

THE WORD AND WORK

(Volume XLVI, January 1952)

THE SAVIOR OF THE WORLD

I cannot tell why He whom angels worship
Should set His love upon the sons of men.
Or why as Shepherd He should seek the wanderers
And bring them back, I know not how or when.

But this I know, that He was born of Mary,
When Bethlehem's stable was His only home.
And that at Nazareth He loved and labored,
And so the Savior, Savior of the world is come.

I cannot tell how patiently He suffered
When with His peace He graced this place of tears,
Or how upon the cross His heart was broken,
The crown of pain to three and thirty years.

But this I know—He heals the broken-hearted
And stays their sin, and calms their lurking fear.
And lifts the burden from the heavy-laden
For He the Savior, Savior of the world is here.

I cannot tell how He will win the nations,
How He will claim His earthly heritage,
And satisfy the needs and aspirations
Of East and West, of sinner and of sage.

But this I know: all flesh shall see His glory
And He will reap the harvest He has sown.
And some glad day His Name will shine in splendor
When He the Savior, Savior of the world is known.
Anonymous

WORDS IN SEASON

R. H. B.

"FOR GOD IS GOOD"

Over and over in Israel's ritual and worship recurs the refrain "For he is good and his lovingkindness endureth for ever." (See 1 Chron. 16:34; 2 Chron. 5:13; 7:3; the first verse of Psalms 106, 107, 118, 136; and other references). This constant emphasis indicates somewhat of the importance of that oft-repeated truth. For it is a fundamental truth, and constantly to be kept before the minds of God's people. Things happen in this world, and not rarely in our own lives, that might tempt us to doubt the goodness of God. Thus, for example, during the horrors of the recent world-war it was said by some that "either God cannot, or else He will not, stop this carnage: if He can not He is not all-mighty; if He could, but will not, He is

not good." Such is man's shortsighted judgment which takes no account of the essential factor of human sin and responsibility, and has no faith in the ultimate wisdom of God.

Or again, some will complain of an unjust and cruel fate, or of their hard circumstances, or of the inequalities of human lot—as in the book of Job we read, "One dieth in his full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet . . . and another dieth in bitterness of soul, and never tasteth of good" (Job. 21:23-26). The psalmist tells how he had stumbled at this point. "Surely God is good to Israel," he says, "even to such as are pure in heart. But as for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well-nigh slipped." It was "the prosperity of the wicked," and the bitterness of his own lot, that so perplexed him—even as it does many today. "So brutish was I, and ignorant," said he after he had seen his error—"I was as a beast before thee." (Ps. 73). That was indeed a dangerous slip. It was on this that Satan made his first attack. He raised a doubt of God's goodness in Eve's mind. There was something so good and so desirable in the forbidden fruit, he implied, that God was unwilling for her to enjoy it; that God was selfish—not at all concerned for her good, but only for Himself and His own glory. The fatal results of that lie appeared quickly. And the devil has been palming off the same lie upon gullible humanity even unto this day.

WHY WE TRUST GOD

The more fully we believe and realize that God is good, the more fully will we trust Him, and the more perfect will be our obedience to His will. But those who doubt His goodness will disregard His word and seek their advantage elsewhere. But God is good. He means well by us and for us, whatever present appearances may be. "O Jehovah of hosts, Blessed is the man that trusteth in thee." For He alone is good. There is an element of evil in the best of men, while they are in the flesh. (Matt. 7:11.) "None is good, save One, even God," said the Lord Jesus. (Mark 10:18.) But "God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all." (1 John 1:5.) In Him is no impure motive, no evil design; naught of malice or selfishness.

GOODNESS BASED ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

The manner of that goodness is set forth in many ways in the Bible. His goodness is founded upon His righteousness and justice. "Just and right is he." This is necessarily fundamental. As honesty and uprightness is the very foundation and framework of a true character among men, so must it be with God. Old Dr. Samuel Johnson in his last illness, lay in deep gloom and heaviness of heart. One of his friends brought a preacher to see him. "I hear, Dr. Johnson," he said, "that you are troubled and despondent—may I ask you why?" "Well, parson, to be plain with you, I fear I'm going to hell." "I don't believe in that doctrine!" exclaimed the preacher. "What difference does *that* make?" replied the honest, sensible Doctor. "But I believe that God is good" said the preacher. "So do I," said Dr. Johnson—"that's why I am afraid." And he was right that far. God would not be good if He were not just. Men in high authority who grant arbitrary pardon to criminals in order to political gain are themselves criminals. God can not grant unprincipled par-

dons. A man, it is said, must be just before he can be gracious: how much more does this apply to God. Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. Which is certainly true—but that is not *all* the truth.

GOODNESS ABOVE JUSTICE

God is just, but He is more than just: He is *good*. In his letter to the Romans Paul draws a distinction between uprightness (righteousness) and goodness. "Scarcely for a righteous man will one die; for peradventure for the *good* man someone would even dare to die." (Rom. 5:7.) That is to say, that one would hardly give his life for a man who is simply upright in his dealings. But for a *good* man there may be such devotion as would cause some even to be willing to die for him. A righteous man (in one sense) is fair and square, conscientious and scrupulous to do what is right and just. A good man is that also, but over and above that he is kind, sympathetic, merciful, helpful, self-sacrificing. For such a man someone might die. (The apostle goes on to show the surpassing greatness of the love of God, in that when we were not righteous nor good, Christ died for us.) There is more to God's goodness than bare justice. *God is love*. And, as someone has well said:

"Love has a hem to her garment that trails in the very dust:

It can reach the stains in the streets and lanes,

And because it can it must.

It cannot abide on the mountain—it must come down to the vale,

For it cannot find its fullness of mind

Till it falls on the lives that fail."

Such is the goodness of God—and in this goodness lies all our hope. It is the excellence of the glory of His character. When Moses in the mount asked that God might show him His glory, the Lord answered, "I will make all my goodness pass before thee." (Exod. 33:18, 19.) And see the recital of it in Exod. 34:5-7; where also He shows that His goodness is far from the easy-going good-naturedness which some attribute to Him. Restored Israel, having learned her lesson, will come *with fear* unto Jehovah and to His goodness in the latter days. (Hos. 3:5.) Yet—He is good and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness unto all them that call upon Him. (Ps. 86:5.)

HOW GOOD IS GOD?

If one should ask *how good* God is—only the redeemed of the Lord can answer that. It cannot be learned from words and sermons—it is a matter of experience. Hence the psalmist says, "O taste and see that Jehovah is good." When the sinner, lost and ruined, receives the free forgiveness and salvation; when the Prodigal returning finds loving welcome at his father's house; or when one forsaken by father and mother and all earthly friends, is taken up by the Lord (Ps. 27:10)—he has something to tell to others, and cause to sing of the great goodness of God. But the measure of it is not known till we see the cross of Christ—where the Son of God gave His all for us, that God might be just and the justifier of them that hath faith in Jesus. (Rom. 3:26.) My friend, if you

have never done so, come, taste and see for yourself that He is good and that His lovingkindness endureth for ever. And whosoever will may come and feast on the goodness of God.

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GIVING GOD A CLEAN PAGE

We get to the place where we "know all about it all." The great hindrance with many is that they "know" too much (1 Cor. 8:2).

If we would take our place as little children before the Lord and before His word, to learn *from Him*, there would be new light, new interest, and great help and profit.

