

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIII, March, 1949)

Our Elder Brother

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye.
Partaker of our human name,
He knows the frailties of our frame.

In every pang that rends the heart
The Man of Sorrows has a part,
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

—Selected.

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

A FAULTY CHURCH

"To the church of God which is at Corinth!" Rarely did the term "church of God" cover such a multitude of faults and gross deficiencies as in this case and in this place. Factions had arisen among them and they had split up into incipient sects, distinguishing themselves one from another by means of human names adapted from the names of their leaders after the fashion of the philosophic schools. There was among them envying and strife. (1 Cor. 3:1-3.) They also tolerated and perhaps even approved of a case of flagrant incest. (Chapter 5.) They had gone to law brother with brother before unbelievers; had eaten things sacrificed to idols; conducted themselves unbecomingly at the Lord's Supper; and some even denied one of the cardinal doctrines of the gospel—the resurrection. Nevertheless, the inspired apostle does not refuse them the name and the rank of the "church of God." It is not to be understood by this that God indulges the church in wrongdoings for which He holds sinners to account. Far from it. He takes special account of the sins of His people (Amos 3:2) and scourges every son whom He receives. And little good will it do some of these to have been members of the church of God which was at Corinth, if they persisted in an evil course. Let us not overlook that, or even imagine that we shall ever be permitted to play with evil or to trifle with God on the grounds of belonging to His church. But, after all this is shown, there remains the fact that this very faulty set of people is still divinely regarded and acknowledged as the church of God. It is a significant point, and should affect our estimates and judgments of Christians and congregations. We are apt to be hasty in concluding that this man or that is no Christian, or that such and such a church is so full of abuses and failures that God has utterly abandoned it and it is no more His church. There

are such cases, no doubt, but we are hardly in position to distinguish them. It behooves us to be cautious, to be kind and helpful rather than radical in our verdict, patient and forbearing rather than to cast off and ignore.

THE HOPE OF GOD'S IMPERFECT PEOPLE

Moreover, the church of God, just because it was the church of God, had a hope and prospect before it. However they may have missed the mark, it was something to have heard the gospel and to have accepted it. After his experiences at Corinth (Acts 18:1-11), Paul could not forbear thinking that this *ekklesia* he had gathered out of the world by God's providence and will were a people upon whom God's eyes rested in a peculiar way—a people manifestly called and chosen of Him; and "the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." The enemy may have sown tares among them; and even the good seed, in the case of some, may have fallen upon rocky or thorny ground. Nevertheless, it was God's field, and there will be a harvest to Him from it. The Lord knoweth them that are His and they shall be his in the day when he makes up His jewels, however much cleaning and grinding they may need before then. So Paul wrote with good confidence to "the church of God which is at Corinth," that the Lord Jesus Christ" shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye be unreprouvable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. *God is faithful*, through whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord." (1 Cor. 1:8, 9.) And so his hope concerning them rested on God's faithfulness and the call they had received, rather than on their present condition. Let us look at God's people from the same high point of view.

THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR

When Paul was under strain of discouragements and persecutions in the city of Corinth, the Lord said to him in a vision: "Be not afraid, but speak and hold not thy peace: . . . for I have much people in this city." Paul remained there a year and six months to gather in those men and women whom the Lord, by way of anticipation, called his people before they had ever heard the gospel. But where did Paul find them? Among the great? Among the philosophers? Among the rich? Among the nobility? Was it among the "better class" of people in the circle of the "substantial, cultured, educated citizenship of Corinth? That is where we might have looked for them. As a matter of fact, they came from the lower strata of the population. "Behold your calling, brethren," Paul wrote to them years afterwards, "that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame the things that are strong; and the base things of the world, and the things that are despised, did God choose, yea and the things that are not, that he might bring to naught the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God." (1 Cor. 1:26-29.) It was with such material that God preferred to work; for reasons,

too, which were not as inscrutable as some that mark God's ways; partly to show that His work did not require the patronage of wealth and power, and chiefly because among the poor and lowly are found the greater percentage of the poor in spirit, the humble, dependent hearts whom God specially favors. There is the richest field for the soul seeker to this day. Our efforts should be directed mainly to the reaching of the poor—the humble classes of humanity. Too many preachers are assiduously toiling where there is nothing but desert sand to sow in, and nothing but sagebrush and thistles to reap, in their vain endeavor to reach "nice people." But Christ Jesus was the hero of the lowly. And when the people of God preach the gospel to the poor, they will again be following in the steps of their Lord, and success will follow them.

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RELATIONSHIP

This term, "relationship," covers a subject of all-encompassing importance. What our eternity is to be depends altogether on the relationship in which we stand toward God: what we are to God and what He correspondingly is to us; the attitude we assume toward Him and the corresponding attitude He assumes toward us. If He is our Lawgiver, then we are His subjects, responsible under law to Him. This inevitably results in the relationship of sinners toward a holy Judge, of evil doers and lawbreakers toward One who is bound by honor and truth to be the Avenger of all sin. This is the relationship toward God in which most men stand—a relationship fearful to contemplate and more fearful to face. "It as a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." There is, however, another relation toward God into which we may enter. There are some who are not under law, but under grace; whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered, and to whom the Lord will by no means impute sin. This is the new relationship which is possible only in Christ Jesus. In that case God becomes our Father, we his children, "foreordained unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ," to whom are all promises and privileges and blessings forever. It surely is worth a man's while in this little day of his to cross over the line and to enter the new relationship in Jesus Christ, in which, by the Spirit, we say, Abba, Father.

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"THE REST"

The distinction God makes between His own redeemed ones (2 Tim. 2:19) and the "rest," the sharpness of the line of demarcation (Matt. 12:30), and the contrast between those on this and yonder side of the line presents an awful and terrible consideration. That line is the watershed between life and death, between light and darkness, salvation and wrath. On the one side it is "you"; on the other side those "that are without," "the rest," who are not included in the number of Christ's people. And what about this "rest"? Paul says we (Christians) were once "by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." (Eph. 2:3.) They are children of wrath. In 1 Thess. 4:13 he states that they "have no hope"—this in reference

to the death of their loved ones. The Christians must not sorrow like the rest who have no hope. There is hope beyond for them and for theirs, though they die. But for "the rest" it is a real and eternal loss. They have not, cannot have, such a hope. For with God "hope" is a real thing, not a sweet dream of better things, or a poetic sentiment—of which the world is full; but a firm expectation based upon facts and trustworthy testimony. Another thing we learn of this "rest" of humanity, which includes the many who travel the broad road, is that they go on careless in their way, eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting, building, marrying, giving in marriage; heedless of God's warning, blind, sleeping. At the very hour when God's long-restrained wrath breaks in upon the world, they are complacent and secure. "When they are saying, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape." (1 Thess. 5:3.) They are optimistic, these world children. They abominate the prophet of evil; they will have none of his foreboding raven croaks. They do not want to be perpetually warned. They did not want it in the days of Noah and Lot, and just as little in this age of progress, prosperity, and peace prospects. Yet, as one has somewhere said, "no fire was ever put out by silencing the alarm bell." And to us God says: "But ye . . . are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief; . . . so then let us not sleep, as do *the rest*." (Verses 4-6.) God grant that none of us be found among that "rest," the unsaved!

