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Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

What I am

"Free me from what I am." That part of a line of a song, heard over the din of afternoon rush hour traffic, caught my attention and set me to reflecting. It is not unusual today to hear expressions of concern over "what I am." Except among Christians. There the common concern is "what I've done," or "what I keep on doing when I know I shouldn't." And they keep on treating the symptom rather than the disease.

Paul deals with this situation in Romans 7; "I fail to do the things I should and keep on doing the things I hate." In earlier chapters he has assured us of justification through faith in the blood of Jesus. The sins we have committed have been marked off the books forever. But then an awful fact comes to the surface—the newly-justified believer keeps on sinning. What about that? The Christian wakes up to the realization that he is a "sin factory." The real need is to shut down the production line, and this is the point frequently neglected. A great deal of attention is directed toward individual sins and what to do about them. Meanwhile, the assembly line keeps rolling and nobody stops to ask where these sins are coming from. "What I am"—there's where the trouble is.

Sin and sins

The scriptures make a distinction in some cases between sin and sins. "Sin" speaks of the sin factory, "what I am" by nature. "Sins" are those misdeeds that offend a holy God. You may note this distinction in 1 John 1:7-9 by reading carefully. Also Romans 8: 2-4. So we need salvation from sin and salvation from sins. Are there then two salvations (saved, then sanctified)? No, but deliverance from sin is sometimes experienced separately from salvation, and it may come as a dramatic spiritual crisis. Some churches teach that every Christian must seek and receive this "second blessing" (or "sanctification," or "baptism of the Holy Spirit"). The normal experience, it seems to me, would be for the new-born Christian to enter into this blessing immediately; perhaps lack of teaching is a deterring factor.

One answer

So I'm a sin factory that I can't shut down! The agonies of this realization are laid out in Romans 7 and summarized in v. 24, "Oh, wretched man that I am? Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Quickly the answer comes, "I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord."

Should we be surprised that God's remedy for our sinful nature is the same as His remedy for our sinful deeds? Just one Savior is all we need! Jesus! Jesus crucified! Jesus resurrected! Jesus exalted to the right hand of the Father, Lord of heaven and earth! What we need is not a "blessing" or an "experience" or even "sanctification"—but Jesus, living in us as Lord.

There is much more in Romans on this wonderful theme; chapter 8 especially discusses it at some length. Assurance is given that our salvation is complete. All of the answers are in our Lord Jesus Christ; in Him provision has already been made for every eventuality that might arise. He has committed Himself to take His saints to glory, and He will accomplish it. And so the Christian's concern moves from "what I am" to "what He is." If He is indeed what the scriptures declare Him to be, then "neither death, nor life . . . nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The Sanctifying Hope

R. H. Boll — 1942

There is a sanctifying power in the expectancy of our Lord's return from heaven. The meaning of that event has been obscured by the common ideas prevalent in our day; and we must get back to the New Testament outlook to appreciate the significance of it. Those Spirit-taught disciples knew of no salvation nor of any heaven of final reward apart from the Savior's return from heaven.

They knew, of course, that, as Paul declared, to depart was to be "with Christ, which is very far better" (Philippians 1:23); and that to be present in the body is to be absent from the Lord, and to be absent from the body is to be "at home with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). But in vain do we look through the New Testament to find any longing for death, any glorification of death, or any intimation that death is the fulfillment of the Christian's hope; or so much as one exhortation to "get ready to die." Death is never the Christian's goal in the inspired teaching of the New Testament. But again and again the coming of Christ is held up as "the blessed hope" of God's children.

Around this event cluster the great words of promise: salvation, redemption, deliverance, resurrection, transformation, perfection, glory, inheritance, crowns and thrones, reign, and blessed union and fellowship with Christ, inseparably and forever. And

to this event Christians were bidden to look. Death might intervene, but the Lord's return alone would bring for us the resolving of all problems—that of death also among others—and the realization of all hopes and promises. For Christ's return from heaven they were to wait and watch; with reference to it they were to live, to serve, to worship. Nothing that could not bear the light of that advent was to be permitted in the Christian's life; and every pain and burden was lightened by the hope of its glory. They did not fear or dread the Lord's return—they hoped for it and prayed for it. They "loved His appearing."

In constant expectation

Some have stumbled at the fact that God—who surely foreknew how long a time would elapse before Christ would come—had His people looking for Him and earnestly expecting Him nearly 2,000 years ago. That they did so expect Him is certain; and that this expectation was raised in their hearts by the apostolic teaching and was not due to unwarranted inferences, is also indisputable. What some folks cannot understand is how God could encourage and foster such expectation, when He knew that it would not be fulfilled for many centuries to come. That seems (in their mind) to verge upon deception, and in their desire to help God out they try sometimes to nullify the facts.

But two things must be considered here: 1) The time of Christ's return was never divulged. The apostles did not teach that He would necessarily come in the near future, nor did they teach that He would not come till in the far future. They simply taught that He would come and that it might be any day, and that when He comes He wants to find His own waiting and watching in readiness to receive Him and to be received by Him. 2) It follows by necessity that Christians from the first had to live in constant expectations of Him. This is the Christian's only proper attitude with reference to that great event. Exhortation to every virtue and grace of the Christian life is based upon this present expectation and hope.

But the Lord Jesus pointed out two faulty attitudes toward the time of His coming: First, that of the evil servant who says in his heart, "My lord tarrieth," and so becomes careless in his life and conduct toward his brethren. Immediately follows the parable of the ten virgins, in which the five foolish, taking for granted that the bridegroom would come at once, were not prepared for a possible long delay.

But the coming of the Lord, never far away (James 5:9) is nearer now than when we first believed—much nearer now than when Paul declared in the Holy Spirit that "the night is far spent, the day is at hand." It was late in the night then—far later it is now. If He did not come in the first watch (the evening) nor in the second (midnight) nor in the third (the cockcrowing)—surely now is the morning watch, and His coming is at hand. It behooves His people today, as never before, to look up and lift up their heads, for their redemption draweth nigh.

Carl Kitzmiller is minister at the Piedmont Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas.

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



I am under the impression that the teaching of prophecy from the pre-millennial viewpoint is not causing as much discord in churches of Christ as it once did. Do you find this to be true? For what reasons?

I suppose we tend to judge such things pretty much on the basis of our own local situation and experience. One can still find plenty of folks who are rabidly against anything that even sounds premillennial. I know of a few men—mostly older men, survivors from the age of debates—who still count it their special calling from the Lord to fight what they are pleased to call “premillennialism.” But I agree that opposition within the churches does not seem to be as strong as it once was.

Several factors seem to be responsible for the change. Most religious issues tend to die down somewhat after a period of time. Most of the arguments on both sides have been heard, viewpoints tend to crystallize, and in some measure each group goes its own separate way. Again, it is not unusual for some new issue to come along demanding attention and creating new hostilities and new lines of separation, thus shoving the older issue into the background. This has certainly been the case with prophetic teaching in churches of Christ. Sometimes the stronger, more popular side of an issue decides that further opposition is unnecessary, that opposition only tends to keep the issue alive, and that they can so dominate the scene with respectability that all else is at a grave disadvantage. This seems to be the thinking of some in this matter.

There has been considerable change in several cases among the amillennial churches, notably a more liberal viewpoint and a lack of satisfaction with the old, legalistic, “hard shell” interpretations. New generations have come on the scene. It has not all been for good, by any means. Some have gone off the deep end in liberalizing views. But there have been so many erosions of the old unwritten creed that it is probably no longer accepted as uncritically today by many people. Once it appears weak in one matter, it is no longer regarded as infallible in others.

One influence which I suspect has mellowed some opposition to premillennial teaching has been the popularity of certain premillen-

nal religious leaders, such as Billy Graham, and the best-selling status of some popular books on prophecy. No longer can the rank and file in churches of Christ dismiss "premillennialism" as some queer ideas of a mere handful of "our" people. Some who have not known what it was, except to believe that it was "something bad," have learned more about it from outside sources than they were willing to learn from those in their midst.

Of course no issue involving Bible truth ought to be settled on the basis of what is popular or unpopular, accepted or rejected. We must ever be driven to the Word under any and all circumstances. Many are not. A growing ignorance of the teaching of the Bible may be a factor at work which has reduced tensions on *both* sides of the question. This is a vicious circle. Human nature being what it is, a lessening of controversy sometimes means that people stop studying the issues, and the truth suffers. I suspect that many of our nominally premillennial brethren are less well-informed today than they were some years ago. For the most part we have all along advocated fellowship with the amillennial brethren; *in some cases* there is now a reciprocation of that. This should not become a reason for forgetting the whole of Bible teaching on these matters. Acceptance and fellowship may be more costly than rejection if this is to be the case.

