

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIII, January, 1949)

Morning Meditation

Dear Lord,

Quietly and Easily;
Help me to live this day

To lean upon Thy great strength
Trustfully, Restfully;

To wait for the unfolding of Thy will
Patiently, Serenely;

To meet others
Peacefully, Joyously;

To face tomorrow
Confidently, Courageously.

—Margaret H. Fisher

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

THE LONGSUFFERING OF GOD

That was a strange thing the Lord Jesus said in Luke 18:7, "And shall not God avenge his elect who cry to Him day and night, and yet he is longsuffering over them?" Longsuffering over whom? Let us look at the context of the parable in which these words occur:

"And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, and regarded not man: and there was a widow in that city; and she came oft unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming. And the Lord said, Hear what the unrighteous judge saith. And shall not God avenge his elect, that cry to him day and night, and yet he is longsuffering over them? I say unto you, that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"—Luke 18: 1-8.

Now, over whom was he longsuffering? No doubt over those adversaries who afflicted the poor widow. So the Revisers seem to have understood it, for they put in the margin, "and is he slow to punish on their behalf?" But perhaps on further thought we may conclude that He is longsuffering over His own people also, the while He is longsuffering over their enemies.

Thus did the longsuffering of God wait in the days of Noah until all hope and chance was irretrievably gone and every resort and remedy was exhausted. Then judgment had to be executed, and it came suddenly and inexorably when it did come. He was longsuffering over the nations that dwelt in Canaan; and Abraham's seed must wait four hundred years before they could enter the land—"for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet full." He had borne long with the wickedness of Sodom, and would have borne longer if there had been ten righteous men in the city. But on the day when Lot went out of Sodom fire and brimstone fell from heaven and destroyed them all. He was longsuffering over Israel for many centuries, as the nation went from bad to worse, and He sent them prophets, rising up early and sending them, warning, pleading, persuading, exhorting. When all was seen to be of no avail, and when they had filled up the measure of their iniquity, the long-announced judgment-stroke fell, and the people were carried away into captivity. During the ministry of Christ again, and for years after, the longsuffering of God waited until hope had dried and patience ceased to be a virtue. Then was Jerusalem destroyed and the age-long dispersion and distress fell upon the nation. And today and yet He is longsuffering over the guilty world which spurns the light of the gospel, and over corrupt Christendom, as it hastens on to final apostasy. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise but is longsuffering—toward His adversaries, yes, and to usward also—not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord shall come as a thief (2 Peter 3:9, 10).

Our God is a waiting God. Patient and longsuffering is He. The delay in answering the widow's prayer was due to the longsuffering of God. He is not slack in the performance of His word; He has not forgotten, nor does He become weary, but He waits.

A NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE OF GOD'S LONGSUFFERING

And why does He wait? The principle and philosophy of God's patient waiting is wonderfully illustrated in the best known of all parables of the Lord Jesus—the parable of the Prodigal Son. It is needless to point out that in this parable we have a picture of the reckless sinner and of the fruits of sin, also of humble repentance and return. The character that dominates the whole story however is that of the father who in the parable represents God.

Before he left his home he was already estranged from it and from his father. His heart had gone on to the far country, long before his feet went thither. The one problem was how to break away from the bonds that tied him to the home of his youth and from the restraints of his father's presence. He solved the problem by demanding and obtaining his share of the inheritance. Now he could be foot-loose; now he could have his way. Just so does every sinner seek to be independent of God, and cast away those cords and bonds from him. The young man wanted to live his own life, unhindered and unhampered. He got what he wanted. He was bent on new experiences, and he got that. At the same time he created

an experience for his father, of which little is said; we read it between the lines.

After waiting a few decent days, the younger son gathered all together and took his journey to the far country, which is the land of Do-As-You-Please; and there he wasted his substance in riotous living. It was a gay life for a while, with jolly company, and plenty of merry excitement, wine, women, and song. But his resources began to dwindle; soon he was scraping the bottom of the barrel and his boon companions and partners in sin heard the sound of the scraping and fled away. The day came when he had spent all—when penniless, friendless, homeless he faced a cold and unsympathetic world. Just at that time, too, by coincidence, a mighty famine arose in that country. What shall he do now? Ah—he will find him a job and seek to rehabilitate himself. Most prodigals resort to such expedients, and some seem to succeed fairly well with it. But this one didn't. He was sent into the field to feed the swine. There was labor and shame and hunger, so that he envied the very hogs he fed. "He would fain have filled his belly with the husks which the swine did eat . . ." At last he came to himself. It dawned on him that he had played the fool—for even the most menial servant in his father's house was better off than he. Then he made his resolve and arose and came to his father.

WAITING INVOLVES SUFFERING

During all this time the prodigal's father was at home, waiting. What went on in his heart and thoughts we are not told. Those who have loved and lost will know and understand. He was a wise father. Well did he know how things must be with his wayward son, and what must be the outcome of the self-willed course the boy had taken. Great, too, must have been the father's anxiety. When the crisis breaks—as inevitably it must, sooner or later—what will he do? Oh that the prodigal might return! But not all prodigals do. In fact most of them do not: the majority of those who have gone that way have perished in the far country. How would it be with *his* son? Has he lost him for ever? His heart was bound up with the wandering boy. But he waited. It was the only thing to do. Someone has said that "Patience is love at its best." And our English word "patience" comes from the Latin word "*patior*," which means to "suffer." The father held steady and suffered. His heart impelled him to go in search of the lost son—to find him—to bring him back home. But his wisdom forbade. To attempt to do so might be to ruin everything for ever. Love cannot be forced upon anyone; it must be desired and sought for. So the father stilled the ardent longing of his soul, and waited.

But day after day he scanned the horizon; day after day his eyes were on the road on which the loved and lost one would be coming back, if come indeed he would. For how could the father have seen him when he was yet a great way off, unless he had been looking for him? So he looked and waited, and waited and looked—and, lo, one day in the distance appeared a figure, instantly known and recognized—yet how greatly changed! He had left in the bloom and

strength of youth, arrayed in the rich garments of his father's home. But the figure that comes from afar is clad in tatters, hungry, sick, emaciated—drawing near the old home with slow, uncertain step; would he find shelter and welcome there? He could hardly expect it. He meant to apply for a hired man's job.

WHEN LOVE BREAKS FORTH

His father saw him while he was yet afar off, and ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Now, now at last, could the love, long penned up, break forth and show itself in all its greatness and power. Now has the time come to release all the surpassing affection so long held back, and to lift the veil to make manifest the father's heart. "Bring hither quickly the best robe and put on him," he cries, "and put a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it; for this my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found." Such is the marvellous forgiveness of God, and the glory of His marvellous patience.

And truly of each one of us it can be said that the longsuffering of God is our salvation. And if His judgment upon evildoers seems long a coming, we shall remember that we owe our mercy to that same longsuffering with which He deals with His enemies. The day of vengeance must, alas, come and He will avenge speedily. But in the meanwhile He waits for me and for you, if by any means we may return to the Father's house and find glad welcome there.

