

# THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

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# Instead

Brad Choate

(This poem was written by Brad Choate, putting himself in the emotional place of Ron Pacheco whose young son, Thomas, had just been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. You can go to Thomas' web site to monitor his progress.)



Please, Lord, me instead.

Don't make him go through this.

I'd face the pain, the suffering, the dread.

Please not him, but me instead.

It tears me in two to know what is coming.

To know more trauma still lies ahead.

I'll take it all — I'm older and stronger.

Give it to me, I'll bear it instead.

Chemo, sarcoma — words a child should not know

Now have to be taught — explained — understood.

I'm not prepared for once to teach him.

Afflict me with their meaning instead.

Give my tears of happiness for his tears of fear.

Give my prayers of thanks for his prayers to live.

I'd gratefully trade them if it would but cure.

Take them from me and grant him instead.

I pray for Your wisdom and what's best be done.

That he can be saved and come safely home.

I'll trust in You as a son trusts his father.

Not my will but Thy will instead.

# THE VOICE OF TRUTH INTERNATIONAL

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

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

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

## Salvation

There are FIVE views or ways that people “interpret” Mark 16:16:

1. The view of all those who do not believe that Jesus Christ is the savior of mankind. This would include atheists, Buddhists, Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Animists, Taoists, Shintos, etc.

He who 0 + 0 = 0  
Does Not Believe And Is Not Baptized Will Not Be Saved

2. The view of “Universalists” who believe that all people ultimately will be saved.

He who 0 + 0 = 2  
Does Not Believe And Is Not Baptized Will Be Saved

3. The view of “Pedobaptists”, who believe that baptism saves infants, even though they do not have the capability of believing.

He who 0 + 1 = 2  
Does Not Believe And Is Baptized Will Be Saved

4. The view of those who believe that faith alone saves.

He who 1 + 0 = 2  
Believes And Is Not Baptized Will Be Saved

5. The view of those who accept the verse, as it is.

He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned (Mark 16:16).

1 + 1 = 2  
He who Believes And Is Baptized Will Be Saved

*Consider these views carefully. The eternal destiny of each one of us depends on how we read these words and what we do in response to them. Have you obeyed the gospel and been born into the family of God yet?*

***The Church...* is the bride of Christ.  
Our Lord is not a bigamist, with many wives.**

*"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25).*

***The Church...* is the body of Christ.  
Our Lord is not a freak, with one head and  
many bodies.**

*"And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence" (Colossians 1:18).*

***The Church...* is the kingdom of  
Christ. All of His subjects are  
in the same kingdom.**

*"...I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:18,19; Colossians 1:13).*

***The Church...* is the family of Christ.  
It wears His name  
and all of His people have been added to it.**

*"For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Ephesians 3:14,15; Romans 16:16; Acts 2:47).*

***The Church...* was bought with His  
blood. Have you been baptized into it yet?**

*Ephesians 5:25;26; 1 Peter 1:18,19; Hebrews 13:8; Colossians 1:19-24; Galatians 3:26,27.*



## WHO AM I?

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

We often hear young men and women say that they don't know who they are, where they came from, and their purpose for being here. They are searching for answers, but frequently in the wrong places. Many of these represent a demoralized generation, a hippie, drug-ridden group. Their values and standards are non-existent. Many are victims of AIDS and other venereal diseases because

of their promiscuous lifestyle. If they have any religion at all, it is generally one of the Eastern religions, which they practice on an experimental basis.

Who are you? Do you know who you are, where you came from, and where you are going? Do you believe in anything? Do you have a purpose for living? Are you making a contribution to society? Will the world be any better because you were born? Do you believe in life after death? If so, where will you spend eternity?

I don't know about you, but I know who I am. I also know who I am not. I did not descend from some one-celled organism. I did not evolve. I am not the son of a monkey or an ape. I am not an atheist, infidel, humanist, or liberal. I am not living out in the world, doing the things of the world, being immoral and ungodly. Neither do I believe that I can save myself. I am not involved in the religions of men, and I do not believe that one church is as good as another, that the name is not important, or that one can be saved without being baptized.

I know where I came from. I came from God. My father and mother gave me a physical body, but God gave me a living spirit, a soul. We read that in the beginning "*God said, Let us make man in our image, after our*

likeness...So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26-28). Then we are told, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Genesis 2:7).

Not only did God give me an immortal soul, but every other human also has a soul, an eternal being made in the image of God. How dare anyone to take it upon himself or herself to abort God’s creation, or to bring an end to his or her life? That soul was given by God and it belongs to Him, and — even as God is eternal — that which is in His image is also eternal. No other living thing has a soul and, therefore, nothing should be put on equality with man and woman.

I believe that there is one God and that Jesus Christ is his Son (Matthew 17:5). I believe that Christ died on the cross for the sins of the world, for my sins (John 3:16,17). I believe that the Bible is the inspired word of God and that we are to live by it, not adding to it or subtracting from it, or substituting for it (2 Timothy 3:16,17; Revelation 22:18,19). I was not *born* a sinner but I *became* a sinner when I reached the age of accountability, knowing right from wrong (Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 3:23). Being a sinner, I needed to be saved, and I *was* saved when I obeyed the gospel (Mark 16:15,16). I obeyed the gospel when I heard God’s word taught (Romans 10:17), I believed that Jesus Christ was the Son of God (Acts 8:36, 37), I repented of my sins (Acts 17:30), I confessed Christ to be the Son of God (Matthew 10:32,33), and I was baptized — buried in water — for the remission of my sins (Acts 2:38; Colossians 2:12). I was born again, becoming a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). When I obeyed the Lord and was saved, then Christ added me to His one church, His family (Acts 2:47).

I am therefore a member of the Lord’s church, the only church that belongs to Him, the one He promised to build, the one He died for, the one He is savior of, head of, and the one He is returning for one day. How could I be a member of just *some* church, a *man-made* church, a *denominational* church? How could I wear all of those man-made names and worship in different ways, depending on which church I visited with? I find great satisfaction in knowing who I believe in, knowing that I was saved by the Lord when I complied with His will, and knowing that I am a member of His

church. I have no doubts about my standing with the Lord and the hope I have in Him.

I believe that Jesus will come again, that all souls will be resurrected, that the judgment will take place, and that the righteous will go to be with the Lord forever more, while the wicked will be cast into hell for all eternity (John 14:1-3; Matthew 25:46).

I am a male and I am married and have a scriptural marriage. I am the husband of one wife, I am a father, I am the head of my family. I love my family, and they love me. I have provided for them through the years and I have tried to set a good example. My wife and children are faithful Christians and my children are married to Christians. We have five grandchildren, and the two older ones are also Christians.

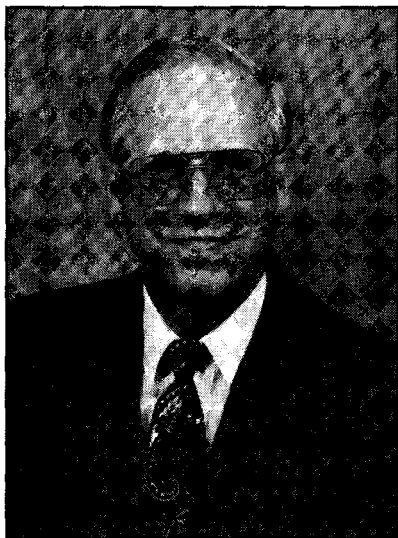
I am a preacher of the gospel and a missionary. I have publicly preached in pulpits in many countries around the world, and have established numerous congregations of the Lord's church. I have used radio, TV, videos, and literature to reach the masses. I have written many books, published hundreds of books, and served as editor of over almost two dozen gospel magazines. I have been richly blessed in my lifetime, both physically and spiritually.

Please don't misunderstand me. I am not saying these things to boast or to leave the impression that I am important. On the contrary, I have done so little in comparison to what I would have liked to have done. I am the first to admit that I have weaknesses, that I am human, that I am a sinner, and that I still need the help and prayers of my family and my brethren, and above all, the grace of God to be eternally saved. (Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23). But my point is that I am *what* I am because of *who I am* — a Christian. That identification not only gives importance to my life but it creates an atmosphere of stability. I can live and I can face death in the knowledge that I rest in the hands of God.

I thank God for all of His many blessings and for the hope of eternal life that I have in Him (Ephesians 1:3). Yes, I know who I am, what I have, and what I have to look forward to. Can you make the same statements, without reservation? Have you prepared to meet the Lord? Where will you spend eternity?

It is time to answer these questions and to plan for the future. We live now physically, but we will live spiritually forever — somewhere. †





# HOW MUCH DO WE LOVE THE CHURCH?

**Byron Nichols**

What kinds of thoughts come to your mind when you think about the church? How do you feel about the church?

Just what is the church, the church in the Bible?

The Scriptures do not portray the church as being just a group of religious people, but as that group that Peter calls “*God’s own special people*” (1 Peter 2:9). “*But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people . . .*”

In spite of the fact that there are many very fine, dedicated people in the multitude of denominations of today, the church of the Bible is the only one spoken of here by Peter. It is **the** church, **singular**. There were no parts, no denominations — only the one church which Jesus promised to build (Matthew 16:18).

**Jesus loves the church dearly.** Paul spoke to the elders from Ephesus about the love of Christ for the church in Acts 20:28 — “*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to*

*feed the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*” Isaiah 53 and numerous other passages also tell of the great love which Jesus has for His church. His love caused Him to give everything He had for it.

**Paul had a great love for the church.** As we think carefully about our love for the church, recall with me a few comments from this noble apostle which tell us something of how much he loved the church. Let’s compare our love for the church with his when he says, **“I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory”** (2 Timothy 2:10). He urged the elders from Ephesus, **“. . . remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears”** (Acts 20:31). Paul’s love and concern were for much more than just one congregation. After listing several of the sufferings which he had endured for Christ, he adds these very significant words — **“besides the other things, what comes upon me daily; my anxiety for all the churches [congregations]”** (2 Corinthians 11:28).

But Paul was not the only early Christian who loved the church. Many became martyrs; they gave their very lives for the church. Some, like Stephen and James, are specifically mentioned in the New Testament. I’ve been blessed by having the opportunity to go inside the great Colosseum in Rome where numerous early Christians became martyrs rather than to deny the Lord and His church. I’ve walked through the catacombs, those underground tombs just outside of Rome, where multitudes are buried because they loved the church and the Lord of the church enough to remain faithful and try to further His cause rather than to deny the faith.

Regardless of the tremendous love of Jesus, Paul, and a host of ancient Christians for the church, the compelling question

that confronts each one of us is, “**How much do I (we) love the church?**” Brethren, here are some soul-searching questions that every member of the church needs to very soberly and seriously think about.

### **Do We Love The Church Enough To:**

1. Present our bodies as a living sacrifice, as Paul urged in Romans 12:1?
2. Be willing to suffer ridicule and rejection in its behalf?
3. Sacrifice our personal comfort, etc., for the sake of the church?
4. Support it with our money, prayers, time, and talents?
5. Defend it against opposition, attacks from without and within?
6. Stand with Christ against the majority, even in the church, if necessary?

Could we ever be called upon to take such a stand in the church? I say this kindly, but to ask such a question is to reveal a lack of awareness of what is going on around us. Many Christians that I know personally are having their love for the church severely tested as a result of present conditions.

Brethren, it is imperative that every member of the Lord’s church be determined to never forsake the Word of God and His desires for the desires and preferences of men! Paul told the Christians of Galatia some things that were not easy for him to say or for them to accept. As a result, he asked them in Galatians 4:16, “*Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?*” Paul was willing to even lose friends, Christian friends, if necessary, for the sake of the church. How about us — Do **we** love the church enough to make that much of a sacrifice if it should become appropriate? Brethren, we must love the church in the same manner that we are to love God — that is, “with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength” (Mark 12:30).

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“No one can appreciate so fully as a doctor the amazingly large percentage of human disease and suffering which is directly traceable to worry, fear, conflict,...to unwholesome thinking and unclean living” (Dr. William Sadler).

Even without a medical degree, most of us instinctively recognize that the anxiety which chases away sleep, the fear which causes our

# FOCUS On God

Rex Banks

heart to race, and the slow-burning anger which gnaws at our gut are the enemies of both our bodies and our souls. The very language which we use is instructive. We speak of being “sick” with fear, “insane” with jealousy, and “eaten up” by anger.

In more prosaic language, medical men have drawn our attention to the fact that a mind filled with negative and destructive thoughts threatens the health of the body: “With every passing year, we obtain a wider comprehension of the ability of the mind (psyche) to produce varied disturbances in the body (soma): hence the term *psychosomatic*. Invisible emotional tension in the mind can produce striking visible changes in the body, changes that can become serious and fatal” (Dr. S. I. McMillen: *None Of These Diseases*).

Now, for those of us who believe that the Bible meets man's every emotional and spiritual need, it is not surprising to hear inspired writers emphasizing that a garbage-free heart/mind is essential to human well-being. True, emphasis is quite rightly placed upon the spiritual, but the God who created us has given laws which enhance our lives physically and emotionally, as well as spiritually.

We are to "guard" or "watch over" the heart (mind) (Proverbs 4:23), because it is the "wellspring of life." We are also to consciously, deliberately choose the focus of our minds. The Psalmist affirms: "I will meditate on Thy precepts" (Psalm 119:15,23,27,48,78,148), using a word which speaks of "silent reflection." Isn't it obvious that the man whose mind is saturated with Holy Scripture is less likely to "look on a woman to lust for her" (Matthew 5:28) than the man who feeds his imagination on pornography?

What of the man who silently reflects upon the cross each day and treasures in his mind the words of a dying Savior, "Father, forgive them..."? Isn't he far less likely to hold a grudge or nurse a grievance than the one who gives no thought to our dying God?

Again listen to David: "When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches"

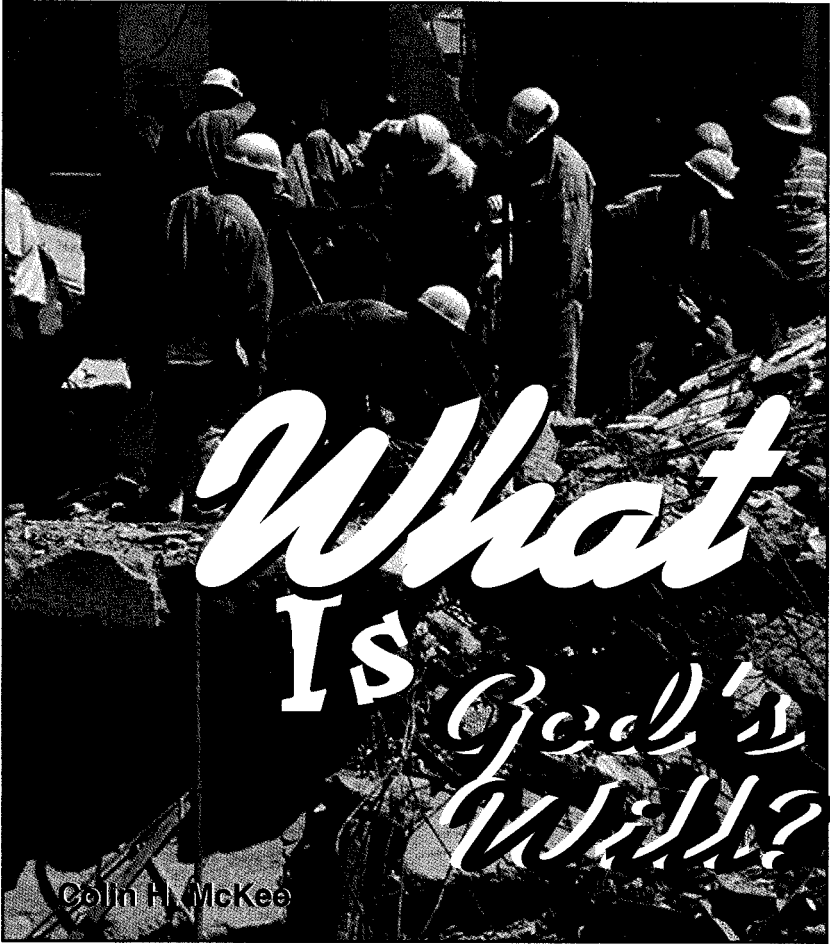
(Psalm 63:6). Isn't it obvious that the heart immersed in the promises of God will enjoy a freedom from doubt and fear which is not known to the atheist and the agnostic? What better antidote for anxiety than David's words: "*The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want*" (Psalm 23:1)?

Poor, sad Bertrand Russell lamented: "...no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling can preserve an individual life beyond the grave." That's the fruit of unbelief. Stephen died with heaven before his eyes, "*the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*" (Acts 7:55). That's the fruit of a God-directed focus.

Friends, let's choose carefully the focus of our minds. When the garbage threatens to engulf our hearts and lives, let's fight back as the Psalmist did — "*Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee*" (Psalm 119:11). Job was "*blameless, upright, fearing God*" simply because he could say with conviction, "*I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food*" (Job 1:1; 23:12b).

Let's choose deliberately and with determination a God-directed focus to our life — our physical, emotional, and spiritual health depend upon our doing so. †

**Rex Banks works with the church in Hamilton, New Zealand.**



Is everything that happens God's will? Was the tragedy of the World Trade Center His will? Is a destructive tornado His will? Just how does God relate to us and our world?

The Bible indicates that God's will relates to man in four ways:

I

**Some things fall into the realm of God's purpose and determination.** God wants a certain event or course of action to take place, and He determines that it be so. Genesis 1:1 tells us that *in the beginning God created the world.* He didn't



## GOD

consult with some hidden force; He didn't call for a committee meeting, nor did He wait for some condition to be right before He acted. He purposed and determined it as God, the all powerful Creator. He willed it to be so, He spoke the words, and it was done.

In the same manner, God purposed and determined man's redemption. He didn't need permission for that decision and His action was not contingent on other forces or events. Paul says, "...*just as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...*" (Ephesians 1:4). Thus, it was *God's choice* to provide the way of redemption without input from anyone outside of Himself.

*judgment if that matter has not been revealed in His word.*

For instance, someone may declare that a tornado which destroyed a community was an act of God's will to punish the residents for their sins. Their claim implies that they believe the tornado was directly attributable to God's purpose and determination. However, without direct revelation from God (which we don't have, concerning current events), the conclusion is merely an opinion.

### II

**Other things fall into the realm of God's direction and man's determination.** In this situation, God *wants* man to obey Him, but He does not *compel* obedience.

There are some things which God neither desires nor purposes, but He *allows* them...

How can we know that these things were purposed by God? Because He tells us so in His word, through revelation. Today, we can **know** that an event or course of action is purposed and determined by Him *only if His word reveals that fact to us*. We may want to say that something in our lives or in world events is God's purpose and design (His will), but *our conclusion is no more than a personal*

He calls man to follow Him, but the determination to do so is in man's hands. God wants all men to be saved, (2 Peter 3:9), but we know that many will be lost. If God **purposed** and **determined** that *all* men would be saved, *man would have no choice* — he could not withstand God's determination. This being so, by His own decision, God's purposive will is not **all-inclusive**. He has purposed *some things*, but not

*all things.* Man can comply with God's desire, or he may refuse it; the decision is under his power.

III

**A third type of event is the result of man's determination, but God's permission.** There are some things which God neither desires nor purposes, but He *allows* them in His over-all scheme of *the working of the universe and the free will of mankind.* From the beginning, God gave man *the freedom to choose* to obey or disobey Him. It was not *God's desire* that sin enter the world, but He *allowed* it in keeping with man's free will to choose good or evil.

An illustration of this point is the destruction of the World Trade Towers. The act was a man-made decision which God permitted in allowing man the freedom to make his own choices. God does not intervene to prevent evil choices, nor does He force anyone to make good choices. Many very good things are done by people every day in this world, but terrible atrocities are committed also. Those things happen, not because of *God's purpose or determination,* but because of His allowance based on our free will to choose or refuse evil. And, then, based on man's response to wonderful or tragic events, God can turn those things and use them to bring blessings into the lives of His children.

IV

**The fourth situation is caused by natural laws coupled with God's permission.** God has set the universe in motion. All things are upheld by the word of Christ (Hebrews 1:3). But in order for anything to function, there must be regulatory laws. **Earthquakes, tornadoes, and other natural disasters occur simply because there are natural laws which govern our universe.** The universe would disintegrate if there were constant exceptions to those laws. God permits natural problems to occur within the framework of those regulatory laws, since to do otherwise would require that He be constantly intervening to prevent disasters all over the world. He would be suspending the very laws that He put into place, and the result would be disaster and utter chaos.

God has limited His purposeful, determinative will to allow man to exercise his own free will in choosing good or evil, and to allow our universe to operate without constant intervention or suspension of regulatory laws. Until we understand this, we will be guilty of accusing God of causing many tragic events which were none of His doing.

Throughout our lives, may we choose what God has purposed for us, and accept also what nature brings! †

**Colin H. McKee is a missionary to Indonesia.**



# WAS MOSES A PLAGIARIST?

Betty Burton Choate

Most archaeologists pride themselves on the claim that they enter into their studies with open, scientific minds, unimpeded in the fairness of their conclusions by any preconceived belief in any “god” or any “inspired message” from God. They overlook the obvious: that the mind of man invariably will attempt to resolve the question of his origin — and one believes either that **there was a Creator**, or that **there was not**. Most “open-minded” scientists and archaeologists long ago accepted the theory that the universe is 15 billion years old, and that everything in existence developed through an “evolutionary” process.

So, most actually begin their

assessment of all things from a very close-minded hypothesis of *no God* and *no message* given from His vantage point of knowledge.

Therefore, the Bible is the prime target for rejection and ridicule, in open refutation of its claim to be inspired by God. It is lumped with all other “holy” books and mythical histories. Matter-of-factly and without hesitation, the characters of the Bible are dismissed or re-made into whatever suits the imagination of the “scholars”. In such an analysis, Abraham is pronounced as being, not an individual person, but a composite “hero” of 500 to 1000 years (Such casual guessing about the time sup-

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posedly involved tells us a great deal about the accuracy of the rest of the fabrication!) of oral traditions of Hebrew nomads. Moses, if such a person existed historically, was actually a prince of royal Egyptian blood who had to be “Hebraized” in order for the straggling Semitic people to accept his leadership. (If everything Scripture says about Moses is untrue, why even take up his name as a character about whom to develop a fabricated tale which is totally unsustainable by anything in secular or biblical records? Why not just deny his existence altogether?)

