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In This Issue

REGULAR DEPARTMENTS

Talking Things Over —G. R. L.	130
Missionary Messenger	138
Questions Asked of Us —Carl Kitzmiller	140
Prophecy: Malachi: Christian Living in the Last Days (Part 3) —Ed Blum	143
Reprint: The Church and the Great Tribulation —R. H. Boll	151
Viewing the News —Ernest E. Lyon	153
News and Notes	160

SPECIAL FEATURES

Tamar—Absalom's Sister —Mrs. Paul J. Knecht	131
"He Followed Not With Us" —W. R. H.	133
Turkey—The Forgotten Land —Mehmet Iskender	135
Poem: A Soldier's Prayer	139
Let's Disagree Agreeably —Alex V. Wilson	149
Garlands for Ashes —N. Bernard Wright	155
The Holy Spirit Gets His Man —Bill Swain	159



Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

Personal salvation

“Personal Saviour” is an overworked expression, or so it seems to me. Although it is not found in Scripture, it does express a thoroughly biblical concept. “My Lord and my God!” cried Thomas, and that’s getting pretty personal. Paul had some rather personal feelings when he wrote, “I count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord.” And, “I have been laid hold of by Christ Jesus.” More than one hymn writer has put Paul’s thoughts into the words, “I am His and He is mine.”

To know Christ personally is not optional. Salvation is an individual, one-at-a-time matter. It requires a personal faith, a personal commitment, a personal transaction. It is not enough to acknowledge the Lord Jesus as the Savior of the world or of sinners in general. We must, with Paul, be able to say, “He loved me and gave Himself for me.” I was a sinner, lost and undone, and Jesus took my sins upon Himself. That is what it means when I say, “He’s my personal Savior.” That’s pretty wonderful.

And yet, I don’t like the expression “personal Savior.” Maybe it’s because it’s used a little too glibly by some of the radio preachers I hear. Or it may be because so many churches seem to stop right there. The sinner is brought to Christ, but then he is left to exist in a spiritual limbo until the rapture. He is never really taught to enjoy the corporate aspect of salvation.

Corporate salvation

The Roman church and some others have taken this aspect of salvation and ridden it to an extreme—to the point of totally obscuring the truth. People are baptized into the church, and salvation (if it is even considered possible) depends entirely upon being in a right relationship to the church. A personal relationship to the Lord isn’t even talked about. Perhaps some of the “personal Savior” people are over-reacting to this “salvation is in the church” distortion.

Yet, encrusted beneath the traditions of men there lies a glorious neglected truth. Christ Jesus is "the Savior of the body." And "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it" (Ephesians 5). The believer who never finds his place in the body of Christ is missing a great deal. Just being a church member is not the whole thing. Paul speaks of the church as a building; there's a world of difference between a building and a heap of building materials. A congregation may be one or the other, or somewhere in between. Turning to the similitude of a body, a corpse with every member in its proper place is still a corpse.

Too often we look only at external details. What about the *life* of the body? What about the *relationship* of member to member? Real fellowship is the oft-missing ingredient. Personal fellowship with our "personal Savior" is wonderful, but it cannot be fully enjoyed in a hermit's cave. Only in the fellowship of the saints is Christ fully manifested. He has made us to complement each other. "Bear ye one another's burdens." How far from this is a perfunctory weekly greeting and handshake. There's much more in store for us, and it is realized only in a company of believers that functions as "members one of another." Therefore, "See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." "And above all things, have fervent love among yourselves." (1 Peter 1:22; 4:8).

As bad as the first wrong was, the second was worse.

Tamar – Absalom's Sister

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

Absalom had a fair sister whose name was Tamar. His brother Amnon, on the advice of his cousin Jonadab, a subtle man, contrived to have her sent to him in his bedchamber. The king complied with his request without a question; and Amnon forced the young maiden. She was willing to have been his wife and urged him to speak to the king for her. But he was perverse, in his passion impatient, and would not. There was no self-control in Amnon.

The story is brief and only one of the many unsavory happenings among the children of David. David was a man of war and evidently left the rearing of his children to their respective mothers without any effort to help. There is a possibility that the mothers themselves felt capable without him and considered any efforts he might have made as interferences in their several households. Whether this be true or not in David's family, it is true now that many mothers resent as interference a father's efforts to help in the rearing of his own children.

There is just one point I want to emphasize in this brief and pitiable story of the marring of a beautiful young princess. That is, Amnon's treatment of her after he had done his wickedness. He hated her and "said unto her, Arise, be gone." But she protested. There was a law in Israel that covered this thing. "If a man find a damsel that is a virgin, that is not betrothed, and lay hold on her, and lie with her, and they be found, . . . she shall be his wife, because he hath humbled her; *he may not put her away all his days*" (Deuteronomy 22:28, 29). Therefore she protested, "Not so, because this great wrong in putting me forth is worse than the other that thou didst unto me" (2 Samuel 13:16). But he would not listen and called a servant to put her out. "Put now *this woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her," he said. He deserved the death he got at the hands of Absalom's servant.

Tamar had a garment of different colors that distinguished her as a king's virgin daughter. This, through no fault of her own, she no longer had a right to wear. She had been humbled and her virginity violated. She put ashes on her head and tore her garment of different colors and "laid her hand on her head" (evidently she had worn no veil or which is more likely had been thrust out unceremoniously without a chance to put it on and in her extremity covered her hair, which was her glory, before God with her hand) "and went her way crying aloud as she went." Her humility was real yet did not make her forget that she was a king's daughter and had received such treatment as even a slave girl should not have. Amnon not only had humbled her but had refused to take the responsibility the law placed on one who had done such a thing. And, as bad as the first wrong was, the second was worse. Moreover, we are told that king David was very wroth; but so far as the record shows he did nothing, either to comfort Tamar or to punish Amnon much less to make him assume the responsibility prescribed by the law for such a case.

In some particulars this incident resembles the sin of David concerning Bathsheba and may have been permitted by God as a part of His chastening of David. Perhaps too, there may be a lesson in it for us that our King be not wroth with His children because of their treatment of one another. Since what is done to one of His is done to Him (Matthew 25:45; Acts 9:4) we may well be careful. God may not be as do-less as it seems David was. Humbling is peculiarly God's own work. It may not be pleasing to Him when His creatures presume to take upon themselves one of His prerogatives. It may be that no matter what means of humbling are used the very fact that it is attempted and accomplished will carry with it a responsibility comparable to that which Amnon refused to accept in the case of Tamar.

THOMAS LATHERN JOHNS: Life has no question that faith cannot answer.

"He Followed Not With Us"

W. R. H.



As John the apostle gave report to Jesus, concerning an "Unknown Wonder-worker," the only complaint was that this one was not from their circle. "Lord, we saw one casting out demons in thy name, and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not; for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me." I think that this un-preached paragraph has a message for today.

Notice that it was not the doubts of Thomas, the greed of Judas, nor the impetuous zeal of Peter that had arisen to this occasion, but the mild truth-loving enthusiasm of the beloved John. Yet all must have concurred, for we hear no other voice raised but the rebuke of the Lord Jesus Himself.

How far should we go along with or recommend evangelist Billy Graham? What should we say to the reports that faith healers have blessed our city and "our people"? Can we give any room for the sincere efforts called "Jesus Movement"? Dare we discuss the present Charismatic Movement in the light of 1 Cor. 12, 13 and 14? Should not a Christian, and particularly a minister, take a position on such matters? Surely we should know what we believe!

Yes, we need to know what we believe; but many people take their positions, and even believe thus-and-thus about things wherein they are uninformed. Take, for example, Saul of Tarsus, when he "verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus." He was no ignorant man but schooled under Gamaliel and a Pharisee of the Pharisees. But he *was* ignorant about Jesus, and only knew of Him by hearsay, and that from the wrong people. Saul's opinion, as it is also with ours, was only as good as the information supporting it.

True enough, their group was the true "disciples of Christ." Jesus Himself, was yet very much in their midst, and was in the process of fitting them for service in the church that He would soon build and own for His very own bride.. They had each been personally chosen by Jesus to be the leaders. Some day they would be given to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Then, who is this unknown wonder-worker whom they had met? Quite naturally they yielded to the impulse to forbid him.