BEN'S BUDGET

Ben J. Elston

I try, first of all and most of all, to make an accurate estimate of myself. Paul said that the fact that he knew nothing against himself did not guarantee his own justification. See 1 Cor. 4:1-4. One all too easily seeks a feeling of self-justification, when the grounds for that feeling do not warrant it. This may, without being suspected, be fatal. When challenged as to my basis of hope, whether the challenge be friendly or otherwise, I have tried seriously to be fair and courteous in every way to the challenger. In this matter, I am compelled to state, I have not uniformly pleased myself. Not for lack of good intention; but sadly enough—at least for me—I must record failure. The resulting injury is at least one aim of Satan, and he would have no endeavor to remedy it ever made. The Father of love and light, however, would put the truly honest and serious soul on proper course of correcting the evil. The course calls for unfeigned humility and sacrificing love, nor should we neglect the first opportunity for any needed adjustment.

Forty-two years ago, I wrote:

Sins of others vex my soul,
Outrage truth and purity;
But myself I can't control—
God be merciful to me!

NEWS AND NOTES

New Albany, Ind.: "The Lord continues to bless our work at Cherry Street. Interest seems to grow and the number increases. October saw our largest regular attendance both in the Sunday School and the Church services. We have recently purchased a School Bus which has helped much in our attendance. Since our last report three young men have confessed faith and were baptized into the Lord. We desire your prayers."—Edward E. Kranz.

Abilene, Texas: "The work here continues to progress both in numbers and in the blessings of the Lord spiritually. One young man was baptized last Sunday night, and one young married woman came forward at the morning service to rededicate her life to the Lord. The services have been holding up rather well considering the sickness and other hindrances. There is a great number that need to be reached with the gospel in its simplicity and we desire the prayers of brethren elsewhere that the need may be met."—Carl Kitzmiller.

Johnson City, Tenn.: "The first Sunday in November was annual Homecoming Day at the Locust St. church. We praise God for 121 in Sunday School (record attendance for 1948 thus far) and for a house full (about 165 people) for the morning worship service. Our offering for that day went toward eliminating our building debt, and totaled nearly \$400.00. The brethren from the Mountain View church gave splendid cooperation in attending the morning worship service.

"We devoted our regular prayer meetings (Wed. at Locust St. and Thurs. at Mtn. View) to special praise and thanksgiving services this week, and had increased attendance at both places, and fine meetings. There were 75 present at Locust St., and possibly 50 to 55 present at Mtn. View. Several from Locust St. attended at Mtn. View."—Robert B. Boyd.

Report from Arthur T. Phillips

Since leaving our home in California we have visited more than one hundred congregations, held four meetings and have been

preaching for the fine group of Christians at Eastview, Ky., for the past three months. As a result of our travels more than forty have been baptized, one church brought to its first love, another brought to a higher plane of fellowship.

While here in Louisville, we have helped the brethren in making the Portland church auditorium more beautiful and in a small way helped build six more class rooms in the Parkland church. In the meantime I have had an operation for cancer, which called for the removal of part of my lip and also for probing in the side of my neck, from which I have been pronounced well.

We have been attending Brother Boll's classes and the children have been in the Portland Christian School.

Along with backaches have come some heartaches, yet above everything our faith in our Lord has been made stronger, and our joys have far exceeded our tears. Our love of God has grown dearer and our heart of compassion for man has grown greater, and our fellowship of our brethren much sweeter. So trusting in Him who is exceedingly able to supply our every need, heal our wounds, and with our hand in His, we answer the call of outstretched hands in the dark night of Africa. Birth certificates, passports, permit of entry, and many other hurdles have been made. Pray the Lord of Harvest that He use us in saving the lost.—Arthur T. Phillips, 2505 Portland Ave., Louisville 12, Ky.

Alexandria, La.: "The Alexandria church of Christ will, in a few days, begin the construction of a new building for services on the two lots, corner of West Fourth and McArthur Drive, which were purchased recently. This is a new addition of the city and we feel that greater things will be accomplished for our Lord. Services are being conducted in the home of Brother and Sister Burgess till the new building is ready for use. Pray for us."—W. J. Johnson.

Jennings, La.: "We praise the Lord for the fine interest manifested in our church services, and for the good attendance in Bible school.

Since last report there were three responses to the gospel invitation here in Jennings: one for reconsecration, one for baptism, and one for membership.

"We were privileged to visit one night during the five-nights meeting at Turkey Creek church and heard Brother Frank Mullins in another of his fine messages. We want to congratulate the Mount Auburn church at Dallas (where Brother Mullins ministers) for their fine new building which will be a great asset to the Lord's work."—Ivy J. Istre.

The congregation at Crowley, La., is in process of constructing a new house of worship which, we understand, is to be known as the North Parkerson church of Christ.

Brother Frank Mullins of the Mount Auburn church, Dallas Texas, conducts a radio Bible school over KSKY (660 kc) each Sunday morning from 9:30 to 10:00. Those in the vicinity of Dallas will wish to tune in and hear these lessons.

Colis and Doloris Campbell embarked from California for Japan on December 14 and when last heard from were on the high seas. They should arrive in Japan in the forepart of January. J. R. Clark, 1046 Dudley Ave., Louisville 4, Ky., forwards support to this fine young missionary couple.

Camp Taylor, Ky.: "The Camp Taylor church has had one of its finest years as to attendance, growth, and good works. Since our November meeting six have responded to the invitations; five of these took membership with the congregation and the other was a restoration. Most of the five also asked for prayers and rededicated their lives to the Lord. The congregation joined others in sending their third-Sunday-of-December contribution to the Sellersburg Home. Sunday night speakers over the holidays were Paul Clark and Eugene Pounds, our own boys who are in Harding College. After their graduation this year they will be ready to go out in the Master's vineyard as ministers of the Word."—J. R. Clark.

Things seem to be shaping up for Brother and Sister Jorgenson to make the winter song tour mentioned in December Word and

Work. They plan to start in January (Lord willing) and travel by automobile along the southern winter route.

PARTNERS

Your publisher would like to know that we are all in this business of sending out the Word and Work together. This good work should mean as much to good brethren as to him, and thus can we make strides forward.

But some who are counted on to help even let their own subscriptions lapse. Others send in large lists of names, smaller clubs, or, at least, are very anxious to keep their own names on the list. Even if you are not a good reader you would help us and your friends by keeping the Word and Work on your reading table in your home. Besides, we who are sitting in the heavenly places in Christ, should cultivate the habit of feeding on spiritual food.

Let us all join hand and heart in a great drive to put the Word and Work in the homes of all of our active members and elsewhere as we have opportunity! Let us hear from you soon. Thanks to all who have already sent in 1949 clubs.

