

# THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLIII, September, 1949)

## FRAGRANCE

A Persian fable says: One day  
A traveller found a lump of clay,  
So redolent with sweet perfume,  
Its odour scented all the room.  
"Whence art thou?" was his quick demand,  
"Art thou some gem from Samarkand,  
Or spikenard in this rude disguise,  
Or other costly merchandise?"  
"Nay, I am but a lump of clay,"  
"A lump of clay! Then whence  
This precious perfume, pray?"  
"Ah, listen, friend, the secret I'll disclose—  
*I have been dwelling with the rose.*"  
Sweet parable; and shall not they  
Who love to dwell with Sharon's Rose  
Distil sweet incense all around,  
Though low and mean themselves are found!  
Dear Lord, abide with us that we  
May draw our fragrance fresh from Thee.

Anon.

---

## WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

### "TAKE HEED"

The warning word "take heed," frequently found in the New Testament, corresponds to our expression "Be careful!" or the colloquial "Look out!" or "Watch out!" It always warns against an unrecognized danger—something into which men might slip inadvertently, by sheer accident, or of some evil that might overtake us before we realize the peril of it. The Lord Jesus made use of this term at different times, always with reference to some insidious wrong into which we might fall unawares. Thus, for instance, He warns against the always present danger that lurks in the path of religion, hypocrisy. "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1b). How easily that can overtake the preacher, the religious leader, the worshipper, or any pious and earnest Christian! It is something to be carefully watched against, for none of us are immune to it. "Take heed," He says, "that ye do not your righteousness before men to be seen of them: else ye have no reward with your Father who is in heaven." Now there is nothing easier than that. Do we not want to make a good impression for our Lord and our religion and our church, and, incidentally, for ourselves? Watch out—there

lies a snare and a trap. Whatever good thing you do by way of exhibition before men has the essence of hypocrisy in it. The higher and holier the act, the worse is the hypocrisy of it, if it is done "before men to be seen of them."

#### Beware of Covetousness

Again, one of the commonest evils that beset human hearts is *covetousness*. Constantly we are warned against it. We have an idea that covetousness is altogether the vice of the rich. Nothing is further from the truth. The beggar can be as deep in the mud of covetousness as the millionaire may be in the mire of it. Covetousness is the love of money, or the greed for money, or other earthly possession. How easily men can slip into it. It often begins with anxiety. It looks to the power of money and wealth for sustenance and protection from the common evils of life. And (as has been well said) whatever you look to and trust in for your help and welfare, that is your god. Wherefore covetousness is idolatry. It is the most prevalent of all vices; and do not think that it has not invaded the church and the religious realm.

"Take heed and keep yourselves from all covetousness," said the Lord Jesus, "for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." (Luke 12:15). These words of our Lord are the beginning of a prolonged discourse which extends through most of this chapter and which finally leads to a lesson on Christ's second coming: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lamps burning, and be ye yourselves like unto men looking for their lord . . . that when he cometh and knocketh they may straightway open unto him." (Luke 12:35-40). The powerful antidote to covetousness (as to every other worldly lust) is the expectancy and hope of Christ's coming. Either that will keep you from covetousness, or vice versa, covetousness will keep you from looking for your Lord.

#### The Vice of Contempt

Another "take heed" that should make us very careful is found in Matthew 18 in connection with Christ's teaching concerning God's little ones. These are the humble souls that have put their trust in Jesus, not much set by nor regarded in the world. How great and dear they are in the Lord's sight is forcibly brought out in the teaching of this chapter. There is a danger that even among Christians these simple, lowly, unassuming "little ones" of God might be held in small esteem, and treated accordingly, a thing which their Lord would greatly resent. We are to be specially careful on this point. "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. 18:10). So greatly beloved are they with God, so highly honored and esteemed in the highest heavens. Take heed then that you do not look down on them here below, not treat them with contempt. Nor, for that matter, any person of humble estate. "Honor all men," says the apostle of Christ.

"These are the sins I fain  
Would have Thee take away:

Malice and cold disdain,  
Hot anger, sullen hate,  
Scorn of the lowly, envy of the great,  
And discontent that casts a shadow gray  
On all the brightness of the common day."

**"BE SOBER, BE WATCHFUL"**

Take heed, take heed! The Christian is bidden to be watchful, to walk circumspectly. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. The devil will not let our faith go unchallenged. "Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ." (Col. 2:8). And "take heed brethren lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief in falling away from the living God." (Heb. 3:12). For unbelief steals in of itself, as the twilight does at the setting of the sun. And "take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you unawares . . ." (Luke 21:34f).

Yea, take heed that every day your heart is committed to the Lord Jesus Christ, who alone can guard your way and keep you from the evil one.

\* \* \*

**"HOPE IS A GREAT LIAR"**

Several years ago in a popular magazine appeared an article with this startling title. The writer of it made out a very conclusive case. Of course the "hope" of which he spoke was what is otherwise known as "wishful thinking"—that vague optimism with which many comfort themselves, which says, "Oh well, things will work around and all will be better after a while." It is the dream of indolence, which would slumber on till something good turns up. Such hope indeed is a liar, and many are willing to be lulled into sleep by it, when action and effort are needed. False hopes are always disastrous. This is not only true of the idle dreams of the indolent, but also of the false hope that stirs men to wrong action. Men and nations following the will-o'-the-wisp of false hopes are lured into swamps of perdition, and plunge themselves into ruin. The awful events of recent history furnish lurid examples of such fatal delusions.

**THREE FALSE HOPES**

There are three false hopes that motivate humanity in our days. There is the false hope of the world in general. There is the false hope of the Jew. And there is the false hope of professing Christendom.

The false hope of the world is of scientific, economic, commercial, industrial progress, of peace and security and prosperity—a happy world of international good will and unity, of freedom from fear, from bondage, from poverty. It is truly a pleasing picture, but it is like the vision of a cool lake fringed with shady trees in the midst of the burning desert, the mirage which allures the fainting wanderer to spend his waning strength in pursuit of the beautiful phantom. The word of God, with unwelcome words

of truth, dispels the delusion and points out the falseness and vanity of it. Forevermore, so long as the present age endures, the factors of human sin, of lust and selfishness, and of all the vices which spring from and which are inherent in the flesh, that is, in the very constitution of human nature, will make the realization of such a hope impossible. The only real betterment that could come would be in a universal turning to God—and, alas, the word of God again shows that will never be, for as it was in the days of Noah so shall it be in the day when the Son of man shall be revealed. The age will end in deepening darkness and sin, and the day of wrath and vengeance must consume the sinful world. So spake the old Book, which has never lied to us yet.