But whereas he was unknown to the twelve, I don't believe he was unknown to Jesus. How could our Omniscient Lord, whose very Name and power were being used repeatedly, not know who was the user? But He did not tell His disciples whether He knew the one or not. His answer was not based on that particular point. His simple answer was for them to "Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me."

Who is to judge?

Notice some things that Jesus did *not* say: "Oh yes, I met him the other day and put him to work." Nor did He say, "I don't know him either." Nor, "Bring him here and let's teach him a bit and add him to our number." Nor, "Some couple of you go along with him and help him out." Nor, "He is a fake." Jesus merely told them to forbid him not. Then, in the event that they thought the man's activity was doing harm, He assured them it was no problem.

As we think back, there was a time when Paul, too, was unknown to the rest of the Apostles. So also with Silas, Lydia, Aquila, Timothy, Titus, and most of the others. But doubtless they were all foreknown by God.

Several good things can be said about this wonder-worker. For one, he was busy about the Lord's business. And, although working alone, he was making progress. Again, he was using the right name, for only in the name of Jesus can demons be cast out, and he was successful. If not, the disciples would surely have noticed and reported failure, because in their experience they had experienced both in dealing with demons. Nor is it recorded that the demons questioned his authority as they did with the seven sons of Sceva, in Acts 19:15.

But, was this unknown one actually serving under orders from the Lord Jesus? We may not be able to decide with certainty; nor must we decide. We know not the mind of the Lord, nor what transactions He has had with other servants. It is enough for us to hear and remember and obey the orders that He has given to us. "Who art thou that judgest the servant of another? Before his own lord he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be made to stand, for the Lord hath power to make him stand." (Rom. 14:4).

Once, much later, when Jesus had been telling Peter about what was to befall him in old age, Peter looked at John, and said to Jesus: ". . . and this man, what?" Jesus answered, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." The context there tells us that this was not to be taken as a prophetic utterance, but rather a remonstrative question. May we take heed from it.

As we follow Jesus, we find that we are invariably drawn into fellowship with all others who are also following Him. What a fellowship!

Mehmet Iskender, who works for the Lord in Turkey, gives us a glimpse of conditions in that Islamic land.

Turkey—The Forgotten Land

Mehmet Iskender

It is difficult to open the New Testament without being reminded of the very central part that Asia Minor played in the extension of the early church. In Acts we read of Paul's home in Tarsus and of his early missionary journeys across Lycia, Pamphylia, Asia and Galatia. Four of the Epistles were specifically written to believers in Asia Minor. And in Revelation we come face to face with the famous "seven churches"—all of them in Asia Minor.

In the light of this, it seems strange that today the modern Republic of Turkey, whose borders are more or less those of ancient Asia Minor, should have one of the smallest evangelical communities of any country in the world of comparable population. In fact there are today probably not more than fifty born-again Turks in the whole nation! In the capital city, Ankara, a town once in the heart of Galatia, there is not a single known Turkish believer in a population of one and a half million. Among Turkey's nine universities, with their 160,000 students, there are no known believers.

In in the first century Paul could write to the church at Colossae of the gospel "which has been preached to every creature under heaven" (Colossians 1:23). But in the twentieth century the great majority of Turkey's population of 37 million—increasing at the rate of one million every year—has had little or no opportunity to hear the gospel. There are a few evangelical churches among the minority groups of Greeks and Armenians, but among Turks, who make up 99.3% of the population, there is only one regular fellowship meeting, and that is in Istanbul. Other converts from Islam are scattered over the rest of the country where there is little or no opportunity for fellowship.

Why is Turkey today such a spiritual desert? One reason is, of course, Islam. As the conquering Turkish tribes filtered into Asia Minor from the ninth century onwards, they found a Christianity that was hardly recognizable as the vibrant faith once preached by the apostle Paul. The spiritual life of the early churches had been throttled by heresy, lukewarmness, monasticism and a lack of emphasis on evangelism. The fate of the dying Byzantine Empire was finally sealed as Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, and since that time Turkey has been dominated by Islam.

However, though Islam was the official religion of the Ottoman Empire, at the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923 Islam was rejected as the official state religion, through the reforming zeal of Kemal Ataturk. Today, through the new constitution of

1961, Turks probably have (on paper) more religious freedom than ever before. Article 19 of the constitution states that "every individual has freedom of conscience, religious faith and opinion." Islam is gradually losing its hold on the people, especially the more educated young. Yet it still has a strong cultural and nationalistic hold, and the true Turk is still thought of automatically as a Muslim. This means that when a Turk turns to Christ, he often has to face opposition from his family, alienation from society in general, and sometimes the loss of his job as well.

Another reason why Turkey is such a spiritual desert is that so few have gone there to proclaim the gospel. In the last century several societies sent missionaries to work there, but their work was largely carried on among the nominally Christian, minority groups. Today there are about forty workers in the country whose main burden is to witness to Turks. Yet this number is tiny when one considers the task in hand—only one worker for every million of the population.

What is being done to reach Turkey's millions? There are now three missionary societies working in Turkey, but the numbers involved are small. Over half the foreign workers in the country are young people in fellowship with Operation Mobilization teams, who are mainly engaged in language study, literature work, translation and personal witness. Sometimes temporary teams come to Turkey for a summer mass literature distribution, with the aim of giving thousands of Turks at least some opportunity of hearing the gospel. It is these teams, engaged in more open forms of evangelism, who have often had to face opposition from the authorities, though there is in fact nothing illegal in tract distribution. Those whom the Lord calls to Turkey on a more permanent basis make personal witness their main form of outreach.

Every summer a camp is held for national believers, with the main aim of Bible teaching. It was a great joy to see six new believers baptized in the sea last summer, one being a convert from Islam, and five from nominally Christian backgrounds. For some isolated believers this camp is the only opportunity they have all year for any regular fellowship or Bible teaching.

Emmaus Bible correspondence courses have been one of the most fruitful means of bringing Turks to Christ. Five courses are now available in Turkish, and around one thousand people are enrolled. Many of these sent in for a course as a result of literature distributed by summer O.M. teams. Others have enrolled as a result of "Friends of Turkey," an organization based in America which sends gospel literature into Turkey. Of those Muslims who have recently come to Christ, most have come either directly or indirectly as a result of these courses.

At present there is a desperate need for more good literature, there being only about a dozen evangelical books in the Turkish language, all of which are translations from English. During the

summer of 1972 the remaining stocks of books were almost all distributed, and important decisions have now to be made as to which books to reprint and what new translations to undertake.

Radio is another way in which Turks are hearing the gospel. Trans World Radio broadcasts five nights a week. The new F. E. B. C. radio station on the Seychelles Islands is hoping to broadcast Turkish programs in the future.

Yet all these various efforts represent only a tiny fraction of what could be done. Above all, a great volume of believing prayer is needed for a whole nation, most of which has never heard the gospel. We praise God for the greater prayer and concern being shown in recent years for the evangelization of communist countries. Yet Turkey is behind no iron or bamboo curtain. As a member of N.A.T.O. the country has its eyes turned toward the West. Millions of young people are being brought up to learn English as their second language. But still little is being done to reach those lost millions.

Perhaps we need to recapture something of the spirit of that very first missionary to Muslims, Raymond Lull, martyred for his faith in the thirteenth century. Lull wrote: "It is my belief, O Christ, that the conquest of the Holy Land should be attempted in no other way than Thou and Thy apostles undertook to accomplish it, by love, by prayer, by tears and the offering of our own lives."
—In *Missions*



Yesterday I returned from a ten-day trip to Turkey. It was encouraging in many ways. I spent some time in Istanbul and then went to Ankara where about 30-40 foreign workers had a conference. The Lord stirred my heart recently with the signs of His Second Coming, so I shared this in several messages, especially what our behavior should be in light of His coming.

In Istanbul I stayed with Kenan and Jenny. He shared with me a true story I had never heard before: In the very home where he was raised and his parents still live—in Midyat, east of Antioch where the disciples were first called Christians—about 50 years ago the cellar was used as a prison for over 150 born-again believers. When they were finally marched to their execution, they sang the whole way and knelt together for final prayer minutes before meeting death. There is a lady in Midyat today who saw this march and can sing the same hymn. I felt it was significant that out of this martyrdom God has brought forth a number of dear believers from the small town of Midyat.