Every Word for 20 Years

Brother J. E. Blansett of Dallas, Texas, says that he has read every word in every issue of the Word and Work for twenty years, the while he has done the same to other religious journals.

The Faith of Our Fathers department carries a new article from the pen of Brother Boll this time. Its appeal for non-sectarian Christianity expresses well the objective of that department.

About the Back Cover

Especially those who have been receiving the Word and Work free for the past several months should read the back cover of this number. After all these months you are being invited to renew on your own. Whether or not you agree with all the articles appearing in this journal it is good for you to read with an open mind what is said. Even those who oppose a teaching would do well to read it firsthand. However, it is our aim to be very careful to set forth only the Word of God.

Atlanta, Ga.: "So far this year the Lord has given us thirteen new converts and one restoral for membership. These have responded to periodic prayerful endeavors. Oh, that we might be stedfast in this kind of effort."—Wm. C. Cook, Jr.

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.: "I greatly appreciate what the brethren have done to help us. To date there has been \$702.93 sent to us, and much of it from those who said: "I read about it in the Word and Work." Since we have been down here our support has been barely enough, and sometimes not even that. But when I get in a jam, I have always been able to pick up odd jobs. But when I stood amid the wreckage of not only our place, but of the entire community, it looked like the end; I felt rather sick at heart. But now the load has been lifted. I feel we have enough to replace all our losses and some over—you see, I'll do the work myself, saving on labor.

"We have resumed work on the church building, and now have the east wall all up, and the other three walls half up. We hope ere long we shall be meeting in our own house of worship."—Brady M. Green.

A fuller report of the Ft. Lauderdale work will be found in an article elsewhere in this magazine. See "Good Out of Ill." Brother Green and the few brethren with him have struggled long enough to erect this new meeting house. We

hear that twelve or fifteen hundred dollars would complete it. We are asking ministers and elders who read this to take the matter up with their congregations and this time, instead of \$700, to send \$1500 to untie the hands of these brethren for greater service in their field. Send what you can, and if it is not much send once and again to their needs until the deed is done. Shall we do it? Send to Brady M. Green, General Delivery, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.—Pub.

Austin, Tex.: "This is to announce that the church of Christ that formerly met on East 7th Street, this city, has moved into its own new building at 2305 East First Street."—C. W. Jernigan.

Johnson City, Tenn.: "We have had one membership, one for re-consecration, and one for baptism at Locust Street in recent weeks. At endance at the Carter-Sell addition church has been especially encouraging lately. Henry Harding is now preaching full time for the Piedmont Ave. church, Greenville, S. C. Brother Brady Green is visiting these parts. He preached for Piedmont Avenue last Sunday morning and for the Duncan church, near Greenville, Sunday night. He is to preach at Locust St. tonight (Dec. 23)."—Robert B. Boyd.

Brother Hall C. Crowder of Cordell, Oklahoma, is beginning work with the Highland church, Louisville, the first Sunday in the year.

THE INSPIRED WORD

We maintain not only that the Scriptures were inspired, but that they are inspired; that the Spirit of God lives and moves in their words as the blood pulsates in the human body. It is this Spirit that dwells within which gives to Scripture its vivifying principle; so that as certainly as the seed cast into the ground brings forth a harvest, so certainly does the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, when received into the believing heart bring forth the fruits of righteousness and true holiness in the human character. It is no exaggeration to say that the greatest revolutions of history have been upheaved by single texts of Scripture.—*Selected.*

I thank Thee for the light of day; I thank Thee for a time to pray.
Please keep me, Lord, from ev'ry sin, as I this day with Thee begin,
And watch me lest I go astray, along the broad, forbidden way.

—Dr. J. A. Maker

THE PETITIONS OF THE LORD'S PRAYER

R. H. B.

As once again we survey the "Lord's Prayer" we note the all-important fact that the Lord Jesus taught us to address God as "Our Father." This (as has been observed before) is an entirely new approach to God. The saints of the Old Testament called Him by many an endearing name, such as "My God," "My Rock and my Salvation," "My Shepherd," "My Redeemer," "My Deliverer," "My Refuge," "My Glory and the Lifter-up of my Head," "My King"; or, in contrition, "the great and dreadful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy." He is indeed all that, and evermore shall be, for He changeth not. But here is a new name, based upon a new relationship, which is granted to men through Christ. He is the *Father*. But only the children of God can rightly call God "Father"; and only they are children of God who are "born of God." Though all men are His "offspring," and all are the objects of His love and care, yet all are not His children, nor is God the Father of all. The right to call Him Father does not naturally belong to men. Nor have all the privilege of belonging to His family as His children; but, "To as many as received him [Christ], to them gave he the right to become children of God; even to them that believe on his name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12, 13.) "Ye are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ, for as many of you as were baptized into Jesus Christ, have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:26, 27.) "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called children of God," says John—"and such we are." (1 John 3:1.) And again, of such it is written that "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God; and if children, then heirs." (Rom. 8:16, 17.)

It is on the ground of this relationship that the Christian can now approach the throne of grace and say, "Abba, Father," and, "Our Father who art in heaven." But to His children He is "*Father*," with all that that name implies—a Father infinitely better, kinder, wiser, more loving, than the best of human fathers that ever lived. "If ye who are evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good gifts to them that ask him?" (Matt. 7:11.)

Let us mark also the fact that the Father is addressed as being *in heaven*. It is perfectly true that God is omnipresent—that He is everywhere—that He fills the heaven and the earth—that in Him all men live and move and have their being; that His power and glory is manifest in all nature and creation; and that His own dwell in God and God dwelleth in them. But God is also localized. Heaven is His abode and dwelling place. We are not to pray to God as being within, or round about us, but to the Father *who is in heaven*. That is the safeguard against a false mysticism, and against pantheistic error.

And when we say "*Hallowed be Thy Name*" we are asking that God's name be held in holy reverence among men. Now in our praying the important thing is always that we *mean* it—that we call on God *in truth*—that our prayer be the utterance of the soul's sincere desire. The Lord Jesus did not teach us to say mere *words*, to be repeated by rote, parrot fashion, but He meant to create in our hearts the real desire for the things we ask. Our attitude in prayer is not that of mere well-wishers, as if to say, "Lord, we would be quite willing and pleased and glad to see Thy Name hallowed and to have Thy kingdom come and Thy will done on earth, etc." No—as we pray to Him we enlist with Him in His plans and in His program. When therefore I say, "Hallowed be Thy Name"—if I really mean it and want it, then the purpose to do all on my part, that God's Name may be hallowed takes shape in my heart. I am lined up with the great end and aim of bringing God's Name to reverence and honor among men. And, is it not true that *a son* can bring more of honor or disgrace upon his father's name, than could anyone else? The nearness of our relationship to God makes us the custodians of His good name among men. Through us, and because we are His children, God's Name may be blasphemed in the world; and, on the other hand, we can let our light so shine that men may see our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. (Matt. 5:16.)

