

THE WORD AND WORK

VOLUME XLIX, DECEMBER, 1955

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J. R. CLARK, PUBLISHER

THE WORD AND WORK 2518 Portland Ave. Louisville 12, Kentucky
Entered at the Louisville, Kentucky, Post Office as second class matter.
Single subscription, \$1.50; two subscriptions, \$2.75;
clubs of four or more, \$1.25 each.

AS THE FATHER HATH SENT ME

- So send I you – to labor unrewarded
To serve unpaid, unloved, unsought, unknown,
To bear rebuke, to suffer scorn and scoffing,
So send I you – to toil for Me alone.
- So send I you – to bind the bruised and broken,
O wand'ring souls, to work, to weep, to wake,
To bear the burdens of a world weary,
So send I you – to suffer for My sake.
- So send I you – to loneliness and longing,
With heart ahung'ring for the loved and known,
Forsaking home and kindred, friend and dear one,
So send I you – to know My love alone.
- So send I you – to leave your life's ambition,
To die to dear desire, self-will resign,
To labor long and love where men revile you,
So send I you – to lose your life in Mine.
- So send I you – to hearts made hard by hatred,
To eyes made blind because they will not see,
To spend, tho be it blood – to spend and spare not –
So send I you – to taste of Calvary –
- So send I you !
Lord here am I !
Send me !

– E. Margaret Clarkson.



Words in Season

R. H. B.

ACCEPTABLE PRAYER

There are not many preliminary conditions of acceptable prayer; and those God has stipulated are extremely simple, and of such a kind that the poorest and least can easily fulfill them. God designed it so. The reason is apparent. He has loved the world; He has put Himself to terrible expense and trouble to save and help men. Now (and it is but natural) He wants to make Himself readily accessible to those who are saved and to those who would be. To the one class, that they may "call upon the name of the Lord"; to the other that they may come as children in undaunted confidence—not in themselves, in their fitness, their enlightenment, their righteousness, for that would leave them in everlasting doubt and fear or make them pharisaical and self-sufficient; but in unquestioning confidence in God, that He "is good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in loving-kindness unto all them that call upon him"; above all things, that He is our Father. For even we give good gifts unto our children, how much more our Father in heaven! That is so wonderful and so simple and so very contrary to our ideas that we must take good care lest we reject it because it is so simple, and too good to be believed, or manufacture conditions, thorn hedges of ifs and buts across the way to God, to make the matter more difficult and complicated, more in keeping with our ideas of how it ought to be. But God's ways are higher than our ways and His thoughts than our thoughts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. And He is good, and His lovingkindness endureth forever.

IF I REGARD INIQUITY

A simple and almost self-evident condition of acceptable prayer is laid down in Ps. 66:18, which, though written under the old covenant, is of everlasting application, and can never be altered or abrogated, because it rests upon the unchangeable character of God. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." Let us note carefully what is here stated and what is not. It does not say that if I have sin and iniquity the Lord will not hear." On the contrary, God is anxious to have sinners call on Him; and this verse was written for sinners. But what it says is that if I *regard* iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear. It is not a question of whether you have committed sin—likely you have; and you are coming to be reinstated, wherein you do well, the more so the sooner you do it. But the question is, What do you think of sin now? If you hold it in tender regard, if you think of it with respect and approval and give it recognized place in your affections and life, then forbear to pray to God, for He will not hear. God is holy. Sin is an object of hatred and abhorrence to Him, and He cannot be partner to it, neither at firsthand nor indirectly by being partner of the man who is partner with sin. Since God hates, abhors, and opposes sin, the man who would take hold of God must hate, abhor, and oppose it. If you will turn your heart against sin and break your friendship for it; if you earnestly long to be delivered from it

and to give it up forever, and with purpose of heart set yourself at enmity with it, then you may call to the Lord and He will hear—yea, and save and help and bless you abundantly according to His great love.

THAT YOUR PRAYERS BE NOT HINDERED

To husbands—the Lord says that they must dwell with their wives according to knowledge (compare 1 Thess. 4:4, 5, “in sanctification and honor, not in the passion of lust, even as the Gentiles who know not God”), giving honor unto the woman as unto the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; to the end that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7). When unkindness and quarreling become the order of the day in the home; when the wife has no reverence for her husband and will know nothing of being in subjection to him; if the husband mistreats his wife like “the Gentiles who know not God”, without concern for her well-being of body, soul, or spirit, then the spirit of prayer takes its flight. For there is a certain atmosphere that is wholly incompatible with prayer and that will thwart and stifle every Godward turn of the thoughts. Hatred and malice, passion and bitterness in that sacred circle we call the home destroys the possibility of the attitude of prayer. But in prayer we possess our mightiest power for our own blessing, for the building up of God’s work at home and abroad, and for attack and defense against our superhuman adversary, for it is the only thing that can avail and can make the rest of our armor available. A Christian ought to be so much of a strategist as to walk circumspectly and look to his points and watch his advantage, and both in his own home and in the daily intercourse with his fellow-men carefully to avoid anything that would hinder his prayers.

DAVID’S MORNING PRAYER

That was an awful night. Dark hung its mantle over the fords of the wilderness beyond the brook K’dron, over the mount of Olives, whither Israel’s great king had fled from the usurper of his throne, his own son, Absalom; dark, and heavy with fearful possibilities of evil times, did it hover over the nation of Israel; but darkest of all, with the blackness of unutterable sorrow and humiliation, had it fallen upon the heart of the exiled king. Now the night was over; but the morning light showed the more plainly the desperateness of the situation. A mere handful of faithful men were with David; and the whole wide land of Israel had risen up in rebellion against him. There was, as it were, a prize upon his head, which any one of the thousands of Absalom would have been happy to seize. The king’s cause, humanly speaking, was utterly hopeless. Now it was on that morning that David, by the Holy Spirit, uttered the words of the third Psalm:

“Jehovah, how are mine adversaries increased!
Many are they that rise up against me.
Many there are that say of my soul,
There is no help for him in God.”

Not even God can help him out of that trouble, said they among themselves. Such was the outlook from man’s viewpoint. But David,

as his wont had been in other days of trial, turns his eyes toward Jehovah. And there he sees help and hope.

“But thou, O Jehovah, art a shield about me;
My glory, and the lifter up of my head.”

The many-sidedness of the love of our Father can be perceived only as we pass through the varying situations of life, and find in Him always exactly the thing to supply our need. When Abraham has run a great risk for Lot's sake, and exposes himself to the vengeance of the kings from whose hand he had snatched the captive men of Sodom; when he had positively refused to take from the hand of the king of Sodom so much as a thread or a shoe latchet for reward, though he could then at one easy stroke have made himself immensely rich—then God came to him and said: “Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield (to protect thee from the kings), and thy exceeding great reward (instead of the reward of Sodom which thou hast refused).” And so here, in his extreme situation, David finds in God the help the occasion was crying for. What was it he so greatly needed? First, protection. “Thou, O Jehovah, art a shield round about me.” David was in great shame; but this thing also God had provided for, and David that day found that God was his glory. And if he had hung his head in discouragement and despair, God came and tenderly lifted it, and bade him look up—“the lifter up of my head.” Between him and Jehovah there was a perpetual understanding. He calls, Jehovah responds. The present tense that he uses shows the habitualness of it.