#### ISRAEL'S FALSE HOPE

The hope that stirs and animates the hearts of the majority of the people of Israel, the Jews, is the prospect of a Jewish homeland and a national independence and autonomy as in the days of old before Nebuchadnezzar led them captive into Babylon. It is not only the Zionist, but also the universal hope of Israel that slumbers deep in the hearts of that great and unhappy people. But their exile and dispersion was of God, and it was for a reason. Until that reason is discerned and acknowledged and removed, until they repent and return to their God and to "David their king" (that is to say their Messiah, who is our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ), and look unto Him whom they pierced, the dream of their national restoration to their homeland can never be realized. Every effort to bring it to pass must end in darker disaster for them.

#### THE FALSE HOPE OF CHRISTENDOM

The false hope of Christendom is that of the world-wide triumph of "Christianity," the hope of world conversion. It would seem to be a worthy hope and a laudable one, and that the professing church does well to set itself such a goal. Indeed the greater part of Christendom is set for such a program. Again, the word of the Lord pointedly warns against that kind of expectation. The church (what the New Testament calls the church) is an election. It can never take in the masses. God is visiting the nations to take out of them a people for His name. It is never a large body, never imposing in the eyes of the world, never grand or rich or powerful. "Ye see your calling brethren," says Paul to the church at Corinth, "that not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called: but God chose the foolish things of the world . . . and . . . the weak things . . . and the base things . . . yea, and the things that are not, that he might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory before God." (I Cor. 1:26-29).

The church, though in the world, is not of the world, even as her Lord is not of the world. In fact, the true church represents her Lord in the world, and she shares His cross and His reproach and His rejection. She can never in this age become a thing of earthly magnitude, or attain to power and glory. So will it continue to be till Christ comes. The last days will not be the best,

but the worst. In the last days perilous times and grievous times shall come. Every ambitious enterprise to bring the world into the fold of Christ must end in failure, or, worse than that, it will eventuate in a compromise of the gospel, an adaptation of its message to the tastes of the multitude, and in a false and corrupt religion which under its profession would embrace all the evil of the world in most virulent form.

#### FALSE HOPE FULFILLED

All three of these false hopes will, according to God's forewarning word, have an apparent fulfilment. They really pave the way for the man of sin, the antichrist. He will indeed unify the world for a season under his beast-sway; he will also for a short while give the Jew the realization of his hope; and by his support a corrupt Christendom ("mystery Babylon") will triumph for a brief time in the earth.

#### THE GREAT TRUE HOPE

In contrast with these false and misleading hopes is the simple hope of the gospel: the coming of Christ, at which time the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible and the living, changed in a moment of time, shall together with them be caught up to meet the Lord in the air is the true hope of the true church. The hope for the world is that day when the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ (Rev. 11:15), and the "times of the restoration of all things" (Acts 3:21) shall have been ushered in after the searching judgments of the great day, and that glorious reign of which the prophets speak shall be inaugurated, the day when the nations shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks, and the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as waters cover the sea.

#### THE HOPE OF EVERY MAN

As for the world and for nations, there are false hopes, and a true hope, so it is for every individual man. Many are drifting along, hoping that all will be well with them in the end; many are pursuing a false path (Prov. 14:12) perhaps thinking that the sincerity of their purpose will get them through: many even, who have no thought but that death ends all, or that there will be a "second chance," and that there is no such place as a "hell," and many who hold fantastic beliefs that they can live in sin, yet be saved at last. But there is a true hope—the hope of God's people. It is built upon the Rock of Ages, and "on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." It is the hope of the children of God, that they shall be like Him when He shall appear, for they shall see Him as He is. And this is the test of it: "Every one that hath this hope set on him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (I John 3:1-3.)

\* \* \*

A little school girl said, "Every time I read the Bible it slaps me in the face." That surely explains why so many people do not enjoy its reading. Sin on the conscience is stifling, paralyzing to the highest and noblest within. But there is the blood of Christ, which if applied, cleanses the conscience from dead works to serve the living God. God be merciful yet a little while that a few more may come to realize and recover themselves.—**Truth Advance.**

# NEWS AND NOTES

Sullivan, Ind.: "Our first Vacation Bible School at Palmer's Prairie had a daily average of 60 children present, plus a good number of adults who assisted the teachers. Attention and conduct were good, and enthusiasm was manifested for another school next year. We studied the book of Genesis. The closing night program was attended by the largest crowd that I have seen in that building. Pray for us in this area.

"Brother Harold Beck and family were with us at East Jackson Street, Sullivan, one Lord's Day last month. Harold preaches the good news of the grace of God. God blessed us through his message. We wish all of Sullivan had heard it."—James Hardison.

A week's meeting at Seventeenth Street mission here in Louisville resulted in two baptisms and one restoration. J. R. Clark was the evangelist, assisting the local minister, Harry Prather.

Lexington, Ky.: "From July 4 to 17 I very much enjoyed my second effort with John Stinnette and the Waterford church in a revival meeting. I was treated royally by the good brethren, and interest was good throughout, with one response for primary obedience.

"During the last two weeks of July the church at Melrose enjoyed preaching by R. B. Boyd. We were especially well favored with visitors throughout the meeting. Nice delegations came three times from Winchester, three times from Antioch, and every night many came from Cramer and Hanover. Large crowds every night of the meeting attested to the spirit of revival and blessing received from every service. Two were baptized and much good done otherwise. By the grace of God we hope to have Bro. Boyd with us again next year."—Orell Overman.

Borden, Ind.: "The Borden church closed a two weeks' meeting on July 31. Brother Howard Marsh, who was with us for the fifth consecutive time, preached excellent sermons with power. Attendance was good each night, and there were six baptisms. One came for-

ward August 7 to be a member of the body of Christ. She had formerly been associated with a denominational organization."—F. S. Spaulding.

Amite, La.: "Since entering our new building June 5th attendance at all services has been on the increase. The evening attendance has about doubled. The good fellowship and spirit of cooperation and worship is commendable. Effort to a noticeable degree in bringing in new people is witnessed. All departments of the building have been used, even the baptistry. The writer spent the first five nights of August preaching at Leesville to fair-sized crowds. Opportunity, with much prayer and labor, could be turned into advantage there. Bro. Odis Ford lives there and Bros. Elston and Gale Palmer give helpful support to the work. The outlying country places are in need of wise and prayerful teaching. A patient godly man, not given to argument and contention, could be used of the Lord in that whole field. Evidence of the deadening effect of quibbling over minor things is not wanting there. At several places a nucleus remains, and at some places, as at De Ridder, a sizeably strong force contends for the faith in lovable spirit. Blanket the whole field with prayer."—A. K. Ramsey.

Dugger, Ind.: "Two revival meetings are scheduled this month within driving distance of Dugger. Bro. Howard Marsh will be with the brethren of Summerville congregation and Bro. R. B. Boyd will be with Berea brethren. In September Brother Hall C. Crowder will be with us in a revival effort and Brother Ham with the Antioch congregation. Bro. Elmer Ringer will assist the Worthington brethren sometime in the early fall.

