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"Holding forth the Word of life."

MARCH, 1974

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Talking Things Over

G. R. I.

FEELINGS ARE IMPORTANT

Not many of us would step on another's toe without a word of apology. But an entirely different attitude prevails when it comes to hurting another person's feelings. "She shouldn't be so thin-skinned!" we hear. More often, feelings aren't even considered. The American culture requires that we imitate the wooden cigar store Indian when it comes to showing emotion; and since I can't express my feelings, that gives me license to ignore yours. The payoff is a breakdown in communication, and we see it everywhere—in the home, in school, on the job, in the church.

In our society we are schooled to be very careful about how we express our feelings. "How are you?" requires "Fine, thank you. And you?" Only a spoil-sport would reply, "I feel lousy." So if you really want to know how your friend is, you must probe further—discreetly, of course—and listen carefully. People will drop clues to their real feelings, but you have to listen closely to catch them.

Why are we like this? Why don't we freely express ourselves? It is probably a matter of self-defense. Like the snail, we put out feelers to see whether or not it's safe to go ahead. "Fine, thank you" is always a safe answer. "I feel lousy," may possibly elicit a barrellful of unwanted advice or maybe even a rebuke. "Well, if you weren't so stupid, you would have stayed in bed!" If "Fine, thank you" gets the answer, "You sound like you might have a cold," then I might be bold enough to say, "Yeah, you're right, and do I ever feel lousy!" If that gets a sympathetic response, I'll probably go on to tell you that I was up half the night with my cold. Just keep on showing an interest in my welfare, and at coffee break I may begin to confide to you some of my real problems. But I don't want advice. I'm not really after sympathy, either. What I really want is to feel that someone cares enough about me to listen—someone who won't laugh at me or put me down. The world is full of lonely people, longing to be loved.

Do the Scriptures have anything to say about this? Yes, indeed, though we hear it little preached. "Be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted. . ." (Eph. 4:32). "Be of the same mind, having the same love. . . in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but

each of you also to the things of others" (Phil. 2:2-4). "Put on therefore, as God's elect, holy and beloved, a heart of compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, longsuffering" (Col. 3:12). Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 tell in some detail the care that believers should have for each other.

Down in the human heart, crushed by the tempter,
Feelings lie buried that grace can restore;
Touched by a loving heart, awakened by kindness,
Chords that were broken will vibrate once more.

When the local church is fully what it should be, there's no need for any of the members to seek a psychiatrist. They know by experience what it is to "bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

REPRINT:

A LOST BOOK

H. L. Olmstead — 1922

In the reign of Josiah (2 Kings 22) there is recorded the discovery of the "Book of the Law in the house of the Lord." In the evil days of the kings preceding Josiah, the *Book* had been lost. When it was found it was attested by the high priest, Hilkiah, Shaphan the scribe, Josiah the king, and last and best of all by Jehovah Himself as being the very book of the law; the inquiry having been made by Huldah the prophetess. When the book was read to Josiah there came "the knowledge of sin," conviction, repentance and reconsecration to God and when read to the people resulted in their making a covenant with Jehovah through their king to keep the law.

Today the whole Bible is a lost Book to thousands who profess the name of the Lord. Substitutes for the Bible are upon every hand. Nothing can take the place of the study of the Bible itself. We are not writing to oppose the consecrated efforts of faithful men to assist us by helps, publications or sermons to arrive at the knowledge of the truth; however, even these things may be used as a substitute for the study of the Bible itself and very often hinder the independent investigation of the word of God so necessary to healthy growth and development. The great need of the churches today is to really know their Bibles. Not just things about the Bible—interesting and profitable though they may be—but to know the Bible itself. To study the Bible only through the glasses of some favorite commentator, editor or writer is to lose much that might come to us if we honestly investigated for ourselves. In these days when questions of the day (which are only for a day) are the theme in many pulpits, when the preacher's favorite author

or his favorite magazine furnishes the topic for discussion, when church members are fed up on daily newspapers or their favorite club or lodge publication, it behooves the true children of God to gather around the only thing which has any real spiritual value and let Jehovah have an opportunity to speak to their souls.

The present day union evangelist as a rule, though he may be in dead earnest, has to spend so much of his time saying sensational things and being an entertainer in order to put over the big job he has undertaken and the people get very little real Bible teaching from that. To one who goes much among the churches the evident, crying need of the hour is for a more earnest study of the Bible by the church itself. The hour's work done in the Sunday school in the average church is wholly inadequate to meet the grave temptations of the times in which we live.

The worst "lost Book" among many churches is the Old Testament scriptures. There seems to be a grave misunderstanding just here. It is a blessed fact that "salvation is not of the law" and there are those who take this to mean that the Old Testament has no spiritual value today. Let us see.

In the first place the gospel itself is unexplainable and unnecessary without the law. "By the law cometh the knowledge of sin." Who could understand the four gospels without the background of the prophets? What does the book of Hebrews mean to one who knows nothing of the history of the children of Israel or their Levitical laws and priesthood? Philip preached Jesus very effectively to the eunuch from a text in Isaiah. From a child Timothy had known the sacred writings (O.T.) which were able to make him wise unto salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. "Remember the words spoken before by the holy prophets" (2 Peter 3:2). "Take for example the prophets" (James 5:10). It is good to know the words of the prophets if we are to remember them. It is profitable to know of the "days of Noah," the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the "way of Cain," "the doctrine of Balaam," "the patience of Job," "Moses the mediator of the old covenant," of "the men of Nineveh," "the Queen of the South." In fact, "all scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for teaching." The Bible and the whole Bible is the book for the church. To study the Bible more and to study more of the Bible ought to be the aim of every church.

The long winter evenings are here. Has it come to pass that the Church of Christ is too busy with worldly affairs and pleasures to use some of these long winter evenings in studying the Bible? This is how God makes His preachers, elders and Christian workers. "My people have gone into captivity for lack of knowledge." "Back to the Bible" should be more than a partisan slogan. Let the churches bestir themselves.

Alex Wilson is a missionary to the Philippines.



Personal Experiences and Bible Doctrines

Alex V. Wilson

"How do I know it works? I know by the only method you can really trust, by *experience*. My *beliefs* merely left me with a messed up head and nothing inside. Experience is what really counts." This was part of a testimony given in a paper published by some Christian young people. This attitude has become widespread in our day, as many folks are yearning for something that really works and are suspicious of anything that seems like mere theory. As one Christian put it, patting his chest, "I wouldn't trade what I've got in here for all the Bibles in the world!"

Thus continues in the present a battle that has been fought many times in the past: Experience versus Doctrine. What is the true role of each? What is their proper relationship to each other?

Examples from Church History

In the Reformation, Luther, Calvin and others broke away from the chains of Catholic traditions and superstitions. They replaced Rome's salvation-by-works with the Bible's salvation-by-grace-through-faith. But, alas, within less than a century, "faith" changed its meaning. Instead of being a wholehearted trust and commitment to the Savior, it became a mere holding of correct doctrinal opinions. Salvation-by-faith degenerated into salvation-by-beliefs. Fierce arguments raged over minor theological details. The over-emphasis on doctrinal preciseness led to a widespread barrenness of heart. The churches declined into a *dead orthodoxy*, cold and unattractive.

This was met by various responses. Some rejected *orthodoxy*, and instead embraced the new religion of Deism. Others rejected the *deadness* and sought by God's power to revive sleeping Christians. They believed there could be a *live orthodoxy*, combining Bible truth with joyful, triumphant personal experience. One example of this was the movement led by George Whitefield and John Wesley in England during the 1700's. Though they did not see all that we see in Scripture, they earnestly sought to follow its teachings. As they preached, many people in contrition turned to Christ and His Word. Some of these believers became overly emotional in emphasis, but perhaps many of us today are at the other extreme. (How long since you have choked up while singing some stirring gospel song, or had tears come to your eyes during a sermon or the Lord's Supper?)

Later, in the U.S. during the early 1800's, an *insistence of a set pattern of personal experience* led to outlandish results. In this case, an ultra-Calvinism was the cause. Some Presbyterians and Baptists believed that since salvation is all of God, a man could do nothing but wait and see if he was one of "the elect." If he was, God would give him some kind of "revealing experience" so he would know it. Thus men waited in agony, hoping for some such crisis to take place. Oftentimes if someone heard a strange noise, saw an unusual sight, or had a moving dream, he would consider this as God's revealing experience to him. For examples of this, read Barton Stone's early ministry in Kentucky, or else *Raccoon John Smith* (by Louis Cochran; now in paperback, 95c; Popular Library). Stone and Smith were early leaders in the Restoration Movement.