“I cry unto Jehovah with my voice,
And he answereth me out of his holy hill.”

And thus it transpired that in his day of need David was not left alone nor comfortless.

It was an awful night. There was a counselor at David's court, Ahithophel the Gilonite, and had now gone over to Absalom, and whom David dreaded more than all the armies of his treacherous son. That man was more than an army in himself. Long-headed to the extreme, he could see and foresee, and knew just what to do at any time to attain a certain end. The Bible itself pays him an unparalleled tribute; for it says “the counsel of Ahithophel which he gave in those days was as if a man inquired at the oracle of God.” He was a man of almost preternatural wisdom and insight. Now when it was told David that Ahithophel was among the conspirators, he cried to his God and said: “O Jehovah, I pray thee turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness.” That night David's life and all hung in the scale. If, Ahithophel counseled and prevailed, David was lost. It was all being decided on that night. The fate of everything turned upon the council that was being held around the fire of Absalom. David had but one help—he cried to Jehovah with his voice. The while Ahithophel gave his fatal counsel, and Hushai the Archite was daringly opposing it and was offering another plan which (as Hushai well knew) would give David a chance to escape—while that sharp conflict of that crisis was on in the fearful night hours, David was—but let him tell it for himself:

“I laid me down and slept.”

That is the climax of child-like trust. He laid him down; and that was only half of it, the lesser half, as anyone that has seen trouble may testify; but he "slept!" And he might as well have slept. For the morning came, and his faith in God was justified.

"I awaked, for Jehovah sustaineth me."

Ah, that we might be able to so roll our burden upon the Lord—how different would life be! Lord, help our unbelief!

And—do not ask me how—David's God turned the ears and hearts of that conclave against Ahithophel's counsel and in favor of the ruinous suggestion of Hushai. Ahithophel, when he perceived it, was farsighted enough to know that the game was over, and went home and hanged himself. So it was seen that day that the mightiest shrewdness and cunning of the world cannot avail against a simple child of God that looks to God in faith. For God made both counselor and counseled, and how shall they hurt His own? "Behold, I have created the smith that . . . bringeth forth a weapon for his work; and I have created the waster to destroy. No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper" (Isa. 54:16, 17).

If, then, the rest of his prayer is taken up in joyful announcement of his faith in God's loving defense of him and in ascription of the glory of his salvation to Jehovah, we do not wonder. More remarkable is the generous petition for a blessing on God's people (Israel) though at that very time they were in revolt against David. But even that is not so strange; for the soul released from anxiety for its own welfare, knowing itself safely hidden under the shadow of God's wings, feels free to pray even for its enemies and persecutors.

But that such morning prayers might unseal our lips at the dawn of day! Such joyful, confident anticipations of God's faithfulness and goodness, and loving trust and hope and cheer in the midst of perplexities! But it is a question of being converted and becoming like little children.

ENVY

I wonder if the poppy shows
The slightest envy of the rose?
Or if the pansy wastes its time
Regretting that it cannot climb?
Do blossoms of a yellow hue
Complain because they are not blue?
Do birds which God designed to sing
Envy the wild ducks' fleeter wing?
And does the sparrow sadly mourn
Because he was not goldfinch born?
I cannot say, but fancy not.
Each seems contented with his lot.
'Tis only man who thinks that he
Some other man would rather be.

—Guest.

EARLY CRISES AT ANTIOCH

Stanford Chambers

CRISIS No. 1

The middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles was broken down first at Antioch. The report of this action, the receiving of Gentile converts into one fellowship with Jewish converts, reached the ears of the brethren at Jerusalem, who seemingly did not so much as know that that wall was divinely purposed to be broken down. Somebody brought the report. Such an unprecedented thing would have to be investigated. Barnabas, "a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith," who was from Cyprus, not far from Antioch, was sent to check up on the matter. He was the right man. Able to subdue any racial prejudice he was also able to see the grace of God as it was unmistakably manifested at Antioch, and so he stamped his approval. God had, Himself, broken down the middle wall of partition, and of the twain had there made one new man in Christ Jesus. Crisis No. 1 had passed. God and Antioch had won.

CRISIS No. 2

Barnabas brought the apostle to the Gentiles into this unique situation at Antioch, and the two labored together there, others cooperating, for a year, "and much people was added to the Lord." Then the two were thrust forth into other Gentile regions to win and save both Jews and Greeks and to build them into one fellowship after the fashion of Antioch. Returning they reported wondrous things wrought by grace through them, and Antioch rejoiced with them. But there were Jewish professors who could not, would not, subdue their racial prejudices, and they protested the setup there. They contended that the only way the Gentiles could be saved was to be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. Those agitating the matter were from Jerusalem and they claimed to have received commandment from the brethren at Jerusalem. After much debate it was decided that Paul and Barnabas should go to Jerusalem and lay the matter before the apostles and elders there. So the debate was continued there. If the Judaizers of Antioch did not also go to Jerusalem (which likely they did) there were representatives of the same contention there, who made the same plea and were answered by Paul and Barnabas in the hearing of the rest. (See Acts 15:1-35 for the whole of Luke's account.) Paul tells us in Galatians 2 that these were "false brethren, privily brought in to spy out our liberty in Christ . . . to whom we gave place by way of subjection, no not for an hour." By whom "privily brought in" we were not told, but the leaven was working, even that "mystery of iniquity." Excepting for these evil workers, there was unanimity in the endorsement of the position of Paul and Barnabas, and the famous "decree" was issued and carried to Antioch. Freedom in Christ was to continue, and great was the rejoicing among Antioch Christians. Gentiles and Jews, with objections silenced, misgivings removed, freedom enjoyed, served together, ate together, worshipped together, thus fulfilling in a yet larger way the divine purpose, "of the twain . . . one new man, so making peace." "Behold, how good and how pleasant for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

CRISIS No. 3

From Antioch go forth the missionaries again. Paul accompanied by Silas, commended by the brethren, carries the "decree" to the churches established on that first tour (for the same element, actuated by their racial prejudice, fought against free grace in those regions; had not Paul been stoned, even, at Lystra?) Freedom in Christ is the firmer established, with the Gospel sphere greatly extended, reaching into Europe.

Again Paul returns to Antioch. Luke makes brief mention of the fact in Acts 18:22, 23. He spent some time there, but how long we are not told. It was in all probability during this stay there that the apostle Peter visited Antioch. Peter, be it recalled, had opened to the Gentiles at Caesarea (see Acts 10 and 11), having been given the repeated vision of the sheet let down from heaven, with the instruction "what God hath cleansed, call not thou common or unclean": Peter correctly interpreted "Call no man common or unclean" (not even the Gentile dog). Peter had been greatly used of God at Jerusalem in the happy solution of crisis No. 2, related above. Peter comes to Antioch, then, and enters into the full enjoyment of the liberty in Christ being practiced there, nothing doubting. Jewish Christians, Peter included, accept invitations to Gentile Christians' homes and eat what is set before them, of course, they eat the Lord's Supper together. "Behold how good and how pleasant!"

