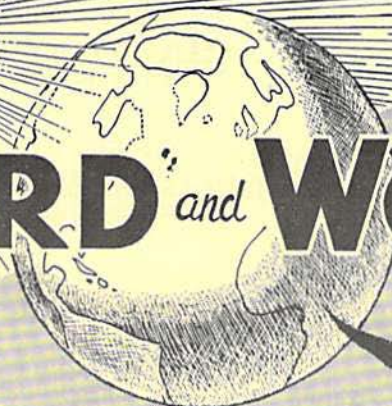


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MARCH, 1975

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GORDON R. LINSOTT, Editor—Publisher
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Published monthly except December by
THE WORD AND WORK, 2518 Portland Avenue, Louisville, Ky. 40212
Second Class Postage Paid at Louisville, Kentucky
Subscription Rate: \$2.50 per year

VOL. LXIX

MARCH, 1975

No. 3

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Talking Things Over

G. R. L.

WE ARE THE ONLY CHRISTIANS (?)

"Christians only, but not the only Christians." About 25 years ago a little booklet by this title was published by the Broadway Church of Christ in Lubbock, Texas. It was translated into other languages and thousands of copies were distributed. The booklet deplored the existence of denominations but acknowledged that there are genuine believers in such man-made organizations. The writer appealed to his readers to break away from their unbiblical organizations and be "Christians only." This is, of course, the original theme of the "Restoration Movement" of 150 years ago. Christians should not, it was said, be separated by denominational creeds and organizational walls. Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, etc. were urged to give up their distinctive names and doctrines to be "Christians only."

With a beginning like that, how is it that now the Church of Christ—heir of the "Restoration Movement"—has established for itself a reputation for exclusivism? "We are the only Christians." Whether intended or not, this is the message the general public is getting. It certainly represents the thinking of a great many Church of Christ members. To those who are happy in this rut, I have nothing to say. However, there are some congregations and a good many individuals who would consider it arrogant to say, "We are THE Church." These shrink back from consigning to hell all who are not "one of us."

THE FELLOWSHIP DILEMMA

There are two dangers here, as indicated by David Gill in the January issue of *Interest*: "We dare not be *unequally yoked* together with unbelievers, but we dare not be *unscripturally separated* from real believers either." The temptation is strong to take the easy route of one extreme or the other. To avoid the unequal yoke, all you have to do is to narrow your circle of fellowship to the extreme—"Me and my wife, my son John and his wife; we four and no more." Obviously, my circle is too tight; ideally it should include all those whom Christ has received (Rom. 14:3).

To be sure that I recognize all who have been received by the Lord, I might go to the opposite extreme and receive all who wear the "Christian" label. This is the ecumenical movement, and it is as wrong as the circle that is too small. I would almost say that

drawing the circle too large is worse than having it too small, for it brings about a conglomeration of saints and sinners, a mixture of light and darkness. This is an abhorrent thing to God, yet I see little concern about it. A strange thing I see is this—some of those churches with the most restrictive membership policies do not screen their applicants on the basis of whether or not they have been born again. If you are in agreement on certain key doctrines, you're in—whether you've been to Calvary or not. If you've had certain experiences (e.g., baptism, the gift of tongues), you're in, and they never ask if you've been redeemed. If you casually drop the names of a few brethren who are "in," you can usually ride in on their reputation, whether or not you know the Lord of glory. The result is a congregation that is both unscripturally separated from many real believers and unequally yoked with unbelievers—spiritual chaos!

This is not to say that the problem of fellowship is a simple one with neat black-and-white answers. One-to-one fellowship with a friend on the job is not the same thing as inviting him to bring a sermon on Sunday morning. Perhaps there should be no such thing as different degrees or depths of fellowship, but Romans 14:1 seems to say that circumstances may limit our ability to share freely with certain other believers. I believe that there is a "minimum" position from which fellowship may be expanded.

DAVID'S CHURCH

When someone asks Nick Russell (missionary to the West Indies) about his church affiliation, Nick answers, "I belong to David's church." Then he turns to Psalm 119:63 and reads, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee." Certainly there is a kinship of spirit between "them that fear thee," even though some of these are not yet born again. In such a relationship, the believer is aware of the need of his friend, and he uses every opportunity to point him to the Lamb of God. One thinks of Peter and Cornelius or Paul and the twelve men in Ephesus (Acts 19). When the only common ground is a concern for spiritual reality, I believe we should share that much, even with an unbeliever.

To receive one *as a brother*, one who has been purchased out of the earth by the blood of Jesus to be a worshiper of His—this is quite a different matter. We have been constituted (by the Holy Spirit) one body, and we are obligated to maintain that unity. And yet, there may be restrictions on the scope of our fellowship. Out of consideration for a brother's weakness, others may need to engage in their "doubtful disputation" when he isn't around. Two brothers who could freely share a steak dinner together would change their menu when eating with a brother whose conscience did not permit him to eat meat. So fellowship must be flexible; there must be room for give and take.