Thus at times doctrine has been overemphasized at the expense of experience—such as the period of dead orthodoxy following the Reformation. At other times experience has been overemphasized at the expense of doctrine—such as when people waited for God to "move" the elect in some extraordinary fashion. Examples could be multiplied.

Experience Without Sound Doctrine

Here's a thrilling experience to think about. This testimony appeared not long ago in Yale University's alumni magazine:

Before . . . I spent a lot of my time being very depressed, in an almost manic-depressive kind of cycle. I'm never depressed anymore. My whole level of emotions has risen out of the angry, sullen, depressed, into the generally happy or content . . . When I saw my father at the Harvard game he couldn't believe it, he kept remarking how more mature I was all of a sudden . . . School doesn't bother me as much any more—the workload seems amazingly easier.

What produced such a wonderful change? Not conversion to Christ, but the practice of Transcendental Meditation! People can have their personalities improved and lives changed—sometimes dramatically—by powers other than our Lord Jesus. Not only Transcendental Meditation, but Alcoholics Anonymous, false cults like Theosophy or Christian Science, other religions like Buddhism and Hare Krishna, and also communism can give to people transforming experiences of one kind or another.

We need to recognize this fact. A friend recently told us of a dedicated instructor at her university. He stands up boldly for his beliefs in God, also believes in Christ, and seems to be a fine, up-right man. "Isn't it possible he is a real Christian even though he's a Mormon?" No, it is not, for Mormonism's god and christ and salvation are radically different from those of the Bible (though Mormons often quote the Bible, thus disguising this fact).

Other movements also make high grades in their *moral standards* but flunk out on basic doctrines. Hare Krishna has salvaged some

young people from drug addiction; but it is a form of Hinduism. Moral Re-Armament (the Sing-Out movement) shows great concern for Christian ethics and compassion. We could say "amen" to perhaps every sentence in *some* of their literature, as they proclaim that the world's biggest need is individuals who are transformed by God and who follow Christian love and honesty. Their error is not so much in what they say but in what they don't say. The saving death of Christ and the absolute need for the new birth are both omitted in this religion. But *Christian ethics minus REDEMPTION by Christ's cross and REGENERATION by the Holy Spirit equals not true Christianity but rather a deadly counterfeit of it.*

What About the Supernatural?

A brother wrote, "By use of superior logic any doctrinal conviction may be changed intellectually, but that which one has experienced from God, no amount of argument can alter." That's partly true, but still shallow. For the question is this: How does a person know his experience is "from God," unless it is supported by His Word? *Miraculous experiences* by themselves do not guarantee that God approves of a person or movement, even if the miracles are performed in the name of Christ. Our Master said, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, ye evil-doers!'" (Matt. 7:22, 23) Note the following example:

In the Philippines there are healers who perform what they call spirit surgery. Their incredible powers have attracted medical and scientific investigators from afar, even from the U.S. and England. Though some of their claims have proved to be spurious, yet hundreds of astounding healings have taken place without drugs or surgical instruments. The healers work for long hours and refuse to take any pay! They live upright lives, teach men to follow the example of Christ, and give Him the credit for their healing powers! Yet at the same time they omit preaching man's need for redemption and regeneration. Some of them deny Christ's deity. And a basic ingredient in their system is spiritualism. They regularly hold seances to contact spirits. They believe these are spirits of dead people but the Bible—which everywhere condemns the practice—indicates that they are demons.

Look at one more example where doctrine is minimized. A teacher wrote, "I attended a tongues meeting, a very prominent one, and I was amazed at some things said and not said in the meeting. . . . The thing that really caused alarm was when the moderator said, 'Doctrine is unimportant, the only thing that is important is that we love Jesus.' He further remarked, 'I imagine that in this group today we will not even agree who Jesus is, but we can love Him.'" Such an attitude is disastrous. But we should note in passing that sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander. While *some* tongues-speakers

base their views more on experience than on Scripture ("I felt so happy and loving I knew it was from God"), *some* folks who oppose tongues-speaking also base their views more on experience than on Scripture ("Tongues split up churches A and B so I know the practice is not from God.") But experiences *by themselves* can neither be proved nor disproved apart from careful, thorough study of the Bible. "Some point to counterfeits or excesses and want to write off the whole thing, while others point to apparently genuine and Holy Spirit inspired manifestations of tongues and want a kind of 'package deal' endorsement of the whole movement. Neither of these approaches is Biblically correct" (Michael Griffiths).

Sound Doctrine Without Sound Experience

As we uphold the primary authority of the Bible's teachings, let's not minimize experience. It is a valuable teacher when properly evaluated by Scripture. Note that at the Jerusalem conference the brethren weighed the experiences of Paul, Barnabas, and Peter as well as the Biblical insights of James (Acts 15:6-21).

And of course we must beware of dead orthodoxy, which is highly contagious. A. W. Tozer gave an important warning to us:

The modern scientist has lost God amid the wonders of His world; we Christians are in real danger of losing God amid the wonders of His Word. Our thought habits are those of the scientist, not those of the worshipper. We are more likely to explain than to adore. We have almost forgotten that God is a Person, and as such can be cultivated as any person can.

Sound Bible exposition is an imperative must in the Church of the Living God. . . . But exposition can be carried on in such a way as to leave the hearers devoid of any spiritual nourishment whatever. For it is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience, they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may delight in His presence and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself. (*The Pursuit of God*)

Rossiter Raymond turned the same truth into a prayer-poem:

Whene'er, O everpresent Lord,
These ancient chronicles I read
Of them, Thy human speech who heard,
Who touched Thy human hands indeed,
Forbid that all my faith be spent
To find them true, and free from flaw,
Or idly pitch my lazy tent
Upon the truth they knew they saw!
Nay, hold not thus Thyself aloof,
But come, abide and walk with me,
That I may cry, with equal proof,
Not, "Yes, they saw," but "Lo! I see!"



Why Most People Will Not Be Saved

Dennis L. Allen

When the disciples asked Jesus, Lord, are they few that are saved? He said to them, "Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able" (Luke 13:23-30). The narrow door, of course, reminds us immediately of Jesus' statement in Matt. 7:14: "For narrow is the gate, and straitened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."

Yet the Scripture is clear that the hindrance is not on God's side. The door is open. Anyone can come in. God pleads with man to come and be reconciled with Him. From Genesis where God seeks for fallen man in the cool of the day to Revelation where the last appeal is to come and take the water of life freely, God takes the initiative to bring rebellious man back to Himself. That God would *allow* man to return is wonderful grace and condescension, but that God would *plead* with man to come is beyond our understanding. In the light of the incarnation and the cross the words of God to Israel are most appropriate: "What more could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" (Isa. 5:4). What more could God have done that He has not already done?

Why then is God's offer of mercy and pardon so often rejected? I thought when I first started to preach that if the message was clearly presented in earnestness and love that men would surely accept it. But it is not that simple. There are many reasons why the message is not accepted, and had I only thought back to my own experience I would have realized that even after I knew my need and wanted desperately to be saved at the same time there were other things within me hindering me from making that first step of faith. Often the sinner does not understand himself, and so the Word must serve as a mirror to reveal the thoughts and intents of the heart and enable him to see things as they really are.

What then are some of these hindrances?

1. *Intellectually Unacceptable.* Oftentimes before the sinner hears the message his mind is closed to it, because he has been convinced that no one can accept the Bible message literally with-

out doing violence to his intellectual integrity. In our day a whole new concept of truth has permeated the educational world. Because of the influence of existentialism and situational ethics the questions, "What is truth?" "What is right?", are viewed from an entirely new viewpoint. Many do not believe there is such a thing as absolute truth. Truly "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them" (2 Cor. 4:4). Darkness and unbelief is settling down over this world in an unprecedented manner, yet that darkness can still be penetrated by God's light shining "in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2Cor. 4:6).