THE PICTURE MARRED

Meanwhile certain came to Antioch from Jerusalem, purportedly from James, who were not converted to any such regime, and were intolerant toward it. Peter was well aware of "how many thousands . . . of them that have believed" there were back home, "and . . . all zealous for the law." The old nature in Peter asserted itself once again (see Gal. ch. 2) and "fearing them that were of the circumcision," he "drew back, separating himself," "and the rest of the Jews dissembled likewise with him: insomuch that Barnabas was carried away with their dissimulation." Thus was the church at Antioch split wide open! For Peter, after the God-given illuminating experiences he had received to lead in this separation, what was it but hypocrisy? And Barnabas!

Paul saved the day for Christianity. Paul stood in the gap. To do so he had to resist Peter to the face. Being no Spiritless one, nor spineless, he performed the unpleasant task, reproving Peter "before them all". To all appearances Peter took it as he should, knowing that he was in the wrong. Thus was crisis No. 3 passed. God and Paul had won, to the blessing of us poor Gentiles!

THE JEW WOULD NOT SIGN

In a costly residential section of the city of Richmond some newcomers complained that the singing in a small church nearby disturbed them. A petition was circulated. It was brought also to a Jewish resident, who said, "Gentlemen, I cannot sign it. If I believed as do these Christians, that my Messiah had come, I would shout it from the housetops and on every street in Richmond, and nobody could stop me." —Selected.

ABOUT GOING TO HEAVEN

R. H. B.

There are two mistaken views regarding the Christian's interest in heaven. The one view, the common and prevalent one, is that when the Christian dies he goes at once to heaven, and there enters upon his eternal inheritance. This is often heard in the songs we sing—as for example in the hymn by Isaac Watts—

“There is a land of pure delight where saints immortal reign,
Infinite day excludes the night and pleasures banish pain;
There everlasting spring abides, and never withering flowers;
Death like a narrow sea divides that blessed land from ours.”

If that outlook, so often voiced and so commonly held, is correct, it nullifies all the meaning and the hope of Christ's second coming. For why, if at death we are at once transposed to that “happy land” would Christ need to come at all? What could His return from heaven add at all to the blessedness of the departed? In fact what need would there be of even a resurrection? For we would enter into a blessed spirit land, where (as one of the songs expressed it) “with spirit eyes we shall see” the glories of our eternal home. Obviously there is something very wrong in this idea. It simply substitutes the prospect of death in place of the promised return of our Lord from heaven, on which latter event all the hope and expectation of God's saints according to the New Testament is focussed and centered. That to the child of God “to live is Christ, and to die is gain,” we know; and Paul voiced his desire “to depart and be with Christ, which is very far better” (Phil. 1:21, 23). But this is not the fulfilment of the Christian's hope. Not until Christ comes and the dead in Christ are raised incorruptible, and those who are alive, who are left unto the coming of the Lord, are “changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye,” and are together with them “caught up to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Cor. 15:51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17) do we enter upon the promised inheritance. The departed ones as well as the living alike look forward to that day.

But among some who have rightly understood this, an opposite error is sometimes maintained (for, alas, we are all so apt to swing pendulum-wise from one extreme to the other)—namely that the Christian's hope has nothing to do with heaven—that the kingdom of God will be on the earth, that here will Christ reign and His saints with Him, and that this is the only goal and prospect held out in the word of God to the Christian. This, too, is quite a mistake. The Christian has a great interest in heaven. Thither did the Lord Jesus go to prepare a place for us (John 14:2, 3). There is the New Jerusalem, the city which is identified with the Bride, the Lamb's wife (Rev. 21:9), and which does not come down thence until the new earth (Rev. 21:1, 2). John is caught up to heaven and there sees the throne of God, and surrounding it twenty-four thrones occupied by twenty-four elders, arrayed in white robes and crowned with conquerors' crowns—apparently representatives of the redeemed. This may be disputed by some, but that innumerable multitude who have come out of the Great Tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb—they certainly are seen as in heaven, standing

before the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev. 7:9-17). Moreover the marriage of the Lamb to His betrothed bride takes place *in heaven*, whence she returns with Him, following in His train, when He comes to execute judgment upon the anti-christian forces which have held sway on the earth (Rev. 19:11-21; comp. 17:14). In short from that time on the Lamb's wife goes with Him wherever He goes, participates with Him in whatever He does—in His reign and rule (Rev. 2:26, 27; 3:21); in the judging of the world and of angels (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) and in the thousand-year reign (Rev. 20:6)—in fact she will thenceforth be "forever with the Lord."

In heaven is our inheritance laid up (1 Pet. 1:4); there is our citizenship (Phil. 3:20), and there is our Savior and Highpriest in whom all our hope is bound up. Therefore, having been raised together with Him, we are bidden to "seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God" (Col. 3:1).

SHOULD I FORCE MY CHILD TO GO TO SUNDAY SCHOOL?

J. Edgar Hoover, of the F. B. I.

Shall I make my child go to Sunday School and church? Yes! and with no further discussion about the matter. Startled? Why? How do you answer Junior when he comes to breakfast on Monday morning and announces to you that he is not going to school anymore? You know! Junior goes. How do you answer when Junior comes in very much besmudged and says "I'm not going to take a bath." Junior bathes, doesn't he?

Why all this timidity then, in the realm of his spiritual guidance and growth? Going to let him wait and decide what church he'll go to when he's old enough? Quit your kidding! You didn't wait until you were old enough! You don't wait until he's old enough to decide whether he wants to go to school or not to start his education. You don't wait until he is old enough to decide whether he wishes to be clean or dirty do you? Do you wait until he is old enough to decide if he wants to take his medicine when he is sick? Do you?

What shall we say when Junior announces he doesn't like to go to Sunday School and church? That's an easy one to answer. Just to be consistent, tell him "Junior, in our house we all go to church and Sunday School, and that includes you." Your firmness and example will furnish a bridge over which youthful rebellion may travel into rich and satisfying experience in personal religious living.

The parents of America can strike a telling blow against the forces which contribute to our juvenile delinquency, if our mothers and fathers will take their children to Sunday School and church regularly. —In R. G. LeTourneau's "Now".

From H. N. Rutherford's Bulletin.

THE EARLY CHURCH fasted and prayed, hence their power. Many of the churches in our day feast and play, hence their powerlessness. —Selected.

THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

J. R. Clark

One might be mistaken on the meaning of a passage of scripture or be weak on a doctrine and yet not be in too serious a condition spiritually, but to have a misconception of the person of Jesus Christ is little short of a catastrophe. "Who do men say that the Son of man is?" asked Jesus. Such was the question of the hour in Jesus' day, and such is the question of the hour today. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). To know Jesus Christ, we must know His nature: preexistent, while on earth, and now.

The Lord Jesus is the only person of all men who existed prior to His birth into this world. Only of Him was it said that God *sent* Him. All others first began to live with their conception and birth. He said, "I came out from the Father and am come into the world: again I leave the world, and go unto the Father" (John 16:18). In John 8:56-58 Jesus shocked the Jews by saying, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it and was glad." The Jews answered, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Jesus said, "Before Abraham was born, I am."

In Moses' day the Christ was the rock that followed Israel. At creation God said, "Let us make man." Who was with God in creation if not His Son? "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). "God gave his only begotten Son." "Who existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped." "Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory I had with thee before the world was." "That though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor. . . ." From these passages we gather that the Lord Jesus was the eternal Word and the eternal Son; that He was God and had glory, riches, and high station. Such was His preexistent state.