Receiving a brother into fellowship does not mean that he must (or even should) be elevated to the place of a teacher. The

elders are to act as a "filter" on the teaching that the congregation receives. A mis-taught, self-appointed "teacher" should certainly be prevented from leading the church astray—but this does not mean that he should be put out of fellowship (unless he goes around trying to create a faction). Should excommunication of an unruly Christian be necessary, we are still commanded to "count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thes. 3:15).

NO SCHISM

It is God's design "that there should be no schism in the body" (1 Cor. 12:25). The word "schism" speaks of a rent or a rip, rather than an open division or a breaking away. Note that it is "schism *in* the body," not "*from* the body." The formation of cliques—for whatever reason—encourages clique members to draw away from other believers, to some degree. This pulling away (or schism) is like the rent in a garment; it spoils the garment without destroying it. However, in real life the breach between brethren tends to continue to widen until there is complete division with no fellowship between the two parties. Add just a little arrogance and soon one group is telling the other, "We are THE church. We are the only Christians."

This is an age-old problem, and I don't pretend to have a formula that will put an end to it. A beginning point for any one of us might be an awakening to and a sharing of the concern of the Lord Jesus in His prayer of John 17. Immediately before Him loomed the cross, but He prayed for His own rather than for Himself. And of all the things He might have asked for us, one need was evidently our greatest—that we might be one. Brother, sister, let that fact sink into your heart.

DEBTS PAID BY CHRIST

C. H. Spurgeon

Just as Christ was fastened to the tree by those dreadful Roman nails, so has He nailed up all the sins of His people, and all that could be laid to their charge. I have heard that they used to drive a nail through the Bank of England notes when they were cashed; a hole was made right through the centre, and they could never be used again; and our blessed Lord has driven the nails right through the accusation that was against His people, and there you can see the handwriting hanging upon His cross. First, He blotted it out; then, He took it out of the way; and, finally, He nailed it up to His cross and there it is still, its accusing and condemning power forever gone. Now, child of God, sit down and say to yourself, "As to all the sins I have ever committed, whatever they may have been, inasmuch as I believe in Jesus, the record is crossed out; and consequently, the very parchment upon which it was written has been taken out of the way; and that I may be quite sure that an end has

been made of it, once for all, my Lord has nailed it, as a crucified thing which He has put to death with Himself upon the tree of sacrifice, and now it has no power to alarm or annoy me."

What better way can there be of abolishing a debt than by paying it? What better way can there be of putting an end to sin than by bearing the punishment which was due to sin? The punishment which was due to sin was for us to lie forever under the wrath of God; but, owing to the majesty of Christ's divine person, the suffering which we deserved to endure forever was bourne in His own body. All the wrath due to Christ's people was condensed into that one cup of which He began to drink in Gethsemane. As He put His lip to it, and tasted it, so terrible was it that it covered Him with a bloody sweat; but He never ceased to drink until He turned the chalice upside down, and not one black drop was found lingering there. At that one tremendous draught of love, the Lord had drunk damnation dry for all His people; and "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." How could there be any when Christ endured it all?

Reprint:

The Present World Crisis

R. H. Boll — 1948

Much has been said in recent days about an impending world-crisis. We have read about it in papers and news-magazines, we have heard it over and over on the radio. Nor does the report emanate from alarmists and sensationalists. It is not the foolish talk of irresponsible, uninformed talkers: it comes to us from the highest sources—from men of official position, and the leaders of our nation. Insistently and persistently we hear the note of grave warning: "*We are facing a world-crisis.*" And that inevitably would mean a crisis for our nation and our people as well.

ATOMIC POWER

Now a "crisis" is a turning-point. It means that things cannot go on as they were before. We became aware of the fact that such a point had been reached when the news of the atomic bomb and its unspeakable effect in Hiroshima and Nagasaki was first flashed to us. We knew then that a new epoch had suddenly broken in upon the world—an epoch terrible in its possibilities. Some forty years ago Sir Oliver Lodge explained the difference between molecular power, such as men had learned to employ in steam and gasoline engines, in guns and explosives; and, on the other hand, that atomic force which is locked up in every form of that mysterious thing called "matter." "If ever mankind becomes able to release atomic

power," said Sir Oliver, "they will destroy themselves. There is enough energy contained in a pebble to destroy a whole city."

It appears now that man has at last found the key with which to set free the terrific forces. The bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we are told, and even those of Bikini, were only crude, elementary things, and since then bombs have been perfected which are potentially one hundred times more powerful—bombs capable of destroying not only cities, but vast territories, and affecting in incalculable ways whole oceans and continents. All thinking people must stand aghast at such a development. The only hope for humanity and civilization would now lie in the possibility of universal friendship and good-will among the nations of the earth. That there is no prospect of such a thing in the world today, and that all signs look the other way, is now a matter of common knowledge. Some days ago Secretary Marshall pronounced the world-situation as "very, very serious." And coming from so high an official, those words meant even more than they expressed. Since then, almost daily, such like utterances have reached us. What does it mean? What will the outcome be?