2. *Laughed into Hell.* Many are convinced in their hearts and still don't come. They are turned aside by the sneers and laughs of their friends. It was so when Jesus was here: "Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God" (John 12:42-43). The fear of man brings a snare, but the one who values his soul will not be caught in it. Why should the ridicule of one wallowing in the same mire I am in keep me from obtaining salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life?

3. *Self-Satisfied.* Many will not be saved, because they are satisfied with themselves the way they are. They believe they compare pretty well with those around them and never realize that they will be judged by God's standard, not their own. To present only God's offer of pardon to such will never bring them to repentance. Only the faithful proclamation of God's standard, God's holiness and God's wrath will bring the sinner to the point of saying, "Woe is me, for I am undone." Only when we face up to God's revelation and confess it is entirely true, are we ready to lay hold of His salvation.

4. *Hiding from God.* Many will not be saved because they are always avoiding God—trying desperately to escape any confrontation with Him. They might not admit it even to themselves. They have many good qualities, but bury themselves in their work, friends, activities, pleasures and never give themselves any time to think. They don't even mind going to church if it is not disturbing, but they avoid like the plague any place or any one they think might disturb their present way of life and bring them into a real confrontation with God. They are too busy to accept His invitation and if pressed have a ready excuse on their tongues why it would really not be possible.

5. *Slaves of Sin.* Many will not be saved because they love their sins too much to give them up. The Israelites in the midst of their bondage protested to Moses, "Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians." This seems incredible until we remember

that the devil has been in the business of deceiving, tempting and bringing into bondage since the beginning and he is a master at his job. He knows what a man's weakest points are and he knows how to darken his mind and pervert his thoughts until he feels he could never bring himself to give up his sin. Brainwashing did not start with the communists. Satan has been doing it all along. He knows how to call black white and white black, appeal to the lusts of the flesh, and lull you to sleep on the easy road. Hearts are hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and many, like Judas, sell themselves for a pitifully small amount. Yet it is not irreversible. Christ came to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind.

6. *A Stubborn Will.* Many will not be saved, because they *will* not. Jesus told the Jews that even though their scriptures bore witness of Him, "ye will not come to me, that ye may have life" (John 5:40). The problem was in their wills. Even Christ cannot save a man against his will. Coupled with this also is pride and stubbornness. You can know the Gospel and deep in your heart your own need and yet be too proud to admit it. But this attitude closes the door to God's grace. "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5c).

7. *Procrastination.* Many people have no intention of being lost. They make no ugly decisive rejection. They simply put off coming to a decision. Those who knocked on the door after the Lord had risen up and shut it were very surprised and shocked at their rejection. They said, "Why we ate with you and you taught in our streets!" So near and yet so far. The Lord said, "I know not whence ye are, depart from me." How sad to come so close and yet not enter. Yet the fact remains if we don't come over on Christ's side, we are still on the Devil's side. If we always say, "tomorrow," tomorrow never comes. God does not send men to hell; they make their own choice. He is "not wishing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

There is yet another reason why many will be lost which I feel ashamed to mention and do not fully understand and yet it must be faced.

8. *The Failure of Christians.* Because we fail to give our testimony, because we fail to share the good news we know and have experienced, some will be lost. "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand" (Ezek. 3:18). May the Lord have mercy on us and awaken us to our responsibility!

Paul said, "I am pure from the blood of all men," but only the faithful proclamation of the whole counsel of God could free him.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Would you reprint your article about baptism that appeared in the Dec. 9 issue of "Piedmont Messenger"?

Entitled "To Whom Are You Listening?" the bulletin article ran as follows:

It is a sad fact that about all the evidence some seem to show as to being Christians is the fact that they were baptized. Baptism, to many of these, is a sort of rabbit's-foot charm that takes care of everything. Their concept of Christianity seems to be: baptism.

On the other hand, there are many professing faith in Christ who have no use for baptism, seem to delight in "putting down" anything related to it, and sneer at the idea that it has anything to do with one's salvation. These are amazed that anyone should give a thought to this matter before extending fellowship.

There are still others who believe in and practice baptism (at least something they *call* baptism), but it is really a matter of little concern to them. They know the Bible has some things to say about it, but except for a sort of token mention once in a while, they have little interest. It is not at all essential in their view.

These positions are all in error, and we need not make any of these mistakes with reference to baptism. This is not a matter hard to understand, and one does not have to be a Bible scholar to sort out the truth. In New Testament times baptism was regarded as the act of obedient faith which marked one's entering into Christ, and he was not a Christian without it. It was not an end within itself nor a ritual that took care of everything else. Except as an act prompted by faith in Christ and repentance of one's sins, it was not valid. But when people were convicted of their sin and sought forgiveness in Christ, they were told to be baptized. Jesus commanded it. The early Christians preached it and practiced it. It was for the remission of sins. In the book of Acts it figures prominently in the conversions and was a matter of some urgency. It was a burial in water and signified death to the old man and resurrection to a new life. The receiving of the indwelling Holy Spirit was connected with this act. It was never unimportant, despised, or neglected.

To put baptism in the Savior's place is the greatest of errors, but to despise, neglect, or ignore it in its rightful place is also great error. God will hold us responsible for what He has revealed in His word, and we must not let prevailing sentiment set our views.

Do you need to look into God's word to see what it teaches in this matter? Do you need to obey Him?

Should we single out some sins as being more serious than others? Is not sin sin, no matter how decent it may seem? For example, is adultery really any worse than withholding help to a poor man?

In one sense, all sin is the same. The unforgiven sin of the "decent" man will condemn him just as the unforgiven sin of the criminal or the immoral will condemn them. All sin to some extent partakes of rebellion against God and is the result of unbelief. All sin or any kind of sin makes us impure unless we are cleansed through Jesus Christ. Only the Gift provided by the grace of God can provide the answer. In this sense there is no such thing as sin which does not defile.

In another sense, there are greater and lesser sins. Some are greater than others in their effects on society, in their power to corrupt and to hold one in sin, in the degree of rebellion which they demonstrate against God, and in the persistence with which they are followed. Now we may be sure that God's evaluation of what is greater sin is often different from man's. Man tends to judge certain acts in the moral realm as gross and serious, while excusing other things also abhorrent to God as being of a lesser disobedience. Man usually judges from externals; God looks on the heart. And man's judgment and evaluation of sin was, beyond question, affected by his fall and is affected by the natural man's love of darkness (John 3:19-20).

Even so, though man's judgment may be imperfect, God has not left man without help in establishing a set of values. This is especially true of regenerate man. The word of God is dependable and enables us to know the mind of God. From the New Testament we may discover that the same sin in two different individuals may differ in its evil before God because of the state of enlightenment of the sinner, the intent of the heart, or other factors. (cf. Lk. 12:47-48). Moreover, there are some things which by their very nature are more serious than others. One does not have to be especially brilliant in the Scriptures to realize that in God's dealings with the Jews of old the tithing of garden herbs was a lesser matter than "justice, and mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). One of the problems the Pharisees had was their inability to discern between swallowing a gnat or a camel; they put as much, if not more, value on external things as on purity of heart. In the book of Proverbs (6:16ff) there is a list of "six things which Jehovah hates." Inasmuch as Jehovah hates all sin, the passage must be a declaration that God hates these things above other things, that they constitute greater sins.

Perhaps the clearest evidence that some sins are more serious than others is found in the fact that our Lord has commanded withdrawal of fellowship for certain offenses (e.g., 1 Cor. 5, esp. vs. 9-11). This is largely ignored in today's soft age, but it is still New Testament teaching. The idea that "one sin is just as bad as another" leaves us without any set of values on which to base such action. In fact, action is sometimes discouraged or defeated today by the attitude that "we are all sinners," and since none of us are without sin, we cannot cast a stone (cf. Jn. 8:7). It is true, of course, that when the proper procedure is followed, disfellowship can only happen when a sin is continued or persisted in or when repentance is steadfastly refused. But if there are not some sins that stand out as works of the flesh (1 Cor. 5:9-11; 6:1-10; Gal 5:19-21; etc.), then churches are under the same responsibility to initiate action against the person who wastes a nickel each week on chewing gum as against the unrepenting murderer. We are in a bad way when we lose our judgment of relative values.