Please explain 1 Corinthians 5:5, which speaks of delivering a man to Satan. Is a person who is disfellowshipped actually turned over to Satan?

In *some* sense the disfellowshipped person is delivered to Satan, for this is clearly what the passage says. It would be a mistake to assume such an act is necessarily a complete, full, and final turning of the individual over to Satan, however. One dominant purpose of disfellowship is to bring the offender to repentance and to restoration with the Lord, so the phrase—"to deliver such a one to Satan"—cannot speak of total rejection. In the case of the man at Corinth, he was brought to repentance (2 Corinthians 6-11), so his place in the church was restored and Satan had no permanent claim on him.

Since one is either in the world or in the church, it is very appropriate to speak of disfellowship as delivering one to Satan. Satan is the god of the age (2 Corinthians 4:4) and the whole world lies in great measure under his power and control (1 John 5:19). To withdraw fellowship, to close the door of fellowship from the church in the offender's face, is to commit that one back to the world in a measure, hence, to Satan. This is also suggested by Matthew 18:17, where the offender is to be treated as a Gentile and a publican, that is, as partaking of the character of the world.

A seeming contradiction to Matthew 18:17 is found in the instructions of 2 Thessalonians 3:6ff, esp. v. 15, where the dis-

fellowshipped person is not to be counted as an enemy but is to be admonished as a brother. The problem is only imagined, however, for the latter just presents another facet of the matter and shows that delivery unto Satan is partial, not complete. Although temporarily driven out to the world, the disfellowshipped one is still a brother and is to get certain considerations as such. We take it that this does not mean the discipline is to be set aside, but that neither is his rejection to be considered as complete. Matthew 18:17 and 2 Thess. 3:15 should not be regarded as contradictory but as complementary, as giving two faces of the matter.

Delivery unto Satan is not always a human action. Job was in a measure delivered to Satan (Lk. 22:31-34). In fact, even Jesus permitted Himself to be driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1; Mk. 1:12-13). Satan's power is ever limited by God, and God knows how to use him as an instrument for strengthening, chastening, or judgment.

To cut oneself off from the fellowship of the church through indifference, rebellion, a love of the world, or such like, is, even in the absence of church discipline, to deliver oneself to Satan in a measure. For whatever reason, delivery to Satan is a fearful thing and deserves much greater concern than commonly seems to be attached to it by many persons.

What is meant by the expression: "For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus," in 1 Corinthians 5:5?

This question is tied to the one above, but we treat it separately to avoid confusion.

The passage is a disputed one with several views offered. It describes the purpose of the action to be taken against the grievous fornicator at Corinth. I can only give my own understanding of the statement.

Note that it is not the destruction of the body, but of the flesh, a term used to speak of the desires and inclinations of the flesh (cf. Romans 8). So I think this does not speak of some physical infirmity or disease coupled with the man's sin. Instead it simply says that the action is intended to make the man realize his sin and repent of it—thus, the destruction of his fleshly ways. Without the destruction of the flesh (i.e., fleshly ways and acts), the ultimate salvation of the spirit cannot occur. Those who live after the flesh are condemned (Romans 8:6, 13). It is this which must be destroyed in all of us. Although salvation is a present possession, it is not a completed possession until "the day of our Lord Jesus."

We are to be saved—"body, soul, and spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:23)—not flesh, soul, and spirit. There is a considerable difference!

7110 Bruton Road, Dallas, Texas 75217

PARENTS—

A Barrier to World Evangelization

Greg Livingston

The congregation was deathly quiet as the tense young missionary abruptly brought his challenge to a close. The pastor closed in prayer and the people began to file out the back. Suddenly a mother in her late forties made her way up to the young man.

"That was wonderful!" she blurted out, to his embarrassment. "Your mother must be very proud of you."

He braced himself with a half smile. He had heard this before and was prepared for what was coming. Unsolicited, the lady began to explain her family situation, speaking very quickly, obviously drenched in self-pity.

The story was familiar. They had two children. Both had finished college. Mark had married a Catholic girl and was a very successful salesman. He drove a new Oldsmobile Toronado and planned to build a large house soon. He was not antagonistic toward his parents' church, and even attended occasionally when he had time.

Marcia, Mark's sister, a very attractive blond, still lived at home. She was dating a nice Christian boy and they both wanted to teach or something. Marcia's mother had encouraged them to think about the mission field, but, well, they did not feel they were the "type." And besides, they did not have a call, they explained.

"Why couldn't our children be like you?" she pointedly demanded from the young missionary. He just looked at the floor, knowing in his heart that she would resent the truth.

Why are mission leaders so concerned about the dearth of missionary candidates? Why do so few Christian youth even seriously consider living for Christ in an area of the world away from home where there exists very little knowledge of the Good News? Why do so many children seem to miss the enthusiasm their parents have for the work of the church?

Two thousand years ago Jesus Christ made it unmistakably clear to His followers that their primary occupation on earth was to "be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Today there are two thousand tribes still without the Word of God, five hundred million Muslims (1/7th of the world's population)

behind the barely penetrated fortress of Islam,^o and several million towns without a single spiritually born resident! There are parts of India where only one of every thousand literates has received a portion of the Scriptures.^{oo} In the Communist world, half the population (roughly about five hundred million) is under twenty-five years of age and therefore is almost completely untouched by the church. These youth, our contemporaries, are blindly educated that God is an untenable idea similar to Santa Claus. Outside the western hemisphere, university students who personally know Christ are nearly as rare as the dodo bird.

This is not even half the sad story. But the question before us is this: If God loves the world so much and wants every single person to have a reasonable opportunity to understand the message of Christ and respond, *why does the world-wide witness not occur in each successive generation?* Certainly it is not because God has failed to "call" men and women into these places. Obviously a tremendous number of God's people have chosen *not* to obey their Saviour.

We cannot dismiss the issue with glib pronouncements about the church needing revival; that no one comes to prayer meeting; that the world is too much with us; or these are the last days. The problem is multiple. There is, however, one very touchy nerve which runs to the heart of the problem: parents, Christian parents, are one of the greatest barriers to the evangelization of the world!

While there are many outstanding exceptions (the Central American Mission has a number of third-generation missionaries), it is painfully true that the burden of evangelism and missions is being carried largely by first-generation Christians. Nearly seventy-five percent of the students who have labored in "Operation Mobilization" over the years have come from homes where either the parents were not Christians or they have met the Saviour *after* their children.

I have had the opportunity of speaking at Bible schools, Christian colleges, and evangelical groups in universities from Madras, India, to Monterrey, Mexico. Our purpose is largely to recruit students for summer evangelistic teams serving missionaries in Mexico, Quebec, Europe, the Middle East, and India. Responses from youth whose parents are Christians are often:

"I would like to go on a team this summer but my parents want to have me around the house."

"My parents don't want me in Mexico because they know of someone who got very sick there and had to miss a semester of school."

^o Turkey alone has only about fifty Turkish believers among thirty million.

^{oo} Ceylon and India Bible Society report, 1963.

"That's great to talk about faith and all that, but I've got to work to get my expenses for Bible school next fall."

From a twenty-one-year-old junior: "I would like to give this old suit that I never wear, but I must ask my mother first." (He never gave it.)

"Don't you have some big-name Christians on your board who can guarantee everything will be all right while we serve on a team?"

"How much do you pay?" "I could never sleep on the floor." "Why don't you use all *new* cars and trucks?"

"I don't *feel* called to leave America." (They usually don't feel called to do very much within the U.S.A. either.)

"These are my years of study, not to be running around giving out to others."

"If I do evangelistic work instead of making money, my folks will call me a religious parasite."

And so it goes. Everyone of these statements tells a story, expresses an outlook, a particular perspective. And that perspective was learned from a parent, a pastor, a teacher, or other adult. In Mark 7:3, Jesus called it "holding the traditions of the elders." They are the same traditions of disobedience and unbelief that kept the Israelites from entering the promised land. What it amounts to, in non-theological jargon, is naturalistic thinking and parental selfishness.

Immediately after my conversion, I attended the church prayer meetings. We were exhorted to pray for the healing of Mrs. Smith, and so one of us would mumble, "Well, God, if it is your will, help Mrs. Smith"—but if Mrs. Smith had stood up all of a sudden exclaiming, "Praise God, I'm healed," she would have been asked to leave the church for her extremist beliefs!