CHRISTIANS FORE-WARNED

To the enlightened Christian this situation is one of deep concern indeed, but not of surprise and dismay. The word of God has fore-warned him of just such a crisis to come upon the world. Nevertheless we are concerned—naturally so—for our own fair land and country, for our nation. What will this crisis mean for us? A third world-war? And what would that third world-war be like? When we think of the new weapons, (not only of atomic, but "bacterial" warfare) the imagination is staggered at the possibilities. We have come through two world-wars. In comparison with what other nations have suffered, our country has been wonderfully spared. If there should be another world-conflict, will this nation again come out of it unscathed? It does not seem likely. Humanly speaking the outlook is very dark. Does the Word of God give us any light that may be applicable to the present world-situation and to our country in particular? The answer is yes. The Bible tells us something about it. It declares that God in time past suffered all the nations to go their own way. Because (as Paul tells us in Romans) when they knew God they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful . . . He gave them up. Three times is this statement repeated in the first chapter of Romans. But though God gave them up to walk in their own ways, He did not utterly abandon them, nor did He abdicate His throne and sovereign jurisdiction over the nations of the world. "He made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, we are told, and "determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation" (Acts 17:26). Moreover (and this is a thing many refuse to believe) He watches closely their doings. "His eyes behold, his eyelids try the children of men." And, again,, "Jehovah looketh from heaven: he beholdeth all the sons of men. From the place of his habitation he looketh forth upon all

the inhabitants of the earth, he that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their works" (Ps. 33:13-15). "Consider, ye brutish," He says, "and ye foolish, when will ye be wise? He that planteth the ear, shall he not hear? He that formeth the eye shall he not see? He that chastiseth the nations shall not be correct, even he that teacheth man knowledge?" (Ps. 94:8-10.) These words were spoken long ago, but they are just as true today as they ever were.

GOD'S JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS

From the Old Book we learn that God judges the nations (1) according to their ways; and (2) according to their light. Whether it be Egypt or Assyria or Rome or Ammon or Moab or their equivalents today—in His balances are they all weighed, and over the pages of history we see again and again the mystic handwriting, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin." The United States is not directly mentioned or spoken of in God's oracles; but in so far as she is the equivalent of the nations on which God executed judgment in ancient days, the same judgment is due for her; and in greater measure, as her light is greater. The same sins for which God punished the nations of old, will bring like retribution upon the nations of today. When we look upon the record of this people in recent years our fears for the nation's future are fully justified. A spirit of infidelity has, like death-dealing fume, poisoned much of the people. Murders, robberies, rapes, and other crimes are the common order of the day. "Juvenile delinquency" (as it is called) has risen to unprecedented magnitude. Greed and covetousness, adultery, and sexual transgressions in general, have become more and more common. A noted volume recently published by a doctor might well have portrayed the statistics of Sodom.

OUR NATION'S ONLY HOPE

Does it not seem that this nation is ripe for judgment? There is only one thing that can avert the judgment of God whether for the individual or the nation: it is *repentance*. If in view of the present emergency our nation would humble itself, as did Nineveh at the preaching of Jonah, God may turn the tide of threatening evil. But there is no prospect of such a thing. Next to that the hope for our country would hang on the question of whether there might be enough of a remnant to warrant the preservation of our country and people. If there had been as many as ten righteous persons in Sodom, the city would have been spared. If a sufficient number of righteous, Godfearing men and women be found in our nation, would not God spare it and see it once more safely through the floods that threaten to engulf it? And lastly, there are the prayers of God's faithful children. Paul writes to Timothy: "I exhort therefore, first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions, thanksgiving, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in high place, that we may live a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity . . ." The prayers of God's people avail much in their working.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

What happens when a person dies? Does he go at once to heaven, or does he have to wait until after the resurrection?

We are entirely dependent on the Bible for any knowledge of what takes place beyond death. There are no satisfactory experiments and few returnees. Man's guesses are no good, for man unaided has no knowledge of what takes place, no knowledge on which to build. The only possible guess with any validity would be one that builds on the things revealed by God, and even that must be recognized as being only an "educated guess." Such an opinion must not assume a "God said" significance. The Bible tells us some things, and we are entitled to all it says, but it does not supply all the answers to satisfy all our curiosity on this matter. We might point out, however, that what is revealed is enough to make us presently a complete man of God, completely furnished for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

It is evident that the body (normally) goes into the grave. At the return of Christ it will be resurrected (Lk. 20:27-38; John 5:28; 6:39-40,44; 11:24; Acts 24:15; 1 Cor. 15; 1 Thes. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:4-6,11-15). Those bodies may have decayed completely, leaving man unable to find the elements that made them up. They may have been blown to bits in battle, reduced to ashes by cremation, lost at sea, or such like. But the Lord is able to raise every one (cf. Rev. 20:13). All—good and bad alike, as will be seen in some of the above passages—will be raised. We are not told what form the body of the unregenerate will take, but the Christian will have a body like Jesus had after His resurrection (Phil. 3:20-21). Not all are raised at the same time, there being a separation between the first resurrection (or the resurrection of the righteous) and the resurrection of the unsaved (1 Cor. 15:22-26; Rev. 20:5-6; 11ff.), but all are raised in connection with the events of the Second Coming of Christ.