Jesus, in the sermon on the mount, several times brought out the thought that one who sins in thought is guilty of sin as certainly as if he sins in deed. The hater is a murderer. The lustful one is an adulterer. To commit an offense in our heart is to be guilty before God. By all means let's let Jesus say what He does, however, and not more. He does not say that such a one has necessarily sinned to the same degree. Let us not in some misguided way go on to declare that if we sin in thought we might as well have sinned in deed. The guilt before God could be as great for the one sin, but the injury to others, the shame brought on Christ and the church, the need for supporting sins, and the consequences are likely to be very different. To say that one might as well commit actual acts of adultery or murder as to think it is to miss Jesus' thought. He was not saying that the sin in thought is equally bad in every respect; only that it is also sin. Sin in deed is normally worse, if for no other reason, because its effects are normally greater.

In one sense, if a man refuses to turn to Christ he might as well commit every sin in the book and do so with a zeal. He is just as lost in the former case as in the latter. But most of us realize that it is better in some ways for man not to become such a dedicated sinner. God in various ways restrains sin—holds it down—so that life on the earth is possible and bearable. He does not advocate that the sinner turn himself over to total corruption. Likewise all sin defiles even the Christian and must be cleansed in that washing of the blood of Jesus. That is a far cry from saying that every sin is equally bad and that none of us have a right to say aught to any other because we all sin in some way.

Ernest Lyon is a professor of music at the University of Louisville and minister of the Highland Church of Christ.



Viewing the News

LAND CONTROL. The House of Representatives version of the Land Use Planning Act, H. R. 10294, was characterized recently by even a left-leaning congressman this way: "This is a centralization bill, pure and simple, nothing else. Power is shifted upward from municipalities to the Federal Government." If the states do not go along with the bill, if passed, they will lose up to 21% of their Federal highway, airport, and land and water conservation funds. As one newsman puts it: "We're being bribed with our own money to acquiesce in the nationalization of our own private property."

BUDGET SIZE. The proposed Federal budget for 1974-75 fiscal year (\$304 billion with more to be added) is more than the combined federal budgets from 1775 to 1941. If the budget deficit estimated by the administration (about \$11 billion for the year) is correct, the total of interest the American people must pay on the National Debt—about \$38 billion annually—will have doubled since the present administration went into effect. During the past ten years our Defense portion of the budget has dropped from 46.9 to 30.6, while welfare and other non-defense spending has doubled.

EQUAL RIGHTS? A Georgia State superior court has ruled that the state's alimony laws are illegal because of sex discrimination. That may correct some inequities, but it will allow some deserted women to starve or go on "welfare."

LAND CONTROL AGAIN. The Rockefeller Task Force on Land Use has issued a statement saying that development rights on private property

must be regarded as being vested in the community and its well-being. That is "gobbledegook" for state control of formerly private property. Do you really want that?

GOVERNMENT SNOOPING. I wonder if a doctor's patient can protect himself from government inspection of his record (by the P.S.R.O.) by asking to keep his record at home and bring it to each appointment. I doubt it, but the danger of some non-medical worker for the government getting to snoop into your medical record is upon us.

RED NAZARETH The city of Nazareth now has a communist mayor, according to news stories I have read.

DID YOU NOTICE? . . . that prices were going down till wage and price controls were set up by the government? . . . that beef was scarce and up in price under controls but became plentiful and prices lowered right after the controls were lifted? . . . that there was no gas shortage until the government cried out that there was a shortage? I have no explanation of some of this!

ENFORCING DISCRIMINATION. The Washington Supreme Court has ruled that a school can practice racial discrimination to promote racial integration. It did it in the case of a man who contended he was excluded from the law school of the University of Washington and others of the "racial minorities" were admitted to schools with lower scores than he had made. A lower court upheld him and forced his admission to school. The case is now pending before the Supreme Court of the U.S.A.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS, WATCH OUT. A U. S. District Court in Virginia has ruled that even if no government aid is received, a private school can not refuse blacks. I do not want them to refuse entrance to blacks, but no reasonable reading of the laws of this country can give the courts the power to make such a rule. Bob Jones University believes that God wants segregation and because of this has lost its status as a tax exempt organization.

ODD BOYCOTTS. Other unions have learned from Cesar Chavez, the marxist labor ruler, that boycotts can be used to force workers to join their union. Chavez did it in the case of grape and lettuce workers. Other unions are now trying to force the employees of the makers of Farah slacks to unionize by getting people over the country to boycott Farah products.

RELIGIOUS PICKETING. Twenty-six "lay" workers and fourteen "ministers" picketed the Baptist Bookstore in Nashville because it was selling "The Living Bible." They were objecting to vulgarities in the paraphrase. I wouldn't picket, but I don't see how so many people like that paraphrase that so many people call a translation (the author calls it a paraphrase but calls it a "bible" at the same time).

SHORTAGES. The artificially-induced fuel shortage is going to cause food shortages also. Added to the lack of rains in many parts of the world that are already causing food shortages, the lack of oil to produce fertilizers will bring about food shortages in India and other countries dependent on fertilizers—such as Indonesia and Southeast Asia. The shifting of monsoon rains has caused much hardship already in parts of Africa and, to a lesser extent, in Latin America. Yet oil experts say we could get more oil than we need by opening up some fields now forbidden. Two experts I have read about say that within 90 to 180 days we could have plenty of oil flowing from the Gulf of Alaska, for example.

LEFT-WING BEAUTY. The National Laymen's Digest for January 1, 1974, says that the present Miss America "wants to legalize marijuana and give women the right to decide to have an abortion." Maybe that would

not be worth mentioning except for the fact that she wants to become a juvenile court judge! . . . On an altogether different subject, the same magazine revealed that British customs agents seized sex education pictures sent to England by the Unitarian Church in America, ruling the films were indecent . . . On the more hopeful side, the same issue reveals that a group of Southern Baptists have started a new monthly magazine to counteract what they call "inroads of liberalism" within their church.

WHAT HAPPENED to the "detente" between the U.S.A. and Russia when the Yom Kippur War started? I hope Russia loses that great weapon with our country because of revealing the continuing grab of the communists for control. Even a scientist in Russia, now in disfavor there, recently warned that "Detente" is vital for the final victory of communism over the United States."

STRANGE BEDFELLOWS are made when religious organizations join in a "fight" on some political question. Some fairly conservative church groups have joined with the (socialistic) ACLU, the (humanist) American Ethical Union, several Jewish organizations, the NEA, and some very liberal church groups and many others to fight giving money from the public treasury to non-public (non-governmental) schools. The "Americans United" group lost its tax exempt status on this subject. For some strange reason, none of the groups that fight for the tax money to non-public schools have lost their exemption, it is only fair to point out.

DR. FRED SCHWARZ, of the Christian Anti-communist Crusade, has been saying for a long time that the communists have planned to take over this country through encirclement plus inner demoralization so that we will gradually surrender. The inner demoralization seems to be going on at a rapid pace. The latest additions to demoralizing things are, of course, the Watergate affair and the energy crisis. The months of contradictory testimony, much of it incriminating those in very high places, have done much to take away confidence in our government. And now with the difficulty of getting gasoline and heating oils combined with the sworn testimony of many people who know

the oil situation that the shortages are due to government interference and the combination of the government and the oil companies not taking advantage of the resources we have (and especially the testimony of some that we could open up new fields to supply us for years and have the oil flowing in from 90 to 180 days) people are confused as to whether our government is for us or against us. Such is the situation the communists have dreamed of creating here. Be much in prayer for our people and our government lest we fall quickly.

NEWS BRIEFS (mostly from Ben K. Kaufman's column in *The Cincinnati Enquirer*): The Missouri Synod Lutheran Church is being torn apart by the aftermaths of the seminary fight reported in this column a few months back . . . The son of the

former U. S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, the Rev. Avery Dulles, is a Jesuit priest who is taking the lead in some of the liberalizing of the Catholic Church . . . Sixteen Protestant, Jewish and other religious groups have come together in a new Religious Coalition for Abortion Rights in opposition to the Right to Life group . . . A man who calls himself a "luciferan" lives in Okolona, near Louisville, and says that that "religion" has records back to 150,000 B.C.! . . . Southern Baptists in Louisiana have dropped the "white" requirement for churches seeking to join their state convention.

Many thanks for your help in getting materials for this column. Keep the clippings and your questions coming to Ernest E. Lyon, 2629 Valletta Road, Louisville, Ky. 40205.