It would mean giving up our preconceptions, our prejudices, our own ideas of how things ought to be and coming to God's word with new, wondering eyes, as though we had never seen it before—looking, listening, learning.

Self-seeking

"Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not."—Jer. 45:5

"Hitch your wagon to a star." This was the poetic advice of an American philosopher. High ideals are commendable. Ambition has its place in life. But ambition is like a two-edged sword. It can become dangerous, both to him who is ambitious and to others against whom his ambitious plans may be directed. "I charge thee fling away ambition; by that sin fell the angels," Shakespeare lets Cardinal Wolsey say in *Henry the Eighth*.

One of the glaring faults of modern education is that youths are continually being urged to seek great things for themselves. They are given in words and pictures the "success stories" of men who have achieved a fortune or social or political prominence. Material prosperity or social standing are made the standards of success.

The deplorable fact is that most ambition is sinfully selfish. It leaves out of the reckoning the will of God for one's own life and the proper consideration for the welfare of the neighbor.

May we not all "seek great things"? Indeed we may. The prohibition lies in the words "for thyself." "It is the element of selfishness that is here condemned. Selfishness is one of the most prolific and at the same time most corroding sins in the human heart. We must continually be on guard against it. The best antidote against seeking great things, such as honor and wealth, for ourselves is to seek the greater and the higher things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. "Set your affections on things above and not on things on the earth." And, "Look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others."

Thou humble Jesus, who hast atoned for the sins of pride and selfishness, forgive us, and grant us the grace of humility and unselfish service. Amen.

—Selected.

NEWS AND NOTES

Huntingdon, Tenn.: "As I send in my renewal to Word and Work I want to express again my appreciation for its uplifting words of spiritual food, which I prize more than those from any other source, aside from God's Word, the Holy Scriptures themselves. To my way of thinking, the plain literal interpretation (wherever possible) put on the scriptures by the writers of 'Word and Work' seems nearer right than any other."—Mrs. Aline G. Rose.

Year End Greeting

"Looking back on the year that has gone, nothing bears reviewing better than acts of self-sacrifice, and nothing brings greater reward. While we must not allow ourselves to be unduly depressed by a review of the past, we must allow it to have a salutary influence upon us. 'But here is my one aspiration, so forgetting what is behind me and reaching out for what is ahead of me, I am pressing onward toward the goal, to win the prize to which God through Jesus Christ is calling us upward' (Phil. 3:13, 14—Williams Trans.).

"The trials, the persecutions, the unjust criticisms of evil men—sometimes even of false brethren—these should neither check your efforts, chill your zeal, weaken your faith, dim your hope, nor cause you to turn from your Lord nor leave your first love. 'Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord.' (1 Cor. 15:58)."—H. N. Rutherford.

W. S. Hoar, minister of Linton, Indiana, church was with the Palmers Prairie church of Christ, out of Sullivan, Indiana, in a meeting the latter part of 1951. Four were baptized during the meeting and three others have confessed Christ in his week-night appointments since, one at each service.

The West Point church at Farmington, Michigan, bordering Detroit, reports increased interest in the last few weeks. Four came for baptism at one meeting and one at another,

along with another response or two. These responses came on the heels of a gospel meeting conducted by W. S. Hoar of Linton, Indiana. Brother J. Scott Greer is the faithful minister of this congregation.

CLUB OF 72 NAMES

A club of seventy-two names for the Word and Work has been sent in by Mrs. George H. Leffler, who is a member of the Ormsby church, Louisville. She is far out in the lead of all clubbers thus far. We doubt that she would let anyone pass her! Maurice Clymore of Dugger, Indiana, ranks second with thirty. Others have in the twenties, nineteen, eleven, ten and on down to four. We are off to a good start for 1952, but several hundred have expired as usual at the dawning of the new year. Let us pray and work for a greatly increased list for 1952.

Later: A club of 31 names has just come in from W. S. Hoar of Linton, Indiana.

LET'S JUST SUPPOSE

Comments concerning our quarter raise in price on clubs and singles for the Word and Work have all been sympathetic and encouraging, but let us just suppose that some are displeased that we are asking more—so much so that they withhold their names in protest. We think surely none will do this, but at least our friends deserve a statement concerning reasons for price increase.

The printer's bill alone for December Word and Work, not including the insert, but including mailing envelopes and postage, averaged $10\frac{1}{2}\epsilon$ per copy, which would come to \$1.26 for the twelve issues for the year. And this does not take into consideration extras we need to print, exchanges, complimentary copies or office help. We must continually make new name plates, mark up the date on renewals, change addresses, pay postage on return copies, address envelopes for mailing, sort them according to states and cities for second class, enter money received on cash book, make zone statements, etc. Only through the sale of Bibles, books

and church supplies are we able to carry on, which in turn calls for more office hours.

Our subscription list is not large; two or three thousand extra names would bring down the average cost. The sale of Bibles, books, Sunday School literature, etc. supplements subscription money and helps us keep out of the red.

Thus if you have waited until after the December 31 deadline to renew for the Word and Work count it a privilege to have a little extra share in sending out the gospel through the printed page.—Publisher.

Changes in Various Churches

William Cook informs us that he has resigned work with the Hapeville, Georgia, congregation to take effect when the brethren there locate a new man.

Bernard Wright has left the work at Crowley, La., and is now with his parents at Pekin, Indiana. Two or three fields of labor are being considered by Brother Wright for future work.

J. Scott Greer and the church at Farmington, Michigan, are interested in securing a new man for the work there, preferably a young minister. Brother Greer has done a long and commendable work with this congregation. In the event of such a change Brother Greer will be available for more evangelistic work, a work which he loves to do and does well, with the blessing of the Lord.

Spaulding at Sellersburg Home

F. S. Spaulding, having discontinued his fine, fruitful ministry at Borden, Indiana, is now acting as overseer of the Sellersburg Children's Home, and also is serving as assistant minister to Brother Howard Marsh at Sellersburg. Sister Spaulding is matron of boys at the Home, succeeding Miss Evelyn Coultas, who is now Mrs. Luin Wynn.

The Borden, Indiana, church is a fine, large congregation, which has been a staunch supporter of the truth of the Gospel for many years. The work responded wonderfully to the ministry of Brother Spaulding, making an unusual growth during the years he was with them.

Buras, La.: "I have just come back from Jennings, La., where Bro. Richard Ramsey, my family, and myself had gone to watch for the new year to come in. The meeting in Jennings was soul-refreshing. Amid the wonderful singing, praying, preaching and only a fellowship that can be found in truehearted Christians we said good-bye to 1951 and greeted 1952. The church house was filled with the Lord's children visiting from all around. Practically every congregation in La. was represented. The women of Jennings served refreshments at the 10 p. m. recess which were very tasty. Brother Ivy Istre did a wonderful job seeing that each preacher and each congregation represented had an opportunity to be heard.

"The Boothville work continues with the help of our Lord. Interest continues to grow and we are now making arrangements to start building our church house. Our building fund has grown to \$240.00. Brother and Sister Leon Buras are going to donate \$500.00, totaling some \$740, which will make a down payment on the material. Then we will pay the balance in monthly payments of about \$30 monthly. We hope to build in January or February of this year, the Lord willing."—Francis Holdeman.