WHERE IS HAPPINESS?

Not in Unbelief—

Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type. He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in Pleasure—

Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure, if anyone did. He wrote: "The worm, the canker, and the grief are mine alone."

Not in Money—

Jay Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth."

Not in Position and Fame—

Lord Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake; manhood, a struggle; old age, a regret."

Not in Military Glory—

Alexander the Great conquered the known world in his day. Having done so, he wept in his tent, because, he said, "There are no more worlds to conquer."

Where, then Is Happiness Found?

The answer is simple: In Christ alone. He said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

NEWS AND NOTES

R. B. Boyd Observes Ninth Anniversary at Locust Street

Johnson City, Tenn.: "Our annual Youth Revival at the Locust St. church is scheduled to begin March 6, closing March 13. Brother B. D. Rake is to be the evangelist. Brother Rake was with us two years ago for our youth meeting, and we are looking forward to this return engagement, and praying that our efforts together may be abundantly blessed of God.

"The opening date of our youth services (the first Sunday in Mar.) also marks the completion of our ninth year with the Locust Street church. As we look back over the past, we feel humbly grateful to God for His goodness toward us.

"God has blessed us with 2 or 3 responses to the invitation since last report.

"Your prayers in our behalf are appreciated. We hope soon to complete the church building in the Carter-Sell addition. (We now meet in the basement.) We are also praying to be able to take full advantage of two or three open doors in this area. We desire earnestly to see other congregations established."—Robert B. Boyd.

East Jefferson Street Church

Louisville, Ky.: "During the year 1948 the Lord wonderfully blessed the work at East Jefferson. We had 41 responses, 26 of these for baptism and 15 for membership. Our attendance for communion services averaged 145 each Lord's Day.

"We rejoice in that we were able to have some part in the work of the Lord beyond our own field. During the year we gave to missionary work, \$231.00; to the Children's Home, Sellersburg, Indiana, \$170.00; to Portland Christian School, \$120.00; to charity, \$82.72. These gifts were from our church treasury and did not include individual contributions. During this time the church supported a full-time minister and discharged other local obligations.

"We also ordained elders in the church, namely, A. E. Higgs, and J. A. Sweeney. Our deacons are Edward Swartz, Jasper Abrams, Ephraim Davis, and Chester Beck-

ham. The sisters of the church meet on the first Tuesdays of each month to sew for orphans and missionaries. We thank God for our beloved Brother Claude Reader and for his labor of love. On July 4 of this year he will complete his twelfth year as minister at this place. Please join us in praying that by God's grace the work here may continue to grow and abound."—Cleodus B. Helton.

Greenville, S. C.: "For the month of January we are happy to report that the Lord added two precious souls to the Piedmont Avenue Church, one by baptism and the other through restoration. Praise the Lord for this. In our last business meeting we made plans for a gospel tent meeting in the earliest season of good weather. Pray for us; we are few in number, but wholeheartedly for the Master's work."—Henry Harding.

Southern Song Circuit

"Dear Brethren: I am still out on this six-week Song Itinerary through the South and Southwest: 25 sessions, in 13 churches, 11 cities from Atlanta on the East to El Paso on the West. I should reach home by March 1.

"It was necessary to separate this Southern Circuit from the Western Tour again this year. The Western Tour will begin June 15, God willing, and will include several points in far-away Western Canada.

"I am grateful to report that attendance at the rallies has been very fine so far, and that I have not been hindered by so much as a trace of cold and hoarseness. About half the churches visited on this circuit were new to me, precious brethren, never known in the flesh before.

"It may be in order to explain that these song tours (now twice-annual and in their 19th year) are never undertaken either to advertise our hymnal or to replenish our pocketbooks. In fact, we seldom go except where 'Great Songs' has already gone; and financially we often come short of travel expenses. This time, however, almost every church made some voluntary gift—usually 10, 15, or 20 dollars per session—resulting in a

slight excess of receipts over expenses. In four cases the contributions were too much and the excess was returned. Thus we turn homeward after six weeks a little poorer in pocketbook, perhaps, but richer in our contacts with some thousands of the choicest Christians, and in the lasting love and personal friendship of some hundreds of them. I cannot, I must not, take space to speak of individual people or churches—to me they were all simply wonderful.

"The gospel invitation was not formally extended in the song rallies; yet, in two churches, the appealing power of song brought 'visible results'—men in tears coming forward to confess their sins and to be restored. We thank God for His great mercy and marvelous grace to usward."—E. L. Jorgenson.

Camp Taylor, Ky.: "Ten have been added to the membership of the Camp Taylor church since the first of the year, nine of them in the last two weeks. Two of these were by primary obedience, and the others for membership. Also an eleventh came for restoration. Our Bible school and church attendance has made unexpected gains this year. Last Sunday we had 180 in our Bible school, which is considerably in advance of our 102 average for last year. Also there seem to be great possibilities in our field. We are conscious that spiritual growth must keep apace with outward growth if the church would be strong. To grow spiritually a church must give themselves much to prayer and feed constantly upon the Word of God with a desire to know and practice the will of God."—J. R. Clark.

Lexington, Ky.: "We have undertaken a new project in group teaching here in Lexington. Four of our sisters gather about 100 children into homes and into the Melrose church every week and teach them lessons from the Bible. This week-day project is already bearing fruit.

"Our attendance at all services is good. We are planning a meeting in May with Brother Orell D. Overman as evangelist."—H. N. Rutherford.

Abilene, Texas: "The Lord has blessed us here at South Side with

more growth in numbers at the regular services. We pray that the spiritual growth is just as much to be seen as the other. The Sunday school attendance on February 13 reached 90, and our morning worship service had around 140."—Carl Kitzmiller.

Alexandria, La.: "The church of Christ, MacArthur Drive and Peach Street, is making progress in their building program. We began with \$2300 in the treasury, and have paid cash for everything. We now have the roof on, floor laid, windows and doors in, and the asbestos siding on, with the inside to finish and seats to build yet. For this we shall have to raise funds. The congregation has responded well to this work both in giving and working."—W. J. Johnson.

Jennings, La.: "The evening of January 28th will long be remembered by all those who attended the song rally at the Jennings church of Christ, which was conducted by Brother E. L. Jorgenson of Louisville, Ky. The allotted hour and a half was not enough time to satisfy the congregation and the singing went on into extra minutes. Many who were not able to attend expressed disappointment in missing the great blessing. But Brother Jorgenson has agreed to make this an annual affair."—Ivy J. Istre.

H. N. Rutherford of Lexington, Kentucky, is to be with the brethren at Shawnee church of Christ, 41st and Michigan Drive, in a meeting beginning April 17. Willis H. Allen is minister of this growing congregation.