BOOK REVIEW

COMPETENT TO COUNSEL.

by Jay E. Adams

Baker Book House, 1972

287 pages, paperback, \$4.50

Here is a book for pastors, teachers, parents, and other Christian workers that proposes the re-establishment of true New Testament counseling. Adams' main thesis is that qualified Christian workers (see Rom. 15:14 and Col. 3:16) properly trained in the use of Scriptures and cooperating with the Holy Spirit's healing ministry are competent to counsel—more so than psychiatrists.

Adams is trained in both theology and the behavioral sciences and his references to Hobart Mowrer open up a whole new field of fascinating related reading to those who want to pursue it.

Adams encourages Christian workers not to refer those with problems to "trained professionals" who give only non-Christian counsel and who remove personal responsibility for the problem. He emphasizes the counseling of Paul—confronting, teaching, admonishing with love. He emphasizes the acknowledgement of sin, repentance, and commitment to a Biblical pattern of behavior.

Adams states there is a Biblical solution to every problem. The book may have been even more helpful if he had been specific in relating Biblical solutions to particular problems, but his purpose was not to create a handbook as much as it was to show the *necessity* of confronting those who come to us with the principles and practices of Scriptures. —Reviewed by Billy Ray Lewter

Why Christian Schools?

Paul B. Smith
Toronto, Canada

If I had my life as a father to live over again, I would make whatever financial sacrifices would be necessary in order to send each of my children to a Biblically-centered school from kindergarten to the end of college.

If I had my life as a pastor to live over again, I would warn my people constantly about the dangers of the North American public school system. Over a period of thirty years I have watched with a heavy heart the devastating effects of the public schools, both on my own children and on those of many of my congregation.

In a cosmopolitan society such as ours, perhaps we should not blame the public school system. It would be difficult to think of our society as Christian in any Biblical sense of the word, and any public school system exists to accommodate the people it serves. However, as a result of this, virtually all religion of any kind has been removed from our schools along with the original concept of the American or Canadian philosophy of life. The backlash of this humanistic approach to education has resulted in a society of young people many of whom seem to feel that religion, patriotism, discipline, and morality are nasty words.

Job's Daughters

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

For some reason that God has not yet revealed to us, the second three daughters of Job were given more than casual mention in the Bible. Their names were Jemimah, Keziah, and Kerenhappuch. They had seven brothers, none of whose names are given. They were allowed an inheritance among their brethren. This apparently was not the usual thing nor did it set a precedent, for (later, so far as we can learn) the five daughters of Zelophchad had to make petition to Moses and wait for him to get an answer from God for an inheritance among the children of Israel. They were granted it because their father had no sons.

Only one other thing is told us of Jemimah, Keziah, and Kerenhappuch: they were the most beautiful women in all the land. If, as many Bible names were, their names were prophetic, we may learn a little more from their meanings. Jemimah was "affectionate, tender and loving," Keziah was "peeled, separated, stripped off." What was stripped off we do not know. It could be that in devotion to God she laid aside all weights and sin even as Christians should do now (Heb. 12:1). But that is just a surmise. Kerenhappuch was a "horn of cosmetic"—skillful in arranging or beautifying." But whatever the names may or may not say, we do know this, "...in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job."

PROPHECY

SAVED FROM WRATH

Dr. Ray Allen Young

*If you try to view the future,
Judging by events at hand,
Would great joy abound within you
Or would you be a fearful man?*

Some try to predict the future only in the light of current trends. Those whose forward look is so limited usually see nothing but a gathering storm. In order to avoid the fearful picture they sometimes employ wishful thinking; they have an unrealistic picture of hope. Since "Hope is the anchor of the soul," without it one is pounded upon the rocks of despondency. Such a person is tormented by his own fear—"Fear hath torment."

Judging by current trends, we logically conclude that the gathering storm must in time burst upon the world. Is there no escape? "Is there no balm in Gilead?" Indeed there is. Our only escape is to walk with God. It is written, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." When we walk with God, our steps are directed and we are protected. "Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him." This also happened in the life of Elijah.

History relates a great number of instances of God's directing and protecting His people. A terrible destructive storm was gathering at the time of Noah. As one of God's people, Noah and his family were saved from destruction while the whole sinful world perished.

Like Noah, Enoch, and Elijah, Lot was also a man who walked with God. He dwelt in the city of Sodom. The people of that city had reached the very depths so far as sin was concerned. One might think that Lot would have recognized that the trend of his time was leading to the certain destruction of Sodom. He—like many people today—was unaware of the gathering storm, but God saved him out of it.

The particular sin of the Sodomites was the practice of sex perversion. From their sins there has come down to this day, the word "sodomy". Today all we have to do is open our eyes and behold the increase of crime of all kinds. Sodomy and the sex craze are prominent in this downward trend. We cannot know just how long God will delay until He shall "come out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth." It looks as if the time is short.

The Destruction of Jerusalem

Subsequent to the time of Lot, our Lord warned His loved ones of coming danger and directed their paths to safety. The tragedy of 70 A.D. was also the result of the prevalence of sin.

The historian, Josephus, writing of this event said: "Now this vast multitude (about three million) is indeed collected out of the remote places, but the entire nation was now shut up by fate as in a prison and the Roman army encompassed the city when it was crowded with inhabitants. Accordingly, the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded the destruction that either man or God ever brought upon the world." The suffering of the Jews was beyond measure. The pangs of hunger became so great that many of them, as God had predicted, ate the flesh of their own children.

As God warned Noah and Lot, He also warned His people of the coming destruction of Jerusalem. About thirty-seven years before Titus destroyed that city, Jesus warned His loved ones: "When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto" (Lk. 21: 20-21). By reason of this warning, history relates that not so much as one Christian was left in Jerusalem to perish. While it is true that God sends His "rain on the just and unjust," that does not prevent Him from singling out His loved ones for their guidance and protection.

The Great Tribulation

In viewing the future in the light of God's unfailling word of prophecy, we see the completion of the picture that winds up in the Great Tribulation. The big question is: Will God save His people from the unprecedented suffering that is coming upon the whole world?

God gives answer to this question through the words of His prophets, but before we hear their answers it will be good to review the account of the Great Tribulation.

The prevalence of sin will usher in the Great Tribulation, as Paul writes, "This know also, in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God" (2 Tim. 3:1-4). Speaking of these same times Jesus says: "Iniquity shall abound" (Matt. 24:12).

Isaiah writes, "The curse hath devoured the earth and they that dwell therein are desolate because they have transgressed the laws changed the ordinances and broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:5, 6). From the above, we see that sin brought on great troubles in the past, and sin is what will cause the Great Tribulation.

To get an added perspective of the Tribulation, we further pursue the words of Isaiah. "The Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. The land shall be utterly emptied and utterly spoiled. Therefore (because of sin) hath the curse devoured the

earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left. Fear and the pit and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitants of the earth" (Isa. 24). Speaking of the terrible things to come upon the inhabitants of the earth, Jesus says: "In those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of creation, which God created unto this time, neither shall be" (Mark 13:19).

Back to the question: Will God save His people from this unparalleled affliction? In the light of His dealings with mankind, both good and bad, what would you expect? Has it been the practice of God to bring such punishment upon His children?

Deliverance

We find the answer in Isaiah 26:20-21: "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: Hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." When God comes to punish the wicked, He will provide escape for His people.

In order to understand better the promise of God, it might be helpful to examine a similar promise from the past. We will paraphrase the above promise in Isaiah, by way of inserted parenthesis—"Come my people, enter thou into thy chambers and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself as it were for a little moment (over night) until the indignation (death angel) be over past. For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish (slay the firstborn of the Egyptians) the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity."

We see that God exercises His power to bypass the righteous when He sets about to punish the wicked. A specific example of this is given in Revelation 7:2-3 and chapter 9:3-4. John saw an angel having the seal of the living God. This angel cried out to the angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and sea saying: Hurt not the earth till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads. Then John saw locusts and unto them was given power as scorpions. It was commanded them that they should only hurt those men which have not the seal of God on their foreheads.

Jesus makes promise to those who have kept the word of His patience: "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Rev. 3:10).