"We thank God for the good interest we have had through the summer months. Two were restored to fellowship with us last Sunday. We are also thankful for those who are sharing with us in the support of the Phillips family."—Maurice Clymore.

Davis City, Iowa: "The yearly meeting here, August 17, had a-

round 225 in attendance from twenty different congregations. The fifteen preachers present along with three other church men gave earnest and helpful messages. A fine fellowship was manifest, making the day a season of refreshing in spiritual things.

"Waldo Hoar of Linton, Indiana, who formerly labored with us in this part, is here in a meeting at the park, which began August 17. Good attendance of members of the churches around."—Wm. J. Campbell.

Nashville, Tenn.: "On Sunday morning, August 21, 1949, we had our first meeting in the Rosemont School community. We are thankful to God that of the six people present, a man 72 years of age gave his heart to the Lord and is to be baptized soon. In the late afternoon meeting there were eight present. There was good interest and happy Christian fellowship. Of course, we expect an increase in attendance as soon as our invitations are extended. Please pray with us for this new work and especially for a more suitable place to meet. We are grateful to God for those who have taken this work to heart and for the support they have given." (To those interested in this new work we commend Brother Rehorn as a faithful servant of the Lord. Your contribution will help him to continue to spend full time in developing this new work. Any amount will be appreciated as he is very poorly supported.—J. R. C.)—Miles P. Rehorn, Rt. 156, Pumping Sta. Road, Nashville 10, Tenn.

#### **Kentucky Bible College**

The opening date for Kentucky Bible College is September 25. Only freshmen courses, along with Bible institute subjects, are offered the first year. The tuition is only \$36 per quarter. It is hoped that several Louisville young people as well as young people from other states will attend. Notify P. J. Bornwasser, Registrar, 2630 Montgomery St., Louisville, if you plan to be a charter member of this institution. Louisville young people may wish just to enroll on September 25.

Jennings, La.: "Brother and Sister Frank Mullins of Dallas, Texas,

spent a few days here the first of August. While here Brother Mullins helped on the church building at Crowley in the daytime, and spoke at the Jennings church four nights. His messages were strong, spiritual and very helpful in giving strength to the congregation and drawing us to a closer walk with God in these trying times.

"The church building at Crowley will soon be available for occupancy. The Lord willing, the congregations throughout this section are planning to give them a housewarming in their opening service, the time of which will be announced."—Ivy J. Istre.

#### **PREACHERS' FELLOWSHIP**

By the time this issue of Word and Work is out preachers from various places will be in Louisville enjoying the good fellowship of the second annual preachers' conference held in Louisville. Devotional studies from 1 Peter, round table discussions, and fine addresses are in store for this short period from September 5-9.

Louisville, Ky.: "Howard Marsh was the preacher for the Ormsby Avenue church of Christ annual summer meeting from August 8-21. Brother Marsh's fine evangelistic sermons and his zeal and love for the Lord were well received and much good was done for the church and the community. Brother N. Wilson Burks very capably filled the pulpit one night when Brother Marsh was absent. Three came forward during the meeting: one for baptism, one for reconsecration and one to place membership.

"Paul Clark will begin his ministry at Ormsby Avenue on September 11. I shall be available for preaching wherever the Lord opens the doors."—Ernest Lyon.

Brother Lyon is a music instructor at the University of Louisville. He is a capable minister of the Word, being unusually spiritual. He is available for preaching or Bible class work in and around Louisville.—Pub.

Detroit, Mich.: "Our attendance and interest at the Farmington congregation is better now than it has been for some time. Brother and Sister Jay Chamberlain took mem-

bership with us last Sunday morning. He has been a very active church worker for a long time and is a very useful man and she is a fine Christian lady. Our Sunday school has had fifty-one in attendance two Sundays in a row and we feel encouraged."—J. Scott Greer.

J. R. Clark is to be with Brother Greer and the Farmington church in a meeting from October 3-16. Will those who are in the Farmington and Detroit area, who see this notice, please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to attend?

Johnson City, Tenn.: "In July we conducted a Daily Vacation Bible School at the Locust St. church, with an average attendance of 71. We passed the 80 mark two or three days. We have had one addition, by transfer, at Locust St. church since last report.

"I was with Orell Overman and the Melrose church, Lexington, Ky., July 18-29. The Lord gave us a good meeting, with excellent interest and attendance, and splendid cooperation on the part of brethren from other congregations. We praise God for two baptisms.

"We began a tent meeting August 3, using local forces, in the Carter-Sell addition, near the Mountain View church. We praise God for a wonderful revival, characterized by enthusiastic interest, very fine attendance, good cooperation

on the part of a number of community folk, as well as brethren from both local congregations, and eleven responses to the invitation. Five were for baptism, one to transfer membership, one for restoration, and four for reconsecration and prayer.

"Brother Paul Clark is leading singing in a meeting this week (Aug. 14-21) at Henning, Tennessee. He and Gene McGhee plan to assist Brother Rutherford in a tent revival effort at Knoxville beginning August 29. Lord willing, I'll be with the Berea church, near Sullivan, Ind., in a tent meeting August 23 to September 4."—Robert B. Boyd.

"Have given Oakdale, La., four nights. One man confessed the Lord. I'm to be with Glenmora this third Lord's day in J. E. Boyd's absence, then a few nights with Alexandria brethren before we entrain for "My Old Kentucky Home." We have had enriching experiences during our California-Texas-Louisiana trip. Our Lord has been good to us."—S. C.

Abilene, Tex.: "Since the last report we have had one baptism at the South Side church. Work continues to progress well. N. Wilson Burks is to be in a meeting with us from October 5 to 16."—Carl Kitzmiller.

---

## The Calvary Spirit

After years of untold sacrifices, privations and exploits in the name of the Lord, David Livingstone returned home for a short furlough. The University of Glasgow, wishing to recognize his achievements, conferred upon him an honorary degree. On the day of the ceremony, the students crowded the gallery bent on ragging at the missionary's expense. They planned to greet him with sticks and rattles, peashooters and catcalls. But when he appeared on the platform of the auditorium—gaunt, worn, and wrinkled from twenty-seven fevers, his arm hanging useless from the lion's bite—the rattles and catcalls ceased. Who could poke fun at such a man? And when he spoke to that crowd they listened breathlessly. The marks of the sufferings which he had endured commanded their respect, and many hearts were moved, for they saw the spirit of the cross so exemplified in Livingstone, that they could not but heed his message. Our greatest need is this Calvary-spirit.—H. N. Rutherford in *Living Messages*,



## “HOW CAN THESE THINGS BE?”

Stanford Chambers

The difficulties that present themselves to our minds as to the how of things God has promised or decreed have played a most important part in shaping our interpretations and understanding of them. Often they determine whether or not we believe! Attitudes are taken and conclusions reached as to the liberality or figurativeness of what God has spoken largely according to the difficulties that loom before us should we take it at full face value. Surely the right attitude is, “Let God be true though every man a liar.” Faith is hardly the right name for it when I believe only what I can understand, or what seems reasonable to me.