Some have supposed, therefore, that when a person dies he goes into the grave and is unconscious or unaware of the passing of time until the resurrection. This view is founded (at best) on a partial understanding of scripture. It confuses the body with the soul or spirit, and it ignores some plain passages in the Word. Man is not just a physical body; he is a triune being—body, soul, and spirit. The body does indeed go into the grave and awaits the

resurrection, but the spirit returns to God who gave it (Eccl. 12:7). At least two passages in Paul's writings make it clear that (for the Christian) the essential being, when death takes place, is at once in the presence of Christ (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 2:21-23). This state of being "with Christ," or "at home with the Lord," is clearly a conscious state, and there is a heavenly house or body provided (2 Cor. 5:1-3). In the account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) we have about the only light concerning the unregenerate. This is given in an O.T. setting, but we have no evidence that the condition of consciousness and awareness is changed in this Christian age. The rich man, while his brothers were still living on earth, was in torment. His physical body, along with Lazarus', and even Abraham's, was still on earth—in fact, is still on earth and will remain so until Christ's coming. All of these were in a conscious state, however, and aware of much that was happening.

We conclude from all the above mentioned scriptures that at death the body goes into the grave, slowly (or rapidly) returns to the dust. The spirit, or the real person, however, goes immediately either into the presence of Christ or into torment, depending on the saved or lost status of the individual. Both of these are a return to God, but for different handling. (The judgments, incidentally, are not to decide one's lost or saved status, but are for rewards for the saved, and for the unsaved a time of accounting for deeds and a vindication of God.) This state continues until the resurrection. We know little about the resurrection of the unsaved except that it will certainly happen at the end and that there is eternal punishment. For the saved, spirit and body will be reunited, and we will be then in possession of our full redemption (Rom. 8:23; 1 Thes. 5:23) and will ever be with the Lord (1 Thes. 4:17). We will be with Him whether He is in heaven, or on the earth, or on the new earth.

Our Christian loved ones, as they die, are in a state of blessedness, therefore—fully conscious, in the presence of Christ. They do not come into the fulness of God's provision, however, until we are all raised or changed at the return of Christ.

Since God wants His people to be one, what is wrong with the ecumenical movement?

It is true, of course, that God wants His people to be one. For this Jesus prayed on the night before His crucifixion (John 17). Several times in the epistles we find admonitions to Christians to be of the same mind (Rom. 12:16; 15:5-6; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8), not to be at loggerheads with each other. In First Corinthians, Paul deals very specifically with divisions among the people of God and very pointedly calls them the result of carnality (1 Cor. 3:1-3). There is no doubt that God is dishonored by many of the divisions among His people and that His gospel has often been hindered by the same. Since Christians all have the same Father and all belong to the same family, they ought to act like

it. There is a unity given by the Spirit of God which we are to give diligence to keep (Eph. 4:3), and we need not suppose this is just some vague sense of good will to other Christians. This has very practical meaning for churches in their work, worship, and witness before the world. "That the world may believe" is one of the very compelling reasons for unity between Christians.

Does it follow that the ecumenical movement is the answer to division? Sometimes, when folks put two and two together to get four, a closer look may show that one of the figures was not a two and the answer should not have been four at all. We have to be careful that we do not put two and a *minus* two together and assume the answer is four. Since the ecumenical movement advocates the getting together of all "Christians" and since all of God's people should be united, it seems to follow that we ought to be for the ecumenical movement. The fallacy is in assuming that all people who wear the name Christian or who pay lip service to the Bible are Christians. A great portion of those most active in the ecumenical movement have long since abandoned some of the very fundamental beliefs of the Christian faith. Many of these are not concerned for the honor of Christ, for the only Christ they know anything about was left in a grave somewhere nearly 2000 years ago. They do not believe in His deity. They are just out to create a massive religious movement. You see, God does want His people to be one, but He does not want His people bound up in some alliance or union with the unbelieving. To use the method of Jesus when He replied to Satan's scripture quoting by saying, "Again it is written" (Matt. 4:5-7), we point out that while unity of God's people is urged, separation from those who are not God's people is also urged (2 Cor. 6:14-18). John (2 Jn. 7-11) calls for a very rigid disassociation from certain religionists. God wants unity, but He also wants separation. Jesus accepted whatever truth the Pharisees of His day had (Matt. 23:2-3), but He did not feel compelled to start a Jewish ecumenical movement, including them and His disciples. He had some very harsh, unfriendly words for these religionists in their opposition to the truth.