The same “scholars” who unhesitatingly rewrite the lives of Bible characters and events also say boldly that the oral traditions and myths were eventually written down by unknown individuals and that the resulting manuscripts were ultimately brought together and passed off on the world as “scripture”. Of course there is no belief in the revelation of truth by God, as “*God... spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets*” (Hebrews 1:1). Or that “*...holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*” (2 Peter 1:21). Totally disregarded is the statement that “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man*

*of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

Reading the Genesis accounts of creation or of the flood, these “scholars” then speak of the “older” Babylonian, Egyptian, Assyrian, and other accounts, and they conclude that whoever wrote those portions of Genesis was aware of the older records and simply and obviously plagiarized.

**Are there accounts** of the creation and the flood that were written before Moses penned Genesis, by God’s direction? **Yes.**

**Are there similarities** between those writings and the biblical record? **Yes.**

**Does this prove that the Bible is not of God**, as it claims, and that its writers could do no better than copy from the myths around them? **No.**

But these accounts *do prove* something that is very important: that *knowledge* of the creation and the flood predated every written record, and that all of the accounts actually came from a common source! Were not the Babylonians and Egyptians and all people of the world actually descendants of Noah and his family? As those sons saw generations of their children born, would they not have told them the awesome stories of the creation of the world and of its destruction by

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water because of sin?

As generation followed generation, and as people became further and further separated from each other, the stories gradually changed. Some of the people looked at the sun and, realizing its importance to their lives, they began to worship it as a manifestation of the Creator God. Others, fearing the power of rivers by which they lived, began to worship and offer sacrifices to the river "god". As these "gods" developed, the stories of the creation and of the flood were changed to incorporate them. With the passing of the centuries, the stories were finally written down and they have come to us in highly mythical forms. Many, many facts had become corrupted, so that it is evident even to a casual reader that these are elaborately developed myths.

Yet, there are threads woven through all of these accounts that are the same, and the similarities are too pronounced to be the work of coincidence. Even archaeologists recognize that there must have been a common source. However, because of their rejection of God, they make no attempt to delve deeper than the similarities and their convenient conclusions that the "younger" copied from the "older". They don't concern themselves with the questions, "Why are these stories of creation and flood found

repeatedly among ancient civilizations? What is the root of these 'coincidences'?"

Consider these likenesses between the Mayan Popol Vuh (from the Western Hemisphere) and the biblical record of creation, as compared in **Return to Sodom and Gomorrah** by an agnostic scientist, Charles Pellegrino:

**The Bible:** *"In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."*

**Popol Vuh:** "Before the world was created, calm and silence were the great kings that ruled. Nothing existed...and the face of the earth was unseen. There was only motionless sea, and a great emptiness of sky.... It was night, silence stood in the dark."

**The Bible:** *"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."*

**Popol Vuh:** "Flatness and emptiness, only the sea, alone and breathless.... In the darkness the Creators waited.... Then, 'Let the emptiness fill!' they said. 'Let the light break on the ridges, let the sky fill up with the yellow light of dawn!'"

**The Bible:** *"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the*

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*waters from the waters.”*

**Popol Vuh:** “Let the water weave its way downward so the earth can show its face.”

**The Bible:** “*And God said...Let the dry land appear: and it was so.*”

**Popol Vuh:** “‘Earth!’ the Creators called. They called only once, and it was there, from a mist, from a cloud of dust, the mountains appeared instantly.”

**The Bible:** “*And God said...Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind...and it was so.*”

**Popol Vuh:** “At this single word the groves of cypresses and pines sent out shoots.”

**The Bible:** “*And God said...Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth....*”

**Popol Vuh:** “The Creators often asked, ‘Will this silence reign under the trees forever?’ Suddenly there were the animals: deer, birds, jaguars, snakes.”

**The Bible:** “*And God said...Let us make man in our image....*”

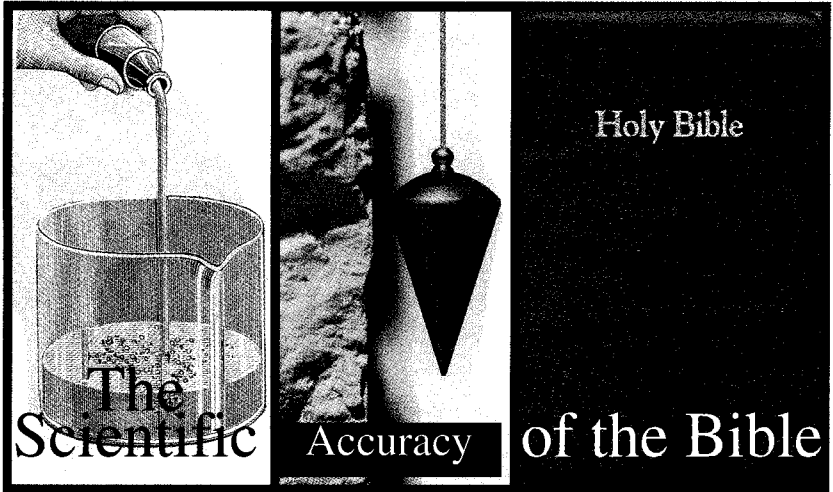
**Popol Vuh:** “‘Let our glory be a man walking on a path through the trees,’ the Creators called.”

Obviously, the writer of Genesis did not go to the Mayan kingdom in the Western Hemisphere to copy from the text of the Popol Vuh. Did the Mayans copy from the Genesis record? How, then, can two accounts of creation, separated by such physical distances, be so much alike? The only plausible answer is that the Mayans had learned the facts from their ancestors — Noah’s descendants — and that they preserved with remarkable accuracy what they had been taught by their forefathers, even after they left the land of their origin and crossed an ocean to reach a new world.

Rather than discrediting the authenticity of the biblical record, these other accounts — regardless of how much they have been altered by time and mythological corruptions — attest to the facts of the creation and the flood, as accurately revealed through God’s inspiration in Genesis. *God’s word stands.* †

**Betty Burton Choate is the wife of J.C. Choate. They live in Winona, MS but also do mission work in Asia.**

*Without faith, we are as  
stained glass windows in the dark.*



Dan Flournoy

The Bible is not a scientific textbook, yet it speaks many scientific truths which help to demonstrate the Divine nature of this Book. In considering anything of a so-called “scientific” nature, it is good to remember the warning of 1 Timothy 6:20, *“O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.”*

On the one hand, we must be careful not to accept too readily the “science” of today, for it may be tomorrow’s superstition. On the other hand, we must also be careful not to “read into” the Bible what we want to see. Some have misapplied some of the poetic passages to read as scientific statements when they

are actually figures of speech. As such, they affirm the power and glory of God as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and are not to be taken in a scientific sense. There are, however, many unmistakable pre-scientific facts expressed in Scripture. Consider these:

**1. Five facts of science.**

Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), the famous British philosopher, declared, after a lifetime of study, that there are basically five fundamentals of science: Time, force, action, space, and matter. These are to be found in the very first verse of the Bible, *“In the beginning (time), God (force) created (action) the heavens (space) and the earth (matter)”* (Genesis 1:1).

**2. Health laws of the**

## EVIDENCES

**Pentateuch.** The Pentateuch is filled with health laws given to Israel while yet in the wilderness. These laws demonstrate a knowledge of bacteria that has only been discovered in modern times. S. I. McMillen, M.D. has catalogued a number of examples in his book, **None Of These Diseases.** They include:

- (1) The quarantine of people with leprosy (Leviticus 13:11, 16,31);
- (2) Covering the mouth of the sick (Leviticus 13:34);
- (3) Burning of contaminated clothing (Leviticus 13:52);
- (4) Shaving and washing of those who had been sick (Leviticus 14:8,9);
- (5) Handling dead bodies prohibited (Numbers 19:5-22; Leviticus 13-15);
- (6) Eating blood prohibited (Leviticus 17:12-14);
- (7) Burying waste (Deuteronomy 23:12-14).

**3. Unscientific practices not incorporated in the Bible.** Luke informs us that "*Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians....*" (Acts 7:22). Yet, he

did not incorporate into the Pentateuch a single medical practice common among the Egyptians of his day. The famous Ebers Papyrus, a medical book written in Egypt about 1552 B.C., gives the most advanced medical knowledge of that day. Many of the common remedies included the bacteria-laden dung of various animals and insects. The formulae for drugs concocted by Egyptian doctors included "...the shell of a beetle, head of the electric eel, guts of the goose, tail of a mouse, fat of the hippopotamus, hair of a cat, eyes of a pig, toes of a dog, etc." (S. I. McMillen). It is nothing short of remarkable that Moses did not incorporate the pagan medical practices of his day in writing the Pentateuch. Thus, what we *do not read* in the Bible is a valuable testimony to its Divine origin.

The Bible, properly used, and true science (not man's fanciful theories), will always agree because their ultimate source is God. †

**Dan Flournoy works with the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Bedford, Texas, USA.**

**"If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you" (Exodus 15:26).**



## EVIDENCES

Jesus taught that Satan is “*the father*” of lies (John 8:44). The first lie ever told was spoken by “*the serpent*,” which of course was the devil (see Genesis 3:4 and Revelation 12:9). Since then the world has been filled with his lies!

Satan is the instigator and perpetrator of all falsehood! But in my opinion, **the most colossal lie he has ever pawned off on a gullible world is the theory of evolution.**

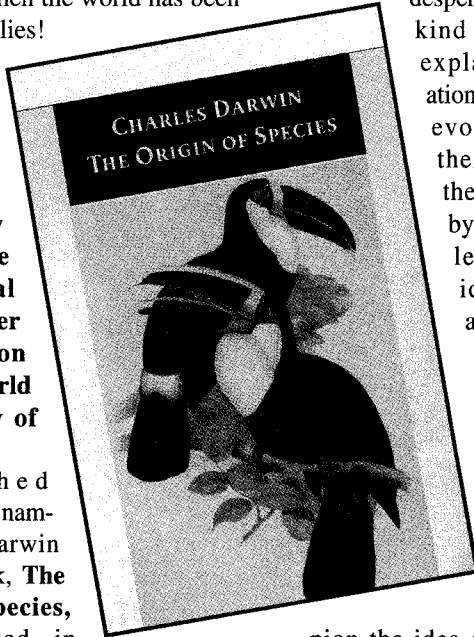
Launched through a man named Charles Darwin when his book, **The Origin Of Species**, was published in

1859, the theory of evolution has been embraced and propagated by most all of those in the scientific community who do not believe in God and the Genesis account of creation. They

desperately needed some kind of an “alternate explanation” to creation, and the theory of evolution provided them the vehicle — the “mechanism” — by which their Godless concepts and ideas could be advanced.

By its very nature, the theory of evolution requires “billions of years” for its “development”. That’s the very reason the evolutionists cham-

pion the idea of an OLD, OLD



# Satan's Greatest Lie

Maxie B. Boren

## EVIDENCES

EARTH. They scoff at the belief that in six literal days an all-wise and all-powerful being (God) could have created everything that exists.

Friends, the battle line is clearly drawn between the theory of evolution and the truth of God's creation, and the stakes are high — don't ever doubt it! And that's the reason it grieves me when some church members naively, with insufficient study and thought, try to accommodate the evolutionary theory by accepting the fallacious notion that the "days" of Genesis 1 are to be understood as long periods of time. (By the way, the use of 2 Peter 3:8 in an effort to claim the days of Genesis 1 to be long periods of time is a misuse of that passage. There Peter is simply signifying the way in which God regards time...not like we do.)

The truth is that God created everything in six literal, 24 hour days, as is clearly seen by reading Genesis 1, Exodus 20:11, and 31:17.

For those of us who believe in God, there is no problem in believing that fact! Over and again, the Bible teaches that God, in His infinite power, wisdom, and understanding created all things (see such as Nehemiah 9:6,5; Psalm 33:6,9; 90:2; 136:5-9; 146:5,6; 148:1-6; Proverbs 3:19; Isaiah 44:24; Jeremiah 10:12; 31:35; 22:17; 51:15; Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24-26; Romans 1:20; Hebrews 11:3; Revelation 4:11; 10:6, etc.).

But the theorists of organic evolution don't believe in God and His creation. The evolutionary theory is an atheistic philosophy in direct opposition to God and His creative genius! Some mistakenly try to hold on to belief in God while accepting evolution, and they call themselves "theistic evolutionists". Such is an untenable position! The theory of evolution and the Bible are totally incompatible! †

**Maxie B. Boren is an evangelist with the Brown Trail Church of Christ in Bedford, Texas, USA.**

**Query: What is "theistic evolution"?** It is an attempt to harmonize belief in a creator God with "scientific" dates and suppositions of how things might have come into existence. In the believer's desire not to challenge and disbelieve "scientific" statements, spoken and written with an assumed air of absolute certainty, he closes his eyes to incompatible contradictions between the biblical account and the claims of evolutionists. This compromise may satisfy the believer who is unwilling to study in depth, but evolutionists laugh at the idea. They have no desire to *compromise*. **Their goal is to utterly eradicate the concept of God.** BBC

## Quick Commentary on Crucial Verses

## John 15:1-8

*"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away and every branch that bears fruit He prunes that it may bear more fruit. ... Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.*

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

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

*"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.*

*"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples."*

These verses clearly show seven "laws" regarding the Godhead and humanity:

1. There is ONE vinedresser — God.
2. There is ONE true vine — Christ.
3. ALL who belong to Christ have been grafted as branches to the vine.
4. EVERY branch MUST bear fruit.
5. A barren branch is cut away.
6. Branches that produce little are pruned to be more productive.
7. Branches that bear fruit will remain in Christ and are promised that God will hear and answer their prayers.

No matter how capable and powerful humans may feel themselves to be, SPIRITUALLY we can do nothing without Christ. We have two choices: Live an apathetic and fruitless life, and be cut off from the source of spiritual life; or be productive, and abide in Him as a result, with the assurance that God will do good for us, according to our prayers and desires. One qualifying statement concerning our "desires"— that they be according to His will (James 5:16; 1 John 4:14,15)

## THE WORD OF GOD

In 2 Timothy 2:15 Paul told Timothy (and us) to "...*rightly divide the truth.*" What does this mean? It means to handle the Word of God properly, not to put one's own private interpretation on it, but to leave it in its context, and compare it with other related Scriptures in order to see what God is saying. It is only when a verse or passage harmonizes with other teachings on the same subject that one can conclude that he is properly understanding that particular truth.

16:30-31 as proof that all one has to do is believe and accept Christ as Savior. In considering this teaching, a look at the context is again very important. The verses following Acts 16:30 show that Paul and Silas "*spoke the word of the Lord*" to the jailor and his household, and immediately they were baptized. To conclude that they were saved through faith alone wrests this passage, making it teach a doctrine that contradicts other commands in the New Testament.

### "...Rightly Dividing the Truth"

Don L. Norwood

To rightly divide the Word, one must first see (1) to whom God is talking (2) in what dispensation of time (3) and whether these were instructions for one individual or for all people of all time.

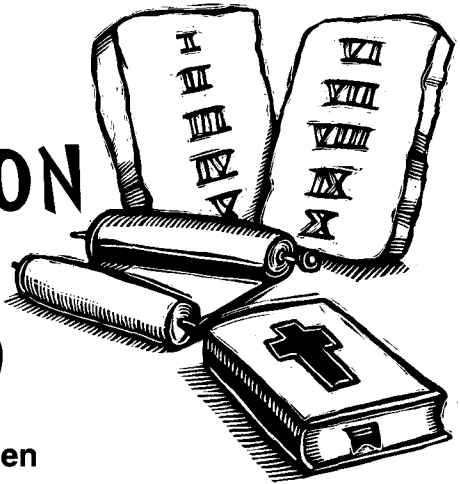
Often a Scripture is lifted out of its context and made to stand alone, with no consideration of these three points. The result forces it to teach something that it does not teach, so that it contradicts other clear passages on the same subject.

For example, some conscientious folks say that one can be saved without being baptized into Christ. Such persons may point to Acts

What do the Scriptures teach about salvation? that baptism for the confessed, penitent believer in Christ does save him (1 Peter 3:20-21; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Galatians 3:26-29). **How?** One is saved by God's grace through the person's faith, but that faith has to demonstrate itself in the person's obedience to the instructions of the Gospel of Christ (Ephesians 2:8-10; James 2:14-24). Remember, the New Testament is the whole body of truth (John 1:17; 17:17; 14:26; 16:13). †

**Don L. Norwood is a missionary to India.**

# THE INSPIRATION OF THE SCRIPTURES



John Thiesen

**Question:** : “How do we know the Bible writers did not make mistakes or get events and teachings tangled up with inaccuracies because of their fallible human memories?”

Strangely enough, there are some “theologians” and others who claim to believe that the Bible is from God but who think that it is bound to be filled with mistakes, since men wrote the Scriptures. Others say that the Bible was written so long after the events occurred that much of it is hand-me-down information recorded by people who weren’t even there when it all happened.

## **Eyewitness Testimony**

The truth is that many of the Scriptures were written by eyewitnesses of the recorded events. This is especially true of the New

Testament, where Matthew, Peter, and John lived with Jesus from the beginning of His preaching career and wrote what they saw and heard (2 Peter 1:16-18; 1 John 1:1-4). The apostle Paul, who wrote at least 13 of the letters of the New Testament, was permitted to see Jesus to qualify him as a witness and he received his information personally from the Lord (Acts 26:16; Galatians 1:11,12).

Other New Testament writers, such as Mark and Luke, traveled with the apostle Paul, and possibly others, and were in a position to hear all the facts directly from the mouths of the eyewitnesses themselves. So when the writers of the Bible penned the Scriptures, they were not setting down oral traditions that had come to them from the distant past.

### Holy Scriptures Inspired

But a much more important factor in their writing was that it was “inspired”. This means “God-breathed”, a process in which the writer was guided by the Holy Spirit in the selection of words when he spoke or wrote. The Holy Spirit both revealed the information to the writer and assisted him in choosing the proper words to express it. This was necessary in order for the story to be accurate. After all, the Bible writers were only human beings, and even holy men can forget or make unintentional errors. And sometimes they, themselves, did not even understand what they were writing, so the accuracy of the message was entirely dependent on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As evidence of this, note what Peter wrote in 1 Peter 1:9,10: “*Of this salvation the prophets have **inquired and searched carefully**, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, **searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating** when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.*”

These verses show that even though the prophets in the Old Testament wrote a correct message, guided by the Spirit of Christ, they did not themselves comprehend what they were writing, so they **studied (just as we have to do),**

**comparing Scripture with Scripture, trying to understand the message.**

During the last Supper, Jesus told His apostles that He was going to send them the Holy Spirit who would

- ◆ guide them into all truth,
- ◆ teach them all things,
- ◆ and bring back to their remembrance all things He had said to them (John 16:13; 14:26).

This came to pass, just as the same Spirit had guided Old Testament prophets who “*spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (2 Peter 1:21). For this reason, the apostle Paul could say of the message he and the other inspired apostles brought, “*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).

You and I can have complete confidence in the Bible, that it is the accurate record of God’s will for us today, for the writers did not speak with their own words or wisdom, but with that of the Holy Spirit of God. The Bible is the mind of God, conveyed through the pens of men. †

**John Thiesen is a former missionary to Malawi and now preaches for the Lord’s church in Buffalo, Missouri, USA.**

## THE WORD OF GOD

### Can we live without hope?

The Bible, which speaks of good news, is a collection of books or writings that were written over a period of 1,500 years. Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible (starting with Genesis), and John wrote the last (Revelation) in AD 96.

Throughout the Bible a unique thread of hope is interwoven — Jesus was the promised hope of the Old Testament. He came to earth and died for all, and is coming again on the last day to retrieve the faithful, as recorded in the New Testament.

The Bible is important to us as our source of hope — Jesus will be returning for “me” and “my” loved ones. The hope that we have in Christ as our Savior, however, is not wishful thinking, nor an unrealistic expectation, a “pie in the sky” as some may say. Our hope is an anchor of the soul, secure and steadfast (Hebrews 6:19-20).

Our hope is a feeling of confident expectation that will be realized when Jesus returns. It is an intangible that many people cannot understand; but for those who have hope, it is the major source of comfort, and those

who hope place their trust in God.

There are two major reasons for having such a hope:

The first is in Jesus. He is our hope — He defeated Satan and death by His resurrection from the

dead and is now preparing a place for us in heaven. He is also our advocate, able to overcome any charge set before us by Satan, the accuser.

The second is the Bible. The Bible, God’s Word or Divine Communication, is the story of

man’s fall from grace in the Garden of Eden, and his redemption through Jesus. The Bible is not just a book, to be compared to Shakespeare, Homer, Plato, or others. There is no other book like it in continuity, circulation, translation, survival, teaching, or influence. It is the only book that is truly a universal manual for all people everywhere, any time, and in any culture.

The Bible can be believed today — not in part, but the whole. From Genesis to Malachi, Matthew to Revelation, God’s Word is inspired — not someone’s clever imagination or interpretation! †

**Peter Mostert works with the Lord’s church in Riverside, California, USA.**

**The Bible Is**  
**Not**  
**“Just a Book”**  
**Peter Mostert**

# Such Were Some of You...

Jimmy Jividen

The city of Corinth was filled with immorality. Paul preached there about Jesus. He told them that their sins would damn their souls.

*"Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9b,10).*

The listeners did not try to excuse or justify their sins. Instead, they **repented**. Paul described their change, *"such were some of you."* This reflected two things:

**First, the demands of repentance.** They gave up those sins which would have damned their soul. The fornicators did not blame the culture. The homosexuals did not blame their genes. The thieves did not blame their environment,

and the drunkards did not say they had a disease. They simply repented — quit practicing sin.

**Second, the magnitude of grace.** This catalog of sin describes a pretty raunchy bunch of people. The good news is that these sinners were washed, sanctified, and justified in and by the blood of Christ.

**"Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers shall inherit the kingdom of God"**  
(1 Corinthians 6:9b,10).

God's grace is sufficient to save the most despicable sinner, if that sinner is willing to repent. In this case, their change of heart in repentance brought about

a total change in their life-style. This brought a change in their relationship with God.

Hearing God's message and being moved by it to obedience will do the same for us today as then — it will save our souls. †

**Jimmy Jividen is a preacher of the Gospel in Abilene, Texas, USA.**



# Eternal Life Insurance

Home Office:

In Heaven

Branch Offices:

In principal cities and communities  
all over the world,  
known as churches of Christ.

This policy is given by all authority  
both in heaven and on earth.

Compiled by  
J.A. Thornton  
from the Holy Scriptures

# Conditions of this Policy

## I. Application for policy.

### 1. *Believe in Christ.*

“For without faith it is impossible to please him, for they that come to him must believe that he is and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek after him” (Hebrews 11:6).