JENNINGS WATCHMEETING

New Orleans, La.: "The New Year's Eve Watchmeeting in Jennings was one of the grandest spiritual feasts I have ever attended. Brother Ivy Istre and the Jennings Church of Christ are surely being used mightily of the Lord.

"One of the many things which contributed to the success of the meeting was the presence of many young men. Several of these have attended Kentucky Bible College, or they are now in school at Kentucky Bible College. The influence of this school is beginning to have a tremendous effect in Louisiana, and we are thankful to the Lord for those faithful teachers and friends at the college.

"On December 30 Stanford Broussard preached for the Seventh and Camp Streets Church of Christ in New Orleans. On the radio program he spoke in French. Stanford's messages were of great help

to the church. He too has attended Kentucky Bible College, and his work is another proof of the good that this school is doing.

"It is my hope and prayer that more and more young men will give their lives to the work of preaching the gospel, and that Kentucky Bible College may continue in the great work which it has begun."—Richard Ramsey.

SERIES ON ROMANS

With this issue of Word and Work Brother Boll launches a new series of expositions on the Book of Romans. His book, Lessons on Romans, is out of print. His new monthly expositions will be largely a reprint of his former book with

changes and added thoughts along. Do not miss this fine series. A limited supply of the January issue will be available to new subscribers or to those who wish extra copies.

Brother and Sister E. L. Jorgenson are soon to leave Louisville for two months in the West. They intend to drive, going by the Southern winter route through Texas, to reach California about Feb. 1. For February and March their mail and residence address will be: Hollywood Hotel, Hollywood 28, California—though they will be further north a part of these months. This is the hotel in which the brethren of the Hollywood Blvd. church have their assembly rooms.

KENYA COLONY, EAST AFRICA, NOV. 21, 1951

Notes from Charles E. Gruver

We arrived in Kenya just two years ago today, Nov. 21. During this time I have been in daily Bible classes with seventy boys and girls. Thus far I have had freedom with the Word. Recently, however, Government officials have tried to restrict me to two periods per week, instead of five. It was my interest in the Word that brought me to Africa. Now if the door is closed I shall consider myself free to go elsewhere.

A teacher just flew down from Ethiopia visiting these parts. He and two other American Christian teachers were fired for expressing their religious views. Seven Ethiopian boys were baptized and were imprisoned for doing so. Such is the thorny path in Ethiopia for those who answered the call to be Christian teachers there.

Africa is a big boy now and will not submit himself to the spanking by John Bull. The spirit that made India free now boils in Egypt. These colonies have been thoroughly indoctrinated with Communism. A secret society like the Klu Klux Klan terrorizes the Christians, calling them out of their houses at night and forcing them to take self-condemning oaths unless they deny faith in Jesus.

I think the whole educational system is drifting toward ungodliness. Missions started these schools but the government is gradually assuming control.

I have been nearly four years in Africa. How little does a man know his future! To have spent twelve years out of my beloved U. S. A. was not the result of a studied plan. To let God lead is best.

THREE ZONES OF LIFE

There are three possible zones of life—the upper zone, which is the zone of victory, the low zone which is the zone of accepted defeat. In between is the middle zone of constant conflict. You will not stay long in it: either you will rise above it to the zone of victory, or sink down into a state of defeat. Christ gives victory.

RECEIVING

There are two sides to "receiving"—one passive, the other active. The gift is bestowed—you are the recipient of it. But after all it is not yours unless you avail yourself of it and appropriate it. The Greek word for "receive" (*lambano*) means both "receive" and "take." Have you taken what God has given you in Christ?

“GIVE US FIRST PRINCIPLES”

Stanford Chambers

Upon discovery of the lack of a particular vitamin in the daily food of some under-nourished children attention was directed at once to the correction of this deficiency and a different diet was provided. After awhile it was found that an overplus of the wanting vitamin was being supplied resulting in ailments of another kind, another demonstration of the importance of balance in the daily food intake.

People's spiritual ills are not so carefully diagnosed. The importance of balanced spiritual rations is not stressed, is indeed not realized. If "the inner man is renewed" day by day" it is upon proper spiritual food taken, digested, and assimilated. Souls are not nourished on wind or husks or cut-and-dried peppers. Spiritual ills result from unbalanced spiritual diet whether deficient in certain vitamins or containing an overplus of certain complexes. Some having long had an unbalanced ration forced upon them have a weakened appetite for spiritual food at all, being unaware that there is anything better than the pabulum they have always known; would be suspicious if something appetizing were even suggested. "Sound doctrine" and something palatable are opposites according to the conception imposed upon their minds as to what "sound doctrine" is.

To the many sound doctrine is predominantly first-principle doctrine, and the preaching of it must give no uncertain sound in its denunciation of any and all religious competitors on or liable to be on the field. Failure to refute any teaching or practice to the contrary must be set down as compromise or inability. Nothing must go unchallenged. Loyalty to the "sound doctrine" plea demands emphasizing the distinctive marks required to justify one certain "unsectarian course" distinctly marked out for the faithful to follow or be lost.

Then "sound doctrine" must (as Eph. 3:21 is interpreted?) "give glory to the church." A list of professedly sound tracts offers ten tracts on the church to one on Him who is the Head of the church. The ill effects of an unbalanced diet are plainly to be seen, and some teachers and writers distressed at the symptoms are discussing the out-of-hand situation. Some are trying sincerely to diagnose the undeniably existent malady. What important vitamin is lacking? Many are in no attitude to accept the correct answer to that question. The wanting element? The *correct* answer can be *positively* refuted!

Sound doctrinists go forth professedly to preach the Gospel. (And Christ is the Gospel. He is the "way of salvation," "the way and the truth and the life.") In reality they go forth to establish "the true church," on which, judged by the emphasis laid, salvation depends more than on Christ! That is, you are Christ's and saved by Him by virtue of being identified with the "true church." So sea and land are compassed to make converts to the "true church." Men and women are extricated from the meshes of denominationalism

who are soon made two-fold more sectarian than they were before. They are translated from the power of a tangible, visible ecclesiasticism unto another less tangible and less easily held responsible, which even denies its own existence! Nevertheless many people, even preachers, are intimidated by the dictatorial policies of the recognized powers that be, fearing the coercion executed upon those who do their own thinking and dare refuse to conform. So uniformity of phraseology is made essential to speaking the same thing; uniformity is taken for unity.

Now Christ is greater than the church of which He is the Head. He is "the Savior of the body." You cannot have the *true* "true church" without Him. And the true church is not His foundation. He is *its* foundation. He is its living Head, not a far-distant, non-active figure-head. They are most faithfully and loyally his who look yonder where the Head is as their headquarters rather than to any "religious center" on earth. To do otherwise is to be off center.

We venture a suggestion, and at the same time venture that it will not be observed: For the over-worked "sound doctrine" substitute the marginal "healthful teaching." By the "healthful teaching" divinely commended to us all things can be done unto edifying; leaving first principles we can go on toward perfection as the apostle exhorts; we can rise above the puerility of this petty strife; we can be strong in the Lord to exercise "forbearance" and the toleration of Romans 14, not setting at nought a brother even if he should be a religious vegetarian or an observer of "the day" as "unto the Lord." The fruit of the Spirit is not unsound.

"THE MISSION OF THE COMFORTER"

Frank Mullins

Jesus said: "He shall glorify me: for He shall take of mine, and declare it unto you" (John 16:14).