The ecumenical movement has made its greatest headway among those people who have had few truly scriptural convictions to give up. If you don't believe much of anything, you do not have much of a problem in giving that up. Agreement and union has been based on, not what the scriptures say, but on the lowest common denominator, as it were. Truth is sacrificed. God wants His people united (not just thrown together in an outward union), but He wants them united around His word, born-again Spirit-indwelt believers, committed to the truth of the Bible and to the Christ of the Bible. Anything else is devilish.

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A DIVIDED CHRIST

A. W. Tozer

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance" —1 Peter 1:14

The Scriptures nowhere teach that the Person of Jesus Christ or any of the important offices which God gave Him can be divided or ignored.

But a notable heresy has come into being throughout our evangelical Christian circles: it is the widely accepted concept that we humans can choose to accept Christ only because we need Him as Savior and that we have the right to postpone our obedience to Him as Lord as long as we want to.

This concept has sprung naturally from a misunderstanding of what the Bible actually says about Christian discipleship and obedience. I confess that I was among those who preached it before I began to pray earnestly, to study diligently and to meditate with anguish over the whole matter.

I think the following is a fair statement of what I was taught in my early Christian experience and it certainly needs a lot of modifying and a great many qualifiers to save us from being in error. It is this: We are saved by accepting Christ as our Savior. We are sanctified by accepting Christ as our Lord. We may do the first without doing the second.

The truth is that salvation apart from obedience is unknown in the sacred Scriptures. Peter makes it plain that we are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience" (1 Peter 1:2).

What a tragedy that in our day we often hear the gospel appeal made on this basis: "Come to Jesus! You do not have to give up anything, alter anything, surrender anything, give back anything—just come to Him and believe in Him as Savior."

So people come and believe in the Savior. Later on in a meeting or conference they will hear another appeal: "Now that you have received Him as Savior, will you take Him as Lord?"

The fact that we hear this everywhere does not make it right. To urge men and women to believe in a divided Christ is bad teaching. No one can receive half of Christ or a third of Christ or a quarter of the Person of Christ!

I have heard well-meaning workers say, "Come and believe on the finished work." That *work* will not save you. The Bible does not tell us to believe in an office or a work, but to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, the Person who has done that work and holds those offices.

It seems most important to me that Peter speaks of his fellow Christians as "obedient children" (verse 14.) He was not giving them a command or an exhortation to be obedient. In effect he

said, "Assuming that you are believers, I therefore gather that you are also obedient. So now, as obedient children, do so-and-so."

Obedience is taught throughout the entire Bible and true obedience is one of the toughest requirements of the Christian life. Apart from obedience there can be no salvation, for salvation without obedience is a self-contradictory impossibility.

The essence of sin is rebellion against divine authority.

God said to Adam and Eve, "Thou shalt not eat of (this tree): for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Here was a divine requirement calling for obedience on the part of those who had the power of choice and will.

In spite of the strong prohibition, Adam and Eve reached out and ate the fruit, and thus they disobeyed and rebelled, bringing sin and condemnation on themselves.

Paul writes very plainly and directly in the Book of Romans about "one man's disobedience." And this is a stern word by the Holy Spirit through the apostle: by one man's disobedience came the downfall of the human race.

In John's Gospel it is very clear that sin is lawlessness, that sin is disobedience to the law of God. Paul's picture of sinners in Ephesians concludes that the people of the world are "the children of disobedience." Paul certainly means that disobedience characterizes them, conditions them, molds them. Disobedience has become a part of their nature.

All of this provides background for the great, continuing question before the human race: Who is boss? This breaks down into a series of three questions: To whom do I belong? To whom do I owe allegiance? Who has authority to require obedience of me?

Now, I suppose of all the people in the world Americans have the most difficult time in obeying anyone or anything. Americans are supposed to be sons of freedom. We ourselves were the outcropping of a revolt. We spawned a revolution, pouring the tea overboard in Boston harbor. We made speeches and said, "The sound of the clash of arms is carried on every wind that blows from the Boston Common," and finally, "Give me liberty or give me death!"

That is in the American blood and when anyone says "You owe obedience to such and such" we immediately bristle. In the natural sense we do not take kindly to the prospect of yielding obedience to anyone.

In the same sense the people of this world have a quick and ready answer to the question of ownership and obedience. Their answer is, "I belong to myself—no one has authority to require my obedience."

Our generation makes a great deal out of this; we give it the name of "individualism." On the basis of our individuality we claim the right of self-determination.

Now, if God had made us humans to be mere machines we would not have the power of self-determination. But since He made us in His own image and made us to be moral creatures He has given us that power.

I insist that we do not have the right of self-determination because God has given us the power—but not the right—to choose evil. Seeing that God is a holy God and we are moral creatures, having the power but not the right to choose evil, no man has any right to lie. We have the power to steal. I could go out and get myself a better coat than the one I own. I could slip out through a side door and get away with the coat. I have that power, but I do not have that right.

I have the power to use a knife, a razor or a gun to kill another person—but I do not have that right.

Actually, we only have the right to be good, because God is good. We only have the right to be holy, not bad. Adam and Eve had no moral right to eat of that tree of the knowledge of good and evil but they did and thereby usurped a right that was not theirs.