Youth Revival

The Youth Revival planned by the Louisville Churches is to be conducted from May 22-29, with John H. Adams of Jacksonville, Florida, as evangelist. The Ormsby Avenue church, 622 E. Ormsby has been selected as the place for this special youth drive. This is a city-wide effort, in which all interested churches are to participate.

Hall C. Crowder has been speaking over WGRC, Louisville, each Sunday morning at 7:45. He has been bringing some very fine messages. Friends within hearing distance would do well to get into the good habit of tuning in on this pro-

gram each Sunday. It will give you a good start for the day.

Winter Bible Classes

Brother Boll's winter Bible classes will soon come to a close. The Highland Library class has yielded some fine lessons on Types from the Old Testament. On Friday night at Portland Great Doctrines of the Bible have been discussed to the edification of all present. In the 3:15 class on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday of each week the Books of Mark, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians have served as subject matter. Those in Louisville, who have not availed themselves of these opportunities, can yet enjoy a few classes. Brother Boll is balanced in his teaching, as well as deeply spiritual.

General Preachers' Meeting

The general preachers' meeting for 1949 is being planned for from September 5-9, and is to be held at the Portland Avenue church of Christ in Louisville. It seems necessary to settle on this date rather than a week earlier, as was first in mind. Visiting preachers and families will be entertained in Christian homes. We hope that the new Portland School building will be completed by that time and that the cafeteria will be ready for use. Those who plan to come would do well to contact N. Wilson Burks, 3206 Taylor Boulevard, Louisville, Ky. All preachers are urged now

to keep the September 5-9 date open for this rare event.

Work to be Done

What are we doing with around a thousand name-plates yet unrenewed for the Word and Work? Perhaps our clubbers have let some get through their nets in their canvass for names. There is work to be done. We have sent each one of these expired persons a special invitation to renew. We hope many of them respond on their own. Others may need a word of encouragement from a clubber. Let's keep them coming in. We have had fine responses thus far, for which we are thankful.

Frankfort, Ky.: "The work at Antioch is taking on renewed interest and the attendance is increasing, being much better this winter than in previous years. The Lord's blessings attended us during 1948. Six were added to our number by baptism and seven by membership. We still maintain a 15-minute weekly program on our local radio station. Our giving for missions more than doubled the preceding year. We are now helping Brother and Sister Colis Campbell regularly besides doing some for local missions and the Children's Home at Sellersburg, Ind. Brother Frank Mullins of Dallas, Texas, is to be with us for two weeks in August for a revival." —Asa Baber.

WILLIAM ALEXANDER McEWAN

On Friday, January 28, Brother Alexander McEwan fell asleep in Jesus after a long, useful and faithful life in the service of the Lord. At the time of his death he was a member of the Main Street church of Christ of Winchester, Kentucky, but for the past eight years had lived at Rosslyn, Kentucky, where he worked in the churches of Powell County as song leader.

Brother McEwan led singing in many congregations and for many special occasions. I can testify that he was very efficient in this capacity. He used his great talent to the glory of God. He was more help to me in singing than any other person; also he was a great help to me both financially and spiritually in this mountain work. He continues to live in my heart from day to day. I always received a warm welcome in Brother and Sister McEwan's home, where I visited many times, and never got away without being asked to pray, regardless of how busy or sick he may have been. I believe he had as great faith as any one I ever knew.

Brother McEwan passed away in a Winchester, Kentucky, hospital at the age of 78 years, and has gone on to be with his Savior, where he awaits the coming of his loved ones. May God bless and comfort Sister McEwan and children in their loss. "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

—Albert Martin.

MAKE DISCIPLES AND TEACH THEM

Stanford Chambers

The Great Commission is a solemn charge, given by the risen Savior in all seriousness. It should be regarded in all seriousness, not forgetting the "all authority" behind it. Though there is great disregard of the same, it is not a thing to be disregarded. Let no man boast of his faith or of his fulness of the Spirit and of his joy in grace who is careless regarding this last charge of the Lord Jesus before His return to the Father.

"Go make disciples of all the nations." This is part 1 of the commission. This sends His disciples forth on a mission — which makes them missionaries — on behalf of the world. They were to make disciples, not of the messenger, not "of Paul," nor "of Cephas," nor of any division of Christendom, but disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Herein is a test as to loyalties. And those being made disciples are to be baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The messenger is responsible to the Lord and to those becoming disciples to see to it that they are baptized. Herein is loyalty tested too. Many teachers even countermand this instruction of Jesus!

But the Commission is in two parts. We refer to Matthew's record of it. (28:19, 20.) Too many overlook part 2: "teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." The Lord's messenger is to observe part 2 as well as part 1. The unconcern of men at this point does not diminish the concern of Christ. The baptized are to observe, not just anything (else they would not need teaching), not just anything seemingly good to them or to the messenger, but things "commanded" of the Lord. They are to observe, not just what seems convenient and reasonable, but "all things whatsoever I have commanded you," not the commandments of men, but what He has commanded. Is He putting you under law? Why not leave that to Him? It is not your first concern.

Why is there such general noncompliance with our Lord's instructions? Ignorance accounts for somewhat; the pull of the flesh to the contrary accounts for somewhat; prevailing sentiment and custom, that is to say tradition, is largely responsible. And so today as in His day, "Full well ye reject the commandment of God that ye may keep your own traditions," a course that seems to men much better and wiser. Some know better what the Lord means than they know what He says!

A street preacher on his itinerary from city to city came our way, whom we found rejoicing greatly in the responses among his audiences of people who raised their hands on one proposition or another he made to them. In a conference I asked this preacher if he was working under the Great Commission. He answered in the affirmative. "Of the many converts you say you have made how many have been baptized?" I asked. He did not bother about that. He left them in the hands of the Lord, with confidence that the Good Shep-

herd would take care of His sheep. "But is that what the Great Commission says?" I replied. He was not highly appreciative of my questioning, but I must needs go further: "And what about the second part of the Commission?" He did not know of any second part. We got our Book. He admitted that he had not given that matter any consideration, and promised that he would do so.

A somewhat similar course was pursued by a man going from city to city preaching in jails. (We are not discounting preaching in jails or on streets either; there should be more in such places.) He led some to a profession of faith and went away. Once I knew of his writing back to a resident minister, requesting that he go to the jail and contact certain prisoner converts. Another able preacher was too "fundamental" to suit his denomination and in time found his work so counteracted and neutralized that, using his own words, he "decided to hit the road." He was "on the road" when we met him. He was finding satisfaction in knowing that he often brought people to a decision for Christ. Did he teach them "to observe all things whatsoever" Christ had "commanded"? No, he left that to the local preachers. "Can you depend on their teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded?" He had but little confidence in many of them. "But one thing Christ commanded was 'Tend my sheep'; 'Feed my lambs.' Can we evade these Christ-enjoined duties? Can we escape the responsibilities involved?" He had not given it any serious thought.