The Scriptures challenge us to walk the tight-rope of faith, but the typical Christian parent cries out that we must be "practical." In other words, God's promises are not realistic. They believe much more in the maxim, "God helps those who help themselves." Yet the parent is ready to condemn the liberal neighbor who doesn't believe the Bible is the Word of God—and the child scratches his head at this double standard. He can see no basic difference between the goals and desires of his parents and the "unbelieving" neighbors. He hears his parents speak of the supernatural, read of the supernatural, and then live completely naturalistically. After all, working on a supernatural basis is too risky, unsure, hard to handle. They make their decisions exactly as does the unregenerate man. The child sees his parents:

1. Examine the resources.
2. Decide what is possible—and therefore "the will of the Lord"—on the basis of these resources, figuring the accepted average amount of self-denial.

Is it not much more Biblical to first, as a family, determine the plan which will best accomplish God's purposes, then—regardless of the personal hardship or seeming difficulty—trust God to supply

whatever is necessary to complete the task?

No wonder so many children from evangelical homes grow up convinced they "have no need for Christ." They reason logically enough that they can do what their parents have done without the extra trappings of religious activity, which is merely consuming time.

I have discovered that Christian parents are pointing their children to remunerative careers because, either consciously or unconsciously, they are counting on these offspring for security when they grow old. And thus the youth are being robbed of eternal accomplishments. They are being cowed into thinking that honoring their parents means following their example of self first, parents second, God and other to be fitted in as convenient—at least enough to salve their evangelical conscience. It is unpopular, of course, not to show at least a *bit* of concern for those "what-you-call-it" Indians. In fact, these parents usually give a sizable amount to missions each year, about, let's say, the equivalent of a new picture tube for the TV.

This selfishness of Christian adults is evident everywhere. The writer recalls with horror reading a full-page advertisement of a Christian college "----- University has successful graduates," it boasted in the caption below a photograph of a young man sitting in a new convertible with three girls hanging over the sides! Is *that success* to a Christian? But remember, the students did not design that ad.

Parents, let us ask ourselves these questions. Do we really attempt to live as Jesus did? Do we *exist* to meet the needs of others? We know that dedication is not in going abroad; but do we seek to live on the minimum necessary and pour the rest of our resources into others? Are we guiding the family so that each member is constantly seeking ways to demonstrate Christ? Are the children praying for and continually checking the progress of father's witness at work; mother's in the neighborhood? Are you praying and planning with your children how to reach their friends, making your home the most natural "local hangout" for the neighborhood?

And what about family devotions? Are the children really excited about having them because they are clearly the door to fruitful living? The typical family which even bothers to have devotions at all witnesses the father thunder through a chapter of the Bible, then mumble a very familiar meaningless prayer full of phrases they have heard a thousand times. And we wonder why Johnny is not excited about God.

In a Christian high school (which would not be necessary if we would really disciple our children) a class of thirty-seven freshmen from Christian homes was asked how many had ever been led to pray about what God wanted him or her to be. *Not one responded.*^o Parents, let's face the facts. *We* are the greatest barrier to the accomplishment of world evangelization in our generation.

^o *Eternity* magazine, March 1964.

Tamar

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

A well-known and much-loved minister of the gospel used to tell his congregation, "Don't fight sin too hard, but center your thoughts on the Lord." That is a good thing to remember in our study and teaching as well as in our lives. Do not concentrate on sin and its analysis more than necessary, but study God's dealings with it and His working. It is not necessary to paint sin as black as possible in order to make God look good. The very best construction one can put on the failures of human beings shows up black in the light of God's holiness (Job 1:8; 42:5, 6). It is possible by digging too persistently into sin to find only that and miss the overall working of the God who alone can deal effectively with sin. Setting our minds on high things, then, let us look away from the sordidness of Judah's sin and Tamar's wicked deception of him to the God whose purposes are right and good, whose overruling providence guides His chosen in the way, for the explanation of this incident in the life of Judah, chosen to be the head of the Messianic tribe, the father of the promised Prince of Israel.

J. F. & B. suggests that God laid bare such things as these to give an honest picture of the ancestry of Christ. "This chapter contains details which probably would never have obtained a place in the inspired record, had it not been to exhibit the full links of the chain that connects the genealogy of the Savior with Abraham; and in the disreputable character of the ancestry who figure in this passage, we have a remarkable proof that "He made himself of no reputation." This may be the reason it was *recorded*, but why did it *happen* to the head of the tribe through which was to come the Christ? Surely the lineage of the Lord is nowhere glossed over, the weaknesses and failures of His human ancestry, clearly disclosed, only point up His perfection and the need for it, for their salvation. On the other hand those in His direct lineage were carefully selected by God and fitted for the place they were to occupy with reference to His purpose. There was nothing hap-hazard about it—no faithless person, careless of his attitude toward God, strayed into the line and remained there.

Judah's family

The high points of Judah's family life as given in Genesis 38 show God's watchfulness to preserve the line of the coming Messiah. Let us look at them step by step. In verses one and two we have the account of Judah's marriage. Apparently without consulting God or the wishes of his father, he married the daughter of a Canaanite. This was not good. Except as God accepted the faith of an outsider one could not be taken into the tribes of Israel. Always He "sought a godly seed." Because her sons were wicked in the sight of God (vs. 7-10) and in view of other facts in the case we may well

suppose that Shua's daughter had not been taken in for her faith. God slew Er and Onan. Tamar was twice made a widow by the hand of God because her husbands were both wicked. Shelah may have been of the same caliber since God seems to have rejected him also for the lineage of Christ. Judah may have had reason to fear his death from the death of his brothers and from his knowledge of the character of Shelah. Tamar seems to have been an Israelite; we are not told.

Of the whole family there were only these two, Judah and Tamar, through whom God would work out His purpose. She may have known little or nothing of His purposes for Israel. But she was known by God and that for the purpose of fruitbearing in line with His promise to Israel. Therefore it is easy to believe that she loved the God of Israel "under whose wings she had come to trust" (1 Cor. 8:3). Certainly I believe that the attitude of the mothers, of the men in the lineage of Christ, toward God was considered by Him. And among those mothers Tamar is one of three mentioned by name when the lineage is given (Matthew 1:3). God accepts faith and forgives failure. David's great sin was grievous and not to be condoned in any sense yet it was forgiven and Israel's greatest earthly king came later through the union that sin brought about.

So also with Tamar's sin. It was not to be excused yet surely the Lord forgave it and accepted fruit of it in the lineage of Christ. What happened to Er and Onan was due to the overruling of God; no doubt to keep out a faithless generation. God later rejected the fruit of mixed marriages (Ezra 10:3, 18, 19; Nehemiah 13:23-27) making exceptions always for faith as in the case of Ruth the Moabitess and Rahab of Jericho.

Judah may have seen God's hand in it—at any rate he was truly humble in his dealings with Tamar, accepting his own guilt when it was brought to light. He did not blame her for her deception of him, but frankly owned that she had been more righteous than he though she had deliberately deceived him. (I do not know of anything more honorable than this.) But his sin went deeper than the surface. For in not giving Shelah to her he not only went contrary to the patriarchal law of this time (later given in the law of Moses, Deuteronomy 25:5-10) but would have broken the line of descent through which the Messiah was to come. This God would not have and He not only worked His will in Judah but also humbled him greatly in the doing of it. Moreover, if we can judge rightly He did not want Shelah in that lineage, but chose Perez (Matthew 1:3) one of the twins and a direct son of Judah born of that illicit union with Tamar.

God's vigilance over the lineage of the Lord Jesus is not to be denied in this story nor His faithfulness always, in the choosing of those who figured in it. This is the lesson of Genesis 38, the remarkable working of God in His search for a godly seed; and because He sought a godly seed we can know that Tamar was accepted by faith and her sin and Judah's forgiven. "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, And abundant in lovingkindness unto all them that call upon thee" (Psalm 86:5).

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Challenging classes and a court case in Hong Kong

The summer camp was a rewarding experience. A typhoon was skirting the colony all the time we were there, so we had strong winds and heavy rain. All outside activities were pretty well curtailed, but we had good accommodations, good food and a lot of time for Bible studies and discussions. The theme, "The Church and Me" gave opportunity for solid Bible teaching concerning the church, its organization and work, the Christian's relation to the world, being yoked with unbelievers, etc. Some who were contemplating marrying unbelievers said they had not realized all that was involved.