So, likewise, when we say, "Thy Kingdom come," we take our place as "fellow-workers unto the Kingdom of God." (Col. 4:11.) We can enhance the interests of God's Kingdom now, and what we do here can result in bringing in its final glory.

So, likewise, if I enter with whole-hearted purpose into the third petition, I will pray, "Thy will be done," and back of it will be the thought, "Lord, teach me Thy will; and "Teach me *to do* Thy will." (Ps. 143:10.) Thus, when I so pray, I will purpose to enter into the fulfilment of His good and holy will on the earth.

"GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD"

The next petition is that for daily bread. Anyone could see that it would be wrong for a man to fold his hands and refuse to do his work and obvious duty on the pretext of this prayer. If a man obtains a living by honest work his daily bread is as much from God as if it had been dropped into his hands from heaven. But there may also come a time in a man's life when he cannot work, and when there is no earthly prospect for his sustenance. Will the prayer for daily bread hold good then, and will God, who has promised not to fail us nor forsake us, then see to our wants and needs? Yea—the prayer is valid then as much as it ever could be. "Therefore," says the Lord Jesus, "be not anxious what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. . . . Behold, the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? . . . And why are ye anxious concerning raiment?" (Matt. 6:25-32.) But someone may say, "*We* have to sow and reap and gather into barns if we want to be fed, and

we must toil and spin for raiment." Very well—let us do so, for that is God's will. And if there come a time when there is no chance to sow or reap or gather, and when we cannot toil and spin, we can pray just the same, and with the same assurance. "For your Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Whether we can see where it is coming from or not, He is always equal to the situation; and He would have us to trust in His care.

But, again—how the little prayer cuts into one's heart and conscience!—did He teach us to say, "*Our* Father"? And, "Give *us* this day our daily bread"? This first person plural compels me to think of my brother. It is not *my* daily bread only, but *our* daily bread I am praying for; and if I have it, and he has not, and if my heart is in this prayer—what would I do? "But whoso hath the world's goods," says John, "and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in Him?" (1 John 3:17.)

"FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS"

That the petition for forgiveness carries with it an obligation is plainly stated. It is, "as we also have forgiven our debtors." And afterward the Lord added these words: "If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive your trespasses; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matthew 6:14, 15.)

In the next petition I will be asking our heavenly Father to keep me out of temptation. How important and necessary is this prayer! We remember the word of the Lord Jesus to His sleeping disciples in Gethsemane: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41.) So, you pray, "Lead us not into temptation." If that is a true prayer, expressing your heart's sincere desire—will you, then, on your part, *walk into* temptation, where you know it is? Certainly not. If I ask the Father to keep me out of temptation—do I not mean to say that I do not want to be led into it, and that I will avoid it where possible, and will steer clear, so far as in me lies, not only of sin but of the opportunity and occasion? Therefore if I pray, I am wholly committed against sin, and all its suggestions and inducements. Also, if I say, "Lead *us* not into temptation" it means that I have the same solicitude for my brother that I have for myself. If he is weak, if he is in danger, I will include my brother in that prayer. And surely, I would not myself lead him (or her) into temptation, or be an occasion of stumbling to him! The Lord Jesus did elsewhere say some very solemn things about anyone who would cause one of His little ones to stumble; and pronounced a woe upon the world because of occasions of stumbling. "It must needs be that the occasions come,"—there is no help for that—"but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh." (Matt. 18:4-7.) What a heavy responsibility falls upon those that help their fellow-men to become drunkards, and upon the purveyors of the lascivious pictures such as often appear in popular magazines; and upon those who produce

and present the licentious shows that corrupt the minds of our youth!

"DELIVERANCE FROM THE EVIL ONE"

Finally, we ask to be delivered from the Evil One—not only from "evil," but from that evil spirit that rules and controls the world. Here only God can help us. Satan is far too mighty and too shrewd for us, and only our Lord who overcame him can safeguard us from his power. Hence this prayer. On our part we are to resist him. From the lusts and vices to which the flesh is prone, he tells us to *flee*. But, as to the devil—him we are to *resist*. Yet not in our own power, but *by faith*. "Be sober, be watchful: your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walketh about, seeking whom he may devour; whom resist stedfast in your faith." (1 Peter 5:8, 9.) But, to do this, we must take up the whole armor of God—most especially the shield of faith, by which we can quench all the fiery darts of the devil; and that sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, with which our Lord once smote him in the mount of temptation.

It is a short prayer, and very simple. But it has a way of opening up more and more. It extends its meaning over all the Christian's life. All lengths, and breadths, all heights and depths are comprehended in its scope. And as we pray it with a true heart, in fullness of faith, consciously and unconsciously we are drawn over on God's side and to His ways; and as we receive from Him the answer to its petitions all our needs bodily and spiritual, are supplied. For "Prayer changes things," and that *on both ends*.

SAVED—BUT BY UNFAITHFUL MEN

Tona Covey

In a recent letter which told how the preacher of a certain congregation had sinned very grievously and showed himself unworthy of further service to God, unless he repents, a friend said, "I was baptized by that man. Do you think I ought to be baptized again?"

Since this question has bothered many in times past, we offer a few suggestions, hoping that it may help others to feel assured as to their duty in this matter.

Certainly no one desiring to obey the Lord would knowingly go to an unfaithful man to get his teaching on baptism or to have such a man baptize him. But the trouble arises when some preacher has been faithful for a time, or, at least, has been considered to be faithful, but later proves to be unfaithful; then his converts begin to wonder whether or not the teachings and services they received from him really counted with the Lord.

On first thought we might think we ought to start over and have some faithful man hear our new confession and baptize us again. But if we decide on that course, then how many of his converts should be baptized again? Should it be only those who were baptized

immediately preceding the open manifestation of his backsliding, or even behind that for a time? Then how far behind that? No one could say just how far back; and if it could be shown that some ought to be baptized again, then none of his converts could feel safe unless they all, from first to last, were baptized again. Surely the Lord does not require that.

Since the teaching on baptism is a part of the teaching that makes up the "Gospel," let us consider some statements made concerning the "Gospel." Paul said (Rom. 1:16), "I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Note that when the gospel is received into a believing heart it is the power of God unto salvation to that man. There are no conditions specified as to how the believer must get that gospel before it can become to him the Power of God. The preacher who gave him the message may have thought the preaching of the gospel was a way to worldly gain, as many have thought (1 Tim. 6:5); or he may have been preaching for "envy and strife" (Phil. 1:15); but these unworthy reasons on his part have no power over the gospel that his hearers believed and obeyed. Now read all of Philippians 1:15-18 and note that Paul said, "What then? only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and therein I rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Paul is not rejoicing that these men with unworthy motives were preaching something about Christ, similar to the present day modernistic teaching, but that they were preaching the truth concerning Christ. Paul could hardly have rejoiced over that preaching if the unworthiness of the preacher nullified the power of the gospel preached. If one has been under the influence and teaching of an unworthy preacher, his concern need not be concerning the gospel teacher, but rather, was that which I received and obeyed really the gospel truth or not?