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house” (Acts 16:31).

“Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1).

### 2. *Repent of sins.*

“I tell ye nay, except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3, 5).

“At the times of this ignorance God winked at but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30).

“Repent ye and be converted that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 8:37).

### 3. *Confess faith in Christ.*

“With the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10).

“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:37).

### 4. *Be baptized for the remission of sins.*

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16).

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38).

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16).

Other scriptures on this point: (Romans 6:3,4, Galatians 3:26,27, 1 Peter 3:21).

**When these conditions have been met  
your policy is in force (Acts 2:47).**

## II. How to pay premiums.

### 1. *By worship.*

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

“And upon the first day of the week the disciples came together to break bread” (Acts 20:7).

“Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is...” Hebrews (10:25).

## **2. By service.**

“Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

“Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord” (Romans 12:11).

## **3. Keep yourself pure.**

“Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God” (Matthew 5:8).

“But pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their afflictions and keep oneself unspotted from the world” (James 1:27).

## **4. Bear fruit unto God.**

“Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

“I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:2,5).

## **5. Be faithful unto death.**

“Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee a crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

“Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have a right to the tree of life and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14).

# **III. Special Provisions and Benefits.**

## **1. Salvation.**

“Though he were a son yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:8,9).

## **2. Forgiveness of sins.**

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Ephesians 1:7).

### **3. *An advocate with the Father.***

“My little children these things write I unto you that you sin not but if any man sin, he hath an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1,2).

### **4. *Communion of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.***

“... that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ” (1 John 1:3).

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Corinthians 13:14).

### **5. *An hundredfold in this life and then eternal life.***

“Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or brethren or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands for my sake and the gospel’s but he shall receive an hundredfold in this time ... and in the world to come eternal life” (Mark 10:29,30).

***IN WITNESS WHEREOF, if you have met the conditions of this policy, it shall be held valid and every benefit given by merits of the blood of Jesus.***

## **The Company’s Present Standing**

### **Capital: Riches.**

“Unto me who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable RICHES of Christ” (Ephesians 3:8).

“To an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, RESERVED in heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:4).

### **Liabilities: Accepts All.**

“He that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).

### **Surplus: Above Asking.**

“Now to him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Ephesians 3:20).

### **Dividends: Hundredfold.**

“An hundredfold in this life and the world to come eternal life” (Mark 10:30).

## Some Essential Facts about the Company

### **Founder: Christ.**

“Upon this rock I will build my church” ( Matthew 16:18).

### **Where Founded: Jerusalem.**

“It shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established ... and the word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem” (Isaiah 2:2,3).

### **Date Founded: 33 A. D.**

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come ... This is that which was spoken by Joel the prophet; and it shall come to pass in the last days ... And the Lord added to the church day by day those that were being saved” (Acts 2:1,16,47).

### **Home Office: Heaven.**

“Seek those thing above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1).

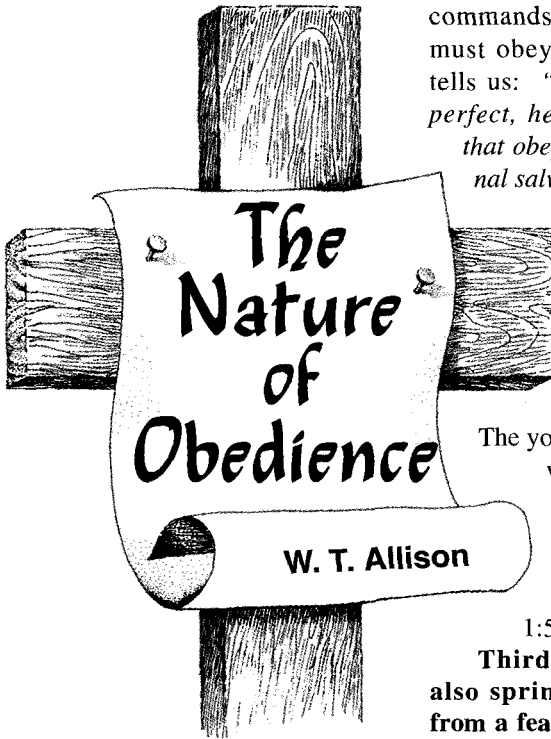
### **Rate Book: The Bible.**

“All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).

### **This Policy Does Not Cover the Following:**

1. People who will not hear Christ (Acts 3:23).
2. People who do not believe (John 8:24, Mark 16:16b).
3. People who do not repent (Luke 13:3-5, Acts 17:30).
4. People who do not obey the gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).
5. People who believe only (James 2:24-26).
6. People who deny Christ (Matthew 10:31,32).
7. Those who serve under the law of Moses or the Ten Commandments (Galatians 5:4).
8. The fearful, the unbelieving, the abominable, whoremongers, murderers, or those who love or make a lie (Revelation 21:8; 22:15).
9. Those who cause division and strife (Romans 16:17,18). †

**J.A. Thornton is associate minister for the Booneville, MS Church of Christ, USA.**



commands of the Gospel that we must obey. The Hebrews writer tells us: "*And having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation*" (Hebrews 5:9).

**Second, our obedience to God must be sincere, as well as active and personal.**

The mere performance of some ritual does not save anyone!

The young evangelist, Timothy, was told: "*But the end of the charge is love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and faith unfeigned*" (2 Timothy 1:5).

**Third, our obedience must also spring from love, not just from a fear of the Lord.** It is true that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Yet, the prime motivation behind our service must be a pure love. Jesus said, "*If you love me, ye will keep my commandments*" (John 14:15). "*If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the of the land*" (Isaiah 1:19). God keeps His promises, but we must believe Him enough to obey all that He asks of us.

**Trust and obey!**



When we become fully aware of our relationship to God and the obligation to obey Him, then we also become interested in *the nature of this obedience*.

**First, our obedience must be living and active.** We must not only avoid what God has prohibited, but also perform faithfully all that He commanded. This involves both an understanding of God's will and a willingness to obey. Although Christ died for us by taking our place on the cross, there are the

**W.T. Allison preaches in Gospel meetings throughout the USA.**

# Verse Search

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

1. What were those in the church at Antioch doing when the Holy Spirit spoke to them? (V. 2).
2. What did the church do before they sent Barnabas and Saul away? (V. 3).
3. Where did Barnabas and Saul go in Salamis, and what did they do? (V. 5).
4. Who was the sorcerer who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus? (V. 6,7).
5. How did Elymas (Bar-Jesus) withstand Barnabas and Saul? (V. 8).
6. How did Paul describe Elymas? (V. 10).
7. What was the proconsul's reaction when he saw what had been done? (V. 12).
8. Who departed from Paul and his party when they came to Perga, and where did he go? (V. 13).
9. What three things did Paul say God did for Israel when they were in Egypt? (V. 17).
10. "I have found \_\_\_\_\_ the son of \_\_\_\_\_, a man \_\_\_\_\_ who will \_\_\_\_\_." (V. 22).
11. Who did God raise up from Jesse's seed according to the promise? (V. 23).
12. To whom was the word of this salvation sent? (V. 26).
13. What did the dwellers in Jerusalem and the rulers not know? (Vs. 27).
14. "when they had \_\_\_\_\_ all that was \_\_\_\_\_ concerning Him" (V. 29).
15. What did Paul preach through the man Jesus? (V. 38).
16. How did the Jews judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life? (V. 46).

[See inside of back cover for answers.]

All Christians began their journey in the Lord as babes. One cannot be *mature* in Christ until he is *in Christ*. To expect anyone to have a full understanding of all things pertaining to being a Christian before being baptized into Christ is to expect the impossible.

About three thousand souls were added to the Lord on the Day of Pentecost. They all knew what they heard Peter and the other apostles preach, but there was much they could not have known. They could not have known: (1) Christian worship, for such worship was yet in the future; (2) Christian giving, for no one had yet given as a Christian; (3) The Lord's Supper, for it had not yet been observed in the kingdom; (4) The organization of the church, for it had not been organized; (5) The New Testament, for it had not been written; (6) The difference between Moses and Christ, for that difference had not yet been fully clarified. But in spite of their lack of knowledge concerning things yet to be learned, they were baptized into Christ.

# How Much Does One Need to Know to Become a Christian?

Hollis Miller

Jesus concluded the Great Commission with these words: "...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28:20). This statement clearly infers that Jesus does not require those being baptized to know everything He taught. On the Day of Pentecost, the birthday of the church, not even the apostles of Christ understood some things they would later learn (John 14:26; 16:12-15).

As Priscilla and Aquila taught Apollos the way of the Lord more perfectly, so babes in Christ are to be taught (Acts 18:26). And while they are being taught, more mature Christians need to exercise great love and patience toward them. Just as no reasonable person would quarrel with a six-month-old baby because he has yet to master the use of a fork and spoon, neither should older Christians grow weary of babes in Christ who have yet to learn what they themselves may have known for many years. †

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





# Calling On the Name of the Lord

David R. Pharr

In the beginning of his sermon in Acts 2, Peter quoted Joel's prophecy that "*Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*" (Acts 2:21). Many mistakenly assume that this simply means to pray and ask to be saved, and that God will save the person at that point.

In fact, however, at the conclusion of the sermon, Peter showed exactly what is involved in "calling on the name of the Lord". Clearly, it is not a mere prayer for salvation.

After Peter had convinced the listeners that they were guilty of crucifying Christ, they asked, "*What shall we do?*" Notice what Peter **did not say**. He did not say, "I already told you just to call on the name of the Lord in prayer." No indeed. Instead, he told them to "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...*" (Acts 2:38).

How is being baptized connect- ed with calling on the Lord's name?

## SALVATION

It is in the fact that when one is baptized it is *"in the name of Jesus Christ."* *In His name* means by *His authority*. Therefore, **being baptized in His name is an appeal to His redemptive power through obedience to His commandment.** (See also Acts 8:16; 10:48; 19:5.)

In Romans 10:13,14 Paul quoted the same prophecy of Joel, but here he emphasized that no one could call on the name of the Lord without **hearing and believing the Gospel.** It is not enough just to *ask* for salvation. One must know and accept the facts and commands of God's word. *"How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"*

Jesus, Himself, also showed that more is required than merely praying. Without **obedience** it is vain to **call His name.** *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* (Luke 6:46). This truth is reinforced in Jesus' warning of Matthew 7:21, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."*

When Saul of Tarsus was under the burden of conviction and awaiting the instructions Christ had promised to send (Acts 9:6), he spent the time in prayer. He had not been told to pray, but this was the natural

thing for him to do, because even though he had previously rejected Christ, prayer had always been a part of the religion of his ancestry.

However, when the Lord sent Ananias to Saul to tell him what he *"must do,"* Ananias did not say, *"Just keep on praying."* He did not say, *"You have prayed and called on the Lord, so now you are saved."* Neither did he say, *"I will pray with you until you feel saved."*

No. What this Christ-sent disciple said to Saul was: *"And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (Acts 22:16).



A penitent believer calls on the name of the Lord for salvation by being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of his sins (Acts 2:38;10:48; Galatians 3:27; 1 Peter 3:21). †

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

# CAN WE KNOW THAT WE ARE SAVED?

Jerry L. Davidson

Many believers spend their lives wondering what their eternal destiny will be, thinking that it would be presumptive to claim salvation before the Day of Judgment.

The question, "Are you saved?" brings a variety of responses, such as: "I really don't know if I am saved," "I will just have to wait and see," and "Maybe my good deeds will outweigh the bad ones so that God will save me."

There are two extremes relative to personal salvation. Some contend that once a person is saved he can never lose his salvation, even if he tried. This is obviously incorrect in view of the Scriptures.

When Simon the sorcerer sinned by attempting to purchase the power of the Holy Spirit for his personal gain, the apostle Peter told him, "*Your money perish with you, because you thought that the gift of God could be purchased with money!*" (Acts 8:20). This new convert fell back into sin and stood in need of repenting and praying to God for pardon (verses 22-24). Other passages that teach the possibility of being lost after once being

saved are 1 Corinthians 9:27; 10:12; 2 Peter 2:20,21; Hebrews 10:26,27).

The other extreme regarding personal salvation might be expressed, "Once saved, but never sure of salvation." Dealing with this idea regarding salvation requires a thoughtful examination of Scripture.

## Did Christ Accomplish His Mission?

Jesus Himself said, "*For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life*" (John 3:16). When Jesus said, "*It is finished,*" as He died on the cross, He declared that His redemptive work was accomplished (see John 19:30).

## New Testament Examples of Souls Being Saved

From the beginning of the church on the day of Pentecost, "*the Lord added to the church daily those who were saved*" (Acts 2:47). Peter, in answering the question, "*Men and brethren, what shall we do?*" clearly said, "*Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remis-*

## SALVATION

*sion of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Cornelius understood that, with the coming of Peter to his house, he would receive “words by which” he and all his “household will be saved” (Acts 11:14). The words spoken to Cornelius and his household led to their having faith and to their being baptized (Acts 10:47). Jesus had promised that “he that believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:15).*

### **Can We Have Assurance of Our Salvation?**

Can we know, as we live each day, that we have salvation, that we have eternal life abiding in us? Can we know that heaven will be our home when we leave this life?

The apostle John writes, *“This is the testimony; that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life, he who does not have the Son does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you continue to believe in the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:11-13). Therefore, John says we can know that we have eternal life, based on our acceptance of the written Word (see 1 John 2:5,6).*

### **Can We Know The Moment We Enter Christ?**

We can know precisely at what

point we enter into Christ to receive His salvation. Paul says, *“...as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27). When God’s Word tells us at what point we enter into Christ, we can know without any doubt whether we are in Christ or outside of Christ (see Romans 6:3-5).*

God’s Word teaches the assurance of our salvation where we are faithfully walking with Christ. John writes: *“If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:6,7). Being in fellowship with God, we have the ever-present cleansing of our sin by His Son’s blood.*

Being assured from the Scriptures that we have salvation in Christ and eternal life, we live in faith and confidence each day. We trust in God’s Word as our unfailing guide. In worship we sing as those who are confident that heaven is our destiny. We view death as a transformation from earth to heaven.

“Blessed assurance” must be more than just a song that we sing; it must be the mainstay of our lives. †

**Jerry L. Davidson teaches at Heritage Christian University in Florence, Alabama, USA.**



# The Ultimate Prize — Heaven

**Wayne Barrier**

Most people are very familiar with contests, events, and activities that offer prizes to participants who are selected as winners. Sweepstakes, lotteries, and various other competitions attract millions, with hopes of being a big winner. Very few ever win, usually less than one of every few hundred million who participate. Even so, interest in such things is growing rapidly across the world. How sad! If only these people could understand and believe, and trust the teachings of the Bible, they could live in expectation of the ultimate prize. All Christians — not just one in a million, but *all* — who are obedient until death (Revelation

2:10) will receive the greatest prize one could imagine.

The writer in Hebrews 11:8-16 discusses the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as they obeyed God and left homelands of comfort and security to dwell in tents on their way to a new home on earth and ultimately to the promised home in heaven. They were able to accurately comprehend the greatness of God and the eternal home He offers those who obey Him.

Jesus encouraged the apostles in John 14:1-6, as He promised that His death on the cross would result in His return to heaven to prepare a place for His followers to join Him.

## SALVATION

Jesus said in John 14:2, *"In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."* He also promised that He would provide His disciples with instructions to help them (and us) to be ready when He returns to receive those who can occupy those heavenly mansions throughout eternity. In John 14:6, Jesus said, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

The apostle Paul understood the heavenly reward and prize. He stated in Philippians 3:14, *"...I press toward the goal for the prize"* and in 2 Timothy 4:6-8, *"For I am already being offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight. I have kept the faith. Finally there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge will give to me on that Day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved his appearing."*

The apostle Peter described reaching heaven as the ultimate prize in life as he wrote in 1 Peter 1:3,4, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away,*

*reserved in heaven for you."*

The apostle John gave beautiful descriptions of heaven in the book of Revelation. In chapter 21, verse 1, he wrote, *"Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...."* Later, in verses 3 and 4, he said of God, *"He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."* Further reading in this book describes a place of great physical beauty, never-ending daylight, eternal life, and unending joy and happiness.

Every person can be a winner of this prize. The promise of heaven is to all who will live and die in obedience to God. Christ has paid the price for us to receive this prize (1 Peter 1:18,19). We cannot purchase this home, but it is free to those who qualify to receive it as an inheritance through obedience to God.

Where will you be in eternity? We can all be in heaven if we will obey God, while here on earth (Matthew 7:21; John 3:16; Acts 2:38; Revelation 2:10). †

**Wayne Barrier makes mission trips to Asia, and lives in Florence, Alabama, USA.**



1. Save the whales. Collect the whole set.
2. A day without sunshine is like, night.
3. On the other hand, you have different fingers.
4. I just got lost in thought. It was unfamiliar territory.
5. 42.7 percent of all statistics are made up on the spot.
6. 99 percent of lawyers give the rest a bad name.
7. I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.
8. Honk if you love peace and quiet.
9. Remember, half the people you know are below average.
10. He who laughs last...thinks slowest.
11. Depression is merely anger without enthusiasm.
12. The early bird may get the worm, but the second mouse gets the cheese.
13. I drive way too fast to worry about cholesterol.
14. Support bacteria. They're the only culture some people have.
15. Monday is an awful way to spend 1/7 of your week.
16. A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.
17. Change is inevitable, except from vending machines.
18. Going to "church" doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.
19. Plan to be spontaneous tomorrow.
20. Always try to be modest, and be proud of it!
21. If you think nobody cares, try missing a couple of payments.
22. How many of you believe in telekinesis? Raise my hand...
23. OK, so what's the speed of dark?
24. How do you tell when you're out of invisible ink?
25. If everything seems to be going well, you have obviously overlooked something.
26. When everything is coming your way, you're in the wrong lane.
27. Hard work pays off in the future. Laziness pays off now.
28. Everyone has a photographic memory. Some just don't have film.
29. If Barbie is so popular, why do you have to buy her friends?

## **FUNNY?** *Not so very...*

**Funny** how a \$20.00 bill looks so big on the collection plate, but so small when you take it to the grocery store or the mall!

**Funny** how big an hour of worshipping God looks and how small 60 minutes are when spent watching TV, playing sports, sleeping, or taking a lunch break!

**Funny** how we are thrilled when a football game goes into overtime or a baseball game goes into extra innings, but complain when a sermon is longer than 20 minutes!

**Funny** how laborious it is to read a chapter in the Bible and how easy it is to read 200 to 300 pages of a best-selling novel!

**Funny** how we believe what we read in the newspapers, but question what the Bible says!

**Funny** how people pay extra or arrive early or scramble to get a front row seat at a concert or some other such entertainment event, but scramble to get a back seat at a worship service!

**Funny** how we claim God as our friend but fail to introduce our Friend to others!

**Funny** how we cannot fit a Gospel Meeting into our busy schedule even with our yearly planners, but we can schedule other events at a moment's notice!

**Funny** how we are rarely late for work but often late for Bible Study and Worship Services!

**Funny** how we are willing to take directions from a complete stranger when we are lost, but are hesitant to take God's direction for our lives!

**Funny** how we want God to answer our prayers but fail to listen when He does!

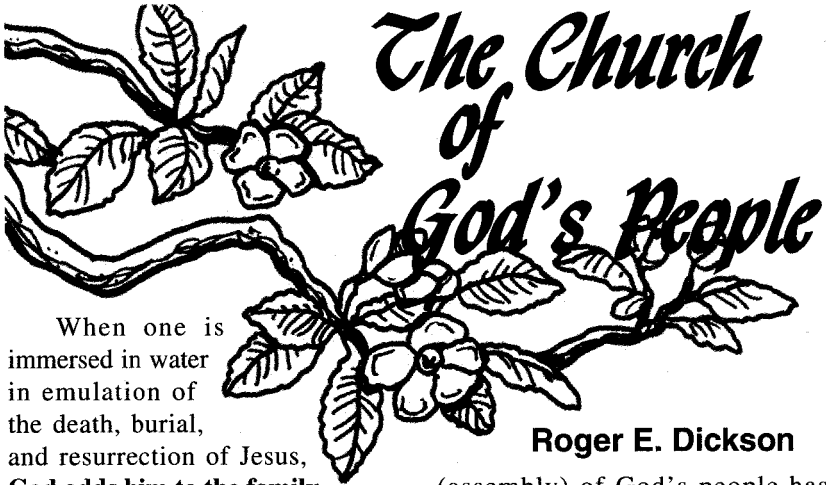
**Funny** how we are so quick to blame God for evil in the world and suffering in our lives, but so easily forget to thank Him for every good and pleasant blessing that comes our way.

**Funny** how concerned we are that our children learn 1-2-3 and A-B-C, but don't spend much time teaching B-I-B-L-E!

**Funny** how "providential hindrance" disappears on Monday!

**Funny** how excited we are to tell the news of some bargain we've found, but are hesitant to talk to others about free salvation!





# The Church of God's People

Roger E. Dickson

When one is immersed in water in emulation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, **God adds him to the family of God, the church.** In Acts 2 on the day the church was first established, about three thousand people were baptized into Christ, and everyone was *"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). Wherever in the world one obeys the Gospel for the correct reasons, **God adds that person to the church.** When one does what God says we must do in order to be saved, **God is the one who adds that person to the church.** It is not *our option* to join a church of *our choice*. It is only our choice to obey what God has said to do in order that **He, then, will add us to His people.**

The word *church* comes from a Greek word (*ekklesia*) that means a "called out assembly". The church

(assembly) of God's people has been called **out of the world** by their obedience to the Gospel. That same Gospel is the means through which God calls people today out of **sin**. God *"calls you into His own kingdom and glory"* (1 Thessalonians 2:12). However, He calls through the appeal of the Gospel *"for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (2 Thessalonians 2:14).

When we accept the call of God through the Gospel, **we are added to the family of God, the church.** We are God's priests (2 Peter 2:5,9) and have thus given our lives in total sacrifice to Jesus (Romans 12:1,2). Therefore, when the word church is used in the New Testament in reference to God's work among people, you must think about **people**. The church is not a building. It is people.

## THE CHURCH

If one has obeyed the Gospel by immersion for remission of sins (Acts 2:38), then he or she needs to seek out God's people in his or her community. If you cannot find the church in your area which worships and serves God according to simple New Testament Christianity, then you need to begin on your own to worship Him in compliance with His directions in the New Testament. This is important lest you create a religion after your own desires. Remember, God does not accept the vain worship of those who have constructed their own churches after the traditions of the fathers or the emotions of misguided leaders (Mark 7:1-9).