The poet Tennyson must have thought about this, for he wrote in his "In Memoriam": "Our wills are ours, we know not how: Our wills are ours, to make them Thine."

This mystery of man's free will is far too great for us. Tennyson said, "We know not how." But then he continues, "Our wills are ours, to make them Thine." And that is the only right we have here—to make our wills the will of God; to make the will of God our will.

We must remember that God is the sovereign and we are the creatures. He is the creator and therefore He has a right to command us. Our obligation is to obey. It is a happy obligation, I might say, for His yoke is easy and His burden is light (Matthew 11:30).

Now, I raise the point again of our human insistence that Christ may sustain a divided relationship toward us. How can we insist and teach that our Lord Jesus Christ can be our Savior without being our Lord? How can we continue to teach that we can be saved without any thought of obedience to our Sovereign?

I am convinced that when a man believes on Jesus Christ he must believe on the whole Lord Jesus Christ—not making any reservation. I believe it is wrong to look upon Jesus as a kind of divine nurse to whom we can go when sin has made us sick and, after He has helped us, say "Good-bye" and go on our own way.

Suppose I slip into a hospital and tell the staff I need a blood transfusion or perhaps an X-ray of my gallbladder. After they have given their services do I just slip out of the hospital again with a cheery "Good-bye"—as though I owe them nothing and it was kind of them to help me when I needed it?

That may sound like a grotesque concept, but it pretty well draws the picture of those who have been taught that they can use Jesus as a Savior in their time of need without owning Him as Lord and without giving Him obedience and allegiance.

Nowhere in the Bible are we ever led to believe that we can use Jesus as a Savior and not own Him as our Lord. He is the Lord, and as the Lord He seves us, because He has all of the offices of

Savior and Christ and High Priest, and He is wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. All of these are embodied in Him as Christ the Lord.

We cannot come to Jesus Christ as shrewd, clever operators, saying, "We will take this and this, but we won't take that." We do not come to Him as one who buys furniture for his house and declares, "I will take this table but I don't want that chair"—dividing it up.

No! It is either all of Christ or none of Christ.

We need to preach again a whole Christ to the world—Christ who will be Lord of all or who will not be Lord at all.

True salvation restores the right of a creator-creature relationship because it acknowledges God's right to our fellowship and communion. You see, in our time we have overemphasized the sinner's condition. We talk a lot about the woe of the sinner, his grief and the great burden he carries. He has all of this. But we forget the principal fact—the sinner is actually a rebel against properly constituted authority.

That is what makes sin *sin*. We are rebels. We are sons of disobedience. Sin is the breaking of the law and we are rebels, fugitives from the just laws of God.

Suppose a man escapes from prison. Certainly he will have grief. He is going to be in pain after bumping into logs and stones and fences as he crawls away in the dark. He is going to be hungry and cold and weary. He will be tired and cramped and cold. All of these things will happen, but they are incidental to the fact that he is a fugitive from justice and a rebel against the law.

So it is with sinners. Certainly they are heartbroken and they carry a heavy load. The Bible takes a full account of these things. But they are incidental to the fact that the reason the sinner is what he is is because he has rebelled against the law of God and he is a fugitive from divine judgment.

It is that which constitutes the nature of sin. The heavy load of misery and sadness and guilt constitutes only what crops out of the sinful nature. But the root of sin is rebellion against law, rebellion against God. Does not the sinner say, "I belong to myself—I owe allegiance to no one unless I choose to give it"? That is the essence of sin.

But, thank God, salvation reverses that and restores the former relationship, so that the first thing the returning sinner does is to confess: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants" (Luke 15:18-19).

In repentance we reverse the relationship and we fully submit to the Word of God and the will of God as obedient children.

Now the happiness of all the moral creatures lies right here—in giving obedience to God. The psalmist cried out, "Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word" (Psalm 103:20).

The angels in heaven find their complete freedom and highest

happiness in obeying the commandments of God. They do not find it a tyranny; they find it a delight.

I have been looking again into the mysteries in the first chapter of Ezekiel and I do not understand it. There are creatures with four faces and four wings, strange beings doing strange things. There are wheels and still other wheels in the middle of the wheels. Fire comes out of the north and the creatures go straight ahead, and some lower their wings and wave them. Strange, beautiful beings, all having the time of their lives, utterly, completely delighted with the presence of God and the fact that they can serve Him.

Heaven is a place of surrender to the whole will of God and it is heaven because it is such a place. Whatever else we may say of its pearly gates, its golden streets and its jasper walls, heaven is heaven because it is the world of obedient children. Heaven is heaven because children of the Most High God find they are in their normal sphere as obedient moral beings.

Hell is the world of the rebel. Jesus said there are fire and worms in hell, but that is not the reason it is hell. You might endure worms and fire, but for a moral creature to know and realize that he is where he is because he is a rebel—that is the essence of hell and judgment. It is the eternal world of all the disobedient rebels who have said, "I owe God nothing."