The converts of a man that later proved to be unworthy should not immediately renounce that which they have received. Some preachers preach much truth and some error; others preach much error and little truth. The first thing to be done in all such cases is to check up in God's word and see if what one has believed and obeyed is really God's word. If one is not able to do so alone, then he should get some tried and true believer whom he can trust to help him find out if he has believed any error. Then he should hold the truth he has received and give up the error.

To illustrate the matter, let us suppose that a man comes to me selling precious stones. By his presentation of the matter he convinces me his jewels are the real thing and I consider his price to be right—that the stones are worth what he asks for them. I buy the stones. But soon afterward I learn the man is a swindler. I do not immediately dump the whole collection of stones into the river. I reason that though he is a swindler, yet he might have given me some good stones in the lot. I have them tested. If any be found worthless, I throw them away. Those found to be genuine I keep. The value of the stone is within the stone itself. The worthless were worthless even though they were in with a collection of good

stones, and the good were valuable even though the salesman was a swindler. The truths of God are precious stones; hold them fast!

Lest some be ready to conclude that it seems to make little difference whether one listens to a faithful or an unfaithful preacher, we must sound a warning, even as the Lord and His apostles also did. Jesus said (Matt. 24:11), "And many false prophets shall arise and lead many astray" (which is the characteristic purpose of the false prophet). Paul in Acts 20:29, 30 warns the brethren against the false teachers that would arise among them, "speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." See Gal. 1:6, and see what the false teachers had done for that church. Then in the same letter (3:1) he tells them they were bewitched. All departures from the word of God, all the multitude of religious denominations and sects, all the religious confusion, is the fruit of the preaching of unfaithful men. That has been the peril of God's people through all the ages. And if God's book gave no warnings, our own observations should warn us that it is dangerous to sit at the feet of false teachers.

A false teacher's falseness lies not only in his evil life, but also in the fact that he has rejected more or less of the truth of God. And having rejected it, sooner or later it will show in both his teaching and his practice. And such men are shrewd. Note this: "But the Spirit says expressly, that in later times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to *seducing spirits* and *doctrines of demons*, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies . . ."—a sufficient explanation for the false teacher's shrewdness. It has been said that the false teacher starts out by making his lie look like the truth of God and ends up by making the truth of God look like a lie. Better take this warning (2 John 10); "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, [the true word of God] receive him not into your house, neither give him greeting." This matter of willfully listening to the teachings of one known to be unfaithful is quite different from those cases mentioned in the first of this article; in those cases there was no question about that which was received as being truth; it was indeed Christ that was preached; it was scriptural baptism without doubt. The unfaithful preacher has some sinister motive for preaching; he is not seeking the glory of God, neither your salvation. He would not preach the gospel at all except to cover up the error he desires to foist upon you. And you can rest assured that from him you will be given poison with the truth; and even the truth will be twisted and emphasized in such a way that it is no longer truth. Only those who have a love for the truth and some knowledge of the truth have much likelihood of escaping from the meshes of the false teacher.

There is only one sure rule of self-defense for all of us, and that is to study the scriptures for ourselves that we may know first hand what the truth is. Thus we shall be guarded, not only against the erroneous teaching of the wicked, but also against such honest mistakes as may be made by well-intentioned teachers,

ALONE

Arthur T. Phillips

"Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."—John 16:32.

No doubt we all, at some time, have felt the emptiness within our hearts from being alone, although many are around or about us. On the other hand, one such as a fisherman at sea though by himself may not be alone. His thoughts may be with dear ones waiting his return, and they thus be with him in spirit.

The old prospector on the desert may not be lonesome. He has his dreams of riches; he may strike his "Bonanza" with the next stroke of his pick. He has his faithful burro to whom he may talk, and they understand each other.

But there comes a time in life when we, as it were, with the crowd about us, are alone. Hands that touch ours send an icy chill to our hearts, when we long for the warm grasp of the hand of someone of kindred spirit. We long for someone to go to with our burdens and receive only a gaze from eyes with only a glazed look that cannot see into the depths of our heart; *then we are alone.*

Words come to us from our lips and we can hear an empty solitude; then we in a small way can feel the void in the heart of Jesus for companionship, and His loneliness for God. In the crowd, we cannot say *someone has touched me*, as did Jesus. Surely the Lord Jesus must have felt very deeply this wonderful faith of one who wanted only to touch the hem of His garment.

The surgeon who feels alone when an operation is to be performed, and who asks God to be with him, and to guide his hands and steady his nerve, has found a great need satisfied.

If we have never been alone we can not understand the empty heart of Jacob (guilty conscience and all) the first night away from his father and mother. God knew His loneliness and sent as a comfort the wonderful dream of the ladder reaching up to heaven. Elijah felt the void of loneliness when he said to God, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away." We see the loneliness of Jesus as a lad of twelve when He asks, "Know ye not I must be about my Father's business?" Seeking, striving, inquiring for that answer which only the guiding hand of God, the true Pilot, could give Him. Oh, the awful loneliness of Jesus at the temptations, in the garden, in the judgment hall of Pilate, on the lonely road to Golgotha, and most of all, on the cross from which is heard the cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Now we are alone if we have not God, but those who have God are never alone. God and I! How it transforms, and fills, and rescues a life to have God. With Him in our lives we have limitless, boundless possibilities. Only He can predict our future, prescribe our duties, and confer our obligations. We all have temptations

and burdens that others can never fathom—no one except God. So alone we must pass through the night and through the desert; alone we are tried; alone we must bear our agony; alone we must be sifted out of the world; alone we walk through the valley, alone we must sit by the poison spring of existence and decide on the cup that we shall drink—alone, if we have not God.

There are trials that are hard: when virtue conflicts with virtue, tearing our souls in twain; when obedience to our heavenly Father conflicts with obedience to our earthly father; when we are faced with losing our life, with leaving son and daughter and brethren—oh, for the faith to do as God says, without regard for what others think or do. May we in the hour of loneliness remember the words of the Lord Jesus, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

GOOD OUT OF ILL

Brady M. Green

Dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ:

You read in the last Word and Work of the tornado that hit us on Oct. 5, doing considerable damage to our property, and some of you sent donations to our need. I think you will be pleased to know the following: 1. How did the brotherhood in general react to our need? 2. How are we doing? 3. How is the church work doing? I will try to answer these questions in order.

This disaster has been turned into a blessing. First we had a little sample of what the mighty power of God is like, for before it the works of man were nought. Second, we are drawn closer to God, seeing ourselves spared as a tiny island in a sea of destruction. When all about us gives way our God is a mighty fortress; He can be trusted to the uttermost. In the third place, the brethren and sisters have given us enough to replace all our losses, and I think some over. I will economize by doing the work myself. The total given to us to date (Nov. 29) is \$702.93. We feel that to our dying day we shall be indebted to the brethren and sisters for their help at this time. The many friends we have gained are among our dearest treasures.