I confess that real difficulties present themselves to this writer in considering the matter of eternal punishment for sin. My difficulties and my concern for those who have died out of Christ do not affect the Bible statements on the matter in the least, and should no more affect my understanding of what those Bible statements say. The Book leaves me but one way to teach it. Let me make sure then to be on my Father’s side of the question. I console myself with the certainty, “God is too good to do anyone an injury, too wise to make a mistake.” Amen. On the other hand I might do some one everlasting injury should I modify the Bible statement on this or any other subject. God will finally vindicate Himself in all His ways. Then every one will acknowledge His righteousness and justice in everything. He will never vindicate our toning down His teachings or warnings. If we are His messengers then the message is not ours; it is neither ours to make our message nor to trim His.

Our Lord’s ordinance, baptism, a phase of which we recently discussed in these columns, has not escaped the treatment we refer to. Historians, reformers, and recognized commentators as well as lexicographers, agree that the action of baptism in the apostolic practice was immersion in water. Difficulties, even inconveniences, in the way of the practice thus of baptism have been sufficient to cause many to change the action to something else. The word of God for it and the recognized scholarship referred to above, christening is not baptism. Difficulties have been allowed unwarranted weight. Hindrances can be overcome, and are overcome by millions who in spite of them are immersed. God’s word *cannot* be overcome.

Real difficulties present themselves to us when we consider baptism for the remission of sins (as per the Holy Spirit’s word in Acts 2:38). Does that not condemn the many who have lived and died unbaptized? the many not to be classed with the wicked or nonprofessors, but as pious and to all appearances spiritually minded, loving the things of God, having their hopes set on things above. That difficulty occurs irrespective of one’s position; who could be unconcerned about loved ones gone before? The easiest way out would be to discover that the Scriptures do not teach that baptism is for the remission of sins. But the claim by some

to have made such discovery is inconclusive, unconvincing. There still stands the word unchanged. Should I allow my wish to be father to the thought that some other interpretation of the language must be found? I deny my inclinations such sway over my interpretation or attitude.

That baptism as ordained of our Lord is an act of faith is not seriously denied. It is an appointed obedience-of-faith step. (Some may need such references as Rom. 1:5, 16:26, I Pet. 1:2, Rom. 6:17. See John 3:36 in R. V.). This activity of faith brings to that perfecting where faith is the right name for it, to the point where God in saving grace responds, even as He has promised (as in Acts 2:38, for example). And when the promised blessing is thus reached its procurement is *by faith*, but a faith which by its activity is perfected to the point where God has appointed to meet it. Bible faith in all generations has had as a component part yieldedness, obedience in germination, commitment of the soul to God. That is not faith plus something besides itself; neither is it a streamlined faith stripped of the appointed activities by which it is to be perfected (Jas. 2:22) in its fruitful quest for a good conscience toward God. (I Pet. 3:21, 22).

Salvation in all ages has been by grace through faith. Nor can it be on any other basis. Various ways have been appointed of God in the past for faith's expression, and the Lord Jesus is found responding to faith often times expressing itself toward Him in a definite way of its own choosing. It does not necessarily follow that in His appointing a way for faith to express itself now in the time of His absence that He has put Himself in a straight jacket, so that He cannot recognize sincere believing on the part of a subdued will and yielded heart, though not enlightened as to the appointed way, but is surrendered and obedient according to the light afforded it. As stewards of the manifold grace of God, nevertheless, it is ours to prove our faithfulness in instructing according to the divine revelation. By His grace let us be faithful.

Finally, "Not by works of righteousness which we did ourselves, but of his own mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit. . . ." (Titus 3:5). Who classifies our Lord's ordinance of baptism as a work (in the sense in which Paul uses the term) puts it in the wrong class. But "faith without works" in James' sense "is dead." James asks, "Can that faith save him?"

---

#### THE PROTESTANT CHILD

When we compare the time spent in actual religious instruction in our churches with that provided by other religious groups, one is appalled at the difference. It is reported that a Jewish child receives 335 hours of religious training each year, and the Roman Catholic child receives 200 hours, whereas the children of Protestant groups, receive scarcely thirty hours a year (The Romance of the Ministry, Calkins, p. 122). Looking at it in another way the Jewish child receives ten times more religious instruction than a child in a Protestant church, while a Catholic child receives nearly seven times more.—Robert H. Dills, in "Western Recorder."

# CHRIST'S TEACHING ON PRAYER

The Gospel of Luke

R. H. B.

Our Lord's great lesson on prayer in Luke 11:1-13 took up the article preceding this. In Luke 18 He has more teachings for His disciples.

There may come times (He implied) when prayer seems vain—when day after day, or even year after year, our requests are presented before God, and no answer comes. At such a time, if there should be such a time, the important thing is to continue undaunted in prayer and not to give up.

"And he spake a parable unto them to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint." (Luke 18:1).

The parable is of a judge "who feared not God, and regarded not man." To him a poor, helpless widow, who was wronged by some adversary comes day after day seeking judgment against her oppressor. For a while the judge is utterly indifferent and unwilling. Time after time he sends her away, no doubt swearing and declaring that he will have nothing to do with her case. But every time she comes back to him again with her plea. This finally gets on his nerves; and though he fears not God nor regards man, he says within himself, "because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest she wear me out by her continual coming."

And what is the application? That God is like this judge, caring nothing for us and our troubles, and before He will do anything will have to be worn down by the persistence of our petitions? Far from it! The illustration is by contrast. "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?" If a callous, hard-hearted judge will finally yield to the unremitting petition of a widow that is nothing to him—how much more will the loving Father in heaven answer the prayer of His own people who cry to Him day and night? No, their prayers were not unheard. They avail much in their working, though for the time their effect be not seen. At the right time "He will avenge them speedily."

## *"When the Son of Man Cometh"*

This lesson on prayer is really a part of the Lord's prophetic teaching in Luke 17:20-37. The Pharisees had asked Him "when the kingdom of God cometh." After answering them in short fashion, the Lord addressed His disciples. He told them of troublous days to come when they would desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and should look in vain. He foretold the conditions that would prevail in the world prior to His appearing—that it would be as it was in the days of Noah, and in the days of Lot, and warned His disciples unto instant readiness when that day should come. Then, without a break, He gives them this parable, "to the end that they ought always to pray, and not to faint." Here is a clear intimation to them that the coming of the Lord may be much later than they might expect. How much later He did not say, and His hearers would hardly think beyond their

own lifetime. But, as always, the Lord left the time indefinite, so that His own might always be looking for Him, expecting Him; and praying, like John in Patmos (Rev. 22:20), "Even so, come Lord Jesus!"