As an obedient believer who has been baptized for remission of

sins, you must heed the Bible's exhortation of Colossians 2:20-23 in reference to man-made religion and churches. In this context God says to you, *"Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations — Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle..."* (Colossians 2:20,21). Remember that man-made religions *"indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh"* (Colossians 2:23). †

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

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### *The Church Is Not...*

*The church is not made up of people who believe they are better than others  
...but rather of those who believe they ought to be better than they are.*

*The church is not trying to make you feel ugly  
...but trying to instill the beauty of holiness in your life.*

*The church is not made up of people who never make mistakes  
...but of those who admit their mistakes and try not to repeat them.*

*The church is not trying to withdraw from everyone  
...but rather trying to bring everyone into its fellowship and love.*

*The church is not trying to separate you from your money  
...but trying to keep your money from separating you from your God.*

*The church is not trying to take the joy out of life  
...but to put real joy into life, and eternal joy in the heart.*

— Unknown

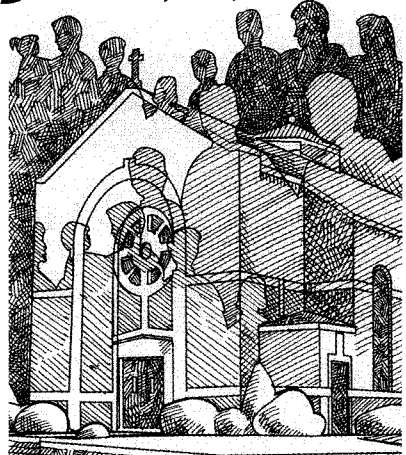
# The Church Exists to Bring Glory to God

Ron Bryant

*“Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen” (Ephesians 3:20,21).*

The redeemed constitute a unique body of people, a body of divine origin, established to exist as an entity that brings glory to God throughout all generations. It is the church's purpose to bring glory to God.

This truth is rejected by many. Some reject it overtly. Others reject it while pretending to accept it. These posture themselves as members of the body, but in truth, they never function in that capacity. They come to the assembly, but only as observers of the scene. They make token contributions of their means, but never really give themselves to the Lord. They sing praises, perhaps even heartily, but their lives do not fit the songs they sing. It is painfully obvious that they do not think in terms of giving glory unto God, let alone of giving



glory unto Him *in the church*.

Interestingly, even the most feeble can rise to the call of giving glory unto God. God has always accepted the humble and the contrite of heart. He has always lifted them up (see James 4:8ff). The humility of man before God is to His glory. The devotion of man to God is to His glory. Humble service, loving obedience, ready and willing worship — all of these can be offered unto God with the assurance that they bring glory to Him.

Above all else, God wants our hearts and our lives. It is He who built the church as a place for us to live and prepare for eternity where we will continue to glorify Him. †

**Ron Bryant preaches for the Lord's church in Flagstaff, Arizona, USA.**

# How Much Is the Church Worth to you?

Jack Harriman

In an age in which many people minimize the importance of the church by insisting that we should “preach Christ and leave the church alone”, and in a culture in

which the masses are “turned off” by “organized religion”, it is important that we raise this question and then evaluate our answer in the light of what the Scriptures teach.

God would have our answer to be governed by five things:

**First, an understanding of the place of the church in God’s eternal plan is necessary** (Ephesians 3:9,10). The coming of the church was spoken of by the Old Testament prophets (Isaiah 2:2-4). As its establishment drew nearer, God sent the greatest prophet of them all to announce that it was “at hand” (Matthew 3:2). Finally, He sent His own Son. Jesus chose twelve apostles and sent them out to preach its imminent coming. These were followed by seventy other disciples who preached the same message. If long and careful planning, if meticulous and thorough preparation, and if clear and unmistakable announcements of its establishment have anything to

## THE CHURCH

do with value, then the church is of great value to God.

**Second, a thorough knowledge of what the church cost God governs its value.** God gave His Son to die in exchange for the church (Acts 20:28). Men have often given their lives for a country they loved. Parents would give their lives for their children. But would you give the life of your child for wicked and lawless men? Would you do it for one like Adolph Hitler? God did!

**Third, a clear understanding of exactly what the church is establishes its true value.** The church is simply a body of people who have been saved by God. When one obeys the Gospel, God saves and adds that person to His family, His church — the body of saved people (Acts 2:47). That is why the church is called "*the body of Christ*".

**Fourth, a knowledge of the uniqueness of the church governs its value.** By "unique" I mean that Jesus built only one (Matthew 16:18). God adds *all* the saved to just one family (Acts 2:47). Jesus is the head over just one body (Ephesians 1:22,23), and there *is* but one (Ephesians 4:4). There is no comparison between the value of the *real* church and countless *imitations*.

**Fifth, a knowledge of its des-**

**tiny governs the value we put on the church.** Jesus is the Savior of His body. The church is the saved. When Jesus comes again, He will deliver up the church to God (1 Corinthians 15:24). The church will then live and reign with Him throughout all of eternity in that new heaven and earth.

I want to be in that number, don't you? But in order to be in that number *there*, we must be in that number *here*.

What is the church worth to you? †

Jack Harriman is a preacher of the Gospel, USA.

### What Position Do You Occupy in the Church?

- A giver or a getter?
- A wing or a weight?
- A pillar or a sleeper?
- A power or a problem?
- A booster or a boaster?
- A supporter or a provoker?
- An attendant or an absentee?
- A peacemaker or a strife-creator?

The church points  
**THE WAY!**

In every step, in every stride,  
I'll let the Savior be my guide!  
His Word, His love I will embrace  
And let His wisdom set the pace.

# Waiting Room Bible Study

A five-minute Bible Study  
to spark your interest in God's word  
(New King James Version)

*Hebrews 1:1,2* God spoke in times past to the \_\_\_\_\_ through the \_\_\_\_\_, but He speaks in these \_\_\_\_\_ days by His \_\_\_\_\_.

*2 Timothy 3:16* All \_\_\_\_\_ is given by \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, and is profitable for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for \_\_\_\_\_, for instruction in \_\_\_\_\_.

*1 Peter 1:22,23* Souls are purified in \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ through the \_\_\_\_\_... We are \_\_\_\_\_... through the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ which lives and \_\_\_\_\_.

*Deuteronomy 4:2* You shall not \_\_\_\_\_ to the \_\_\_\_\_ which I command you, nor \_\_\_\_\_ from it, that you may \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord your God which I command you.

*Proverbs 30:6* Do not \_\_\_\_\_ to His \_\_\_\_\_, lest He rebuke you and you be found a \_\_\_\_\_.

*Revelation 22:18,19* For I testify to \_\_\_\_\_ who hears the \_\_\_\_\_ of the prophecy of this book: If \_\_\_\_\_ to these things, God will \_\_\_\_\_ to him the \_\_\_\_\_ that are written in this book; and if anyone \_\_\_\_\_ from the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, from the holy \_\_\_\_\_, and from the things that are \_\_\_\_\_ in this \_\_\_\_\_.

**ANSWERS:** fathers; prophets; last; Son. Scripture; inspiration; God; doctrine; born again; trine; reproot; correction; righteousness. obeying; truth; Spirit; born again; word; God; abides forever. add; word; take; keep; commandments. add; word; liar. everyone; words; anyone; add; add; plagues; takes away; words; book; Book; Life; city; written; book

# How Do Congregations Grow?

Bert M. Perry

*How do congregations grow?* This is one of the most important questions facing the church, and it is one which each of us, as Christians, must answer. In order to do so, it is necessary that we do individual *studying, praying, observing, and thinking* for ourselves.

1. Every member of the congregation must truly be converted to Christ. Know your Bible, the doctrine of Christ, the value of one soul. Everything you do, preach and teach must be founded upon divine authority.
2. We must have dynamic leaders (elders, deacons, preachers, teachers) who *want to grow*. Notice that the New Testament provides for a plurality of elders in each congregation. Every congregation that is led by *one man only*, whether it be the preacher from the pulpit or one elder ruling the others, is doomed to die!
3. Every member must *want* and *expect* the congregation to grow. Each of us must learn to speak freely to our neighbors, friends, and strangers about their souls' salvation, looking for opportunities to teach, earnestly seeking to convert others to Christ. If every member *expects* the church to grow, then none will be ashamed to speak out for Christ.
4. Members will win their own families and hold them faithful to Christ. Attending Bible classes every Sunday and all the services of the congregation will be a good start on faithfulness. Bible study and daily devotionals in the home are *absolutely essential*.
5. When new souls are won, they must be carefully taught. Why? So that they will be properly nourished in the Word of God to keep them spiritually alive at a very critical period of their development.
6. New converts must immediately *go to work*. Why did I not say they must be *put* to work? Because working for the Lord is something that each one must *voluntarily* decide to do from teachings received and

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from examples set by other Christians, and because of the love for God and man that each must have. But going to work is vital to staying alive in Christ.

7. Each member must recognize his individual responsibility, and everyone must recognize his responsibility as a part of the whole congregation, working together in making the church grow.

Strong churches are built by majoring on the fundamentals and basics. The spiritual fundamentals for the church are *teaching, prayer* and *visitation*. There is no limit to how strong a congregation can become when the leadership strives to build on the basics: **Bible study, prayer** and **visitation**. An exciting, spiritual, growing church is not built on some newly invented idea that no one has ever thought of before. Rather, it is built on the basics — and by doing them well, praying for God’s blessings on every effort made. Our “success” in reaching others depends, first, on our willingness to make the effort to teach; second, on their desire to learn; and third, on the increase given by God. †

**Bert M. Perry is a retired gospel preacher, living in Palestine, Texas, USA.**

### What Do Friendly Churches Do?

1. **Expect visitors.** If Christians are inviting friends and relatives to the assemblies as they should, there will be visitors at every service. Let us be expecting them and ready to show Christian love and concern for them.
2. **Come early and stay late.** If everyone arrived two minutes ‘til and left immediately following the “amen”, there would be no one to visit with visitors. Plan to be an early welcoming committee.
3. **Visitors first.** Don’t wait until you have visited with everyone you know before you search for visitors. By then they will probably be gone. Give a few minutes before and after class or worship to welcome visitors.
4. **Offer them four invitations.** Invite visitors to your class or help them find a class. Invite them to sit with you during worship. Invite them to lunch with you. And invite them to the next service. Just because they have come once doesn’t mean the invitations should stop!
5. **Be sure there is a record of the names and addresses of visitors.** Follow-up visits should be made within the week, and an offer should be made for home Bible studies. **Don’t lose contact with visitors!**



Jerry and Shirley had been married about a year. They were busy getting things set up in their little house they had just purchased. Both worked, both were busy, both were committed to one another in what was going to be a good marriage, but there was something missing. Neither of them expressed it or talked about it. Neither knew what it was.

Jerry worked with a young Christian man. They were not what you would call *close* friends; they just passed and said "hello". At coffee breaks they talked about trivial things like weather and sports.

One day the Christian man approached Jerry with an invitation. The fellow stumbled and stuttered a bit. He said he wanted to know if Jerry and his wife would come with them on a future Sunday to a thing called "**1 Bring 1**" in the church. Since Jerry and Shirley weren't going anywhere on a regular basis, they accepted the invitation.

The day with the Christian man and his wife was fun. The worship services were warm and happy. Jerry and Shirley didn't know much about the Bible, but they could fol-

low along as the preacher preached, and they understood that the message was from God's word. Afterwards, they went out to eat together. The conversation was easy and comfortable. Then they went their separate ways and Jerry put the event out of his mind.

The following Tuesday night there was a knock at the door. Jerry answered to find a man from the church standing there. He told Jerry how happy he was that he and Shirley had visited the assembly of the church on the previous Sunday. Jerry invited him in and they talked for a while.

Soon the subject got around to the Bible, and the visitor offered a Bible study to the young couple. Jerry and Shirley were so excited about the offer that they began their study that very night about 8:00 o'clock. They studied for one hour, and then two, and at 10:30 that evening they were baptized into Christ! They had heard the good news of Jesus and were baptized "*the same hour of the night*" (Acts 16:25-34)

This story is true. It happened a few years ago in Albuquerque. It was the result of a "**1 Bring 1**" invitation. But what I didn't tell



ONE  
Bring  
ONE

Anonymous

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you was that it happened three more times that very week in four other homes! Altogether, **twelve people found Christ as a result of that one effort!**

That is the reason we are asking you to **ask someone to come with you to the worship assembly**. When your friends come, it tears down any barriers they might have to follow-up visitation. The door is then open so that when someone from the church visits them the next week, Bible studies can be set up. Souls can be saved.

You know a Jerry and Shirley somewhere in your town. Find them and bring them Sunday. †

From Bulletin Digest

### **A Portrait of Those Who Win Others to Christ**

*Their EARS are open to the cries for help  
from a lost and dying world.*

*Their EYES are ever searching for a receptive heart  
in which to plant the word of God.*

*Their LIPS are always ready and willing  
to proclaim the glory of God.*

*Their HANDS are always turning the pages of God's Holy Word,  
seeking His will for them.*

*Their FEET are on the move to carry out the words of Christ  
to preach the Gospel to every creature.*

*Their HEARTS are beating and breaking with the urgency  
to reach the lost before it's too late.*

*Their HEADS are bowed in prayer to the Father in heaven,  
to give them wisdom to carry out the mission.*

*Their FACES glow with the hope that is in them.*

*Their LIVES are like the light of a city set upon a hill  
that cannot be hid.*

*They are the LIGHT of the world.  
In Christ they live, and move, and have their being.*

—author unknown

### Editor's Note:

Most often throughout the history of mankind, the persecution of one group of people by another has had its roots in religious fanaticism. This is a prime illustration of how Satan will invariably take what is good, turn it into evil, and then attempt to use it as a bludgeon to destroy God and His people.



## The Course of the Church through the Centuries

Dr. Hans Grimm

Satan personally pitted himself against God through Eve in the Garden of Eden. Historically, Nimrod elevated himself to the position of a god, so defying God's directive to the descendants of Noah that He confused the languages and scattered the people over the face of the earth.

It was with the gods of Egypt that God warred when the plagues were brought on the land. Repeatedly, in the history of Israel, the conflict was between God and the pagan religions of the inhabitants — with Baal, Ashteroth, Molech.

When Israel engulfed herself in the paganism of her neighbors, and God sent prophets to condemn those practices, in indignation they were persecuted and killed. Jesus mourned, "*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her*" (Matthew 23:35). And it was the leadership of the Jews that brought Him to trial before the Romans and condemned Him to death.

According to the record in Acts, the persecution of Jesus extended to His followers, and thus began merciless slaughter that waxed and waned through the following centuries, first by Jews, then by Roman pagans, then by erring brethren who ultimately developed into the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant world. The religion of Mohammed took its turn at killing those under its power who did not submit to its teachings. In each

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situation, **“fanaticism is presented as courage of faith and faithfulness to creed”** (Grimm, P. 16). Armed with this conviction of “rightness”, fanatics who have had the physical or political power to do so have accused, maligned, hunted, and killed those who would not submit to their definition of “truth”.

The late Dr. Hans Grimm, who served churches of Christ in Germany in the first half of the 20th century, wrote the following history of churches of Christ in Europe:

...then perished also many churches who had held fast to the teaching of the mountain land of Galilee and to the ordinances of the times of the apostles....

**When the persecution** of the powers of state and of the organized church of that time [the 2nd and 3rd centuries onward] violently rooted out not only the Arianists of the Eastern Kingdom but also the Donatists and Novatianists of the Western Kingdom, then perished also many churches who had held fast to the teaching of the mountain land of Galilee and to the ordinances of the times of the apostles; they perished before the fanaticism and officiousness of the persecutors. These persecutors classed the genuine and sincere Christians who were striving to remain with the Old

Paths right along with the heretics who were after money.

In Syria, for instance, genuine disciples were burned to death along with dualistic Marcionites or Manicheans. In Armenia and Northeast Asia Minor that bordered onto Armenia they rooted out their churches under the pretext that they had succumbed to the sun-worship of the Avars. The persecutors hunted them out on the Galatian plateau at the same time as the Antinomianist of Messalim and stoned them to

death or burned them alive along with these heretics.

**Yet no power could stop the course of the church of the living God.** By families and by groups, Christians who were concealing themselves from the executioners settled the inaccessible oases of Northwest Arabia, concealed themselves in the almost waterless wadis of the Sinaitic Peninsula, fled into the chaotic cities of the Nile delta that were heated by the Arian and Meletian controversies, they emerged in the hinterland of Cyrenaika, on the island of Djerba near the Tunisian coast, and in the

High and Lower Atlas mountains.

**About the middle of the fourth century we find the traces of a New Testament mission in the northern part of the Pyrenees Peninsula.** A very influential merchant, Priscillianus, followed the advice which Jesus gave the rich young man for he sold his possessions, distributed the proceeds among the poor, and preached the good news of our deliverance from death and from the power of the devil with such success that the Catholic diocese of Avila called upon him to serve it as bishop.

Two bishops of the state church became his zealous followers. In the year 380 he was banished along with his faithful followers. The supreme authority of the state seized him, he was brought in chains to Trier and there, after terrible torturings whose aim it was to extract from him the confession that he was a magician and Manichean, he and five of his followers were beheaded. Traces of churches founded and influenced by him are still to be found after centuries in northern Portugal, in western France, in Galicia, and Traz-oz-Montez.

Out of the Celtic district of Galicia and Gaul messengers of the New Testament gospel must have entered the British Isles, for even as early as the year 422 the Catholic bishop Germanus, who had been

sent there on inspection, wrote that numerous Christians in Britain had rejected Augustine's doctrine of the original sin, practiced the immersion of adults only, did not follow the Roman ritual in their divine service, and did not recognize the hierarchy of Rome, especially the spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope. It was not asserted that these British Christians were Manicheans; that would not have been believed even in Rome; the blame was placed, rather, on the schismatic churches of Arianism. The conquest of Britain by the Anglo-Saxons and the later so-called Christianization of these tribes by Roman bishops and by abbots educated in Rome led to the rapid disappearance of these churches.

In the bold missionary spirit of the Irish-Scottish church, in their endeavor to keep the doctrine of Jesus pure from the foreign range of thinking, in their opposition to the arrogant authority of the Roman episcopate, and in their persistent attempts to check the worldliness of the church, there is certainly to be observed a legacy of those churches which gave Germany a Kilian, a Clement, and a Vergilius.

In the workroom of that Kilian who was murdered at the command of a duke of the Franks, in the so-called "Cloister" at Wurzburg, there is still preserved a parchment out of

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the middle of the eighth century, a Greek copy of the Letter to the Romans (Book of Romans). On chapter three there stands the Irish marginal note: "Creitem hi cridiu in folgni firiam" (Faith, hid in the heart, makes man just), a clear testimony of a genuine New Testament Christianity in contrast to the institutionalism of the papal church.

...even as late as 1390 A.D., a New Testament church in Celtic Hill Cliff in Wales built a room for worship with a great basin for immersion of adults in baptism upon confession of faith.

About the year 700 there began in Ireland itself the gradual assimilation of the national church, which was free from Rome, into the type of the western "great church". At about the year 800 the Scottish kings broke the strength of the clans, and with the old constitution of blood relationship brushed aside the last remains of the Scottish-Irish missionary churches; but even as late as 1390 A.D. a New Testament church in Celtic Hill Cliff in Wales built a room for worship with a great basin for immersion of adults in baptism upon confession of faith.

**We get our first knowledge of the continuation of New Testament churches in Syria** from Mananalis where the pious widow Kallinike raised her public protest in the year 375, on the one hand against the terror of the majority of the state church and on the other hand against the Arian heresy of the minority, *by appealing to the teaching and deeds of the apostle Paul in these provinces*. Along with her two sons, Paulus and Johannes, she was banished from the region as a follower of Manichaeism on the cheapest pretext, since the adherents of the blending of the Gnostic, Parsee and Buddhist religion of Mani also took a stand against forced "conversions", against the use of the sword, against the use of oaths, against Mammonism in church and state, and declared that the Law of the Old Testament was made without power through Christ. To be branded as followers of Manichaeism was dangerous, since this religion was held to be especially hostile to state and culture, and its followers were exposed to the funeral pyre.

In spite of this, some 250 years later there was extended out from Mananalis a wave of building of churches after the New Testament order in Asia Minor. A Marcionite sectarian, Constantine, was converted by the study of the four Gospel accounts and of Paul's epistles, and joined with the

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small church of true Christians in the Catacombs.

Around the middle of the seventh century persecution drove him and his fellow believers to Kibossa in northern Armenia where he was cordially received by the church of Christ which was located there and existed in somewhat freer circumstances. From that time on he wandered and preached and led the life of a true follower of Christ, keeping in touch with all the churches of the dispersion either personally or by letter.

involuntarily drew parallels with the death by stoning of the martyr Stephen and began to study intensively the teachings, of the New Testament, that is to say of the church, and then a few years later, under the code name of "Titus", he became one of the most successful messengers of the gospel in Galatia and Cappadocia. In the year 694 he was likewise ferreted out and led to the funeral pyre.

But his work and his predecessor's work did not perish. The epoch of the iconoclast emperors

In this "golden time" of comparative peace there was great growth of those who turned away from the confused teachings of the great "denominations" and were added by God to his church.

In doing this he made use of code names for persons or places, in order to make the work of informers difficult. Thus, for example he speaks of himself as "Silvanus", of Kibossa as "Macedonia". But he did not escape from his fate for, seized by the soldiers of the Byzantine Governor, Simeon, he was condemned and stoned to death as "adulterer", caught in the very act of leading astray the church, Christ's pure bride, with the "Marcionite false lover".

However, his steadfast death so impressed the governor that he

granted to the churches of Asia Minor a little time for recovery before the great storm of persecution which was to be hurled upon them after the martyr's death of Simeon-Titus. In this "golden time" of comparative peace there was great growth of those who turned away from the confused teachings of the great "denominations" and were added by God to his church.

The people and the authorities called the followers of the Lamb "Paulicians" because these followers knew how to answer their opponents in all their discussions with

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well-aimed arguments of the great apostle to the Gentiles. In contrast, they called themselves exclusively “Christians” and among each other as “brothers” and “sisters”. A Byzantine monk of this time reported concerning a religious debate with them:

A Byzantine monk of the early eighth century reported concerning a religious debate with those who were called “Paulicians” by religious opponents and “Christians” by themselves :

Only the New Testament was accepted among them as rule for faith and church practice; they rejected the worship of the Mother of God and of the saints, even of the great martyrs George and Sergius; they do not consecrate a special worship to the Archangels or to Elias, have no church feasts at all; each Sunday they assembled in places of prayer which are not worthy to be named thus, since they have neither altar nor wall for pictures of the saints, nor a place for keeping the holy vessels; they use neither incense nor chrism oil.