This is the time given us to decide. Each person makes his own decision as to the eternal world he is going to inhabit.

We cannot believe on a half-Christ. We must take Him for what He is—the anointed Savior and Lord who is King of Kings and Lord of all Lords! He would not be who He is if He saved us and called us and chose us without the understanding that He can also guide and control our lives.

Can it be that we really think we do not owe Jesus Christ our obedience? We have owed Him our obedience ever since the second we cried out to Him for salvation, and if we do not give Him that obedience, I have reason to wonder if we are really converted.

The Bible says, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Jesus means "Savior," Lord means "Sovereign," Christ means "Anointed One." The apostle, therefore, did not preach Jesus as Savior—he preached Jesus as Lord and Christ and Savior. He never divided His Person or offices.

Three times in Romans 10:9-13 the apostle called Jesus "Lord." He says that faith in the Lord Jesus plus confession of that faith to the world brings salvation to us.

Search the Scriptures. Read the New Testament. If you have been led to believe imperfectly in a divided Savior, be glad that there is still time for you to do something about it.

—In *Alliance Witness*

This is chapter 2 (condensed) in the fifth volume of the Tozer Pulpit series, released by Christian Publications, Inc., 25 So. Tenth St., Harrisburg, Pa. 17101. Price of each volume is \$3.95 plus 55c postage. Volume 5 also available in paperback under the title *I Call It Heresy*, \$1.50 plus 45c postage. 12 essays on 1st Peter.

Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. (Matthew 6:31-33 RSV)

YOUR FATHER KNOWS

John R. W. Stott

Anxiety is forbidden to the children of God. Yet how common it is! Millions of people fret and fuss and fume. Some are afraid of sickness, unemployment, disaster or death. Some make themselves sick with worry, cannot concentrate by day or sleep by night.

1. THE CHILD OF GOD IS FREED FROM ANXIETY

Three times in this passage worry is forbidden in the words 'do not be anxious' (verses 25, 31 and 34). And twice a question is asked, which shows the futility of worrying (verses 27 and 28).

First, *anxiety is incompatible with worldly wisdom*. Verse 34: 'Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day'. J. B. Phillips renders this 'One day's trouble is enough for one day', and the NEB 'each day has troubles enough of its own'. So why anticipate them? Besides, as we say in other proverbs, 'Don't worry it may never happen' and 'Fears may be liars' (they often are!). There is here, in fact, a double argument of worldly wisdom. If what we are worrying about does not happen, we have worried once for nothing; if it does happen, we have worried twice (in the anticipation and the event) instead of once. In both cases our worry has been stupid. Worry doubles your trouble. Worry is waste.

Secondly, *anxiety is incompatible with Christian faith*. This is the real argument of Jesus, and He elaborates it twice. He argues both from the greater to the lesser, and from the lesser to the greater.

Verse 25: 'Do not be anxious about your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink, nor about your body, what you shall put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?' In other words, God sustains your *life*; can you trust Him to supply the food necessary to nourish it? God sustains your *body*; can you trust Him to supply the clothes necessary to cover it? If He does the greater work, can you not trust Him to do the lesser?

Then in verses 26-31, Jesus commands us to consider both the birds and the flowers, and uses an argument from the lesser to the greater. 'Are you not much more value than they?' He asks. If then God cares for them, even for grass 'which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven,' can you trust Him to care for you who are much more precious? In a word, God is our Father. He is not the Father of birds and flowers. If He cares for them, although He is only their creator, can we not trust Him to care for us since He is our Father?

2. THE CHILD OF GOD IS NOT FREED FROM TROUBLE

God clothes the grass, but it is cut down and burned in the oven. God feeds the birds, yet Jesus knew (as we do) that many die of starvation in the winter. God protects sparrows ('not a sparrow falls to the ground without your Father'), but sparrows do fall to the ground. 'Do not be anxious about tomorrow,' Jesus says, not because trouble will not come, but because tomorrow's troubles are enough for tomorrow. It is plain, therefore that God's children suffer from adversities like the rest of men. To become a child of God is not to take out an insurance policy against misfortune. Although it is true that He feeds and clothes His children, it is also true that we are suffering today from world hunger and poverty on an unprecedented scale

Why and how, then, can we be free of anxiety if we are not free of trouble? The first answer is that we know God to be a God of providence. He has ordered life on this planet as to provide for the creatures He has made. There is food for birds and clothing for flowers. This is how He 'feeds' and 'clothes' them. He has arranged things this way and Himself controls the scientific processes which men are increasingly understanding. There is wherewithal to feed and clothe us also. The earth and the sea are well able to produce food for the whole population. Hunger and poverty are not due to God's inadequate provision, but to man's inequitable distribution. The same Jesus who says that God will feed and and clothe us, told us to feed the hungry and clothe the naked ourselves.