Here is a partial list of those who have contributed to us. First, our West side church here in Ft. Lauderdale; Dan Richardson and the Maxville church, and Jacksonville brethren; James T. Morris, and the Piedmont Ave. church of Greenville, S. C.; R. B. Boyd and the Locust St. church, Johnson City, Tenn.; Willis H. Allen, and Shawnee church, Louisville, Ky.; Ben Rake, and Main St. church, Winchester, Ky.; J. O. Hottel, Pekin, Ind. church; Jack Curry, Randolph Schooling, and the Fisherville, Ky., church; W. T. Micou, Highland church, Ky.; Tona Covey and friends, Portland church, Ky.; Carl Kitzmiller and the South Side church, Abilene, Tex.; Chester Gilbert and 17th St. church, Louisville, Ky.; Richard Ramsey and 7th and Camp Sts. church, New Orleans, La.; J. Edward Boyd and fellowservants of Glenmora, La.; J. L. Addams and Parkland

church, Louisville, Ky.; and J. S. Higginbotham, Crowley, La.

There is a rather large group of individuals who sent donations and I would like to give the name of each one. But some of these saints would object, I feel sure. Their deep humility is such that they do not wish anyone but God to know of their good works. I shall of course respect the wishes of these dear servants of Christ. I will tell you, however, they are scattered over Florida, Tennessee, South Carolina, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Louisiana, Texas, Alabama, and Iowa. I have written each one a warm personal letter of thanks—all but one. This one had no return and no address. I cannot write this saint personally, but I received your gift, and may God bless you; we are thankful.

We were deeply touched by the generosity of some of our returned missionaries. They sent to our need—we ought to be helping them, these saints whose lives are upon the altar of God. Let us not neglect our returned missionaries. One outgoing missionary sent to our needs; let us join in and help our outgoing missionaries. And our student preachers have sent to our need; I fear they sent money they needed themselves. They are a noble group of young people; let us all back up our young preachers and give them all the help and encouragement we can, for upon them soon will fall the responsibility of carrying on. Among these are Brethren Paul Knecht, Stanford Broussard, Bob Morrow, James Means, and Frank Gill.

So that is my answer to the question as to how the brethren reacted to our need.

How are we doing? Well, we have returned to our place; the water has gone down; I patched, I think, 27 holes in the trailer top, replaced the broken glass in the trailer, pasted waterproof cloth over the holes in the sides of the trailer, have the top back over the back porch, which puts the trailer back in the dry, and for the moment we are comfortable—thanks to our heavenly Father, and his faithful servants here. We are trying in spare time to repair the damage.

As to how the church work is coming, we have a nice little Sunday school running ordinarily from thirty to fifty. Today it was thirty-nine; and recently it was fifty. We have around twenty-five to thirty for worship ordinarily. This is a group of working people, none wealthy. We have in a little less than three years bought a church lot and paid for it, and are at present building a rather nice church building, size $32\frac{1}{2}$ feet by 60 feet, and we have one wall up, and the other three about half up. We are getting this work done ourselves by our own hands and by hiring some work done. We have the rare opportunity to be the first to build a church in this West side of Ft. Lauderdale. So far as we can see, there is no reason why this cannot one day be a strong church. Our strength and resources are small, but we shall go as far as we can and trust God for what is beyond our power. Some have expressed amazement at so small a group's attempting to build a church. But the God whom we serve is able, and upon Him we shall rely. Brethren, continue to pray for us that God's will shall be done on this South Florida field.

THOUGHTS WORTH WHILE

D. H. F.

"KILLED" BY LOVE

There is a story of a deacon, who, goaded beyond endurance by the persistent malice of an enemy, vowed he would kill him. It came to the ears of the enemy, who waited to see what the harmless old man would do. Actually the deacon sought every opportunity to do his enemy good. It was first an amusement to the enemy, but when at last the deacon gave costly and sacrificial service to save the man's wife from drowning, the death-lock was broken. Said the enemy, "You've done what you said you would, you've killed me—or at least you've killed the man I was. Now what can I do for you?"—*Young People's Weekly*.

THE VASE

I was at Collamore's the other day, and they showed me a wonderfully beautiful vase, made in the royal pottery in Russia, given by the Czar to his married daughter, and so coming through successive owners into the hands of an American purchaser. It was beautiful in form, in color, and in exquisite decoration, yet it had been made out of simple well-selected clay. And I said as I looked upon it, if an artist can make such a work of beauty out of common clay, what cannot God make out of common mortal, if the mortal will only give God a chance and will allow himself to be made?—*Lyman Abbot*.

THE NAIL IN THE OAK

A large oak tree was cut down, and near the heart of it there was found a small nail surrounded by twenty-nine circles, the growth of as many years. Did that nail injure the oak? Alas! it did; for the sap carried the oxide from the metal with it until the space of three or four feet long and four or five inches in diameter was completely blackened. The hidden nail in the heart of the tree proved injurious to the mighty oak, just the same as the secret sin in our hearts will injure our young manhood and womanhood.—*Intermediate Young People*.

AS FAR AS EAST IS FROM WEST

Dr. Chapman tells of a man who had been a professor of mathematics in a German University, but who became a wreck through strong drink. He came to one of Dr. Chapman's meetings, forlorn and dejected, and took a seat in the rear of the room. He was converted and became a member of the church.

It was Dr. Chapman's custom to meet the men of his church every Sunday morning before going into his pulpit, for a short conference on the things pertaining to the Christian life. "One morning I told them that our sins were taken away from us as far as the east is from the west," he says in relating the story, "and then, seeing this old professor before me, I said, "Professor, that is a mathematical

proposition for you. How far is the east from the west?" He reached for his pencil and notebook, when suddenly he stopped and burst into tears, and facing the crowd of men he said, "Men, you cannot measure it, for if you put your stake here and east be ahead of you, then west will be behind you. You go around the world and come back to your stake, and east will still be ahead of you and west will still be behind you. The distance is immeasurable. And, thank God, that is where my sins have gone!"

DEATH ENDS ALL

I was talking to an atheist one day, and he said, "I do not believe, Dr. Wilson, what you are preaching." I said, "You have told me what you do not believe; perhaps you will tell me what you do believe." He replied, "I believe that death ends all." "So do I," I said. "What! You believe death ends all?" "I certainly do," I answered. "Death ends all your chance of doing evil; death ends all your joy; death ends all your projects, all your ambitions, all your friendships; death ends all the gospel you will ever hear; death ends it all for you, and you will go out into the outer darkness. As for myself, death ends all my wanderings, all my tears, all my perplexities, all my disappointments, all my aches and pains; death ends it all, and I go to be with my Lord in glory." "I never thought of it that way," he said. The outcome was that I led that man to Christ just by agreeing with him that "death ends all."—*Dr. W. L. Wilson.*

LIVING INSIDE OUT

A sweet little six-year-old girl, the other day, looked up suddenly at her mother and said: "Mother, I think that Jesus was the only one who ever dared to live His inside out!" The mother was fairly dazed by the little one's thought. Well she might be. It carried one of the most profound thoughts suggested by lifelong study of that divine character. But here it was out of the mouth of almost a babe. She had heard His story. She had seen that He was so pure in all His soul that there was nothing there that He needed to conceal from anybody. Was not He the only one in all the history of mankind of whom that could be truly said?