Many questions were asked in discussion periods such as these: In answering questions why do you limit yourself to the Bible? There are many areas of truth outside the Bible (This by an unbeliever, but he seems dissatisfied and searching.) What does it mean when it says, "It repented God that he had made man"? Did the children of Adam and Eve marry their own brothers and sisters? If our names were written in the Book of Life from before the foundation of the world, does the person whose name is not written there then have no hope to be saved? (This spawned a whole series of questions and discussions regarding man's free will and God's foreordination.) Can a person's name be taken out of the Book of Life? Will a Christian who is truly born again be left when Christ comes to take us up? (The one asking was conscious of failures and stumbling and was concerned that she might not be taken up.) Is it wrong for women to preach in the church? (There are many women preachers in Hong Kong.) How can I know the will of God for my life? How can I overcome when temptation comes in my life?

Do you wonder that we find these meetings very challenging? It is refreshing to see young people who are thinking seriously about the problems of living a Christian life and who want answers to the problems confronted in their Bible study.

Attendance at the young people's meetings has been increasing since the camp. There were 23 present last night. This morning we were very happy to see Miss Hung present at the service—the first time she has been there in years. She was in the mental hospital for several years and though now out is still not entirely well. She needs your prayers.

This past week I was called upon to testify in court. A young man in the church was accused of stealing a car. His mother was sick with worry about the matter. Fortunately the owner of the car was willing to testify that he had not stolen the car, but that it was used by him and another boy with his permission. He was also accused of driving without a license. I just testified that I had known the boy and the family for years, that they were Christians and that the boy had never been in any trouble before and asked for leniency. To the surprise of all the judge dismissed all the charges for lack of evidence and instructed that nothing be written on the boy's record. They were so grateful to the Lord. Sometimes poor people don't get a fair deal in the courts and the police are quite corrupt, so they had some reason to be concerned. The judge himself said it was quite unusual for him to dismiss a case in this way, so we feel it was the Lord's working. I think the Lord is already bringing good out of the matter.

All four of our children will be going to the same British school—King George the 5th. They wanted Robbie to skip to the 7th grade simply on the basis of age. They are very rigid on this matter. We are glad they can all be together. They will all have adjustments to make. Steven has to take 2nd year French when he hasn't had 1st year yet. Betty is trying to get him through 1st year French at home in one month. We are about to get things in functioning order here at home. We have ordered cabinets made for the kitchen which should be ready in a week.

We need to be making some decisions about the future of the nursery soon. Two nights last week we sanded and painted the folding chairs over at the meeting place. They had gotten quite rusty. Nine of us worked together one night and got a lot done.
—Dennis Allen, Hong Kong, August 26.

Zambia: "Perhaps something will be decided for Sinde's future"

Iris Elder is the coordinator of all the material for the revision of the Tonga Bible, and I'm helping with the typing. God always gives a blessing in everything, for as I type reading the words, I learn how to use the proper words. Isn't that wonderful to get this extra "study-practice" in Tonga while also getting the typing done? Tomorrow is a meeting at Kalomo with Brother Benson. Perhaps something will be decided for Sinde's future. We pray God's will in all decisions as He knows where and how each of us can be used to bring the most glory to His name. Each day I pray for His guidance and that I may be fully devoted to whatever work He has in mind for me. Maybe He wants to use me elsewhere—so I'm willing to go wherever He leads.

It may take 5 years to finish the whole Bible. Ken and Iris have an electric IBM typewriter which is such a great timesaver

and so easy to use. They are at Namwianga Christian Secondary School where 3 of their children attend. Ken teaches part time.

At Mujala village 57 were present on Lord's day and 3 precious souls were baptized into Christ. Next Sunday the blind preacher will speak. How wonderful God sent him to speak once or twice a month. —*Elaine Brittell*, Livingstone, Zambia, July 27.

Leonard Bailey will return to Rhodesia

We arrived in Canada June 22nd and Mabel's mother and brother Wilfred and family were there to welcome us. We came to Dauphin with Mother and were here about two weeks. The church was having VBS and our boys attended it.

Our time in Canada is passing quickly, we are booked to fly to London on the 18th of September. We hope to spend ten days with my sister and then on to Rhodesia, Lord willing.

We thank all those who have been so kind to us throughout our stay here and in helping to make it possible to have come.

Our boys have enjoyed many things but especially the farm at Delacore and Manson; I think they have decided they want to be farmers like Uncle Wilfred and mow hay and bail clover and feed cattle!

We received a letter recently from Bro. Velapi saying that two more had been baptized in Bulawayo and that he was leaving there shortly to visit one of his friends who is preaching in a remote area. —*Leonard Bailey*, Manson, Manitoba, August 22.

September gospel meetings in South Africa

Last Lord's Day evening the 12th of August, we were privileged to witness the husband of one of our young sisters, baptized into Christ at about 10 p.m. What a joy it is to know that they can now together walk through the fields of joy, peace, and happiness, and together await the coming of the Lord.

I am busy preparing the handbills for our 3rd series of gospel meetings for 1973 commencing 4th to 9th of September, with a guest speaker from Port Elizabeth, one of our seaside towns. Our prayers are that God might richly bless him as he prepares, to the intent that the meeting may result in fruit-bearing to the glory of God.

I have made contacts with various families, whom I have to visit, almost ready to make their decision for the Lord. What a blessing to know this. The men are all excited about our new building project in the Hanover Park township just waiting for official plans from the Council. The men have offered to build themselves. —*T. W. Hartle*, Capetown, South Africa, August 15.

PROPHECY

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

What Lies Ahead? (2)

Willis H. Allen

Last month we confined our study largely to the "blessed hope" of the Christian, which reaches its fruition at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we want to apply the question to Israel, using the term in its usual biblical sense—*natural* Israel—descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. We hear much today about "spiritual Israel," but that expression is nowhere found in Scripture. The idea grows out of the erroneous concept, held and taught by many commentators and teachers, that all Old Testament prophecies relating to Israel find their fulfilment in the New Testament church. While we deny this concept, we cannot enter into a discussion here of this negative aspect, chiefly because it does not enter directly into the purpose of our present study. We refute it through a more positive approach to the subject.

What lies ahead for Israel? We cannot hope, in a brief treatise like this, to adequately answer the question; we shall attempt to simply give a summary of what the Lord has to say about it in His word. God's purpose for and through Israel is bound up in the covenant He made with Abram when He called him out of Haran (Genesis 12:1-3). After leading him into the land of Canaan, God said to him: "Unto thy seed will I give this land" (v. 7). And later, the land promise was more definitely described: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates," etc. (See Genesis 15:18-21; also ch. 17:8, where the Lord extends the promise of the possession of "all the land of Canaan, for an *everlasting* possession." Emphasis ours.) The covenant God made with Abraham was later repeated to Isaac (Genesis 26:35), and again to Jacob (ch. 28:13-15). We are giving stress to these promises, for, as indicated above, in them are centered God's plans and purposes, not only for the descendants of Abraham, but for the nations also. "For in thee and thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."

Keep in mind that the people who came to be known as "the people of Israel," or simply "Israel," were particularly chosen by Jehovah to be a people unto Himself, a nation separate and apart from other nations: with Abraham as its progenitor, through his son Isaac, Isaac's son Jacob (whose name was changed to Israel), and Jacob's twelve sons, whose names became the names of the twelve tribes by which the nation was thenceforth designated. (Let us insert here that though the nation in its history became

divided, God never failed to recognize *all* the tribes as His people. Even in the New Testament “the twelve tribes of Israel are prominently mentioned, as, e.g., in Matthew 19:28; Acts 26:7; James 1:1; Revelation 7:4-8, where they are mentioned as numerically “sealed” by their tribe names.) “For thou art a holy people unto Jehovah thy God: Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a people for his own possession (‘a special people unto himself’—KJV) above all people that are on the face of the earth” (read Deuteronomy 7:6-11).

There is a prevalent concept in many quarters that when Christ came into the world to open up the fountain of cleansing for sin through the sacrifice of Himself, God was finished with the nation of Israel as such, etc. etc. To accept this notion is to ignore the facts of history, even down to our times, and the many prophecies of Scripture having to do with the future of Israel. It is obvious that we cannot here enter into a discussion of Israel’s history, even though it does have a bearing, if indirect, on our present inquiry. (Perhaps we may be able to take this up in a later lesson.) But we would point out this significant fact: God is *not* through with Israel. This is abundantly seen in both the Old Testament and the New. John declares that “He came unto his own, and they that were his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name” (John 1:11-12). Jesus revealed to the Samaritan woman that “salvation is from the Jews” (John 4:22).

