harm the helpless. In the New Testament, we are commanded, *“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil”* (Romans 13:1-4).

And God, Himself, will have the final word as He executes judgment on that last great day, when evil doers and the disobedient receive His condemnation for the evil they have done. *“And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and the books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ...And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire”* (Revelation 20:12-15). †



# The Other Sacrifices of Jesus

**Byron Nichols**

In spite of the tremendous significance of the sacrifice of His very life on the cross, the death of Jesus Christ continues to be one of the most overlooked events of importance in the history of the world. This awesome incident surely does not receive the amount of our attention that it deserves.

The writer of Hebrews said, *“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone”* (Hebrews 2:9). How can anyone even imagine such a thing?! This astounding statement becomes even more meaningful as we read Paul’s elaboration of the matter in Romans 5:6-11: *“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the reconciliation.”*

Most assuredly, such a sacrificial deed demands our attention, our thoughtful consideration, and our lifelong expression of appreciation.

Although volumes could rightly be written (and have been) about the sacrificial death of Jesus, let me call attention to some other aspects of the sacrificing that Jesus Christ did as He experienced humanity for the benefit of the entire human race. Please give some lingering thought to just a few of the **other** sacri-

fices that Jesus made in addition to that incredible sacrifice on Calvary.

(1) He sacrificed living in Heaven for a life here on Earth. The Lord spoke of Himself in John 3:13, “*And no one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man who is in heaven.*” Jesus said these words to Nicodemus while He was still here, but He spoke them knowing that very soon He was going to die and be resurrected and then return to His Father in Heaven. Undoubtedly the sacrifice of leaving Heaven is going to be much more impressive when we see and experience Heaven for ourselves, but surely even now we can marvel that Jesus was willing to sacrifice that glorious place for this ball of dirt called the Earth.

(2) Jesus sacrificed being on equality with God the Father (Philippians 2:6,7). The Bible clearly affirms that Jesus was not inferior at all to even God Himself, yet He gave that up in an effort to save us from our sins.

(3) Our Savior sacrificed by allowing Himself to be misrepresented, misunderstood, and falsely accused — all because His compassionate concern was for others and not for Himself.

(4) Jesus sacrificed His will for that of the Father. Remember that Jesus had been equal with God up in Heaven, but as a human He says, “*...I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me*” (John 5:30). Another time Jesus declared, “*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work*” (John 4:34). Of course, the best remembered words of Christ along this line were His prayers in Gethsemane as He agonized over His approaching death. Twice He implored the Father, “*O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will*” (Matthew 26:39,42).

(5) Jesus sacrificed by enduring rejection and humiliation. He was ridiculed and mocked, and even many of His disciples forsook Him. Instead of demanding that people acknowledge Him for who He really was, the Son of God allowed Himself to be made fun of.

(6) The sacrifices of Jesus included being poor after having been partaker of the riches of Heaven. In 2 Corinthians 8:9 Paul declared, “*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.*” Jesus testified as to His poverty when He said, “*Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head*” (Matthew 8:20).

Much more could be said regarding the sacrifices of Jesus, but suffice it to say that His entire life was a sacrifice, and all of it, including His death, was for our eternal benefit. He sacrificed Himself to make possible the salvation of the entire world. Just how thankful are we? †

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

### GOD

Northern Lights .....	Larry Henderson .....	11
Mediator, Advocate, . . .	Cecil May, Jr. ....	13
My God, My God, Why . . . ?	Hollis Miller .....	15

### EVIDENCES

Evolutionary Hoaxes .....	Dalton Key .....	16
The Fruit of Humanism, . . .	Bill Nicks .....	17
Coincidence or Creation? .....	Foy E. Wallace, Jr. ....	19

### THE WORD OF GOD

The Natural Man .....	Parker Henderson .....	21
Our Precious Possession .....	Jamie L. Henry .....	24
What Shall We Speak? .....	Owen D. Olbricht .....	26
“Synecdoche” .....	Jack Harriman .....	28

### DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

Hearing the Call .....	Rodney Tedford .....	29
The Purpose of Baptism .....	Roger E. Dickson .....	33
Dead or Alive? .....	J. Lee Roberts .....	34

### SALVATION

The Love of God .....	Allen E. Flaxman .....	36
Can Salvation Be a Gift . . . ?	Owen Cosgrove .....	38

### THE CHURCH

The Identical Church .....	Joe C. Magee .....	41
Religious Division .....	Jerry Jenkins .....	43
Esteem Them Highly in Love	Dale Grissom .....	44

### CHURCH GROWTH

Reasons Why the Church . . .	Clayton Pepper .....	45
Church Growth and Me .....	Randall Caselman .....	48

### CHURCH HISTORY

Borrowed Pagan Practices .....	Keith Sisman .....	50
--------------------------------	--------------------	----

### CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

One Egg or Two? .....	T. Pierce Brown .....	54
God’s Anvil, God’s Word . . .	Randolph Bonas .....	56
From Criminal to Christian .....	David Mendiola .....	59
While Men Slept .....	E. Ulric Alleyne .....	62

## DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

The Burdensome Load . . . . .	Michael L. King	65
Distinctions of the Faithful . . . . .	Wayne Barrier	68
Are You Still on the Bottle? . . . . .	Bill Dillon	70
Integrity . . . . .	Gordon Hogan	71
The Sign of a Disciple . . . . .	Colin McKee	72

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

Is It Really that Important? . . . . .	Hershel Dyer	75
Women's Liberation . . . . .	Betty Burton Choate	76
God and Families . . . . .	Ardon Hinton	79
Woman's Highest Calling . . . . .	Jane Maynard	80

## PROVERBS 17:22

Humor . . . . .		83
-----------------	--	----

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

Divine Fellowship . . . . .	Dillard Thurman	86
Are You a Jew? . . . . .	E. Claude Gardner	87

## BIBLE CHARACTERS

God Uses the Broken . . . . .	Jerry L. Davidson	88
Profile of a Winner . . . . .	Roy Beasley	92
A Mother Who Made . . . . .	Bobby Dockery	94

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

Why Do We Have . . . ? . . . . .	Ken Tyler	96
Two Important Questions . . . . .	Kevin L. Moore	97

## TEXTUAL STUDIES

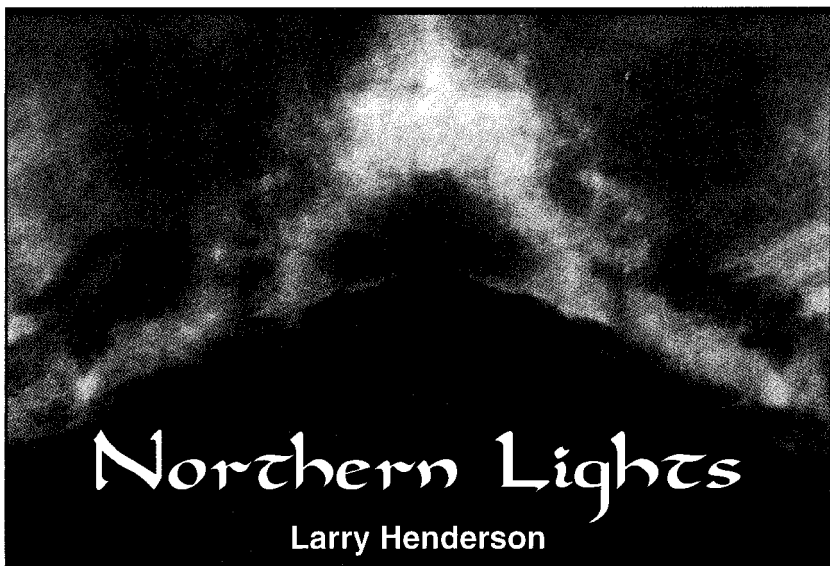
Grace? What Does It Mean? ..	Hugo McCord	99
What Was Christ . . . ? . . . . .	Sunny David	100

## FEATURES

Choate Editorial . . . . .	J.C. Choate	4
Nichol Editorial . . . . .	Byron Nichols	7
Waiting Room Bible Study . . . . .	John mark Wilson	20
What Must I Do? . . . . .		39
Verse Search . . . . .		40
How Do You Measure Up? . . . . .		64
Quick Commentary . . . . .		85
Who Am I? . . . . .		91

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

Trinidad/Tobago . . . . .	Mohammed, Neptune	102
---------------------------	-------------------	-----



# Northern Lights

Larry Henderson

Well before daylight this morning, my son Caleb and I were walking with Michael McCoy through some thick brush on his father's ranch. Our destination was a remote wheat-field where we hoped to get a shot at one of the elusive deer that lived in the woods next to the pasture. The night was dark with only the stars providing direction for our steps when suddenly we stopped and stared speechlessly into the cold sky.

"What's that?" I finally croaked, as it appeared that the area behind the hill in front of us had to be on fire! The sky was a deep red color with changing hues that looked like the reflection of tongues of fire leaping into the sky. It took a while, but we finally realized that we were watching an awesome demonstration of *aurora borealis*, the Northern Lights! Usually seen only in the higher latitudes, this special manifestation dazzled for several minutes until it began to fade with the approaching light of day.

The natural phenomenon seen in Texas reminded me of a super-natural event that took place in the Palestinian sky over 2,000 years ago. Luke explains that "*There were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them. ... Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests'*" (Luke 2:8,9,14)

## GOD

Whereas it might be “special” for us to see the Northern Lights, the events surrounding the birth of Jesus were truly unique as the Creator of the universe introduced His “only begotten Son” to our world. Named Immanuel — “*God with us*” —, His birth was like none other as it represented deity’s presence with humankind. The importance of such an occasion has not faded through the centuries as men and women of faith still celebrate the wonder of the virgin birth.

Unfortunately, not all the world is willing to accept the coming of Jesus Christ as being absolutely distinctive. For example, the Hindu religion teaches that divine reality is expressed in many forms and can claim “Krishna is lord,” “Buddha is lord” or “Jesus is lord”, simultaneously and without contradiction. Such a view is unacceptable to the Christian who sees the miraculous birth of Christ, His exemplary life, and His triumphant resurrection from death as unparalleled in human history.

John, one of Jesus’ closest disciples, wrote that “*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth*” (John 1:14). The apostle Paul also said “*God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,*

*and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross*” (Colossians 1:19,20).

Such comprehensive testimony does not allow comparison with any human representative. For that reason, “*God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*” (Philippians 2: 9-11.)

If you live long enough and are aware of what is going on around you, it is likely that you will see some amazing event take place in our skies. Whether it is the passing of a major comet, a series of meteor showers, an eclipse, or an appearance of the northern lights, we can all be dazzled by what we see in the heavens. The significance of these incidents however, will fade with the passing of time and the arrival of the next episode. Only the angelic announcement of the birth of Jesus remains without equivalent. Let us join with those angels and bring honor to him by the way we live. †

**Larry Henderson is with the Abilene Christian University in Abilene, Texas, USA.**

# Mediator, Advocate, Propitiation

Cecil May, Jr.

**Jesus is our mediator.** A mediator stands between two estranged parties. He must be neutral, having no relation to either party, or else equally related to both. Jesus alone qualifies as a mediator between us and God. *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"* (1 Timothy 2:5).

As Son of Man and Son of God, Jesus stands where no other could. Facing God as God, perfect and without sin (John 10:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21); yet, *"a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief"* (Isaiah 53:3), *"touched with the feeling of our infirmities,"* and *"tempted in all points like as we are"* (Hebrews 4:15); *"it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people"* (Hebrews 2:17). How wonderful to have such a mediator!

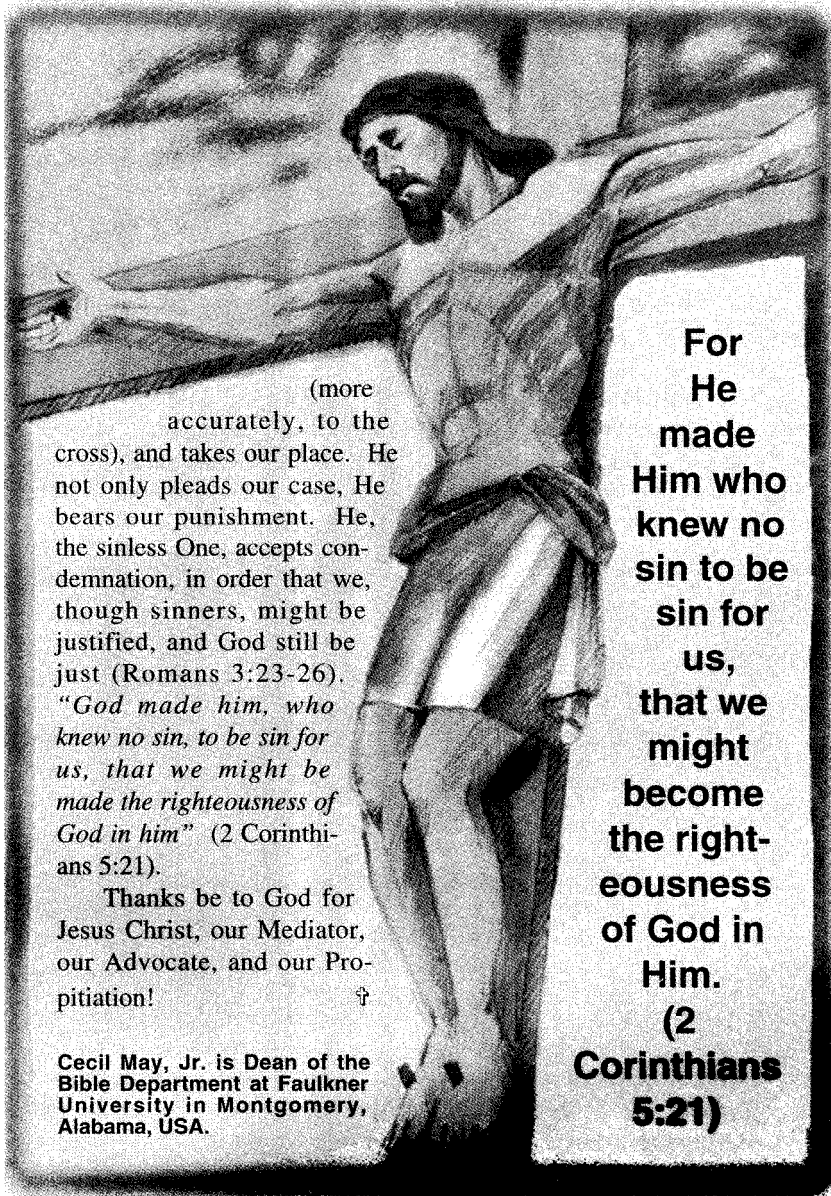
**Jesus is our advocate.** An advocate is one who pleads another's case before a tribunal or bar of

justice. John, the beloved apostle, said, *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"* (1 John 2:1). The word is "paraclete," the same word Jesus used for the Holy Spirit (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7, translated "Comforter" or "Helper"). Note that Jesus refers to the Spirit as "another paraclete" (14:16).

How wonderful! Our mediator, so carefully balanced as God and man, steps over to our side and pleads our case, becomes our lawyer for the defense!

**Jesus is our propitiation.** *"And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"* (1 John 2:2). A propitiation is a substitutionary sacrifice, an atonement. You see, we stand before God's bar of judgment "guilty as charged". We need a mediator. We need an advocate. But being guilty, and God being just, we need something more. Our mediator and advocate steps over to the gallows, as it were





(more accurately, to the cross), and takes our place. He not only pleads our case, He bears our punishment. He, the sinless One, accepts condemnation, in order that we, though sinners, might be justified, and God still be just (Romans 3:23-26).

*“God made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”* (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Thanks be to God for Jesus Christ, our Mediator, our Advocate, and our Propitiation! †

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

For  
He  
made  
Him who  
knew no  
sin to be  
sin for  
us,  
that we  
might  
become  
the right-  
eousness  
of God in  
Him.

(2  
Corinthians  
5:21)



# My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me?

Hollis Miller

The words of our Lord which serve as the title for this article bring forth the tenderest of emotions from the Christian heart. The cry of the Son of God is so filled with pain and anguish that only the hardest of hearts can fail to be deeply moved by it.

The cry of Jesus was not a plea for information, for He had taught His disciples that death awaited Him, and why it awaited. *“From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day”* (Matthew 16:21). Elsewhere He said: *“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to give His life a ransom for many”* (Matthew 20:28). Even though Jesus knew why He was on the cross, His knowledge did not deliver Him from the indescribable agony the cross brought to His tortured body.

It was on the cross that Jesus

was made sin for all men. *“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God through Him”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). To the Galatians Paul wrote: *“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us...”* (Galatians 3:13). The words of the apostle clearly teach that the penalty due sin was laid on Jesus. *“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed”* (Isaiah 53:5; cf. 1 Peter 2:24). No mortal can comprehend the love of God, but all reasonable men can understand enough about the cross of Christ to know that sin is a dark and terrible enemy of the human race.

*“God commendeth His love for us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8). †

Hollis Miller is a gospel preacher living in Cadiz, Kentucky, USA.

# Evolutionary Hoaxes

Dalton Key

We must remember that which evolutionists often fail to admit — that **evolution is not fact, but theory**. A fact can be proven; a theory cannot. Evolution has not, and never will be proven as fact; therefore, it is mere theory, and a fanciful theory at that.

Evolutionary scientists have a long record of false claims which cast a dark shadow of doubt upon their professional objectivity. In 1912 the “missing link” between monkey and man was said to have been discovered in a gravel pit in Sussex, England. This discovery was based upon a few bones. Later, after this so-called break-through had been recorded in many textbooks, it was learned that a few mischievous students had buried the bones, including the jawbone of an ape, as a prank on their professor.

And that is not all. The “Nebraska Man”, called, “Hesperopithecus”, supposedly millions of years old, was completely reconstructed from a single tooth. The tooth was later found to belong to a pig.

One of the most famous discov-

eries was that of the “Neanderthal Man.” This “missing link” was pictured as a slouched creature halfway between erect modern man and the knuckle-dragging gorilla. It was later discovered that the skeleton used for the model had in its knees a bone disease, which accounted for the slouch. The “missing link” is still missing.

Why must we go to such great lengths to establish a foundation for **disbelief** when **belief** is so very easy? The question of man’s origin is answered simply, completely, and plainly in the first few chapters of Genesis. For those of us who believe the Bible, there is no problem. God inspired Moses to write, *“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them...And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and he breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul”* (Genesis 1:27; 2:7) †

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

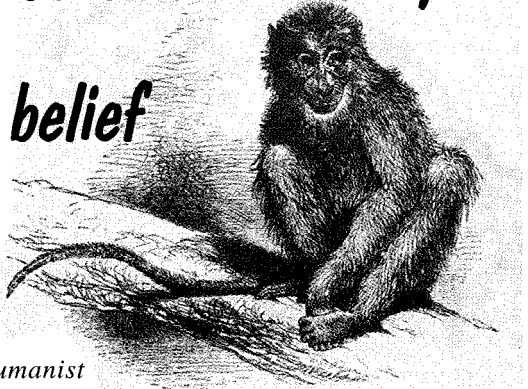
# The Fruit of Humanism, *the fruit of evolutionary belief*

**Bill Nicks**

The American Humanist Association published "*Humanist Manifesto I*" in 1933 and forty years later published "*Humanist Manifesto II*" in 1973.

The name "Humanist" is nothing more than a sophisticated word for "Atheist," or "Infidel." The latest "Manifesto" was signed by such people as Isaac Isamov, science-fiction author, Lester A. Kirkendall, Professor Emeritus of Oregon State University, called "the father of the sex education movement"; Lester Mondale, former President of the Fellowship of Religious Humanists and brother of Walter Mondale, who was Vice-President of the U.S. (1977-81); Joseph Fletcher, famous advocate of "Situation Ethics," and Betty Friedan, founder of the N.O.W. and called "the mother of the women's liberation movement."

The purpose of this article is to show that, unfortunately, through their influence in educational circles and all branches of the media, humanists have deceived many into



believing their dogma which they designed "for a secular society on a planetary scale."

(1) Under "Religion," it is avowed that "traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience do a disservice to the human species." Humanists regard the Bible as myths which do not pass the test of scientific evidence, thus they reject God and all the supernatural events recorded in the Bible.

(2) "Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful." Rather than accept the teachings of Jesus regarding heaven and hell, they affirm, "There is no credible evidence

## EVIDENCES

that life survives the death of the body.” Thus, they accept evolution, the propaganda of the atheist, as the answer to the matter of origins. This tool of atheism utterly eradicates any need for God as a basis for faith since they believe that science — which deals only with empirical knowledge, or what we learn through our five senses — is the final answer.