And then He came to earth. Said the angel, "And they shall call his name Immanuel, which is, being interpreted, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). God bowed the heavens and came down in the person of His Son. What was Christ's state on earth? Was He pure man, or pure God, or both at the same time?

Docetism, a heresy that arose in the early church, taught that Jesus Christ was only apparently man and not really so. This sect was the mother of Christian Science. The Unitarians teach, on the other hand, that Jesus was real man and not God. Russell taught that Christ was only man while on earth (even saying He was non-existent during the three days He was in the tomb), and that now in heaven He is only God and not man.

One of the most gripping passages in the Bible on this theme is Phil. 2:5-8: "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men: . . ." Of what did Christ empty Himself? Did He empty Himself of His divine nature, of His essence? The answer is "No." He did not empty Himself of Himself! If so, what of Him would have been left to come to earth?

He emptied Himself of His glory, for we read in John 17:5: "And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." He emptied Himself of His riches—"Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor . . ." (2 Cor. 8:9). He emptied Himself of His high position, for He took the form of a servant, which means that He gave up a high position, "The form of God;" for a low position, "The form of a servant," which two expressions are contrasted. Thus Christ did not at all relinquish His divine nature.

The late A. T. Robertson, an eminent Greek scholar, in commenting on this passage, corroborates the foregoing statements. He says, "He did not empty Himself of His divine nature, but only of the 'insignia of His majesty,' the outward manifestation of His deity . . . He lost only the appearance of God, not His essential nature as God . . . Christ no longer wore His 'Godlike majesty and visible glories,' but appeared as a man . . . His outward guise was altogether human."

The truth is that while on earth (and even now) Jesus was at the same time real man and very God! By this is not meant that He was half man and half God. He was as much man as if He were nothing else but man, and He was as much God as if He were nothing else but God. This is a staggering thought. Even if we do not understand it we must believe it. We do not understand radio or electricity, but we accept them and enjoy them just the same.

To deny the manhood of Jesus Christ would be plain heresy, a manifestation of the spirit of the antichrist. Says John, "Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: and every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God: and this is the spirit of the antichrist" (1 John 4:2, 3).

Jesus lived His life here upon earth as a man in utter dependence upon God through faith. In doing so He laid down an example for His followers, that we might walk in His steps. "He that keepeth Israel will neither slumber nor sleep," but Jesus slept. "The everlasting God, Jehovah. . . fainteth not, neither is weary," but Jesus grew weary and sat thus by the well. He was hungry, thirsty, poor. He prayed for hours at a time, was tempted as are we, suffered and *died*. He was a man.

He was the only really normal man that ever lived. He was the only good, sound, sweet apple on the tree of humanity, all others were blighted.

He needed to be a man that He might reveal God, that He might die for us, that He might be our high priest, that He might judge the world, that He might be king on David's throne.

Also, Jesus was God while on earth. To deny that Jesus was God while among men is heresy of the worst sort. It is unbelief. Some there are who deny His virgin birth, His atonement, His resurrection, His coming again, His very deity! This is pure wickedness.

The angel said His name should be called Immanuel—God with us; Thomas called Him, "My Lord and my God"; the apostle Paul said, "of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever" (Rom. 9:5); and in Heb. 1:8 we read, "but of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Jesus accepted worship from angels and men: "And let all the angels of God worship

him" (Heb. 1:6). "And, behold, there came to him a leper and worshipped him . . ." (Matt. 8:2). Only God is worshipped!

"Jesus said, "If I had not done among them the works which none other did" (John 15:24). His works were different. They proved His deity. Again, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (John 3:35). "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father: and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal him." (Matt. 11:27). "In him was life; and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4).

Jesus did His wonderful works in subjection to the Father, and not independent of Him, yet the Father vested in Him that power and authority because He was His Son and because He was God. Such authority and power would not become another! And it seems evident that the Father trusted the Son and endowed Him with full authority and power to do things even as He Himself would do them. For example, it is said that "as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself," and that "the Son also (even as the Father), giveth life to whomsoever he will" (John 5:26; 5:21). And this life which the Father gave the Son, Jesus had before He came to earth, for "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." Who would say that the Son did not have life and life-giving power from the very beginning? Yet He is indebted to the Father for it. Thus, when Jesus said to the leper, "I will, be thou made clean," He could do it instantly as God's Son, yet in harmony with God's will. Jesus' will coincided with the Father's will. He could say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," and He could be conscious of the reasoning of their hearts because He was God as well as man. God was setting His seal upon the fact that Jesus was His Son by giving Him such powers, and Jesus, out of His own God-endowed nature was doing works which none other did, thus calling attention to His person. It seems that we must strike a balance in this matter as in so many other truths of God.

As to His nature now, Christ is still man and God at the same time. His present manhood is set forth in 1 Tim. 2:5, "For there is one God, one mediator also between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus." He has now received His former glory with the Father, with more glory added, for, indeed, as a reward for His work on earth, "God highly exalted Him, and gave him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

THE EMPTY SEAT SAYS:

To the preacher: "Your sermons are not appreciated."

To the visitor: "This church is not going forward."

To the prospective church member: "You had better wait awhile."

To the members present: "Why don't you stay home, too?"

You need the church and the church needs you. "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

—The Friendly Messenger.

NOTES ON "CLOSE COMMUNION" AND ON THE "LOCATED MINISTRY"

E. L. Jorgenson

To one who himself desires and seeks the Holy Spirit's leading, it is not a pleasant task to review critically the writings of others who seek the Holy Spirit's leading perhaps even more. Yet, in the full consciousness of the dryness and deadness of human religion and of mere human meetings, it may be good to point out some serious errors often held (even to making it a fellowship issue) by certain believers who seek guidance of the Spirit, and who are sincerely committed to the scriptures. And there are friends and brethren closer home, known and loved among us, who may perhaps be interested in these notes.

Two pamphlets have recently come into my hands:

1. "Scriptural Principles On Gathering";
2. "Are We Preaching Something New?"

Both of these pamphlets are at least ninety percent good. However, the positions taken on baptism, on the order in the assembly (communion service), and what they call "one-man ministry" are certainly revolutionary to the present general practice. If true, these positions should be heartily accepted, regardless of revolution; if not true, their errors should be avoided, because of unnecessary restlessness and possible revolution.

It is stated that denominational ministers oppose the "brethren" principles of ministry because their livelihood is at stake: this cannot be said of the present writer, since he had long sought (for other reasons) to be relieved of the ministry in his home church. His interest and motive now is the peace and spiritual progress of the church, and of the churches generally.

AS TO BAPTISM

On pages 30, 31 of the first pamphlet, the author says, *of the unbaptized*: "It is true that baptism does not affect the soul's eternal salvation." And, again of the unbaptized, "Let us never forget that every believer is a child of God and a fellow member in the body of Christ."

Is this in harmony with Mark 16:16, John 3:5, Acts 2:38, and especially Acts 2:41; 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:26, 27, and 1 Peter 3:21? Within these verses, baptism is clearly the entrance act of faith into the Body of Christ; and, to say the least, strong significance is attached to the act by the Holy Spirit.