They despise and scorn the baptism of the church and say that infants have no faith. They recognize neither the jurisdiction of the Patriarch at Constantinople nor of the Patriarch of Antioch and Jerusalem and have no respect for the schismatic church of the Armenians. They are proud of the fact that their churches are small and poor and that their evangelists live only from what sheltering believers give them voluntarily. They do not accept the false accusation that the heretic Paulus is said to have founded their sect, and say that they are not Paulicians, but Christians, and chosen of God. †

**Excerpt from Tradition and History of the Early Churches of Christ in Central Europe by Dr. Hans Grimm, translated by Dr. H.L. Schug, and printed by Firm Foundation, P.O. Box 210876, Bedford, Texas, 76095-7876, USA.**

**Note: The Bibliography will be given at the conclusion of the series of articles. Editor.**

“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name **JESUS**. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,  
**and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:31-33)**



Christianity began its existence in the world under very unfavorable and adverse circumstances. Idolatry was upon the throne, the statesmen, governors, and rulers of the empire being committed irrevocably to paganism.

While such were the conditions abroad, affairs were equally unfavorable at home in Israel. A haughty and impious Sanhedrin immediately declared a war of extermination upon any movement that dared to oppose the traditions of the elders or that threatened to disrupt the schisms of the Jews. There is not, in the whole catalogue of iniquity, any form of hatred, jealousy, envy, and crime equal to that fostered by religious sects in defense of their respective traditions and dogmas. *Iniquity never takes on a blacker aspect than when masquerading under the name of religion.*

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, had died a tragic death at the hands of religious leaders. All of His apostles, with a single exception, would

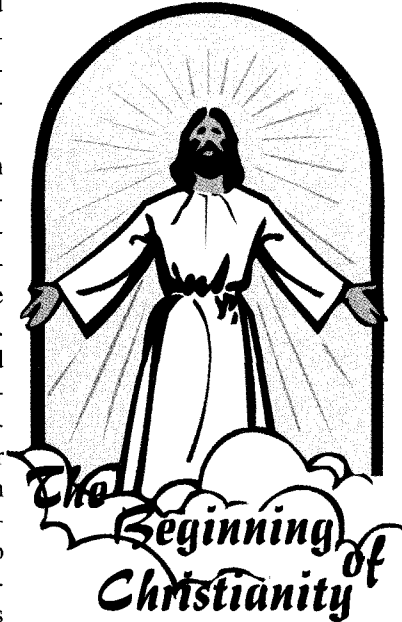
meet unnatural forms of death, not for robbery, murder, or vice of any kind, but for distinguishing between truth and error in sacred concerns.

Yet the birth of the church took place on that first Pentecost following the resurrection of its Lord. The war with Satan was engaged. Martyrs died, blessing a holy cause. Disciples were cast into prison without bail, but the principles for which they suffered came out of every struggle triumphant.

What, *but almighty truth*, could run such a career, overcome such obstacles, and successfully withstand the power, wealth, and cunning ingenuity of the most learned and talented men the world could boast?

Yes, the war goes on, and will not end until the sound of the last trumpet from Heaven. But throughout the centuries, truth has triumphed, faithful Christians have been victorious, and the lives of all men have been blessed by this, God's greatest gift to the world, in the form of His Son.

We conclude, then, that it is a grand thing to be a Christian! †

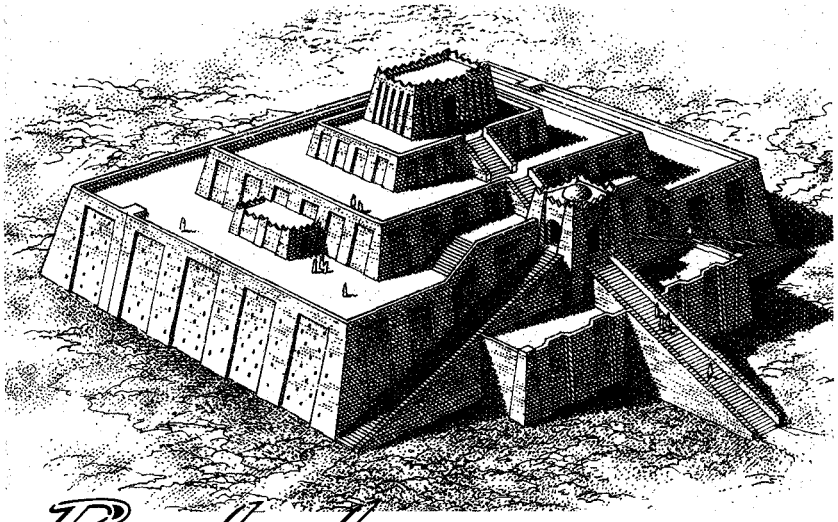


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power, wealth, and cunning ingenuity of the most learned and talented men the world could boast?

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# *Babel and Beyond*

Keith Sisman

## Neglected History

The Bible tells us about the origin of man, the creation, and later, after the flood, the dispersion of mankind from Babel.

For the modernist, believing in the theory of evolution and the myth that man came from apes, the Biblical account of the origin of mankind is nonsense and far too recent. Historians, who could help to set the story straight, fail to tell about

the origins of the nations of the earth, often through no fault of their own. They, themselves, are ignorant of earlier and neglected histories.

But, such histories do exist, though they have been ignored by those who write the textbooks meant to educate the peoples of the world. It is an important argument in support of the credibility of these ancient records that they are pre-

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Christian and non-Jewish.

Most, if not all, the nations of the earth can follow their origins back to Babel, and once at Babel back to the creation. It is not surprising that modernists with their humanistic agenda ignore these forgotten and thus neglected histories.

The evolutionist argues that mankind has been around for millions of years, but have you noticed how recent is the real record of human history? Conjecture gives bones and artifacts ages of many thousands or millions of years, but the ancient cities and civilizations that can be truly dated are all no more than five or six thousand years old — which is the same time-frame given in the Bible. And the same time-frame given in those neglected histories agree with the biblical account of mankind found in the book of Genesis.

Following the great Noahic flood, the people multiplied, but they did not separate and move to various parts of the earth as God had instructed. Instead, we read, *“Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.*

*“Then they said to one another, ‘Come, let us make bricks and bake them thoroughly.’ They had brick for stone, and they had asphalt for*

*mortar. And they said, ‘Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in the heavens; let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth.’*

*“But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower which the sons of men had built. And the LORD said, ‘Indeed the people are one and they all have one language, and this is what they begin to do; now nothing that they propose to do will be withheld from them. Come, let Us go down and there confuse their language, that they may not understand one another’s speech.’*

*“So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city. Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth; and from there the LORD scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth (Genesis 11:1-9).*

Memories of the dispersion from Babel would live on in folklore worldwide. Myths developed concerning the gods that came down and fought with one another and with mankind. Noah is remembered as Poseidon, Neptune and Saturn — “gods” of the sea. He is also remembered as the god Vishnu, and as the originator of the Hindu religion.

The following is a quote from **The Word in Life Study Bible,**

## BIBLICAL HISTORY

P.27, published by Thomas Nelson:\*

“Like a storm cloud on the horizon, the name Nimrod (Genesis 10:8) signals the coming of trouble. As subsequent history shows, the people and empires descended from Nimrod — particularly the Assyrians and Babylonians — became ruthless conquerors who vexed and vanquished many of their neighbors in the ancient world, including the Israelites.”

Nimrod was the grandson of Ham. Three of his uncles (Cush, Mizraim and Put) are said to have migrated to Africa, while a fourth uncle, Canaan, settled the land that would bear his name.

“Nimrod established two kingdoms, one in the ‘land of Shinar’, the other in Assyria (Genesis 10:10-12). These areas correspond to the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, and the beginnings of the Sumerian, Babylonian, Akkadian, and Assyrian empires are traceable to Nimrod. In fact, Assyria came to be called ‘the land of Nimrod’ (Micah 5:6).

“Some believe that the name Nimrod means ‘we will revolt’, implying that this ‘mighty one on the earth’ and ‘mighty hunter before the LORD’ (Genesis 10:8-9) was actually a mighty leader in rebellion against the Lord. Certainly his descendants turned away from God (Isaiah 47:1, 10-15; Nahum 3:1-7).” And it was while under his leader-

ship that the building of the tower provoked God’s intervention and the resulting dispersion.

“Yet as crucial a role as Nimrod played in history, his identity remains uncertain. Some suggest that he was (or was similar to) King Sargon the Great, whose kingdom of Akkad was flourishing around 2300 B.C. Sargon proclaimed himself ‘King of Universal Dominion’ while building an empire that stretched from the Mediterranean coast and Asia Minor to Persia.

“After the Akkadians, other empires rose and fell in Lower Mesopotamia during the next two thousand years, but all of them could be traced to Nimrod. It was not until Alexander the Great that the political and economic might of the Sumerian-Akkadian peoples was broken.

“Despite its eclipse, the culture that was fathered by Nimrod left a rich legacy in the history of civilization:

◆ The spread of language began at Babel, on the plain of Shinar (Genesis 11:1-9).

◆ The Akkadians and their descendants created military empires which brought political, economic, and social organization from the Mediterranean Sea and Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf. These superpowers reflected a major transition from small city-states which were more common in the ancient world.

## BIBLICAL HISTORY

◆ Sumerian-Akkadian culture and technology spread throughout the ancient Middle East.”\*

It was at Babel that the caste system first began. Nimrod made himself a king and later he became a “god”, being known as Bel and Baal. The caste system promotes an individual’s position within society, still strongly adhered to in India by the Hindus, and still found in much of the world, including Europe, with regards to royalty. The old Celtic system of Britain with its Brahmins, Bards and Druids was identical to the earlier Hindu religion, both being Japhetic in origin. Like other pagan religions worldwide, the cow or bull were regarded as sacred animals, and often worshiped as such. Today in India the Hindus regard cows as sacred and do not allow their slaughter.

A hundred years or so before the start of the Christian era, Europe was populated by many pagan tribes of Japhetic origin, from the north of Scotland, Scandinavia, across Europe, and down to northern Italy, Galatia, and across to India. These tribes vied with each other for supremacy, but also intermarried and traded. The common designation today is Gauls or Celts for most of these peoples. The Greeks had named this part of Europe Galatia, which in Roman times had become known as Gallia and later as Gaul. These tribes were united through

their priesthood, the Druids, who according to Julius Caesar were centred in Britain.

Brutus, with his Greek colony (otherwise Brut or Brytts, depending on history used), arrived in Britain during 1104 BC. According to legend, it was Brutus who founded the British peoples, who were named after him. Britain at that time was populated by the Picts, who were a much cruder nomadic people, but physically larger in stature than the Greeks, legend calling some of them giants. These peoples may have been descended from Ham. Possibly their grave sites are the so-called Neanderthal graves whose remains have been found across palaeolithic Europe. If so, it would affirm that they also believed in the after-life. These people had populated northern Europe from the east, following the herds of wild animals northwards after the receding Ice Age. Living a nomadic lifestyle, mainly being meat-eaters, they were disorganised and unhealthy, no match for the better educated and organised Greeks, who quickly displaced them. †

**(To be continued. Sources will be given at the conclusion of the articles.**

**Keith Sisman is a brother in Christ who is doing research into ancient records in the museums of England.**

**\*The Word in Life Study Bible™, 1996 by Thomas Nelson.**

# Shall We Evangelize Only the "Unchurched"?

David Tarbet



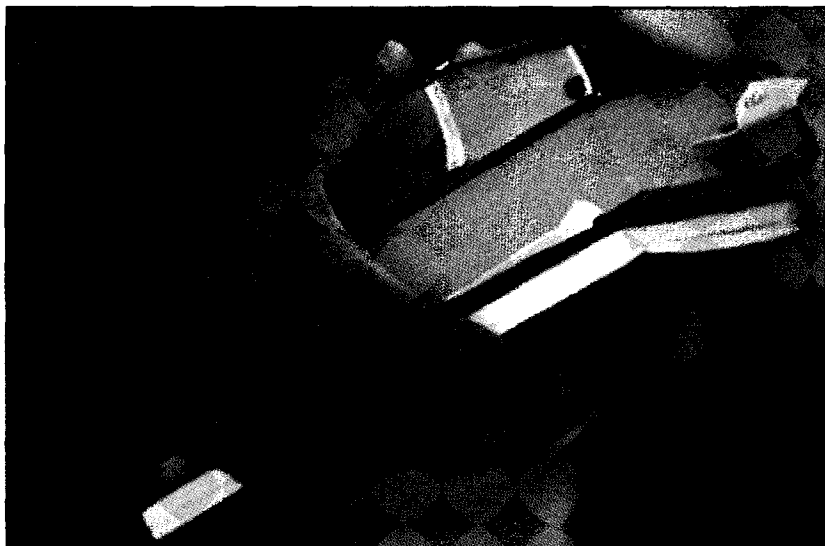
It is popular to describe the evangelistic mission of the church as "reaching the unchurched." There are some things about this idea which bother me.

For one thing, **it's much too narrow in focus.** There are lost people among both churchgoers and non-churchgoers. Simply because a person is a sincere and devout church member does not make him right with God. It makes a difference what a person believes, how he worships, whether his piety is in harmony with the revealed will of God (the Scriptures). Like Cornelius, one can be a devout man of prayer and yet need to hear the message by which he can be saved (Acts 10 and 11). The book of Acts tells how Paul went to the synagogues to preach. If there was no synagogue, he went to the place where religious people met in the presence of their idols. Deeply religious people need to hear the pure Gospel!

For another thing, **it's too naive.** Non-churchgoers are not necessarily more receptive to the Gospel than churchgoers. Many are "unchurched" because they prefer it that way. They have no spiritual appetite, they are not seeking God. They are satisfied as they are.

The important characteristic we need to look for is *receptivity*, openness to the Gospel, a sense of spiritual neediness. If one is dissatisfied with his present condition, whether "churched" or "unchurched," he is the person we can talk with about spiritual matters. Look around and set up a Bible study with someone who wants to know more about the Bible! †

**David Tarbet preaches for the White Rock Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas, USA.**



# Sound Out The Word

*with Faith  
with Love  
with Hope  
with Patience*

**Roy D. Baker**

In the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians Paul pays a compliment to the church in Thessalonica. In all the Scriptures there is not a more excellent commendation than the one paid to that congregation. Paul's compliment is worth noting

because he was no flatterer. Notice verse 8, "*For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything.*"

## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

Paul is telling these people that they are a dynamic force for the Gospel and that they are making such a wonderful impact that he has no need to say a word.

Notice Paul's impressive words in his description of the business of the church, "*For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you...*" This could be compared to a trumpet call. We are God's trumpet, and from this trumpet the Word of the Lord is to be sounded forth. In the first century the Thessalonians made that message ring out. The church is God's supreme agency in the world, today, by which His Gospel is to be made known. This is *the business* of the church!

Look at some truths that are enwrapped in the compliment Paul pays to the church in Thessalonica. First, he describes those who were sending the Gospel to the ends of the earth. They were people who possessed three fundamental virtues of the Christian life (verse 3), "*...your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ....*" Paul further states in verse 5, "*For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction.*" What did you say, Paul? "You were absorbed by these great matters; you took your religion seriously; you accounted it the first thing in the world to be true

followers of God; to be imitators of Christ." And Paul further states, "*you held steadfast, you were unwavering in the midst of tribulation...*"

In the Book of Acts we see those early Christians were assaulted by the mobs, and that their blood flowed down their backs from the scourgings laid on them by cruel persecutors. Note how they were hunted like wild beasts; how they were watched as they sang songs of praise and voiced their hymns of obedience to their Lord, even as they were being persecuted to the death. To paraphrase Paul, "You did not withdraw when the battle became fierce; you didn't flee like cowards; when oppression was on you, you were true." Oh! What a tribute to be paid to any group of Christians! They were steadfast in that they obeyed without wavering. They had patience to hold on. What a lesson for Christians today!

Every step of this earthly life needs to be fortified with patience. We have a perfect pattern — that pattern is Christ. We are to keep looking to Him as our example and to be imitators of Him.

See the Lord's patience in dealing with His apostles. They learned His teaching slowly; they were at times very selfish, and yet Jesus was patient with them. In John 14 — that "comfort" chapter which is the heart of the Gospel —



## CHRISTIANITY IN ACTION

one of the disciples said to Him, *"Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us,"* to which He replied, *"Have I been so long with you and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'?"*

See His patience with the people who pressed upon Him from every quarter. Wherever He went, the multitudes followed Him and found Him.

His patience toward His foes was still more wonderful. They sought to circumvent His plans and to frustrate His work, but His patience was undimmed and undiminished through it all.

Nor was His patience a sign of weakness. He reminded His opposers that He could call upon His Father and that more than twelve legions of angels would come to His aid, if He so desired. But this procedure would have been out of harmony with God's plan for human redemption.

A large measure of patience is constantly needed in all our contacts with our fellowman. Not all are reasonable and congenial. Some are unreasonable and demanding. Unless we have a right measure and a proper use of patience we shall surely misunderstand and misjudge our fellowman. If we knew all the background in other people's lives, our judgment of them would many times be different.

As we travel through life, let us remember that Christ's Gospel demands patience — because of the undying hope it holds up before us. We must keep that hope and the eternal home constantly in our minds. Thus shall we be better fortified for the battles and burdens of our earthly journey. That grand old hymn, "Heaven Holds All To Me", is the sum total and end of the story concerning the glorious life awaiting the followers of Jesus our Lord. †

**Roy D. Baker is Director Emeritus of Bear Valley Bible Institute of Denver, Colorado, USA.**

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**"Every tomorrow has two handles. We can take hold of it with the handle of anxiety or the handle of FAITH." — Henry Ward Beecher**

**"LOVE is an act of endless forgiveness, a tender look which becomes a habit." — Peter Ustinov**

**"This HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast..." — Hebrews 6:19**

**"PATIENCE and passage of time do more than strength and fury." — Jean de La fontaine**

# Walking by Faith



## Donna Taylor Mitchell

### *Abraham and Sarah*

*“And the Lord said to Abraham, ‘Leave your country, your people, and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you’” (Genesis 12:1).*

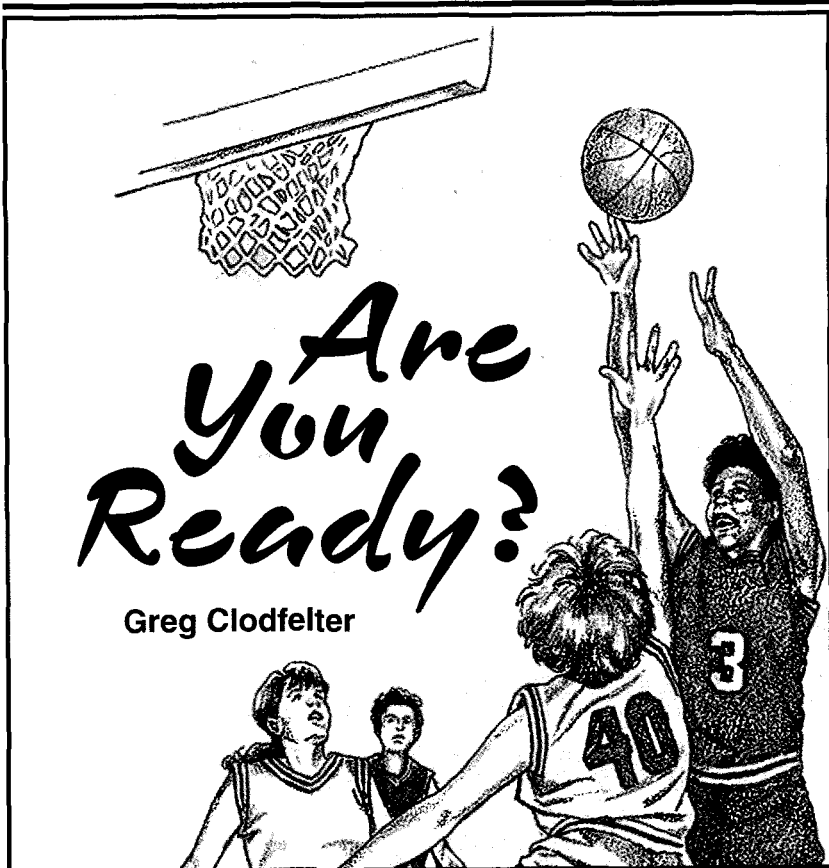
She grew up amongst the hickory and dogwood of eastern Oklahoma, but her destiny was among the canvas and khaki of the msasa trees and acacias of southern Africa. I always wondered what she thought when her young husband provided her with a thatch-roof home in Southern Rhodesia. She cooked over a wood stove, worried about boomslangs and cobras, and had to learn, child-like, the language, culture and cues of a strange land.

But there were incalculable blessings, too. To see African people turn from the tyranny of their ancestral spirits to serving sweet Jesus. To hear them sing praises to the one true God, their matchless voices blending with the harmonies of Africa. To see the wild rivers of Africa — the Zambezi, the Limpopo — and the majesty of Africa’s mountains, the Drakensberg, the Chimanimani. To watch as a second and third generation of Christians grew, elders rising in churches, preachers proclaiming a universal and timeless message.

The missionary’s wife is an unsung hero. Delia Short, Jaxie Palmer, Rosemary Legg, Georgia Hobby, Zelma Lawyer, Donna Horne and many others possess no memorial other than a commendation from their Savior, but that was what they desired supremely. She would be embarrassed that I write this, but there is a sin worse than being forgotten; it is the sin of ingratitude. Thanks, Mom, for your sacrifice.

*“Her children rise up, and call her blessed” (Proverbs 31:28).*

**Donna (Taylor) Mitchell, born in Vinita, OK, November 23, 1933  
went home just a little ahead of us, in Kansas City, KS, June 23, 2002.**



Last night, Friday, Linda Mwangi came to watch the basketball team, which I coach, play scrimmage against another local high school. We lost **BIG!** It was a good learning opportunity: **preparation is the key.** You always play in a game the way you play in practice...or worse. So you'd better *prepare more* and *practice harder.* **I'm not**

**talking about basketball; I'm talking about life.**

Linda made a phone call when we reached town. She discovered a girl friend of hers was having car trouble. She asked if we could go and help. I like Linda; she has a good heart and is always helping others. Of course I don't know a lot about cars but I was willing to go

and see what I could do. If anything, I could at least be protection for the girls. We took a taxi.