(3) This leads to the belief in the realm of moral standards and values that man’s ethics are “autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction.”

How do they arrive at this ethical knowledge, since there is no religious authority for guidance?

(4) “Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humankind possesses. There is no substitute; neither faith nor passion suffice in themselves.”

Therefore, humanists conclude, since we walk by sight and not by faith (2 Corinthians 5:7), we humans can set our own standards of ethics, and there are no sub-absolutes. We should be “tolerant” and “not prohibit, even by social sanctions, sexual expressions by consenting adults. The many varieties of sexual exploration should not in themselves be considered ‘evil.’”

When you hear anyone expressing tolerance toward homosexual behavior or fornication, remember that this came right out of the Humanist Manifesto II and not from the absolute standard of God’s Holy Word.

When men and women are not willing to speak out against these evils, they are walking and talking as the atheists. Humanists and those whom they have influenced are the out-spoken advocates of abortion, divorce, alternate lifestyles and promiscuity, all of which God hates (Malachi 2:16; Romans 13:9).

Furthermore, these people are the advocates who promote “the individual’s right to die with dignity, euthanasia, and the right to suicide.” After all, if it is permissible to take the life of a baby in the mother’s womb, it is equally right and “dignified” to take the life of an elderly person in an old folks’ home!

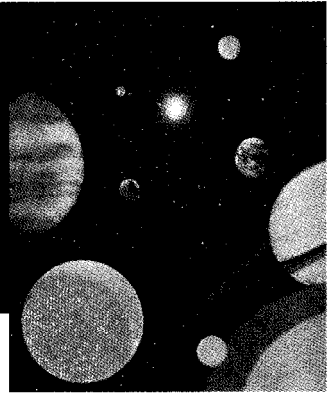
In fact, according to humanists, **there literally is no such thing as moral right and wrong, good and evil: there is only personal opinion followed by personal decision.**

Jesus said, “*Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Therefore, by their fruits ye shall know them*” (Matthew 7:19). †

**Bill Nicks has been involved in foreign mission work for many years, most recently in Trinidad.**

# Coincidence or Creation?

Foy E. Wallace, Jr.



*If you are in doubt about whether the earth "happened" by coincidence or was created by Divine will and power, consider the following facts about the earth, its atmosphere, and its relationship to the rest of the universe:*

The rotation of the earth on its axis, for instance, is 1,000 miles per hour at the equator. If it were 100 miles per hour instead, the days and nights would be ten times as long, the result of which would be the burning up of all vegetation each long day and the freezing of each surviving sprout each long night.

The sun, the source of light, has surface temperatures of 12,000 degrees Fahrenheit; the earth is far enough away for the right warmth, not too much, not too little. If the sun gave less radiation, the result would freeze us all; and if more, it would roast us all.

The slant of the earth is at an angle of 23 degrees, which gives seasons, and if not so tilted, the movement of the vapors of the sea would turn continents into ice.

If the moon were set at less distance from the earth, tides would submerge all continents twice daily, and the mountains would erode away.

If the crust of the earth were ten feet thicker, there would be no oxygen and all life would die.

If the atmosphere were thinner to the point of precision, meteors which hurl from their orbits and dart toward the earth and which now burn and consume in the atmosphere, would shoot to the ground and set fires over the whole earth.

All of this is proof that life was created, is governed by mathematical laws, and is not an accident. †

**Foy E. Wallace, Jr. (1896-1979) was an outstanding scholar, preacher, editor, writer, and Christian.**

# Waiting Room Bible Study

A five-minute Bible Study  
to spark your interest in God's word

Rom. 3:23 \_\_\_\_\_ have sinned. Does this include you and me? \_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 6:23 The wages of sin is eternal \_\_\_\_\_.

John 3:16 God \_\_\_\_\_ the world. He sent His \_\_\_\_\_ for us to believe  
in Him so that we may be saved.

Col. 1:13,14 Through God's Son, we have \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

Rom. 1:16 The \_\_\_\_\_ is the power of God unto salvation.

1 Cor. 15:1-5 The Gospel is the death, \_\_\_\_\_ and resurrection of  
Christ.

Mk. 16:15,16 In obeying the Gospel, we must \_\_\_\_\_ and be \_\_\_\_\_  
to be saved.

Rom. 10:10 With the mouth we make \_\_\_\_\_ unto salvation.

Acts 2:38 We must repent (turn) and be baptized for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Acts 2:47 When we are baptized the Lord adds us to His \_\_\_\_\_.

*(Hear: Romans 10:17; Believe: Hebrews 11:6; Repent: Acts 17:30;  
Confess: Acts 8:36,37; Be Baptized: Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, Matthew  
28:19,20)*

— John Mark Wilson

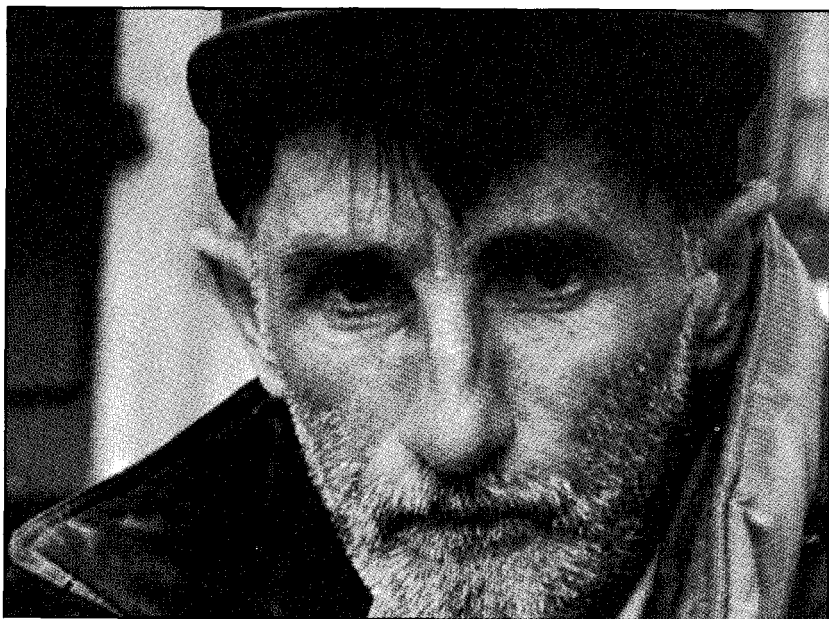
**H**ave you ever wondered about “the natural man” of whom Paul says, “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned*” (1 Corinthians 2:14)?

Is Paul saying that a sinner cannot understand the gospel of Christ without a personal miraculous power of the Holy Spirit being

given unto him? Of course, the passage does not say that, but what does it mean?

**A careful look** at the matter being discussed in this whole chapter, leading up to verse 14, will help us understand who Paul calls “the natural man”.

Beginning with verse 1 Paul states, “*I came to you. .. declaring unto you the testimony of God*” He continues; “*I determined not to*



# *The Natural Man*

Parker Henderson



## THE WORD OF GOD

*know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified*" (2:2). Paul also says, "...my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (2:4).

He gives the reason for such preaching, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (2:5). Paul calls the gospel he preached, "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory" (2:7). This message "none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (2:8). Paul makes it very clear that he is writing about the gospel of Christ, which was planned from eternity and which the princes of the world did not know, or they would not have crucified the Lord.

**The gospel of Christ** is that of which Paul continues to write, saying, "But as it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9). Here he shows that man, of himself, could not make up this gospel message, it did not come from man's heart but from God and, of necessity, it had to be revealed by God in order for man to have it.

In the very next verse Paul

makes it clear that God is the source of his information. As an apostle of Jesus Christ, "...God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit..." (2:10). In the next verse, Paul says, "...even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (2:11). Because man cannot think up, make up, nor of himself know the gospel of Christ; it had to be revealed by God to man!

**Man did not know the true gospel until God revealed it.** Paul states this in verse 12, "Now we (Paul speaking of himself, but it is also true of all apostles and prophets; Ephesians 3:5) have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God" (1 Corinthians 2:12).

**It is very clear that Paul received the gospel message from God by the Holy Spirit.** In the next verse Paul declares, "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual" (1 Corinthians 2:13). Paul received the gospel message by revelation of the Holy Spirit; this means that the words are the words which the Holy Ghost teaches. This is how all of the apostles and prophets received the gospel message.

**"The natural man" of the very next verse is held up in con-**

## THE WORD OF GOD

**trast to the apostle Paul. Who is this natural man?** He is the man who did not receive the revelation. He is like those princes who did not know the gospel. The point is *not that he is a sinner* but rather that *he is without the revelation of God's word*. He is the one under consideration all the way through the passage who did not know and understand the revealed message of God.

You may be wondering, **"To whom has God revealed that hidden mystery?"** The answer is given by the same apostle, *"How that by revelation he (God) made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit"* (Ephesians 3:3). God revealed the message by the Holy Spirit to the true apostles and prophets. In turn, they wrote that which had been a mystery in other ages, but was revealed to the apostles and prophets and, through them, to the world!

**How can the rest of us understand that revealed mystery?** Paul stated clearly, *"Whereby when ye read ye may understand"* his knowledge. To Timothy he also urged, **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to**

*be ashamed..."* (2 Timothy 2:15). Again, Peter added, *"...desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"* (1 Peter 2:2). It was Paul who also said, *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17).

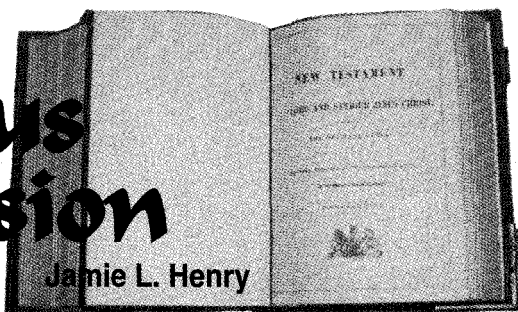
**Thus, "the natural man" was man without God's revelation.** The apostles and prophets were the **spiritual men** who received the long awaited "mystery", the gospel of Christ. That mystery has been revealed to the apostles and prophets who wrote the message. **When honest men read it, study it, hear it, they can understand what the apostles understood, believe and obey what the apostles believed and obeyed, and thus be saved.** This is called *"continuing in the apostles' doctrine"* (Acts 2:42). **The sword of the spirit is the word of God** (Ephesians 6:17). God's Spirit leads men today by the written word of the Spirit, the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is God's power unto salvation (Romans 1:16)

**The churches of Christ are pleading for all men to go back to the Bible!** Let's read the Bible; study the Bible; and obey the Bible! In doing this we can all really be the church of Christ that Jesus built so long ago. †

**Parker Henderson is director of the Trinidad School of Preaching, and long-time missionary to the country of Trinidad/Tobago.**

# Our Precious Possession

Jamie L. Henry



I brought something special with me today — my grandmother’s family Bible. Inside there is my family history: birthdays, anniversaries, baptisms, and deaths. This Bible has been in my family for a long time, and it is special to us. Your family probably has a special Bible, too, and you probably have your own personal copy that is special to you.

But did you know that there are many families who do not even own one copy of the Bible? A missionary to Russia told us that, in that country, hundreds of families would stand in line for hours in freezing temperatures in hopes of getting a Bible. He remembered one old grandmother who had waited a very long time, but all the Bibles had been given away before her turn came. This grandmother was very upset and just kept standing there, crying. She told the missionary that she wanted the Bible for her granddaughter, and it was her birthday. The missionary offered to buy the child a box of chocolates instead,

but the grandmother kept crying. She said, “The chocolates will only make my granddaughter happy for a little while, but this book can make our family happy forever.” The missionary felt so sad that he gave the grandmother the only Bible he had left — the one he was planning to give to his own grandson. The Russian grandmother was very grateful to receive this treasure.

This made me think of all the copies of the Bible my family has at home. We don’t even realize what a precious possession we have or think about how many people gave their lives for us to have an English Bible.

Many years ago, only the Catholic priests were able to read the Bible. In the year 1380, a man named **John Wycliffe** dared to translate the Latin Bible into English for the common man. Only twenty-seven copies of this translation were made. Can you imagine how long it took to copy the entire Bible by hand?

Then in 1525, **William Tyn-**

## THE WORD OF GOD

**dale** fled from England to Holland where he translated the Bible and made many copies using the new Gutenberg printing press. These Bibles were smuggled into England inside bags of grain. However, over 12,000 copies were bought and destroyed by the Catholic church, and Tyndale was burned at the stake. His dying prayer was, “Open the King of England’s eyes.”

Finally, King Henry VIII decided to leave the Catholic church so that he could divorce his wife. He began the Anglican church and, ironically, he then commissioned Tyndale’s friend, **Miles Coverdale**, to translate the Bible. In 1539 the first “English Authorized Version” — The Great Bible — was released, in spite of attempts by the Inquisition-General to destroy both the work and Coverdale.

When I think of what it took so that I can hold this Bible in my hand, I know it is not just a place to record family history. It is not just a book to carry to church services. It is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes (Romans 1:16), and it can make us happy forever. This book contains God’s own words (2 Timothy 3:16) and guides the way my family lives, works, and plays.

The Bible tells my family to pray for each other and those in need (James 5:16). When we sit

eat together, we always pray.

The Bible teaches us to visit the sick and shut-in (1 Peter 4:9), so many times my mom and dad take us to see the elderly of our community. Mrs. Sybil always gives me a hug and smells like perfume, and Mrs. Dot always offers me a drink. When we visit at the nursing home, the elderly think I am funny, and I make them laugh. One lady thought I was there to take her home with me.

The Bible also teaches us to share what we have (Acts 2:45), so my family tries to find ways to help others. We shared our time this summer by doing work-service in our community. It was fun to mow yards, wash windows, and pick apples for the shut-ins.

These are only a few of the important lessons God has for us in His Word. I don’t want to take my family’s most precious possession for granted. By studying the Bible, my family will grow closer to each other and to God. Like Joshua and his family in the Old Testament, we will continue to serve the Lord by reading and doing his Word. *“...choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD”* (Joshua 24:15). †

**Jamie L. Henry is a young Christian who participates in the “Lads to Leaders” program. He lives with his parents, Larry and Tammy Henry, in Dennis, Mississippi, USA.**

## THE WORD OF GOD

**A**cts records the fact that God's Word was preached with boldness (Acts 4:31) everywhere Jesus' followers went (Acts 8:4), to Samaritans (Acts 8:25), and even to other countries (Acts 11:19; 13:5,46, 14:25; 15:35,36; 16:32; 17:13; 18:11; 19:10). Paul's customary approach was to discuss God's Word, the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16); "*Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures*" (Acts 17:2). The apostles saw the

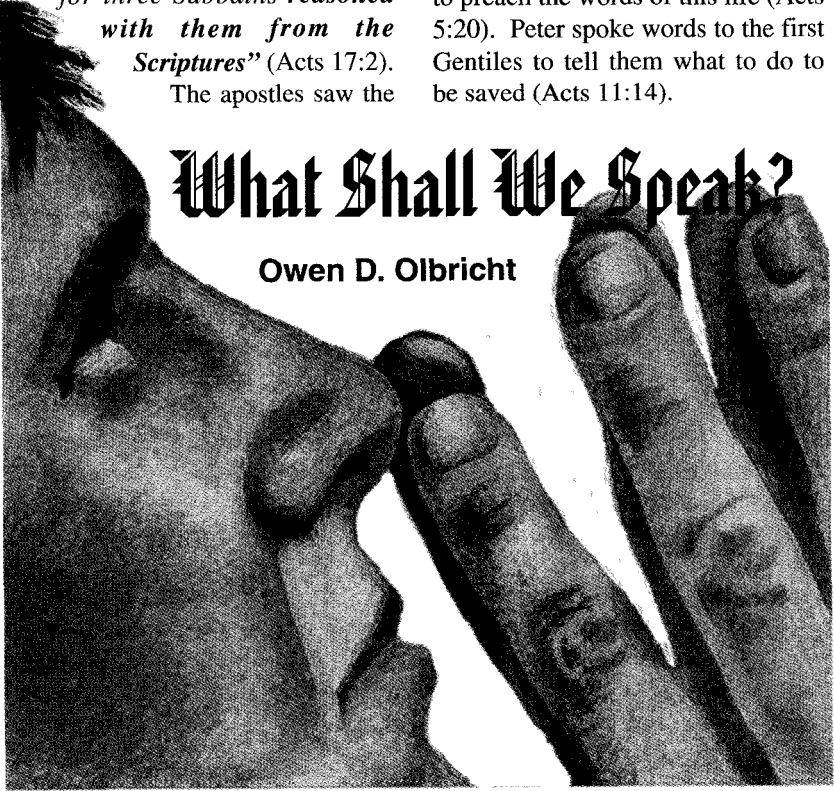
importance of the Word. They were not sidetracked to serve tables, which others could do, but devoted themselves to preaching the Word (Acts 6:2-4).

### **Why Preach the Word?**

We are to preach God's Word, which is the Gospel of our salvation (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 1:16), because it can make people "*wise for salvation*" (2 Timothy 3:15; Acts 13:26). An angel told the apostles to preach the words of this life (Acts 5:20). Peter spoke words to the first Gentiles to tell them what to do to be saved (Acts 11:14).

# **What Shall We Speak?**

**Owen D. Olbricht**



### Response to the Word

Those who had a readiness of mind received God's Word (Acts 17:11); however, those whose minds were closed rejected it (Acts 13:46, 28:26,27).

Receiving God's Word brought people to believe (Acts 4:4; 17:11, 12) and to be baptized (Acts 2:41; 8:12; 18:8). The pattern in the book of Acts is that, when the Word was preached, those who received it believed and were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. This was true of those on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-41), of those in Samaria (Acts 8:12,13), the Ethiopian (Acts 8:25-39), the first Gentile converts (Acts 10:47,48; 11:1), Lydia (Acts 16:14,15), the jailer in Philippi (Acts 16:32,33), and the converts in Corinth (Acts 18:8).

When the report was given concerning those who had believed and been baptized, the statement is made that **they received the Word** (Acts 2:41; 8:14; 11:1), but **not** that *they received Jesus as their personal Savior, prayed the sinner's prayer, received the Holy Spirit, or any other such statements.*

### Conclusions

From the preceding information we can draw these conclusions:

1. The Scriptures are to be respected and preached (2 Timothy 4:2).
2. God's Word will save those

who receive it.

3. The proper response to the Word is faith and baptism, followed by a life dedicated to Jesus.

4. Those who received the Word were baptized for the forgiveness of their sins.

5. Salvation comes to those who obey Jesus when they hear the name of Jesus and the kingdom preached (Acts 8:4,5,12).

6. Both the Samaritans (Acts 8:14) and the Gentiles (Acts 11:1) "*received the word*".

7. The description given of the response on the day of Pentecost — when preaching forgiveness in Jesus' name began (Luke 24:47) — was that those who received the Word were baptized. This must mean that receiving the Word includes baptism in order to be saved (Mark 16:15,16), for the Word can make us wise to salvation, and baptism was the result of receiving it (Acts 2:41).

8. Preachers who do not preach the Word today are failing to bring people to salvation.

9. Failure to preach the Word is to fail to follow the instruction of Jesus and the precedent set by the early church.

10. Receiving God's Word is the only way to salvation, yesterday, today, and until the end of time. †

Owen D. Olbricht is a writer living in Sherwood, Arkansas, USA.

# “Synecdoche”

Jack Harriman

syn-ec-do-che (si nek' da ke) *n.* a figure of speech in which a part is used for the whole, or the whole for a part. (Webster's Unabridged Dictionary)

The New Testament writers never used the Greek equivalent of this word, “synecdoche”, but they often did what it means. In their speaking and writing, they used a figure of speech by which the whole of a thing is put for a part, or a part for the whole. Jesus prayed, “Give us this day our daily bread.” A part of His diet (bread) stood for all of His diet. A knowledge and application of this figure of speech is necessary to properly understand the will of God for us. Let me illustrate.

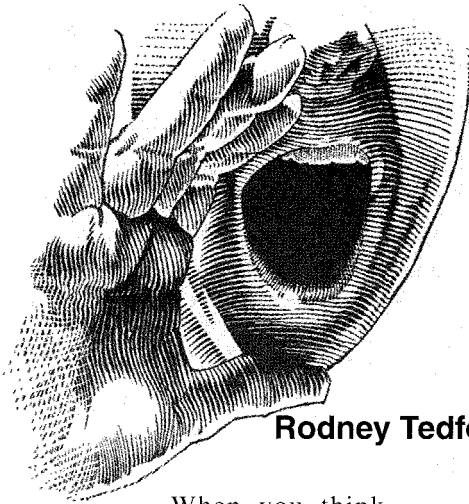
As to *how* and *when* one becomes a saved person, the New Testament seems to make several contradictory statements. Ephesians 2:8 says that man is saved “by

*grace through faith*,” but Romans 10:10 says that “*confession is made to salvation*.” And Acts 11:18 says that “*God has granted to the Gentiles repentance to life*.” Still different is 1 Peter 3:21, which says that “*baptism saves us*.”