AS TO THE ASSEMBLY AND THE SUPPER

Page 20, the same writer says, "Believers, and believers only gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ... for remembrance of the Lord in the breaking of bread"; and among the passages cited is 1 Cor. 14. Yet 1 Cor. 14:25 unmistakably indicates that there were or might have been unbelievers in the assembly.

Page 26, he continues: "The brethren have sought to return to New Testament principles of gathering, and no unsaved person is knowingly permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper, or allowed to associate with them in their fellowship." Does not this practice make

us "judges", taking the place of Christ who alone can know all the "saved" in any company? And does that course allow a man to "prove *himself*", in regard to eating the bread and drinking the cup (1 Cor. 11:28)? Here is a practice that will lead any group into sectarianism. In fact, while decrying sectarianism, these writers seem to foster it. They speak of "The things we stand for", etc., page 46. The fact is, the sectarianism and endless division that is well known to exist among the "brethren" is exceeded only by that of certain groups among the "churches of Christ". Such movements, all religious movements, that make judges of men, down to the last jot and tittle, carry in themselves a principle of disintegration that can only end up in division and fission without end.

The theory strikes an obstacle in the presence of Judas at the first supper (Luke 22:21); this presence, therefore, must by all means be explained away. The author says, page 32, that "from John 13 it seems certain that Judas left after the Passover feast and before the Lord's Supper. But John does not distinguish between the Passover and the Supper. John shows that "after the sop" Satan entered into Judas, and that then, having received the sop, Judas went out. But Luke 22:19-21 states clearly and definitely that Judas was present throughout the Supper service. Either then, the sop occurred before the Supper, and Judas lingered through the latter service; or else the sop as recorded by Matthew and Mark follows the Supper service, though mentioned by Matthew and Mark preceding *their record* of the memorial institution. However that may be, Luke gives us the clear and uncontradicted word that the hand of Judas was with the Lord on the table, not only after the Passover, but after he had taken the bread and the communion cup (22:21). Yet, the presence of the betrayer did not make void or vitiate the Communion service! Much less may we frail and finite human beings judge one another in this respect.

THE MINISTRY

Though in some churches the charge of "one-man ministry" may be justified, is it really so among the free churches of Christ? The author of the second tract, page 6, states that by "one-man ministry" he means, "a pastor or minister to whom alone is committed the responsibility of preaching to the people." But must we necessarily use any such system? Do we not have a "mutual meeting" on mid-week nights, and also often otherwise? Do we not "allow liberty for exercise of gifts to the church to function within the local assembly?" Surely we do, although we are without the supernatural "gifts" of the Corinthian church. Even the first tract (page 43) calls upon believers to "gather to support, by their presence and prayers, the one who is to deliver the gospel message." Here is "one-man ministry" at least in the "gospel meeting"!

But is 1 Cor. 14:26-33 a binding model for the church of today, the church that is in full possession of the Bible, but that has not these special, supernatural, spiritual gifts? These "Brethren" would make it so. But have they completely overlooked the fact that 1 Cor. 14 is chiefly a meeting of believers who were endowed with special spiritual gifts, such as tongues, revelations, and interpretation of tongues? (Probably *all* the items mentioned were by direct and

supernatural inspiration of the Holy Spirit.) We must remember that these people had as yet no New Testament. Either we must acknowledge the great difference between such a meeting and those of our own times everywhere—a difference so great that it can no longer be a model; or else we must expect the same supernatural manifestations in our midst today. Do these “brethren” expect such manifestations? If no, how can such a meeting be a binding model; if yea, then we have Pentecostalism in all its uncontrollable modern extremes. But this the “brethren” do not accept.

The first tract admits that some workers will need to be sustained financially. The author says that “God-sent ministers are to be maintained when there is need of it”: Well then, that is that! None of us would wish to maintain any other kind. Paul, in 1 Timothy 5:17, 18, says: “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn. And, The laborer is worthy of his hire.”

The first writer (page 32) sets the Supper in the midst of this meeting of 1 Corinthians 14 (we do not deny it), and implies that we “usurp the Lordship and authority of Christ” unless we follow this particular order: “one alter another of the brethren arise as the Spirit leads—one with a hymn, and another voicing the worship of the assembly, another with some scripture exposition... one rises to give thanks for the bread... perhaps another rises to give thanks for the cup.” Does it follow that “we usurp the Lordship of Christ” if we arrange a program, decent and orderly (1 Cor. 14:26, 40), as to who is to rise and give thanks and as to who is to pass the loaf “so that all may break it and eat?”

It is indeed a serious thing, and could be unnecessarily divisive, if we were to gravitate toward a Sunday morning meeting in which no one dares to make a move by previous arrangement; to lift a song, to read a scripture, to deliver a lesson, to serve at the table, to give thanks for the bread and the cup, or even to venture to pass the Communion elements—unless he is, at the moment, especially and inwardly impelled by the Spirit. We have very serious doubts that this order is the will of God for us today, nor the mind of Christ.

I was brought up in a church that used the Sunday morning “mutual meeting”, and I have no criticism of that order. It was there my humble talent (if any) was found, though it would have been the same in any church with a good mid-week mutual service. It is not against the orderly meeting of this kind that we speak, though long ago it became clear to me in the scriptures that this is not the only way. For our times, surrounded as we are by preaching, it is perhaps not often the best way.

I see now, from the scriptures, that from the beginning every well-developed church had someone (one man or more) equivalent to what we now call the minister. Jerusalem had the apostles (Acts 2:42), and James was prominent. Antioch had, as special teachers, Paul and Barnabas, who taught the church, also “much people”, “for a whole year” (Acts 11:26); when these two were sent farther into the mission field, Antioch had still its Niger and Lucius, and Manaen. You will say, even so, there was in every case a plurality, two or more.

Let it be granted in all its force; they are still the special, God-chosen teachers of the churches. And so was Paul, perhaps alone, for more than three years at Ephesus (Acts 19); and for a long period at Corinth. These long periods of apostolic ministry are sufficient example for those who are satisfied to follow Paul as he followed Christ (1 Cor. 11:1).

We readily concede the weakness of the one-man pastor system as usually practiced in denominational churches; but the unavoidable distinction between those laborers who, like Paul and Timothy, give themselves wholly to the gospel (1 Tim. 4:15) and those who are sustained by the labors of their own hands, this natural grouping can hardly constitute a "clergy" and "laity" distinction, called in these tracts an "abominable heresy" (page 34).

It is a great and wonderful and scriptural privilege when a church says to a minister: "You go up into the pulpit while we sit here; go up and take the time necessary to unfold to us, in an orderly manner, some great scripture doctrine or some great Bible chapter that the Lord has laid upon your heart." We believe that the Sunday morning church *needs* such a minister, and that nothing can take the place of it—unless it is something that turns out to be the equivalent of it.

But even if the "located minister" is something that has come in since the beginning (we do not concede it for a moment)—yet, God has certainly set His seal upon it, in the case of those men who have labored with a true heart for the building of His church; and the greatest churches we have known are served in this manner. God said to Israel that He would still bless the kingdom arrangement after He had already gone so far as to say that Israel had rejected Him in choosing a king:

"And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto Jehovah thy God, that we die not; for we have added unto all our sins this evil, to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have indeed done all this evil; yet turn not aside from following Jehovah, but serve Jehovah with all your heart: and turn ye not aside; for then would ye go after vain things which cannot profit nor deliver, for they are vain. For Jehovah will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it hath pleased Jehovah to make you a people unto himself" (1 Samuel 12:19-22).