It was also a joy to see a few from other parts of Turkey who have come to Him from a Muslim background. Join us in prayer that before He returns His Spirit will be poured out in that land.
—Dale Rhoton, Vienna, Austria.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

In Capetown, a new birth

With the teaching going on in homes of various families by way of film strip lessons, we can hopefully look forward to many souls responding in obedience to the gospel of Christ in the very near future. A lady whose husband is a member of the congregation has been attending our services and cottage meetings very regularly, and personally I have been helping her on the importance of "counting the cost." To the glory of God, on the morning of March 4, before the start of our worship service, she was baptized into Christ. And not only was there rejoicing in Heaven among the angels, but above all there was great rejoicing within the heart of her husband. Our prayers are that God might use them, Brother and Sister Leslie Judd, to lead other to the Lord.

It seems like things will be hopefully moving, in respect of our future building plans in the new area of Hanover Park. We have contacted the architect to make up rough sketches for the type of building we would require, Lord willing. We are still sharing in our prayers on behalf of both the Bokmakirrie and Steenberg congregations, that the Lord might open up the way, that they also may obtain ground to build.

Lastly, with the present funds I have towards the car, up to date, I still need about 1600 dollars. As a family we have no doubts that the Lord in His own time and manner will make this possible. Thank God my old car is still holding out. —*T. W. Hartle*, Capetown, South Africa, March 14.

Political unrest and a growing ministry

Yesterday I spoke at the Hillside congregation and at the Paddonhurst congregation in the evening. The latter is about two years old, and they have accumulated about half enough funds to buy a lot on which to build. They will then be able to borrow money to build, paying it out by the month. At present, they meet in two large rooms at Brother Tom Brown's home. Hillside continues to look toward opening the new work in Bellevue. It is a lower, middle class community, with quite a few children to the family. So we feel there is a valuable potential there.

Of late, Joyce and I have been trying to catch up on our backlog of visiting sick, elderly and shut-ins. It seems that we

have had an unusually large number of our own members in the hospital. They need encouragement and cheer. There's nothing to equal the joy of confronting people with the Christ and all He can mean in their lives.

The political situation here right now is far from a happy one. Zambia-based, Communist-trained terrorists are sending incursions into Rhodesia. Because of this, Rhodesia and Zambia closed the border between them. After promises from Zambia, Rhodesia opened but Zambia has not reopened. So it looks like we cannot expect to have visits from our children working in Zambia. —*J. C. Shewmaker*, Bulawayo, Rhodesia, March 12.

Forcades may leave Rhodesia in June

Both of us find ourselves very tired at times, but we are able to keep things going by the grace of God. Some of the children, some of the members at Arcadia, along with my wife and I have been ill with some kind of virus or flu. We seem to be about over the worst of it. My wife holds up remarkably well, but we do hope the Harrises come before too many more weeks. We would like to have some weeks to work with them and do some other special work before we leave Rhodesia. For some rather compelling reason we are thinking of leaving in June, but God may will otherwise. —*J. Miller Forcade*, Salisbury, Rhodesia, March 19.

A Soldier's Prayer

From prayer that asks that I may be
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee.
From fearing when I should aspire,
From faltering when I should climb higher
From silken self, O Captain, free
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.

From subtle love of softening things,
From easy choices, weakenings
(Not thus are spirits fortified,
Not this way went the Crucified)
From all that dims Thy Calvary,
O Lamb of God, deliver me.

Give me the love that leads the way,
The faith that nothing can dismay,
The hope no disappointments tire,
The passion that will burn like fire.
Let me not sink to be a clod:
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God.

—Anonymous

Questions Asked Of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



Recently you answered a question concerning repentance of certain sins having to do with marriage. Since it is better not to get involved in wrong marriages in the first place, how about pointing out positively what is acceptable to the Lord?

This is an excellent suggestion. I almost always try to point out when dealing with marriage that by far the best solution to the often complicated and heart-breaking problems is to avoid them in the first place. Most of us cannot avoid having to deal with such, but we can aim at avoiding the wrong in our own marriage. We cannot go out of the world, so even when our own marriage is not in question, there is a good chance we will be confronted with wrong marriages among kindred, in the churches, or elsewhere. We will likely be called on to take a stand as to what is right or will need to encourage in what is right; therefore, we need to know what that is. In one sense there is no way to escape the negative aspects of marriage questions, for the right course demands that we do *not* do certain things. It would be like trying to teach the ten commandments without ever being negative. But we can be positive in the sense of trying to teach what is good and acceptable and in trying to reach people with these truths before marriage rather than in merely trying to salvage the situation after a wrong marriage has occurred.

Our space does not allow an exhaustive treatment of these matters, but we can begin by establishing a few general principles.

1. Christians should always seek to be in the will of God. This certainly includes the choice of a life companion.
2. Normal marriage is a life-long commitment (Matthew 19:3-8).
3. Death of the companion frees one to be remarried (Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39).
4. An innocent* person divorced because of the companion's

* "Innocent" is used here to designate the person who is not guilty of fornication. It is very possible that the one who is not guilty of such a sin nevertheless bears a great responsibility for driving the other person to such a sin. This is not to excuse the fornicator but to remind the other that God is not unaware of such things and that He will not hold such a one guiltless. Being innocent of fornication does not automatically mean innocence from all guilt.

fornication is free to remarry (Matthew 19:9).

5. Christians are required to marry Christians, to avoid the unequal yoke (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Corinthians 7:39).

6. The married have certain responsibilities to each other and must maintain a holy relationship (1 Corinthians 7:1-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4).

Much needs to be said on the first point, but we must be brief. A Christian can allow his own will and flesh to dominate the choice of a companion, so that while there are no specific violations he may leave himself open for much chastening from the Lord. If Christ is the Lord of our life, then we will want His overruling hand in all things and we will honestly and fervently seek His will for us. We always need the help of the One who knows our need, what the future holds, where blessings lie. Romantic love is a desirable part of a good marriage, but it is folly to allow the heart to lead us in any way out of His will. There is a sense in which good marriages are made in heaven—they are formed between people who are intensely interested in His choice. Caution that we do not mistake our own feelings for guidance from the Lord is in order. Some even set themselves against the Bible itself because they “know” that what they want to do is “right,” but the Christian will have no guidance *from the Lord* contrary to the Word.

Basically marriage is the union of a man and a woman for life (Matthew 19:3-8). This is not without exception, but the exception can only be when one partner is guilty of serious sin. Today we hear much about trial or experimental marriages. These are planned to break up after a period and are proposed by supposedly intelligent people as the solution to modern home problems. These would supposedly allow young people to find out what marriage is all about and then settle down to a good marriage and the rearing of children. God makes no such provision. Without question many people enter marriage with the thought that they can always get a divorce and go their separate ways if things do not work out. Again, God makes no such provision, and all the ideas or philosophies of men will not change His requirements. Marriage is not a partnership to be formed and broken as one wills. Whatever the law of the land may allow, Christians (and any other who has concern for the will of God in the matter) should be married with full commitment to the companion for life—“for better or for worse.” This is not a commitment we can run from when the going gets rough. The death of one’s mate is the only completely honorable way for the union to be broken. Such a death leaves the surviving partner free to be married again, subject of course to any other limitations God has imposed (Romans 7:2-3; 1 Corinthians 7:39). God’s word imposes no minimum time limit before remarriage in such a case, but we recognize other principles of Christian conduct may have a bearing on this.

God makes one exception and *allows* divorce when the other partner is guilty of fornication. Please note the use of the word, "allows." God does not demand divorce in such a case. Many people who have a *right* to divorce would be considerably better off to forgive and take up again the broken threads of a marriage and try to improve it. In fact, when the guilty one is repentant and honestly seeks forgiveness, the teaching of the New Testament puts a considerable burden on the offended partner to forgive (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:21-22; Luke 17:4). This is a matter about which people may act in haste and anger, only to regret it later. Some cases of fornication leave little room for reconciliation, however, and God does allow the putting away of the guilty partner. It is very similar to the death of such a one, for in a sense he has "died" as to his former union.