In the meanwhile His people, like the poor widow, hard beset by the evil adversary, look for Him, and cry to Him for help. In long, anxious nights of persecution, in wars and famines and pestilence, in the troubles and trials, physical and spiritual, with which Satan afflicted them—how did they long for Him and His return! "O that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might quake at thy presence . . . to make thy name known to thy adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence!" (Isa. 64:1, 2). And would their prayers hasten that day? God works all things through the prayers of His people. For many centuries have His saints, times innumerable, sent up their petition, as the Lord had taught them to pray: "Thy kingdom come." Is not the kingdom come? Oh yes—His redeemed ones are in His kingdom now (Col. 1:13). But their citizenship is in heaven; while on the earth Satan is still the prince of the world and its god, and he deceives the nations, and holds sway over the mass of mankind. And so will it be till after the seventh trumpet is sounded and the great announcement is heard, "The kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ." (Rev. 11:15.)

"Our Lord is now rejected, and by the world disowned,  
By the many still neglected, and by the few enthroned.  
But soon He'll come in glory, the hour is drawing nigh,  
For the crowning today is coming by and by.

"O the crowning-day is coming, is coming by and by,  
When the Lord shall come in power and glory from on high.  
O the wondrous sight shall gladden each watchful, waiting eye,  
For the crowning-day is coming by and by."

Will the prayers of God's people count unto that end? Surely they will. When in the great drama of the end the seventh seal is opened, the prayers of the saints, long held in reserve, come in for remembrance (Rev. 8:1-4).

So let the poor widow unweariedly make her plea; her God has heard her. When the answer comes—we know not how soon it may be—it will come speedily.

"Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, will he find faith on the earth?" Will there still be those who hoping and trusting continue stedfastly in prayer? Yes, there will be such; not many perhaps, but some. "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we who are alive, who are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." (I Thess. 4:16, 17). Until then, He exhorts us, let us continue in prayer and not faint.

It must not be forgotten that the lesson of persevering prayer

applies to all prayer. It is not always nor often that answer is so long delayed; often the answer comes with surprising swiftness, but if it tarry long let us continue to pray and not faint. If it is right to want a thing, it must be right to ask for it; and so long as it is right to pray for a thing, it is right to continue asking until the answer comes.

(To be continued)

---

## ARE CHURCHES OF CHRIST BECOMING SECTS

N. B. Wright

We are aware that the favorite pastime of many preachers is to knock the sects and pick at denominationalism. Then they shout to the whole world: "We are the true church; where the Bible speaks we speak." Let's look at the true situation.

The Catholics, if they hold up the Bible at all, hold it in one hand and in the other their traditions or a book of official interpretations of the church. If a person, they say, does not believe as they are told to believe, that person is not saved.

Christian Science holds up the Bible in one hand and their Key in the other, while they shout to the world that folk cannot understand the Scriptures without their Key. Extremely unfortunate!

The Russelites hold high the Bible with one hand and offer the book of Charles T. Russell in the other.

The Mormons believe the Bible to be the Word of God but enlighten our dark minds by saying: "The church needs a new revelation for the last days and the Book of Mormon for sure is that revelation."

Other denominations preach the Bible plus their creeds.

Now, behold, the newest thing out! Many Churches of Christ hold the Bible high in one hand and their anti-prophetic, anti-millennial, anti-truth creed, unwritten but a creed nevertheless, and shout in no uncertain terms: "Unless you believe as we tell you to believe, and line up with our accepted 'interpretations', you are not saved (say some), nor can we fellowship you." What is the difference in principle between this attitude and action and that of the others? Is it not all sectarianism of the worst sort? The zealous over and over again take the position that sectarians are lost. Very well, (if that be true), since you have pronounced your own doom, why don't you repent?

Did it ever occur to the newest sect to do exactly with some parts of the Bible what they tell the older sects to do with the other part? Simple solution, isn't it?

---

The Holy Spirit should be real to every Christian. How else is He any one's comforter? Jesus said, "I will not leave you comfortless." The Christian should cultivate an acquaintance with the "Comforter" until He is real. Experience His comfort to your soul and it will be no longer a make-believe matter. The child of God is not to be full of self, neither of the world.

## SEED THOUGHTS

J. R. C.

To seek to reproduce the painting of another would not do justice to the artist. The same might be said of word-pictures. But nevertheless we feel that our readers will enjoy the following selections from rather painstaking class notes, taken by long hand in Brother Boll's winter Bible classes and slightly edited.

### Unfounded Happiness

A minister took a seat in the train coach near a woman. He noticed that she held a song book and, as he had a Bible, he said pleasantly, "Let's have a meeting; you have the song book and I have a Bible."

"This is a Christian Science song book," she said, guardedly. (She was not yet a Christian Scientist; in fact, she had vastly better connections. Being informed of this, the preacher felt moved to talk to her about what she was about to get into and she began to weep).

"One thing you can say for Christian Science," she said, "is that it makes you happy and that is good."

"Not necessarily so," replied the minister, "contrariwise, that may be bad. If one had a cancer that could be cured, and if he were informed that he had only minor trouble, would that be good? Or if a person in the death cell was told falsely that all was well and as a result was made very happy, it would only add to his bitterness when the warden read the sentence."

(We know not what result came from this meeting, but we recall the old adage, "A person convinced against his will is of the same opinion still", and wonder.—J. R. C.)

### Hard To Keep From Lying

"Some people think that it is hard to keep from lying," said a self-styled sanctified brother in a meeting.

"Brother, if you had tried as hard to keep from lying as I have you would think it difficult, too," was the realistic rejoinder.

So it is that historians generally have difficulty in recording true facts. For example, the biographers of Washington and Lincoln make them either too good or too bad. But not so with the Bible; it gives a true estimate of its characters. It is a true view because it is God's view. The characters live before us just as they were of old. The Bible is a light that penetrates the mist of darkness and goes to the heart of things. Shakespeare is noted for his portrayal of human nature, but his works do not hold a candle to the Bible.

### Learning About God

What is the profit of studying about Israel? To make a study of the Chinese of one thousand years ago would be of historical interest only and of little practical value. But when we study the history of Israel as it is unfolded in the Old Testament we are in reality *learning about God*.

## Looking for the Bad

Those Pharisees who watched Jesus that they might accuse Him are big brothers to those who read the Bible to find flaws in it. If the Bible is "full of immorality" as some claim why is it that only the purest and best people of the world read it and, in turn, are rewarded with even purer and better lives?

"Dr. Johnson, I don't like your dictionary. It has so many bad words in it," remarked a lady to the English lexicographer and author.

"You must have been looking for them," was the telling reply.