It is my firm conviction that the mission of the Holy Spirit in this church-age is just as vital to the Christian as the mission of God's Son when He became flesh that He might die on the cross for our sins. One can no more live the Christian life, or fulfil the will of God in one's life, or know the things of God, apart from the ministry of the Holy Spirit, than one can be forgiven sin apart from the shed blood of God's Son. What the blood of Christ is to the guilt of sin and the judgment for sin, the Holy Spirit is to the power of sin over our life and to the manifestation that "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us," and to the abundant joy-filled life of God's people. I had as soon attempt to point the sinner to salvation without the blood, as to point anyone to that new life in Christ apart from the Holy Spirit. There is a two-fold power in the gospel of the grace of God, each essential in its place and for which there is no substitute. The power in the blood to atone for sin, and the power of the in-dwelling Holy Spirit for manifesting the victorious life of Christ through every born-again soul. The mission of God's Son, when He emptied Himself and became flesh, was

a mission of death. He came into the world to "give His life a ransom for many." He partook of the flesh that "through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Heb. 2:14). The mission of the Holy Spirit in this age (and this church-age is as definitely the time of the personal ministry of the Holy Spirit, as was the time of the sojourn of God's Son in the earth the period of His personal ministry) is just the opposite to the mission of God's Son. His was a mission of death, that of the Holy Spirit is a mission of life. The Holy Spirit has come into the world to live, to live in and through God's people the life and will of God, to live and manifest the life of Christ through every blood-bought soul. These two fundamental truths are inseparable. The blood of Christ must be claimed by faith for its cleansing power so that one may stand in the presence of God justified. The Holy Spirit must then be trusted to take over, that we might walk in newness of life and put to death the deeds of the body, and to make known the things of God to a lost world.

The apostles were not sufficient in themselves to take the message of the grace of God to a lost world. They must wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It is the same message today, and our need as certain as theirs. It is the Holy Spirit who glorified God's Son. He it is who takes from the Son and declares unto us. We are but the channel through which He works and manifests the things of Christ. It is not the building up of our will-power and self-sufficiency that glorifies Christ, but to the contrary it is only when we receive the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead, that Christ is glorified. It is then the Holy Spirit takes over.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

There is a vital consideration here to a proper understanding of the mission of the Holy Spirit. It is the background upon which His mission is portrayed. The background of man's abject, miserable, helpless, hopeless state is his natural state or inherent resources. One of the great difficulties in making known the gospel of the grace of God, the power of God to save, is to get a lost soul to see that he is not only lost, but hopelessly and helplessly lost. That he has no strength by which he can ever lift himself up to heaven, no works of righteousness of his own which will ever make him acceptable to the Holy God. He must realize he is bankrupt before God, he has nothing in his hands to bring. That man who thinks he is too great a sinner to be saved, who acknowledges he is too weak to live the Christian life, is not far from the kingdom of God. Doubtless much nearer and easier to reach is he than the man who prides himself on his integrity, his will-power, his own righteousness, his good deeds and his honorable name among men. For the gospel is God's power to save, both in bringing man to God and washing him whiter than the snow and making of him a new creature in Christ, and in keeping and using him for God's glory.

The book of Romans presents this two-fold power of the Gospel—as well as the two-fold need of man—the power in the blood and the power in the indwelling Holy Spirit. It is upon the background of

man's guilt and bankrupt state before God that the power in the blood is revealed (Rom. 1:8-3:23, 24, 25). And it is upon the background of man's wretchedness in trying to do the will of God in the flesh that the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit is revealed (Rom. 7, 8). To the degree we realize this background of absolute failure and insufficiency in ourselves, shall we know and appreciate and approximate the gospel which is God's power to save. For example, I take a piece of white chalk and make a mark upon a black-board. And with the same piece of chalk, and as nearly as possible the same pressure, make a similar mark upon a white wall. You cannot see the mark upon the white wall, but can see the mark on the black-board. The reason is simple. The black-board is black and makes the white mark stand out clearly discernible to all. While the white wall, though the same chalk was used and an identical mark was made, does not let the mark be seen. Even so, when we try to portray or even understand the gospel upon the background of our own righteousness or good works or inherent resources of whatever sort, we neither see the gospel of the grace of God nor can we make it known to others. Our background is black—"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," "There is none righteous, no, not one." When we accept our place as sinners, as we are in God's sight and as He reveals to us, then the gospel of the grace of God is truly gospel, good news, then we realize the need of power outside of ourselves if we would be saved. Then from the depths of our soul we realize and say:

"Nothing in my hands I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for dress; Helpless, look to Thee for grace;
Vile, I to the fountain fly; Wash me, Savior, or I die."

As long as you pride yourself on your own righteousness or good deeds, or what have you, the blood of Christ will only be one among other things you might look to and will not be the completed work of God on the cross for your sins. As long as you look at anything else you can never truly sing: "Jesus paid it all, all to Him I owe; Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow." The gospel will not stand out in its clear light either to yourself or to those to whom you witness. It will be the blood of Christ plus something you have done, or who you are, and the true grace of God will be marred, or perverted. To the soul who knows the grace of God the gospel portrays the righteousness of God and man's sinfulness. When the Holy Spirit has brought the indictment against us, "for all have sinned," then He declares: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth to be the propitiation, through faith, in His blood. . . ."

LACEY ELROD

At various times and places during near 40 years past, I have come in contact with Brother Lacey Elrod. And always and everywhere he was regarded and beloved as a humble, faithful servant of God, and one who did his work as a teacher and preacher, ably and faithfully. He served his own generation in the will of God, and now has fallen asleep in Jesus, awaiting the promised Day of the Coming of the Lord.

R. H. B.

James H. Stribling

R. H. B.

It is not an "obituary" I am writing, but rather a brief life-sketch in remembrance and honor of one lately passed away—as I knew him, and knew of him—a great man and noble, whom it was my privilege to know during the latter half of his long life. I met him first in his home-town, Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. This was his birthplace, and there, a bare-foot boy, he spent his early years of privation and poverty; and to this town he also returned in the prime of manhood, after he had made the beginning of his ultimately vast fortune.

It was by his request that I came to Lawrenceburg in 1910. He had himself built a magnificent high-school building; and his plan was to give his town and county free use of it; reserving only one room in which the Bible should be taught every day to any and all who might choose to avail themselves of the opportunity thus given. This plan and purpose was carried out for many years according to the generous provision of Brother Stribling.

But back of all this enterprise lay a tale of mortal grief and of faith and hope and love; the story of which I will try to relate, and as nearly as I can in the way in which he himself told it to me.