There are those who insist that the New Testament passages allow divorce in such a case but do not allow remarriage. I do not believe this to be a proper understanding of divorce nor a fair exegesis of the passages. The "except" clause in Matthew 19:9 seems clear enough that for the innocent partner putting away *and marriage* to another is *not* adultery. As with all subjects it is the sum of God's word that is truth, and the absence of the exception in one passage does not make it void when it appears in another. Of course, for the person who believes remarriage of the innocent party to be wrong, to him it is wrong, per the principle of Romans 14:23—"whatsoever is not of faith is sin." We might also add that any person considering marriage to a divorced person should be diligent in trying to ascertain the facts of the case. After all, this is no trivial matter, and it can have a great effect on one's relationship with the Lord and future usefulness in life and in His service. Personally I would want to know that the divorce resulted not merely from suspicion of adultery but from good evidence of such an offense. I would want to know that the divorce was obtained *for this reason* (I do not mean that adultery must necessarily be charged in the legal proceedings), and not that the sin came sometime after the divorce. An exception might be the person who is divorced against his will and the divorcing companion goes on to be joined to another. Technically, whenever two people are divorced for even the most trivial reasons, the first to remarry might be considered to be committing adultery, thus freeing the other. I find it hard to believe, however, that God honors this kind of waiting game and declares the last married to be innocent and the other guilty. He who knows the thoughts and intents of the heart does not get bogged down with such technicalities.

The responsibility of believers to marry only in the Lord has often been neglected—in teaching and in practice. 2 Corinthians 6:14-18 is without doubt speaking of more than marriage; but that it does speak of marriage is certain, for there is no closer union we can form. Some choose to make a believer anyone who is not an idolatrous pagan, but I see no reason why it does not here refer to the Christian as it does elsewhere. All Christians are to marry only

in the Lord, and this does not mean those merely professing to be in the Lord or "Christian" as defined by today's ecumenical standards. Wisdom may decree an even greater limitation than that, for many differences may exist between Christians which result in divided homes with divided religious loyalties.

There are cases where Christians find themselves in the unequal yoke—maybe due to disobedience, to the conversion of one partner, etc. These unions are not to be dissolved by the Christian (1 Corinthians 7:12-16), and the Christian should diligently seek the conversion of the other (1 Peter 3:1-2).

Concerning the last point—responsibilities of the married to each other—much needs to be said, but it must be deferred. Let the married read carefully and prayerfully the passages cited.

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PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

Malachi: Christian Living in the Last Days

(Part 3)

Dr. Ed Blum

How can you justify studying the book of Malachi for your life if you are not a Jew? First of all the New Testament teaches that "every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work" (2 Timothy 3:16), and so we need Old Testament teaching as well as New Testament teaching.

We are in the second section, with a rebuke of the priests from 1:6 to 2:9. In 2:10 begins a rebuke of the people. Right away we have a problem of application. Most of us have never seen a priest, unless we come from a system that has a priest. So if we make an application to us, we would first ask, what corresponds to a priest today? In other words, what corresponds to the priests of Israel today? In the Jewish religion there was always a priest and he stood between God and man, so the priest was always going to God for men. We still have a carryover from this. People come to the preacher and say, will you pray for me? They seem to think that they, for some reason, can't themselves pray for things. They think that the preacher has some sort of special pipeline to heaven. They do not realize the great truth that all of us are priests. This is one of the things that sparked the Reformation. There were several things—justification by faith was one, by grace alone, by scripture alone, and the fourth major principle that we are all priests of God. The Roman Catholic church taught that

there was a specialized priest that had access to God. Martin Luther said no. As he studied the scripture (he was of course a monk), he began to see that we are all priests—"ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Notice this, we are priests, and we have a sacrifice to offer.

Now let us return to Malachi. Whatever is written in the O.T. is written for our instruction. The things that happened unto them, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:11, happened unto them for examples that we may not fall into the same pitfalls as they did. So if the priests of old had certain problems—and we are going to see that they did—then we should learn from the scriptures and avoid their pitfalls.

Malachi 1:6, "A son honors his father and a servant his master." Now he doesn't say a son should, he is simply saying a general truth that happens in society. It is interesting to note that God doesn't often say, I love you. It is almost always in the past tense, I have loved you. Most people say, I love you, but God says, I have loved you. He puts it in the past tense because He has demonstrated this by concrete deeds. One of the ways that He has shown His love is that He has not wiped them out. You see, with Jacob and Esau, both were sinners, both deserved the judgment of God. But God showed His love in that He forgave the iniquity of the one, and He showed His righteousness in that He punished the iniquity of the other. One of the great aspects of His love toward us is that we don't get what we deserve.

God has revealed Himself in nature. What does Paul say that man does? He suppresses the revelation of God. He does not admit it for what it is. He is not thankful to God. He is rebellious and turns away from God in spite of the fact that He showers His love upon us. And so, the people of Israel should have been thankful, but on the contrary, they were not. A father should be honored by his son; a master or a lord should be honored by his servant; but there was a lack of proper response. Instead they have come to despise the Lord.

It is very possible that even Christians can have a wrong view of the Lord. Being around religious things does not necessarily make you a godly person. Many Christians have had a flippant attitude toward the Lord.

Another evidence of God's love was His willingness to enter into dialogue with them, the very fact that God speaks to them, that He sends His prophet, that He sends His Son, that He sends His Holy Spirit. All of this of course is to lead us to repentance. And again we see the love of God in that He does not let us go. When Adam sinned against Him, we see God coming in the garden saying, Adam, where art thou? God is seeking man and He seeks each of us.

But here are these people who should have known better; they were priests, they ministered in holy things, and yet, the Lord's

indictment is, ye have despised my name. They do not grasp the analysis of the situation and they say, How have we despised your name? (Malachi 1:7). "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar. And ye say, wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, the table of the Lord is contemptible."

What they are doing, they are offering up just any old thing that comes to mind, (verse 8,) "And when ye offer the blind for sacrifice, it is no evil?" Here they are just offering just any old thing unto the Lord, even the lame and the sick. In other words, they were careless in their religious life. How does this apply to us today? We are priests, we offer up sacrifices, we do religious service to the Lord. We offer up sacrifices of praise. Let's take something very concrete—singing, for example. If our singing is sloppy, we don't care about it. We are offering that which is not the best that we can do.

Our prayers are part of our sacrifice to the Lord. If they are a flippant thing, we are not fully aware of what prayer is. Another application is our indifference toward worship. We should ask ourselves, What is true worship? We sit and listen to a lesson, but is that true worship? Now here we have, on Sunday night, a worship service built around the Lord's supper. We should examine ourselves and ask ourselves, am I truly worshipping the Lord? Malachi 1:8, "If ye offer this type of thing, lame and sick unto thy governor, will he be pleased with thee? Or will he accept thy person? saith Jehovah of hosts." Imagine what would happen if driving along the road they found an animal mangled that had been run over, and they presented it to the governor. Would he be pleased to accept it? Would they say, aren't you pleased to accept this offering? What would he do? Well, if they got off with their head they would be lucky.

**"Stop the worship services!
... why doesn't somebody
lock the doors of the church?"**

Verse 9, "And now, I pray you, entreat the favor of the Lord that he may be gracious unto us; this hath been by your means. Will He accept any of your persons? saith Jehovah of hosts." The priests had a function of praying for his nation. I think one of the reasons God blesses a nation is because of His people in it. If we are not really the Lord's people, will He bless our nation? No, he is saying here, He will not accept an offering from you kindly. And now a striking statement in verse 10. "Oh, that there were one among you that would shut the doors." In other words, Stop the worship services! As you will realize, there are worship services that take place all over this country. And to some of them the Lord would like to say, isn't there just one of you that would lock the doors of the church? Just stop! I am tired of the whole mess, because it is not really doing anything! Remember Isaiah said, Bring no more of these sacrifices, I am sick of them, I can't stand what you are doing! We get the idea that a few people gathering to-

gether and mumbling a few songs, and a man getting up and mouthing a few words somehow makes God happy. I think you have to be very careful about that. So, He is saying here to the people of that time, I'd just as soon have the whole thing stopped!