The disciples of Jesus asked Him as to the signs that would precede His coming. In answer, He named a number of things and then added: "When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). In this promise, what did Jesus mean by the word "redemption"? Surely He did not mean their redemption from sin. That had already happened. What did Paul mean by the word redemption in Ephesians 4:30? "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." What is the day of redemption?

Surely not the day they were redeemed from their sins. That happened when they were sealed. The word redemption can be properly used as meaning redemption from something other than sin. In Psalm 106:10 we read that God redeemed Israel from the hand of Pharaoh and his army. In other words, God saved Israel from Pharaoh.

From all this, does it not seem logical to conclude that God's people will be redeemed from the world at the *beginning* of the Great Tribulation?

God's people will be redeemed from this world when we are caught up in the air to meet our Lord. Can this possibly be after the Great Tribulation, since after that time Jesus will be on the earth? Jesus ends the Great Tribulation when He comes from heaven to the earth at the head of a great army. In Revelation 19 we read that Jesus defeats the perpetrators of the Tribulation, namely the beast and the false prophet, activated and empowered by the devil. We see the power and influence of the devil completely withdrawn from the earth as he is bound by an angel of God for one thousand years.

If we are God's people there is no reason for our hearts to harbor fear, for a peace from God past all understanding is ours. God will never punish His people, for we are "not appointed unto wrath." He may chastise us if it becomes necessary to get us back in step with Him. But punish us? Never!

On the other hand, the devil has been our enemy from the beginning. He is determined to punish us. Some of God's loved ones he will cause to be slain. But even in causing the death of the physical body he will utterly fail to separate the spirit from the presence of God. "Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him" (1 Thes. 5:10). Like the Psalmist David, we can say, "The Lord leadeth me, yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me" (Ps. 23:4).

How wonderful it is to be led and protected by the guiding hand of God. What consolation to believe that God will redeem His people from this world before He "comes out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." And to think that it is all free. The only condition is that we "trust and obey". The promise of God is: "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely" (Rev. 21:6). "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

Sit — Walk — Stand

Asa Baber

There are three key words in the book of Ephesians that are vital to the Christian life—*sit*, referring to his life in Christ; *walk*, referring to his life in the world; and *stand*, referring to his attitude toward the wiles of the devil. The Christian era began

when Christ died, was buried and was raised, and made to sit at God's right hand in heaven. The order to sit, walk, and stand cannot be changed.

What is meant by being told to sit is to rest after the work is completed, as God did when He completed the earth and so did Christ when He completed the work His Father gave Him to do. To sit requires no effort, only trusting the chair to hold you. The chair bears the burden. So we are to sit with Christ and rest upon the work which He has completed.

Paul tells us to walk worthily of our calling. Eight times in this book he uses the word "walk" signifying that we must move among the people of the world. How shall we walk? With long-suffering, putting away falsehood, speaking the truth, being not bitter but kind, forgiving, obedient, walking in love. There is so much said in this book about how to walk that we cannot refer to all of them.

In chapter 6:10, 11, Paul said, "Finally, brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." This is not instruction to go out and fight, but to stand the ground you have attained, and that ground is our foundation on which we stand. Paul says to not give back as much as an inch, but to hold our position against the onslaught of Satan.

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Dennis L. Allen

Kowloon, Hong Kong

January 15

We are grateful for the efforts of the young people to bring their unsaved friends to the evangelistic meeting during the holidays. Three expressed a decision to accept Christ. There are also some others from a class Betty has been having at the roof top school who want to be baptized.

Several new ones are coming to the Revelation class and showing very good interest in spite of starting so late. We will probably take up a study of Daniel next.

Recently one of the young ladies married a Chinese boy who had come back from the States to find a wife. He seems like a nice boy, but is not a Christian. She has been bringing him to some of the meetings and he has promised to come to the Bible class this Friday. She will be going with him to the States as soon as papers can be arranged.

This is exam week for the children. They have worked hard, but they hardly know what to expect.

Prices continue to spiral here. Sugar is now \$1.52 US for 5 lbs, and the price goes up every few days. Prices for flour and paper

are the same way. I suppose part of it is due to the fuel shortage. We are glad that we can get along all right without a car.

Donald Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

January 17

The gasoline situation here is not good, and they are supposed to start ration measures next month. We have already applied for our coupons for the Home and the Church. Our meat prices have risen some, but not out of reason like they are there. A good grade of beef roast costs us 40 cents a pound now and good hamburger for 35 cents a pound. Since these prices are in Rhodesian money, you would multiply by one and a half to get the U. S. dollar prices. We get eggs for 28 cents a dozen, but it is all other things that are so high. Things like sheets, shoes, clothing, etc.

We are getting along very well and are very busy. School opened the 15th, and we had our first scripture class today. The children seem to be glad to be back in school. During the holidays, some of the older children taught the younger ones in some of the things that the young ones were weak in. It has helped some of them too for, Michael came in yesterday telling me about some math the teacher had put on the board. He was the only one in his class that was able to do them. I told him that he should go and thank his older brothers here in the home, for if it had not been for their teaching him, he would not have known either. He said, "Yes, Brother Harris," and that's what he did. It made the older boys feel like they had not wasted their time, and they are beginning to see where helping one another in all ways is good. Their traditional way is to help each other, but some have gotten away from that. At one time in our country, people would band together and help each other much more than they do today. Everyone is too busy trying to get that pie in the sky, and any thing else they can lay their hands on. Surely, the day of the Lord is at hand.

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

January 8

We are earnestly praying for a genuine revival of the Holy Spirit and praise God, we begin to see a small cloud like a hand in the spiritual sky of Greece. It may become a great shower of blessing soon.

Please continue to pray for me. I need your prayers; I am confronted with a lot of problems and trials. Praise the Lord, we are more than overcomers with Him.

Winston Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

February 2

During the month of January four individuals who attend the Spring Brook Church of Christ made the good confession and were baptized: Richard and Vivian Teel and their son Chet, and James Wasson (age 10). January weather and road conditions were some hindrance to attendance; however, fifty-one were present Sunday morning, January 20. There is good interest and growing attendance in Irene's Thursday morning Bible class in the Birchwood Loop area. Work is progressing inside our new basement-

structure as time and money permit. During the past two months I have been battling an inner-ear problem (causes dizziness, nausea, weakness) Medicine which the doctor prescribed seems to be dealing only with the symptoms, so more extensive examinations may be necessary. We are thankful that Norman is back in school following the Christmas holidays, apparently stronger physically than he had been.

Dollie Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

January 4

Delores and I have made several quarts of grape jam from the bountiful crop of grapes off our two vines. I had the garden boy cut out old and dead wood from the row of young berries, put manure around them and set out another row from the extra runners. So next summer we should have some for our eating and some for jam.

Had a good crowd at our women's Bible class last night. Delores and I did some visiting Sunday afternoon. School starts on Jan. 15. Yesterday we went to town to buy school uniforms for the eight girls—two that are in high school wear dark blue and the other six at grade school wear green-checked dresses with white collars. Donald has gone back to town today to see about getting school shoes for Barbara as she is very hard to fit. The boys wear khaki shirts and shorts until they are seniors in high school, and then they require them to wear grey longs and white shirts. We have had a lot of rain the past two weeks; the sun is shining today, for which we are all thankful as it is wash day for the girls' clothes, sheets, towels, pillowcases, etc.

This is Friday, young peoples night. Delores is reminding the girls it is time to get over to the church building. Peter and I are staying here. I enjoy the hour's quiet; seventeen children can create an awful lot of noise without half trying. May each and every one of you have a happy and prosperous New Year serving our Lord.

Shichiro Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

December 17

For the past several years the work proved very unsuccessful, which made us feel despondent many a time. This last summer, after our concentrated efforts over those years, we have seen eight souls as the fruit of our feeble labor, and we have all rejoiced. Often we feel within ourselves that we are inadequate to do the Master's work, and still feel a greater sense of need for further training. I sincerely believe that the Lord does expect each of His followers to develop his or her talent to the fullest extent as described in the parable of the talents. I do want to be used more fully and more efficiently until the Lord comes.

On December 23 I have been requested by a large civic circle representative to be present as they get together to celebrate Christmas. Over 200 youngsters with many civic leaders are going

to be there to hear me preach and teach the meaning of Christmas. I am also asked to show my ventriloquism then. We are sincerely hoping that this contact will help develop itself into something that the Lord can be pleased with, such as a new mission point. I wish you to pray about it.