In the midst of the confusion of the present situation how can the messenger of Christ meet his responsibility? How can the sheep be cared for, provided for? Jesus must have foreseen such a situation and so made provision for His assembly in the very simplest form. "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst." In this way is that important matter of fellowship provided for, concerted activities and worship, as well as mutual edification. They can observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded. If not, why not? If therefore modernism or tradition has such control in an assembly that God's sheep are endangered this simple arrangement of the Lord Jesus is the solution. The true messenger can meet his responsibility to those becoming disciples. He can, and—will he?

Now, come-outers are not very popular; stay-outers hardly more so. They can be dubbed "sectarian" just for that. Traditionalists and partyists lead in the dubbing, while they are often found apologists for rank modernism. And in some circles the worst theological crime is to contend for the observing of "all things whatsoever" commanded by Christ. With many it is incompatible with free grace to insist on such things as duty; or that Christians are enjoined; for those under grace commandments are out of order. And as for prohibitions, they would interfere with "liberty in Christ." "We serve not from fear, but from love." And so what? We can do as we please? If you want to be "of Paul," is your "liberty in Christ" such? And if I want to be "of Cephas," is that my "liberty in Christ"? Paul to the Corinthians says some pretty plain and blunt things

(Paul the great exponent of grace) all the way through, and in 1 Cor. 14:37 he says, "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things that I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord." Does that seem old-fashioned, antiquated? Jesus said, "If ye love me keep my commandments." This is also old fashioned for some. What is this thing in men's hearts that makes the Word of the Lord, or any portion thereof, an antiquated document? What prompts this religious ideology which, when the Bible says one thing, makes it mean something else—anything else, almost, but what it does say? People can, some surely do, convert grace and truth which "came by Jesus Christ" into legalism and thereby miss the blessing of grace, a thing in meekness to correct, but it is no necessary inference that when Christians are scrupulous as to duty and about their obedience to the Lord's commandments that they are therefore legalists and Pharisaical. "Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth" (Rom. 14:12). "And he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

THE CHRISTIAN CAPITALIST

"While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?" (Acts 5:4.)

Many people who point to the early Jerusalem church as a Bible example for Communism fail to note that the Jerusalem church operated on a voluntary basis. Some sold their property and gave to the church while some held on to their property. In addressing Ananias Peter expressly declared that what Ananias did with his property was his own business, and that there was no coercion. The Bible strongly validates the principle of individual ownership of property and of private management of wealth.

Nevertheless the Bible also firmly stresses a Christian's obligation to obey his government. Whenever our government lays upon us price controls, income taxes, various property restrictions, the Christian is bound in good conscience to obey these laws. And this despite the fact that there are many greedy, grafting individuals, too lazy to work for themselves and eager to plant themselves in another's way—people who will turn every loophole of the law to their advantage. Remember that the same Lord will deal with both parties; keep yourselves right before God.

All of which is another of the signs of the times. The day will come when "no man should be able to buy or to sell, save he that hath the mark of the beast" (Rev. 13:17). When that times comes, all loyal servants of God will refuse to worship the beast, though it means their martyrdom.

Praise God for the freedom and privileges we enjoy in this The United States of America. Preach and practice 1 Timothy 2:1, 2.

—Richard Ramsey,

"Some of these days." Why not send that renewal now?

THE APPEAL OF EVOLUTION

R. H. B.

In what lies the peculiar appeal of the doctrine of Evolution? It is really not only an unproved, but even a disproved theory; yet the world of intellect, science and education lies largely in its fascinating grasp. Darwin himself ("Life and Letters") expresses his amazement at the sudden and widespread vogue of his theory. "I was a young man with unformed ideas. I threw out theories and suggestions, wondering at all times over everything, and to my astonishment the ideas took like wildfire; men made a religion of them." A recent writer commenting on this says: "This candid statement suggests that men *liked* the theory, whether it could be proved or not." Yes they did, and do still. *Why* do they like it?

If the Doctrine of Evolution were merely a scientific theory; if it were only a question of the method by which this world was created, one would not need be troubled. The theory of Evolution is far more. At first sight it appears to be an abstract question, such as might engage the interest of the schools only; an unpractical and unimportant speculation—a question whether things began in this way or in that. What does it matter? The scholars and scientists say it was thus and so. It doesn't matter to me. Let them have it as they will. One would presume that no doubt they know. But once accepted, that little item carries us on to far-reaching consequences. It enters into everything. It cannot be kept out of the realm of spiritual things. It affects radically the conceptions of God and Man and Sin and Salvation and the Bible and Christ and Destiny. There are some who think they can hold Evolution and stand by the Bible teaching on these themes. But do they who say so know what the Bible teaches or what is the ultimate meaning of Evolution?

If the devil can implant a false premise in a heart, he can afford to wait for the conclusion, whether it comes in ten years or fifty; or in a hundred. He knows it is inevitable. The evil seed will spring and bear fruit in its season. Just one single, simple, plausible suggestion as to the origin of things, innocent of appearance, vouched for by learned and brilliant people—only a question of interpreting the Creation-story in the light of modern science; how can it matter? But it turns out that it matters vastly. "Evolution" is in its essence what Darwin said the people made of it—a *Religion*. And a religion utterly different and antagonistic to that of the Bible and to the faith which is in Christ. In that fact lies its subconscious appeal to poor human nature, and its fascination and power.

I. AS TO GOD

To sinful man the thought of *God* is a burden. Since Adam's day sinful man has been trying to hide from Him. Like the Prodigal Son we have been taking our journeys into a far country, where at least we do not always have to have Him before our eyes. Men "refused to have God in their knowledge" (Rom. 1:28). "There is

no God! let there be no God!" they cried at the French Revolution, when they enthroned a harlot as "Goddess of Reason" and bore her through the streets. Yet, despite all efforts God is hard to get away from. There is always a point where He becomes indispensable. Science needs Him. The gaps are unbridgeable without Him. Philosophy cannot dispense with Him. He alone is the goal or the starting-point of all thinking. The human heart needs Him. Nothing is so utterly futile and meaningless as human existence is seen to be apart from God. Society needs Him; men cannot hold up morally and socially without God. Nations need Him. History has shown more than once how nations that forget God are turned into hell. Nevertheless, the thought of God is troublesome. Our consciousness of Him is a check on our ambitions and desires. We somehow feel that He watches us. We cannot quite cast off the thought that we shall have to give account to Him. His very existence makes demands on us which the flesh would gladly repudiate. We would be glad to flee from Him and be rid of Him.

Evolution owes its first great attraction to the fact that it gets men rid of God. It puts Him far, far away. Hundreds of millions, or billions, of years ago He may have created something. Since then He has had no hand in the universe; all has gone forward by means of "resident forces" in the course of nature by the process of endless gradual progress and development. That is on the assumption that there is a "personal" God. Perhaps there isn't. Perhaps God is Himself that "resident force" that indwells all things—a blind, unconscious, impersonal force that works along certain principles. Be it as it may, in any case the troublesome idea of God is disposed of. He is effectively put out of our affairs, and all thought of direct dealing or relationship with Him is wiped out. That is the first great charm of the theory to the flesh.