In verse 11, we have a prophecy of Gentile worship of the Lord. Now that must have been very surprising to the Jew. Somehow they had the idea that God was locked up to them. What is an application to us? Do we have the idea that God is locked up to America? Suppose we were wiped off the face of the earth? Do you think the world would survive without us? There are movements of God in other parts of the world, you know. We must not presume that God could not pass us by because we are such a great missionary-supporting nation. I think God could do without us. He could raise up people in Africa, South America and different parts of the world to do His functions. Notice what He says in verse 11, "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the Gentiles, saith Jehovah of hosts." Now if you are not a Christian think about this for a moment. This book was written approximately three hundred and fifty years before Christ. At that time Jehovah was worshipped only by the Jewish people. Here is a prophecy; now has this prophecy been fulfilled? Anywhere you go in this world today, people are worshipping the God of Israel. What other book predicts the future like this? And this prophecy is not totally fulfilled. The Lord is telling His people at that time, "Don't think that I am tied up just to you little priests. There are going to be people who will honor my name around the world." And so, He has fulfilled His promise in one sense, and He will complete it in the future in what we call the millennium. When Christ returns, He is going to set up His kingdom and there will be true worship of the Lord all over the world. "His name shall be great among the Gentiles."

Verses 12-13, "But ye profane it, in that ye say, the table of the Lord is polluted and the fruit thereof, even its food, is contemptible. Ye say also, behold, what a weariness is it! And ye have snuffed at it." You know how it is, you parents who have served your children boiled okra. They sniff at it. Or you serve your husband something that he doesn't like. He doesn't want to hurt your feelings, so he sniffs at it.

Now the application—people get tired of God's work. We are all involved in God's work, and some of it is really hard work. Loving one another, bearing one another's burdens—that is hard work. It is possible for us to become weary in well-doing. Now this is what happened to these priests. They tended to do their work in a very sloppy fashion. Because it was hard and tiresome, and because they had become weary in it, they just did it any old haphazard way.

Verse 14, "But cursed be the deceiver, who hath in his flock a male and has made a vow to God to offer up a male, and sacrifices unto the Lord a blemished female; for I am a great King, saith Jehovah of hosts, and my name is terrible among the Gentiles." And now in chapter 2, verses 1-9, he gives the judgment against these priests. "And now, O ye priests, this commandment is for you. If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith Jehovah of hosts, then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart." If our worship of the Lord does not profit us, then it will really become a curse for us.

I think that in part the Russian revolution was a reaction to religion that had become a curse. I can understand the saying of the Russians that religion was an opiate of the people, because it was a curse. When man does not respond promptly to God, that which should have been a blessing becomes a curse. And so our faith, if it does not really work for us, can be turned very easily into a curse. And instead of being a blessing to people about us, we may become a curse. One of the functions of the priests was to bless the people, but now instead of the priests blessing the people, the people are going to be cursed. Verse 3, "Behold I will rebuke your seed, and I will spread dung upon your faces, even the dung of your feasts; and ye shall be taken away with it." Much of Christendom is despised today and probably rightfully so, because it is really a curse rather than a blessing.

**“. . . the Russian revolution
was a reaction to religion
that had become a curse.”**

Verse 5, "My covenant with Levi was one of life and peace; and I gave them to him that he might fear, and he feared me and stood in awe of my name." The purpose of becoming a priest was for life and peace. The application is, we are priests also. A priest was to know the law of God. Now one of our functions is to teach. The family is to bring up the children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. One of our functions is to have true instructions in our mouth. We are to be a messenger of the Lord.

In America the concept of the ministry has entirely changed. When America was formed, the big dog was the minister. The goal of our first university, Harvard, was to train ministers. They spoke before an election and people respected their views. A doctor did not have the stature of a minister. In our day the minister as the object of esteem is down and the doctor is highly esteemed.

At times Christians have been despised because they have not been the blessing that they should have been. In verses 10 through 16 we have a rebuke for divorce. The people of God at that time were in very desperate straits economically. They were meager in number and since there were pagans living all around, they had a tendency to become amalgamated into the culture. It is our

same problem today. We are Christians, we are living in the midst of a pagan culture. One of our biggest problems in the Christian faith is that many Christians inter-marry with non-Christians. This of course causes great problems, and this is the problem here. "Have we not all one father? Hath not God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, profaning the covenant of our fathers?" God as a father had made a covenant with the children of Israel and in their covenant they were to live before Him. And now in verse 11, He spells out what the problem is. "Judah (Israel) hath dealt treacherously and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem, for Judah hath profaned the holiness of Jehovah which he loveth, and hath married the daughter of a foreign god. This is another thing you do, ye cover the altar of Jehovah with tears, with weeping and with sighing, in-somuch that he regardeth not the offering any more, neither receiveth it with good will at your hand."

Verse 14, These men were getting rid of their wives of their youth and marrying heathens. They were turning their wives out, and they were left to drift, for no one wanted them. God said, "I have been a witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously, though she is thy companion and the wife of thy covenant." The Lord said, should I accept the sacrifices from such men as this. He says no, look what you have done. In verse 16, God says, "I hate divorce and him that covereth his garment with violence; therefore take heed to your spirit that ye deal not treacherously." The Lord still hates divorce. Sometimes divorce seems to be the only way, but God still hates it and there are better ways. Israel was carrying on its guise of being very religious—still offering up sacrifices—and yet was dealing treacherously with the Lord. The application to us is very pointed. It is very possible for us to be religious in form and yet far from the Lord.

Now we are talking about Christian living in the last days. Note in 2 Timothy 3:1-5 what Paul says. "But know this, that in the last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, no lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, puffed up, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness but having denied the power thereof." This last phrase is what I would like for us to think about for a moment. The major problem of those days was that people had a religious form but there was no real heart. It seems to me that this is always our greatest danger. We can carry out our religious activities, and yet our heart can be pretty far from it. Jesus said, "They honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." And it seems our major application for us today would be; we are priests. We are engaged in religious matters if we are Christians, and yet we must be very careful that our hearts be with the Lord.

To be continued

Alex Wilson is a missionary to the Philippines.



Let's Disagree Agreeably

Alex V. Wilson

A very perceptive editorial appeared several months ago in HIS magazine. The writer's main thesis plus two examples are seen in the following paragraphs:

In the midst of our differences (of beliefs) we need to distinguish between two levels of discussion. As a Christian group we can all accept the plain statements of Scripture, but many of our convictions are derived from Scripture or even derived from something else that is itself derived from Scripture. For example, I would say both pacifism and the just-war theory are not presented in chapter and verse in the Bible; they are inferred from Biblical material. Notice the two levels.

Of course there is nothing wrong with deriving our ideas from Scripture. We must do so. The point is that we are entitled to less certainty and more tolerance for such secondary knowledge. As another example, Scripture does not anywhere say that all Christians must have an experience of speaking in tongues or that no Christian today can speak in tongues. Both of these positions are developed out of Biblical material, and the arguments can get quite convoluted, but they do not possess the certainty often claimed for them. —Stephen Board, November, 1972 HIS

The crux of his view is that not all of the Bible's teachings are equally clear. Some doctrines—the main ones—are obvious and undeniable to any open mind: God created the universe; in Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of deity bodily; He is the only mediator between God and men; the same Jesus who walked and talked with His disciples will come again in the same manner as He ascended; etc.

But other teachings of God's word are not stated so obviously nor explained so fully: whether a Christian should be a conscientious objector or a combatant in his country's armed forces; whether present-day speaking in tongues is always good, always bad, or somewhere in between. Other examples include the exact meaning and length of the "days" of creation in Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, etc. Also the identity of the rider on the white horse in Revelation 6:2. Brother Chambers thought this rider is Christ; Brother Boll thought he is not. Each of them could give *evidence* to support his view, but neither could definitely *prove it* because the Bible nowhere states, "The rider on the white horse in Revelation 6:2 is . . ."

In this area of not-so-clearly-explained teachings, we are "entitled to less certainty" of conviction and thus should exercise "more tolerance" towards those whose interpretations differ from our own.

We need not become alarmed if we do not all see eye-to-eye on all points. "Each person should be convinced in his own mind," but at the same time not pass judgment on his brother (Romans 14:5b, 4, 10).