If of old God so blessed the king and the people (though in this case they had sinned at the outset), how much more would God condescend to bless the "located minister" arrangement, since there is nothing inherently evil in such an order! We do not make this point to excuse departures from the primitive pattern, nor do we admit that the "located minister" is such a departure; we simply point out the gracious condescension and reasonableness of our God, to labor with and to bless His people, regardless of certain weakness in their work. This He has undoubtedly done in many instances, and even in many cases of the so-called "one-man ministry." We think it is not so much a question as to where a man may labor, nor how long; but entirely a question of *what he does* at that place, and whether or not he is a yielded instrument for the glory of God and the true building of the church. Most certainly, it is not a difference over which to draw lines and cause separations among the churches of the Lord!

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

E. P. Goodwin

HIS COMING PERSONAL AND VISIBLE

But let us advance further: I affirm that the Lord's return must be literal, personal, visible, because he must needs return as a true and proper man (His human body). That He was such when He was upon earth, and as truly such subsequent to His resurrection, admits of no doubt. It was as the man Christ Jesus that He appeared to Mary Magdalene, and the other women, to Peter, to the disciples on the way to Emmaus; to the eleven when Thomas' doubts were removed; to the 500 in Galilee; to the little company that saw Him ascend from the slopes of Olivet into the clouds of heaven. Up to that vanishing point we know past a peradventure that our Lord was a true and perfect man, and that He took with Him into the heavens, a true and literal, though glorified, human body. What I say now is, that of necessity He will return with that same body, a body that can be seen and touched, and personal fellowship as true and real, and loving and blessed to be had with Him who wears it, as in the days of His dwelling upon the earth. This is exactly what, if there had sprung up no men wiser than the men who wrote these Scriptures, everyone would say was what the angels meant, when after the ascension they said to the wondering disciples, "Why stand ye gazing up into the heaven? This same Jesus which was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). The point of the angels' message is not so much the fact of the return as the manner of it. This same Jesus is to come as He departed, in the air, in the clouds of heaven. The rationalizers may refine as much as they please upon the phrase, "in like manner," and seek to make it agree with the spread of Christianity, or the destruction of Jerusalem or the manifestation of the spirit in the heart, but there will still confront them this unquestionable fact, that in the minds of those to whom the angels spoke these words they had an altogether different meaning. They went forth looking for the return of the "same Jesus" whom they had seen depart, and for His coming in the clouds. And the best scholarship of all the ages (on Acts 1:11) is agreed that this is what the language signifies. Says Hackett: "The expression 'in like manner' is never employed to affirm merely the certainty of one event as compared to another. It signifies 'in what manner:' i.e., visibly and in the air." So Bengel, DeWette, Meyer, Olshausen, Lange, Alford, Jamison, Fausset, and Brown. To make these angels mean what the spiritualizing interpreters of this passage say they meant, is to make their testimony a cruel mockery to these longing hearts they were sent to comfort. Nay, it is to make the Holy Spirit, whose messengers and mouthpieces they were, put off upon the early church a virtual deception, and suffer them, unchecked, to cherish and rejoice in and treat it as the one peculiarly blessed hope by which their hearts were unspeakably comforted and inspired. God does not comfort and inspire His people in that way. These angels meant exactly what

they said. And that "same Jesus", a true, personal, visible man, is to come as He went, in the air, and with power, and great glory.

HIS HUMAN BODY

But how do we know, it may be asked, that He has not laid aside His humanity, and so will return in a spiritual way? I answer, in the nature of things He cannot lay aside His human nature, but must keep it forever. There is much loose and unscriptural thinking and speculation among Christian people here. Jesus Christ, when He was born of the virgin and entered this world, as the incarnate Son of God, took upon Him our nature. He was not a make-believe man, a god disguised in human form, as some have held from the earliest ages, but a literal and true man. He was as truly man as if He were not God; as truly man as He was truly God. So that as He was God of God, very God of very God, He was man of man, very man of very man. That is, He had a true, rational, human soul and a true flesh-and-blood body. And "it behooved Him" to be made thus: "for as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood"—i. e. the race He came to save—"He also Himself likewise took part of the same." He must needs become one with those whom He would rescue, must in the most literal sense be identified with their nature. But having so wedded Himself to the seed of Abraham by being born of the virgin, by that fact He made Himself thenceforth forever a true and literal man. We talk loosely and lightly about our bodies. We seem to think they are the mere houses in which for a time we dwell; or that they are related to us as the casket to the jewel, or the shell to the seed which it encloses. Not so the scriptures. In their view man is a complex being. The body is not the man, nor is the soul the man, nor the soul and the spirit. He is made up of all these factors, and neither of them can be left out, and the complete man remain. As in the divine idea of the tabernacle, the shechinah glory and the tent in which it dwelt were to be inseparable, so the divinely bestowed soul and the humanly created body, which constitutes a man were never to be divorced. The law of God concerns both factors; sin concerns both; redemption concerns both. Their future destiny for weal or woe is, according to scripture, indissolubly linked.

When, therefore Jesus the Christ was born, He took our nature to keep it. The indispensable condition of His becoming our redeemer was that He become our kinsman according to the flesh, and that He should remain such forevermore. And rightly speaking, philosophically speaking, as well as scripturally, He could no more lay aside His humanity than we can lay aside ours. In the language of the early time, the time of the great councils that shaped the faith of the historic church, Christ was on His human side consubstantial with men, and on the divine side consubstantial with God. Hence He was and continues to be both God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever.

(To be Continued)

If you work for your employer like you serve God, how long would you hold your job?

LESSONS ON FIRST PETER

R. H. B.

1 Peter 2:9, 10 — “Ye Are . . . That You May”

“But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God’s own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God: who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”
(1 Peter 2: 9, 10.)

In contrast to those of the Jews who “stumble at the word, being disobedient” (verse 8) Peter now tells the believing, obedient ones what they “are”—what their place and station now is in the sight of God through their faith in Jesus Christ. They *are* something now, which before they had not been. For, as Paul declares, “If any man is in Christ he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). What are they? First “an elect race”—a new race of men, elect, chosen; next, “a royal priesthood”—priests of royal rank; then, “a holy nation”—a nation set apart unto God; lastly, “a people for God’s own possession.” These titles belonged to the fleshly people of Israel (“whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises”, Rom. 9:4) but now in higher and fuller meaning are applied to these “sojourners of the Dispersion”, the Jewish believers to whom Peter is writing (1 Pet. 1:1)—and, indeed, to all Christians alike, for in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. But because these to whom he writes were of Israel’s stock, as to the flesh, and well acquainted with the Old Testament scriptures and the claims and standing of the Jew, Peter chooses those familiar terms and titles, and applies them to these Christian Jews, in a sense far higher, however, than Israel of old ever knew. So that is what they “are”, and what we all are who are in Christ.

This high calling and station is ours *for a purpose*. “Ye are” something that you may do something—namely that we may “show forth the excellencies” of our God, “who called us out of darkness into his marvellous light.” That cannot be done by any unless and until *they are* what Peter here says they are. With other words you must *be* something before you can *do* anything for God. Not until God has made us anew—not until we are “his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works”, can we do those works (Eph. 2:10)—just as only the branches in the “true vine” can bear fruit unto God (John 15).