And yet—after the first exultation of freedom is past, a great desolation invades the human spirit that has got rid of God. We feel alone, in the midst of a vast, complicated, unfeeling, terrible universe. The merciless laws of nature, the survival of the fittest, the play of cosmic forces, afford no hope nor peace; nor do they meet a heart's longings. The man may speak jauntily and with great air of knowledge to reassure himself and others, but he can never again say: "Our Father": he is an orphan. A terrible need goes unsupplied. "As the heart thirsteth after the waterbrooks"—but, alas, there is now no more any slaking of that thirst. It must be stifled.

II. AS TO MAN

But we turn to a more cheerful aspect. What of Man? Ah, how pleasant is the Evolution-gospel here! He is certainly not a fallen being! Nay: he is evermore rising. He is not the degenerate descendant of a once perfect individual who fell from a high estate, but he is the noblest product of the ages. He stands on a dizzy height, looking back upon the ascent of millions of years on which he climbed from the lowest type of animate being through more complex forms

of reptile, bird, and beast. He has emerged out of the low estate of an ape-like brute, into primitive man, and onward, higher and higher. And all that by dint of a force inherent in himself, which still works steadily on. What will he not become? He needs no "new birth"; no "atonement"; no sort of special help or interference from on high—only a chance of development. The making of a God is in him, and in a few million years more he will be one. Not the individual, of course; these things are said of the *race*. What will become of the individual—of you and me? Who knows? We pass the way of countless hordes of the past and—well, where is last year's snow? So Evolution flatters man—that is its second attraction; but also it immeasurably degrades him as to his past and leaves him hopeless as to the future.

III. AS TO SIN

Then there is that crux of all the questions that bother men's souls—SIN. Evolution has a comforting way of dealing with that. Sin is, according to it, nothing more than deficiency. Sin is the mark of imperfect development. It is but an accident on the road of progress. "Evil is good in the making." By and by, in the course of the ages, mankind evolving, "by progressive change, according to certain laws and by means of resident forces," will move into purer heights of altruism and nobleness. This conception does away with the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and at the same time with the sharp sense of personal accountability. But it makes God the Author of Sin, and even the blinded human conscience lifts up a protest and will not be satisfied with the specious falsehood. But because this theory so smoothly absolves men from sin and guilt they find it attractive.

It must be observed that the evolutionary theory has no room for miracle. However things may have begun, the theory is that from that beginning things have moved forward by fixed laws. This is essential to the doctrine. It is a necessary and fundamental assumption of this type of modern "science" that *God never does anything*. (Zeph. 1:12; 2 Peter 3:4.) The uniform, uninterrupted action of natural law is the one factor that figures in evolution, by hypothesis. On this premise follow a number of serious consequences of which we will take up only two: First, How this affects our view of the Bible; second, How it affects our conception of Christ.

I. HOW OUR VIEW OF THE BIBLE IS AFFECTED

The Bible claims to be of supernatural origin. Its existence is due to God's breaking in upon the ordinary course of things *He spoke*. The Bible is the inspired record. He sent messengers with a message directly from Him. (Heb. 1:1, 2; 2 Peter 1:21, etc.) But the evolutionist cannot admit such a thing. Like all else, the Bible too must have evolved. It sprang out of the consciousness of a certain people, Israel, who had a genius for religion (just as, for example, the Greeks had a genius for philosophy and art, and the Romans for government); and the inspiration of the prophets and apostles was not different in kind from that of artists and poets.

It would follow then upon that assumption that the Bible presents a development from early crude ideas to the nobler and higher conceptions of Deity, the mind of man struggling upward from primitive superstitions toward spiritual truth. Hence the book of Genesis is to be regarded as consisting largely of myth and folklore; and a progress is traced from the first rude picture of Yahweh, a Hebrew tribal god, who was worshipped through a system of sacrifices and priestcraft, to the purer faith of the later prophets, who were emancipated from those swaddling-bands of primitive crudities; while a still higher plane is reached by "Jesus," the "supreme religious genius."

Such a view would indeed "make the Bible a new book" to any one that adopted it; and would release one from all inconvenient obligations of obedience to the old Book. Which again explains the pull of "Evolution" on the modern mind. The Book itself, however, refutes the daring falsehood. Now that a *progress* in the plan of God is discernible in the Bible every student knows. But the God of the first chapter is the God of the last; and the "angry Yahweh" of Exodus and Joshua is none other than the gracious God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. His word is *truth*, in the earliest day as in the latest; and the alleged difference between the later prophets and the priestly ritualistic religion of previous times does not exist. The progress observed is that of the path that as the dawning light shineth more and more unto the perfect day; from truth to truth and from glory to glory. For mankind did not begin with crude ideas and evolve high conceptions of God, but started with high conceptions and degenerated (Rom. 1:21-23). The Bible is not the record of man's waning error, but of God's rising truth. It takes little insight to perceive that the theory of Evolution is the inner source of the "destructive criticism." the liberalism and modernism that has denied the truth of God's word in our day.

II. HOW THE FAITH IN CHRIST IS AFFECTED

If there is no miracle, no interference from on High, nothing but the eternal, unvarying reign of law and progressive development by resident forces—then Jesus Christ is Himself a product of evolution; an exceptionally fine specimen—the very noblest thus far—but in no wise supernatural. God did not send Him in any sense different from the "sending" of others. There was no Virgin birth—there could not have been. He wrought no miracles. He did not die for our sins. He could not have risen from the dead. He did not ascend to heaven. He is not coming again. The gospel testimony is not to be taken as the record of fact. He was not God's Son in any unique sense. He is not really Savior, nor Redeemer. All of this, however disclaimed by some, follows logically and inevitably from evolutionary premises. The belief of these foundation truths is utterly incompatible with the theory of Evolution. There may be room in the Evolutionary scheme for a teacher, a leader, a hero, an example, but it has no place for a Redeemer. Man must needs be his own savior and redeemer.

And so, in the final sum-up, everything goes overboard and the light goes out. No God, no inspired Word, no Savior, no redemption, no new birth, no sin, no atonement, no judgment, no hell, no heaven, no home.

As a scientific theory concerning the origin of things, "Evolution" is a miserable failure. It utterly fails to give the least clue concerning the origin of matter, the origin of life, the origin of consciousness, the origin of man; nor can it offer the least explanation of the fixity of species or the evidence of design in nature. But as a Satanic device to blind the minds and harden the hearts of a foolish generation who have loved darkness rather than the light it is a success unsurpassed.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

R. B. Boyd

Are you neglecting the education of your children?

When a child reaches the age of 6, parents, yea, Christian parents, very energetically see to it that their children attend school regularly, 5 days per week, 9 months per year. Distance from home to school may present a difficulty in some instances, but the difficulty is invariably overcome. Attendance must be regular, even though the weather isn't always good.

But amazingly enough, these same parents think one hour per week either regularly or irregularly under the influence of the church is sufficient! So, if convenient, they send their children to Sunday School. But if not convenient, absenteeism is not considered anything worth worrying about! And to take a 6 year old child (or even a 10 or 12 year old, for that matter!) to the regular church services—why, that is ridiculous! Perish the thought!! They are too young!!! The poor little darlings get restless and tired! (I wonder if they ever get restless and tired in school?!)