This could be very confusing unless one recognizes the fact that *faith is a figure of speech* which stands for the whole of man's response. *So are confession and repentance and baptism, as used in these quotes!* This is why we must study **all** that the Lord has said on this subject, and others, before we begin to draw our conclusions. †

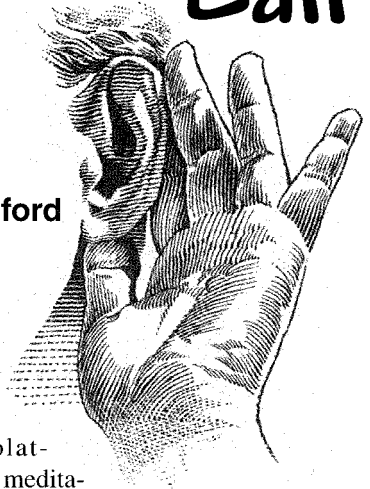
**Jack Harriman preaches the Gospel in Fayetteville, Arkansas, USA.**

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek (Romans 1:16).



Rodney Tedford

# Hearing the Call



When you think about it, a person's religious perspective can always be traced back to his understanding of God's calling of man: *how that call comes and what that call contains.*

So many measure their spiritual life from that moment when they "received God's call." Countless others wait patiently for their own special saving encounter with God. Whether perceived as received or expected, this way of God calling man into a personal relationship with Him is evidently open to wide variety and personal interpretation.

One feels he is called by means of a near-death experience; while another has a dream. One is called to join an established denomination; while another is led to start his own. One is called to worship in silent,

isolated meditation; while another is inspired by Hard Rock with a "Christian" message.

Does God actually call individuals in these many different ways? If so, how can anyone do what Peter tells us to do in 2 Peter 1:10, "*make your call and election sure*"?

If we want to know *how* God calls people, should we go to humans for guidance? Wouldn't the most reliable answer to this question come from the One doing the calling? *According to God's own Word, how does He call us?*



## Called by the Gospel of Christ

Paul reminded the Thessalonian Christians of their call from God in 2 Thessalonians 2:13,14: “*God, from the beginning, chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

This same description of God’s call is beautifully stated in 2 Timothy 1:9,10: “*Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*”

So, when God calls someone “for salvation through sanctification”, He does so **by the gospel**. And when the calling is “according to His own purpose and grace”, it is **through the gospel**.

Remember we are wanting to know how **God** says that He calls us. The apostle Paul, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote that it is “**through the gospel**”. So, what is that gospel?

## The Gospel of Christ Preached

Let’s hear from the apostle Paul

again, this time in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4:

“*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain.*

*For I delivered to you first of all that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.*”

According to Paul, the gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. We can find this prominently at the heart of the preaching recorded in the book of Acts. It was in Peter’s first sermon on the day of Pentecost:

“*Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know — Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.*” (Acts 2:22-24)

Over and over again, we hear the apostles present this gospel.

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

(Acts 3:13-15; 4:10; 5:30; 10:37-43) So unique was this gospel that Paul warned in Galatians 1:8, “*But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach **any other gospel** to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.*”

So, we know how God calls men: **through the gospel**. We know *what that gospel must be* for it to be God’s calling: **the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ**. So, what should we do about all the other ways that people claim to be called? What should we do about all the anticipation for God’s calling to fit our expectations? What should we do about these “other gospels” to which people think they have been called?

**“Your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:5)**

The first two chapters of 1 Corinthians were written to remind those Christians that **the gospel that they obeyed was thankfully not from men but God**. It was not what *the Jews or the Greeks* were looking for (1 Corinthians 1:22). “Christ crucified” was *a stumbling block* to the Jews and *foolishness* to the Greeks (1 Corinthians 1:23). But God chose the preaching of **the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ** to be “*the power of God and the wisdom of God*” (1

Corinthians 1:24). “*That no flesh should glory In His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God — and righteousness and sanctification and redemption — that, as it is written, He who glories, let him glory in the Lord*” (1 Corinthians 1:29-31).

So we must all determine with Paul “*not to know anything among you except **Jesus Christ and Him crucified***” (1 Corinthians 2:2). Paul quoted the prophet Isaiah in 1 Corinthians 2:9 about what we might imagine God’s call to be: “*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*”

That’s what makes Paul’s following affirmation in 1 Corinthians 2:12 so very important to all of us: “*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.*”

From our study thus far we have learned *how God calls all men*: through **the gospel**. We know what that gospel must be for it to be the true calling of God: **the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ**. And we know that this gospel will not be controlled or changed by what any man expects or desires — it is the one Gospel,

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

delivered once and for all to mankind, and any who would try to change it are under the curse of God.

Now, let's assume that all these statements of truth are believed to this point. **What would one do in order to respond to God's one and only call through the gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ?** How does one "accept the call"?

### Obey the Gospel

How does one obey the teaching of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ? Must we all hang on a wooden cross, be buried in a borrowed tomb, and be raised from the dead on the third day?

Thanks to more of God's revealed Word, **no!!!** Paul told how those in Rome **obeyed** the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ in Romans 6:3-5: "*Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.*"

Paul called this *response of baptism* into Christ, **obeying** "that

*form of doctrine to which you were delivered"* (Romans 6:17). Thus we know **God's chosen way** to answer His call!

In Acts 2:38 the very people who crucified Jesus, who heard the call of the gospel in Peter's sermon, were given the same way to **obey the gospel**: "*Repent and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" And that's exactly what about three thousand of them did! That's what those who hear and believe the gospel call will do today: "*Then those who gladly received his word were baptized*" (Acts 2:41).

**No sensation** can replace the power of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ. **No emotional high or low** can match the truth of His death, burial and resurrection. **No human imagination** can compare to the reality of God's true call.

Thank God for the simplicity and dependability of the gospel of Jesus Christ! Thank God for His willingness to forgive our sins! Thank God you still have time to believe and obey the call of the gospel! †

**Rodney Tedford worked in Trinidad for eighteen months, and now returns often to teach in the Trinidad School of Preaching. He and his family work with the Ash Street congregation in Perry, Florida, USA.**

# The Purpose of Baptism

— Roger E. Dickson

The New Testament records the event of thousands of people who were baptized (Acts 2:41; 6:7; 8:6,12). They were immersed in obedience to the command of Christ for the remission of their sins.

**1. Obedience to the gospel:** The gospel is the historical fact of the death of Jesus for our sins. It is the event of His burial and resurrection to give us hope of eternal life (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). This historical event is communicated to us through the inspired word of God. Unless one obeys the gospel, he cannot be saved (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 1 Peter 4:17). When one is baptized he is buried with Christ into His death in order to be raised from the waters of baptism to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:12). Therefore, the mode of *baptizo* is immersion into the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in order to be saved.

**2. Remission of sins:** When one is immersed with Jesus in obedience to the gospel, he comes into contact with His blood. He thus receives forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), as his sins are washed away (Acts 22:16; Timothy 3:5). God subsequently adds the immersed believer to His spiritual family, the church, which is made up of people who are in a covenant relationship with Him (Acts 2:47).

## Candidates for Baptism

There are definite prerequisites that qualify one for baptism. (1) Only **those who can be taught** are to be baptized (Matthew 28:19,20). (2) Only **those who can understand** the command to be immersed are to be immersed (Acts 2:38). (3) Only **men** and **women** are to be immersed (Acts 8:12). (4) Only **those who can hear** the teaching of the gospel are to be immersed (Mark 16:15,16; John 6:45). (5) Only **those who can believe** are to be immersed (Mark 16:16; John 8:24; 8:12; 18:8). (6) Only **those who can receive the word** are to be immersed (Acts 2:41). (7) Only **those who can repent** are to be immersed (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9). Therefore, **baptism is only for adults who can make a free-moral choice to be immersed.** †

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



# Dead or Alive?

J. Lee Roberts

*“For as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ”*  
(1 Corinthians 15:22).

**All who reject God’s instructions and disobey Him**, as did Adam, are separated from God by their sins and are spiritually dead. When we, along with Adam, follow the advice of the serpent, instead of listening to the Lord, we are cut off from the source of spiritual life and are no longer in fellowship with our Creator. This sin, this rejection of His wisdom, is universal as “all have sinned”. This is to be “in Adam” and to be **spiritually dead**. Jesus spoke of this state when He told the **dead** to bury their **dead** and when he pronounced the rebellious young prodigal as “**dead**” (Matthew

8:22; Luke 15:32). Paul described widows who live only for pleasure as **dead while living** (1 Timothy 5:6).

**All who follow Adam’s disobedience are also dead!** Through sin, all die in Adam. Read Ephesians 2:1-6: “*You were dead through the trespasses and sins in which you once lived, following the course of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work among those who are disobedient. Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, ... like the rest of mankind.*”

*“But God, who is rich in mercy,*

## DOCTRINE TO LIVE BY

*out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were **dead through our trespasses**, made us alive together with Christ ... and raised us up with Him."*

**All spiritual life is in Christ**, as we follow His example of total love and obedience to the Father and to His will. Convicted of the enormity of our sins through the Spirit's work in the message of the Cross, we turn from the love and practice of sin to love God and His righteousness.

We are made **spiritually alive** when we reject Adam's example and obey Christ in baptism. We are buried with Him and raised to walk in holiness, our hearts changed to hate evil and love godliness, — to cease serving sin and to become servants of righteousness.

*"Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

*"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross" (Colossians 2:12-14).*

*"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love*

*the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.*

*"Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:14-16).*

*"For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.*

*"But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior..." (Titus 3:3-7).*

**Prayerfully read** these additional scriptures: Romans 6:1-19; 1 Peter 1:22-25; 3:1-17; Acts 2:37-42; 1 John 2:3-6; Titus 2:11-14.

**In Christ we are made alive** and are being changed into His likeness, always taking on more and more of His attributes — loving as He loved, forgiving as He forgave, as the Spirit works in us. †

**J. Lee Roberts, formerly a missionary to the French world, now worships and works with the Greenlawn church in Lubbock, Texas, USA.**

# the love of god

Allan E. Flaxman

*“God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).*

How horrible is the Bible picture of Hell! Many years ago I listened to a sermon delivered by one of our outstanding preachers, based on the Bible description of Hell. It was not funny. It was designed to make his audience “sit up and take notice.” It certainly got that response from me, and I feel confident that it got the same result from the large audience.

Hell is a place of Darkness! Hell is a place of Fire! Hell is a place of suffering and weeping and gnashing of teeth! In Hell the condemned will remember all the events on earth they wish they could forget! For example, the times they ignored those who were trying to encourage them to become Christians. Hell is Eternal — it will never end!

You can stay out of Hell by obeying the Gospel, but if you once get into Hell you will never get out! Not a pretty picture! And remember, God painted such a graphic picture, doubtless, so that it would be a warning to everyone through the ages

(Matthew 13:42-50; 18:8,9; 8:12; Jude 13; Luke 16:27-31; Matthew 25:32; 2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Hell is the ultimate destiny of all unforgiven sinners (Romans 6:23). That, then, raises the question, “What is sin?” Also, “How does God regard sin that He would prepare a place as horrible and as horrifying as Hell is, for unforgiven sinners?”

Perhaps we should begin by noting that God’s present attitude toward sin is not new! In the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, God promised Adam and Eve that to eat the one forbidden fruit would bring about their death. Thousands of years later we are all too well aware that God kept that promise. We have learned, too, that God never fails to keep any promise He ever makes. In the days of Noah, the whole world population, except for eight people, was drowned in the Flood. Why? Because of sin. And, as the story continues on through the Old Testament until the coming of

## SALVATION

Christ, God's same attitude toward sin remains (Genesis 2:17; 6:1-8:14).

The New Testament takes up the story, continuing to emphasize God's severe attitude toward sin. "Sin," it says, "*is the transgression of God's law*" (1 John 3:4; Romans 4:15). It further says, "*He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin*" (James 4:17).

Gets one to thinking, doesn't it? How sinful is sin? The New Testament speaks of the "sinfulness of sin" (Romans 7:13). It also points out that the sacrificial blood of animals has no power to actually "take away" sin (that is, to cause the sinner to actually experience God's forgiveness). God continues to view sin any way but lightly (Hebrews 10:4).

But, in this Christian Age, a new event has been introduced into the equation. "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,*" says Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15. "*For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16).

Is this a "back-flip" on God's part? Is He having "second thoughts" about Hell? Not at all. The advent of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world was a God-planned event! Planned, in fact, "*Before the foundation of the*

*world*" (Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:18-20; Revelation 13:8). How marvelous and how wonderful His love, that He should go to these extreme measures — giving His "*Only begotten Son*" as the only qualifying and suitable sacrifice to keep sinful man out of Hell!

And that brings forward yet another thought, raised in the Hebrews letter. The inspired writer says, "*He that despised Moses' Law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified an unholy things, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?*" (Hebrews 10:28,29). No wonder we are reminded immediately, "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" Vengeance indeed belongs rightfully to Him (verses 30,31)!

Yet, think of it. "*The wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). Hell remains more horrible than we can imagine! And, God so loved us all that "*While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*" (Romans 5:8). †

**Allan E. Flaxman, after having preached the Gospel for many years, is now an active member of the Blacktown church in Sydney, Australia.**



# Can Salvation Be A Gift And Still Be Conditional?

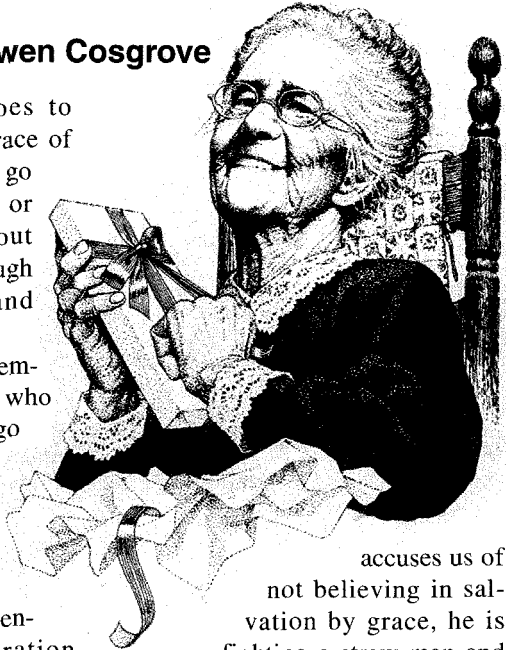
Owen Cosgrove

If any sinner ever goes to Heaven, it will be by the grace of God. None of us deserves to go to Heaven. None can earn or merit his salvation. Without Christ and God's mercy through Him, we are hopelessly and utterly lost.

I have never known a member of the Church of Christ who claimed that he deserved to go to Heaven because he had obeyed the Gospel. I have never known of a gospel preacher who taught that we are saved by our own works. In forty years of extensive reading in Restoration Movement literature, I have never read where any of our brethren taught that one can earn his own salvation.

I have heard our people sing through the years "The Old Rugged Cross", "Amazing Grace", "His Grace Reaches Me", "Without Him I Could Do Nothing", and dozens of other songs about the matchless grace of Jesus, and the necessity of that grace in our salvation.

So when some sectarian teacher



accuses us of not believing in salvation by grace, he is fighting a straw man and jousting at windmills.

**Are we saved by grace?**

Answer yes or no! Emphatically the answer is "Yes!" Are we saved by our own works? Answer yes or no! Emphatically the answer is "No."

One more question needs to be addressed. Although God has given His grace to us through Jesus Christ, is anything expected of us? **Can salvation be a gift and still have conditions?**

- ◆ God gave Canaan to Israel (Joshua 1:2,3,11). Did they have any responsibility to appropriate it?
- ◆ Jesus taught us to pray, *"Give us this day our daily bread"* (Matthew 6:11; 1 Timothy 6:17). Does this remove all responsibility for us to work (2 Thessalonians 3:8)?
- ◆ God has given us His Word (Acts 7:38; 2 Peter 1:3). Do we therefore not need to study, because He has **given** it to us?
- ◆ Christ gives us His peace (John 14:27). Do we have any obligation to be at peace and to be peacemakers?

### Can salvation be a gift and still have conditions?

*"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God"* (Romans 5:1,2).

*"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world..."* (Titus 2:11-12). †

**Owen Cosgrove preaches for the Northside Church of Christ in Waxahachie, Texas, USA.**

### WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

#### SPEAK.

When our hearts have been filled with **faith** in Jesus as God's Son, and we have determined to mold our behavior after His life by **repenting** of (turning away from) our own sinful living, what must we do next?

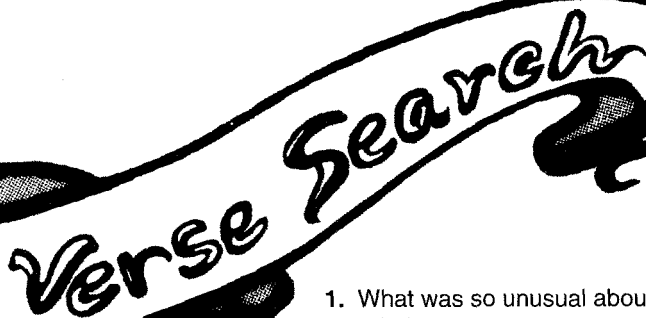
Jesus said, *"...whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in heaven"* (Matthew 10:32, 33).

Believers in the first century made **the confession**, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God"* (Acts 8:37). We, too, must confess our faith in Him if we want to be saved. The confession, which begins with **words** concerning our faith, must then **permeate our daily life** so that life itself becomes a continual confession of our faith in the Sonship of Jesus and of our promised salvation in Him.

#### NEXT:

*What must I do to be saved?*

#### BE BURIED.



# Verse Search

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

1. What was so unusual about Cornelius' conversion? (V. 1).
2. What happened when Peter returned to Jerusalem? (V. 2).
3. The voice Peter had heard from heaven said, "\_\_\_\_\_ cleansed \_\_\_\_\_ common." (V. 9).
4. Did other Christians go with Peter, to serve as witnesses? (V. 12).
5. What happened, as Peter began to preach? (V. 15).
6. What promise did Peter remember, as a result of this manifestation of God's approval of Cornelius becoming a Christian? (V. 16).
7. What conclusive reasoning did Peter use to settle the matter? (V. 17).
8. How did the Jerusalem church respond? (V. 18).
9. What happened to Christians who were scattered abroad after the stoning of Stephen? (V. 19).
10. Men from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ came to \_\_\_\_\_. There they taught \_\_\_\_\_ about the \_\_\_\_\_. (V. 20).
11. What response did these people make? (V. 21).
12. When the church at Jerusalem heard of their conversion, who did they send to them? (V. 22).
13. What did Barnabas do when he came and had seen how these people had responded to God's grace that had been offered to them by way of the preaching of the Gospel? (V. 23).
14. How does their belief, turning to the Lord, and being added to the Lord compare with the record in Acts 2:37-47? (Vs. 21-24).
15. When Barnabas found Paul, what did they do? (V. 26).
16. *Where were disciples first called Christians?* (V. 26).

[See inside of back cover for answers.]



# The Identical Church:

by Identity and Determinate Qualifications



Joe C. Magee

*“So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch” (Acts 11:26).*

*“Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you” (Romans 16:16).*

There is a difference between *identical* and *determined*. Identical

is defined as, **1:** being the same; **2:** having such close resemblance as to be essentially the same. Determine is defined as, **1:** to fix conclusively or authoritatively; **2:** to decide by judicial sentence; **3:** to settle or decide by choice of alternatives or possibilities.

If I see a mound of red earth with a hole in the middle and red

## THE CHURCH

ants going in and out, I identify that to be a red ant hill. I have not determined it to be a red ant hill. That was already determined before I came upon the scene. Even if I mistakenly identified it as a mole hill it would still be a red ant hill. I would not change its characteristics by calling it something different.

qualities that merited his identifying them as “churches of Christ”.

But why did Paul spend so much time and effort writing to various congregations, pleading with them to correct serious flaws in their midst? Was it because they were in danger of losing their **determinate qualifications** that would affect their

**There are certain qualities that can develop within a congregation that can so contradict the determined characteristics of the Lord's church as to cause it to lose its identity as His body.**

The disciples of Christ were called Christians first at Antioch. This identifying term came about quite naturally because of their obvious Christ-like characteristics and loyalty to the Savior. But suppose that somewhere along the way they had cast off those noble characteristics and returned to the ways of the world. Or suppose they had introduced into their daily activities things that were foreign to that which Jesus had determined for His saints. Would they still have been Christians?