We found her friend safe, and the car was working. A cousin had reached before us and fixed the car. Linda and I rode back to town with her friend. I sat in the back and Linda sat up front. The friend drove quite recklessly. I inquired and found out she had been driving only a month.

We all went to Linda's house and found Mama Linda. We had food, fun and fellowship. It was late. I slept on the couch. The women slept in the bedroom. The next morning I woke at 4:00 am. Though it is unusual to leave so early without saying goodbye, I could think of a thousand things I needed to do. So I slipped out of the house and was gone.

Today, Saturday, Linda was not at the youth group meeting. Right now I've just hung up the phone from Mama Linda. Linda was on her way Nyahuru in the car of her friend. An accident occurred. "Linda is no more." I plan to leave here in a few minutes, walk up to Mama Linda's house and give her a big hug.

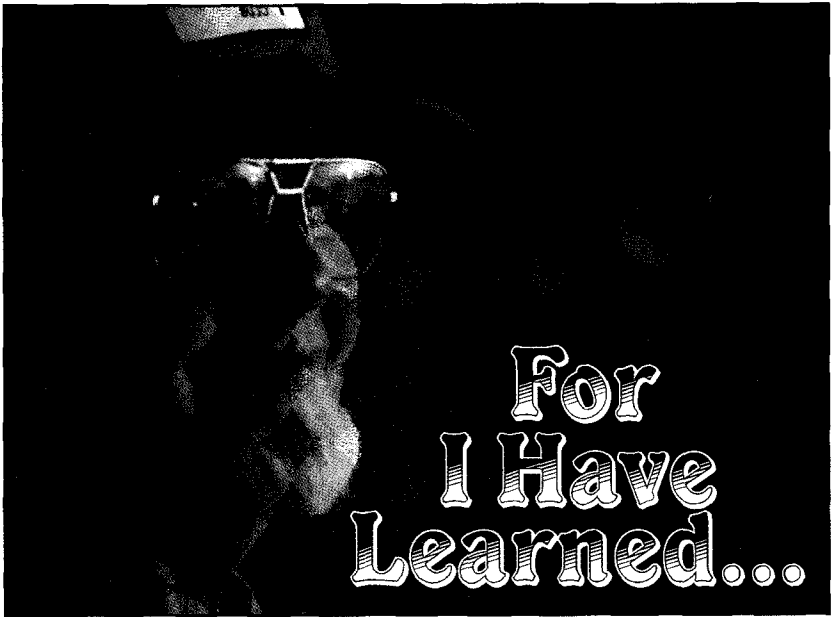
I will announce Linda's death in my sermon tomorrow. She was 20 years old. She was baptized into our Lord and Savior. The message will be "Are You Ready?" **Preparation is the key. Prepare more; work harder. I'm not talking about basketball; I'm talking about life.**

Commit your life to Christ. †

**Greg Clodfelter is a single missionary in Nyeri, Kenya.**

I think these difficult times have helped me to understand better than before how infinitely rich and beautiful life is in every way, and that so many things that one goes around worrying about are of no importance whatsoever.

— Isak Dinesen



**Allan E. Flaxman**

How wonderful is God's creation! How marvelous are His works throughout the universe! The ancients, back in King David's time, (and doubtless, long before the birth of that Royal Poet) looked in amazement at the mighty mountains and their steadfastness and wrote about them.

And we "moderns", filled, as we suppose ourselves to be, with scientific knowledge, are still mightily impressed by their grandeur and beauty. And this is but to speak of the mountains!

If we were to ask, "What is God's greatest, most awe-inspiring

creation?" we would probably get many hazarding guesses in response. I rather think that none of us would reply with confidence and certainty. Yet, were a list to be made of His mighty creations, it would surely seem that the human brain would be found somewhere towards the top of that list.

Tied to this wonderful part of God's creation, the various bodily systems (such as the heart, lungs, kidneys) are all taken care of automatically! The same brain takes care of our sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch, responding as it does to stimuli in these various

compartments of the human senses. The “motor” movements of our fingers, hands, arms, legs, feet, etc., respond to our free will as the brain gives very rapid instructions, and our free will, or “decision making,” is activated by the same brain!

Then there are thinking and learning. Learning, it would seem, is the result of this brain acquiring knowledge and storing it and then being able to recall it, according to our free will desire at times when our brain tells us we need to recall it! And, without any doubt, I’ve overlooked much more — my brain is telling me that I have!

In our chosen text (Philippians 4:11), the apostle Paul says, “*For I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*” Notice that Paul was not *given* this contentment as some kind of reward for, say, his faithfulness. Yet God was involved in Paul’s sense of contentment, inasmuch as God gave Paul, along with the rest of humanity, a free will and the ability to learn.

Paul makes it very clear that his contentment, under all circumstances, was the result of *learning*. I don’t know that he intends us to believe that he actually set out to learn how to be content despite the circumstances in which he might find himself, because this same brain of which we have spoken acquires much of our knowledge via

the “sub-conscious” — and that’s an additional facet of the human brain!

Yet, whether the knowledge is acquired consciously or sub-consciously, Paul’s message is plain: he had learned how to be content in “*whatsoever state*” he found himself! I suppose that most of us would almost envy what Paul achieved in regard to contentment. Just think for a moment how good it would be in times of trouble, to be able to say with confidence: “Despite these trying circumstances, I have a real sense of contentment.”

But, if Paul had to *learn* this — and he did — then we, like he, have this wonderful brain that God has given to the human race, so that we, too, can set about learning how to be content in whatever the circumstances! Some of this learning will almost surely occur as our sub-conscious does its God-appointed task. But, as in other fields of endeavor, we can *deliberately* set out to *practice* contentment, and can enjoy the benefits of *developing the attitude*, even while experiencing the most trying of circumstances.

**“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out”** (1 Timothy 6:6,7). †

**Allan E. Flaxman has preached for many years and strengthened the Lord’s cause in Australia.**

# God and Caesar

G. F. Raines

During the earthly life of our Lord Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Rome was the mistress of the civilized world. The homeland of the Jews, subsequently known as Palestine, was ruled from Rome by kings, procurators, and proconsuls (governors).

The Jews strongly resented the extremely high taxes which they were constrained to pay to the Roman government.

During the time that Jesus lived on the earth, there were four armed Jewish revolts against Rome, but, unlike their revolt against the successors of Alexander the Great in the days of the Maccabees, they were weak and unsuccessful.

When Jesus was about ten years old, a leader named Judas instigated one of the most spectacular revolts, which centered in Sepphoris, the largest city of Galilee and the second largest in Palestine. Sepphoris was only three miles from Nazareth. After the revolt was successfully repulsed, the Romans totally

destroyed Sepphoris and many smaller towns. Two thousand Jews were crucified and thirty thousand were sold into slavery.

Jesus did not endeavor to ignore or evade the vexatious Roman problem, but said, "*Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's*" (Matthew 22:21).

Paul says, "*Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.... Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour*" (Romans 13:1,7).

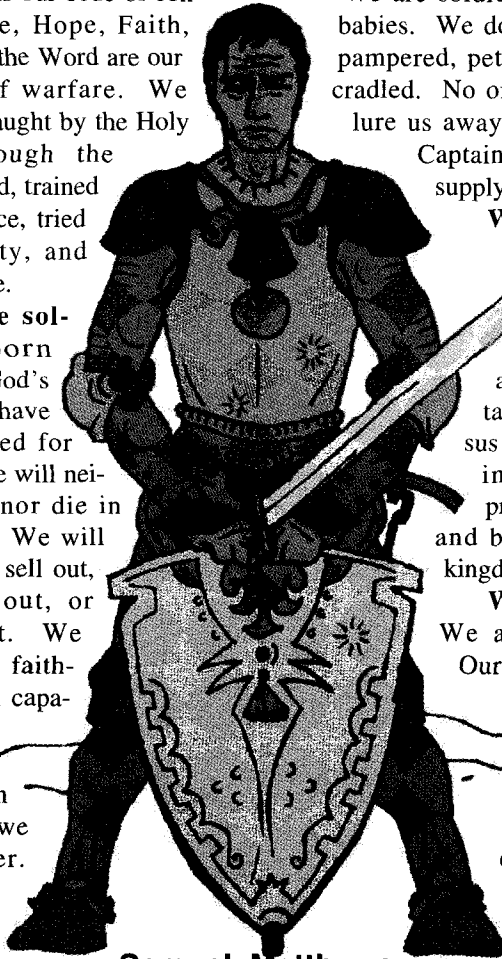
Peter says, "*Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well*" (1 Peter 2:13,14). †

**G. F. Raines is a writer and preacher living in Celina, Tennessee, USA.**

**"It isn't fair!"** Never, since the entrance of sin into the world, has fairness been the rule. But Christians can live in peace with injustice and unfairness by obeying God's instructions. Or if they must suffer, they will do so with clear consciences, knowing the evil is not within themselves.

**We who are faithful Christians are soldiers in the army of our God.** The Lord Jesus Christ is our Commanding Officer. The Holy Bible is our code of conduct. Love, Hope, Faith, Prayer, and the Word are our weapons of warfare. We have been taught by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God, trained by experience, tried by adversity, and tested by fire.

**We are soldiers;** born again into God's army. We have been enlisted for eternity. We will neither retire nor die in this Army. We will not get out, sell out, be talked out, or pushed out. We will remain faithful, reliable, capable, and dependable. When God calls, we will answer. Where He sends, we will go. If



Samuel Matthews

He needs us in Bible class to teach children, to work with youth, to help adults or just to sit and learn. He can use us because we are ready.

We are soldiers. We are not babies. We do not need to be pampered, petted, cuddled, or cradled. No one can entice or lure us away from Jesus our Captain. Our God will supply all our needs.

**We are soldiers.**

We are not crybabies and wimps. We are fighting Satan, following Jesus our King, obeying His orders, praising His name, and building up His kingdom.

**We are soldiers.**

We are committed! Our feelings cannot be hurt badly enough to turn us around. We cannot be discouraged enough to turn us aside. We cannot lose enough to cause us to

***We are soldiers!***



## DAILY CHRISTIAN LIVING

quit. Even death cannot destroy us. When our Commander calls us from this battlefield we will be eternal winners.

**We are soldiers in the army of God.** We are marching to Zion. We will not give up. More than conquerors, we will always triumph. Devils cannot defeat us. People cannot disillusion us. Weather cannot weary us. Sickness cannot stop us. Battles cannot beat us. Money cannot buy us. Governments cannot silence us, and hell cannot handle us. We can do all things through Christ.

**We are soldiers in the Army of God.**

### *Will you march with us?*

How, you might ask? You can become a Christian by believing in Jesus as God's Son who died, was buried, and rose again on the third day so your sins could be forgiven. You must repent of (or change your mind about) your sins. You must confess your faith in Christ and be immersed in water so that the blood of Jesus can cleanse and make you whole. Please do these things while God gives you this day (cf. 2 Corinthians 6:2). †

**Samuel Matthews is a preacher of the gospel in the USA.**

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### *Let's Think it over...*

God is preparing us, if we are His children, to be someone He can use in a capacity of far greater importance than anything we have ever thought of. To be refined by hardships into something better than we are now is a common lesson in the scriptures. It would be a huge mistake to think the Lord is refining us for the purpose of going to heaven to lounge around in a hammock, drinking iced tea, while listening to someone strum on a harp.

The Lord used an analogy to give us a glimpse into the future with the parable of the talents: "*And he that had received five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, 'Lord, I have gained beside them five talents more.'* His Lord said unto him, '*Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou has been faithful over a few things, I will make you a ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord*'" (Matthew 25:20,23).

Notice that the award for improvement was to have a greater responsibility than the servant had during his trial period. And notice that the greater responsibility is associated with the joy of the Lord...

— J.E. Dunkin

# Child Abuse

Stephen D. Eckstein, Jr.

In our world, incidents of child abuse are receiving more and more publicity. This is as it should be. Every Christian should be appalled by and deplore any kind of abuse on helpless children. Each one should do all he can by word and deed to eliminate this evil blight on our society.

However, I am concerned even more about another kind of child abuse which goes virtually unnoticed. **It is the almost total neglect of the spiritual development of countless numbers of children.** In many instances, children grow as spiritual waifs with little or no spiritual instruction. In numerous other cases, neither parent makes any significant effort to teach, train and nurture their children in a spiritual way daily. It is tragic that those who never neglect to feed the body three times a day seldom or never impart spiritual food to the hungry child. This kind of child abuse is not generally recognized or condemned. Nevertheless, it has eternal consequences. Every day a child is deprived of spiritual nourishment is like putting a nail in his or her spiritual coffin! My heart weeps at this appalling sin. I realize these are strong words, but is it not supremely important? Jesus said, *"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"* (Matthew 16:26).

Paul had some challenging words in Ephesians 6:4, *"Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."* What does this mean? Fathers, as leaders in the home,

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

are NOT to irritate their children to wrath or agitate them to violence. The father must communicate to the child that he is truly loved and of supreme worth to the parent. To do this, he must nourish (promote their health and strength) by putting into their minds through training (repetition and example) and discipline (correction in love when a mistake is made and encouragement and praise for accomplishments) the precepts of God.

Every father should have a plan for the fulfillment of Paul's instruction. Possible ways to implement this teaching are:

**The greatest abuse a child can endure is the neglect of his soul to the point of eternal death....**

◆ **Each day, set aside a time when you can actually teach your child the Word of God through songs, scripture readings, Bible stories, etc.** You will cherish these as the days and years go by. Your children will thank you over and over again for a heritage which cannot be taken away. I can remember my children saying in their sweet little voices, "Daddy, tell it again". As my father said, "Son, do something today you can rejoice about tomorrow."

◆ **Each day, play some game with them. Take time to be a little child.** I will always remember our games of hide and seek, hitting the line (playing football in the front room), turning the house into a maze, etc.

◆ **Each day, make the time to do something together, such as take a walk and explain something about God's wonderful world of nature.**

◆ **Explain to them why putting the kingdom first is more important than a TV program, a recreational activity, etc.** Provide an example in your own life in regard to attending Bible classes enthusiastically and consistently, fellowshiping with the saints, sharing the gospel of Christ, visiting the sick and widows. They are watching closely to see if you practice what you say.

By doing these things, fathers, you will lay a solid base upon which your wife can build in her relationship with the children while you are away from home. Be a modern Joshua and exclaim "*...But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord*" (Joshua 24:15). Amen. †

**Stephen D. Eckstein, Jr. is a Gospel preacher living in Lubbock, Texas, USA.**

# Parents Making a



# Difference

Jack W. Carter

*“Tell me the story of Jesus,”  
Did you hear your little one say?  
Or, were you so pressed with many cares  
That you sent him out to play?  
To feed and clothe his little frame,  
You left his soul unfed;  
This little child that came to you  
And asked for sweeter bread.*

I have always had a place in my heart for that bit of poetry. I don't even know who wrote the verse, but it tugs at my heart every time it passes through my mind.

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

I have seen so many children grow up — it almost seems as though I have seen a hundred generations come and go. So many are living successful Christian lives now, but so many are not.

When I was a young evangelist I was absolutely convinced that the determining factor was the disposition of the parents. Guess what? I am a whole lot older now, and hopefully wiser. But the fact is, I haven't changed my mind one bit about my initial persuasion regarding parents!

Oh, I know that the child will be individually accountable and that each child has a mind of its own. I also know that suggesting that the parents make *all* of the difference implies that the child will not be judged on its own merit, though God says that each one of us will have to answer for the way we have lived in our own body. I have heard all of these things a thousand times, and I still stand by my persuasion.

The point is that dedicated *Christian parents* can be such an influence in the lives of their children that growing up to become Christians is normally a "given" for them. Then, just how far they go with that Christianity will depend largely on their personal determination. But, even here, the way they were trained and molded during their childhood will have a lot to do with

how they mature in their Christianity once they are adults. Without a doubt, weak Christians usually produce weaker Christians, and seldom does the younger generation have the strength to withstand trial and adversity throughout a lifetime. This means that *their* children, and *their* children, almost certainly will never even be exposed to the true Gospel by their parents. What each father and mother needs to realize is that the importance they place on Christianity will likely determine the eternal destiny for generations of their descendants yet unborn.

What prompts me to continue in my long-held belief is the success I see on the part of those who take their parenting seriously, and the failure by those who are more concerned about secular training and preparation for their children than spiritual development. Parents who believe they can make a difference **do make a tremendous difference.**

I am absolutely thrilled about the way some young parents are approaching their sacred assignment. It warms my heart to envision what their children will be like as adults. To all of you I want to say, please don't stop believing. God will bless you with success. I'm sure of it! †

**Jack W. Carter works with the Lord's church in Castle Rock, Colorado, USA.**



# *Where There Is Love*

**Frances Parr**

One has only to listen to the radio or television news or to read a newspaper to learn of the growing problem of domestic violence. Unfortunately, many have experienced it personally, right in their own homes, administered by a parent, spouse or sibling. Is this a problem which is growing like wildfire, or are we simply more aware of it because of wide media coverage? No matter which is the case, it is abominable. Unfortunately, the problem also exists within the Lord's church.

Often, wives and children are

afraid or ashamed to tell others of the abuse. Instead, they invent tales of falling or other accidents, to explain the bruises. Husbands and fathers are not always the abusers. This writer knows, personally a gentle, Christian man who lived over 50 years with a wife who threatened him at gun point, struck him, verbally abused him, and generally mistreated him. Why did he endure this? He had made a vow, in the sight of God, to love, honor, and protect her. He honored that promise until her death.

Many families today live in a constant state of stress. The pressures of trying to earn a living and the many activities in which they are involved tend to use up more time and energy than is available. Sadly, in some areas violence and

## THE CHRISTIAN HOME

terror are a way of life, not only in the home, but also on the streets.

Anger and frustration are main reasons for violence of any kind. They are not sinful within themselves unless allowed to rage out of control. David said in Psalm 4:4, *“Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still.”*

The good news is that there is help available. The first thing to be done is to admit that violence exists at home. There are counselors, some who have themselves been abused in the past; there are support groups, safe houses, and of course, the police. Many are fortunate to have close friends who will aid them in getting out of an abusive situation.

The answer to abolishing domestic violence is as near as God’s Word. In Genesis 2:22-24, at the creation of the universe, God planned for a man and a woman to live in harmony with one another and produce children. Ephesians 5:22-24, 28,29, speak of love between husbands and wives and how they will treat each other because of that love. Colossians 3:18-21 repeats this and adds responsibility of fathers to children and children to parents. Often ones who have been mistreated as children become abusers themselves when they have offspring of their

own, and the cycle continues.

The responsibility rests on all family members to act in such a way that they will not be driven to abuse another. If the tendency is there, seek help immediately. Remember that this behavior is a choice.

Paul says, in Romans 6:12, *“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.”* Ephesians 4:26,27 warns, *“Don’t sin by letting anger gain control over you. Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil.”* (New Living Translation). Instead, *“Be affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another”* (Romans 12:9,10).

Just think, if everyone in the world would read God’s Word and abide by it, what a difference it would make! One book (the Bible) and one word (love) hold the secret and power to change the actions of people everywhere.

*“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord”* (Romans 12:18,19). †

**Frances Parr is a Christian writer living in Eldon, Missouri, USA.**

# Anchors

I planted a little tree today;  
The wind swayed it to and fro.  
I stood a strong stake beside it  
To anchor it firmly as it grows.

If it wavers on the stormy days,  
Bent over, its trunk shall be;  
For how the little sapling grows  
Is what shapés the full-grown tree.

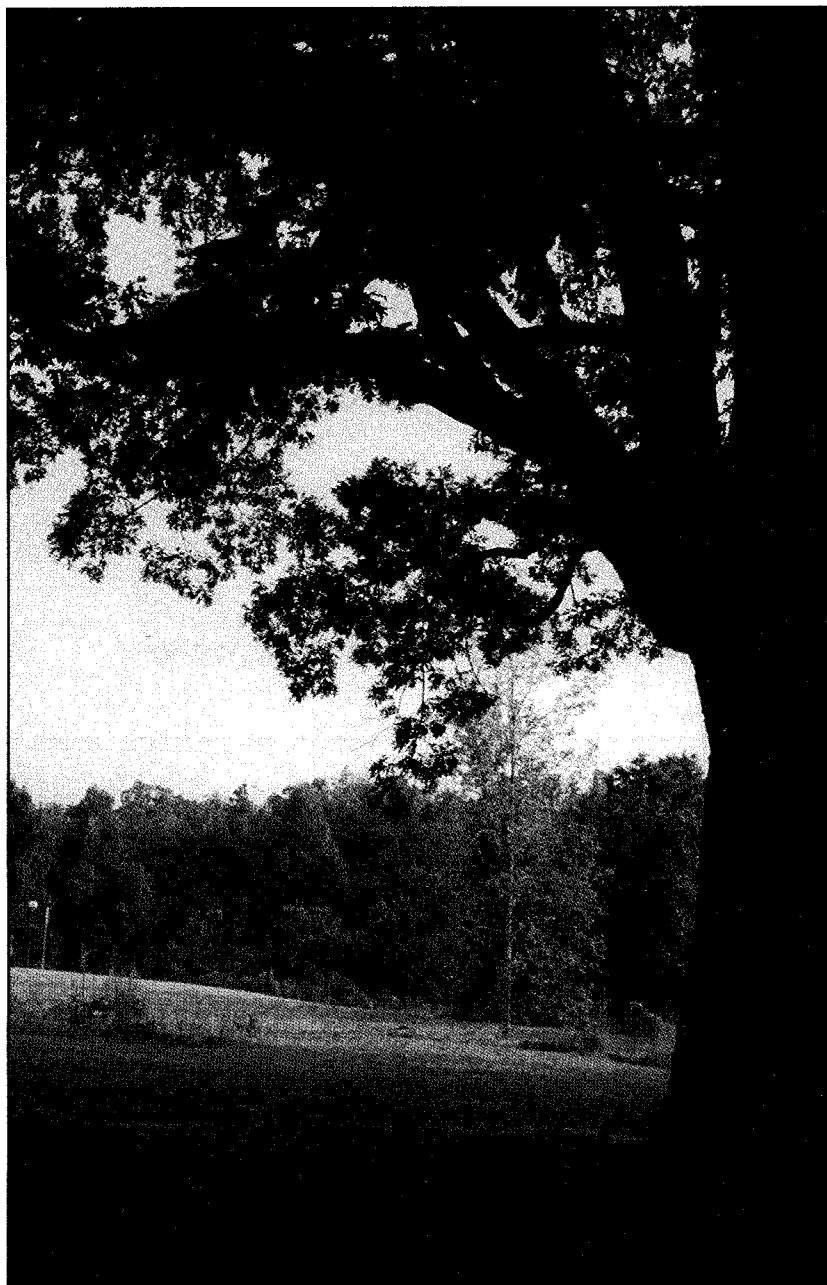
Lord, keep me strong for my children,  
Standing firm and proud like that tree,  
For when they need an anchor  
They'll be standing beside me!