AT REST IN HIS PRESENCE

"He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps. 91:1).

The world hastens on. Saved and unsaved are swept into the maelstrom of ceaseless activity, highpitched and unrelaxed.

Yet in the very heart of a cyclone is a place of absolute stillness, and in the heart of every Christian there should be that place of quiet calm at the Savior's feet.

It is true that we have our part to play in the daily routine of life. A multitude of duties face us day by day. These will be met with greater strength and courage, if we take time to meditate upon God's Word and to kneel in prayer at His throne of grace.—*Sel.*

THE NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE N. T. EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

Dennis Allen

ITS ESTABLISHMENT

The church was established by the sending forth of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. The three thousand who received the message of Peter concerning the risen Christ were baptized and the Lord added them to the body of believers. (Acts 2:41, 47.) The educational system of the church was successfully launched. From the human point of view it was an insignificant beginning. It was without financial, political, social or recognized educational backing. But behind it was the power of God. A definite progression had been made in God's educational program. Not only was their message from God, but the Holy Spirit now dwelt within them to apply that message and to be their ever-present Teacher. (John 14:17; 1 John 2:27.) Only on this basis can its marvelous influence and expansion be explained.

When the church set out on its mission on the day of Pentecost the field that lay before it was the Roman empire. As the black brings out the whiteness of the white, so an understanding of the civilization into which the church was born brings out more vividly the marvel of its influence and expansion. Gwatkin sums up the condition of the Roman world in these words:

It was a brilliant world, in the full splendor of the Augustan age of literature and civilization. . . . Never had so many subtle brains and skilful fingers ministered to luxury and elegance. Above all, peace and order were guarded by the strong hand of Cæsar and his seven-and-twenty legions. . . . Yet it was a cankered world withal. Its elegance was largely the vulgar ostentation of a pampered and frivolous class, its splendor a glittering pageant which scarcely hid the abyss of social misery caused by slavery, and even its peace was paid for by taxation which gradually ruined its industrial prosperity. Above all, the ideals of the ancient world had perished with its freedom. The old civic virtues were becoming extinct, the old religions were dissolving, and there was nothing that could take their place. The Empire itself on one side, philosophy and superstition on the other, were only makeshifts that could do no more than stave off the catastrophe. Custom was weakened; force and selfishness remained. Family life was poisoned at its source, and even population dwindled. In a word, Society was no organic whole, but a bundle of interests held together by mere human feeling, by the industry of certain classes, and by the laws and arms of Rome. **Early Church History to A. D. 313**, Vol. 1, pp. 51-54).

Coming from a subject people of the Empire, Christianity swept over the world in one generation. An examination of the book of Acts reveals the rapidity with which it spread. Beginning with the addition of three thousand on the day of Pentecost, it was not long until the men of the church alone numbered five thousand. Like a refrain through the book of Acts run the reports of the increase in the believers:

. . . and believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women. . . . And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly. . . . So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace, being edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, was multiplied. . . . So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and increased in number daily. (Acts 5:14; 6:7; 9:31; 16:5.)

ITS NATURE

An understanding of the true nature of the church is essential to a proper conception of its educational system. A misconception at this point has caused many to go far afield in developing educational systems.

The word "church" is our translation of the Greek word, *ekklesia*, which means simply a "called out" group of people. The church of the New Testament was composed of those who were called out from the world "into the kingdom of the Son of his love," yet it was also given an added significance, for the church of Christ was a Divine institution composed of "saints" separated from the pagan world and rendered holy by a momentous change that had taken place within them.

This called out people are represented under the figure of a body with Christ as the Head. (Col. 1:18.) Thus, vitally joined to Christ, the church shares in His life and Spirit. The body is dependent upon the head for its power and direction. The body, in turn, is Christ's instrumentality for doing His work in the world. Through it alone can He accomplish His educational objectives. Since the church is a functioning body, it must have within itself all of the "offices and energies" necessary to carry out its purposes. The church is not dependent upon any secular power for protection or support. Neither can the church expect to be loved and respected by a world that hated her Master. In fact, she is to share His reproach and sufferings (Heb. 13:13, 14). Many Christians, not recognizing this fact, have tried to establish educational institutions to carry on the work of the church that would command the recognition and applause of the world. This cannot but result in dishonor to the church and hinder the true cause of Christ.

The church was also represented as the family of God. The vocabulary and customs of home life were carried over into the church. The church is called the "household of faith," the Christians called one another "brethren," and in their assemblies gathered around a common table—a striking symbol of their unity. They were mutually responsible for the well-being of one another and for the group as a whole, and were all dependent upon, and in subjection to, the Father. It was a school of the highest order in which all were learning to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. Christ was the center of the system; without Him it would have been nothing.

ITS PURPOSE

The purpose of the church was in perfect harmony with its nature and bore a direct relation to its educational program.

1. The ultimate purpose of the church is to glorify God. This fact is clearly brought out by many passages. (Rom. 15:6, 9; Eph. 1:5, 6; 3:21; 1 Pet. 4:11.)

2. With respect to the world the primary purpose of the church is to preach the Gospel to every creature. Christ has committed to His church the responsibility for carrying out the whole missionary program. Though the commission was first given to the apostles, it is applicable also to all other Christians. (2 Tim. 2:2.) The church is God's missionary society.

3. The church is to educate and edify herself. (Rom. 14:19; 1 Cor. 14:12, 26; Eph. 4:11-16.) Each babe in Christ was to be nurtured that he might grow up unto a fullgrown man in Christ. This responsibility of the church to provide for the edification of all her members was a basic function and essential to the proper fulfillment of the other purposes.

4. The church is to purify herself. This was the responsibility of the individual believer and of the local church as a body. (1 Cor. 11:28-31; 2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Cor. 5:6-8, 13; Rom. 16:17.) Discipline was to be exercised for immorality and other disorderly conduct, for causing divisions and for false doctrine.

5. The church is to have a general uplifting and restraining influence in the world. This effect is to be produced by the godly lives of Christians and by their aggressive preaching and teaching ministry (Phil. 2:15, 16). They are to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world."

6. The church is to do good to all men (Gal. 6:10). The Christian is to follow the steps of the Master who "went about doing good," but like Him he is to keep uppermost the principal mission—"holding forth the word of life." Good works are to be done in such a manner that those beholding will glorify the Father (Matt. 5:16).