## Jehovah Gave Them Rest

"So Abijah slept with his fathers, . . . and Asa his son reigned in his stead. In his days the land was quiet ten years. . . . And he built fortified cities in Judah; for the land was quiet, and he had no war in those years, because Jehovah had given him rest."—II Chron. 14:2-6.

If secular historians sought to figure out why there were no wars during the first ten years of Asa's reign, they would doubtless suggest "friendly neighbors" or "Asa's military strength" as a possible explanation. But the Bible says it was "because Jehovah had given him rest." Secular historians might seek to connect the disaster that befell Israel in II Chronicles 15 to natural causes, but the scripture says simply, "God did vex them with all adversity." (15:6). Further we read in verse two, "Jehovah is with you, while ye are with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you." The lesson to us is obvious.

## The Center of the Life

"They feared Jehovah, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away." II Kings 17:33.

This is syncretism—the union of conflicting beliefs. Do you know any one that does this? They simply added God to their collection. As a result, in their effort to worship both God and their own gods, they did neither, especially did they not truly worship God.

Many think of religion as a little adjunct to their lives—just a side thing, a little hobby. But God says that it is your life, the very center and core of your being.

## A Charged Book

The Bible is like something that is charged with electricity. When you touch it by perusing its pages you get a spark. Sometimes there is a dead touch and no spark, but the Bible is charged nevertheless.

## Difficult to Believe

To Dwight L. Moody a man said, "I find it very difficult to believe——." "Believe whom?" Moody interrupted. The man didn't finish his sentence, but, as if hit by a thunderbolt, turned and walked away.

## LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

Salvation is indeed by grace (let us not fail to give that truth its proper place and emphasis)—by the favor of God, wholly unmerited; eternal life is the free gift of God, and for a gift that is free we pay not one small penny even as part payment, we do not one smallest service in return; otherwise we cannot truly say that it is free! So salvation is altogether by grace—either that, or it is not by grace at all. Let us hold fast this exceedingly precious, comforting truth, no matter what other cherished notions we have to give up.

But is a gift any less free because I must walk to the post office to claim it? Or (to use a scriptural illustration) was Naaman's cleansing any less by the grace of God because he must wash seven times in Jordan? Or the man born blind: did he receive his sight on any other basis than "by grace through faith" because he must go to Siloam and wash his eyes? No works of merit these, but only the exercise and manifestation of the faith by which they came into possession of gifts that God was freely offering. Illustrations could be multiplied; for so it has ever been. If we think of baptism as the reaching out, in the Lord's appointed way, of faith to lay hold of the salvation freely offered us by His grace, all the difficulty involved in this question vanishes and the seeming contradiction fades away. We can accept the statements concerning baptism in their plain, obvious significance without surrendering one smallest part of the comforting assurance contained in the scriptural teaching of salvation by grace through faith.

There is another point which should be given emphasis in connection with this subject of baptism. He who is truly converted to the Lord will scarcely raise the question concerning any of His commandments, "Is obedience to this essential to my salvation?" It will be his earnest desire to be well-pleasing to the Lord in all things, even in those things for which he sees no special purpose. As with the six hundred in the charge of the light brigade, so it is with him: it is not his to reason why. The question of immediate concern is, "Is this what the Lord wants me to do?" Assured that it is, he renders prompt and willing obedience. It is unthinkable that he will refuse to obey because he does not see the reason for it. Indeed, there is no greater manifestation of faith than that of humbly walking in the way of His commandments when no specific purpose or design can be discovered.

For faith is the one indispensable prerequisite to all acceptable obedience. "Without faith it is impossible to be well-pleasing unto God." And it is not faith in baptism, nor in any design of baptism, that counts, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. This statement will scarcely be challenged; but we believe that there is danger—real danger—that it will be overlooked, and that consequently salvation will come to be thought of as depending upon one's ability to comprehend the fine points of a system rather than upon the finished work of the Savior. These principles should



help much in settling the once much mooted "rebaptism question." What if there is confusion in the mind of the believer in regard to the precise point on the highway of faith where he crosses the boundary line into the city of salvation—let him continue on that highway according to instructions and he will not fail to enter. He who is baptized because of his faith in Jesus as the Son of God and in submission to His will is baptized for, in order to, "eis," the remission of his sins.

Because Peter said, "Be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ," some have inferred that the command of Jesus in Matt. 28:19 ("baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit") was no longer in force. Yet it was not many days before this day of Pentecost that Jesus uttered it. And in the meantime the disciples had been waiting for the Holy Spirit to come before beginning their ministry. And the "Great Commission," of which that was a part, was to apply "unto the consummation of the age." (RV, margin.) So, according to this theory, Jesus gave His disciples certain instructions; then, not many days later, before they were put into effect, the Holy Spirit countermanded them! The simple truth of the matter is that "in the name of Jesus" means (according to Thayer's Greek Lexicon) by His command and authority; so, if they baptized in His name, they baptized "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," for this is what He commanded and authorized to be done.

**THE GIFT OF THE SPIRIT.** Grammatically, this expression may be interpreted subjectively or objectively. According to the first, the Holy Spirit is regarded as the giver; according to the second, as the gift. That the latter is the meaning intended seems evident from the following considerations. When Peter, not long afterward, was testifying to the Sanhedrin concerning the exaltation of Jesus, he said, "And we are witnesses of these things; and so is *the Holy Spirit, Whom God hath given to them that obey Him.*" (Acts 5:32.) And Paul, writing to Christians but recently converted from heathenism, said, "Therefore he that rejecteth, rejecteth not man, but God, Who *giveth His Holy Spirit unto you.*" (I Thess. 4:8). Unquestionably then, the Holy Spirit is Himself a gift to the believer.

Furthermore, Paul reminded the Corinthians, although they fell far short of being the sort of Christians they should have been and so received rebuke and admonition from the apostle, that they were a temple of God in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt. (I Cor. 3:16). And in a later chapter (6:19) he said to them, "Or know ye not that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God?" Likewise in the eighth he has much to say concerning the indwelling spirit. After declaring that those who are in the flesh cannot please God, he adds: "But ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." Our ability to please Him, then, depends upon the presence of the Holy Spirit within us. And every one who belongs to the Lord has the Spirit; "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." (v. 9). In view of the

context, it is not the disposition of Christ that is in view here, but (as in the sentence immediately preceding) the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit. Thus it becomes abundantly clear that the child of God does receive the Spirit as a gift from God.

This is not to say that the Spirit is not also a liberal giver, a bestower of gifts according to His will. For the Spirit is a person, and not merely an influence, or the Word, as anyone can discover from personal study. That preacher was quite wrong who held his Bible up before his congregation and said, "This is all the Holy Spirit we have today." Men of old spoke as they were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and thus we have the scriptures. They are closely related, but not identical. And Peter speaks not of gifts, but of the gift, of the Spirit; nor does he specify any particular gift which He was to bestow. So, with these facts before us, our conclusion is that the promised "gift of the Spirit" is the Holy Spirit Himself.