Let's look at one more example where our beliefs must be based on various Scriptural assumptions rather than on clearcut statements. Donald Barnhouse wrote regarding the book of Revelation, "The major portion of this book belongs entirely outside of the age of the Church. Regathered Israel is the center of the scene, and the Church does not even appear in the discussion (after chapter 3, he means). Many Christians agree with this view. Many others do not. And neither side can prove its view absolutely, beyond the shadow of a doubt. Why? Because nowhere is there a plain statement, "Christ returns to rapture the church at the beginning of chapter four," or, "The rapture does not occur till after the persecution by the Beast. "

Yet each side can present evidence to support its position. Those who believe that the Church will *not* be on earth during the events described in Revelation 4-20 point out that the words "church" and "churches" are used nineteen times in chapters 1-3 but not even once in chapters 4-20. Also, 7:4ff. mentions "every tribe of the sons of Israel," and probably the woman in chapter 12 represents Israel (though that again is an assumption, not a clearly-stated fact). On the other hand, those who believe that the Church *will* be on earth during the reign of the Beast point out that the Beast makes war against "the saints" (13:7), and that the term "saints" is used over forty times in Acts and the epistles to mean Christians, members of the Church. The term appears thirteen times in Revelation, and in 19:7-8 it refers to the Lamb's bride at His wedding-supper. Though this passage does not call the bride the Church, but does call her "the saints," everyone agrees that she is the Church. So if "the saints" are the Church in 19:8, why are they not the Church in 13:7 (i.e., during the Beast's reign) In that case, the persecuted Church would *include* the regathered, converted Israelites. So we see that each side has some Biblical reasons for assuming its position, but neither position can be proved by clear, unequivocal statements.

In such matters we must keep studying and praying and examining the reasons put forward to support various viewpoints. I am sorry some readers became upset at the articles (July '72, March '73) that presented the possibility of the Church's being on earth during the Great Tribulation. I don't intend to make a hobby out of that issue, nor to write about it again soon. But it is healthy to hear views divergent from our own sometimes. (I remember Brother Frank Mullins saying he didn't believe in reading books only by those whose interpretations were identical with his. His study was stimulated by reading those who differed from him.) Anyway, there were 5 or 6 articles in *Word and Work* during 1972 that supported the pre-tribulation view. All sides are entitled to be heard, if based on God's Word, are they not?

One time I heard two —ist missionaries in the Philippines discussing a doctrinal difference between them and many of the folks in their churches in the U.S. One advised the other, "Don't let the members back home know our beliefs about this. You might rock the boat and even cause our mission work here to suffer!" How sad. Thank God for the freedom among us. Let's hold it firmly.

A Word and Work Reprint

The Church and the Great Tribulation

R. H. Boll — 1924

There is a question that comes to the minds of many people; I have been asked that question by earnest Bible students. They want to know whether the Church will have to pass through that great tribulation. Some maintain that she will. Now I want to give you three reasons why I think that the Church is not going to have to pass through that tribulation. In the first place, if God had taught that the Church would pass through that tribulation, we would not need to look for the coming of Jesus until the great tribulation had set in. But God tells us to look for the coming always and at all times. Paul would not have told those Thessalonians to wait and watch for that day, if he had known that that great tribulation had to come first. If someone were to convince you that the great tribulation would come and the Church must pass through it, you would say, "There is no immediate prospect of Christ's return, evidently, because that great tribulation has never broken in on us." It would put that period of the tribulation between the Christian and his hope.

The second reason why I believe that the Church is not to pass through that tribulation is that it would introduce something worse than death itself between the Christian and his hope. I would rather die if I knew that I had to go through that tribulation. I would say, "Let me fall asleep peacefully in Jesus and be raised up at the latter day, and so escape that tribulation." When God wanted to show favor to a penitent sinner, He would sometimes say, "I will not let the evil come upon him *in his day*, but he shall die in peace" (1 Kings 22:29). That tribulation will be worse than death. It says that men shall seek for death and will not find it, cry for the rocks to fall on them and for the hills to hide them. I would far rather be asleep in Jesus than go through that trouble. If the Church had to pass through that great tribulation, that would make death more desirable than the coming of the Lord. Therefore I do not believe that the Church will go through that tribulation.

The third reason is that the Lord has made some very definite promises in regard to it. In Luke 21:34-36, we are told (it is

a solemn exhortation to careless Christians)—“Take heed to yourselves, lest haply your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come on you suddenly as a snare: for so shall it come upon all them that dwell on the face of all the earth. But watch ye at every season, making supplication, that ye may prevail to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.” Something is coming to pass down here that they will want to escape and they are to watch and pray that they may be permitted to stand before the Son of man ere that thing happen. Agam. speaking to the faithful church at Philadelphia (Revelation 3:10), the Lord Jesus says, “Because thou didst keep the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of trial, that hour which is to come upon the whole world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” That hour of trial cometh upon the whole world, but He will not only keep them out of the trouble but out of the very hour of that trouble.

So here are three reasons why I believe that the Church of Christ is not going to have to share in that tribulation.

But evidently somebody is going to have to face it. It is especially “the day of *Jacob’s* trouble.” When the Lord Jesus comes with “a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” In the meanwhile, down here on the earth breaks loose the final rage of Satan, because he knows that his time is short, and there will ensue this day of tribulation such as has never been known. It will center upon Israel but will involve the whole world.

It will be the day of *Jacob’s* trouble. Israel, the nation hitherto disobedient, will be brought to realize her condition and will be brought to her senses in her distress. But someone may say, “You do not believe, then, that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation?” Yes, I believe that the Gospel, and it alone, is the power of God unto salvation, but sometimes people have such a good time that they won’t listen. The Prodigal Son did not think seriously about his father’s home until he was perishing with hunger in the far country. Israel will not till the great distress comes upon her. “In their affliction they will seek Me earnestly.” In their final state of distress they will turn to the Lord Jesus and when they turn they will turn like everyone else. There is only one way of coming to the Lord Jesus, one way of salvation. What puzzled you all the time is the idea that when Christ comes it will settle the destiny of every soul living. When the Lord Jesus comes in the first stage of His coming, there will be certain ones caught up to meet Him. The rest of men are not just then dealt with. When Jesus returns with His saints there will be those who are found disobedient, and He will execute judgment upon the Beast and his devotees.

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Viewing The News

I WONDER how many Christians in this country are beginning to wake up to the fact that we are now living in a country in which Christian influences are no longer dominant. Test this out in schools . . . in courts . . . in the news media . . . in any part of the government. You will find out that it is no longer taken for granted that God exists, that Christ is God's Son, that Bible moral principles are important. We have never had a truly Christian country, but until about thirty years ago the people of this country and their institutions were largely run by Christian influence. This is an abnormal situation in a world that lies in the evil one and we have allowed it to pass by. "Blessed is the nation whose God is Jehovah" (Psalm 33:12), but God is far from the thoughts of those who set the tone of this country. Truly we are living in what Francis Schaeffer and others have been calling the "Post-Christian Era."

SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM are based on atheism and the deification of man. They teach that man can "lift himself up by his own bootstraps" and that appeals to those who reject Christ. A great many people who have not one iota of understanding of the true nature of socialism or of communism (which is one of the branches of socialism) or of fascism (which is another of the several branches of socialism) are clamoring for some form of socialism, thinking that it is a new thing and the "wave of the future." It may well be the cemetery of the future.

SOCIALISM is based on idealistic arguments that are based on a misunderstanding of human nature. But those arguments are very sound on the first examination by those who do

not follow through to the results of the arguments. For example, doesn't it sound good to proclaim, "From each according to his ability; to each according to his need." But that means that every man must work to the best of his ability but not be able to partake of the fruits of his labor other than to have those things that someone else decides that he needs. I once decided to challenge some of the college students who so loosely clamor for socialism by proposing to grade a class on that basis. Everyone in the class was to work to the best of his ability. Everyone needed a grade of C to pass and to move toward graduation, so everyone would get a C regardless of how well he would do the work. It was strange to hear them immediately begin to give the arguments against this fine-sounding dictum. One of the main arguments was that I had no way of knowing that each just needed a C, since some might need more in order to be able to get something else they needed. Right there, of course, they hit on one of the faults of the socialistic system—someone must decide what everyone needs. Now think about it, would you like to be the one who decides what kind of car your neighbors need, what kind of house they need, what kind of food, etc.? If you would, you are indeed a very evil person—and that is exactly what happens. When a Hitler or a Stalin or a Minh or any other dictator of one of these evil systems is revealed, he is always an evil man, for no one not evil would want that awesome and impossible place to fill—impossible to fill it righteously, that is.