Paul has much to say about God’s purpose for His people in his great epistle to the Romans, devoting an entire section of three chapters (9, 10, and 11) to this question. In ch. 9, he shows that—even though to them belonged “the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed for ever” (vs. 4-5)—their *present* rejection was not a breach of God’s faithful promise. In ch. 10 he shows that they themselves are responsible for this rejection in that they failed to “hearken to the glad tidings” presented to them (see vs. 16-21). Then in ch. 11 it is clearly brought out that God is not yet finished with Israel. The chapter opens with the question, “Did God cast off his people? God forbid.” That is, “It cannot be.” God did not cast off his people whom he foreknew” (v. 2). The apostle’s reference to himself in v. 1 is not to be understood in the sense of an *individual* conversion to prove the assertion he has just negatively stated. Individual conversions, whether of Jews or Gentiles, was not an issue among believers; for all knew that the gospel brings salvation to all that believe, “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” What he appears to be saying is that to him, who is an Israelite, the casting off of God’s people is an incredible idea. He then proceeds with his argument as to the plan of God being worked out for Israel and the Gentiles, in their respective relations to each other, culminating in the declaration in v. 26, “And

so all Israel shall be saved; even as it is written" etc. (read all of vs. 26-32).

We hasten to add, in connection with our present study, that the salvation of "all Israel" will not be obtained without the acceptance of, and obedience to, Jesus Christ, not only as their Messiah, but also as their Savior. We cannot take the space to follow through the arguments presented throughout this chapter; but we urge our readers to carefully study the entire chapter, especially the reasoning of the apostle under the figure of the "cutting off from" and grafting into" the olive tree; and that in context with the chapters 9 and 10.

There are two points to which we would call attention, seen in v. 25, which Paul calls "this mystery" (a previously unrevealed, but now *revealed* secret). These two points are (1) a partial hardening—"a hardening *in part* hath befallen Israel;" and (2) a certain time—"until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." We should never overlook God's "untils"—for example, "Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:24). Let us add that these two expressions are not the same in significance, though in point of time the fulfillment of each is related to the other. "The time of the Gentiles" refers to that period during which the land of Israel, especially Jerusalem, is under the sway and dominion of Gentile nations. "The fulness of the Gentiles" does not mean the conversion of all Gentiles, yet the coming in of some full number seems to be contemplated; Luke 14:22-23 may suggest a possible explanation. Whatever this "fulness" contemplates, it is to precede the lifting of the partial hardening on the part of Israel, when "all Israel shall be saved." Those individual Jews who died in their sins and in unbelief in times past are not in view here, but those who compose the nation at the time when it turns to the Lord with all their heart.

At that time will be fulfilled the prophecies to often reiterated by God's prophets of old as to the final glorification of Zion. But before all of this takes place, Israel must again suffer under the tyrannical power of the coming Anti-christ, predicted by the Lord in His Olivet discourse as the "great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever shall be" (see Matthew 24:21-22). It is "the time of Jacob's trouble" (Jeremiah 30:7). But a study of these world-embracing conditions we shall take up in a following lesson, the Lord willing.

While we wait, let us be diligent in admonishing our neighbors and friends, including those who are Israelites, that they hear and obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and "watch 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" (Luke 21:36).

Ready for the Rapture

H. Robert Cowles

There's a church in North Hollywood, California, that takes the rapture seriously. The congregation has arranged to obviate the legal entanglements and leadership chaos that will follow the return of Jesus Christ for the true believers who look for Him.

Pastor D. Leroy Sanders thinks that many of those left behind following the rapture will realize what has taken place and want to make their peace with God.

"This will be the key time to bring members into the church family," he says.

To prepare for the anticipated influx, the church has altered its bylaws to permit the election of new officials after only three months of membership rather than the four years required until now. The church also has alerted its mortgage company to the financial emergency it anticipates when most of its contributors suddenly vanish. It has contacted a major insurance company to determine how claims may be paid without waiting the usual seven years before missing persons are declared legally dead. Members have been asked to make the church the beneficiary of their insurance policies.

Although some conservative Bible scholars dispute the idea of a "rapture" when the church, living and dead, is suddenly whisked out of this world to be forever with Jesus Christ, the words in First Thessalonians 4:14-17 can hardly be understood to mean other than that.

Thus the very real prospect that unbelievers will find themselves unexpectedly bereft of Christian friends and acquaintances. In nations where Christians make up only a percent or two of the total population the effect may be negligible. In the so-called Christian nations where a sizable portion of the population is part of Christ's true church, the effect will be startling, if not cataclysmic.

Driverless cars careening along high-speed roadways, airliners suddenly without pilots, patients in the midst of surgery cut off from medical attention suggest some of the immediate effects. For those left, the long-range effects could be even more unsettling. Banks will hold mortgages on which they cannot collect payments. Children will be without a father's livelihood or a mother's care. A sudden shortage of skilled labor could throw the economy into persistent chaos.

Although the congregation in California is to be commended for its forethought and its realistic attitude toward Christ's coming for

His church, we fear they have overlooked one probability following the rapture: so few members of a truly evangelical church will remain that hopes of salvaging the organization are almost futile. It will have to be a fresh start for those who are left.

There are Scriptures which suggest that the period of judgment following the rapture of the church will find men still unrepentant. Revelation 9:20-21 speaks of those not killed by the plagues who nevertheless refuse to turn from their wickedness.

But other Scriptures seem equally clear that multitudes will make their peace with God during that period. Revelation 7:14 refers to a numberless assembly who have come out of "great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

So the possibility is very real that hundreds of thousands who know the gospel but who have never received Christ as Savior will clamor to be included immediately following the rapture.

The door of escape from the wrath to come may indeed be closed to them, but in view of the thousands who come through the great tribulation with washed robes, we cannot say that the door to eternal salvation is closed to them.

How shall they be saved after the rapture?

Most assuredly the same way we have been saved before the rapture: by confessing and forsaking their sins and by committing their cause in faith to Jesus Christ besides whom there is no savior.

And how will this information—this gospel—be communicated to those left behind by the raptured church? Probably through the millions of people who know the way of salvation but who have never acted on that knowledge. They will constitute a reservoir of communicators who can inform less knowledgeable inquirers.

Besides these human agents there remains the medium of print: Bibles, tracts, Christian magazines such as this one with its positive gospel witness in each issue.

If Christ were to return for His church today can you imagine the demand tomorrow for copies of this magazine and for other Christian literature?

Is it farfetched, in view of what we believe will be the soon return of Jesus, for each evangelical church to arrange a gospel literature depot where Bibles, salvation tracts, Christian magazines can be stockpiled against the press of inquirers sure to be seeking help?

Then we who have been caught up to be forever with the Lord can rest in the comforting knowledge that our concern for a lost world included also those left behind at Christ's second coming.

Asa Baber is a retired minister of the church of Christ in Harrodsburg, Ky.

The Love of God

Asa Baber

God's love in us

"No man has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us." (1 Jn. 4:12). This is accomplished by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). If God's plan of redemption were to carry no farther than His love for us it would be tragic and fall far short of the goal. Man must be possessed of God's love and nature. "By which are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we may be partakers of the divine nature having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (1 Peter 1:4)." For fellowship with God we must have His love. This is how Christ can live in us. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

The Holy Spirit has taken on Himself the task of transforming human beings from the natural man to the Spiritual man. Example: A man looking at the gauge on a boiler to see what is inside, so people look at the gauge of our lives which is our actions to see how much love we have in our hearts. Look at 1 Corinthians 13. Verses 1-3 show that love is essential. Verses 4-8 shows love is triumphant. Verses 8-13, love must be pre-eminent. Men substitute other things to cover up the lack of love—eloquence, knowledge, faith, money, and service. Contrast love's performance. Love shows itself in action. Love is patient, kind, knows no jealousy, makes no parade, is never rude, never selfish, never resentful, and is slow to expose. Love is permanent; all of the gifts and attainments that men pride themselves in are perishable.

God's love through us

"But as touching brotherly love, ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another" (1 Thessalonians 4:9). "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love" Everybody needs to love and be loved. Without love man has lost the very best in life. He becomes abnormal, he shrivels up and becomes hardened. The Christian should see that this does not happen to him or anyone under his influence.

God channeled His love to the world through His Son. If God so loved us we ought to love one another. He channeled that love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He desires to channel that love to needy people everywhere through His redeemed people. Are

you being a channel? Thus we see that love becomes the key to His redemptive program. Received it becomes our Salvation. Responded to, it becomes our Sanctification. Released to others, it becomes our service; and love has no substitute.

Hatred is having its day now. Hate is the foe of love. If Christianity is to survive in the world it must awake to its peril and not only teach love, but must live it as its very life. Love alone will win. We cannot force people to be good. We cannot compel them to go to church; coaxing usually fails. We have printed literature, passed laws, resorted to education, but as good as these things are they have failed. Why not try love?