We are indeed thankful to God that Teruko has been active in teaching at kindergarten since April with good health. Annette is also active in witnessing for Christ among her classmates and is serving as a Sunday school teacher assisting in Sister Sugimura's class. Stephanie, now 13 years old, became a Christian last summer, and is taking a teacher training program that I teach every Sunday evening. Michael, 8 years old, is just as active as all boys are.

J. C. Shewmaker

Bulawayo, Rhodesia

January 7

At present we are making enquiries about the cheapest air routes for us to travel to the U.S. in early June. So far very little has come in toward our air tickets, but we realize everyone has been "bogged down" with Christmas festivities.

Any reservations we might make can be cancelled a few weeks before the set date. If the Lord does not see fit to provide sufficient funds, we shall carry on here gladly, knowing we are within the Father's will. It will have been twelve years since we visited children and loved ones in the U.S..

We are trying to make arrangements as far as possible for our work to be carried on in our absence, but of course, it will work quite a hardship on those willing to shoulder the work, even on a temporary basis. Usually, we advertise our Bible correspondence courses through "Rays of Light," Brother Short's paper, or some other magazine of this area, when the numbers start to decline, but we shall refrain from this so as not to have a "flush" of new ones while we are away. We may be able to get temporary help with my scripture classes in the government schools by spreading them among a number of volunteers. Of course, our visitation work, preaching, and cottage meetings will have to go. My class of young marrieds at Hillside will be arranged for. At present, I am allowing some of the class members to gain a bit of experience by occasionally taking the class. Their Bible knowledge is very limited, but when one has to teach he has just that added incentive to delve into the depths of God's word.

Our young people of the churches of Rhodesia are engaged in a "Youth Retreat" at the "Missionary Rest Home" in Burnside, Bulawayo, this week. One of our elders, Brother Tommy Smith, with others, is assisting in this.

As a preface to the opening of a new work in Bellevue, we are beginning this month Sunday school classes in the government school building in that area. This will end our 35th year on the African continent, with two previous furloughs back to the U.S.

We were at Raffingora the last Sunday of December. After last year's drought the heavy rains have been most welcome but have caused widespread damage to roads and bridges in many parts of Rhodesia. A bridge just the other side of Raffingora was torn away by the flooded river. This did not bother us as we were not going beyond Raffingora. The 200-mile round trip is more tiring than usual because of the new fuel conservation speed limit of 50 mpg. (Maximum fine for exceeding this limit is approximately U.S. \$1,600.) We returned home rejoicing, however, because there were five Christians who came forward to confess sin. Two women confessed quarreling with their husbands and a third who wanted forgiveness for violently quarreling with another who accused her of being a witch. She had visited a house where there was a sick baby. Another visitor offered her some snuff and when she refused to take it the woman accused her of being a witch and causing the baby's sickness. She became angry and they quarreled violently. What an opportunity for testimony but she had spoiled it in her anger. Two men confessed having gone back for a time into the world: one, into sins of the flesh and the other into worship of the ancestral spirits. They realized there was no life there and wanted to return to Christ. We were also introduced to two who had been baptized the week before.

Give praise to our Lord and pray for Raffingora and Brother Yesaya, the faithful leader there for many years. His employer died last month so his job and future are uncertain.

We attended the watch-night service at Arcadia and spoke at the New Year's Day service at Harare the next morning. When the invitation was given a young man came forward to accept Christ. Brother James Mushonga took his confession and recounted this story. The day before Brother Tobo had met the young man, Julius, at the bakery and said to him, "I am going to church. Won't you come with me?" But Julius replied, "No. I do not think I can go to church."

"But do you not know that the world is coming to an end and then what will you do?"

"No, this world is not coming to an end. It is only when a person dies that the world comes to an end for him. But that is all. The world is not coming to an end." But he persuaded him and he came. Several of the brethren talked with him—opening the Scriptures, explaining to him his need and the wonderful grace of God.

James then read from Romans 10 and made a beautiful exposition of the meaning of confessing Christ and living for Him while looking for the coming of the Lord. Julius then made that good confession and was baptized into Christ, while we rejoiced with the angels in heaven.

The process camera has arrived but the rest of the printing equipment may not arrive for another two or three months. Pray for its safe arrival and our use of it to His glory when it does get here.

Thomas Hartle

Cape Town, South Africa

January 22

It was a very happy new year to look forward to for our Brother John Ford, Sr., who after 23 years of earnest prayers and hope, was able along with many present to witness his dear wife Connie baptized into Christ on the evening of Dec. 24. (As was his wish when this day would come, Brother Ford baptized his wife.) Yes, that evening the angels in heaven rejoiced; we rejoiced who were present; Now our prayers are that other of their family may soon respond in obedience to the gospel of Christ in the very near future.

We have now set up a very extensive working program for 1974: cottage meetings, film strip classes, visitations, etc. Already many new homes have opened up their doors for the word (and even in the new area where we intend to erect our new church building, as soon as the plans have been approved by the Council). Some of our brethren have been "knocking on doors" with the result that two homes have requested a cottage meeting. Isn't that just wonderful? At least we have made a start in a very ripe area, Hanover Park. We thus pray that having obtained two homes for this week, that the Lord might undertake to the intent that many more doors may open up for cottage meetings.

New additions for the start of the New Year in our children's Bible school for all ages has been very encouraging. As we nurture them in the fear of the Lord, may they eventually desire to give their young lives to Jesus.

We had many visitors at our services during the holiday season which we did appreciate. Two of these were sisters from Zambia Sister Becky Remlinger and Sister Sue Russell. We indeed admire the faith, courage and sacrifice these two young sisters are making on a mission. May the Lord bless them as they strive to do His will in that part of His vineyard. We also give thanks that all our visitors arrived home safely.

"Remember the poor," Galatians 2:10. It is easy enough to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will when you yourself have warm clothes and plenty of food and medical care and a roof over your head and no worry about the rent.

But if you want them to believe you—try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will yourself!
—Thomas Merton

THE CLERGY SYSTEM

Carl Ketcherside

No class or order of men that ever appeared on earth have obtained so much influence, or acquired so complete an ascendancy over the human mind, as the clergy. The Christian clergy have exercised, for about fifteen hundred years, a sovereign dominion over the Bible, the consciences, and the religious sentiments of all nations professing Christianity. —Alexander Campbell

In this article I am going to discuss what I believe to be one of the gravest errors into which the religious world has ever fallen. So widespread has it become that it will be virtually impossible to ever overcome it. So subtle is its encroachment that even those who deny being guilty of it are nonetheless victims of its malignant influence.

I refer to the rise of the clergy system with its unwarranted and unscriptural distinction between "clergy" and "laity." Never has there been a more serious imposition upon the kingdom of heaven and never another more widely accepted. How did "the clergy" originate to first usurp the rights and privileges of all the saints, and then to claim their prerogatives as a divine right? Some assign the beginning, which ultimately resulted in "a universal father", a *papa*, or pope, to the need for a strong voice to sound out the position of orthodoxy in a time of schism and heresy.

Whatever its origin it became so powerful that, almost without exception, it became "the way of life" for religious organizations, and in the case of one, the Roman party, it became "the church" itself, to the exclusion of other communicants who bore the tax burden and picked up the tab for its maintenance. So much a part of the thought processes of our generation has it become that even those who seek to offset it are tricked into using its vocabulary, and parroting its specialized jargon.

Perhaps, as we shall later point out, there is nothing seriously wrong with the mere words clergy and laity. It is the creating of a distinction between them which is so fraught with danger. The fact is that all of God's clergy are laity, and all of God's laity are clergy. Every child of God is a priest. Every child of God is a minister. Every disciple of Jesus has entered the ministry. The word of God knows nothing of a disciple who is not a minister. So long as we pay empty lip-service to this concept while practi-

Ed. Note: The original article, in the February *Mission Messenger* is eight pages long. Here we have reprinted just a few paragraphs, chosen almost at random. To get the whole article (and the entire Feb. issue), send 10 cents to *Mission Messenger*, 139 Signal Hill Drive, St. Louis, Missouri 63121. Better yet, send \$1.00 for a whole year's subscription. That way you will get the sequel to this article in the March issue.

cing something which is exactly the opposite, we are hypocritical and acting out a sham.