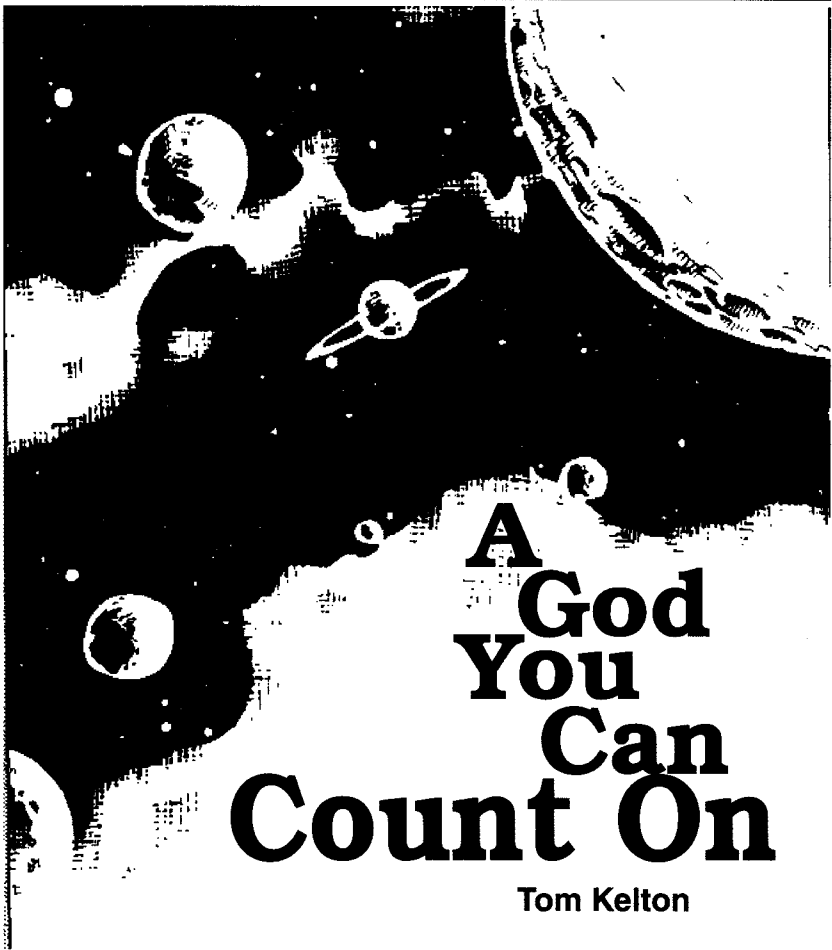
Keep me ever faithful to You, Lord,  
Unwavering as the strong winds blow.  
Let them see me stand beside You,  
As my anchor, while they grow.

Now the oak is tall and mighty, Lord,  
So beautiful in Your sunshine's glow,  
And, yes, my children stand tall, too —  
Their values were planted long ago.

— Barbara Cagle Ray







# A God You Can Count On

Tom Kelton

Our Lord is a high-test, high-performance God. We can trust Him to do as He says He will. Many times it seems that the Lord won't be able to fulfill His promises but even when a situation looks hopeless, our best recourse is to be patient and wait; **God will be faithful.**

Often God does not show us the valley between the promise and the fulfillment. He doesn't tell us in advance about the testing, the humiliation, the trials which will come into our lives and prepare us to receive His later blessing. When Abram set out from Haran, he had

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no idea that he would encounter famine and enemies. His faith was tested before the blessing came. There was a long delay from the time God gave Abram the promises in Genesis 12 to the time He began to fulfill those promises — twenty-five years to be exact. Through those years, Abram's faith would be tested and tempered by the experiences the Lord allowed him to endure.

God told Joseph in a dream in Genesis 37 that his brothers would bow before him, that he would one day be in a place of great leadership. The next thing, Joseph found that he was in a pit, then in a prison. Only after thirteen years of slavery and captivity in Egypt would he be made prime minister of the land, second in command to Pharaoh. Nine more years passed before the brothers who betrayed him bowed before him. Joseph's trials were intense before he ever saw God fulfill what He had promised, but **He was faithful.**

God has given us a promise of eternal life. He does not reveal beforehand the discipline that will go on in our lives between the promise and its fulfillment. The difficulties, the trying situations are what He's allowing so that we will be strengthened. Through these experiences, we will be prepared to receive His blessings.

Even though we don't know

how we will be tried before we are blessed, we should expect to be tested in the pursuit of God's will. The apostle Paul teaches that we can expect the test when he writes in 1 Thessalonians 3:4: "*For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction; and so it came to pass, as you know.*" Like Paul, we can fully anticipate that our lives as Christians will contain some pitfalls and obstacles. Because we are faithful to Christ doesn't mean that we are protected from problems.

Those who would leave the impression that becoming a Christian ensures that one's life will be filled with wealth, good times, and no problems are deceiving their audience. God **has promised** to be with His children (Matthew 28:20), and He **has promised** that all things will work together for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28) — but those promises were not meant to shield us from the challenges that come from living in this world. Through our faithfulness in good times as well as bad, God uses the natural difficulties of life to mold and temper us into vessels of gold in His service (Romans 5:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:2). †

**Before his death after a lengthy illness, Tom Kelton was a staff writer for *The Voice of Truth International*.**



Charles E. Burch

**P**roblems, trials, tribulation, suffering, disappointments, heartaches, anxieties, loneliness, pain and sorrows are experienced by many people daily. For all of these there is one being that is to blame: the devil. The apostle Peter had this to say about him. "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a*

*roaring lion, walks about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Peter 5:8).

The devil is real! He is out to get everyone! He doesn't appear in person, as a little man in a red suit and a forked tail, as many "pictures" depict. Rather, he has many agents working for him. Paul pointed this out by saying, "*And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light*" (2 Corinthians 11:14). You see, he has many disguises just as he used when he approached Eve in the garden of Eden. To her, he came in the form of a serpent (Genesis 3:1-5).

The sad thing that happens over and over is that Christians who are suffering in some way choose to blame the Lord and to leave Him. Jesus told us when giving the great commission, "*...And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*" (Matthew 28:20). Jesus' own promise assures us that He will never leave the Christian!

James wrote, "*Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*"

## COMFORT AND REASSURANCE

(James 4:7,8). It is, most specifically, when the Christian has problems that *he must wrap himself in unquestioning faith and draw closer to God!* There is absolutely no way to win when the Christian turns his back upon his Father. Peter wrote, *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your anxiety upon him; for he cares for you"* (1 Peter 5:6,7). Notice, we are invited to take our problems to the Lord, with the assurance that He will help us solve them.

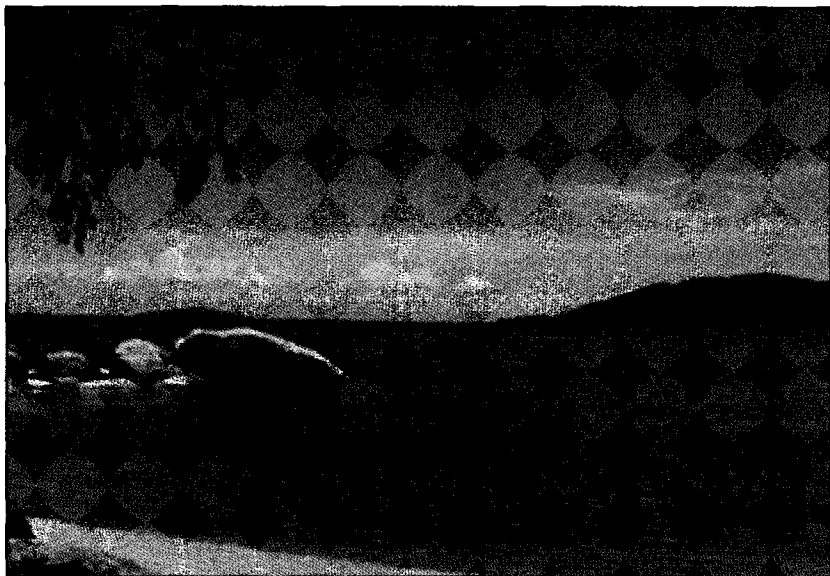
When a Christian suffers the problems of life he **MUST** draw closer to God for the strength and comfort that He offers. Why is this so vital? Because when we turn our backs upon God, *we sin!* Then our sin becomes a wall, separating us from God. God's prophet stated, *"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear"* (Isaiah 59:1,2).

But, though the devil is so real, so powerful, and so evil, he does not have the power to *make* the Christian sin. God has worded a promise: *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer*

*you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"* (1 Corinthians 10:13). You see, *we don't have to yield to the devil's game of sin.* God will not *allow* His children to be tempted to the degree that they are overcome — provided they are putting their own strength into the effort to overcome. In such a situation, before the temptation becomes too great, God has promised that He will make a way to escape — but, again, it is the responsibility of the Christian to be looking for that way of escape and to take it when God offers it.

In trials, it is easy to think that no one cares. Never forget, though: God cares! Brethren in Christ also care, though sometimes they may not know what to do to help. Regardless of the problem or the strength offered us by others, **the key to remaining faithful is to never give up.** Problems, trials, and suffering will come from time to time in our lives. They become exercises in spiritual growth. What the Christian must remember in the midst of those fiery trials is that one is never alone at those times. Our Lord has promised to be there always — if we have not left Him. †

**Charles E. Burch works with the Bellingrath Church of Christ in Theodore, Alabama, USA.**



*Cape McClear, a beautiful national park located on Lake Malawi.*

## **History of the Church of Christ in Malawi**

**Written by G. B. Shelburne III; Revised by Lendal Wilks**

Malawi is a small country in Southeast-Central Africa bounded by Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique. It is about 500 miles long from north to south and less than 100 miles wide, with a current estimated population of about 13 million. Its chief geographical feature is Lake Malawi, which is 350 miles long and up to 50 miles wide. Many parts of the country are mountainous and it has been called "the Switzerland of Africa."

African tribes had been living in Malawi for many hundreds of years before the British missionary and explorer Dr. David Livingstone first visited there in 1858. The reports written by Dr. Livingstone brought both missionaries and businessmen to Malawi from Britain. These Europeans eventually put an end to the slave trade that had been such a curse to Malawi. The missionaries gradually pacified the tribes, which had been almost perpetually at war with each other, and established schools.

Malawi became a protectorate of the British government in 1891. It was at that time called "Nyasaland", "the land of the lake". The name Malawi was adopted when Nyasaland received its independence from the British in 1964. Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda became its Prime Minister in 1964 and then President in 1966. His leadership made Malawi one of the most peaceful and stable countries in black Africa, with freedom of religion during his reign.

## Missionary Influences in Malawi

Dr. Livingstone was a missionary of the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian). The first mission station in Malawi was set up by the Anglican Church in 1861, only ten or twelve miles south of the location of our Namikango Mission. The Presbyterians came in 1875, followed by the Dutch Reformed Church in 1889, and several "industrial missions" with teaching similar to the Baptists before 1900. The Roman Catholic Church was established in Malawi in 1901, the Seventh-Day Adventists in 1902, the Jehovah's Witnesses in 1907. Many other groups have been established in Malawi since that time, including most of the major fundamentalist, conservative and Pentecostal denominations, which we know in America. The early Presbyterian and Anglican missionaries were mainly responsible for translating the Bible into the major languages of Malawi, and for making them written languages. For these things we owe them an immeasurable debt. The largest denominations in Malawi today are the Presbyterians and the Roman Catholics.

The first preacher of the church of Christ in Malawi (then Nyasaland) was Brother Elaton Kundago, who had gone from Nyasaland to take a job in South Africa and became a member of the church there in 1906. Soon after, he returned to Nyasaland and began preaching at Chikunda, in Blantyre. Brother J.R. Pondani, in his history of the work, tells us that Brother Kundago and his converts appealed to the church in South Africa to send missionaries to help them.

In 1907 George Hubert Hollis came to Blantyre where brother Kundago served as his translator and co-worker. At this time a mission station was established at Namiwawa, southeast of Zomba, the capital of the country.

At Zomba, there were three African men who held office in the Church of Scotland, (Presbyterian Church): George Masangano, Frederick Singano Khonde, and Ronald Kaundo. Masangano was a deacon and was also a

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head foreman in the work of the government in Zomba. Khonde was a foreman in the Government Press. Brother Elaton Kundago knew Masangano and wrote him a letter explaining baptism by immersion as practiced in the Scriptures. Masangano and his two friends were convinced about scriptural baptism, so Masangano went to Chikunda and, after studying for two or three days, was baptized by brother Kundago on November 28, 1907. He returned to Zomba, baptized Khonde and Kaundo, and, at the same time, he began to preach.

Other missionaries came from Britain to work with the Hollises at Namiwawa, but in 1915 the missionaries and local Christians suffered severe persecution when John Chilembwe, leader of the Providence Industrial Mission (Baptist), led an uprising against the Nyasaland government. Thinking that members of the church of Christ had agreed with the uprising, the government detained the missionaries of the church for seven weeks in Zomba. Then brother Hollis was deported and the other missionaries left in 1917, the church having been banned since 1915. Brethren Masangano, Khonde, and Kaundo were imprisoned for seven years and other brethren were executed.

Though the church was banned by the government from 1915 to 1924, the brethren continued to meet in secret for worship and they baptized converts in the streams at night. The leaders directed the work from prison, and baptized people and led worship within the prison. Brother Khonde petitioned the government in 1920, and again in 1924, to lift the ban on the church. At first the request was refused, but was finally granted in 1924. Frederick Khonde, George Masangano and Ronald Kaundo all signed a pledge to obey the government. The church was required to file a quarterly report of its activities and to consult the government about the location and establishment of new congregations in the villages.

The Nyasaland brethren appealed to the churches of Christ in Britain for other missionaries to be sent. In 1929, the Baptist Industrial Mission closed its work at Gowa Mission in Ntchewu District and handed the mission site over to the British Churches of Christ. This may have helped influence their decision to send brother Ernest Gray in 1929 or 1930. Previous to his departure from England, many of the churches of Christ there had become doctrinally liberal and were probably parallel to the Disciples of Christ in America.

The liberal teachings offended Masangano, Khonde, Kaundo and other African brethren and in August of 1931 they separated from brother Gray.



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Masangano and his followers formed the “Church of God” and Khonde and Kaundo and their followers became organized as the “African Church of Christ”, because the government required them to take different names to avoid confusion with the more liberal British Churches of Christ.

The group led by Khonde and Kaundo is centered at Namiwawa in Zomba District, not far from the Namiwawa Mission station of the British Churches of Christ. Numerous missionaries have worked with them through the years. These brethren — numbering more than 1000 congregations — separate themselves from other churches of Christ in Malawi because of disagreement about the cup in the Lord’s Supper.

## Northern Region Work

In 1957, three missionaries of the church of Christ in America (Andrew Connally, James D. Judd, and Doyle D. Gilliam) came and built Lubagha Mission at Rumphu in the Northern Region. Through the work of these and other men (Fred Liggin, Leon Clymore, Doug baur, and John Thiesen), as well as their Malawian co-workers, the church of Christ has been established in almost every district of the Northern Region. The missionary couple currently at Lubagha Mission is Bob and Flo Calderwood, who came after John Thiesen became sick in 1992. James Judd returned to stay in the Northern Region in 1990, and started the Church of Christ Bible College at Mzuzu, which was opened in 1994. Randy Judd came in 1995 to assist his father.

## Central Region Work

Although there were already a few local churches established by the African Church of Christ in the Central Region, many of today’s churches were established by American missionaries and their Malawian fellow-workers. The first missionary from America to work in the Central Region was Doyle Gilliam, who came from the Northern Region and worked in Lilongwe from 1958 to 1966. F.P. Higginbotham arrived from America in 1962 and helped brother Gilliam until 1966. Now all the preachers in the Central Region are Malawians, and the church of Christ is found in every district. A church building was constructed in Lilongwe town in 1960. A Bible school was opened in 1967 at Mponela and is operated by the Malawian Brethren. Larry Williams arrived in 1991 for a few years, and Wayne Jarnigan came in 1993 to work in the Salima area, on the shore of Lake Malawi.

## **Southern Region Work**

From 1930 to 1960 divisions developed in the churches of Christ in the Southern Region, with many independent groups being formed. Some brethren who had separated from Masangano's "Church of God" began writing to American brethren about 1955 pleading for missionaries to come. Brother C.B. Head was sent and stayed in Salisbury (Harare), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) during 1958 and 1959, visiting Malawi periodically. He reported back to America on the need for workers, and the American brethren sent brethren Roland Hayes and G.B. Shelburne III, and families, to open Namikango Mission at Thondwe near Zomba in 1961.

Brother Hayes went first and arranged for residence permits and bought a farm and farmhouse ten miles south of Zomba, then the capital of Malawi. The place began to be called Namikango Mission because of Namikango stream which flowed through the area. Surely the Lord led the way to this property, for as the work grew in future years, it was located in the exact center of the congregations that developed. Through the years, a savings many times over the \$7,800 purchase price has been realized by not having to rent houses for the mission and its work.

In Blantyre, workers have included James Judd, Leon Clymore, Frank Alexander, F.P. Higginbotham, Robert Compton, and Jerry Smith. The church building near the Red Cross headquarters on Mahatma Gandhi Road was constructed in 1965. The church that meets there sent Daisi Banda Feliciano to Mozambique as a missionary 1968. Congregations have multiplied in Blantyre and have reached out to many other areas.

## **The Namikango Mission Story**

### **Program of Systematic Bible Studies**

When Namikango Mission began in 1961, between 10 and 20 congregations were working with brother Limani and his associates. In a short time word of the establishment of the mission station went around and many Malawian brethren in fragmented divisions of the church of Christ began to find unity again through association with the mission and its work. It is estimated that in the Southern Region alone there are now over 3,000 churches known as the church of Christ, some working independently.

There are three primary programs at Namikango: a four-year Bible school opened in 1961; Ntonda Primary School, near Jali, Zomba District; and a Maternity Clinic at Namikango Mission at Thondwe.

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .



**Lendal and Peggy Wilks have worked at Namikango Mission from 1964-1972 and from 1977 down to the present time.**

**Malawian couples working with the Namikango Mission: R. Amos and Esitere Jekete Suwande and (below) Bester and Alice Samson Koviwa.**



farming. Hundreds have studied a good part of the subjects. The influence of these studies is seen everywhere among the churches.

A turning point came in 1968 when we began to offer the studies in the vil-

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

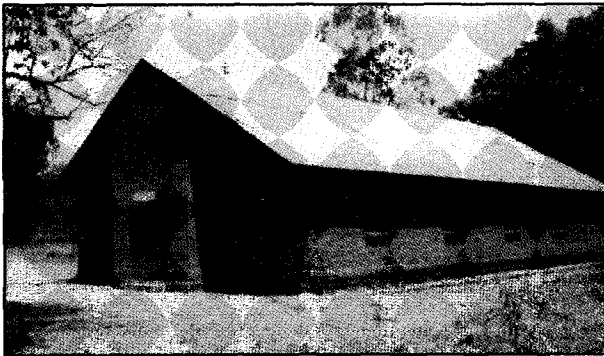
lage churches, rather than at the mission. We were able to reach more brethren who could not or would not come to the mission, and we ourselves came to know the Malawian people much better for having lived in the villages at the church locations. The village studies are called **Namikan-**



**House meeting and teaching in a village.**

**go Bible School Extension Centers.** There are five centers in five districts of southern Malawi and four in the Zambezia Province of Mozambique. The village churches have assumed the load of feeding the students, providing places for the studies, and trying to provide support for the teacher one month out of each three months of study. This is seen as helping the churches to grow in responsibility.

Another turning point was the addition of Malawian teachers to the school faculty. Countless local brethren have served as teachers and preachers in succeeding years. Nowadays, the work they began in the surrounding villages has been taken over by new workers who carry on up to this present



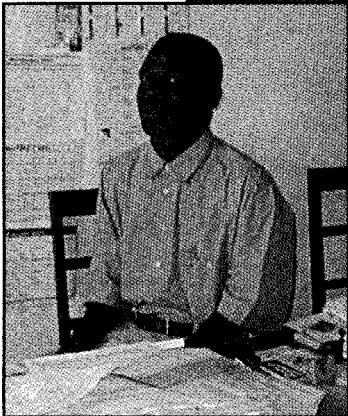
**The Thondwe church's meeting place.**

time. All of the teaching is done by Malawi teachers in Malawi and by Mozambican teachers in Mozambique.

### **Printed Teaching**

The impact of the printed page has been

Gusto Stenala is in charge of the World Bible School follow-up. Recently, George Funk brought his "Gospel Chariot" from South Africa and conducted a meeting in Thondwe.



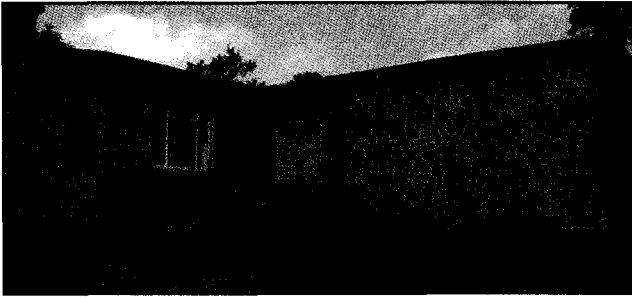
tremendous. Brethren have never had such study helps before in their own language. It is impossible to keep printed lessons on the shelves. The number of teaching materials printed in booklet form are now 23 in the language of the people of Malawi and part of Mozambique.

A monthly bulletin is sent to addresses totaling 2,203. 1,463 churches in the Southern Region are receiving the four-page bulletin. 245 churches receive the bulletin in Mozambique along the borders of Malawi, and 600 churches receive it in the Central and Northern Regions. Each issue has three pages of teaching material and one page of news events happening in the Bible Schools. Most of the writing is done by Malawians.

Correspondence courses are offered in Chewa and in English. Namikango Mission serves as a collection and sending point for World Bible School lessons by mail.

### **Namikango Maternity Clinic**

Located at the mission, this clinic was opened in 1974. Although healing of bodies is not as basic as healing souls, we believe that it has a place and that we cannot ignore the misery and needs of people if we have God's love in us (1 John 3:17,18). Monthly births are from 70-90. There is pre-natal care,



(Left) Namikango Maternity Clinic where pre-natal and delivery care are provided.