The Seven Crowns

The Lord exhorts the church to faithfulness, even to death itself, should that be the outcome of their tribulation. He said in effect, "Let not thy faithfulness to Me stop short of enduring death itself" (Rev. 2:10). For such loyalty the Lord has a sure reward—"I will give thee a crown of life." This picture is taken from the Greek games, when he who had finished first in the race, and had triumphed, received the victor's crown, a garland. But it was a wreath of laurel leaves that soon withered. The garland of the faithful martyr is no withering, fading trophy, but an incorruptible, unfading crown—a crown of life. It is one of the seven crowns promised to believers in the New Testament. They are:

(1) The Incorruptible Crown—for successful runners in the Christian race (1 Cor. 9:25).

(2) The Crown of Rejoicing—for evangelists who will meet their converts at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1 Thessalonians 2:19).

(3) The Crown of Righteousness—for those who served Christ with their eyes on the Lord's Second Coming (2 Timothy 4:8).

(4) The Crown of Life—for believers who have been patient in tribulation (James 1:12).

(5) The Crown of Glory—for overseers who have devotedly tended the flock of God (1 Peter 5:4).

(6) The Crown of Life—for Christian martyrs (Revelation 2:10).

(7) The Crown of Gold—for believers who have suffered, with a view to reigning later with Christ (Revelation 4:4).

The primary function of these crowns is not for the personal decoration of believers, but for the recipients to cast them at the feet of their beloved Lord in a coming day—to add to His glory (Revelation 4:10).

—In *Last Day Messenger*

A revival for Israel, or for the church?

Joel's Last Days

Dee McCroskey

And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire, and pillars of smoke. Joel 2:28-31, KJV.

From one of our readers comes this note: "Here are a few things that have puzzled me. Will you please gather it all up in a short article in your magazine? I'm sure many of your readers would welcome it also. Does Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit in the last days, relate to Israel only? So many of God's people seem to think it indicates a time of great revival for the Church also. Peter's message on the day of Pentecost would seem to confirm this belief."

By making Joel's words refer to the Church instead of to the nation Israel, many people have long expected a world-wide revival that never came, and will not come during the present dispensation. What is worse yet, because of a misunderstanding of Joel's words and the events of Pentecost, there is a growing movement in these last times, which they refer to as "Back to the Power of Pentecost!" It is a tragic error, which can only confuse and disappoint God's people.

Perhaps we should start by quoting this passage as Peter delivered it in Acts chapter two:

But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy: And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come. Acts 2:16-20, KJV.

"It shall come to pass in the last days." A great outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh, young people prophesying and having visions; a great display of phenomena in the heavens, followed by the "great and terrible day of the Lord."

As we have pointed out in previous articles, Peter's and Paul's last days are not the same. Peter's last days speak of great revival, while Paul's last days speak of great apostasy. Peter's revelations from the Lord concern the latter period of the whole history of Israel, up to the return of the Lord Jesus Christ to earth to set up His earthly kingdom. His second Epistle is largely taken up with this subject. Paul's revelations (2 Timothy 3:1-5 and 4:3) speak of the last days before the rapture of the Church. He writes in 2 Thessalonians

2:3 that the day of the Lord cannot come in "except there come a falling away first."

Ignorance of this fact has resulted in untold harm to the cause of Christ, in proclaiming a false hope of "a great world-wide revival in our day," and of fervent efforts on the part of many to promote "the promised Holy Ghost revival," and similar notions. The present evil days are to "wax worse and worse" until the Church is caught up.

There will be the world-wide revival, when the time comes. It will be among the believing Jewish remnant of the Tribulation time, after the Church has been caught up. They will literally carry out the so-called "Great Commission," going to all the Gentile nations with the "Gospel of the Kingdom" (Matthew 24:14).

The Prophet Isaiah speaks of this reviving of Israel in his "Little Apocalypse"—(Isaiah 24-27). The Holy Spirit will be poured out upon them in great power. "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done. They shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord, they shall cry aloud from the sea" (Isaiah 24:13-14).

As for the continued insistence in religious circles of a "great world-wide revival" in these last days of the present age, no such thing is found in the Scriptures. Things will wax worse and worse. More and more, people will "turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:4).

Joel's prophecy

No one could read the Book of Joel with an honest and inquiring mind without seeing that it all relates to Israel. The Prophet's big subject is the "Day of the Lord," which relates to the Tribulation time and the second coming of Christ. The outpouring of the Spirit is also a promise to Israel.

Further, it should be plain to any earnest reader that only part of the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came down in mighty power, and there was a *partial* reviving. But there was no full-scale national prophesying, nor inspired dreams. Nor were there any of the wonders in the heavens, nor signs in the earth, nor blood and vapor of smoke. The sun did not turn to darkness, nor the moon to blood. And the "great and notable day of the Lord" is still future.

For some reason known to God, the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy began, but was interrupted. It will all be fulfilled in its fulness at a future time, leading to the return of the Messiah, when His earthly people shall "look upon Me whom they have pierced," and He will pour out upon them "the Spirit of grace and of supplications" (Zechariah 12:10).

As far as prophecy is concerned, the coming of the Spirit was in fulfillment of definite promises to the people of Israel. Such a promise is found in Ezekiel 36:26-27, where God said He would give them "a new heart," and a "new spirit," and "will put My Spirit

within you." The Prophet Isaiah also spoke of it: "I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3).

What about the Church, then? Although the coming of the Spirit, and the day of Pentecost itself, were all in fulfillment of Old Testament promises to the redeemed of Israel, the Church reaped the benefits of it as well. For we poor Gentile sinners needed the Holy Spirit also to indwell us and make us new creatures in Christ. We can say with Paul, in Romans 11:33, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!"

—In *Last Day Messenger*

A voice from the past.

Who is Sectarian?

David Lipscomb

I would say that it is wrong to encourage sectarianism in any way, if we can tell who are sectarians. But my observation is that it takes a sectarian to ferret out a sectarian, just as "it takes a rogue to catch a rogue." Unfortunately, all the sectarians are not in sectarian churches; and I hope that some in sectarian churches are not sectarians. Things get badly mixed in this world. Sometimes people who wish to obey God are born and reared in sectarian influences. A man who loves party more than he loves God is a sectarian. A man who divides the church of God for a theory or teaching not required by God is a sectarian. A person who pushes an idea or practice not required by God, to the disturbance of the peace of the church, or that exalts a human opinion or practice to an equality with the commands of God, is a sectarian and a heretic.

There are some in nonsectarian churches who are sectarians, who violate the laws of God in order to oppose sectarians. They are sectarian in their opposition to sectarians. There are some in sectarian churches who will obey God and follow him in spite of the sectarianism of the churches in which they find themselves. As examples, there are persons in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches who were baptized to obey God rather than to please the sects. In this they rise above the sectarian spirit, despite the parties in which they find themselves. They ought to get out of the sectarian churches, but they see so much sectarianism in the nonsectarian churches that they think they are all alike.

Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, all met with sectarian Jews at their times and places of worship and participated with them, that they might find an opportunity to speak a word for the truth. I do not think it hurts anyone to hear the Bible read by sectarian or sinner at any time or place. The great end is to be true and faithful to the truth and at the same time kind and sympathetic with those in error. The nearer we can do these two things, the more like Jesus we will be and the more sinners and sectarians we will save.

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Viewing the News

CHRISTIAN BEACON, Carl McIntire's magazine, published some disturbing news in the issue of July 29, 1973. It cost him \$340,000 to defend the right of his radio stations, WXUR-AM and WXUR-FM, to continue on the air after it was criticised by left-wing and liberal groups, examined and found innocent by the FCC examiner, and then its license revoked by the FCC in spite of its examiner's report. The case never reached the Supreme Court, for the latter refused to hear the case. Those facts I already knew, but the added news was even more disturbing. Station KTRG, Honolulu, stopped broadcasting on September 30, 1970, because it was facing the same kind of trial and did not want to waste that much money. Station KAYE, broadcasting from Puyallup, Washington, and headed by a Pentecostal preacher, has been ordered to stop broadcasting by the FCC. The station has raised over \$300,000 to take its case to the courts. The United Church of Christ Office of Communication, headed by Everett C. Parker, has led the fight against stations KGDN and KBIQ-FM, Edmonds, Washington, on the grounds, believe it or not, that the stations hired only Christians. They are fundamentalist Christian stations that the liberals want silenced, apparently. Station WMUU-AM and FM, Greenville, South Carolina, owned by Bob Jones University have been complained against by the U. S. Civil Rights Commission, concerning their employment practices, even though two of the ten full-time employees are black. A strange aspect of that one is that the University has been told not to employ any of its student body! You may draw your own conclusions and watch the cases.