Certainly those who justify their separate existence from the rest of the religious realm upon the ground that they represent a movement to restore the primitive order, ought to restore first of all the divinely revealed concept of the ministry of the saints, seeing that it was the gradual renunciation of this which resulted in the multiplication of parties from the hoary "mother of sects" upon the banks of the muddy Tiber, to the latest little group following a self-proclaimed member of the "reverend clergy."

No one has an exclusive right to engage in teaching, exhorting or admonishing the saints. Why should the talents of scores of brethren to be stifled and subjugated so that the one can grow by exercise? Shall we bind all of the members of the body but one, and let them become paralyzed through disuse? Are not all of the bodily members expected to perform the work for which they are gifted by the Lord? Are any gifts of God useless and worthless?

We are tricked into thinking that we are free from "the clergy system" because we have been clever enough to employ other terms to designate our clergy. But being a clergyman has little to do with whether "the common people" designate one by such titles as "Reverend" or "Right Reverend." One who appropriates to himself by reason of his status, the regulation and conduct of that worship which is the right of all, is a clergyman whether he admits it or not. What is the real difference in function between "the located evangelist" hired by a non-instrument Church of Christ, and the "pastor" hired by the Baptist Church a block down the street?

Not only the world which surrounds our little oasis regards us as "the clergy" when we appropriate the function of preaching, and contract to proclaim the word at so much per annum with vacation pay specified. The saints who are taxed to support the organizational complex feel the same way. It is "the minister" who has his name on the signboard out front and upon the official letterhead. He has an office in the consecrated structure, and often a secretary who alone can admit you to the inner sanctum. The very world we have created for ourselves sets him apart.

Hardly anyone ever calls the bishops to advise with them in times of marital, financial or social difficulties. The elders are not solicited to come and counsel a wayward son. If a member of the flock is hospitalized a frantic search is made to locate "the minister" to go and "have prayer." I have long been concerned with what we do when we *have* prayer.

The Christian Church has *not* been tried and found wanting—it has been found difficult, and left untried. —G. K. Chesterton

NEWS AND NOTES

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

St. Edwards, Nebr.: Here is another year's subscription to Word and Work. I do appreciate the good, plain teaching that is brought out in this little paper. —Leona Littell

Lexington, Ky.: I want to make a drive for new subscribers to the Word and Work. Brother Julius Hovan commends the W. & W. often from the pulpit here at Cramer and Hanover. And of course I heartily indorse his seeking to get people to subscribe. We shall pray for the enlarging of the paper's readers and that many may find the good reading that it contains.

The beginning date for our Teacher Training Classes has been set for February 3rd at 5 p.m. This class is for all interested in preparing themselves to teach or improving their present teaching skills. —H. N. Rutherford

Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.: The brethren here at Westside praise God for His rich blessings on our efforts. Twenty-six additions were recorded during 1973 and we have been blessed these first three weeks of 1974 with one baptism and two transfers if membership. Our building is now under construction and we are growing on all fronts. Our morning worship attendance averages are advancing in answer to much prayer and work.

We are now meeting three evenings a week for prayer and Bible study with our average running between 35 and 40. Bro. Willis Allen is conducting a Ladies' Bible Study each Wednesday morning.

Bro. and Sister Leach, formerly of the Sellersburg Church in Indiana, have recently moved to this area and are now involved in the work here.

Our thanks to all who have supported the work here and those who continue to help we appreciate very much. —Vaughn A. Reeves

Iroquois Church, Louisville, Ky.: For the first entire year in Iroquois' history, a "fulltime" preacher has been supported. All expenses paid, our treasury is in good condition, and we

have over \$4,100 in our Building Fund. The adult class has paid all the operating expenses on our bus, including the installation of a different engine.

We held our first Vacation Bible School in July, and averaged 95 for eight days. Many of these children still attend and several have been baptized. —T. Y. Clark

Jacksonville, Fla.: Southside Church is greatly encouraged over the works of faith in FLORIDA! Reports (constant) from Macclenny, Maxville, Brandon, Ft. Lauderdale keep us well posted and encouraged. We are again in the planning stage for another "DAY OF FELLOWSHIP" among the Florida churches and ask the cooperation from each. Southside has volunteered to host this year's fellowship to be held around the first of April. Plans are now being made to this end. Printed matter will be sent later.

SCC LECTURESHIP

The news section of the February Word & Work says that the SCC Lectureship Week and the PCS Spiritual Emphasis Week are the same dates. That was true, but SCC has kindly changed the dates of their lectureship.

SCC Lectureship: March 12-14.
(Tues.—Thurs.)

PCS Spiritual Emphasis Week:
March 18-22. (Mon.—Fri.)

Louisville, Ky.: A letter came last week from Bro. Bob Morrow, minister of the Church of Christ in Glenmora, Louisiana, requesting an audition tape to be used in an effort to secure time for "Words of Life" on a radio station at Oakdale, La.

WORDS OF LIFE

"Words of Life" is now heard as follows:

Each Sunday
(Central Daylight Time)
WHAS, 840 kc, 11:05 p.m.
KSYL, 970 kc, 9:00 p.m.
WFLA, 900 kc, 9:00 a.m.

Some brethren in central Louisiana

have contracted for time on another radio station to carry "Words of Life" (KREH in Oakdale). Earlier in the year, these same brethren began sponsoring the broadcast on KSYL in Alexandria. We hope and pray that this enthusiasm for getting God's message out will be contagious, and that brethren in other places will give serious consideration to sponsoring "Words of Life" in their respective areas. — Robert B. Boyd

Portland Christian School: Bro. Nathan Burks has so far recovered from injuries suffered in the bus wreck of Nov. 10 that he again meets his classes and has resumed his work in the pulpit of the Jeffersontown church. He is not completely over the effects of that experience but is carrying on faithfully for the Lord.

The Bible Institute of evening classes is worth attending. The program was given in the January Word and Work. If you have misplaced yours and are interested, call the school. 778-6114.

Bro. Earl Mullins, PCS principal for the past 10 years, recently announced some gratifying results from the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test exams taken by college-bound juniors. The scores from these tests indicate how our juniors "stack up" with their peers in high schools across the entire country. There were 13 juniors taking the tests. Of these, four were ranked in the upper 25% of the nation. In mathematics, five were in the top quarter; three of these were in the upper 7%. In English and the

verbal skills, nine were in the upper quarter, and of these, three stood in the top 10%.

SPIRITUAL EMPHASIS WEEK

The next phase of PCS's 50th anniversary is Spiritual Emphasis Week, March 18–22. Five alumni will bring spiritual messages in the All-Purpose Building on those evenings at 7:30.

Tentative roster of our speakers is: J. L. Addams, Elmer Ringer, Brent Hickman, Alex Wilson, Benny Hill.

Buechel Church: The Buechel congregation helped Bro. John Glenn to celebrate his 98th birthday on Feb. 13. A reception was held on the 10th at 5:30 p.m. Bro. Glenn made a brief talk at the devotional period; about 100 guests were present. He is much loved by all who know him.

We are requested to make known to our readers the need of a minister at the Sugar Creek church near Warsaw, Ky. A residence is provided and a small salary, with also the possibility of a teaching position in the county public school. Anyone wishing for more information may write to Michael T. Sanders, 2107 Buechel Bank Road, Louisville, 40218 or to Cecil Carrett, SCC, Winchester, Ky., 40391.

Brother Reader has been appointed a deacon at the Buechel church.

Callatin, Tenn.: There have recently been two responses to the gospel invitation. Kimberly Kedslie and Phil Hollins. We rejoice at their decisions and pray the Lord's richest blessings on both of them as they go forward in the Christian life.

Two summers ago a small team connected with Operation Mobilization went to the country of Yemen to do literature work. They got up into a small village in the interior of the country and were surprised to find a group of believers meeting together. When questioned as to how they began, they said that they had bought a Bible and begun to read it. As they studied it, they were saved and began to meet together. They were remembering the Lord in the breaking of bread, and said they were already baptized. When asked who baptized them, they said, "Oh, no one was here to baptize us, so we baptized each other."

Please pray that the "Word of God may have free course and be glorified" in the Middle East in these turbulent days.

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By Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

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(We are aware of some passages where the words and expressions used are less than pleasing to our ears. Yet, we feel that over all, the work well deserves a place in our study.)

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