J. H. Stribling was a man of such power and ability, that, had he been in public place he would have ranked among the most notable men of his generation. For executive ability, for wisdom and foresight and business acumen, and for force of character he had no equals. After having spent some years in the state of Texas, he settled down in Lawrenceburg for life. He was amazingly prosperous. In everything he undertook he was successful. His wealth grew from year to year. In all his dealings and transactions he was ruggedly honest and upright. He became more and more prominent—a successful, prosperous man of the world. And at that time his thoughts went no higher than that. He had one child. All the love he was capable of centered upon that little one. One night—it was near Christmas—the little girl, then about 4 years old, cried out during the night. The father rose up, and walked the floor with her; when suddenly she gave a gasp and died in his arms. "I can't tell you how I felt," he said. "Wife and I were simply crazy with sorrow. After the funeral I said to her, 'Let's go away from here.' So we took the train and traveled, north, south, east, west, anywhere, aimlessly hither and thither, hoping in some measure to forget our grief. But nothing helped. We landed in Dallas. My wife said, 'I would like to go up to Denton County where my folks live.' 'Go,' I said, 'and I'll go back home, and will be waiting for you.' After my return I was like a man in a daze. I took notice of nothing—had no interest in anything. Along in March the men were clearing ground on my farm, and burning brush at the foot of a dead tree, and I watched the flames shooting up through the hollow tree, high into the air. That as I remember was the first thing that arrested my attention, and gave me a little pleasure. When gradually I collected my reason, in the weeks that followed, one thought took pos-

session of me: If there is any hereafter (and I believed there was) I *must* see my little girl again. But I knew that being such as I was I could never go where that pure innocent child has gone. I made up my mind to find salvation.—“Brother Boll,” he said to me, “there is not a secret place on this farm (his farm was then about 9000 acres—much larger later)—where I haven’t knelt and called on God for Christ’s sake to save my poor soul. But I found no hope nor relief. One day my friend, W. R. King, an attorney in Lawrenceburg said to me, ‘Stribling, there’s a man preaching in town, and I think you would like to hear him. His name is T. B. Larimore.’ So I went with him.” On that night Brother Larimore preached a simple sermon on “What Must I Do to Be Saved?” and made it very plain; and at the close he said, “Whosoever will, let him come.” Stribling jumped up and said “I will”; made the good confession, and was forthwith baptized. From that day on he and all he had belonged to the Lord Jesus Christ.

God gave him another child—another little girl, so much like the one he lost as to seem as if God were giving him back what he had lost. This little one he loved almost insanely, and with daily, hourly anxious concern for its health. “When I am out on the farm,” he said to his wife, “if anything in the least should be wrong with the child, call me any hour of day or night, and I’m coming.” His anxiety for the child alarmed some of Brother Stribling’s friends, who feared that if anything should happen to her he might turn away from the Lord. So they asked Brother Larimore to write to him about it. The letter Brother Larimore wrote ran something as follows:

“Dear Brother Stribling:

“Your friends and all the church rejoice in your new-found faith and love. But they have a misgiving. They know how great is your love and your concern over the welfare of your little one, and they are afraid that if the Lord should see good in His wisdom to take this child also, that you might lose your faith. And they asked me to write you about this”

To which Brother Stribling replied:

“Dear Brother Larimore:

“I thank you for your letter and the concern you and the brethren feel for me. If this child should die, I don’t know what I would do or how I could bear it. But on this point you can rest assured—whatever may come or go, I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, now and henceforth and for ever.

Your brother in the Lord,

J. H. Stribling.”

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When the high-school building was completed I was the first teacher in the Bible Room. That was the session of 1910-11. I taught whoever would come—classes all day every school-day. On Monday nights I preached to the colored people in town. On Friday nights I gave a Bible lecture at the court-house. Sundays I preached part of the time for the church at Lawrenceburg, part of the time at

Mars Hill (Brother Larimore's old home and home church) and other Sundays at Sheffield, Ala. It was an over-full program, and I was fagged out when spring came. Then, just about school-close, an epidemic arose, and within one week my child was taken away—little girl about 2 years old. Among the things I could never forget was the loving sympathy of Brother Stribling toward me in my bereavement. "Brother Boll," he said, "I want you to bury your baby in my lot, where my child is buried." So there has been her little grave ever since. The inscription on the marker reads

"Madeline Boll

"Born June 23, 1909

"Died May 28, 1911

"Leaving us both richer and poorer."

But I could stay at Lawrenceburg no longer. I had preached at Portland Avenue in Louisville from January, 1904, to the time I took up the work at Lawrenceburg. During my 10 months' absence they had got no one else to preach there regularly. They wanted me to come back, and I wanted to go back; and since then have remained with the Portland Church. Brother J. E. Thornberry took up the Bible work at the Lawrenceburg Highschool, and did it for many years afterward. Frequently I have gone back to Lawrenceburg since both to preach and to visit the little grave.

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Of the rest of Brother Stribling's work—how and why the Bible-class work was at last discontinued, and the building sold to the county; and of the Orphanage Brother Stribling started on his place, its many buildings and provisions, and the church-house he built on the grounds, and the 22,000 acres of land he deeded to the orphanage—of that let someone else write. I admired Brother Stribling for his wonderful ability and wisdom, his qualities of head and heart. I used to marvel how perfectly he had all his work in hand: getting calls from all parts of his farm, from his sawmills, from his bank (The First National of L.)—asking for orders, demanding counsel and instant, sometimes very difficult decisions, which he never failed to give on a moment's notice. But greater than all his abilities was his unwavering righteousness and devotion to his God, and his love toward all men. Once, when I held a short meeting for the church at Lawrenceburg he had me to hold daily services at his bank, at the opening hour—on *his* time. "You surely must be conducting your bank-business on a high level" I remarked to him one day, "or you couldn't be having religious meetings in your bank with your employees." "Why, Brother Boll," he answered, "I wouldn't be in any business in which I couldn't have the Lord Jesus Christ as my Partner. During all this depression, nor at any other time, did we ever foreclose on anybody." Some may wonder and ask, "How could he run a bank on such principles?" Well he did, and suffered no great loss by it. On Lord's day he taught the Bible, made talks, waited on the table; and on all days he served the Lord.

Now he has fallen asleep in Jesus. It was a long and busy life. He met all its problems and trials by faith in his Lord. He lived to the glory of God, and his works follow him.

THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS*

R. H. B.

* Many calls have been received for the booklet on Romans which for two years or more has been out of print. It has been decided to print it anew, but in the form of a series of articles ("Lessons") appearing monthly in *Word and Work*, which will be gathered into book-form when the series is completed. Two reasons prompted this decision: (1) the financial cost of reprinting the booklet as a whole; and (2) the desire to rewrite in part and to enlarge upon the text of the first edition.

As we enter upon the study of this great New Testament book, the Epistle of Paul to the Church in Rome, it is well to consider briefly who wrote the epistle, and when, and why he wrote it.

Paul was the apostle of Christ to the Gentiles. The commission of the other apostles extended to all nations and every creature, but was exercised in fact chiefly among the Jews (Gal. 2:7-9). Paul's commission (Acts 26:16-20) certainly included the Jews, but was chiefly to the Gentiles. (Acts 9:15; 20:21.) In the letter to the Romans Paul calls himself "an apostle of Gentiles" (Rom. 11:13). His real life-work began at Antioch (Acts 13:21) from which point he started on his first missionary journey. On this journey he went to the island of Cyprus and to various points in Asia Minor. Soon after his return he started on the second journey, on which he entered Europe and preached in Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 15:40 to 18:22). His third missionary journey took him back to Europe, thence to Asia (Ephesus); back to Macedonia and Greece, returning through Macedonia (Philippi), to Troas on the coast of Asia Minor, past Ephesus (Miletus), back to Syria and up to Jerusalem. (Acts 18:22 to 21:17.) It was during this third missionary journey, and while he was at Corinth (as shown by data in Romans and Acts) that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans. The date of its writing is fixed at about A. D. 58.