WHICH ONE? There are two countries in Africa (more but I want to contrast these particular two) that are controlled by minorities. In one of them the minority in control seems to have instituted a genocide of the majority tribe, having slaughtered from 100,000 to 250,000 already (censorship makes the exact number difficult to ascertain). In the other country the minority has instituted a program that will lead eventually to the majority being prepared to take over the leadership. Which country do you think the United Nations is trying to overthrow? In Burundi, where the Tutsi are apparently slaughtering the majority Hutus, the UN says that is an internal matter over which they have no control. But in Rhodesia, where a non-communist white group is in control and gradually turning the reins over to the Africans, the UN forgets about the internal matter and is seeking to overthrow the government. A peculiar double standard, wouldn't you say?

DOUBLE STANDARDS are not peculiar to the UN. Just contrast how the media have treated Watergate and the Ellsberg case, for example. Bugging is a horrible crime if it is by those you don't like, apparently, but outright stealing of government documents, even when there is evidence of giving the material to our enemy, is o.k. by those you like. Maybe we should simply say, a plague on both your houses!

WOULD YOU BE SURPRISED to find that the ecology drive that is ruining your car and raising its price is funded by the Ford Foundation and

other money coming from the auto industry? That is what the news sources say, however.

THE CHARISMATIC movement has gone high into the ranks of the Catholics, even to the auxiliary bishop of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and others of similar position. The movement seems to be growing still among Catholics.

"A magazine jointly published by the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ is calling for President Nixon to resign or be impeached," so reads an item in Ben L. Kaufman's religion column in *The Cincinnati Enquirer* for July 22, 1973. Clericalism is not on the decrease. In rebuttal to such work by churches, may I reprint the following two paragraphs from *Toward the Mark* for July-August 1973, written by the editor, Harry Foster:

"There is hardly a day now when I do not feel impatient with men's mismanagement of human relations, and an impetuous urge to hit out in some direction or other. My natural instincts make me indignant about wrongs, and ready to back any man or movement which offers to put an end to them. The peril of such an attitude is that impatience with one kind of rule can make for sympathy and support for its opposite, and so lead me into strange company for, unless I am very much mistaken, it will be the chaos and anarchy of contemporary conditions which will finally precipitate the kind of despotic rule represented by the beast (Note—he was discussing some results of teaching Revelation 13). I seem to hear my Lord warning me that if I allow myself to get caught up in this political struggle, I will inevitably be deceived into welcoming the master-man that conditions will seem to call for. To do that will be to discover—perhaps when it is too late—that such an authoritarian regime may begin with good intentions but will, in the end, become the instrument for Satan's lust to domineer over men.

"It takes wisdom (v. 18) to understand that if 777 is God's number, then 666 is the number of that kind of man who always comes short of the divine standard, and who being fallen, can never remedy humanity's ills. Indeed all his attempts to do

so can only lead to calamity. Our wisdom, then, is to recognize that the saints are citizens of another world. We are pilgrims—visitors—here on this earth. Let us submit to men's ordinances and let us pray for whoever are our rulers, but let us avoid emotional involvement in their suggested solutions of world problems. I find that I am constantly pressurised to get so involved. All protestants feel that the Roman Church has failed to use its political powers for good, but do they equally realise that Christ's Church has failed to use its political power for any purpose? World events are moving fast. If it so happens that the present development of our home and foreign affairs paves the way for the last great deception, then we shall soon be carried swiftly away on the irresistible tide of humanistic godlessness. Then the saints who have not had ears to hear and have backed political solutions will want to withdraw from their sympathies for and support of the contemporary saviour of the situation. Or it is to be hoped that they will. But in any case will they be able, at that late stage, truthfully to assert that their politics are in heaven?"

POLITICS seems to blind churchmen. Many church groups have rallied to support the marxist labor leader Cesar Chavez, giving some vague religious excuse for doing so and relying heavily on their ideas of "civil rights." Now there is a fight between Chavez' union and the Teamsters Union and those same church leaders are simply taking part in a jurisdiction fight between different unions.

GERALD S. POPE, Editor of the *Christian Crusade Weekly*, did a service for people wanting to understand the "powers behind the throne" in this country when he did a long article on David Rockefeller recently. A book on this Rockefeller has recently been written showing the power he has wielded as Chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank and controller of a good many corporations. His banking interests include 28 foreign branches in the capital cities of the world and 50,000 correspondent banking offices!

"JEWISH-Christian tension is rising in this country, and the Christmas season has become the occasion for appeals for tolerance," said Ben Kauf-

man last December in his column. If that is true, be no part of the anti-Jewish trend. Praise the Lord and preach the Lord and every man's need of Him, but continue to love every kind of sinner, for whom Christ died.

JAMES BURNHAM, writing in *National Review* over two years ago, pointed out that the United Nations and the media of the world start making great noises at every suspicion of radioactivity from this country, but when Sweden reported radioactivity from a Soviet nuclear blast in the Ural Mountains there was not a single word of protest. The double standard is older than that, but this serves as a good example.

HOW FAR "scholars" will go and how far the media will follow them is well illustrated by a new book and the publicity it has gotten. It is called "The Secret Gospel: The Discovery and Interpretation of the Secret Gospel According to Mark," published during the last week of May, 1973, by Harper and Row, according to an article in *The National Laymen's Digest*. The book is written by Dr. Morton Smith, a professor of ancient history at Columbia University. It contains strange attacks on Jesus as a charismatic

preacher and healer who used magic, self hypnotism, psychic phenomena, including occult practices, formalized into secret and possibly sex-oriented erotic rituals, even taking the story of the young man who fled naked as the result of such a ritual, not as the true Gospel of Mark gives the story. Avoid the book like a plague—and call me a "book-burner" if you wish!

A MEETING was held in June, 1973, at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. On the agenda were resolutions dealing with amnesty for draft dodgers, a national boycott of lettuce, state aid for non-public schools, a state lottery, freedom of the press and safeguarding the privacy of ministers' personnel files. Does that agenda suggest that it was a church meeting? It was the Northern Illinois Conference of the United Methodist Church!

MANY THANKS to all who send clippings, especially for the great help of the couple who send so many useful clippings from Cincinnati papers. Keep them coming and also send your questions to

Ernest E. Lyon
2629 Valletta Road
Louisville, Ky. 40205

Assembly Worship

Michael Hall

To worship is to feel and express adoration and love toward God! It is not enough to feel adoration. It must express itself . . . it must demonstrate itself! And we do not "worship" until we *participate* in the Act of expressing devotion! Merely to sit listening to the singing of spiritual songs and "feeling" love toward God doesn't mean that we have worshipped! We must sing! And worship is more than merely going through the acts that are given to us to express our devotion. Singing without the spirit, without the understanding or singing without meaning it; is not worship either! Because of the Spiritual nature of worship; God demands that we worship Him in spirit (with feeling, intensity, earnestness) and in truth (by the right acts and expressions of devotion)!! (John 4:23-24)

Worship is a means to *spiritual power!* Christians *need* to worship in that it helps them recognize the Sovereignty of God in their lives

and it makes their heart more sensitive to God's Will! We wish now to address our remarks concerning our worship in an assembly.

"Assembly worship" is a *demanding* experience! It demands our *full awareness* and participation! It demands that we think and consider one another to encourage each other! (Hebrews 10:23-25) It demands our spiritual preparedness (1 Timothy 2:8-12) and it demands that we be real and genuine in our worship with each other! (Matthew 6:1-18)

It's this writer's conviction that we need more *informality* in our assembly worship. The assembly needs *Reverence* . . . but not coldness! The group of God's people assembled for praise needs more togetherness and openness. We need to get over a lot of our hangups about our assemblies! The assembly ought to have the *warmth* and acceptance that a family in worship does! After all, the assembled church is God's family! Let the assembly worship be informal enough to allow for 'amens'! (1 Corinthians 14:16) Informal enough to allow any brother who has a message to relate it to the group! (1 Corinthians 14:30-31) But too often, our assemblies are so formal that it'd be unscriptural to start 10 minutes early (or late) or to have the worship last 15 minutes longer! Suppose a modern preacher "continued his speech until midnight" and then after an interruption would stay around to eat a meal and then "talk a long while, even till the break of day"! (Acts 20:7-11) The New Testament *does not* reveal any certain format for the order or length of the acts of assembly worship!