Paul wrote to the church in Rome, “*The churches of Christ salute you.*” This greeting reflected Paul’s attitude toward, and identity of, certain congregations scattered throughout the land. These surely possessed certain predetermined

**identity** as churches of Christ? How long would the church in Corinth have been identified *as the church* if they had not corrected their faults and repented of their sins?

There are certain qualities that can develop within a congregation that can so contradict the determined characteristics of the Lord’s church as to cause it to lose its identity as His body: false teaching, rebellious members, unqualified elders and deacons, hatred, envy, etc., etc. These cannot be counterbalanced by a sign on the door. They must be recognized, dealt with, and corrected. Not to do so will lead to tragedy and eternal condemnation. †

**Joe C. Magee preaches for the church of Christ in Carthage, Missouri, USA.**

# Religious Division

Jerry Jenkins

There is no greater sorrow than religious division. It is sad to lose a loved one, have a child to be resentful and rebellious, or have a divorce in the family, but the deepest possible sorrow for one who loves the work of the Lord is division in the local congregation. This sorrow is so great because it undervalues the church.

Jesus displayed His estimate of the value of the church in the garden where “...*in agony He prayed more earnestly: and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground*” (Luke 22:44), and in the blood freely shed in His scourging (John 19:1), and as they drove the thin spikes of steel into His feet and hands, and His blood splattered on the cross and ground (Luke 23:33). Each drop which poured from His body was the price paid for the church (Ephesians 5:23; Acts 20:28). He certainly did not consider the church to be insignificant or non-essential.

Religious division hurts so badly, for it alienates family and friends. Some of my relatives will fellowship with me in my home, eat food provided, sleep in our beds,

but on Sunday will not break bread in the Memorial Feast together.

Religious division hurts, for it takes the focus from the primary purpose of the church, which is to teach the Gospel to those lost in sin, and makes the incidental become dominant in our thinking.

Religious division offers, at least in the minds of the non-committed, excuses for not worshipping God. I think of so many who dropped out of service through the years because there was difficulty in the local congregation.

Religious division hinders religious neighbors and friends from seeing and obeying the truth because we have failed to be the light on the hill (Matthew 5:16). It has been stated, “I would rather be the Roman soldier who pierced the physical body of Christ as one who, by gossip, misrepresentations, and anger, divided His spiritual body.”

May we never be one who in any way would be responsible for religious division. †

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

# Esteem Them Highly In Love

Dale Grissom

*“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men. Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil”* (1 Thessalonians 5:12-22).

The apostle Paul was here pleading with the church in Thessalonica to get to know, personally and intimately, those who labored among them and were over them. He further admonished the brethren to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake.

Too often we do not really know those who work so hard

among us, those whose efforts keep the church active and alive. Perhaps we need to be reminded, as the Thessalonian brethren were, that we have a responsibility to know and esteem others highly in love because of the work they are doing in service to the Lord.

We are to be a happy and joyful people; after all, we have the hope and promise of eternal life. We are to be a prayerful people, not just in time of need or want, but continually. We are to be an energetic and excited people, desiring to share the hope we have in Christ with others. And we are to hold fast to that which is good — never compromising the truth — and carefully avoid **all appearance** of evil.

When a congregation of God’s people works hard together to spread the borders of His kingdom, then there will be an appreciation of one another and of the effort that is put forth. There is no place in the church for disunity and division; our energy must be spent in serving the Lord. †

**Dale Grissom works with the church of Christ in Dexter, Missouri, USA.**

# *Reasons Why* the Church Should Put a Priority on Building a Loving Church



**Clayton Pepper**

## **Because a loving church is a *united church*.**

Acts 2:46,47 describes the early Christians in Jerusalem as united. “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common” (Acts 2:44). This church was united. They enjoyed being together. There was a bond between the Christians.

The church today should also be so bonded in unity that the members enjoy the time that they can spend together. Unity is vital for a people to work as a group to accomplish the Lord’s purpose. Any division, even in understanding the work of the church, can defeat the church’s efforts to accomplish the works of love. Whenever there has been division among



## CHURCH GROWTH

members of God's own church family, it has handicapped His cause. Someone has well said, "The price of a divided Christendom is an unbelieving world."

### **Because a loving church holds and involves members.**

When love does not bind Christians together, some ask the question, "How many times a week is one *required* to attend church services?" Love in the Jerusalem church enabled Luke to say of them, "*So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart*" (Acts 2:46).

Studies on church unity and fellowship would cause us to conclude that fulfilling the need for close friends in the church through a sincere fellowship that binds is difficult to achieve in large groups. While some may, at first, question the value of small groups, the truth of this assessment is seen in the fact that we are social creatures whose needs will inevitably be met by *somebody, somewhere, who will invest enough time in a relationship to make it meaningful*. Large churches face a greater problem developing these close relationships than small churches.

### **Because a loving church will see souls being saved.**

When people praise God for His blessings, have favor with fellow Christians, and keep their focus outward, souls will be brought to Christ. There is grave danger of the church turning inward and becoming a chubby collection of nice folks existing only for the edification of the saints. Instead of being fishers of men, they are keepers of the aquarium! When they reach that point, there is more joy on earth over one new church building than over 99 souls that repent! Not so with the Jerusalem church whose leaders were the men Jesus trained. Luke wrote, "*...praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved*" (Acts 2:47).

Is your congregation seeing edification that results in **love** and **multiplication**? If not, do not be misled: **it is losing its direction!**

## ***Deteriorated Love***

The church at Ephesus is the story of a church who left its first love (Revelation 2). Many good things were said about this church. They were

## CHURCH GROWTH

holding fast to the correct doctrine. They apparently knew the difference between truth and error, but they did not recognize that they had lost the zeal that was characteristic of them when they had left worshiping idols and burned their books, turning to the true God to obey the gospel (Acts 19).

**There are churches today that are absolutely true to the Scriptures doctrinally but are empty, spiritually.** The *carnal nature* of humanity can *fight* but cannot perform *spiritual works*. In such churches, whatever devotion is left is largely focused on negative things. Their lovelessness may manifest itself in a number of ways: (1) They may be extremely conservative, unable to distinguish between the changeable (methods) and the unchangeable (doctrine). (2) They may be governed by negative attitudes such as, “I don’t think that will work here” or “It costs too much,” or “I don’t believe we are ready for that.” (3) They focus on the *defense* of the gospel while neglecting the *advancing* of the gospel. (4) They are quick to accuse others of apostasy, yet are not themselves following the command of our Lord to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). (5) Often these churches are like James said: “*But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there*” (James 3:14-16).

The admonition of the Lord to the church at Ephesus is applicable to church members whose love has deteriorated: “*I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works....*” They were warned of what would happen if they did not!

### Conclusion

Where are you and your congregation in relation to being the loving person or people that we must be? If you claim to be a Christian but are not concerned about others — that is, you are not concerned about helping carry out the **great commission** (Matthew 28:18-20) — are you really obeying the **great commandment** (John 13:34,35)?

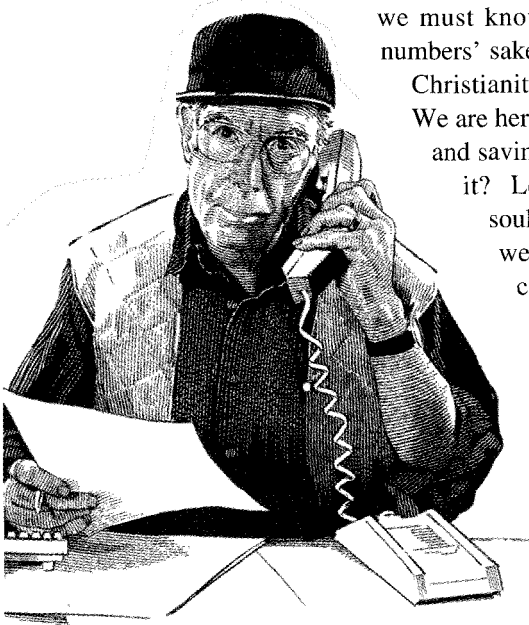
Is your congregation seeing edification that results in **love** and **multiplication**? If not, do not be misled: **it is losing its direction!** †

**Clayton Pepper, now deceased, devoted much of his energy as a gospel preacher to study and promotion of “church growth”.**

*We all want* the church to grow, but we must know that church growth for numbers' sake is ugly. There is more to Christianity than our collective ego. We are here to glorify God by seeking and saving the lost. How can we do it? Let's examine some simple soul-winning principles, things we can do to be evangelistically effective.

### ◆ **Point to Jesus.**

Become a John the Baptist. John said, "*Behold the Lamb of God.*" This is a notable characteristic of John; he was more interested in Jesus than in himself. Personal ego can be a



# Church Growth And Me

**Randall Caselman**

major stumbling block in our soul-winning efforts — too much emphasis on self, our opinions, interpretations, and ideas. It is easy for us to be wrapped up in self-esteem, intimidation, self-aggrandizement, and assertiveness. No. No. Point to Jesus. Be willing to lose self for the sake of souls. John lost disciples. They left him to follow Jesus.

◆ **Be Transparent.** Evangelism is our getting out of the way so others can see Jesus through us. Paul said we are to become transparent. "*I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.*" Jesus said, "*If I be lifted up, I will draw all men to me.*" Are we willing to become transparent? Lift up Jesus.

◆ **Create Curiosity.** We need to take this soul winning tip from the Master Himself. A man came to Jesus asking, "*Rabbi, where do you live?*" Do you know what Jesus' answer was? "*Come see.*" Later this individual,

## CHURCH GROWTH

Andrew, became a disciple, an Apostle, but it all began in curiosity. People are searching, and rightly so. Paul taught in His Mars Hill discourse that God had placed within us a mental mechanism that causes us to search, to look, to reach out — to our creator, to God. Invite neighbors to come and see. Come see our love, our sincerity, our search for truth, our friendliness. Come see Jesus demonstrated in His people.

◆ **Be a Friend.** Friendship evangelism works. Most of us are in the church because of friendship. Someone cared enough, loved enough to invite us, bring us, teach us, and show us Jesus. Books, articles, and seminars on relationships are in big demand. People are interested in relationships — becoming a part of something, somebody. Friends, family, fellowship, neighbor are important. The truth is, we cannot, will not, survive without this concept. God created us for relationships. The Bible declares, *“It is not good that man should be alone.”* Jesus called His first disciples from among friends and kin. Andrew brought his brother. The lady at Jacob’s well went to her friends and town folk saying, *“Come see the Christ.”*


Church growth demands more Christianity than simply coming to a meeting at the building three times a week. We must offer Jesus to our children, our spouse, our kinfolk, neighbor, fellow worker, yes, even our enemies. Surely most of those who love us would be honored to be asked to “come and see — meet Jesus”. †

**Randall Caselman preaches for the Lord’s church in Bella Vista, Arkansas, USA.**

### Omissions

It is not so much the things I do that cause me to regret;  
It’s the little things I leave undone, the things that I forget;  
It’s words I fail to utter, the songs I fail to sing,  
The letters I forget to write, that they may great comfort bring.  
It’s the little acts of kindness, the joy I fail to give,  
The smiles I fail to scatter, as day by day I live.  
It’s the sick I fail to visit, the flowers I fail to send,  
It’s the hand I fail to offer unto a fallen friend.  
It’s not so much the things I do that cause me to regret,  
It’s the little things I leave undone, the things that I forget.

— Author Unknown



All folk in the English speaking world are familiar with the word ‘church’, but few realise what this word really means. Here is a history of that word and how it became part of our modern language.

The word church, as found in our English Bibles, is somewhat unique for it is based on the Greek word Kurios (lord) which gives us Kuriakon (a lord’s house or a god’s temple) — Kirk (god’s house) —

## Borrowed Pagan Practices

Keith Sisman

Circe — Circh — Church. Here I am referring to the English or more precise Germanic (Angle-Saxon) word as used in our English Bibles. It is unique because it is *based* on a Greek word, but *not the underlying Biblical Greek word* — Ekklesia. Therefore I am not referring to the underlying Greek word Ekklesia (the “called out” — congregation) which is used in the Greek text of our Bible.

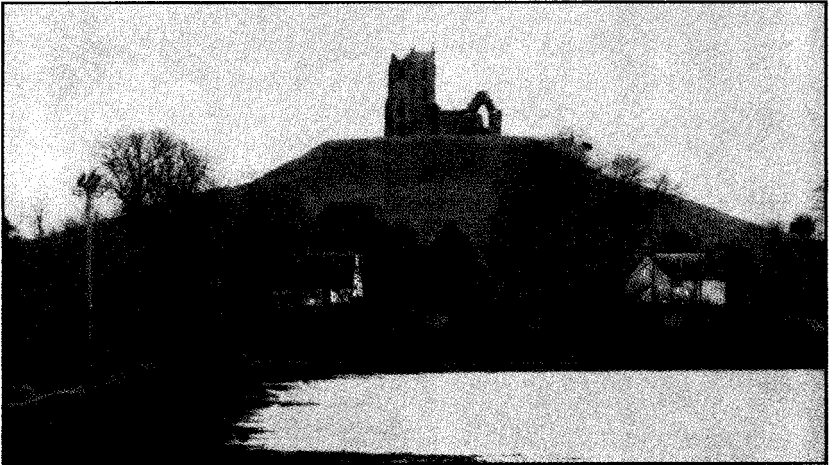
When the Catholic church evangelised Europe with its false doctrine, short cuts were taken. One favourite was to incorporate existing cults, converting them to ‘Christianity’. Many pagan temples were thus converted into ‘cirches’, retaining the original word! Not only was the original word retained, so were the doctrines and priesthood. Thus was born the idea that the church is the building, the only place for worship being on ‘dedicated holy ground’, and hence the organisation/hierarchy of the Catholic Church and, later, Anglican and some denominations.

The Celts had four main festivals, associated with the seasons. Imbolc was celebrated on 1 February and was associated with the Irish mother goddess Brigit (meaning exalted one).

After the Druids were destroyed, the cult of Brigit remained and continues today as the Catholic cult of St. Brigit whose feast day is the 1 February. Brigit was possibly associated with the British deity Brigantia.

Another temple practise was that of sacrifice, animal and human. The

## CHURCH HISTORY



In the flat Somerset Fens of south England lies an abnormality: a small hill where none should be. It is an ancient pagan 'High Place', a site of idol worship many years ago. Such mounds are man-made, constructed of earth, and are a world-wide phenomena. The first 'High Place', in the opinion of the writer, was the Tower of Babel, from whence knowledge of false religion spread throughout the world.

This particular mound, known as Murrow Barrow is close to Taunton, Somerset. Here sits in ruins St. Michael's Church. St. Michael is the Catholic Saint of High Places. Several others exist in this area, the most famous being Silbury Hill, at Avebury. Others include St. Michael's Tower at Glastonbury and Dragon Hill, Wiltshire. Other, smaller mounds surround Stonehenge, the world famous stone circle. Further away is Godshill, Isle of Wight.

victim was known as *the host*. This word is still retained in the Catholic Mass. That's right; what I'm saying is that when you see an Anglican or Catholic priest holding the communion cup and proclaiming it to be the blood of Christ, this man (now

also women!) is actually continuing with a christianised pagan (Druid) sacrifice! Hence, also, Easter and Christmas (Yuletide) and many other things, including the altar and priesthood, are the modern heritage from ancient paganism.

## CHURCH HISTORY

The pagans worshipped trees on all continents. Even today some pagans — Hindus and Buddhists — still worship “the spirits” of/in trees. This practise was widespread in Europe before and after Christianity began. Pope Gregory I wrote a letter to Augustine of Canterbury (c600) to encourage the pagan use of decorating buildings with evergreens. Augustine had been concerned with paganism in what is now England; again the answer was to incorporate this into Catholicism, rather than to fight the custom.

Mistletoe is of Celtic origin. It was known as ‘all-heal’ and was believed to have certain miraculous powers. Mistletoe is found on the oak tree which was highly venerated by the Oak Priests (Druids) of the many Celtic tribes across Europe and England. Because of its association with the Druids, some denominations have in times past refused its use in decorations in church buildings.

In the Isle of Wight, which lies south to Portsmouth, England, is the town of Godshill, so named because here is a hill where pagan gods were worshipped. This was a pagan ‘high place’ where not only pagan worship took place, but also folk were sacrificed to pacify various gods including Bel (Baal). The Isle of Wight was the last part of what is now called England to fall into the

clutches of the Catholic Church, around the year 900 A.D. The pagan idea of ‘holy places’ dedicated for worship became a part of Catholic doctrine.

When Wickliffe made his translation of the Bible into English in 1380, the word ‘cirche’ was brought over into the translation from pagan use. This helped, further, to establish in the minds of the populace the old idea of the sanctity of the building where worship took place, rather than the biblical concept that the holiness was in the body of people

Tynedale in his translations (1525, onwards), realising that the word which had been translated ‘church’ referred to the people of God, used the word congregation instead. The 1611 KJ translators retained ‘church’ although by this time scholars realised that the word church referred to the congregation rather than the building.

Churches of Christ during this period (1600’s) were known as ‘church (or congregation) of Christ’ or Church of Christ or Congregation of Christ, all three being used interchangeably.

Listen to the words of ‘saint’ Bernard, a Cistercian monk and abbot of Clareval, who wrote a letter to the Earl of St. Giles in the year 1147, complaining that he was harbouring ‘Henry of Toulouse, a heretick’ who practised believer’s

## CHURCH HISTORY

baptism (by immersion, for the remission of sins), opposed the clergy, and denied other Catholic teachings. Many of the practices Henry rejected were pagan doctrines that had been incorporated into Catholic dogma. Bernard said in his letter, "The churches [buildings] are without people, the people without priests, the priests without honour, and Christians without Christ. **The churches [buildings] are no longer conceived holy, nor the sacraments sacred, nor are the festivals any more celebrated.** Men die in their sins, souls are hurried away to the terrible tribunal, without penitence or communion, baptism is refused to infants, who thus are precluded from salvation."

This was part of Bernard's ongoing attack on the British and European churches of Christ at that time.

Pagan doctrine concerning 'holy places and sacraments' warred against biblical doctrine of the temple being within the heart of the Christian (1 Corinthians 6:19).

### 1 Peter 2:4-9

*"Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

*"Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, 'Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious, and he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.'*

*"Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,' and 'A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.' They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed. But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light."*

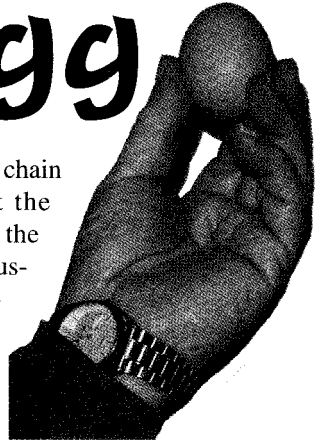
From the writings of the inspired apostle Peter, we learn that it is Christians who are a spiritual house (the church), a holy priesthood. We have no need of special buildings and a separate priesthood. The Bible is all-sufficient when obeyed by those who have a contrite heart. †

**Article by Keith Sisman, who preaches at the church of Christ meeting in Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, England. [www.Ramsey-church-of-Christ.org](http://www.Ramsey-church-of-Christ.org)**

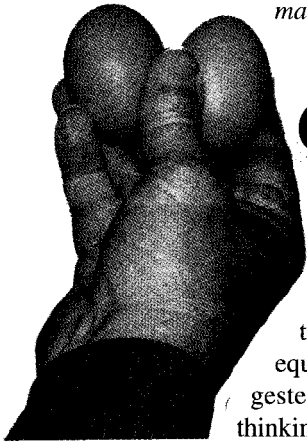


# One Egg

Some years ago the owner of one of the chain stores that sold milkshakes was sitting at the counter in one of his stores. He listened to the person making the milkshakes as he asked customers, "Would you like an egg in your milkshake?" Perhaps half the customers would say, "No." He had a flash of insight into the possibilities and told his employees to change the question to, "Would you like one egg or two in your milkshake?"



Revenue in the stores increased by a million dollars the following year because of the extra eggs that were sold. The psychology behind the strategy is basically sound. The person who really does not want an egg in his milkshake can answer, "Neither". But those who have not given it any thought will often first examine the two suggested possibilities and then choose one or two. Even if the person chooses only one, the store may sell twice as many eggs as it did when the choice was only between one and none. If he chooses *two*, the store may sell *three times as many* as it did originally!