What is it then that those who hold this high standing in Christ are to do? The answer is they are to “show forth” to the world, the “excellencies” of God—the ways and the character of Him who called us. The chief trait of God’s character—indeed the sum of all is *love*: His righteousness, His holiness, His goodness, His compassion, His mercy—all are included in His love. This we are to show forth. Only a child of God, begotten of God (1:23), partaker therefore of His nature, can do that. “Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you”

(Eph. 5:1, 2). If He called us out of darkness into His marvellous light, it is that by the reflection of His light we are to "shine as lights in the world."

Once more he calls attention to what they now are, in contrast to what before they were: "who in times past were no people." In Hosea God pronounced the sentence "Lo Ammi" ("Not my people") upon disobedient Israel. "Ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" (Hos. 1:9). In fact, like the Gentiles, they were "no people" (Deut. 32:21; quoted in Rom. 10:19). But the prophet looks beyond the horizon of his time, and foresees a better day: "It shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God" (Hos. 1:10; quoted in Rom. 9:26).

Once more Peter goes back to Hosea's prophecy. "Lo-ruhama" ("That has not obtained mercy") the name of Hosea's daughter, applied to the unfaithful people of Israel, foretelling (like "Lo-Ammi") their long rejection. But again the prophet envisions their restoration: "Say to your brethren, Ammi; and to your sisters, Ruhamah" (cancelling the "Lo", which in the Hebrew means "Not"). "And I will have mercy upon her that had not obtained mercy; and I will say to them that were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, "Thou art my God" (Hos. 2:1, 23). So Peter writing to the Jewish Christians, says: "Who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God; who had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pet. 2:10). Where, when, and how these obtained mercy is shown in Acts 2:36-42.

IS THE CHURCH "SPIRITUAL ISRAEL"?

One line of interpretation—misinterpretation, rather—followed by many teachers and commentators, goes on the presumption that "God is through with the Jew", and that all the promises and prophecies concerning the nation descended from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, have been forfeited by them, and are now to be spiritually applied to the church. This idea denies and nullifies much of the scriptures. We may freely grant that Israel is in rejection now. We also gladly concede that much that is said to and about Israel is applicable to the church, and that all *spiritual* blessings are ours in Christ Jesus (Eph. 1:3). But it does not follow that therefore Israel (the nation descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) is abolished for ever. The promises and prophecies concerning that people, their land, their city (in full view of all their sins and foretold rejection of their Messiah) their regathering and restoration, are no less clear and explicit than the prophecies of their age-long punishments. The latter have been literally fulfilled, and are yet being fulfilled; just as surely and literally will be the fulfilment of their promises and prophecies of their national restoration, "for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it." For "like as I have brought all this evil upon this people," saith the Lord, "so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them" (Jer. 32:42). "And I will bring Israel again to his pasture, and he shall feed upon Carmel and Bashan, and his soul shall be satisfied upon the hills of Ephraim and in

Gilead. In those days, and at that time, saith Jehovah, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found, for I will pardon them whom I leave as a remnant" (Jer. 50:19, 20). Their city which had been a provocation of anger and wrath unto God, shall be to Him "for a name of joy, for a praise and for a glory, before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good I shall do unto them, and shall fear and tremble for all the good and for all the peace that I procure unto it" ((Jer. 32:31 and 33:9). "For I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have scattered thee, but I will not make a full end of thee; but I will correct thee in measure, and will in no wise leave thee unpunished" (Jer. 30:11). "But by their fall salvation is come to the Gentiles" says Paul: "Now if their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness? . . . For if the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11:11-15. Note the context of these quotations.) Nothing found elsewhere in the scriptures can contradict or nullify the definite and explicit predictions of the future place and glory of the penitent nation of Israel.



(Seed Thoughts this time are taken from an old publication entitled "Missionary Messages" by A. B. Simpson.)

THE FINISHING TOUCH

At best our work is only apprentice work preliminary and preparatory to His great finishing touch, and how we long for the Master to come and bring that touch and climax to our poor, imperfect attempts at service.

They tell of a gifted artist who was struggling to express on canvas the great vision that had come to his soul, and how at last, discouraged by his inability to do justice to his own ideal, he left the painting incomplete and wrote in his diary a little cry of self-despair. That night his old master came in disguise to his studio to which he still retained a pass-key, and as he gazed upon the striking outline upon the canvas and thought of the artist whose inmost soul he understood so well, he seemed to enter into his conception, and seizing the brush he finished the painting as only he could have done,

and quietly stole away. When the young artist returned to the studio, he gazed in rapt astonishment upon his finished work, and bursting into tears he cried, "No one but the master himself could have done this." So, some day He will come and finish our poor apprentice work with His own glorious touch.

MATERIALISM

We need no better evidence of the materialism of the day than the last testimony of Herbert Spencer, the great leader of modern philosophy, given just before he died. "It is all dark and uncertain to me," and taking back a good many of the things he had said, wrote to a friend: "I may not see another springtime. All that I can say is that I have this conviction left after all my researches that somewhere in this universe there is a force of some kind that is moving things, but it is all blind and dark to me, and my philosophy gives me no consolation as I look into my own grave." That is what agnosticism can do for man.

GIVING HERSELF

One Christmastide in the Sudan the missionary asked the native girls to bring an offering for Jesus. They each brought some little thing. With it was a little flower or some toy that had been given them by the passing traders.

One dark-skinned girl, with deep-set eyes, and a face transfigured, handed the missionary a little bundle, which when he opened it, he found to contain eighty-five cents. That for a poor girl in the Sudan was as much as for you to give \$85,000. It was a fortune. He called her to him and said, "My child, how could you do this?"

"Jesus gave Himself for me and I thought I would give myself for Him. I went and sold myself for the rest of my life to a planter. I gave him the right to use me in his field at the hardest toil, and he gave me eighty-five cents and he let me have this one day, so I could bring the money to you." That is what love can do. Let it control your heart.

How the Heathen Can Love

Two Africans stood by David Livingstone till he died, and then they carried his body in their arms through the swamps of Africa, wrapped in cotton, through perils of wild beasts and wicked men; took it to the coast to be buried in Westminster Abbey. That is the way the African can love and sacrifice.

The Poor Can Give

A minister said to a very humble congregation of saints, that he did not believe there was a person in it, so poor, man, woman, or child, but could give something to the Lord. One poor woman went home and had a good cry over it. "I am so poor I cannot give anything." After she had cried a little while, she thought, you cannot give like other people, but you can give like a child. You can begin and put aside a penny." Do you know that when that year ended that poor woman had \$21 to give. It was the largest gift in that entire congregation.

THE MAN AT THE TOP

J. H. McCaleb

An organization is but the shadow of the man at the top. That pearl of wisdom was dropped by an executive for whom I worked during many years, and whom I have admired greatly. That philosophical principle has stayed with me, and I have always been most interested in knowing something about the one at the top. There is no question about the reality of his shadow and the direct effect it has upon the entire working group. It is a powerful influence.