AND THE LORD ADDED. In the Greek Testament the word "eclesia" (church) does not occur in this chapter. In verse 41 it is simply "there were added that day about three thousand souls"; and in verse 47, "And the Lord added together day by day those being saved." The American Standard translates it "to them"; the Revised Standard "to their number." Later (5:14) it is said that "believers were added to the Lord," and (11:24) "much people was added unto the Lord." Being added to the Lord, they became members of His body, which is the church; and so the church grew from day to day.

---

## BAPTISM — IS IT OPTIONAL?

Maurice Clymore

Many who claim to teach only the word of God begin speaking for themselves when they come to water baptism. Noted preachers, and some not so noted, are heard to say, 'I'm an—— or a —— and, of course, I'm expected to believe that baptism is, or is not, by immersion only, but if you believe some other way, I do not fall out with you,' or again we hear, "Baptism has nothing whatsoever to do with salvation any more than church (denominational) membership does. Now, of course, I think every one should join a church, etc., etc." All is optional with the individual as far as the word of God is concerned. But the word of God does not say it that way. Baptism is taken out of its God-given place and classified with denominational membership, which is nowhere taught in the word of God. Baptism is treated as though it had no more scriptural foundation than denominational membership, yet if one choose to become a member of a denomination practicing baptism (in one or more of its forms?) baptism becomes a must, or else. Creeds of men make baptism as taught in the word optional, but when practiced according to the creeds it is necessary.

On the day of Pentecost baptism was not optional, for Peter by inspiration said, "Repent ye, and be baptized *everyone* of you

in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." They were added after they received the word of God and were baptized. It was not optional when Peter commanded the household and friends of Cornelius to be baptized. Ananias did not leave it optional with Paul when he was sent to tell him what to do. The Eunuch would have hardly gone out of his way to request baptism if Philip had told him it was optional. Our Savior, though without sin, insisted that John baptize Him, that He might fulfill all righteousness. Doctrines of men pervert the word of God.

---

## A SWEET SINGER OF ISRAEL GOES HOME

"As shadows, cast by cloud and sun,  
Flit o'er the summer grass,  
So in Thy sight, Almighty One,  
Earth's generations pass.  
And while the years, an endless host,  
Come pressing swiftly on,  
The brightest names that earth can boast  
Just glisten and are gone."

Loyal friends sang this song by the body of Claude Martin-dale, who had often helped them sing the Wondrous Story. Truly God had made him a bright name to the saints in Indiana and afar.

"God has given me ability and talent in singing," he said. Humbly, ably, gladly, joyously he used that grace of singing for his Savior. In revivals or worship, in times of grief or rejoicing, his songs brought "words in season," "words of life and beauty" to multitudes. God comforted and strengthened many aching hearts through this servant.

"By God's strength I will be faithful." With these words, Brother Martindale accepted the work of an elder. He met the divine pattern: meekness, love for souls, holy wisdom, and aptness to teach. He walked by the Spirit.

"If God is willing, I hope to be alive when Jesus comes." His oft stated hope God will answer, and (for the present) has answered with something very far better . . . to depart and to be with Christ. Now heaven is dearer to us; our longing increases for Christ's return, for the glad resurrection of His own, and for the Home-Coming in the air. Praise God, we shall sing with him again!

"The dead in Christ, shall rise first . . ."

"And they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." Daniel 12:3.

James Hardison.

The inward man is what he feeds upon. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." There can come no spirituality from the comic section, nor from the sports page, barely a crumb of the spiritual from any other page. Knowing, as you do, what people read, you should have little difficulty in accounting for so few enjoying spiritual health.—**Truth Advance.**

# THE CURRICULUM OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Dennis Allen  
The Scriptures

The curriculum of the New Testament church was not determined on the basis of experimentation and human judgment. From the Master Teacher Himself they received the content of their message. At the beginning of the church, the Old Testament was the only scripture available to the saints. At this time it was widely circulated among the Jews, being read in all the synagogues and often found in private homes. The Christians thus had the advantage of all the history of God's dealings with the Jews. In their preaching and teaching full use was made of these Scriptures, for their minds had been opened to understand them and they now saw that they predicted the very things they had seen with their own eyes in regard to the Christ. The Old Testament Scriptures thus were taught because of their revelation of Christ. Their proper study would make "a workman, that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth." (II Tim. 2:15).

## The Oral Teaching

Though the four Gospels and the Letters to the churches were not written during the earliest years of the church, the saints received an authentic account of the facts concerning the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus from the apostles upon which to build their faith. Since the apostles were guided by the Spirit "into all truth", those who received their teaching had as trustworthy a foundation as those who read the inspired writings which were given later. This oral teaching concerning Christ is often referred to as the "tradition" (II Thess. 2:15; 3:6; I Cor. 11:2).

## The Apostle's Writings.

The Epistles to the churches were written and gradually put into general circulation while the church was still young to give the Christians a deeper conception of the meaning of the new life and instructions pertinent to their daily problems. Those who taught the word of life were warned not to go beyond what was written, neither were they to take from it. They were to declare "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

However, it should not be overlooked that even the inspired writers related the precious truths they sought to convey with current life. Numerous illustrations were gathered from the world about them to forcefully set forth these spiritual truths.

In warfare it is the soldier, his weapons, his armor, his shield, his wages. In government, the commonwealth, its citizens, their responsibilities and privileges, appear in the apostles' writings. In the world of labor, the slave and the skilled artisan, the finished product, the possibility that a piece of work may be returned by the employer, rejected because of failure to meet specifications, all become illustrations which Paul uses. (Wuest, **By-Paths in the Greek New Testament.** pp. 43-44).

## The Ordinances

The educational value of the ordinances has received very

little attention in the past, but a careful examination of the New Testament will show that they had a great significance in the educational processes of the early church.

*Baptism*—This was the initiatory ordinance and from the beginning was required of every convert. It was regarded as the consummating act of faith by which persons come into Christ (Gal. 3:26, 27). Paul brings out its educational significance most clearly in Romans 6:3, 4, in which he says:

Or are ye ignorant that all we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

The faith, which the apostles preached as necessary to salvation, was no mere intellectual assent which could be held while the life remained as it was before. It was an act by which a man came into personal contact with Christ and resulted in the new birth. This total conversion of the inner man in which the control of the whole life was handed over to Christ, being an actual break with the past, involved an outward expression of that break with the former life. Baptism thus symbolized the complete break with the old life and the entrance into all the blessings which were to be found in Christ Jesus. Baptism thus had a great educational significance for the young convert.

*The Lord's Supper*—Under the Levitical system, God made extensive use of symbolism in educating the Jews. The Passover, the temple and its service, the sacrificial system are outstanding examples of teaching by the use of symbolism. These were all a foreshadowing of the things to come and form the basis of much teaching in the New Testament, but the Lord established one ordinance in the church for perpetual observance until He comes which is primarily symbolical.