# or Two?

## T. Pierce Brown

When the average person has to process his thinking to make a decision between one or two, then on his own volition bring into the equation another alternative that has not been suggested to him, many persons will not do that extra thinking without help. More will choose one egg or

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

two than will choose none.

As I thought about the principle, I decided to use it in setting up a Bible study. I had been asking, "Would you like to have me come to your home for a Bible study?" The answer normally would be either "Yes" or "No". Frequently when it was yes, the following type of statement would be made: "I will let you know when." To my disappointment, because there was no set time, often no study ever materialized even with those who had agreed to have one.

So, using the new-found principle, I changed the question to some-

thing like this, "Would you rather study with me on Monday night or Tuesday?" If the reply was, "Neither," I still had the choice of saying, "Which other night would be best?" If they replied, "On Monday," then I had an opportunity to say, "Would six or seven o'clock be best?" They might still choose a time that suited them better, but I discovered that I could greatly increase the number of studies when that process was used than by simply suggesting that I would be glad to come by some day at some time. If you look on the calendar you will not find "some day" listed. If you

look at the clock, you will never find the hands point to "some time".

If you will learn to suggest the proper alternatives, you won't make an extra million dollars, but you may win another soul for Christ! Which is worth more? †

### Today

I shall do so much in the years to come.

But what have I done today?

I shall give out gold in a princely sum.

But what have I done today?

I shall lift the heart and dry a tear.

I shall plant a hope in the place of fear.

I shall speak with words of love and cheer.

But what have I done today?

I shall be so kind in the after while.

But what have I been today?

I shall bring to each lonely life a smile.

But give to truth a greater birth,

And to steadfast faith a deeper worth.

I shall feed the hungering souls of earth.

But whom have I fed today?

— Author unknown

T. Pierce Brown works with the Lord's church in Cookeville, Tennessee, USA.

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

# GOD'S ANVIL,

# GOD'S WORD



# GOD'S PEOPLE

Randolph Bonas

### THE ANVIL

Last eve, I passed beside the blacksmith's door,  
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.

When looking in, I saw upon the floor  
Old hammers, worn with the beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had", said I,  
"to wear and batter all these hammers so?"

"Just one" said he, and then with twinkling eye,  
"The anvil wears the hammers out, you know."

And so, thought I, the anvil of God's Word,  
For ages skeptics blows have beat upon;  
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,  
The anvil is unharmed, the hammers gone!

— Author Unknown

### THE BIBLE IS GOD'S ANVIL

When we think of the anvil — durable and long-lasting — we can easily think of the Bible, God's wonderful word! It has endured the past, the present and will endure the future blows of falling hammers. Peter says "*The word of the Lord endures forever*" (1 Peter 1:25). The "hammers" could be anything that fights, attacks or is opposed to the Bible: (1) **atheists**,

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

(2) **skeptics**; (3) **false teachers**, in general, would fit the category. All that could be thought of as “anti-Christ” would fall under the figure of “hammers”.

Notice how, like that anvil, the word of God withstands all blows that rain against it. Truly, the Bible is beyond the power of man to destroy. *“...the word of our God shall stand for ever”* (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus said, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away”* (Matthew 24:35). Even at the Lord’s return, His words will yet be there to judge mankind: *“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).

### **GOD’S PEOPLE ARE LIKE ANVILS**

Notice, also, that when the word of God is embraced in the hearts of God’s people they become like the anvil. The Psalmist said, *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee”* (Psalm 119:11). Jesus said, *“If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you”* (John 15:7).

With His word abiding in us, Christians are steadfast, able to endure the temptations and attacks of the world. *“For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”* (Romans 8:38,39).

We become His workmanship (Ephesians 2:10) and grow strong, clothed with impenetrable armor *“...that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand”* (Ephesians 6:13).

### **THE CHURCH OF CHRIST IS LIKE AN ANVIL**

Now if we will go one step further, when the members of the church stand together, with that word, the church of Christ is like the anvil! The church is a living organism, built on the foundation of Jesus Christ: *“For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ”* 1 Corinthians 3:11).

The church is made of “living stones” — baptized believers —: *“ you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, ...to God through*

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

*Jesus Christ*" (1 Peter 2:5).

The church is the living "...pillar and ground [support] of the truth..." (1 Timothy 3:15). During the early days, in spite of severe persecution, the church grew with great power. In Act 2:41, on the day of its birth, three thousand were added to the church. In a brief time the number of men had swelled to five thousand (Acts 4:4). Within another brief period, that gospel-filled body had *multiplied greatly* (Acts 6:7).

The church of Christ will stand forever (Daniel 2:44) and, as Jesus Himself promised, "*on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18). What a wonderful anvil-like church our Lord built!

### THE MESSAGE MUST BE PASSED TO EVERY GENERATION

With the powerful word of God to enable His people, there are two things we must do:

✓ First, we must stand with the Bible, love the Bible, teach the Bible and live like the Bible instructs. The church of Christ thus stands strong.

✓ Secondly, we must very carefully teach our children so that generation after generation will know the gospel. *Every generation must be taught until the Lord comes again.*

There is no time to lose and no generation to be left untaught. With God's word we will endure, no matter what the circumstances may be. **Without it, there is no enduring, no strength, no standing, no church of Christ.** †

Randolph Bonas is a Trinidadian, and a third generation Christian. Much like Timothy of old, his grandmother was a faithful Christian until her death. His mother still lives and is an active Christian in the congregation where Randolph is a gospel preacher supported by the local church of Christ in San Fernando, Trinidad.



**A**s I stood in front of the Texas judge awaiting my sentence, my past life was going through my mind. I didn't even think about the future, about what was going to happen to me from that point on.

I was sentenced to 20 years in prison for burglary of habitation, a crime I committed to obtain money for drugs. You can *"be sure your sin will find you out"* (Numbers 32:23). *"God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap"* (Galatians 6:7). I was indeed reaping the "wild oats" of my lifestyle!



ness. I thought that my life was over. I had no hope. Nobody cared about me, and I was beginning to feel the same way.

The big thing in prison is gaining respect. I started associating with a group of prisoners that was part of a feared prison gang known as the "Mexican Mafia".

Some of the members of that gang eventually asked me if I wanted to join, and since I thought they were "cool" and "tough" and that

## From Criminal to Christian

David Mendiola

Prison was a whole new environment. The way television shows prison is nothing like the real thing. I was entering into a world of dark-

one would get more respect by being a member, I accepted their invitation. Little did I know how that would change my life.

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

Because I was a member of a disruptive gang, I was placed in segregated housing, which means spending 23 hours a day in a single cell. I kept noticing a volunteer chaplain who was visiting another gang member a few cells away from me, and I finally asked to speak with him. He was an evangelist of the church of Christ.

We started talking about God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, and the most commonly asked question — life and death. He continually referred me to the Bible, and the more he visited me, the more interested I became in finding those answers to my questions. I found that much of what I had been taught as a child was not consistent with the Bible.

tract” on my life. I struggled over this cost of commitment, but with the encouragement and prayers of Christians, I decided to follow and obey Christ all the way. On August 16, 1994, I was baptized into Christ according to the New Testament teaching (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:17,18). I was so very happy to have become a “*new creature*” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

The Mexican Mafia immediately issued a contract on my life. Though I was afraid of what might happen, I drew comfort and strength from the words of Jesus, “*And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*”

It has now been seven years since my baptism, and God has protected me from those who would kill me.

As I read and studied the Bible, I realized that I was totally “lost” and needed to be saved from my sins. I also grasped the profound truth that “*No man can serve two masters*” (Matthew 6:24).

I knew that to become a Christian I had to leave the Mexican Mafia, but I also knew that if I left the gang they would put out a “con-

(Matthew 10:28). My life was in God’s hands.

It has now been seven years since my baptism, and God has protected me from those who would kill me. Whether He chooses to continue to do so, my hope is that “*Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death*” (Philippians 1:20).

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

Beloved brothers and sisters in Christ, I encourage you to remain faithful, for the Lord says, *“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life”* (Revelation 2:10).

For those who have neglected faithfulness and have left their first love of dedication to the Lord, He says, *“Remember therefore whence thou are fallen, and repent”* (Revelation 2:5) for *“If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth; but if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin”* (1 John 1:6,7). *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (verse 9).

Lastly, if you are not a Christian, I urge you to come in faith in God’s Beloved Son Jesus, who was sent to save mankind from our sins (Matthew 1:21; John 3:16), for He is the only way to God (John 14:6).

Those who reject Him will not see life (John 3:36). God calls you to repent of your sins (Acts 17:30), and confess with your mouth that Jesus is the Son of God, Lord and Savior (Romans 10:9,10), and then you must be baptized (immersed) into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21).

Living a faithful Christian life can be tough, though we will be able to accomplish all things through Christ who gives us strength (Philippians 4:13). As Christians, rest assured that we can live forgiven, guilt-free, and that we can know without a doubt that we are saved (1 John 5:13)! †

**David Mendiola is a Christian inmate in prison in Huntsville, Texas, USA.**

### What Is the Church Worth?

- ✓ To **Christ** it was worth **His blood** (Acts 20:28).
- ✓ To **God** it was worth **His Son** (John 3:16).
- ✓ To **Stephen** it was worth **his life** (Acts 6-7).
- ✓ To **Paul** it was worth **his heritage** (Philippians 3:8; 2 Corinthians 11:28).
- ✓ To **Matthew** it was worth **his job** (Luke 5:27).
- ✓ To **Philip** it was worth **his time** (Acts 8:26-40).
- ✓ To **James** it was worth **his prestige** (James 1:1).
- ✓ To **Peter** it was worth **his attitudes** (2 Peter 1:10,11).
- To **John** it was worth **his concern** (3 John 4).
- To **Jude** it was worth **his freedom** (Jude 1).

— Dale Jenkins





# While Men Slept

E. Ulric Alleyne

Our enemy, the Devil, Satan, “the old Dragon”, “the Serpent”, knows us better than we may care to believe. He has had time and opportunity to study the human family intellectually, physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually. It may be that he can well predict our next move, and our responses to his onslaughts and deceitful devices.

This is not an attempt to praise Satan but to warn his opponents who have not taken the time to “study” him. It is for those who did not read the “mission statement” and “warning brief” (the Bible) from our Captain Jesus Christ, which tells us what we are up against. It is for those who do not know or who may have forgotten how to resist and defeat this enemy of ours.

In Matthew 13:24-43, our Captain used an illustrative story (a parable) which gives us a good opportunity to observe how our enemy works: *“The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares*

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

also appeared.

*So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'*

*He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.'*

*The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'*

*But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.'*"

Satan waited for the "good people" to do their work in the fields and then cunningly attacked their effort. He did not strike with direct opposing force but simply by adding "evil" to the "good". He mixed in the bad to confuse those who are opposed to his way. The result will not be confusion, alone, but frustration, anger, disappointment and worry over the effect of the "evil" being so close to the "good".

The most effective part of the strategic move of the enemy is how he waited for the "good" people to "sleep" before he sowed his tares among the wheat! While we wait for a frontal attack, Satan stabs in the back. While we look outside for

the enemy, he operates from the inside. While we sleep, Satan rises to do his worst!

Our Captain, the Lord Jesus Christ, knows Satan well and has instructed that in the battle of the good and the bad, both will continue in close quarters. *"They will grow together"* until it is clear what is what and who is who. The bad will be rooted out and the good harvested as the final battle comes to an end. *"The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."*

*Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

A sad thought concerns the souls that are lost as a result of the bad seed that was sown while men slept. We are the people of God; therefore, let us all be awake lest Satan mix error with truth, mingle the lost with the saved, put wrong with right, and get good so mixed with bad that the harvest for our Master be very meager and small. In some of the field there may be no harvest at all. †

**E. Ulric Alleyne is a preacher of the gospel in Trinidad/Tobago, in the Caribbean.**



# How do you measure up?

Therefore, putting away lying, ¶Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Be angry, and do not sin:

do not let the sun go down on your wrath,  
nor give place to the devil.

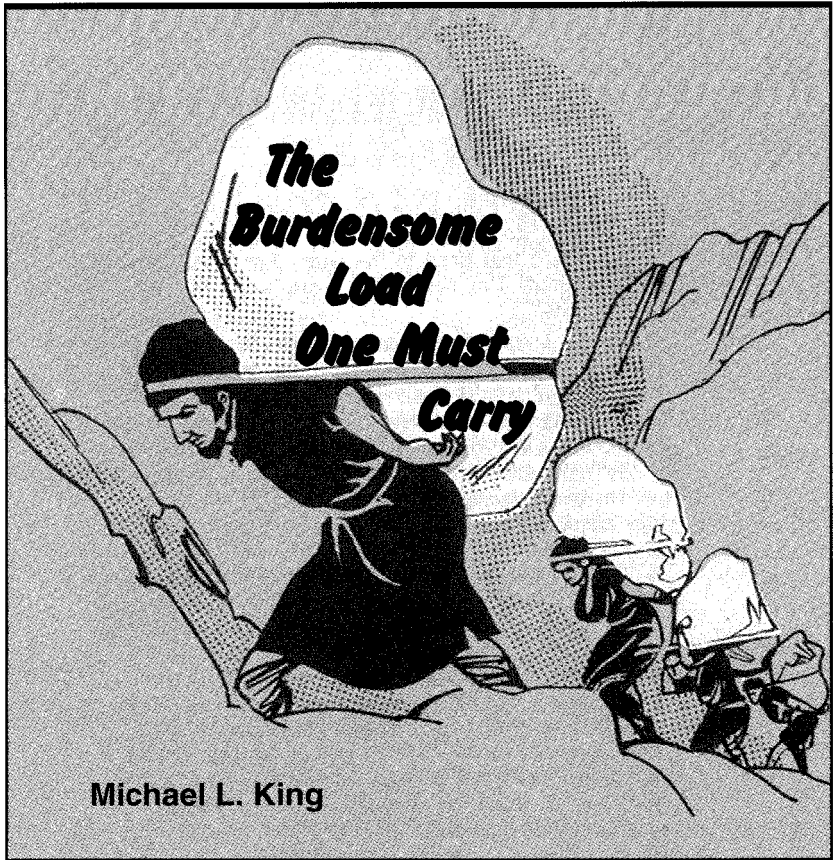
¶Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor,  
working with his hands what is good,  
that he may have something to give him who has need.

¶Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth,  
but what is good for necessary edification,  
that it may impart grace to the hearers.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,  
by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

¶Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor,  
and evil speaking be put away from you,  
with all malice.

And be kind to one another, tenderhearted,  
forgiving one another, just as God in Christ  
forgave you (Ephesians 4:25-32).



Paul established the fact that people “*in this tabernacle do groan*” (2 Corinthians 5:4). This comes as no surprise to those of us who contend with the challenges of daily living. If we could only understand the magnitude of some of the battles raging in the hearts and souls of others, we might be less harsh and judgmental, and more compassionate and loving.

Paul, likewise, addressed the burden dilemma of man in his letter to the Galatian Christians. Two verses seem contradictory upon initial consideration, those being 6:2 and 6:5. Ripley defines the word “burden” differently in these two passages. He states that “burden”, as it appears in verse two, in the Greek (*baros*) means, “load”. This burden can pertain to any load of

difficulty, sorrow, or pain. We are to bear one another's burden of this nature. "Burden" in verse five is from the Greek (phortion) which means, "pack", representing the whole of one's duties before God for which personal responsibility is required. A distinction is made between one's own burden (pack), and the heavy "load" of another.

There are three ways in which one can respond to burdens:

- ◆ "Every man can bear his own" (Galatians 6:5)
- ◆ "Bear one another's" (Galatians 6:2)
- ◆ "Cast thy burden upon the Lord" (Psalm 55:22).

Some responsibilities cannot be transferred to others and must be personally assumed. Others cannot believe, repent of sins, confess Christ or be baptized for us. One's service to God cannot be accomplished vicariously. The responsibility for personal devotion to the Lord and answering before the judgment bar must be assumed as an individual (Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10). It is equal folly for one to attempt to hide or avoid his own burdens for doing right and avoiding wrong as it was for Adam and Eve to try to hide from the presence of God in the garden. Self-assistance characterizes the bearing of one's own burden.

When bearing one another's burden, mutual assistance is being experienced. Some burdens can be, and are to be, shared with others. The responsibility of "rightly dividing" the Word of God is something to be borne mutually. The withdrawal of fellowship is a weighty burden of responsibility that must be a shared activity. The restoration of an individual to the Lord and His church necessitates mutual assistance. Christians are to manifest "the abundant grace through the thanksgiving of many abound to the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 4:15). The burden of sorrow, meeting material needs, teaching about right and wrong (i.e., addressing sin), the burden of leadership, and so many other obligations are met by mutual assistance.

Some burdens are beyond the reach of both individual and collective human efforts. We must learn to place these kinds of burdens upon the Lord (Psalm 55:22). He has promised to sustain us as we struggle to cope with these heavier burdens. Sometimes the burden will be lifted or removed, but at other times He provides us with the wherewithal to escape or to endure (1 Corinthians 10:13). Great comfort is found in this passage because we learn that burdens "are common to man," that "God is faithful," man will not "be tempted above that ye

are able,” and that He will “also make a way of escape.” Assurance was given by the apostle Paul that strength would be provided to bear whatever burdens might come.

Paul, himself, appealed to God three times to take away his “thorn in the flesh.” God told him, “*My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness*” (2 Corinthians 12:9). We are not being presumptuous when we cast upon the Lord those unbearable burdens that must come. “*Let your requests be made known unto God*” (Philippians 4:5-7). Peter must have known through both revelation and practical experience that when “*Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you*” (1 Peter 5:7), God would oblige.

Let us be willing to assume burdens that are our responsibility and nontransferable in nature. Secondly, let us become conscious of the load of heartaches being borne by others with which we can help. Finally, when we realize that our burdens are beyond our control, let us be willing to cast them upon the Lord with confidence and conviction that certain help is present for the asking.

To all the sincere hearts in the world experiencing burdens, be comforted by the fact that “Burdens were lifted at Calvary, Jesus is very near!” One day, there will be no

more burdens after crossing the river of death. There, we shall lay down all the struggles and loads associated with the flesh (1 Corinthians 15:54-58).

Trust in the Lord, “*And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not*” (Galatians 6:9). May God bless your every effort to honor Him in this life. †

**Michael L. King preaches for the Grant Street Church of Christ in Decatur, Alabama, USA.**

**The Full Soul**  
Time and the changing seasons,  
Age and the weight of years —  
These are no good reasons  
For grief and fruitless fears.  
For Time should heal our sorrow,  
And Age should bring us light  
Of an everlasting morrow  
Beyond the realm of sight.  
Though life will have its yearning  
The full soul holds its peace  
In hope toward heaven turning,  
It waits for its release.  
— Charles R. Brewer



# Distinctions of the Faithful

Wayne Barrier

The Bible provides detailed information about great men and women of faith throughout its pages. Some refer to Hebrews 11 as containing the “Hall of Fame of Faith”. The names of great men and women discussed there include Abraham, Abel, Enoch, Noah, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Gideon, Barak, Samuel, Jephthah, Samson, and David.

Study of the Bible reveals many others whom we would characterize as having a faith that distinguished them. Think about the faith of Paul, James, John, Peter, Barnabas, John the Baptist, and others. What makes these people different from the masses? A comprehensive list of traits, factors, and attitudes that characterized these people of faith would be too long to cover in this

article, but a few prominent distinctions can be discussed.

**First, their trust in God was total, complete, and first in their life.** They were as Jesus said all His followers should be, as Paul wrote in Philippians 4:6,7, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* They believed themselves to be as Paul described in Romans 8:37, *“...in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him who loved us.”*

**Second, they had a clear purpose and goal in life.** Again Paul stated it well as he wrote in Philippians 3:13,14, *“...forgetting those things which are behind and reaching to those things which are ahead, I press toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”* This goal was clarified by Paul in Romans 1:16 as he stated, *“I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation....”*

**Third, they trusted in the power of prayer and God’s providential hand of guidance.** Con-

sider Paul’s statement in Romans 8:28 when he declared, *“...we know that all things work together for good to those who love God....”* James expressed confidence in the power of prayer in James 5:16 as he stated, *“...the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much....”* Jesus taught His followers in Matthew 7:7 to “ask, seek, and knock,” and one will “be given, will find, will have the door opened.”

We, too, can be men and women of distinguishing faith if we desire to be. We must simply feed and exercise our faith, so that it will grow. As it grows, we can achieve spiritual success by allowing God’s purpose and will to shape our life. Through a mature faith, we will experience the joy and contentment to sustain us until our life is over and our work on earth is complete.