And so with any congregation; the reflection of the top is evident here also. What does one find to be the spirit of the members and the quality of its fellowship? Is there an atmosphere of joy, peace, long-suffering and gentleness, or is there a history of hatred, strife, jealousies, wrath, factions, divisions and heresies? One immediately searches out the leaders: the elders, the deacons and the preacher. For the moment he thinks that perhaps he has found the source of the shadow; but he hasn't gone quite far enough. He must look beyond the finite into the infinite.

Christ is the head of the body, the church. So also, He must be the head of any congregation which is made up of members of the one body. In any sound congregation, one must find without any doubt whatsoever, the lovely shadow of the Lord, "the man at the top." When men usurp the position at the top, chaos is bound to result. There is one Lord and one God and Father of all. Only when we are willing to be blinded can we mistake the shadow of the man for the shadow of the Lord.

NEWS AND NOTES

Lexington, Ky.: We had a great spiritual feast with Brother Boll Thanksgiving week. Many visitors came and two were baptized. This week of Gospel messages was preceded by a week of prayer and supplication by the Hanover church. —H. N. Rutherford.

Louisville, Ky.: I just arrived home from a trip to Sullivan County, Indiana. Preached at Sullivan, where Paul Neal has ministered a number of years, now being assisted once a month by Paul Knecht of P. C. S. Had a tiny part in the special meeting at Dugger, Thanksgiving Eve., in which twelve or more congregations were represented, and in which some two dozen children of the Sellersburg Home took part. A half dozen or more preachers took part, directed by Maurice Clymore, resident preacher.

I joyously greeted some that I baptized in early years of my ministry. Preached yesterday at Palmer's Prairie, a congregation over 100 years old. This church is blessed by two nonagenarians, the mother and mother-in-law of Sister Wyman, wife of the late Ray Wyman. Her mother, Mrs. John Ward, is 92; the mother-in-law is near 95. These two sisters know much of the history of the Cause in Sullivan County. Brother Alva Wyman (son), presented me with a copy of the history of Palmer's Prairie, a document of his own production, an appreciated gift. Here I stood at the grave of Thomas and Charlotte Chambers, my grand-parents, and by me stood Howard Ragsdale, my grand-nephew, their great-great-grandson. Much more of interest could be written.—Stanford Chambers.

Louisville, Ky.: Three were baptized into Christ, two backsliders returned amidst much rejoicing, and one came for reconsecration and prayer in the eight-day revival at the beginning of November, held at Ormsby Avenue church. Brother H. E. Schreiner was our evangelist. We were greatly blessed by his stirring messages from God's Word.

Harold Preston, minister of the

Parksville church of Christ asks us to announce a new Gospel Broadcast from Harrodsburg, Kentucky, over WHBN (1420 kc) at eight o'clock each Sunday morning. The program is thirty minutes in duration.

Johnson City, Tenn.: We had a good meeting with Carl Kitzmiller preaching. Had more than the usual attendance by the people of the community. One was baptized during the meeting and we have had one added by membership since. —Waldo S. Hoar.

Chattanooga, Tenn.: Our meeting from October 5-16 with Orell Overman preaching was good. We enjoyed having him this, the second time. The messages were presented with force, and, we believe, in the power of the Holy Spirit. We commend his manner and his messages.

The Word and Work continues to render a great service to all who read it carefully. Our good Brother Boll presents the word with as much power as in former days. May the Lord continue to bless all of you. Pray for us here. —E. H. Hoover.

Yazoo City, Miss.: I am to begin full-time work with the church at Leon, Iowa, Sunday, November 13. My address will be P. O. Box 96, Leon, Iowa. Pray for us as we go to work for these good people. —H. C. Winnett.

Jennings, La.: During the last half of October we were happy to have Brother Boll in a meeting with the Jennings church. The rich, spiritual messages that he brought to us greatly edified and strengthened the church. In the morning class (7:15-8:15) he taught by request the book of Revelation which was a great blessing to all who attended.

The services were all well attended, and a fine interest was manifested. One was baptized during the meeting.

We praise the Lord for His blessings on Brother Boll, and, if the Lord should tarry, may He grant Him many more years of useful service. —Ivy J. Istre.

Abilene, Texas: The October publication of the Word and Work, as every issue, was fine reading. I especially enjoyed the editorial.

Recently I returned from a two-weeks' meeting with the Fourth Street Church of Christ in Wichita Falls, Texas. The good meeting, with good interest and cooperation on the part of the congregation, resulted in two responses to the invitation—both for baptism. Both bore evidences of having really taken hold of the new life. Being an excellent "listening congregation", the church was blessed spiritually, I believe. This is a fine group of God's people.

Here, at South Side, we are anticipating a good meeting in early December (4th-11th) with Brother Carl Kitzmiller. It will be a grand "reunion" when we have him and his family back for a week.

We had one baptism recently. Continue praying for us. —Frank Gill.

SHAWNEE MEETING

The Shawnee church closed an interesting series of meetings on November 16. Eleven preachers, all of them of the Louisville area, participated in the meetings, each one preaching one sermon. Altho there was no special planning of themes to be discussed, most of the messages seemed to dovetail as to subject matter, and all of the messages were of the highest quality, and most helpful. Many attended from sister congregations. The Shawnee church is most grateful to each of these fine men who so willingly helped us in this work. One man was baptized during the meeting, and we are sure that much other good was done. —Willis H. Allen.

Ponchatoula, Louisiana: Brother John Fulda closed an eight-day meeting in Ponchatoula, last night. (Nov. 6.) His messages were up-

lifting and deeply spiritual. Thirty-five local visitors attended one or more times and many visitors from other churches of Christ in this area attended, making this our best revival yet.

The Bible classes at Southeastern Louisiana College are being well attended.

There are fourteen churches of Christ within a radius of 100 miles of the college, which will fellowship us. There are good opportunities for starting new mission points all around us. So, a young man who wants to preach should find plenty of opportunities to preach on Sunday while working out his college degree and while studying Bible in the Bible Chair. —Richard Ramsey.

Mail your inquiries and gifts to: Church of Christ Bible Chair, P. O. Box 715, College Station, Hammond, Louisiana.

A GIFT FOR THE INNER MAN

Most of our gifts at Christmas time serve the outer man. We have stocked our shelves in the Word and Work Book Store with gift materials for the inner man—Bibles, Testaments, commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, devotional books, Bible story books—soul food all. These are the best gifts. Give a good book for this Christmas. You may send for a book list, or call AR 8966, or visit Word and Work, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville 12, Kentucky.

A Stationery Counter

Now the children can get their school tablets, theme paper, pencils, etc., at the Word and Work Book Store.

Greeting Cards

We still have a nice assortment of Christmas cards, and greeting cards for various occasions. Drop in at our Store and see them.

NELSONVILLE CHURCH HOUSE DESTROYED BY FIRE

Early Thursday morning, November 17, the church building of the Nelsonville, Kentucky, church burned to the ground, even to the ruin of the poured concrete basement walls and basement floor. Origin of the fire has not been determined.

The Nelsonville Church has been helping in the publication of **Missionary Messenger** by means of underwriting part of the expenses, for more than three years past, along with the services of their minister, Robert Heid, as publishing editor.

The brethren hope to rebuild with concrete block construction, along with labor "of their own hands" and field-cut lumber which is available. —Robert Heid.