Each one of these purposes is fundamentally educational or has an educational aspect. The first cannot be accomplished without education. The second and the third are inherently educational. The third emphasizes an essential aspect of the educational program, i. e. the church living out in the school of life that which she has learned. Without education the purpose of the church cannot be accomplished.

We have thus seen that the church is in its very nature and purpose an educational institution. In this school which God has ordained men are to be trained, disciplined and educated to their high responsibility as sons of God.

(In future studies we wish to analyze more closely this unique system of education which Christ ordained through his apostles. Though we may find it different from other systems devised by man, we may also discover that in those very differences lie some of its most distinct advantages.)

Prompt renewals save us time and expense and are best for you.

"FAITH OF OUR FATHERS"

E. L. J.

For this month, and while the editor of this department is laboring to lay out the larger outline of the new year's "precious reprints," we offer an original article by the able editor of *Word and Work*. From the beginning of his preaching and his editorial work, Brother Boll has labored earnestly and consistently for free, unsectarian Christianity as opposed to denominationalism, and as opposed to the incipient sectarianism that springs up unawares, even from within. He has stood for the simple New Testament church—no man's party and no man's sect (least of all, for one of his own!); for the church of God, which is the house of God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Far more deeply and earnestly than many who boast of the only simon-pure variety of religious leaders, the author of the following warning has faithfully stood for the "Church of Christ" in the true New Testament sense, and in the sense sought and inculcated by the "Restoration fathers." His tract, "Why Not Be Just A Christian?" has been universally adjudged the very best for circulation on this line, and it has been read with high approval by many thousands, if not by millions. We are glad indeed to have the following contribution for this department from this discerning student and gifted writer.—J.

A SECTARIAN FELLOWSHIP

R. H. B.

In a report to a certain church-journal a brother preacher enumerates several congregations of the "Church of Christ" in his city which (according to his mind and his view of the church, as he represents it in this report) are guaranteed as sound and loyal. But he adds sadly that there are also some "other congregations whose leaders love the premillennial teaching more than they love the fellowship of other brethren." So, in other words, the requirement for fellowship with him and those sound congregations is that those "other congregations," or their leaders, give up their love of the "premillennial teaching."

By what authority do those churches impose such a condition of fellowship on those "other brethren" and those other congregations? It is a strange case of blindness, surely, that keeps them from seeing that they have set up a human authoritative creed to which all must subscribe who would want to have fellowship with them. This is, of course, the old sectarian principle against which the Church of Christ has battled so earnestly in times past. And while claiming to stand for the true church of Christ these brethren have fallen into the evil way of sectarian creedism, and in effect, whatever their claims may be, have joined the ranks of denominationalism. It might be suggested that in taking the confession of a candidate for baptism they put the question thus: "Do you believe with

all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that the pre-millennial teaching is wrong?" Why not? If they have already put "the creed in the deed," and have made it a condition of fellowship—then it would only be fair and honest to put it into the original confession also, so that their converts may know from the first where they stand and what is required of them by their ecclesiastical superiors.

A "TRUE" CREED

Of course those brethren are convinced and persuaded that their anti-millennial creed is in accord with the Bible. All creed-makers think that of their creeds, and they all feel that those who are not willing to subscribe to their "true" creed are not "sound" and are unworthy of their fellowship. But a simple Christian who knows what it is to stand on the ground of simple, nonsectarian, New Testament Christianity would not want to belong to such creed-bound bodies, even though they agreed with them in those doctrinal positions. For a Christian who knows his freedom in the Lord could hardly afford to work and worship under such human domination and limitation. The barrier of fellowship in this case is not so much a matter of doctrine, as of *principle*, deep and far-reaching—a principle that separates between the church of the Lord and the sectarian organizations of Christendom.

"PREMILLENNIAL" CHURCHES

It may be that the brother preacher who deplors those congregations and their leaders—who "love premillennial teaching more than fellowship with their brethren," who are not willing to purchase fellowship at the price of giving up their "premillennial" convictions in favor of the "anti-premillennial" creed which those brethren have set up—it may be that he thinks that those congregations disfellowshipped by him are "premillennial churches." If so I would like to correct the misunderstanding. Those churches are not "premillennial" churches in the sense in which the church he preaches for is "anti-premillennial." They are composed of free Christians. None of them are ever asked how they stand on this or that point of prophetic teaching. The children of God are personally responsible to God, and no man may have lordship over their faith. (2 Cor. 1:24.) They have a right to examine the scripture for themselves, they think, and accept any of it and all of it, and that quite regardless of any man's permitting or forbidding. They have set up no creed as a condition of fellowship, as their sectarian-minded, anti-premillennial brethren have done. They are free to search the scriptures and to prove all things and hold fast that which is good. So long as they acknowledge that authority, no other is to be imposed upon them. Their "leaders" would really be unable to say how many of their congregation were or were not "pre-millennial." All of them are willing to accept all the statements of God's word as they are able to discern, and as more and more by prayerful study they may be able to apprehend them; for the motto of simple Christians is always, "We are not right—the Bible is right." Those who

would prevent their brethren in the exercise of such right and freedom are the real sectaries, and upon them the charge of faction and division must rest.

WAS JESUS A PREMILLENNIALIST?

Some while ago someone raised the question, "Was Jesus Christ a Premillennialist?" Certainly He was not. He was not a Premillennialist, nor an Anti-premillennialist, nor a Postmillennialist. He was not any kind of "ist." He simply spoke for God, and all that God gave him to say on any and every subject. Though some of His teaching was definitely what, in the minds of some today, would mark Him as "premillennial," He was not a Premillennialist. Thus, in like manner, He taught the distinctive doctrine of the Pharisees (Acts 23:8), but that did not make Him a Pharisee. The simple Christian also is ever willing to believe and teach the word of God—any part of it, all of it, as it stands. But that does not make him a "premillennialist," or any other sort of "ist" or "ite"—however men may seek to classify him. He is committed not to any foregone theory or system, but simply to the "whole counsel of God."

Please read next the last cover page of this month's magazine.—J.

TRUE CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Allen C. Harrington

A well known fact is that man always conforms himself morally to what he fears. If he fears the frowns of the world, he must watch very carefully, or he will find himself conforming to it in some way or another. If he fears certain groups in the Church—fears their wrath, or fears lest he should lose caste with them, he will most certainly, unless he prays constantly to God, conform to their ways and doctrines whether right or wrong. This is an awful thought!

On the other hand, what sets a man free from subserviency to the world, and from groups, perhaps powerful, in the Church? It is this one great principle which, as another has suggested, is the aim of a New Testament Church—the aim to establish Christianity on a basis which cannot be shaken. This principle, namely, that in the last resort the soul of man can abandon everything but the word and promise of God. This is true liberty! Invincible freedom! In this freedom the three Hebrew friends stood before the most powerful monarch in the world and said, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us . . . and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Dan. 3.) Noble words, so strong and calm! and yet with no trace of arrogance or disrespect. They knew that they could give up everything, if necessary, for they had the word and promise of God, and that made them free.