Its observance was to bring back to the believer's mind the death of Christ on Calvary which brought to him forgiveness of sins and restored fellowship with God. It also expressed the union of the believers with one another because of their union with their common Lord and recalled to their minds His sure return.

The provision against formalism in this ordinance was the simple command: "Let a man examine himself, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For any one who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself." (I Cor. 11:28, 29. R.S.V.) This simple requirement and its accompanying warning had great educational significance. for it provided for the personal examination of the heart. The controls were to be internal, not merely external.

To the humble, faithful disciple who thus examined himself how rich, meaningful and sanctifying in its tendencies was this ordinance! Could any believer have thus exercised his heart and still have retained lust, pride, vanity or revenge therein? Thus we see in a measure the great educational significance of the Lord's Supper.

## Prayer

Prayer was an important part of the curriculum of the early church. The apostles believed that prayer was essential to living the new life before the world in a manner that would magnify their Master. (Acts 4:29, 30). The educational value of prayer in increasing the knowledge of God's will and in purifying and ennobling the life can be readily seen. Through prayer they had a direct approach to their Teacher and Lord. Prayer undergirded all the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). Without it the educational program would have been a miserable failure.

## Pagan Learning

To discern what was *not* included in the curriculum is probably just as important as an understanding of that which was. What was the attitude of the church toward the pagan learning of the day? The early church faced a world that put great stress on education.

Not until the dawn of the eighteenth century do we find a higher state of intellectual activity and enlightenment than that presented in the Graeco-Roman world at the beginning of the Christian era. As fine a type of scholarly research and investigation was carried on in the first century as we know today. The chief difference is that their facilities were not nearly so numerous or effective as those at the command of modern scholarship. Surely we may safely say that the intellectual competency was as great and the effort as eager and diligent. (Dana, *The New Testament World*. p. 143).

Literature, philosophy, architecture, mechanics, law and medicine were taught in . . . "universities" at Rome, Massilia, Athens, Rhodes, Tarsus, Pergamum. Libraries were very common. Grammar schools, corresponding somewhat to our high schools, were to be found in most provincial towns and in a few of these there were schools of a still higher grade, the rhetorical schools giving instruction and training in oratory. (Marique, *History of Christian Education*. Vol. 1, p. 12).

Did the Christians regard the learning which could be obtained in these schools as essential to a well-rounded education? Paul, who probably was better acquainted with the pagan learning than any of the others, states clearly his attitude toward it:

Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. . . . (Col. 2:8).

For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He that taketh the wise in their craftiness: and again, The Lord knoweth the reasonings of the wise, that they are vain. (I Cor. 3:19.)

O Timothy, guard that which is committed unto thee, turning away from the profane babblings and oppositions of the knowledge which is falsely so-called; which some professing have erred concerning the faith. (I Tim. 6:20, 21).

These passages indicate that Paul had little respect for the philosophies of men and the so-called wisdom of his day, but on the contrary regarded it as very dangerous. Instead of improving the mind and broadening the outlook as many would think, Paul viewed it only as corrupting the mind and hindering the entrance of the glorious Gospel of Christ. Paul did have an ac-

quaintance with the current writings of his day evidently, for he several times quotes from them (Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12). He did not, however, consider such learning necessary to a true education. He rather deliberately avoided giving a philosophical presentation of the Gospel even when he was trying to reach those who delighted in philosophy (I Cor. 2:1-4).

#### Scope of the Curriculum

Luke gives probably the most compact statement of the curriculum of the church in these words: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers." (Acts 2:42). The curriculum included the whole of their life activity. The emphasis was not put so much on a body of facts to be learned as on attitudes to be developed and results to be attained (John 8:31, 32; 17:3).

From another viewpoint Paul gives the scope of the curriculum in these words:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. (Phil. 4:8).

Does this seem too narrow for present day conditions and needs? Paul, writing by inspiration said that it would make the man of God "complete, furnished completely unto every good work." (II Tim. 3:17). Is any man narrow minded if he truly knows Christ, "in whom are *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" (Col. 2:2, 3)?

When fully appropriated the curriculum of the New Testament church is fully adequate. Peter assured those who had obtained "a like precious faith" that "his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us . . ." (I Pet. 1:1, 3).

(The author recognizes that New Testament Christians received training in the honorable trades, crafts and professions through which they earned a livelihood. This article simply endeavors to point out the scope of the subject matter taught in the New Testament church. In a future article we hope to discuss the function of the home in the educational system.)

---

#### LOYALTY AND DEVOTION

For a touching story of loyalty and devotion read 2 Samuel 23:13-17. It is the story of men who risked their lives for the sake of their king, not because he had ordered them to do so, but because he had merely expressed the longing of his heart for a drink of water from the well of his boyhood days. They acted under no compulsion except the compulsion of love for their king.

Can we not see in this incident a picture of the devotion which a Christian should manifest toward his David, the Lord Jesus Christ? Thus there should be no quibbling as to whether one must do this or that in order to be saved; it should be enough to know that it is well-pleasing to the Lord—that it is according to His desire. We need more of that spirit in our Christian service,

## SIGNS OF THE TIMES

Come ancient traveler on your way  
And tell us now the time of day;  
For we would know from wiser minds  
The meanings of the signs of times.

The seething turmoil and unrest,  
O'er land and sea, from east to west,  
Bids fair to shake the very ground  
And bring God's righteous judgments down

But tell us now, with word and pen,  
When thinkest thou these things begin?  
How long will God withhold His hand  
From righteous cleansing of the land?

No place within their hearts they hold  
For love and grace, so often told;  
Nor will they heed the warning signs  
Of coming judgment in our times.

As was the days of Noah, when  
He preached so long to sinful men,  
So will it be on that great day  
When all their works are swept away.

Nor work nor deed shall stand the test  
Of righteous judgments then, unless  
Such works be builded by our hand  
Through faith that's in God's Perfect Man.

Edward Vernon Wood.

---

### ARE WE WAITING FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN?

Paul teaches us that it is characteristic of God's people to be looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ. (Titus 2:13.) The Apostle himself loved Christ's appearing. (2 Tim. 4:8.) The Thessalonians were converted "to wait for His Son from heaven." (1 Thess. 1:10.) Many Christians do not have this attitude. There seem to be two reasons for this, namely:

Because the conscience is not ready to meet the Lord. Like Adam, when he became conscious of sin, there is a natural tendency to wish to avoid God's presence.

Because the affections are not right—there is no real love for the Lord. It does not seem possible for a worldly person to love His appearing. One might study prophecy day and night, with no personal, loving wish to see Him. "And the Spirit and the Bride say, 'Come.'" The last verse but one in the Bible says, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—A. C. Harrington.