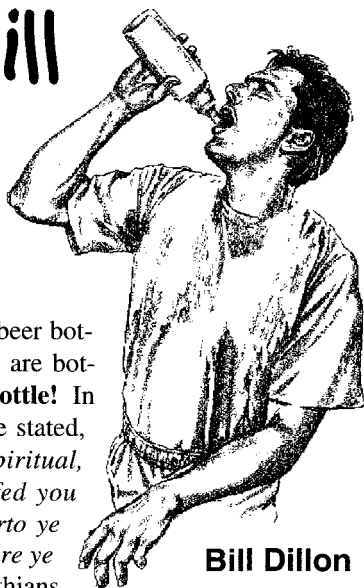
Our faith can motivate others to seek the Lord and obey His will, just like men and women of great faith about whom we study in the Bible. †

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

**Men sometimes credit themselves for their successes  
and God for their failures.**



# Are You Still On The Bottle?



**Bill Dillon**

Are you still on the bottle? Not the beer bottle or the whiskey bottle (although those are bottles to be avoided), but I mean the **milk bottle!** In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians he stated, "*I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but...as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able*" (1 Corinthians 3:1,2). The Corinthians were rebuked for their lack of spiritual growth and development. They simply and sadly had not grown in their spiritual life. They had time and opportunity, but the Corinthians remained in a state of spiritual immaturity — they were religious dwarfs! They should have been walking and taking solid food, but they were still on the bottle.

There are too many like the Corinthians in the Lord's church today. They must always *be taught*, but they never *teach*. They *complain* at the mere thought of some inconvenience or hardship. They *never encourage others*, but must always *be exhorted* themselves. They never seem to be able to *deal with the deeper spiritual problems* that require much practical wisdom and understanding.

The writer of Hebrews said, "*When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk and not of strong meat*" (Hebrews 5:12). Does this explain why there is always a teacher shortage in the church? Let every child of God labor to be a well-seasoned, keen-minded, mature soul, capable of declaring the Gospel. Let us get off the bottle! †

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

I care what people think of me. No Christian should be careless about the opinions other people hold concerning his or her life and conduct.

Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister of Singapore sued a political opponent a number of years ago for saying or implying during a campaign speech that Lee had used his position as Prime Minister to gain financial advantage for his wife's law firm, Lee & Lee. Prime Minister Lee testified during the trial, "The government I head stands or falls on its integrity." If the charge made by his opponent was true, not only would Lee be discredited, but the entire government he represented would be discredited.

Norman Hillyer, author of the New Bible Commentary, Revised, writes, "There are people who will be glad of an excuse not to listen to the Gospel or take it seriously, and they will look for such an excuse in the conduct of its ministers."

Precisely to avoid giving anyone such an excuse, the Apostle Paul strenuously defended his own reputation, beginning his defense by writing, "*We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited*" (2 Corinthians 6:3 NIV).

We must be acutely aware that the cause we serve, the Lord we honor, and the church we cherish are more important than we are personally. On the other hand, God counts each of us as a vital instrument in carrying out His will. †

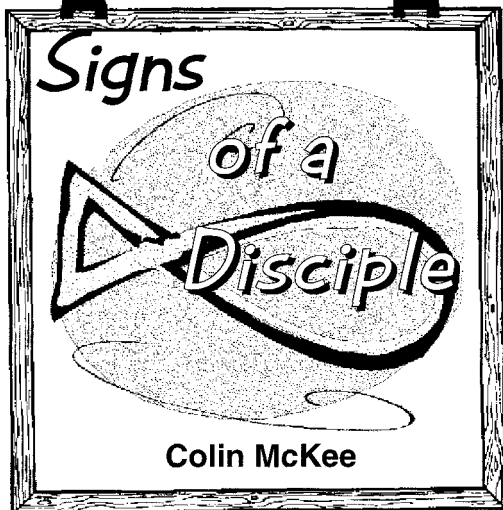
Gordon Hogan, missionary to Asia for 39 years, is currently the Missionary-in-Residence at Harding University, Searcy, Arkansas, USA.

# Integrity

Gordon Hogan

Christ commanded His followers to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19). Those who are His disciples must be recognizable. How do we recognize a true disciple of Christ today? What are the distinguishing characteristics?

Some have strongly averred that the exclusive identifying mark



of the Lord's disciples is brotherly love. John 13:35 is quoted as the proof text: "...by this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one for another." Certainly the disciples of Christ must manifest sincere mutual love. Failure in this trait impairs true discipleship.

However, Christ did not say that love was the exclusive identifying mark of His disciples. Although absolutely necessary, it does not stand alone. Several other things are put forth by the scriptures as necessary signs of a true disciple.

In John 8:31, Jesus said, "...if you abide in my word, you are my disciples indeed." **Abiding in His word** is just as important as practicing **love**. Love "covers a multitude of sins", but cannot be substituted for abiding in His word. "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God" (2 John 9). Of course an integral part of abiding in His word is the manifestation of love. Neither stands alone.

Jesus mentioned another sign of His true disciple in John 15:8: "By this

is My Father glorified, than you **bear much fruit**; so you will be my disciples.” Fruit bearing is as true a sign of discipleship as love. Again, neither stands alone. Each characteristic is equally important. One may practice deep love, but if he doesn’t produce fruit or abide in Christ’s word, he is not a true disciple.

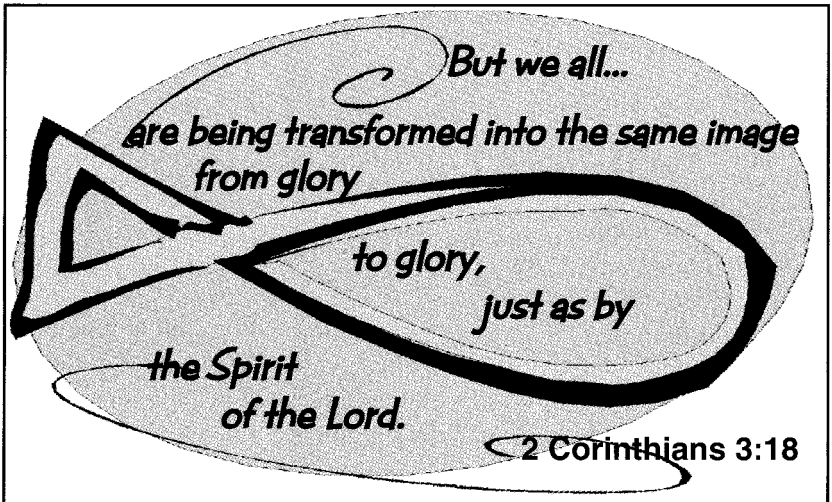
Again, Jesus said in Luke 14:27 that if one doesn’t **take up his cross** he cannot be His disciple. Taking up one’s cross may involve willingness to suffer, shouldering burdens, making personal sacrifices, forgetting self or giving up certain practices and relationships. I may produce fruit but still cling to a relationship that hinders me spiritually. I may show much love but be unwilling to carry a burden during a time of crisis and thus shirk my

responsibility.

In Matthew 12:48-50 our Lord indicated that His disciples were spiritually his “*mother and brothers*”. Then He concluded by saying, “...*whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.*” Therefore a disciple of Christ is recognized by the fact that he does the will of God.

Christ’s disciples are not one-dimensional. We are recognized, not by one single trait, but by a composite of characteristics. With the application of everything that His word commands, we are, “...*complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:17). †

Colin McKee does mission work in Indonesia, is a part of the “World Evangelism” team, and lives in Winona, Mississippi, USA.



# If You Could See Me Now!

(Read during the funeral service of Aunt Judy.)

Kim Noblitt

Our prayers have all been answered.

I've finally arrived.

The healing that had been delayed

Has now been realized.

No one's in a hurry.

There's no schedule here to keep.

We're all enjoying Jesus.

Just sitting at His feet.

If you could see me now —

I'm walking streets of gold!

If you could see me now —

I'm standing tall and whole!

If you could see me now

You'd know I've seen His face!

If you could see me now

You'd know the pain's erased!

And you wouldn't want me ever

To leave this glorious place —

If you could see me now!

My trials, light and fleeting.

He molded for my good

And measured what I needed.

Though I misunderstood;

How sweet the glory brought Him

Through my sorrow, through my pain.

As my soul was shaped for heaven

By my earthly wind and rain.

You wouldn't want me ever

To leave this perfect place

If you could only see me

In the sunlight of His face!



The distinguished educator, Francis Wayland Parker, had just concluded one of his lectures. A woman came to him and asked, "How early can I begin the education of my child?" He then inquired of her, "When will your child be born?" "Born," she gasped, "why, he is already five years old." "My goodness, woman," he said, "don't stand here talking to me. Hurry home. You have already lost the best five years."

In our Sunday worship services, sermons from the pulpit are naturally geared more to adult minds than to children, though surprisingly, children often are among the most attentive listeners. But it is in our Bible classes, Sundays and Wednesdays, that our children learn so much. These classes should have the enthusiastic support of all members of the congregation. While the dedicated teachers (God bless them everyone) are most intimately involved in this noble work, all Christians, and especially the parents, should be concerned about what is being taught and how the children are learning.

In these, their most impression-

able years, young souls are being spiritually trained for godly living. With so many of their peers growing up to become evildoers and a menace to the safety of others, how important it is that the children of Christian homes be guided toward

lives of righteousness.

Adults need to set the example for their children. Of course, all right-thinking people want their off-spring to grow up to be spiritually good and useful, but how meaningful can such concern be if the adults do not attend Bible classes de-

signed for their own spiritual growth? It is a bit like the father who urges his child to eat vegetables — "Because they're good for you" — but will not touch them himself!

*"And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up" (Deuteronomy 6:6,7). †*

**Hershel Dyer has worked for many years with the 10th and Rockford congregation in Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA.**

**Is It  
Really  
That  
Important?**

**Hershel Dyer**

# "Women's *Liberation* Movement" **Is Actually** **the *Exploitation* of Women!**

**Betty Burton Choate**

There was a time not so long ago — in my early years — when a woman was treated with deference and respect. "Ladies first" was the rule, as doors were opened for ladies, and they traditionally walked in front of men. A man stood up and gave a woman his seat. Even a rough man would refrain from the use of bad language in the presence of women. A slur spoken against a woman could cause a fight in defense of her good name. A woman was shielded and protected from the harshness and dangers of the world, insofar as was possible.

That is not to say that there were not hard-working, courageous women who struggled along-side their husbands with the challenges of life. There were certainly cases of abuse of women, men who took advantage of their physical weakness and of their inability to protect themselves legally, emotionally, and physically. There were "bad" women, and there were bad men who made life miserable for the women under their power.

But the majority of women were protected and deferred to as the "weaker sex". They and their children lived in the security of a hus-

band who stood between them and the world. Legally, not much in the line of "rights" was defined because the very culture itself safe-guarded the majority.

"Women's Suffrage" had brought freedoms and recognition in areas that were just and fair: women had gained the right to vote and to inherit property. Working conditions and terms had improved for those who had to work outside the home. There was a reasonable balance between "freedom" and "protection".

Then came the "Women's Liberation Movement", led by those who were intent on "liberating" women from every definition associated with the word: from their dependence on men, from the confines of the home, and from the moral restrictions imposed by a Judaeo-Christian cultural ethic.

We've seen the effects of 35-40 years of "liberation" now. Legally, women have endless "rights" delineated in our law code. They can sue for discrimination and win the suit. They can sue for admission to an all-male military academy, and the doors swing wide. They are fighting

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

now to be free to serve in the dangerous confines of a submarine, and eventually they will be granted that “privilege” too.

So women are “free”, and they’ve achieved the goals they were told were rightfully theirs. They are “equal” with men now — no deference is shown them, no particular respect. If a man gets to the vacant seat first, the woman can stand. Her ears are no longer considered too pure to hear foul language; in fact, she may be more vulgar-mouthed than her male counterpart. There is no need now to shield or protect her as the “weaker” sex — she is allowed to carry the load right along with men.

The woman can develop a career, rushing about in the morning to feed the family, getting the children off to school or to day-care (sometimes the husband may help). After working eight hours, she is allowed to go home to the never-ending mother/wife/home-maker work. Quite often the rat-race her life has become is paying little or nothing in actual cash after child care, taxes, increased clothing, transportation, and food costs are factored in. But, never mind — this is her “liberation”. She is no longer confined to the boredom of home. These are the freedoms and responsibilities she wanted, and now she has them!

Women are now free to face danger and death in the military

along with the men. They can stand in the sun on road construction sites and hold the stop signs. They can lift weights too heavy for their bodies to bear, because they have won the freedom to be hired for *any job*, even if it destroys their health.

Women are liberated by “no fault” divorce. Marriage is no longer expected to last a lifetime; divorce carries no stigma. A woman can leave her husband for no reason — *or* she and the children can be left for no reason. She then has the freedom to carry three full loads — outside job, mother, and home-maker, often with no help of any kind and no child support from the man who has grown up in a culture devoid of respect for women and of the feeling of responsibility on the part of men. Amazingly, the “women’s liberation movement” seems to have freed men more than women!

A woman who chooses the free life style of no marriage at all can now — without social censure — “live in” with boyfriends, or have intimate relations with any number of men on a casual, “entertainment” basis. She is free to deal with the venereal diseases, or even AIDS, that may develop. She can also carry, bear, and be responsible for the children who may result from her free morals. Or she has the freedom to harden her natural love for the new but unwanted life within her, to



## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

have it killed through legalized abortion. Then she can live with that guilt the rest of her life, either *suffering* from it or *hardening* herself to it until she has no heart left. Either way, the woman is the one who will have life-long effects of the ravages of the world's new moral freedoms.

Yes, we have achieved a "free" society. Women are free to work at any outside job along-side men, and then go home to do most of the traditional work of women that — oddly enough — hasn't vanished in this brave new world. They are also free, in many cases, to carry all the responsibility for the children they bring into the world. They are free to suffer a lifetime of consequences for these new freedoms in our culture.

And the men who choose to live by this new cultural and moral code are free — period.

I used to think that women were as intelligent as men. But after seeing them fight to achieve the exploitation and ruination of their sex, mis-labeled as "freedom" by a politicized "liberation" group — and be happy about their achievement — one can only conclude that some women must be extremely dumb, and the rest of us are paying terrible penalties for their dumbness.

On further thought, is it possible that some scheming, diabolical-minded man is actually the head of this "liberation" movement? ☺

What does God have to say about the husband/wife relationship? *"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

*"Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing...."*

*"So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.*

*"For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.' ... let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:22-31,33).*

**No human plan for men and women can improve on God's plan.** †

**Betty Burton Choate is a Christian wife and mother, living in Winona, Mississippi, USA.**

# God and Families

Ardon Hinton

It is hardly possible to give this basic building block of human society more attention than it is due. No institution has filled a more significant role in human history. When families and their related concerns begin to decline, so does their homeland. God knows best, and rejecting His viewpoints is dangerous indeed.

The word "family" in this use of the word includes such concerns as marriage, bringing up children, responsibility for parents and others, and household management. It provides the very important beginning of a child's education and training. Never doubt that every child is learning something and being trained for living. The teaching and training may be faulty, even ungodly, but certainly it is taking place, day by day.

Another thing you should not doubt is that every family, even if it is reduced to one person, has some influence on the world around it. All people, whether married themselves or not, should feel obligated to uphold the sanctity of marriage and to work for the preservation and edification of the family.

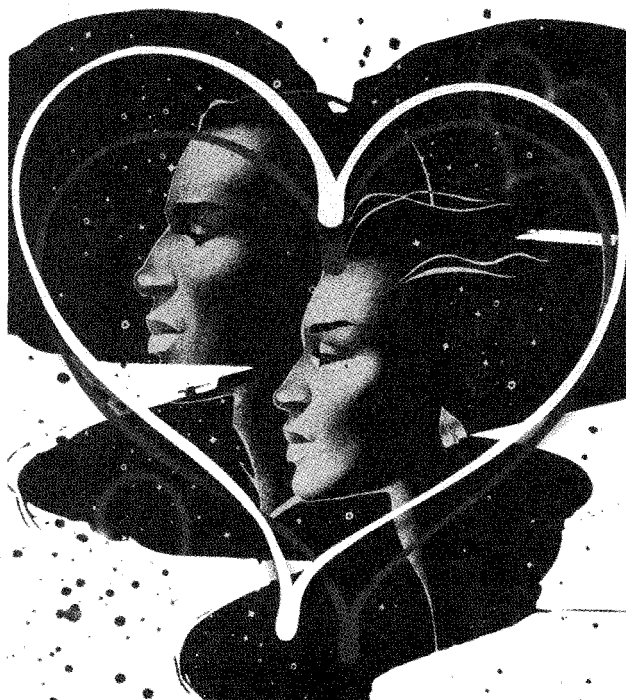
Although people have family

ties by birth or adoption, and thus have family ties even if they never marry, the fact remains that marriage is the source of on-going families. Tampering with God's will regarding marriage results in polluting this vital social stream at its source.

God made His view of marriage known in the first chapter of the Bible. It is *one man and one woman, united in heart and mind in a partnership that cannot be dissolved without the one doing the dissolving being found guilty by God.*

Mankind has devised numerous substitutes for the real thing: polygamy, no-fault divorce, cohabitation without marriage, no-commitment marriages, same-sex unions, and casual sex outside of marriage. None of these really work. They produce problems for society, downgrade women, create epidemics of some diseases, undermine the nurturing of the next generation, and create a lot of unhappiness. Beyond all this, we must never forget that whenever people violate the system God Himself has established, they offend Him and must suffer the consequences. †

**Ardon Hinton works with the Lord's church in Roosevelt, Oklahoma, USA.**



All of us live in a society which shamefully continues to produce its share of victimized women. This writer in no way attempts to lessen the seriousness of the plight of those women who are actually in such adverse circumstances. Nor, do I in any way look over the sinfulness of any person who perpetrates such

# Woman's Highest Calling

Jane Maynard

evil against women. God will hold them accountable. However, Satan is subtly taking advantage of the legitimate claims of victimized women and using those claims to make a blanket statement about all women. Especially does he love to lump women professing godliness into the victimized, deprived of their rights and in need of counseling.

In Exodus 20:5 God stated that He is a jealous God. His jealousy was for Israel's fidelity. The Father loved His children and did not want them corrupted. He sought to protect them for their own happiness. Paul exhibited the same type of jealousy over those he had converted (2 Corinthians

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

11:2). He called it a godly jealousy.

Perhaps it is time for God's women to develop enough of that same jealousy to reaffirm, before a dark and desperate world, the exalted position God has given women.

The highest calling of women is that of **servants**. Women can and should be proud of who they are: servants of the Most High God. While servanthood is a *submissive* role, it is by no means a *lowly* one. To the contrary, it is a special place, a place of honor reserved for those in whom God has entrusted some of His greatest work on this earth.

No woman in Scripture portrays more adequately the beauty of a servant spirit than does Abigail (1 Samuel 25). She was married to a hateful (17), high-tempered (14), selfish (11), drinking man (36) of immense wealth (2). (Can't you hear what the "experts" of our day would do with her situation?) Abigail was a servant to her own servants (14-17), to David and four hundred hungry men (18-20), and committed to her marriage despite her husband (35,36). When God finally relieved her of an abusive husband and she was preparing to become the wife of David, how did she view her new position? She's just a servant.

*Then she arose and bowed her face to the earth and said,*

*"Here is your maidservant, a servant to wash the feet of my lord's servants." (41)*

Abigail beautifully teaches that circumstances surrounding ones life **do not** determine their service to God. Whatever she was as Nabal's wife, she would be as David's wife. Whatever she was, married to a wealthy man, she would be married to a man running for his life from king Saul. She would be a servant. Abigail's life cries out to godly women of all times and of all situations that servanthood is a **condition of the heart**. When women of God have the servant spirit prioritized in their hearts and lives, their commitment and submission to God will cause them to soar to new heights of faith and service.

With the servant spirit intact, woman is equipped to undertake God's great work. By His own plan and design there are some roles in life that *only* women can fulfill. One of those roles is that of being a wife. From the beginning of time (Genesis 2:18), God knew man needed a helper, an effective counterpart for his life. As man's helper, woman faces her most challenging work as a servant, a work that demands strength and perseverance. Of necessity, she must develop a forgiving spirit early in the relationship. Despite the fact that marriage should be a fifty-fifty partnership,

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

many times those ratios will be drastically altered. However, the woman's love for God and her respect for the confidence He has in her will enable her to encourage, strengthen and help the man mature to his greatest spiritual potential. The godly woman with the true servant mindset will prayerfully hover over her marriage with the godly jealousy necessary to forgive, protect and nurture their love.