May I suggest also for your consideration that assembly worship is *not* service. The purpose of the assembly worship of the church is *not primarily evangelism!* The "coming together in the church" (assembly) is primarily for the purpose of praising God and building each other up in the faith! (1 Corinthians 14:26, 30-31) This doesn't eliminate evangelism from the assembly worship, for *if* therefore the whole church be come together into one place . . . and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers . . ." (1 Corinthians 14:23) If there are visitors interested in spiritual things . . . they need to hear God's Word too! But our service, our commission, our task, our ministry of reaching people for Jesus Christ is *not* to be considered identical with the assembly worship! It's unfortunate for the Cause that many members equate "assembly worship" with the task of the church! Actually, the time that the church spends together worshipping is a time of spiritual refreshment, nourishment and renewal. It's not the church's ministry to "hold worship services." Worship only prepares the church for service!! Worship motivates, equips and urges to service. The church member who is content with his or her church that merely is "keeping house" and "holding services" reveals their shallow understanding of the purpose and aim of Christ's ministry!

—From the bulletin of the Meigs Avenue church of Christ, Jeffersonville, Indiana

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Linton, Indiana: Let's have more news reports, as that is what I look at first. I like to know what other churches are doing. —Bert W. Miller

Ames, Oklahoma: Orland Boyer introduced us to Word and Work in 1917 and it has been a great blessing to this present time. I am still in touch with Orley Boyer in Brazil. He is still doing a great work that should shame these younger men into more activity and sacrifice. Orley lives in one room and eats two meals a day so he can put more into his translating. I know I shall see him in heaven. —Jennie M. Hayes

Dallas, Texas: The last week of July was family week at Camp Ingallwood in Louisiana. We had a great time together in the Lord. Two missionary families—the Wilsons and the Garretts—were there. They showed slides of their work and brought soul-stirring messages. Sister Garrett had women's and children's classes every day.

Brother Valdetero brought a powerful series of lessons on Essentials for Usefulness. Bro. Robert Garrett brought two series: Prayer, and the Working of the Holy Spirit. Then right before our eyes we had a graphic picture of His working. The whole week was truly a mountain-top experience. We all came back with a renewed burden of prayer and a greater vision of the fields that are white unto harvest. —Marie A. Rehorn

Abilene, Texas: The Lord is blessing us abundantly here with July '73 Sunday school attendance figures up 69 percent over July '72. Bro. Vaughn Reeves brought some excellent revival messages the last week in June, and many individuals in the congregation seem to be growing spiritually. The Lord has really "rolled up His sleeves" (Isaiah 53:1) this year and we're awed by what He is doing! He blessed us with an additional bus this past month, and with two willing bus drivers, so both Lazarus and Ebenezer are in use.

A World Literature Crusade leader recently impressed us with the idea (similar to Bro. Janes' philosophy) that our greatest responsibility lies in getting the Good News to those who haven't heard. He was referring to foreign fields, but this also includes the younger generation whose parents have not bothered to teach them. Both fields are very "white unto harvest." —Ben Rake, Jr.

NEW BOOK

The Best from the Pen of Thelma Holt isn't a very exciting title—especially if you don't happen to know Thelma Holt. However, after reading a few pages you'll feel that you know this delightful lady, now in her 70's. She has an easy conversational style and there is an abundance of illustrations from her own experiences. She weaves in the story of her life, but this is in the background. The greater part of the book is a collection of short talks the author has given at various places over a period of years.

The subject matter of the book is practical—the Christian family, the Christian school, the Christian woman—and all of it interesting reading. Mention of persons known to most of our readers brings the author a little closer to us who may not have known her personally. She is the daughter of the late G. P. Bowser, who labored for the Lord in Louisville in the '20's.

The book is paperbound, 141 pages, and sells for \$2.00. Order from Mrs. Thelma M. Holt, 18404 Muirland, Detroit, Michigan 48221.

Dallas, Texas: I go to a little congregation of the Church of Christ in east Dallas, which uses one cup and one loaf when having the Lord's Supper and has no Sunday School, but the two tracts by R. H. Boll Why Not Be Just a Christian? and The Church I Found and How I Found It expresses how most people think and feel in the congregation. These people are tired of the sectarian spirit. They really need people to love them. I

have just been going to this congregation a few months. They have really been growing spiritually. - Cleon Scriven

Henryville, Indiana: Two experienced the new birth at the church on the 26th. A young boy, Steve Gum, a resident of the children's division of the Maple Manor Christian Homes was

to be baptized. His mother who came to church to witness the immersion, herself also made the confession and was buried with the Lord in baptism.

Maple Manor Senior Division's date for Open House is to be September 15th and 16th. Congressman Lee Hamilton will speak at 3:00 p.m. on the 15th. The other times for the open house will be from 1-5.

I Believe

I BELIEVE that the world will never be completely converted to Christianity by any existing agency before the end comes. In spite of all that can be done by ministers, churches, schools, and missions, the wheat and tares will grow together until the harvest. And when the end comes, it will find the earth in much the same state that it was when the flood came in the days of Noah (Matthew 13:24-20; 24:37-39).

I BELIEVE that the widespread unbelief, indifference, formalism and wickedness which are to be seen throughout Christendom are only what we ought to expect in God's Word. Troublous times, departures from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, love waxing cold, are things distinctly predicted. *So far from making me doubt the truth of Christianity, they help to confirm my faith.* Melancholy and sorrowful as the sight is, if I did not see it I should think the Bible was not true (Matthew 24:12; 1 Timothy 4:1, 13, 14).

I BELIEVE that the grand purpose of the present dispensation is to gather out of the world an elect people, and not to convert all mankind. It does not surprise me at all to hear that the heathen are not converted when missionaries preach, and that believers are a little flock in any congregation in my own land. It is precisely the state of things which I expect to find . . . This is a dispensation of election, and not of universal conversion (Acts 15:14; Matthew 24:13).

I BELIEVE that the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is the great event which will wind up the present dispensation, and for which we ought daily to pray. "*Thy kingdom come,*" "*Come Lord Jesus,*" should be our daily prayer. We look backward if we have faith, to Christ dying on the cross, to His resurrection from the dead, and we ought to look forward no less, if we have hope, to Christ coming again (Luke 17:27-30; John 14:3; 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; James 5:8).

-by J. C. Ryle, an Anglican bishop during the nineteenth century in England.

WOODLAND UNITY FORUM

MEN ONLY! (except in the evening sessions)

A tremendous 3-day men's retreat is up-coming! The Woodland Unity Forum is scheduled for October 23-25. It will be held on the campgrounds of the Woodland Bible Camp just outside of Linton, Indiana.

In addition to the rest (you've talked of needing) and Christian fellowship the Woodland Unity Forum will provide some discussions concerning the church of our Lord. I assure you that you will find these sessions both interesting and challenging. Following each session you will have opportunity to ask the speaker one question.

Everything you will need is provided. You will bring your bedding (include a thick blanket), toiletries, and casual clothing (anticipate cool weather). Cabins, bathhouse, mess hall and tabernacle are all there for your comfort. If you want to bring camping gear, do so. We can accommodate anything from a pup tent to an Airstream, self-contained, travel trailer.

Come prepared to play volleyball, horseshoes, softball, ping pong, chess, and/or checkers if interested. We will try to have teams for some sporting events.

After consulting the schedule below, send your name, check, and length of your stay to Orell Overman. The pre-registration is cheaper and a help in preparing. Please don't wait! This pre-registration covers all expenses—food, insurance, room, etc.

In Jesus' name,
Michael T. Sanders
Minister, Buechel Church of Christ

P.S.— Evening sessions are open to families or interested individuals who cannot participate otherwise.

Coordinators: Orell Overman, Terry Morrison, Michael Sanders

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:30 Breakfast
9:00 Morning session
11:00 Free time
12:00 Lunch
1:00 Rest
2:00 Afternoon session
4:00 Recreation
5:30 Dinner
7:00 Evening session
10:00 Fireside devotions

SPEAKERS AND TOPICS

TUESDAY: The Forum begins at noon
2:00 What does the Holy Spirit do in the life of a believer?
7:00 Fellowship
WEDNESDAY: All day
9:00 Millennium
2:00 Missions
7:00 Fellowship
THURSDAY: Forum ends with noon meal
9:00 Body ministry

— — — — CUT HERE — — — — CUT HERE — — — —

Woodland Unity Forum — October 23-25

Name _____ Phone _____
Area Code and Number

Address _____ Church _____

I will be with you:

	Pre-registration	At the door
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<input type="checkbox"/> Three days	12.50	17.50

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 my camper, trailer (self-contained)
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