FREDERICK HAYEK, in his classic book on socialism, *The Road to*

Serfdom, gives an illustration that tears away the heart and substance of socialist arguments. I would like to re-tell it from my memory of reading it several years ago. Imagine yourself in the simple primitive society, one in which a small village of people make their living off the land surrounding their dwelling place. With their primitive instruments it took each man 12 hours a day working in the fields to produce those things that he and his family needed. When they got home it took an hour to carry water from the spring in the nearby hill to last over the coming day. One of the men of the village finally had a good idea. He used his time after work hollowing out logs and connecting them together to run a pipeline from the spring to his house. Now all he and his wife needed to do was to turn the primitive valve he built and in flowed all the water he needed. Thus he could spend an extra hour in the fields and began to produce more than the others and lay up some extra. Soon the others in the village saw the advantage and they began to bargain with him to allow them to tap onto his pipeline, saving them the extra hour. They paid him the equivalent of a half-hour of work and then began to use the extra time to better themselves also. Soon the inventor had enough to be able to spend more time working on inventions that made life still easier for all. But imagine for just a moment if that had been a socialist community. When the pipeline was finished the "city fathers" would have said, "This pipeline belongs to all," so they would have tapped into the line without paying for it and the inventor would have stopped inventing and progress would have stopped at that point. Human nature, like it or not, is such that men who do not partake of the fruits of their labor quit laboring with any efficiency.

NOW PLEASE put the foregoing together with the fact that many in our government are communists at heart and even more are socialists without preferring any special form of socialism. Even our President has said, "Economically I am a Keynesian"—and John Maynard Keynes was a socialist economist. As foolish as they seem to me, Keynes' teachings on economics have saturated most of the schools of business in this country.

The attempts to eliminate God from public life in this country have produced a climate favorable to the growth of socialism-communism-fascism. Many hide their aims behind other fronts, though even many of these at times admit their ultimate aims. Ralph Nader's name has become a household word and many swear by him so much that to be against him is akin to being against motherhood to some people. Nader takes a big public stance as the fighter for the little man against industry, but he has said in interviews and speeches that he favors some form of socialism or communism for our government. Every real or imaginary ill that he finds is supposed to be solved by a government bureau taking over. And, along the way, he has greatly increased the cost of your cars and other things with, to say the least, questionable results in most cases from the changes he proposed.

I HAVE TAKEN Nader as an obvious sample of the many who find something wrong in our country and blame it on "the system," when actually they want to set up another "system" that would grind the people of this country all the way back to, as Hayek calls it, serfdom.

I HOPE THAT this smattering of things will open up for you some of the reasons why our government has turned against a private enterprise friend like Nationalist China and favors the Red Chinese; raises prices on food and creates food shortages while giving food to Russia; and every week the federal government takes on more power through court decisions, executive orders, and congressional bills. When a nation turns against God they will find that Satan becomes the master, Satan is a liar, the deceiver, and our great adversary; those who serve him will naturally follow in his steps.

ARE YOU NOW wondering what kind of pessimist I am? I am not a pessimist of any kind so far as the future of every child of God is concerned and I am not afraid of a world that is built on Satan's principles, since I am a child of God. The early Church lived in a Satan-directed society on every hand, yet they "turned the world upside down" and were willing to die for Christ, yea, were glad to suffer for Him even un-

to death. They set the example that made many "turn unto God from idols to serve the living and true God." There is no reason why we need fear man if we fear God. We should look forward to every day as an

opportunity to witness for Christ in the midst of a "crooked and perverse generation" that needs our Savior.

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Garlands for Ashes

N. B. Wright

We may be pardoned for borrowing out of context this expression from Isaiah 61:3. This blessing will be for Israel when Messiah comes to restore all things. These few words also dramatize for us the low estate of spirituality in which the church too often finds herself as over against the provisions for victorious living which are already available to the people of God.

It is altogether too rare a thing to find a believer who really has any confidence in the present or hope for the future. One weight of the eternal glory we bear while we contain the treasure in earthen vessels is to see the despair of the world creep in among members of the household of faith. Often we ask ourselves the question, "Why?" This essay seeks to answer that question.

We focus attention on a very complex subject; to find three basic failures in clear enunciation of the gospel and two realms wherein an understanding of grace is darkened. Simply stated, they are: A Faulty View of the Cross-work of Christ and an Incomplete Knowledge of the Grace of God.

1. Faulty, in the first place, because of being incorrect. Somehow we tend to fall into the error of thinking His sacrifice was to propitiate God. The truth lies elsewhere. The Bible points us away from the heathen idea of appeasing the gods. Yet we in our ease hear the gospel and somehow are so blinded that we think somewhat after this fashion: I sinned against God, made Him angry; hence I will bring to Him the sacrifice of Christ which He gave me; then He will be pleased and accept me. O, how in many "pious" ways we dishonor the Father!

The Bible specifically points out the fact that the offering of Christ is the propitiation for our sins. 1 John 1:2; 4:10; Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17. Never is it stated that He propitiated God. For

this make-believe act there was no need. Had the Father not loved man there would have been no sufficient reason for the gift of Christ to the world. This principle is seen clearly in the doctrine of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. It is man, an enemy of God by reason of human sin, reconciled to God. Never is it the reverse.

This faulty view of the cross-work is really a weak understanding of the love of God. 1 John 4:10 is a classic utterance of this fact. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

2. A faulty view of the sacrifice of Christ falls short of the full truth of Romans 8:1. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Let us follow the two "for's." "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death." This "law" means "power" or "principle." Now "the law of sin and of death" is illustrated by his exclamation in Romans 7:24: "Who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?" In the first century a man who was guilty of murder was chained to the corpse of his victim. How awful! So human sin brings judgment and death—death to the body and the second death to the spirit. Humanly speaking there can be no release from this predicament. But God found a way. The apostle goes on to say: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We come to the second "for" in this glorious no condemnation. "For what the law could not do . . . God, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin (an offering for sin), condemned (judged) sin in the flesh." What did God do? God sent His Son in a body which could die to be an offering for sin. Then He judged sin in the flesh. Return for a moment to the man chained to the corpse. How could he be released from his horrible end? Only by judgment of the court, we suppose. So Christ judged sin in the flesh and set us wonderfully free. Praise God, His judgment fell upon my sin and will not fall upon me.

There follows a "that" which leads us to the Spirit. After mentioning the "spirit of holiness" in chapter 1 of Romans, he went on to disclose the propitiation for sins by Christ. Now we come to the Spirit again. "That the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in (not "by") us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Romans 8:3). This walk by the Spirit could not be except the body also be given life. Vs. 11.

A failure to enter into these glorious truths results in a weakened life in the church today.

3. A third way the faulty view of the work of Christ is found is a failure to understand and to teach that there is victory over sin. This condition cannot be excused. How seldom, if ever, is it held out to young people that God wants life to be victorious!

What do we do, actually? One makes a talk at a prayer-meeting service and refutes the claim of some people to sinless perfection. He proves that they are wrong by almost boasting of the fact: "Why, I sin every day." How dishonoring to God! What a beggarly life!

The greatest Bible Scholar I ever knew (his wife said he had five doctorate degrees) and personal friend, founder of the Biblical Research Society in Los Angeles, used to say: The apostle Paul was not conscious of sinning against God every day; he probably lived for days without sinning once. Then his reference was 2 Corinthians 2:14, which states: "But thanks be unto God, who always leadeth us to triumph in Christ." And then to Romans 8:37 where we are "super-conquerors" through Christ.

Romans 5:12-21 shows that "whereas death reigned" and "sin reigned in death," through the obedience of Christ we might "reign in life" and that "grace (might) reign in righteousness." Chapter 6 shows that the believer has been made dead unto sin and freed from its dominion.

The Spirit would take over in victorious living where before sin and law held one in bondage.

Faulty views of the grace of God

We come to the second main section of our treatise. The believer too often leads a weak life and offers an unsteadfast service to God by not appropriating to himself two wonderful truths in regard to the grace of God.