A second role that **only** women can fill is that of motherhood. It has been correctly stated that, "When God has wanted His greatest work done, He has not amassed His armies. Rather, He has simply laid a tiny baby in some mother's arms." Entrusted into her care are the tiny souls whom God knows she will influence for eternity. While woman is not the only parent and certainly does not bear full responsibility for the children, usually it is the mother who spends more one-on-one time with them than the father does. Therefore her direct influence may have a greater impact.

It is women then, as servants, who are primarily responsible for the foundational training of elders, deacons, preachers, their wives, Bible class teachers, etc. To view the position of the mothers who perform such tasks as a lowly place of little worth is a corruption which

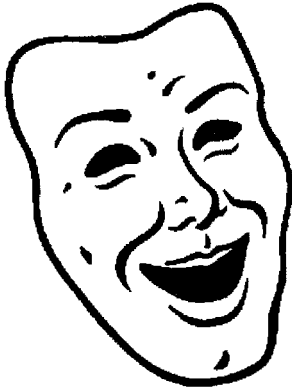
can be found only in the Gospel of Society, authored by Satan. For he knows full well that the work of women is some of the most important work on earth.

What a challenge and what a career: "molders and makers" for eternity! Women of God have every right to shelter the precious souls of their children with a godly jealousy which allows them to grow up, fiercely loved and thoroughly taught in the ways of God.

The woman of God is special and is of great worth (Proverbs 31). She is not victimized, weak or lacking in intelligence because of her submissive spirit, as Satan claims. She always has accessible to her the great Counselors, to meet her every need (Psalm 119:24, Isaiah 9:6). Their help, coupled with the woman's submission to God, allows her to hold a unique position of honor and esteem as she is entrusted with the challenges of using her God-given creativeness to influence for eternity the ones she loves.

There is no greater career, no higher calling, nor does anyone ensure more God-given rights, than do women who have made themselves the servants of the Most High God. †

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



Three young boys were boasting about their fathers and what great things they could do.

First boy: "You've heard of the Empire State Building. My dad built it."

Second boy: "You've heard of the Grand Canyon. My dad dug it."

Third boy: "You've heard of the Dead Sea. My dad killed it."



"I am afraid I sin every morning," said the young woman to her preacher.

"And what makes you think so?" asked the preacher.

"Because every morning when I gaze into the mirror, I think how beautiful I am."

The preacher looked at her again and responded, "Never fear. That isn't a sin; it's only a mistake."

### Bulletin bloopers:

"For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery upstairs."



You know you're getting old when you start riding the bike and your kids take the car!

And when you can't remember where to go back to, to remember what you forgot!



You can tell it's going to be a rotten day when your birthday cake collapses from the weight of the candles.



People who are smart, industrious, kind, honest, and likable just seem to have all the luck.



An old man who had had a lot of money finally died. Although they cared little about the old man, all of the sons, daughters, grandchildren, nieces, and nephews gathered together for the reading of the will. In eager anticipation, they listened as the attorney opened an envelope

## PROVERBS 17:22

and began to slowly read the old man's last will and testament, "Being of sound mind, I spent every last cent I had while I lived."



A woman telephoned the police to report that thieves had been at work on her car. "They've stolen the steering wheel, the brake pedal, the accelerator, the radio, and the dashboard." The police sergeant said that he would investigate.

A few minutes later the police station phone rang again. "Don't bother," said the same voice. "I got into the back seat by mistake."



A man in his beat-up old car drove up to a toll booth. The toll collector said, "Two dollars."

The owner said, "Sold!"



Time may be a great healer, but it's also a lousy beautician.



You're getting old when you get the same sensation from a rocking chair that you once got from a roller coaster.

The teacher asked her Bible class of 3-year-olds, "And who was Matthew?" There was no answer. She then said, "Well, who was John? Surely you remember him." Still no answer. "Now, come on children. You're letting me down. Surely someone knows who Peter was — now speak right up!"

A soft voice came from the back row, "I fink he wuz a wabbit."



An optimist thinks that this is the best possible world. A pessimist fears that this is true.



Boy: "Dad, Mom just backed the car out of the garage and ran over my bicycle."

Father: "Serves you right, Son, for leaving it on the front lawn."



Remember: Amateurs built the ark — professionals built the Titanic.



You just have to wonder about some folks. They think God is dead and Elvis is alive.

## Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

## Romans 5:8-10; 6:4

**5:8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

**6:4** Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

How do we reach the death — blood — of Christ? We are baptized into His death! And, emulating Christ's resurrection, we are raised from the water of baptism to walk a new life in Him. Baptism is not only the burial of the "old man of sin", it is the birth of the new man into the family of God.

The wall of sin separated God and the creation made in His own image — man. Because of His great love for us, God initiated the reconciliation that would overcome the curse of sin. Christ died for our sins, while we were still alienated from God.

Some people believe that the critical question is whether or not one loves "god" — and any understanding of the concept of God is thought to be tolerated. But God's word says that the only way we can be saved from the wrath to come is through justification by the blood of Jesus Christ.

While a human is still in sin, he is the enemy of God. It is a "black" and "white" situation — we are either saved or lost — no "gray" in-between area. But when we have been cleansed by the blood of Christ, the enmity is removed and we have been saved from our sins — reconciled — through His death; as a result, we can now be saved through the fact that He overcame death.



# Divine Fellowship

Every Spiritual Blessing is  
in Christ Jesus — Eph. 1:3

Divine Fellowship is One of the  
Spiritual Blessings — 1 Jno. 1:7

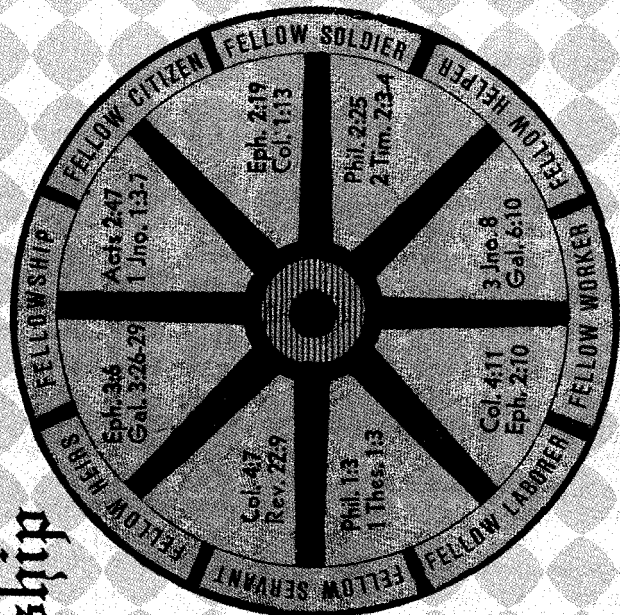
So, Divine Fellowship is Shared  
Only in Christ Our Lord!

Those Out of Christ Are Without  
Hope and God — Eph. 2:12

To Enter Into Christ, One is  
Baptized Into Him — Gal. 3:27

Until Baptized Into Him, We  
Have no Fellowship in Him!

Why Not Obey the Gospel for  
Salvation in Christ? — 2 Tim. 2:10



Dillard Thurman

# Are You a Jew?

## E. Claude Gardner

### I. Introduction

- A. "I am a Jew and I am not a Jew."
  - 1. It is not abhorrent if one is a Jew by race.
  - 2. A high percentage of Pulitzer Prize winners are Jews.
- B. But anyone who is a Christian is a part of Spiritual Israel in God's sight.

### II. Discussion

- A. "*Israel after the flesh*" (1 Corinthians 10:18). These were children of Abraham.
  - 1. The Jews were God's chosen people (Isaiah 44:2; Deuteronomy 7:6-8).
  - 2. Jesus would come and bring salvation.
  - 3. Two parts to the Abrahamic promise (Genesis 12:1-3; Matthew 1).
- B. "*Israel of God*" (Galatians 6:16). It is the church of the Lord.
  - 1. It is made up of both Jews and Gentiles (Ephesians 2:14-16).
  - 2. Both are "one" (Galatians 3:26-29).
  - 3. There is one plan of salvation to both Jews and Gentiles (Romans 1:16).
    - a. "We don't have a message to the Jews", some say.
    - b. This contradicts the Bible.
  - 4. Both Jews and Gentiles are sinners (Romans 1,2) and stand in need of Christ and the gospel.
- C. How does one become a Jew spiritually?
  - 1. It is by circumcision of the heart (Romans 2:28,29).
  - 2. It takes place at baptism (Colossians 2:12).

### III. Conclusion

- A. Jews by race have no special favor from God and do not have any claim by divine right to Palestine as many believe.
- B. There is only one way to God and to heaven and that is through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). †

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# God Uses the Broken

Jerry L. Davidson

## Introduction

1. *“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven...a time to break down, and a time to build up.”* (Ecclesiastes 3:1-3).
2. Many things need to be discarded when broken (e.g., toys, tools, dishes, and gadgets).
3. Other things must be broken to be used.
  - a. A farmer breaks ground to plant the grain; when the grain is harvested, crushed and processed, life sustaining bread is made from the flour.
  - b. In service to God there are many things to keep whole or intact (e.g., the physical body, the Word of God, the church).
  - c. Other things can be used only when they are broken. Consider these:

## I. **Broken Pitchers** — With broken pitchers Gideon’s army triumphed (Judges 8).

- A. Success was not in military might, but rather in obedience to the Lord’s command.
- B. The pitchers had to be broken to reveal the torches, which along with the sounding of trumpets and the war cry, put the enemy to flight.
- C. The Lord expects us to break the “pitchers” in our hands to show forth the light of the Gospel (Matthew 5:14-16; Acts 16:18; Philippians 2:15).

## II. **The Golden Calf** — When the Israelites became impatient with Moses at the foot of Mt. Sinai they cried out to Aaron for a substitute god (Exodus 32:23).

- A. The appeasing golden calf was both an idol and a monument to Israel’s impatience and faithlessness.
  1. As long as the golden calf remained, God’s Law could not be received.
  2. Moses took it and ground it to powder...as a dramatic way of

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

showing the awfulness of sin (Exodus 32:20).

- B. We too can be separated from God by idolatrous “calves” (i.e., inordinate desire for money, selfish pleasures, etc.).
- C. Our “golden calves” must be broken down (See 1 John 2:15-17).

### III. The Alabaster Flask — Mary broke the “alabaster flask” filled with “*costly oil of spikenard*” in order to anoint the head of Jesus (Mark 14:3).

- A. In the “broken flask” Jesus saw Mary’s love and unselfish devotion toward Him.
  - 1. She didn’t give something that cost her nothing.
  - 2. “*She hath done what she could*” (verse 8).
- B. We also have “alabaster flasks” which need to be broken.
  - 1. What sacrifices are we willing to make to show our love for the Lord?
  - 2. What we **give** is what we will **keep** in heaven (See Matthew 6:19,20).

### IV. The Lord’s Broken Body

- A. While Jesus’ bones were not broken at the time of His death, in keeping with prophecy (Psalms 34:20), His side was pierced by the soldier (John 19:34).
  - 1. His flesh was broken by the nails and spear, and His atoning blood flowed.
  - 2. Had that precious body remained unbroken, and had Jesus died of natural causes, the world would have no saviour.
- B. Thank God “*He bore our sins in His body*” (1 Peter 2:24)!

### V. The Broken Wall of Partition

- A. In Christ, barriers between men are broken down (Ephesians 2:13,14).
  - 1. Without demolishing that separating wall, God’s eternal purpose in His Son could not have been carried out (Ephesians 3:6-11).
  - 2. “*There is no distinction between Jew and Greek...*” (Romans 10:12).
- B. If we limit our evangelism to certain areas, races, and cultures we presume to rebuild “walls of division”.

## CHARTS AND OUTLINES

C. In Christ we have “open doors” instead of “walls”.

### VI. The Broken Heart

- A. Sinners are restored where there is genuine repentance.
1. This involves heart broken sorrow for past sins, a humble mourning for having offended God, and a turning in complete submission to His will (see 2 Corinthians 7:10; Acts 2:38; Colossians 3:1-3).
  2. David came to realize that “*the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart*” (Psalm 51:7; 34:18).
- B. May we recognize that the only sound heart is the heart that has been broken.
1. Hardness of heart and stubborn pride must be broken down.
  2. But when the heart is broken through the Gospel, there is also mending power and hope.

#### Conclusion:

In the words of the hymn written by L.O. Sanderson:

Bring Christ your broken life  
So marred by sin,  
He will create anew,  
Make whole again;  
Your empty, wasted years  
He will restore,  
And your iniquities  
Remember no more.

†

**Jerry Davidson is an instructor at International Bible College, Florence, Alabama. He also directs the French World Bible School.**

The worst thing that happens to a man may be the best thing that ever happened to him if he doesn't let it get the best of him.

## Who Am I?

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

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

1. **100** I was a shepherd, a sheepbreeder, from Tekoa. (1:1).
2. **90** I lived in the days of Uzziah king of Judah and Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel.(1:2).
3. **80** Though my God-appointed work lasted only a short time, I served as His spokesman about 760 B.C.
4. **70** My work was to warn Israel of the approaching judgment of God, the coming "Day of the Lord" (2:6 and following; 5:18).
5. **60** At the beginning of my work as a prophet, I pronounced God's judgment on eight nations. (chapters 1 and 2).
6. **50** Though historical records show that Israel was prosperous, I condemned the prevalence of injustice and of unconcern about the poor and helpless. (2:6,7).
7. **40** I condemned, also, the rampant spiritual corruption among the Israelites (2:7,8).
8. **30** Through me God said that He had sent the Israelites cleanness of teeth (lack of bread), He had withheld rain, He had blasted them with blight and mildew, locusts had devoured their crops, but they had not returned to God (4:6-9).
9. **20** God warned that He would send a different kind of famine: a time when they would frantically run here and there, seeking the words of the Lord. (8:11,12).
10. **10** Finally, God promised to "raise up the tabernacle of David", with Israelites and Gentiles who would be called by His name, and that after that great day His people would never again be pulled up. (9:11,12,15).



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

*See answer on inside back cover.*

### Caleb was a winner.

Caleb was one of the twelve Israelites sent into Canaan as spies. All of them brought back an evil report, except for Caleb and Joshua.

The other men were fearful because there were giants in the land and great walled cities. They were convinced that the people of Israel could not possibly defeat such enemies, but Caleb and Joshua insisted that,

with God's help, they *could* take the land. In faith, they urged Israel to advance immediately. Instead, the people listened to the majority. Because they did not believe God's promises, they were forced to wander in the wilderness for forty years until all of that generation had died. Only Caleb and Joshua lived to enter into Canaan.

Caleb was a winner.

Caleb was forty years old when

he went into Canaan as a spy. Now, after the forty years in the wilderness and early efforts to take parts of the land from its inhabitants, Caleb was 85 years old. But, he was not ready to retire — not Caleb. He said, "*I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in*" (Joshua 14:11).

Caleb requested Hebron for an inheritance, the very mountain from which they had seen the giants and the walled cities. And Caleb did what he had known was possible with God's help forty years

before: he and his warriors drove out the inhabitants of the mountain and took the land.

Yes, Caleb was a winner, and we can be winners, too.

It is not easy to tell the difference between a winner and a loser by a casual glance. Their appearance may be much the same. They may dress alike, shop in the same stores, and live in the same neighborhoods. Successful people come



# Profile Of A Winner

Roy Beasley

## BIBLE CHARACTERS

in all types of personalities, all professions, all colors of skin, all colors of eyes, all heights, all weights.

How, then, can you distinguish between a winner and a loser? *You can tell a winner by his attitude.* That was true of Caleb. His attitude was different from the ordinary. He did not think of failure — only of success. *“With God’s help we can do it!”* That was his attitude, and he succeeded!

What do we learn from Caleb? We learn that winners **think positively**. They are willing to **pay the price for success**. Winners are willing to **make a personal commitment**. They accept **responsibility**. Winners, like Caleb, **expect to succeed**. They use their creative abilities. They **never quit**.

You, too, can become a winner. Do you have a negative attitude like the ten spies? If so, you need to develop a positive attitude like Caleb. You can begin by clearly identifying the new attitude you wish to develop and starting to work on it. Prepare affirmations to help you change your old habits of thinking. Work on this every day.

From Caleb we learn how winners behave. Winners set goals to win. Caleb had a goal — to conquer Hebron in spite of its giants and walled cities. Although he was past 85, he achieved that goal!

What about my goals? Are

they high enough to challenge the best within me? Or are my goals too high so that they become discouraging? Am I using my full potential of knowledge and ability? Am I tracking daily my progress toward my goal? Do I have negative thoughts? Do I secretly, in the back of my mind, believe that I cannot reach my goals or that somehow I am unworthy? At first glance, do my goals seem to be too high? If so, I need to break them down to smaller steps that can be accomplished with less discouragement.

Here are some characteristics of winners.

(1) Winners are always striving to reach a little higher. That was true of Caleb.

(2) Winners are always above average. In his deep faith in God, Caleb was above average.

(3) The progress of winners is always forward. They never look back. Again, this was true of Caleb.

(4) Winners always bounce back after failure. They may get knocked down time after time, but they always get right back up and try again — until they succeed! That’s the final difference between a winner and a loser.

Yes, you, too, can be a winner like Caleb. †

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



# A Mother Who Made a Difference

Bobby Dockery

We read in the Bible of a courageous mother who made a difference...in the life of a child...in the welfare of her people ...in the history of her nation! Her name was Jochebed — not the most beautiful name to modern ears — but a name profoundly beautiful, nonetheless. It means “*Jehovah is her glory.*” She is the first person in the entire Bible to have a name compounded with “Jah” — the sacred name of Jehovah!

Jochebed and her husband Amram were from the tribe of Levi. Their home was a slave’s cabin. Their days were filled with drudgery and grinding toil under the threat of an overseer’s whip. When years of cruel adversity had ground



them to the last ounce of their endurance, they died and were laid to rest in graves long since forgotten.

A short, simple story, full of heartache and toil and tears — except for this: Jochebed has a secure place in history because of these three children: Miriam, Aaron, and Moses!

When Moses was born, Jochebed made up her mind to fight for the life of this child who had been sentenced to death by the decree of Pharaoh. As long as she could, she hid him away in a secret place. When she was unable to conceal him any longer, she wove him a little boat, a cradle of papyrus reeds, and placed it in the rushes growing at the edge of the Nile

River. Miriam was left to stand watch, and when Pharaoh's daughter discovered the baby in the basket, Miriam managed to get their own mother appointed as the child's nurse!

Think what a difference the influence of this woman made in the life of her son! We remember Moses as a great man of God, but how differently his story might have turned out if it had not been for the influence of a great, godly mother! When Moses grew to manhood, the Bible says he *"refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season"* (Hebrews 11:24-26). What prompted that choice? **During his formative years Moses was reared by a woman whose name meant "Jehovah is her glory,"** a woman whose deep love for him was matched only by her determination to serve God!

May we never cease to give thanks for the things our mothers have meant and continue to mean to us. May we be faithful to the lessons they taught us. May God help us to honor, by the living of our lives, all those who have made and continue to make a difference!†

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

### Like Mother, Like Son

Do you know that your  
soul is of my soul  
such a part,  
That you seem to be fibre  
and core of my heart?  
None other can pain me  
as you, dear, can do.  
None other can please  
me or praise me as you.

Remember the world will  
be quick with its blame  
If shadow or stain ever  
darken your name.  
"Like mother, like son"  
is a saying so true  
The world will judge  
largely the "mother"  
by you.

Be yours then the task, if  
task it shall be,  
To force the proud world  
to do homage to me.  
Be sure it will say, when  
its verdict you've won,  
"She reaped as she  
sowed.  
Lo! This is her son."

— Margaret Johnson Grafflin

# Why Do We Have So Many Churches Today?

Ken Tyler

Obviously, this is a good question. The reason we have so many churches today is because individuals have departed from God's pattern in the New Testament and started their own denominations. Various names have been given to these denominations which are not found in the New Testament. In these denominations you will also find doctrines that are not the same as that taught by Jesus and the apostles. The New Testament condemns division and a departure from God's way. Paul told the Corinthians, "...that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Corinthians 1:10). In response to false teachers, Paul also told the Galatians, "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:8). Jesus stated concerning the scribes and Pharisees, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). We must realize the difference between the "commandments of men" and the "commandments of God."

The truth of the matter is that we do not read of "different churches" in the New Testament. Jesus said in Matthew 16:18, "...I will build my church..." The church built by Christ is the only church. The various congregations were simply the same church meeting at different locations. Denominations are not found in the New Testament. They were started by men hundreds of years after Christ built His church.