Parents, wake up. (I refer to those guilty, of course.) Don't you realize that by your actions you are saying head culture is more important than heart culture? Don't you realize your children are growing up with the idea that the things of this life are more important than the things of God? And who is to blame? God says: "Train up a child in the way that he should go." Now, when your child is old, should he attend church? Then, as a child he should be trained to go to church! God says so!

And listen, parents! If you take your children to every regular service of the church per week, they will spend less time in church services per week than one day in school. If you must *SEND* your children to Sunday School, instead of coming with them, then by all means join them at church, and let the whole family worship God together, "not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is."

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Dennis Allen

THE LEADERS

Since the whole church was essentially an educational institution, it will be well to see what function each of the officers of the church had in carrying out this aim. All of the leaders of the church may be classified under the general term, "the ministry" (Eph. 4:12). This word indicates the nature of their office and work. Service and leadership were to go together in the church, nor were the leaders to aspire to positions of rank and dignity (Matt. 23:8-12). The apostles, especially the apostle Paul, well illustrated this principle in their ministry.

In general there were two kinds of ministry in the early church. This is first brought out in Acts 6 where it is said that seven men were appointed to the "ministry of tables" (Acts 6:2, margin) which is distinguished from the "ministry of the word" (Acts 6:4) carried on by the apostles. In this ministry of the word are included the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11).

APOSTLES

In its narrow use this term applied only to the twelve (Luke 6:13) and later to Paul (Rom. 1:1; 2 Cor. 11:5). In this use it designated one who had been directly appointed by Christ as an eye-witness of Him to preach the gospel of the kingdom of God (Luke 9:2; Rom. 1:1-5; 15:16). They were the leaders in the missionary work of the church and in establishing the first churches. They received their message from Christ, hence their teaching and their writings had divine authority behind them (Acts 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:1, 2, 14-16; 1 Cor. 14:37).

The term "apostle" was also used in a wider sense. Barnabas was called an apostle (Acts 14:14). Adronicus and Junias are termed "apostles" by Paul (Rom. 16:7). There were also "apostles of the churches" (2 Cor. 8:23, margin). The words *apostle* and *missionary* are synonyms. They were called apostles because they were sent forth by the churches as messengers of the gospel to fields where Christ had not been preached. The primary responsibility of both classes was to teach.

PROPHETS

The prophets were the second class of leaders which God set in the church. "A prophet . . . in both the Old and the New Testament, is one who, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, speaks the words and thoughts of God, whether they relate to the past, to the present, or to the future." (Milligan, *The Scheme of Redemption*, p. 298.) During Jesus' earthly ministry He had promised to send prophets (Matt. 23:34). The primary function of the prophets was teaching, and their services were highly valued in the early church. Many of the prophets went from one congregation to another in order to stir them up in zeal and service. The Lord may have had this in

mind when He promised a prophet's reward to those who received His prophets (Matt. 10:41).

There were six main functions of the prophetic office: (1) to predict future events (Acts 11:27, 28); and (2) to reveal the counsels and purposes of God (Eph. 3:4, 5); (3) to distinguish between the inspired word of God and the uninspired teachings of men (1 Cor. 14:37); (4) to exhort the church (Acts 15:32); (5) to reveal the secrets of the human heart (1 Cor. 14:23-25); (6) to unfold the meaning of the Scriptures in order to confirm, comfort and edify the church (1 Cor. 14:1-4).

The prophetic office, in the sense of miraculous knowledge, was temporary, as was the special apostolic office. It was for the purpose of founding and ceased as the foundations rose above the ground (Eph. 2:20). However, the term "prophet," like the term "apostle," was also used in a wider sense. In this sense it applied to all those who were gifted to speak the word of God.

EVANGELISTS

From the use of this term in the New Testament it is evident that evangelists were a class of ministers who, under the instruction of the apostles, went everywhere preaching the word. In this class would be included such men as Mark, Luke, Timothy, Titus, Silas, Epaphras and Trophimus. Timothy was specifically exhorted by Paul to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5). From his life and the instructions given to him by Paul can be found the clearest description of the function of this office. Timothy was personally taught and trained by Paul and accompanied him part of the time on his missionary journeys (Acts 20:4; Rom. 16:21; Phil. 1:1). He was also sent by Paul on missionary business (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 4:17). It was apparently the practice of the apostles to gather around them younger men whom they could train while they in turn assisted the apostles in their missionary endeavors.

The primary duties of the evangelists were (1) to make disciples and baptize them in accordance with the teaching and example of the apostles; (2) to collect the converts into congregations, instructing and edifying them until they were grounded in the fundamentals of the faith, then going elsewhere after elders and deacons were appointed; (3) to maintain an oversight of these congregations (not jurisdiction over them) occasionally revisiting them and giving special aid to those that were weak and sickly. There seems to be little distinction made between apostles in the broad sense of the term and evangelists. For both the aim was primarily missionary.

The book of Acts and the epistles reveal the fervency with which these servants of the Lord Jesus fulfilled their ministry. In the Spirit of Him who for their sake had left all and come to the earth, they went forth bearing His message and His reproach. "And they went forth, and preached everywhere." (Mark 16:20.) How much is contained in those words! Publicly and privately, in the synagogues and in jails, in the market places and in the homes, wherever they found men, in whatever condition, they were taught. It was not a work that men could be hired to do. It cost far too much for that (1 Cor.

9:19-22; 2 Cor. 6:4-10; 11:24-28). They worked for an eternal, incorruptible reward. No man would have chosen this work for a profession. True, some did make merchandise of the gospel, but those who were sent forth by the Lord were constrained by the love of Christ.

(Next month we plan to consider the officers in the local church.)

SHALL THE CHRISTIAN DANCE?

(Compiled, revised, and arranged, by E. L. Jorgenson.)

1. All churches considered Christian and evangelical have condemned dancing as carnal and immoral, and inconsistent with the Christian profession; and all the evangelists of any spiritual power have agreed in denouncing it.

2. Even the sacred books of the pagans declare that it is an immoral amusement, and pagan moralists, like Cicero, call it indecent and voluptuous.

3. Dancing has a bad name for Christians, and it dishonors the fair name by which we are called. The most devout believers do not do it, and all devout Christians and ministers are grieved to learn of any of their people being guilty of it.

4. It is a favorite amusement among the vile and the fallen, and the dance halls are filled with the unconverted and the backsliding.

5. It is the distinctive badge everywhere of worldliness and world conformity (Rom. 12:2) and is known to be the companion vice of drinking, gambling, and immorality.

6. It destroys completely the Christian's influence and testimony—in fact it destroys the desire to testify; and the world has no confidence in the religion and piety of dancing church members. (If your minister danced, would you approve?)

7. It is named by unfortunate women themselves, according to most accurate police reports, as the chief cause of their moral ruin; in fact, 75 per cent attribute their fall to the dance.

(Even if you escape moral damage, can you set the example, and cause your poor, weak sister to stumble and go to hell?)