(Below) Christian midwives who work at the clinic. Deliveries average 70-90 each month.

nutritional and health counseling, and home-craft classes, plus devotions taught each day. The clinic is entirely staffed by Malawians. Some government aid is received. Salaries, technical help and advice are given by



**Peter Nchena, pictured with his wife and baby. Peter is the Bible teacher for the Ntonda Elementary School, operated by the brethren at Namikango Mission.**

the Christian Hospital Association in Malawi.

### **Ntonda Elementary School**

This school was founded by brother C.B. Head in 1958-59. Enrollment has reached around 1,500. The government provides 16 to 20 teachers for the eight standard grades. The Christian Relief Fund provides funds for a Bible teacher and a limited amount for maintenance of the facility. †

# Lubagha Mission

**Bob Calderwood**

This year marks the tenth year Flo and I have worked as the missionaries in charge of Lubagha Mission. It will also be the first year of a new outreach program.

Lubagha Mission is located in the Northern part of Malawi in a remote mountainous region. There is no electricity or telephone at the Mission. The nearest town is Rumphu, about an hour's drive. The area is impassable in the six-month rainy season, so training is done during the dry season. We have accommodations for up to 100 students at a time and raise our own food to supply their needs during their stay.

For many years a school was held at Lubagha Mission, teaching preachers at first, but then it was expanded to include men who were actively engaged in preaching and teaching at their home congregations. Flo had ladies' classes and trained a special group of women in evangelistic outreach.



(Above) Bob Calderwood pictured with his translator, teaching in a preacher-training session at Lubagha Mission.

(Right) A group of preachers and their families, at Lubagha Mission for a training program. After the session, they go home to teach others what they have been taught.



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Further, we utilized some of our key preachers to have extension schools to encourage spiritual growth amongst the churches throughout Malawi.

While this resulted in a huge growth of the church, we felt we could do better than just inward growth. This year we will begin a new work to reach out to the lost of Malawi. It consists of nine Bible Study Centers spread across the country. In America you would call these centers **inner-city ministries**. These centers will incorporate World Bible School (WBS) materials and International Bible Institute (IBI) courses from South Africa, courses especially designed to reach the lost. In addition, our affiliation with IBI will allow us to take hand-picked, (by a native committee), preachers to Lubagha Mission for training toward an accredited diploma. This diploma is recognized in both Africa and the USA.

Lubagha Mission will be teaching the first seven courses towards the diploma over a four- month dry season. We will continue the school for training leaders in addition to the IBI school. These leaders will also continue training their local churches with materials supplied by Lubagha Mission. *We hope to baptize 10,000 during 2002 from these efforts.* †

# Church of Christ Bible College, Mzuzu

**Jim and Randy Judd**

Our work falls into four main areas:

### **The Campus Work**

Each year we have up to 70 students on campus for four terms of eight weeks studying the Bible eight hours per day. As part of their training, on at least three weekends per month, the students go into the villages within 225 miles, to take part in area-wide gospel meetings.

After graduation, these students are highly regarded for their Bible knowledge and their defense of the truth.

### **The Extension School Work**

We conduct between 80 and 130 extension schools each year. Often we have as many as twenty congregations represented at one school. First we bring to the campus graduates and full-time preachers. Here they are taught the lessons to be used in the Extension Schools. Then they are sent out, with sufficient copies of Bible lessons in the local language to teach extension schools when returning home.



## The Printing Work

We furnish printed lessons to go with all the Bible classes. Until recently we also printed the Malawi Messenger for Ardron Hinton. There are also a variety of tracts, Bible Correspondence lessons, baptismal, marriage, college, and extension school certificates that are needed by congregations all over the country. This often adds up to 1,000,000 pieces of literature each year

## The Benevolence Work

Because of the extreme hunger this year in Malawi, we, of necessity, have turned most of our attention to benevolent work. This year we have already provided 252 tons, 702 pounds of food to 236 congregations for distribution in the Northern, Central and Southern regions, as well as Mozambique and Zambia. Randy and I have personally delivered the majority of this food by truck.

It looks like the end of this year may be worse than what we have already experienced. Most people had to start eating from their gardens early, in order to survive. The harvests are marginal in most places and the added loss from eating out of the harvest early has decreased the ability of brethren to feed themselves later.

While operating as a college we have rooms for a library, print shop, eye clinic, computer room, classrooms and dorm rooms. We have now emptied all these rooms and prepared them for storing corn. They had to be painted, and wood strips and plastic put on the floors.

All authorities are predicting more wide-spread shortages than we have at present. From personal observation this prediction is accurate. In order to help people, when this year's small harvest is consumed, **we are storing food, now!** This is necessary while it is available and much cheaper than it will be in September 2002 lasting until April 2003. We have already stored 279 tons and have storage space for 1045 tons, available and ready. More storage rooms can be made available when necessary. Last week Randy, the workers at the college and I, off-loaded and temporarily stored 60 tons in



## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

seven hours. We have placed an order for 80 tons of corn per week until our storage space is filled. This will not only save lives but a considerable amount of funds. As we are storing corn for later use this year we continue, at present to deliver corn to the hungry. †

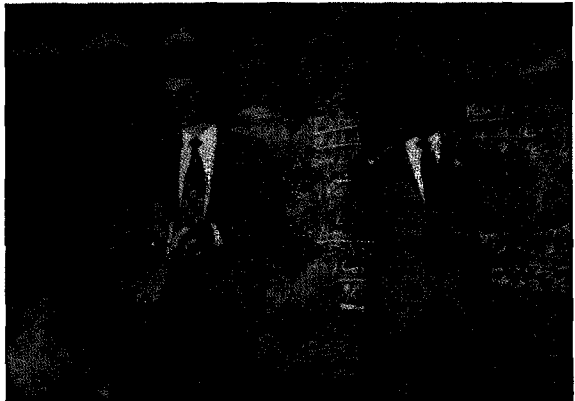
# Preacher Training Schools

Gary C. Hampton

Four times I have traveled to Malawi to help teach in preacher training schools. Each time I was impressed with the "warm heart of Africa," as Malawi is called. The brethren there are eager to study God's word. They desire to take fresh knowledge of the truth to all of the people living in Malawi.

In the late 1980's and early 1990's, we conducted schools each year during the dry season. Supported men came for a week of intensive study. Others, who supported themselves through various types of labor and preached on the Lord's day, were also invited to come for a week. John Thiesen arranged for men to come from particular areas each week for a total of 8 to 12 weeks of schools. The Pleasant Valley church in Mobile helped raise funds from many churches to support these schools. Various elders and preaching brethren and I shared the work-load in these sessions.

Each Sunday while we were in Malawi, we attended a gospel meeting in some part of the country. Invariably, we were invited to speak to crowds of people who had come on foot from miles around to hear the gospel preached. Like those in America in the early 1800's who gathered under brush arbors, these people were hungering and thirsting for the word of God. They would sit for hours on end, often on mats placed on the ground. A multitude put on their Lord in baptism. One man had traveled over 100 miles to obey the gospel and then stayed for a



Gary Hampton preaching with the help of a translator.

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

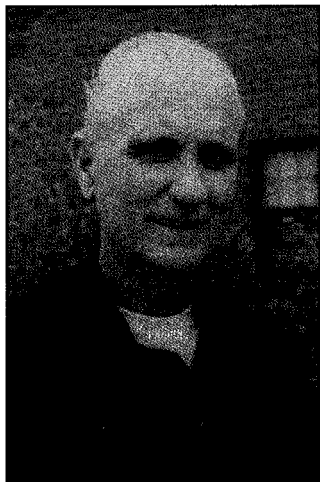
week of intensive Bible study. Scores more were restored because of the preaching done during these meetings.

At every gathering, whether in the schools or during the meetings, the brethren in Africa constantly expressed thanks to their brothers and sisters in the United States who helped send John and Ann Thiesen to minister in their land. They asked God to bless those who loved them enough to send men with the gospel to work among them. Meanwhile, we in the United States gave thanks for the tender hearts of the people in Malawi and prayed God would help them grow. This they have done, both spiritually and numerically.

These trips served a dual purpose. We were able to strengthen the faith of our preaching brethren in Malawi through a deep study of God's word. These men in turn carried the lessons they learned all over the nation in the months following the schools. Statistics for the time show a dramatic increase in the numbers being baptized as a result of the works of the men who attended the schools. However, I would be remiss if I left the impression that good was done only for our brothers in Africa. The Pleasant Valley church was also encouraged by eyewitness reports from its own members who had seen the work firsthand and had come to better appreciate the value of a soul. Our giving for these works grew as we grew closer to our Malawi brethren. †

## Gospel Tract Work

### John Thiesen



One of the most effective means of spreading the gospel of Christ in Malawi for many years now has been the use of gospel tracts. The main reason for this is that the Malawian people are avid readers, devouring any piece of printed literature they may encounter. Their natural curiosity about the world and their keen desire for learning, coupled with a basic religious nature, make the printed page an ideal vehicle for imparting to them the knowledge of God and of His will.

From the beginning of the establishment of Lubagha Mission, all the missionaries working there have made extensive use of the printed page in evangelism. Some of the

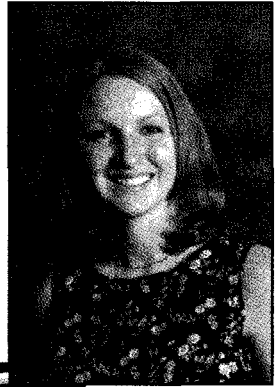
## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

tracts of those earlier years are still being used in the North, being much in demand by gospel preachers in village evangelism.

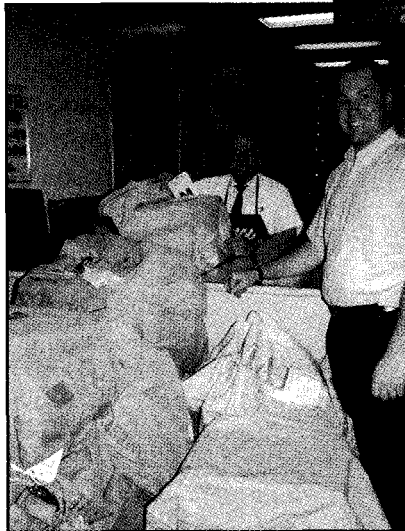
### Goal of One Million Tracts

The Pleasant Valley Road Church of Christ (now University Boulevard Church of Christ) in Mobile, Alabama has for many years put great emphasis on the tract ministry. Starting in 1991, they launched an all-out effort to increase production until by 1993 they were printing and shipping 500,000 tracts a year. In 1994 they increased the number to one million tracts, and they have been putting out from 500,000 to 1,000,000 tracts every year since. For many of those years, paper was donated by some of the brethren of the Livingston, Alabama congregation who owned a stationery supply company. Three ladies have been responsible for the actual printing of those millions of tracts: Nancy Talbot, Tammy Stewart, and Lacey Talbot, using the church's press. Lacey is now the full-time printer. The finished tracts are put in mail bags, loaded on pickups, and hauled to the post office by various members of the congregation, including an elder, Leroy McGaughy, and the congregation's preacher, Bruce Stewart. The mail-bags go to various preachers throughout Malawi who share them with other preachers and congregations who hand them out personally to the people.

The tracts are written in the two main languages of Malawi: Chichewa (the national language) and Chitumbuka (spoken in the Northern Region). I have



(Above) Lacey Talbot works full-time with the printing of tracts for Malawi.



(Left) Bruce Stewart, preacher for University Blvd. Church of Christ makes a delivery to the post office of tracts packed in "M-bags" for surface shipment to preachers and churches in Malawi.

## FROM THE HEART OF . . .

had the pleasure of writing some of the tracts, both while serving as missionary at Lubagha Mission at various times since 1969, and continuing to do so on a part-time basis since my return to America. (My main work now is translating the English volumes of The Voice of Truth International into Spanish for brother J.C. Choate.) Other tracts have been written by various brethren in Malawi. Some of these are for use in reaching people outside Christ, teaching them about Christ, faith, repentance, baptism, the church, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, the judgment, Heaven, Hell, and eternity. Others are for Christians, teaching them to live pure and productive lives in Christ, avoiding alcoholic drinking, polygamy, and other sins.

### Fruits of Printing Ministry

Tract work has been highly productive in saving souls in Malawi. They are passed out to people on the paths, in the gardens, on front porches, and in public market places. Many have been brought to Christ as a result of them, and new congregations established because a villager had read a tract and had subsequently gone to seek a preacher of the church of Christ to come and preach at his village. †

## Campus Ministry in Malawi

### Ardron Hinton

The American brethren who began this work had been involved in teaching with printed materials in Malawi for several years. It was noted that many students in secondary schools and colleges were among the readers of a monthly teaching publication for Malawi, developed by myself in the USA while serving as campus minister for Western Oklahoma State College in Altus, under the oversight of the Elm and Hudson church. Both of these churches and several others continue to be involved in the work among Malawi students.

It was obvious to Malawi and American brethren that more needed to be done to stay in touch with the young people among our brethren who were privileged to go on with their education. They needed both encouragement to faithfulness and continuing instruction in biblical truth. Reaching every secondary and college level student who gives the churches of Christ as his or her religious preference has been the goal from the beginning. Some Malawi brethren were able to gain official acknowledgement that churches of Christ have the right to arrange for its representatives to contact our people in the schools, regardless of who operates them. School co-

operation has been good most of the time.

The programme of locating our people and establishing study groups began during our 1986 trip to Malawi. Progress has been made in reaching the original goal, but we are not there yet. In an effort to increase the efficiency and the soundness of the programme, a large church (with elders) in each of the three regions of the country has assumed responsibility for its administration and supervision. In addition, we also work with congregations near the schools. Where it is possible, we encourage students to worship with them. The work of contacting students and distributing teaching materials is done by volunteers. The USA brethren continue to assist by providing funds for expenses and teaching materials.

This particular ministry (field of service) has been going long enough now that many of those working in the programme were formerly students. It requires a great amount of effort and cooperation to fulfill its mission. Strengthening and teaching these students is definitely a work the Lord wants done. We need to give it our best effort. †

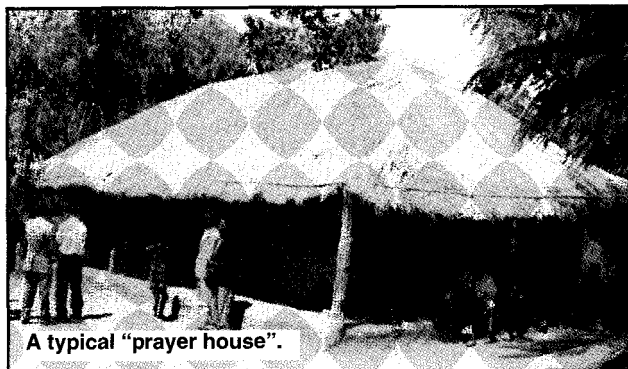
## The Growth of the Work

Beginning in 1962 some brethren began to translate the English name "Church of Christ" into the Chichewa "Mpingo wa Khristu". Both designations are now used interchangeably. The church is still growing and Malawian brethren have planted congregations even in Mo-zambique, Zambia, Rhodesia and South Africa. We estimate over 4,000 churches to be in Malawi, with 200, 000 Christians.

The workers among the churches have done a great job of establishing new congregations. The majority of the preachers are not on salary but are self-employed, in small businesses, which takes them to many places to sell their products or produce. Their



A worship meeting in a home, with the Lord's Supper being served.



A typical "prayer house".

dedication to the work of the Lord as they have moved about from place to place has been outstanding.

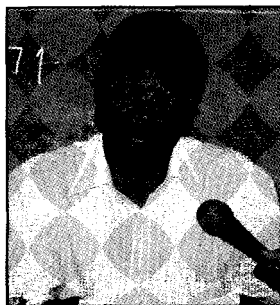
The village churches have taken initiative in planting new

churches, and the Bible Schools have emphasized the need to continue to start congregations, but also to mature the churches already in existence. There has been a struggle through the years to develop church workers who qualify for elders, deacons, teachers and preachers with the qualifications from the Bible.



It is the work of women to carry water for the use of the congregation.

A weekly ra-

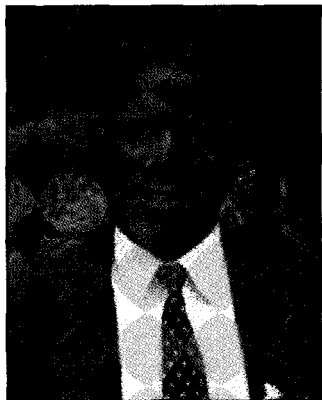


dio program is now being aired from Limbe, FM 101 on Sunday evening at

**Left: Amos Jekete recording a lesson for the radio program.**

**Right: John Katete Phiri is also a radio speaker.**





6:15, sponsored by World Radio. Malawians are doing the teaching and production of programs in the local languages.

Though the church has its weaknesses, there are good signs for the future. Only a few missionaries remain and the church does not depend on foreigners as before. Little by little the congregations are beginning to help their leaders financially in a small way, and to arrange their own Bible studies. One of the great needs is for the churches to find unity because of the same Spirit, same faith,

The church in Malawi has sent workers to neighboring countries to preach the gos-pel.

(Above) Jones Solomon Jere is supported by Malawian brethren in his work in Mozambique.

(Right): Excitement over a baptism in Mozambique.



and same Lord, not just because of association with the same mission. Self-dependency has yet to be achieved among many of the churches of Malawi. May God grant this. †

**Editor's Note:** Because of spiritual hunger among the people of Malawi, and the spirit of dedication and sacrifice among missionaries who have served there, the development of the church in Malawi is an exciting story. Brethren in other mission fields would benefit greatly by implementing some of the methods of teaching and evangelism that are working so well in Malawi.

May God help us to have the wisdom and perseverance to evangelize the world in this generation. †



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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 (or our missionary's) address, to be shipped directly to us or to him, as per instructions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

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## ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

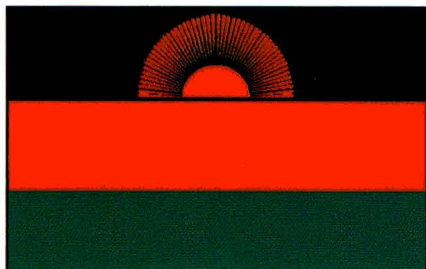
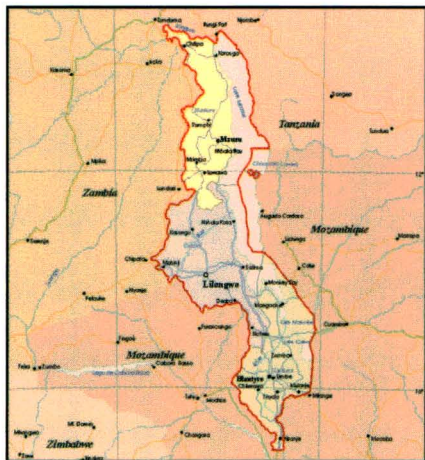
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### *Verse Search* — 35 (from page 37)

1. They were ministering to the Lord and fasting.
2. They fasted, prayed, and laid hands on them.
3. They went into the Jewish synagogues and preached the word of God.
4. A false prophet whose name was Bar-Jesus.
5. He sought to turn the proconsul away from the faith after he had called for Barnabas and Saul to hear the word of God.
6. As full of all deceit and fraud, a son of the devil, enemy of all righteousness and perverting the ways of the Lord.
7. He believed, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord.
8. John Mark departed and returned to Jerusalem.
9. He chose the fathers, exalted the people and brought them out with an uplifted arm.
10. "*David ..... Jesse.....after my own heart.....do all my will*"
11. A savior, Jesus. See Isaiah 7:14, 9:6, and 11:1 for references to the promise God had made hundreds of years before.
12. Sons of the family of Abraham, and those among them who feared God.
13. They did not know Christ nor the voices of the prophets which were read every Sabbath.
14. "*fulfilled.....written*". See Luke 24:26,27,44,45 where Jesus refers to all things regarding Himself being fulfilled.
15. Forgiveness of sins. This is the same message taught to Paul by Ananias in Acts 22:16 and by Peter in Acts 2:38
16. They rejected the word of God that was spoken to them. God had shown them special favor by sending His word of salvation to them first, but they rejected it.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:**

## Republic of Kenya



**Government:** Multiparty Democracy  
**Head of State:** President Bakili Muluzi

### Secular Facts:

**Location:** Southeast-Central Africa, bounded by Tanzania, Zambia, and Mozambique.

**Land Mass:** 45,745 square miles; 500 miles long and about 100 miles wide.

**Population:** 13,000,000; under 15 years, 45%; over 65 years, 3%.

**Major Cities:** Lilongwe, Blantyre.

**Language:** English and Chichewa.

**Literacy:** 56%.

**Religion:** Protestant, 55%; Muslim, 20%; Roman Catholic, 20%.

**Ethnic Groups:** Chewa, Nyanja, Lomwe, other Bantu tribes.

**Economy:** *Industries:* Agricultural processing, cement; *Agriculture:* Tea, tobacco, sugar, cotton, corn, potatoes; *livestock:* chickens, goats, cattle, pigs, sheep; *Labor force,* 86 % agriculture; *Communications:* *Radios:* 112 per 1000; *Telephones:* 1 per 283 persons; *Transportation:* 25,000 private cars; *Railroad length:* 490 miles; *Health:* Life expectancy, male, 36.6; female, 36.5; infant mortality: 134 per 1000 live births.

**Monetary Unit:** Kwacha.

### The Church:

**Congregations:** Approximately 4000, with perhaps 200,000 Christians in the country.

**History:** The first Malawian was converted in South Africa in 1906. He returned to Malawi and was able to establish some congregations, though fellowship was often broken by distance and factions, resulting in numerous independent splinter groups by the middle of the century.

In 1961 Roland and Wanda Hayes and B. and Ruth Shelburne moved to Malawi. They bought a farm and farmhouse near Zomba, the capital of the country, on the Namikango River. The residence came to be known as "Namikango Mission". It has been a tremendous asset to the foreign teams that have used it through the years, being located at a central point among the congregations of the southern part of the country.

From the beginning, the goal of missionaries was to train local Christians to push the work forward. A program of systematic Bible studies was developed into a four-year cycle of daily Bible studies during the dry season. In time, these classes were taken to the villages for on-site training sessions, with local men serving as teachers, along with available missionaries. Printed materials, a radio program, a maternity clinic, and an elementary school are additional tools.