What we need to do is get back to the New Testament pattern and quit forming new denominations and simply be the church Jesus built. It's sad that we have hundreds of denominations in our world when we read of only one church in the New Testament (Ephesians 1:22,23; 4:4). We do not have the right to tamper with God's Word (John 10:35). It is time for people to wake up and leave man-made denominationalism and practice what the New Testament teaches. †

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

# *Two Important Questions Relating to The End of Time*

Kevin L. Moore

## *What Is Meant by "The Great Tribulation"?*

The Tribulation theory proposes that for seven years after the so-called "rapture", the human race on earth will experience horrific judgments until the visible return of Christ. An often-cited proof text is Matthew 24:21, but this passage is actually in the context of the Lord's description of Jerusalem's devastation (verses 1,2, 15-20; see also Luke 21:20-24) which was fulfilled in A.D. 70. Jesus said it would occur during the generation of His disciples (Matthew 24:34), and Josephus recorded indescribable suffering, death, and destruction at the time of Jerusalem's siege.

The proof texts taken from the book of Revelation to support this theory are used out of their historical context. Revelation was written near the end of the first century A.D. about things "*which must shortly take place*" (1:1; 22:6). John was not writing about a period of tribulation that was to occur 2000 years in the future; he was writing to the first century congregations of Asia (1:4,11) concerning the persecutions they were already experiencing (1:9; 2:9,10; 7:13,14).

The Bible has much to say about the tribulations of early Christians. John 16:33 says, "*These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*" (Acts 5:41; 14:22; see also (Mark 4:17; John 15:20; Romans 12:12; Philippians 1:29; 1 Thessalonians 3:3,4; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 2:20,21; 4:13,16). The rapture and tribulation theories are man-made doctrines which are not taught in the Bible.

## *What Is to Happen when the Lord Returns?*

Christ will come at an unknown, unexpected time (Matthew 24:36,42; 25:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4; 2 Peter 3:10). He will descend from heaven with a shout, with a trumpet sound, with His angels, and with fire. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17 says, "*For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord*

## BIBLE QUESTIONS

*in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord*". (see also (Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8). All the dead will rise (John 5:28,29); first those who were righteous, meeting the Lord in the air, followed by the living righteous (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Matthew 24:40,41).

At the resurrection, physical bodies will be changed to spiritual ones: "*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed — in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed*" (1 Corinthians 15:51,52).

The present world will be destroyed (2 Peter 3:10): "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up.*"

Everyone will stand before the Lord in judgment (Acts 17:31; 2 Corinthians 5:10), and every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord (Philippians 2:9-11: "*...At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*"

Matthew 25:32,33 tells us that

the righteous and the unrighteous will be separated. "*All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.*"

Since time will be no more, all of this will seem to occur "*in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye*" (1 Corinthians 15:52).

After judgment the unrighteous will be eternally punished in hell; the righteous will be eternally blessed in heaven: "*And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.*

*The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*

*Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.* (Matthew 25:41,46; see also Revelation 20:12-15; 1 Peter 1:3,4). †

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

# Grace? What Does It Mean?

Hugo McCord

***"...but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen" (2 Peter 3:18).***

Christians are taught to "grow in grace" (2 Peter 3:18). A Bible student asks, "What does it mean to 'grow in grace'?" The inspired word "charis" can have reference to that which causes delight or favorable regard; it can also refer to the loving character and good will of the one who is termed "gracious". "Charis" is defined as "**grace, kindness, mercy, goodwill**" (GREEK- ENGLISH DICTIONARY, Barclay M. Newman, Jr., p. 197); "**sweetness, charm, loveliness**" (Thayer, p. 665); "**attractiveness, favor, graciousness**" (B-G-D, p. 877).

*"The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself"* (Ecclesiastes 10:12).

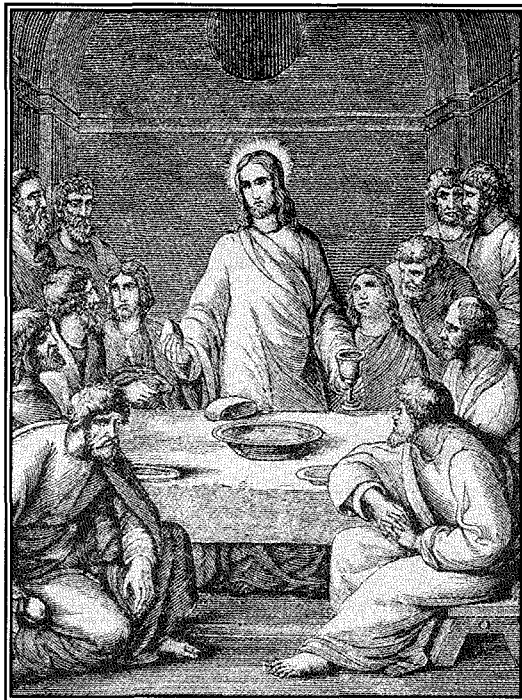
*"Everyone approved of him [Jesus], and marveled at the gracious words that had come from his mouth"* (Luke 4:22).

*"Let no bad word come from your mouth. Speak only that which is gracious and edifying to listeners"* (Ephesians 4:29).

*"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, remembering how you ought to reply to everyone"* (Colossians 4:6).

As the Christian grows in the "Christian Graces" he is changed so that his attitudes and behavior reflect the grace of God, his Father: "*...add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ*" (2 Peter 1:5-8).

**Hugo McCord has taught at Oklahoma Christian University and Cascade College. He is living presently in Vancouver, Washington, USA.**



**Was  
Christ  
Teaching  
about  
the  
Lord's  
Supper  
in  
John 6?**

**Sunny David**

To understand any passage or teaching from the Bible it is necessary for one to look at the background of what is being said, because if we do not read to understand in its specific context, we can easily misunderstand and draw an entirely wrong conclusion. So one must ponder the fact of why a certain thing was said or done about which we read in the Scripture. What was the context?

In John chapter 6, we read that a great multitude of people were following Christ. He took five

loaves and two small fish in His hands and gave thanks for them, and then fed the whole multitude of people — some five thousand plus — from this small amount of food. Of course, all of the people were impressed by what He did, and even said, *"This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

But then we read that on the following day they again began to look for Christ. When Jesus saw them, He said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek me, not because you saw the signs, but because you*

## TEXTUAL STUDIES

*ate of the loaves and were tilled. Do not labour for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him” (Verses 26,27).*

It is in this context that Christ made the strong contrast between the physical and the spiritual, saying: *“I am the bread of life...This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world...Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life” (John 6:48-54).*

Christ was teaching them that more than the physical food, which they were seeking or anticipating from Christ, they needed the spiritual food — which was Christ Himself! By giving His body and shedding His blood He gave Himself a ransom for all, making salvation and remission of sins available to all (Mark 10:45; 1 Timothy 2:6; Matthew 26:26-28).

The people in Christ’s audience

misunderstood what He was saying, obviously concluding that somehow He was demanding that they literally eat His body and drink His blood. Because of their repugnance of such a thought, *“...many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more” (John 6:66).* It was only later, when He instituted His memorial Supper prior to His death (Mark 14:22-26), that His followers began to understand the spiritual lesson He was teaching. All disciples, for all time, would remember the sacrifice of His body and His blood by partaking of the memorial feast He was inaugurating (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

Christ gave His body and shed His blood so that we may have eternal life in heaven. As Christians partake in the Lord’s Supper, we remember His sacrifice. Certainly we do not the eat the literal flesh of Christ and drink his literal blood, but when baptized believers — Christians — become partakers of His flesh and His blood through this memorial feast, we appropriate Jesus Christ through our obedient faith and receive the benefits of His atoning death.

What a profound and beautiful lesson Christ was teaching! †

**Sunny David preaches the Gospel in New Delhi, India, through radio and literature.**



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FROM THE HEART OF . . .

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The Church of Christ

*in*  
*Trinidad and Tobago*

Ken Mohammed and Gilbert Neptune



*Looking Back . . .*

It was during World War II that members of the church of Christ first began meeting in Trinidad & Tobago. These services were conducted by Americans stationed in Trinidad and were temporary in nature.

**In 1965, an American preacher, Ralph Wharton, in St. Vincent began a radio program.** The program was received by interested persons in Trinidad. Ralph came to Trinidad to visit a group of students and baptized Dave Dailsingh, Kaso Ramcharitar and Chanardaye Ramdeen. The church was begun on June 26, 1967 and this group of young people, along

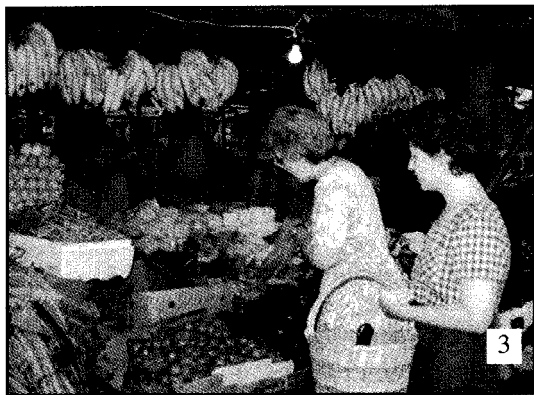


1. A village scene.

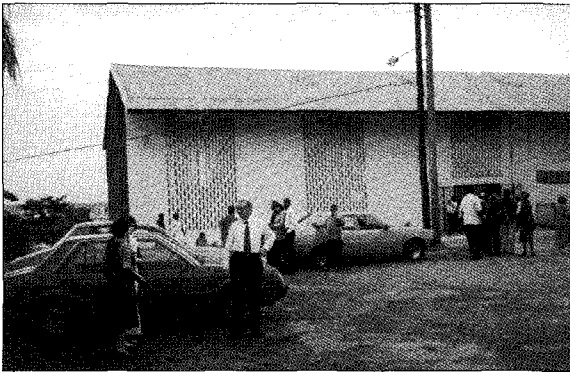
2. Pitch Lake at LaBrae — almost a square mile of tar, 300 feet deep!

3. Market Day in Trinidad for Donna Henderson and Janet Tedford.

with Ralph, organized worship in the home of Dave's parents in a village near San Fernando. Ralph made other trips to Trinidad before returning to America in 1969. Several others were converted during those years.



In 1970 Bob Brown, having replaced Ralph Wharton in St. Vincent, began broadcasting the radio program over Radio Trinidad. Because of the tremendous response, he moved to Trinidad in 1971. An eloquent, dynamic preacher with a



*The church building in San Fernando, Trinidad, with Bill and Jerry Nicks in the foreground.*

Caribbean type of preaching, Bob was very successful in leading many persons to Christ (including the Gilbert Neptune).

**David McFalls, another American preacher, also came to Trinidad.**

David worked mainly in the north and central part of the island and was

responsible for the church being started in Deigo Martin and in Chaguanas. Many other workers soon joined the effort in Trinidad: Don Latham, Don Starks, Glenn Buffington, Harold Poland, Nicky Faught, Mike Robinson, Jim Massey and Bob Bole, and others. A total of 25 families came during a period of ten years.

**Splendid cooperation between foreign workers and the local members produced great growth.** Don Starks took the responsibility of the Bible Correspondence courses and more than 50,000 people were enrolled in Bible study. Bob Brown had great results with the radio broadcast. Tent meetings drew large crowds and the church grew rapidly.

In 1974 a school of preaching was established in San Fernando with Don Latham its first director. Upon the completion of a church



*Ladies' Fellowship conducted by the San Fernando Church of Christ. This meeting brings over 600 women together for Ladies' Teaching Day.*

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .



***Preacher students of the Trinidad School of Preaching and Teaching, San Fernando, Trinidad.***

Dominic Dos Santos, Winston Clarke, Jr., and Donna (music) and Parker Henderson.

Current enrollment in the school is 37 full-time students and 10 part-time. Churches in America assist in the support of students, and churches in Trinidad provide their preachers as teachers in the school.

**During the past twenty-two years American brethren have sent ten preachers to live in Trinidad to teach in the school.** These are: Eugene Cardinal, Tim Conatser, Fred Givens, Ron Edwards, Kenny Bayles, James Huggins, Bill Nicks,

building in San Fernando, this training school used the church facilities for classes. The brethren had borrowed money from American churches to build the first building owned by the church in Trinidad and Tobago. The school remains in that same building, under the direction of the San Fernando church until the present time. Many of the missionaries have taught in the school.

During the time when Jim Massey was director of the school, he began a tape and printing ministry. Since 1979 Parker Henderson has served as the director. Current regular teachers are Gilbert Neptune, Ulric Alleyne,



***Female students who are learning to be teachers.***

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .



Rodney Tedford and Roy Wright. These preachers brought families and lived and worked side by side with the national teachers. About half of these men return and teach short terms year after year. The Hendersons have obtained permanent residence from the Trinidad & Tobago Government.

**The first known evangelist from Trinidad to be sent to another country to preach was Kaso Ramcharitar.** He was sent by Ameri-

***The dormitory of the Trinidad School of Preaching and Teaching.***

can brethren to Grenada in 1972 where he spent one year. He later married Chan Ramdeen and they migrated to Canada.

**The first known evangelists to be sent by Trinidad churches to another country were Ulric Alleyne and Thaddeus Bruno.** These men were sent by the San Fernando church to Grand Bay, Dominica in 1982 to establish a congregation. That



***Surendra and Marsha Singh, former graduates of Trinidad School, united in a Christian marriage.***

congregation was established and remains unto this day. Both men continue as effective evangelists, Thaddeus in St. Thomas and Ulric in Trinidad.

## Looking Forward



*One of the newest congregations of Trinidad meets in this used tin church building in a Hindu community in Woodland.*

A Television Program, "Know Your Bible", is conducted by the Point Fortin church with Mahasse Bissoon-dath doing the speaking. Ken Mohammed serves as the director. These programs are not only planned and produced by local Christians, they are likewise financially supported by many of the congrega-

tions in Trinidad and Tobago.

Today it is estimated that there are about 4,000 members of the church in 42 congregations. According to our latest figures, Trinidad/Tobago claims a total population of 1,300,000 peo-



*Gospel meeting in Woodland, with Kenneth Dimsoy doing the speaking.*

ple. 69.4 % of the nation hold membership in the many Roman Catholic and Protestant denominations present. 23.8 % of the population is Hindu and 5.8 % is Islamic.

**With less than 1 % of the population claiming membership in the church of Christ, we have much work to do.** Our aim is to encourage every member of the church in Trinidad and Tobago to take his rightful place in the glorious church of Christ and to keep on building on the foundation that has been laid. We want these beautiful islands of the Caribbean filled with faithful, loving, evangelistic Christians. This is the drive that pushes us to become “self supporting”, “self governing” and “self reproducing”. We are grateful for those who brought the gospel to our country. We now are trying to do likewise and take it on to others. With His help we shall not fail.

— **Gilbert Neptune**, evangelist, Indian Walk Church of Christ Princes Town, Trinidad; — **Kenneth Mohammed**, evangelist Point Fortin, Trinidad.

**Editor's note:** The Trinidad/Tobago spirit of evangelism mentioned above is seen reflected in: the local production and support of a weekly 30 minute radio program, two 30 minute TV programs per month; a school of preaching and teaching, in existence for 27 years, with a current enrollment of 37 full-time students from five Caribbean nations. One Trinidad congregation has just had a missions contribution of TT \$160,000.00 (equal to more than US \$25,000.00) for their annual support of evangelists. With the help of matching funds from American and Trinidad/Tobago churches, 12 full-time evangelists are kept on the field. Many other evangelists support themselves or are assisted by their own congregations.

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## *School of Preaching*

### **Bill Nicks**

It was my privilege to spend seven years as a teacher in the Trinidad School of Preaching located in San Fernando. Parker Henderson has been director of this school for 20 years and has done an outstanding work. The school is a beacon for the gospel in that land. Men who have taught in it have been of sound faith and love for the students as well as love for the gospel. In addition to brother Henderson and myself, men from America

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .



*Tent used in beginning a new congregation in Rancho in 2001. Rodney Tedford and his daughter, Jamie, are standing in the foreground.*

outreach methods of the school has been student “on the job training.” The school van takes students to various small churches for a week and each student does door-to-door evangelism, followed by tent meetings at night in

who have taught in it in the past few years have been Rodney Tedford, Roy Wright and Ron Edwards. Nationals from Trinidad have been Dominic dos Santos, Ulric Alleyne, Gilbert Neptune and Junior Clarke.

One of the evangelistic



*“Saturday School” being taught by Bill Nicks and Parker Henderson.*



## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

which either faculty or students preach. In this way, students are strengthened, churches built up and souls saved by the preaching of the word.

The school averages from 20 to 28 students in attendance and meets daily from 7:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. in the building of the church in San Fernando. This church has been evangelistic in that every October it holds a World Evangelism Workshop. The purpose is to encourage churches to support preachers to preach the word, as well as to evangelize the community.

Originally, someone said, when a goal of \$25,000 was proposed for the weekend Workshop, "Trinidadians will not give that much money to such an effort." But the original amount raised was over \$40,000. That number has increased each year until an amount of \$125,000 has been reached.

Preachers for small churches have been helped greatly from these funds. The school continues to attract students not only from Trinidad, but also from many other Caribbean Islands, such as St. Vincent, Dominica, Antigua, St. Kitts, Barbados and others. This

two-year program has been expanded for some students to a third and fourth year. It has been a tremendous help in training preachers for the spreading of the gospel to Caribbean nations, as well as Trinidad and Tobago. †

**Bill Nicks has worked in mission fields in Africa and Trinidad for many years. He currently resides in Hobe Sound, Florida, USA.**



***The Atlantic Ocean — World's Largest Baptistry! Dominic Dos Santos brings Christina Bascomb back to the shore after her baptism into Christ.***

# Do You Want to Reach out to Others, but . . .

How often do you meet up with a friend or a relative, or simply develop a conversation with a stranger and, because of your concern for their soul, you turn the topic of discussion to spiritual things? But little can be said in those few minutes, and there is a desire to leave them with something to guide their thinking after you part ways. What can you do?

We have a suggestion. Keep copies of **THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL** in your handbag, ready to share with those who show an interest. It is so easy to offer it, with the words, "I'd like to share this special magazine with you and to invite you to study with us. Here, at the back, is a contact address, phone number....."

**For \$25 a month, you can personally receive 35 copies of each issue — 35 copies to share with the precious souls you want to teach!**

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



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Att. Byron Nichols

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I want 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. Churches are also urged to use boxes in this way.

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 \_\_\_\_\_





## Republic of Trinidad & Tobago



**Government:** Parliamentary Democracy

**Head of State:** President Arthur  
N.R. Robinson

**Head of Government:**  
Prime Minister Patrick Manning

### Secular Facts:

**Location:** In the Caribbean, off the east coast of Venezuela

**Land Mass:** 1,981 square miles.

**Population:** 1,300,000; 656 per square mile.

**Major Cities:** Port-of-Spain, Scarborough, San Fernando.

**Language:** English (official), Hindi, French, Spanish

**Literacy:** 98%; free and compulsory.

**Religion:** Roman Catholic, 32%; Protestant, 28%; Hindu, 24%.

**Ethnic Groups:** Black, 43%; East Indian, 40%; Mixed, 14%.

**Economy:** *Industries:* Oil products, chemicals, and tourism; *Agriculture:* Sugar, cocoa, citrus, rice; *Communications:* TVs: 198 per 1000; Radios: 433 per 1000; Telephones: 1 per 6.2 persons; Newspapers, 139 per 1000; *Transportation:* 128,000 private cars; 27,000 commercial vehicles. *Health:* Life expectancy, male, 68.1; Female, 73; Infant mortality: 19 per 1000.

**Monetary Unit:** Trinidad & Tobago dollar.

### The Church:

**Congregations:** 42, with approximately 4000 Christians throughout the country.

**History:** Americans stationed in Trinidad first began worshipping during World War II, but it was not until 1965 that Ralph Wharton, an American preacher living in St. Vincent, came to Trinidad to further teach and to baptize radio contacts. Dave Dail Singh, Kaso Ramcharitar and Chanardaye Ramdeen obeyed the gospel and formed the nucleus of the first congregation, June 26, 1967, in San Fernando.

Bob Brown moved to Trinidad in 1970 and led many people to Christ, including Gilbert Neptune, a national preacher of 25 years' experience, known throughout the country for his love for the church and zeal for the lost.

David McFalls, Don Latham, Don Starks, Jim Massey; Roy Wright, Rodney Tedford, Bill Nicks, James Huggins are among the American brethren who have taught in the Trinidad School of Preaching and Teaching, now under the direction of Parker Henderson.

Radio, television, and literature are mass media tools used to support evangelistic programs. Local Christians and congregations are making supreme efforts to be self-supporting and to send missionaries to neighboring countries.