Up to this time Paul had never been in Rome. Twice he had come rather near the Imperial City, and both times had turned back. That might have excited wonder and surmise. Why did he, the apostle of the Gentiles, seem to avoid Rome, the center of the Gentile world? Did he have no desire to come to Rome? Or might it be that he was afraid, or perhaps ashamed to come to the Great City with his gospel? These questions are answered in the introductory part of the epistle (1:8-16). And seeing he could not come to them in person as yet, Paul by the Holy Spirit, in writing, lays out to them his gospel in this matchless treatise, *the Epistle to the Romans*.

PAUL'S TITLES AND DEGREES

As modern authors often do, Paul sets down his titles and degrees on the title-page of his epistle. He has two degrees. The first is, "Servant of Jesus Christ." The word for "servant" used here means a "bond-servant," plainly, a *slave*. Yet he was not a slave by force and compulsion, but Christ's love-slave.

His other title and degree is "An Apostle of Jesus Christ." That describes his official position. Now an apostle is literally "one sent"—a messenger. But more than just a messenger. The apostles of Jesus

Christ were men empowered to speak authoritatively for Him. As an earthly government may send forth ambassadors to represent it officially at some foreign court, to negotiate a treaty, or conclude some sort of agreement, so the apostle is the ambassador and representative of the Lord Jesus Christ, accredited, and authorized to transact business for Him, and to let His word and will be known to the sons of men. In the case of earthly governments—if, for example, the United States should send a representative to some foreign government, such an ambassador would have powers (conferred on him by the home-government) to stipulate conditions, to negotiate contracts, to say “yea” or “nay,” to bind or to loose, on behalf of the U. S. government which sent him. If he is rejected, his government is thereby rejected; if he is accepted, it is his government that is accepted. Whatever he lays down is ratified by his home-government. His power is of course not his own to be used as he pleases: in all things he is strictly bound by instructions from his headquarters.

Such messengers were Christ's apostles. Sent forth and empowered by Him; and having received the Holy Spirit, that they might be able to speak precisely and unerringly the things their Lord gave them to say—no more, no less—their word carries all the authority of Jesus Christ, which is *all* authority in heaven and on earth. (Luke 10:16; John 13:20; Matt. 28:18f.) “He that is of God heareth us,” said John, “he that is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” (John 4:6.)

And such a messenger and ambassador was Paul. He was an apostle “not from man, neither through man; but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead.” (Gal. 1:1.) At the outset of our study of “Romans” we must settle that in our mind. For as we go along we shall find things that are so amazing, so contrary to our natural thinking, and so different from our conventional religious notions, that we may wonder and look again to see *who* it is that says these things and *dares* to say them.

For “Romans,” the greatest and most fundamental of all Paul's epistles (since its teaching is the basis of all the rest) is mightily revolutionary. Even if we have studied it before, it gives us a new shock every time we take it up again. Things that do not fit into our general conceptions we readily forget, and a teaching which runs counter to our ideas quickly fades out of our consciousness, unless we make special effort to hold it fast. Chrysostom, the famed preacher of the fourth century, had “Romans” read to him twice every week. “If I do not do that I forget it,” he said. “Nothing so conclusively proves its necessity as the fact that it so soon ceased to be understood,” says James Denny. (Expositor's Greek Testament.) “It always requires to be re-discovered again.” Godet (Introd. Commentary on Romans) says, “Coleridge calls the epistle to the Romans ‘the profoundest book in existence . . .’” Luther in his famous preface says, “This Epistle is the chief book of the New Testament, the purest gospel. It deserves not only to be known word for word by every Christian, but to be the subject of his daily meditation day by day, the daily bread of his soul The more time

one spends on it the more precious it becomes. . . Melancthon, in order to make it perfectly his own, copied it twice with his own hand. The Reformation was undoubtedly the work of the Epistle to the Romans, along with that to the Galatians. And the probability is that every great spiritual revival in the church will be connected as cause and effect with a deeper understanding of this book."

But this great epistle does not need testimony and commendation from men. It needs only to be studied with an open heart and a willing mind. And this will we do if God permit.

Will you now stop and read Romans over at least once? And if possible several times? That helps greatly when we come to the real study of it.

In this general reading you will perhaps notice several marked divisions. Evidently at 6:1 Paul takes up a new line, and again at 9:1. Then at 12:1 he begins with a long stretch of "practical" teaching, based on all the "doctrinal" portions that went before. The reader may also notice three "Therefore's" that tower like mountain-peaks — one at 5:1; one at 8:1; one at 12:1. Just as the repeated survey of a landscape reveals to the beholder more and more the details of its features, so the general reading and rereading of the whole epistle brings out its outlines and demarcations more and more fully and clearly.

And for a more particular study, in preparation for the next lesson, take up the first three chapters down to verse 20 of the third chapter. The "key-text," which is Rom. 1:16, 17, should be memorized.

Our Father, who didst command light to shine out of darkness, who didst shine in the heart of thy servant Paul to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ — to thee we come as we are about to study this great and wonderful Gospel-message in the letter to the Romans. Do Thou open our eyes and our minds, and grant us good understanding in this Thy Word. And may it do its pure and perfect work in our hearts. May the blessing it will bring to us go forth from us in blessing to others. In the Name of Jesus Thy Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us, we ask it. Amen.

SEISS ON REVELATION 13

"Thus in the name of Democracy and popular rights, comes absolute Dictatorship and Imperialism; in the name of Freedom comes complete and universal enslavement; in the name of the better Reason, which tramples on religion and Revelation, comes a great consolidated system of gross idolatry; in the name of a charitable Liberalism which disdains allegiance to any creed, comes a bloody Despotism, which compels men to worship a base image of a baser man, or die! Here is one star in the crown of this world's boasted Progress."

LESSONS ON THE BOOK OF ACTS

J. Edward Boyd

PAUL'S THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY

AN INTRODUCTORY SURVEY OF THE JOURNEY. After spending some time at Antioch (Acts 18:23), Paul set out on his third missionary tour. There was first a work of consolidation—of establishing all the disciples in the region of Galatia and Phrygia. Then he passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus, capital of the Roman province of Asia. He had formerly been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the Word in Asia (Acts 16:6), and had been directed on to Troas and across into Europe. But on the return trip he had stopped at Ephesus and had spoken in the synagogue of the Jews there. (Acts 18:19). They had insisted upon his staying longer; but he refused to do so, promising as he took leave of them to return again if it was God's will. That promise he now fulfilled; and he was permitted to speak boldly in the synagogue "for the space of three months, reasoning and persuading as to the things concerning the kingdom of God." When strong opposition developed, the apostle withdrew to the school of Tyrannus, where he reasoned daily for two years. As a result of his ministry there the word of the Lord was disseminated throughout the province of Asia. It is probable that during these three years (Acts 20:31) the seven churches later addressed by John in the book of Revelation came into existence. (Rev. 1:4, 11.)

As the end of his labors in Ephesus drew near, there came into the mind of Paul a definite plan for his future course. He "purposed in the spirit" to visit Macedonia and Achaia, then to go to Jerusalem, and then to Rome. (Acts 19:21.) That he felt a strong compulsion to visit the capital city of the empire is evident from his expression, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome." The rest of the book of Acts is the story of the accomplishment of this purpose, brought about in a most remarkable way, as we shall see. All along the apostle had faced many difficulties and endured much suffering; and added to these things was daily "anxiety for all the churches." (2 Cor. 11:28.) From Corinth came word of contention, of tolerance of sin, of other disorders; and the two letters to the Corinthians are the result—the first written while he was at Ephesus, and the second sent from Macedonia. From Galatia, where he had so recently been establishing the disciples, came disturbing news of threatened defection. Not all the Judaizers had been silenced by the decision of the "Jerusalem Conference"; some had invaded those churches and were troubling the brethren with their insistence that Gentile Christians be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. This deadly peril called forth the epistle to the Galatians, written either while he was at Ephesus or not long afterward. The valiant warrior must at the same time battle against the vice and superstition of paganism and the legalism of Judaism.