He is able to quote freely: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). Here the shouting stops. There may well be two reasons for this strange quietness.

1. He does not understand that his standing before God is one of grace. Romans 5:2. Having been saved by grace initially, he will confess freely his present precarious footing by some such words as "I'll be saved if I keep all of the commandments, or am good enough, or if I do enough good works." Since he fails according to his own false standards, he really thinks he has no hope before God.

God accepted the repentant, obedient sinner on the basis of divine grace. We stand before him continually by grace. True, His Spirit with the Word should produce the fruit of holiness in life and good works. Now stand with assurance on the basis of grace.

2. We come to our last consideration for some of the reasons for walking day by day without confidence and hope. The test is 1 Peter 1:13. "Wherefore, girding up the loins of your mind, be sober and set your hope perfectly on the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Did you hear what the Spirit said? "Set your hope perfectly on the grace." Yes, set it perfectly, without doubt, wavering or any such things. Is it the grace which saved you? Not exactly. Is it the grace by which we stand continually before God? Not in this text. What grace is it then?

It is the grace "that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." When Christ comes for His own He will bring all the grace necessary, for those already in grace, to set them acceptably before Him in great joy.

Let us illustrate. A lonely woman lived in a small town before the era of electric refrigeration. One Sunday morning a special delivery letter is brought to her house. The letter reads: Since today is your birthday, five car-loads of relatives and friends are coming to visit you. Watch her heart sink! She thinks: How can I feed that many people on this short notice? Please read on: Man, read on. The letter continues to say: We are all bringing our basket dinners with us; you don't prepare a thing; after church services we shall all go to the park.

What a difference! Who doesn't fall short of the will of God? Do you belong to Him and serve Him sincerely? If so, here is the promise that when the Lord Jesus comes again He will bring all the grace you need. How wonderful to be accepted and acceptable in the Beloved.

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HAVING KNOWLEDGE

There is something wrong with your Knowledge of --

BOTANY— if you have never discovered the True Vine John 15:1.

GEOLOGY— if you are still ignorant of the Rock of Ages. —Deut. 32:4.

CHEMISTRY— if you are not acquainted with the Great Catalyzer.

—II Peter 3:7.

MATHEMATICS— if you have not considered the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Jesus Christ our Lord.

—Eph. 3:18, 19.

BIOLOGY— unless you can trace life back to the great Creator who "In the beginning created heaven and earth and all that is therein."

—Gen. 1:1; John 1:1-4.

PHYSICS— until you have experimental knowledge of the operation of the Holy Spirit which is "Christ in you the hope of glory."

—Eph. 3:7, 16, 20. Col. 1:27.

SOCIOLOGY— if you seek any other cure for sin than that which God has provided through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, His Son.

—I John 1:9.

ASTRONOMY— unless you are prepared to have the day star dawn in your heart and to witness the rising of the bright and Morning Star.

—II Peter 1:19; Revelation 22:16.

The Holy Spirit Gets His Man

Bill Swain

Scene: A young man, 20 years old, alone on a university campus—unhappy, confused, dissatisfied.

But why? His parents had lavished him with personal attention and material goods. He was an "A" student, an Eagle Scout. But lack of responsibility and hours of daydreaming in novels and watching TV had produced an insecure, self-centered idealist who ached to "see the world."

At the age of 16 he left home with an international singing group called "Up With People." For 15 months they traveled across the U.S., Canada and parts of Latin America and the Caribbean. Traveling with enthusiastic young people and living with families from every culture surpassed all his daydreams. The message that men could produce a peaceful world fascinated him.

From 1967-69 he attended a college in Michigan that embraced the "Up With People" idealism. There he devoted himself to literature, the theater and the other arts. But the philosophies of self-gratification and existentialism that permeate modern thinking drove him to introspection. Finally after a semester of assistant-teaching in a black school in Los Angeles he was thoroughly disillusioned with the American way of life.

During these four years away from home he was obsessed with a concept of God but understood nothing of the true Gospel. Abandoning his Protestant background he looked for reality in Moral Re-armorment, the Catholic Church, Bahaism, and Unity. But no philosophy or religion offered a satisfying answer to the questions that gnawed at his soul. Who am I? What is life all about? Why is the world filled with prejudice and meaningless activity?

Shortly after his twentieth birthday he transferred to a university near his home in Tennessee. One day a sophomore girl invited him to a hayride. That night the kids on the hay wagon sang Gospel songs and talked about a Jesus who had saved them from their sins. He thought he had taken a time machine back 25 years! He wanted to tell them how backward they were but was afraid.

Then came two weeks of torture. Although he had attended Protestant churches and youth groups no one had ever confronted him with the Gospel. Now a young girl had the courage to show him from the Bible that he was a sinner and that Jesus had died for him. He retaliated with all his religious arguments but still she persisted.

Finally one Friday night in his old Chevy II she quoted Ephesians 2:8, 9: "For by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man

should boast." Suddenly things began to make sense. "Say it again," he told her. She repeated the verse until he understood. "You mean I don't have to struggle anymore?" he kept saying. For the first time in his life he cried tears of relief and joy. He didn't understand much but he knew that Jesus was real and that He had died to save him from a meaningless life.

During those 20 years he was without Christ he read many books on philosophy and religion but no one had ever given him a simple Gospel tract.

I am that young man.

—In *Pioneer*

NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them . . ."

MISSIONS SEMINAR

May 12, 1973, at Portland Avenue Church, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. (with lunch to be served at nominal cost), there will be a seminar on Home and Foreign Missions.

Open to all. Those interested in missions are urged to attend.

The speakers and discussions leaders will be men home from mission fields. Their wives will speak to the ladies. —From Buechel Bulletin

Highview Church, Louisville, Ky.: April 22, Jane Kaufman placed membership with this congregation and John Willen, on Wednesday night gave testimony of how the Lord dealt with Sharon Carney and how happy it made them all when she was buried with the Lord in baptism.

Rangeland Church, Louisville, Ky.: On April 22 Jaye Campbell and Lisa Seymour came forward—one for rededication and the other for prayer for loved ones. The Wednesday night before (18th) Patty Ann Cleary made the good confession and was baptized into Christ. Others are planning to place their membership at Rangeland.

Miss Joyce Zimpelmann is doing faithful, effective work with the chorus. She will also be teaching a

new class—grade 6—on Wednesday nights.

Brothre Robert Garrett is to show pictures of the Lord's work in Africa, May 9, and June 7 "The Horizons" will sing at Rangeland.

Extra expense would have been doubly extra but for the time donated by the men of the church. Some worked to the point of almost complete exhaustion until late at night on both Friday and Saturday.

Radio broadcasts of Brother Robert Boyd reach to Jacksonville on WHAS, Sundays at 11:10 p.m.

Westside Church, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.: Brother Reeves returned from a meeting in Gallatin during which eight responded for baptism and one for rededication. Linda Newcomb was immersed into Christ, March 27. The baptistry is the Atlantic Ocean.

PICTURES OF ASIA MINOR

Dr. and Mrs. Horace E. Wood of Dallas spent several days in the Kentuckiana area early in April. Dr. Wood spoke and showed slides of the seven churches of Asia at the Rangeland and Henryville churches. The pictures were taken during a tour of Asia Minor (Turkey) about a year ago.

OUR GREAT HIGH PRIEST

By Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

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The seven chapters of the book can be studied one at a time, in any order—or all at one sitting.

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Sister Mildred Lale, who, with her sister Edith, has been doing the office work for several years, has suggested that we list her telephone number at home so that those who want to call about orders will be able to do so. We greatly appreciate her willingness to use her home and her time at home for the convenience of Word and Work friends.

—Robert Heid

Family Week—"a vacation in the woods"

Sunday, July 15 (evening meal) to Saturday, July 21 (morning meal)

Cost for the WHOLE FAMILY is only

\$45.00 for the week

(\$15.00 per person, singles or couples)

Cabins free, first come first served. Or bring your tent or camper.

Informal Bible classes. Christian family fellowship. Relaxation and un-hurried recreation. All meals in the dining hall. Evening devotions in the "tabernacle."

Morning sessions with Robert Garrett. Discussion of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Planners: Emory Grimes, Elbert Blansett, Charles Knecht.

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