8. The dancing of the sexes together, as in modern times, is unknown among God's people in Bible times. It simply didn't happen!

9. Aside from the thrill of music and rhythm, and the poetry of motion, it is known to have a definite sex reference, with immoral results in many cases.

10. It brings innocent youth and virtue into close and dangerous association with vice and criminal experience, at late hours of the night, and under the influence of sensuous music—an association that renders virtue well-nigh powerless.

11. The liberties allowed and taken in dancing are nowhere else permitted in decent society; and if indulged in elsewhere, they furnish ground for divorce.

12. It is an invention from the world of the lost, and almost every new and licentious form of it has come to us from the house of prostitution.

13. It is far, far past the border-line observed by earnest Christians; in fact, it is the very last and most extreme amusement this side of criminal practices. One step beyond the dance, and even the laws of the land forbid!

14. It dulls the spiritual appetite and kills our prayer, Bible-reading, church-going, soul-winning; so that—even if bodily and moral injury does not follow — your soul, with that of others, may go down to hell.

15. Your Christian parents, your preacher, your Bible teacher, and your elders all ask you not to do it: you disobey your God your parents, and your church, if you do!

The round dance was started in a house of prostitution in Paris by a mistress of a King of France and was never danced outside of a house of prostitution, nor by anyone but prostitutes and rakes, for the first hundred years after it had started. The waltz was originated by a French dancing master by the name of Gault. He was guillotined in 1632 for strangling to death his own sister in an attempt to ruin her. The most popular step used in ballrooms today originated with negro prostitutes of the Barbary Coast, San Francisco. The next popular step originated with prostitutes on the Bowery, New York. T. A. Faulkner, a converted dance master, took careful census of two hundred prostitutes in Los Angeles, and found that one hundred and sixty-three attributed their fall to the dance and the ball room; twenty to drink given by their parents; ten to wilful choice; and seven to poverty and want. Bishop Spaulding of New York said that nineteen out of every twenty fallen women stated that their fall came through the dance. A great educator has said: "The dance hall is the nursery of the divorce court, the training shop of prostitutes, and the grade school of infamy."—*Christian Victory*, (copied from "The Dawn," London, Dec. 15, 1939).

"To my satirical eye, dancing is the most ludicrous and soul-exposing activity in life. The poses, movements, and expressions reveal as nothing else a person's vanity and passion, just as plainly in the waltz as in the ceremonial cavorting of savages. It's a sort of X-ray movie of the subconscious self. Everything that is primitive and innate comes to the surface for all to see."—Gelet Burgess, *Readers Digest*, October, 1937.

HEART EDUCATION

"Your education has been a failure—no matter how much it has done for your mind—if it has failed to open your heart."—J. A. Rozenkranz. In Paul's grand prayer for the Ephesians (Eph. 1:15ff), one major burden of his prayer was: "having the eyes of your *heart* enlightened."

QUESTION AND ANSWER

R. H. B.

A brother from Illinois sends in the following request: "I wish that one of the writers in the Word and Work would reconcile 1 Kings 8:9 and 2 Chronicles 5:10 with Hebrews 9:4 in regard to just what the Ark of the Covenant contained. Is there a conflict in these passages?"

That not some "golden censer," but the "golden altar of incense" is meant in Hebrews 9:4 seems to be beyond dispute. Nor would it be possible to think of any mistake here. The writer of Hebrews evinces a perfect knowledge of the appointments of God's ancient worship and of the Tabernacle with its arrangement and furnishings. He certainly knew as well as anyone that the golden altar was outside the veil which separated the Most Holy from the Holy Place. But why then does he speak of the golden altar of incense as being in the Most Holy? As a matter of fact he does not say just that. "There was a tabernacle prepared" (he says)—"the first *in which* (Greek, *en hee*) were the candlestick, and the table, and the showbread; which is called the Holy Place. And after the second veil the tabernacle which is called the Holy of holies; having (Greek, *echousa*) a golden altar of incense. Now this term "echousa," "having" admits of a broader meaning than the words "en hee," "in which." It can (and does here) mean "belonging" or "pertaining to." The golden altar of incense marked the closest approach, short of actual entrance, to the Holy of holies. It stood in the midst, directly in front of the Ark and the Mercy-seat, separated from it only by the veil (Exodus 30:6). Therefore it is spoken of as *belonging to* the Holy of holies: "the whole altar that belongeth to the oracle." (1 Kings 6:22, R. V.) Its close relation to the Ark and the Mercy-seat is further seen in the fact that like the Mercy-seat it (and it alone) was sprinkled with the blood of the sin-offering on the great Day of Atonement. (Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 16:18, 19.) It was therefore reckoned as pertaining to the Holy of holies.

As to the difficulty suggested by the statement in 1 Kings 8:9 and 2 Chronicles 5:10, it must be remembered that the writer of Hebrews is speaking of the Tabernacle, not of the temple. If the pot of manna and Aaron's rod were in the ark in the days of the Tabernacle, and (as 1 Kings 8:9 says) in Solomon's time, about 400 years later, there was nothing in the ark but the two tables of the testimony, the natural conclusion is that the pot of manna and Aaron's rod must have been removed from the ark (perhaps during the turbulent times of 1 Samuel 5 and 6). This is the easiest and most natural explanation. It is possible, however, that here, as in the case above, the inspired writer sums up things that were kept in close contiguity with the ark as belonging to the contents of the ark. For, while it is stated concisely that the two tables of the Law were put *within* the ark (Exodus 25:16; 40:20) of the pot of manna and Aaron's rod, it is said only that they were laid up "before the testimony." (Exodus 16:33, 34; Numbers 17:10.) And that also is worth considering.

CHRIST'S TEACHING ON PRAYER

R. H. B.

PRAYER FOR LABORERS IN GOD'S HARVEST

Four times, at least, on different occasions, we read that our Lord was "moved with compassion." One of these instances is the background of His third lesson on Prayer. (Matt. 9:35-38.)

It was when He looked over the great throng that had followed Him from place to place (Matt. 4:25) that His soul was filled with a great compassion for them. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," says the wise man of old. But here was One who knew the bitterness of each and all, and how they were "distressed and scattered as sheep not having a shepherd." The piteous multitude cried to Him with a mute appeal. They were lost, aimless, hopeless, distracted, as no less are the sinful masses of today. Yet there was a possibility for them. To His eyes the multitude appeared as a great harvest-field, which could and should be reaped for God. (Comp. John 4:35.) It was *God's* harvest field; and the gathered sheaves would be His.