The story of Paul's visits in Macedonia and Achaia is in Luke's narrative given only brief mention. (Acts 20:1-3.) But elsewhere we learn that, in addition to his other activities, he was raising a

fund for the poor saints at Jerusalem. To the churches of Galatia and to the church at Corinth he gave similar instructions. (1 Cor. 16:1, 2.) Nothing is said concerning the response of the Galatian churches; but the brethren of Macedonia and Achaia responded gladly. (Rom. 15:26.) The Corinthians had evidently pledged a liberal sum; and Paul thought it good to send brethren in advance of himself to have it ready. (2 Cor. 9:5.) The amazing liberality of the Macedonian brethren was used as an example for others. (2 Cor. 8:1-5.) It was indeed a free-will offering; yet the apostle did not fail to emphasize the blessedness and to teach the principles of Christian giving. (2 Cor. 8, 9.) Not only was he thinking of the needs of the saints; he saw also an opportunity to bring into closer fellowship Jewish and Gentile Christians. (2 Cor. 9:12-14.) He seems to have had some misgivings about the Jews' attitude toward such a gift from Gentiles; for he asked the Roman brethren to strive together with him in their prayers to God for him, that his ministrations for Jerusalem might be acceptable to the saints. (Rom. 15:30, 31.) Such was his concern that, while he would not assume the responsibility alone, he was determined to go to Jerusalem, bearing this gift to his beloved Jewish brethren on behalf of the Gentile Christians.

APOLLOS. We now return to a more detailed consideration of the work of the Lord at Ephesus. Some time before Paul's arrival from Galatia and Phrygia, they had occurred an event of much interest and importance. It may surprise us to learn that at this time, more than a quarter of a century after the close of the ministry of John the Baptist, there were some of his disciples who knew nothing more about Jesus than what they had learned from John. One of these was Apollos, a native of the Egyptian city of Alexandria, important center of commerce, science, and education. Perhaps the gospel of the cross had not yet reached Alexandria, even as it had until this time by-passed the province of Asia. Or perhaps Apollos had been preaching among the Jews of remote communities. In any event, his information concerning Jesus was accurate, but limited; he knew "only the baptism of John." Surely it was in the providence of God that this man appeared at just this time in Ephesus. Since he was a Jew, eloquent, mighty in the scriptures, fervent in spirit, he would be invited to speak in the synagogue. Among his hearers were Priscilla and Aquila, who had come with Paul on his way from Corinth and had remained at Ephesus. The great worth of this couple in the service of the Lord here becomes evident. They never appear as seeking any place of prominence for themselves; yet they were always ready for any good work that they could do. If there was need of a place of meeting, their home was open, whether at Ephesus or Rome. (1 Cor. 16:19; Rom. 16:5.) Here was a man who needed enlightenment; so "they took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more accurately."

One of the marks of true greatness is humility; it is the little man who resents correction, especially when administered by "laymen." It is evident that Apollos listened with an open mind and readily received the additional truth. A preacher once said, when

a friend pointed out a certain teaching of scripture, "If that's so, it will spoil one of my good sermons." It was said jokingly; but we may well wonder if many a truth has not been rejected, or at least ignored, because to receive it would spoil sermons. Apollos must change his preaching: no longer can he proclaim the message of John that the Messiah is yet to come; He must declare that He has come, that He has died for our sins and been raised from the dead, all in fulfillment of the scriptures. When he expressed a desire to go to Achaia, the brethren encouraged him and wrote a letter of commendation. So valuable was his work there that Paul compared it to watering what he himself had planted. (1 Cor. 3:6.) The unbelieving Jews were unable to answer his arguments, based upon their own scriptures, concerning the Messiahship of Jesus. His learning and eloquence made a deep impression on the Corinthians—so much so that, when parties began to form in the church, some said, "We are of Apollos." (1 Cor. 1:12.) We have no reason to suspect him of fault in the matter—quite the contrary. From 1 Corinthians 16:12 we learn that he returned to Ephesus while Paul was there, and that the apostle urged him to go back to Corinth "with the brethren"; but he declined to do so at that time. What a beautiful picture we have here of loving fellowship between these two great servants of God—a demonstration of the love that envies not! And so Apollos passes from the picture, to appear again in one of Paul's last epistles (Titus 3:13); and we are led to believe that the Lord was still using those precious gifts in His service.

OTHER DISCIPLES OF JOHN. When Paul reached Ephesus he came in contact with a number of disciples. It seems that he sensed that that something was lacking; so he asked them a pointed and searching question: "Did ye receive the Holy Spirit when ye believed?" (The "since ye believed" in the King James translation is misleading, as it suggests that the Holy Spirit is a sort of "second blessing" to be given some time after one becomes a child of God.) They had not even heard that the Holy Spirit had been given. Soon the apostle ascertained the truth that they had been baptized into John's baptism. That was a baptism of repentance, but only preparatory, looking forward to the Christ Who was to come. But the Christ had come, in the person of Jesus; so to be baptized into John's baptism was no longer valid. It would be a recognition of an authority which no longer existed. These men, too, when given further instruction, received the truth and "were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus." According to Thayer, this was to "profess the name of one whose followers" they became—an acknowledgement of "the dignity and authority" of the Lord Jesus. This done, the apostle laid his hands upon them and the Holy Spirit came on them. Then they were able to speak with tongues and to prophecy. Is it always thus? No; not even in New Testament times did all have these special gifts. (1 Cor. 12:28-30.) The Holy Spirit is not limited to certain methods or manifestations. He is given to all Christians (Acts 2:38; 5:32; Romans 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 1 Thess. 4:8); but only under extraordinary circumstances were these special manifestations to be expected.

SEED THOUGHTS

“To every man there openeth
A way, and ways, and a way—
And the high soul takes the high road
And the low soul gropes the low;
And in between on the misty flats
The rest drift to and fro.
And every man decideth
Which way his soul shall go.”
(John Oxenham)

WARNINGS

“Moreover by them is thy servant warned.”

Let me ask you one question only—Do you accept gladly, or do you resent, being warned?

This is a touch-stone. Self-will does not want to hear any warning. Those who love sin don't want to be warned. Those that are proud and self-righteous feel insulted.

Those who want to please God above all things are glad to be warned. The way you take warning reveals your attitude and character.

EXCUSES FOR DISOBEDIENCE

The three words of excuse of disobedience are (1) “What's the use?” (2) “I see no harm in it”; and (3) “I cannot.” The first is the answer of discouragement and hopelessness; the second is to justify doubtful doings; the third is the voice of unbelief, which counts the power of evil stronger than the promise and power of God.

SETTLED BEFOREHAND

To the mind of a true Christian there is never any question as to whether he will do right or wrong in any given case. That is for him already settled, and no longer a debatable matter. If you have to first look on this side and on that, and decide which you will do, it is a foregone conclusion that you will go wrong. “Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Make level the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established” (Prov. 4:25, 26).

TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?

“Lord to whom shall we go?” This in answer to Christ's question, “Will ye also go away?” (John 6:67, 68). He as much as said, If you want to go away—go, the road is open. Neither first acceptance of Christ, nor continuance with Him is compulsory. Yet if you leave Him who else is there to go to? Some earthly friend? Some human leader? And where will that get you? You must go to someone, and if not Christ, then whom? But mark this: Unless you are converted to *Christ* you are not converted, whatever your religious affiliation, or however great your religious or humanitarian works may be.

—Above paragraphs by R. H. B.

“FAITH OF OUR FATHERS”

E. L. J.

Brother Harding was the first great pulpiteer from the men of the “Restoration Movement” that I had met; and his sermon on “The Millennium” was so impressive that it could never be forgotten. It seems but yesterday we heard it.

It was in a week of meetings at Odessa, Mo., at the Christmas time in 1907; and though two elders out of three in my Nebraska home church were of “the premillennial view,” and though evangelists who held our meetings there, notably Andrew Perry, had expounded Revelation 20 (constructively, not with mere negations, as now) and had illustrated its teaching on the blackboard, yet it was Harding’s powerful sermon that sank deep into my mind and heart.

It is the glory of great souls that they can differ, and differ freely, without the loss of respect and love for one another; without breach of that unity and fellowship which is the Spirit’s most beautiful fruit. As from Aaron’s head and beard to the skirt of his garment the sweet-smelling oil ran down (Ps. 133), so the fragrance of Christian love, proceeding from Him who is the priestly Head must flow and go, yea, even to the farthestmost rim of his spiritual body, which is the church. Did our pioneer fathers understand this somewhat better than we have understood? Did they prize more highly the precious pleasantness and goodness of dwelling together in unity? Why did they not break fellowship with Harding? David Lipscomb was for years his colleague in the Nashville Bible School: was he perhaps, like E. G. Sewell, either too good a Christian or too poor a “post” or “anti” (as indeed he was), to fall upon Harding as a “speculator”? He probably differed from Harding in considerable degree. Even some millenarians will find themselves differing from Harding on the place of the 21st chapter of Revelation. Harding thought (as the first part of our reprint indicates) that that chapter would be fulfilled within the frame-work of the 20 chapter; that the holy city, New Jerusalem, would come down on earth in all its glory at or during the millennium. In this he may have been right or wrong; but that he was “premillennial”—boldly, out-spoken so—is beyond all possibility of denial or doubt. Lipscomb and Sewell must have known that he was so. To D. H. Friend and H. N. Rutherford he said (of the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth), “I am as sure of that as I am that I am sitting here.” And the following reprint, especially the latter part, will be evidence all-conclusive. It was written as an editorial for *The Way* (later combined with *Christian Leader*) in 1903, long before his memory weakened. In the final paragraphs, he sums up his faith and teaching in a very compact manner.

Harding on Second Coming, Revelation 19, 20

The time came for the enlargement of God’s family. There must be added to it a great host of “sons of God,” of beings made in the image of God, after the likeness of God, being educated, trained and fitted to reign with Christ as members of the royal family, as

children of the King . (See 1 John 3:1-3; Rev. 20:4-6; Rev. 22:3-5; Dan. 7:18, 27; Matt. 19:28, 29; Rom. 5:17.)

From these considerations it is clear that the earth is God's nursery, His training grounds, made primarily for the occupancy of His children, for their education, development and training until they shall have reached their majority, until the end of the Messianic age has come; then it is to be purified a second time by a great washing, a mighty flood, but this time in a sea of fire. Then God will take up His abode Himself with His great family upon this new, this renovated and purified earth. . . .

It is apparent that the one great, all-including purpose for which we were made, for which we exist, is to be educated, trained, developed, so as to be indeed sons of God; brothers of Christ, heirs of God, who will dwell with their Father for ever, and will reign with Him. We were made for rulers to start with (Gen. 1:27), and the faithful are to be members of the ruling family of the universe, rulers for evermore. Daniel prophesied, saying, "The saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever. . . . I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; until the ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the Most High, and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom. . . . And the kingdom and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom *under the whole heaven*, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High: His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Dan. 7:18, 21, 22, 27.) Paul indignantly asks of the Corinthians, when they were so foolish as to go to law before unbelievers, "Know ye not that *the saints shall judge the world?* and if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that *we shall judge angels?*" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). In the parable of the talents (Matt. 25:14-30), and of the pounds (Luke 19:11-27), Jesus plainly shows that the faithful are to be made rulers. Referring to the time of His second coming, He says to the faithful, "Well done, thou good servant: because thou was found faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities;" and, to another, "Be thou over five cities;" or, as He expressed it in another place: "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Again, He says (Matt. 24:45-47), "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, that he will set him over all that he hath."—From *The Way*.

"There shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear and for expectation of the things that are coming on the world: for the powers of the heaven shall be shaken. And they shall see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these things begin to come to pass, look up, and lift up your heads; because your redemption draw-

eth night." (Luke 21:25-28).

When Christ came the first time no man knew the day nor the hour of His coming; but devout Jews were expecting it, and many false Christs arose because of this expectation. In foretelling His second advent Jesus makes it plain that the world will not expect it, nor be prepared for it; to them He will come as a thief in the night; but it should not be so with regard to His people; He tells them plainly that they should watch, and not be surprised as by a thief; they are to read the signs of the time and be ready.

"And as were the days of Noah, so shall be the coming of the Son of man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall be the coming of the Son of man.—From *The Way*, Sept. 25, 1902.

(Italics ours)

When the saints are caught up to meet Him, *Christ comes on with them to the earth*. Then all the kings of the earth gather their armies together, with the beast and the false prophet, to make war against Christ and his army. The beast and the false prophet are captured and cast into the lake of fire, the first to be consigned to that awful place; then by the sword that proceeds out of his mouth Christ slays all the rest, all the wicked that are on the earth, and all the birds are filled with their flesh. Satan is then caught, chained, and cast into the abyss, which is shut and sealed. In this place he is confined for one thousand years.

During this time, this thousand years, Christ and his saints reign, *but the rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years have expired*. This, the resurrection of the righteous, is the first resurrection; over these who come up at this resurrection "the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." . . .

From all this it is evident that the last thousand years of Christ's reign will be a period of perfect rest from sin. During this period Satan will be in the abyss, chained, closed up and sealed over; the beast and false prophet will be in the hell of fire; all the rest of the wicked will be dead; and the saints will have received their spiritual bodies having been delivered "out of the body of this death."

These facts point clearly to this period of a thousand years as the Sabbath rest that remains for the people of God. . . . this glorious thousand years *with which time ends*, during which all the saints of all ages will reign with Christ in perfect freedom from the guilt and all the evil effects of sin, in perfect freedom from the temptation to sin. That *this millennial reign will be on the earth* is clearly indicated by the fact that at the beginning of it Christ and His saints are on the earth, and so they are at the end of it. Compare Rev. 19:11-21 with Rev. 20:1-10. Read also 1 Cor. 15:20-28; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 2:7-9; Matt. 24:29-31.—J. A. Harding, in *The Way*, Oct. 15, 1903; portion of above reprint used in 1946 "Faith of Our Fathers," repeated here to make the exhibit complete.