Now here comes the astounding thing: these disciples were to pray and ask Him to whom the harvest belonged, to send forth laborers into His harvest! "The harvest truly is plenteous but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest that he send forth laborers into his harvest." Who ever heard of such a thing? Does the farmer whose fields of ripened grain are ready for the cutting, need to have somebody to petition him to send men to reap his harvest? Is he not of himself ready and eager to see to it? Does he have to be urged by his friends and neighbors to gather in his grain? Certainly not. But here we learn something of God's ways, and the mystery of prayer. To the man of the world, the "natural man" of 1 Cor. 2:14, it does not make sense. They may have heard that "God so loved the world," and that He "would have all men to be saved," and that He is "not willing that any should perish." Would it not follow then that He would do all that can be done to save them? Why then pray for anything like that? Thus, for example, James M. Barrie, in his story of "The Little Minister"—when the little minister prayed for a poor, sick woman—remarks that God didn't need little ministers to tell Him what to do for a poor woman. But Barrie was wrong: God *does* need to be asked and requested for the needed help. It is a thing that many do not understand. "If you ask for something that is not according to God's will," they say, "you may pray for ever, and you wouldn't get it; and if anything *is* His will He will go ahead and do it anyhow, and you don't need to beg Him to do it." Thus reasons man. But the word of God shows that there are things—many things—that God would do, and can do, in answer to prayer, which He could not righteously and wisely do otherwise. In other words, that prayer really effects something. The Father in heaven has ordained that it be so. He will not work independently of us—He must have our co-operation—at least to this extent that we shall make our appeal to Him, pray, beseech,

intercede, ask, and "make our requests known unto God." (Phil. 4:6.) "But does He not know anyway?"—a puzzled one may object. Yes: we have already learned in a former lesson that "your Father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask him." (Matt. 6:8.) Nevertheless we must ask. Our prayer is an essential link. "Ask and it shall be given unto you . . . and everyone that asketh receiveth." It is also true that God's response may exceed our asking, and that He is able to do for His praying child exceeding abundantly above all he may ask or think. (Eph. 3:20.)

This truly opens up a wide field of privilege—and responsibility. For if it is thus with prayer, and if we fail to pray—do we not hinder God in the good that He would do, and hold back the blessing which not only we, but our friends, neighbors, our nation and country, yea, and the nations of the whole world need and should and could have? (1 Tim. 2:1-4.)

But now let us get back to our lesson. Here then is God's great harvest-field. But how few are the laborers! Everywhere, from every mission-field comes the same lament: how great is the opportunity, how great is the need, how few the helpers and workers! What should we do in view of this heart-breaking situation? God says, *Pray*. That is first, and must come first. We are apt to overlook that first thing. When by some inspiring missionary-talk or by some stirring report from foreign fields the zeal for missions springs up in our hearts, probably the first thing we think of is to send money. That seems like doing something—and really it is important in its place. Then perhaps we look around for someone who will go—or we hear of one who is minded to go, and we want to get behind that and help push it through. Or, to do something big we want to put on a drive to raise a million dollars to send the gospel overseas; or we plan a great campaign and regiment a squadron of young folk, enthusiastic and adventuresome, to go and invade this or that great missionary field. Or it may even be that one of us is seized with a desire to go himself, and tells the church of his intention, and perhaps makes a tour of the churches to stir up an interest. Anything, everything—things good and laudable, or measures that are more or less questionable—only so we get things going and the gospel is sent over to the heathen. And all the while the first and chiefest matter, on which all else depends, is overlooked, or barely noticed.

The first thing to do is to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His harvest. For He alone can do it. Although the missionary obligation rests upon every member of the church, all can not and must not go. The Lord has set the members in the Body as it pleased Him; and not all are evangelists or teachers or pastors or missionaries. Therefore pray—and in answer to true prayer laborers will be raised up for the harvest; and such of His servants as should go will go. Moreover the Lord of the harvest will see to their support—for if He has raised them up He will sustain them, not only physically, but spiritually, with comfort and boldness and power, that they may bear fruit and that their fruit may abide. And fear not, He will do it.

The harvest is plenteous, the laborers are few. What shall be done? God needs men. For how shall they believe on Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? Pray therefore—and God is able of the very stones, as it were, to raise up laborers after His own mind to go forth into His harvest-field to gather precious souls for Jesus. And then give freely and some more, and again, and all along. For this is a supernatural work. God's reapers must invade Satan's domain, and they will feel the sharpness of the conflict with the principalities and powers, the world-rulers of this darkness, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. But they will also be able to say, "Thanks be unto God who always leadeth us in triumph in Christ, and maketh known through us the savor of his knowledge in every place."

In the end, when the Lord comes, those who tarried with the baggage and those who went down to the battle; those who sowed and those who reaped; those who stayed at home and prayed and sacrificed and those who went forth to declare the good tidings among those who had never heard—all who in whatever way co-operated with Him in His great work—all of His true servants will rejoice together in His presence; and the recompense of their work of faith and labor of love will be surpassingly sweet.

A TEST OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

A Mohammedan trader, it is said, who could not read a word of English, nevertheless kept an English Bible beside him at all times.

"When I meet a trader who is unknown to me," he explained, "I put the Bible into his way and watch him; if he opens and reads, I know I can trust him; if he throws it aside with a sneer or a curse, I will have nothing to do with him."—*Christian Victory*.

LEN S. LEWIS

Brother Len S. Lewis departed to be with the Lord on Sunday, February 6, lacking only six days of being 87 years of age. He had been a member of Antioch church of Christ for 65 years, and a deacon for 40 years. Brother Lewis was a fine Christian man, who was loved by all who knew him. His home was the home of many ministers who came to Antioch in years gone by. Much of the progress of the church in its struggle to keep going in recent years is the result of the faith and untiring effort of this good man. In the past four years he has not been able to attend services regularly because of poor health, but his interest and prayers have been a great help and inspiration to me in my labors with the church. The church has lost a grand counsellor, and personally, I feel keenly the loss of a good friend, but our loss is Heaven's gain. Our deepest sympathy goes to his wife, Aunt Sallie, who survives him.

—Asa Baber.

Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture which they cannot understand; but as for me, I always noticed that the passages in Scripture which trouble me most are those which I do understand.—Mark Twain.

NOT UNDERSTOOD

Not understood. How trifles often change us!
Not understood. We move along asunder
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep
Along the years; we marvel and we wonder
Why life is life? And then we fall asleep,
Not understood.

Not understood. We gather false impressions
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions;
And thus men rise and fall, and live and die;
Not understood.

Not Understood.* Poor souls with stunted vision
Oft measure giants by their narrow gauge;
The poisoned shafts of falsehood and derision
Are oft impelled 'gainst those who mould the age
Not understood.

Not understood. The secret springs of action,
Which lie beneath the surface and the show,
Are disregarded; with self-satisfaction
We judge our neighbors, and they often go
Not understood.

Not understood. How often trifles change us!
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight
Destroy long years of friendship and estrange us,
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight;
Not understood.

Oh, God! that men would see a little clearer,
Or judge less harshly where they cannot see;
Oh, God! that men would draw a little nearer
To one another, they'd be nearer Thee,
And understood.

—Selected

THANK GOD FOR THAT

Lady Huntingdon was trying to lead a man to Christ. To her urgent entreaties he answered:

"Oh! it is of no use! I am lost! I am lost!"

"Thank God for that!" she said.

"Why?" exclaimed the man in astonishment.

"Because," said Lady Huntingdon, "Christ came to save the lost. He is just the one who can save you."

—*Evangelical Messenger*