The second reason why we may be free from anxiety, although not free from trouble, is that this God of providence is our heavenly Father. If misfortune comes, we have the assurance that this too is within His permission. If not a sparrow falls to the ground without Him, we may be certain that not one of His children falls without Him either.

3. THE CHILD OF GOD IS NOT FREED FROM PRAYER

Some people ask why we should pray if 'your Father knows'. If He knows what we need before we ask Him, what is the point of praying? Surely prayer is superfluous, even impertinent?

But no! In the same Sermon in which Jesus tells us that our heavenly Father knows our needs, He also tells us to pray. He gives us the Lord's Prayer in which the first petition is for the very daily bread which He assures us God will give us! He adds: 'Ask, and it will be given you' (Mt. 7:7).

Being a child of God does not dispense with the need for prayer. What it does is to change the character of prayer. It makes true prayer possible, namely the prayer of a child to a heavenly Father. Since our Father knows what we need, prayer is not a means of informing Him. Since He cares about us, prayer is not a means of persuading Him. Prayer is rather an acknowledgement of our dependence on Him, a recognition that all good comes from Him, and that our expectation is from Him alone.

4. THE CHILD OF GOD IS NOT FREED FROM LABOUR

The Authorised Version translation 'take no thought for the morrow' is very misleading. The Greek means 'be not anxious'. What is prohibited is not forethought, but anxiety; not work, but worry.

Even birds (although they have no expertise in agriculture, 'they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns') yet go foraging, scavenging and hunting. Even flowers (although they have no spinning and weaving factories) draw nourishment and clothing from the soil and the sun. Thus faith is not inconsistent with the use of means. God does not cast all of us in the role of Elijah and supply food for us miraculously through ravens by the brook or an angel in the wilderness! Hudson Taylor learnt this lesson early in his missionary career. On his first voyage to China in 1853-4, while off the Welsh coast, the ship was caught in a tremendous storm. He had promised his mother that he would wear a lifebelt, but he now felt it would be dishonouring to God to do so, so gave it away when all hope of being saved had been abandoned. But he saw his mistake and wrote: 'The use of means ought not to lessen our faith in God, and our faith in God ought not to hinder our using whatever means He has given us for the accomplishment of His own purposes...'

So the Christian farmer, trusting God for a good harvest, yet ploughs and sows and reaps. A Christian, trusting God for health of body, yet goes to the doctor when he is ill. Trusting God for the necessities of life, the Christian still goes to work to earn them. And a Christian worker, trusting God for blessing, still engages in wintessing, visiting or teaching. We trust God; but we also keep our powder dry. The two are not incompatible, but belong together.

We have seen that, because our heavenly Father knows, we His children are set free from anxiety, but we are not free from trouble, prayer or work.

The fundamental distinction between the children of God and the rest of mankind is that being a child of God alters your ambition. What you 'seek' is different, what you recognize as being the supreme good. The Gentiles 'seek' material things; they give themselves up to the pursuit of treasures on earth. But not so Christian people. We pray for material necessities. We work for them also. But these things do not engross us. We do not fret and fuss about them, because God is our Father, who knows and cares, and supplies our need. Instead, we seek first God's kingdom and righteousness. We recognize that the supreme good is the establishment of His reign and the spread of His standards of justice and holiness. As we put these things first, everything else is added. It is getting his priorities right which gives the child of God his calm confidence, his freedom from anxiety.

—Used by permission

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

PROPHECY

A Panorama of Approaching Cosmic Judgment

Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

The Sixth Seal Opened

Now John looks and he sees the Lord Jesus open the sixth seal—"and lo, there was a great earth quake." I would not suggest that the earthquakes that we are having today over the world are evidences of the end of the age in which we live. It is true, however, that in almost every place in the New Testament where the future judgments of God are mentioned, reference is made to earthquakes. We have had earthquakes in different places down through the centuries, so this is not an infallible sign. It is, however, a sign of the times. The fact that we have tremendous earthquakes in various parts of the world is a reminder that God is still on the throne and He is well able to execute judgment upon the earth.

It wasn't so many years ago that we had a most remarkable earthquake—almost a picture of what we have right here—with the sun darkened and the moon as red as blood. You have perhaps read of the 1883 explosion of the island of Krakatoa, which lies between Java and Sumatra. For three days in August, as a result of a tremendous earthquake, the island practically blew up and over 36,000 people were killed. An estimated cubic mile of stones, ash, etc. was thrown into the sky, with some projectiles reaching an estimated altitude of 17 miles. Atmospheric disturbances of some months duration were set off. It was so dark that people 150 miles away had to turn on lights in the middle of the day. The noise of the explosion was heard in many places as far away as 1500 miles. The tidal wave generated traveled as far as 11,000 miles to the British Isles. Those who witnessed the effects mentioned that the moon took on a blood-red hue as a result of the volcanic ash in the air. So you see, it is entirely possible that God who made the atom is well able to produce the destruction and judgments described here in Rev. 6.

In fact it is just possible that when we read of the earthquake and the sun becoming sackcloth of hair and the moon as blood and the stars of heaven falling to earth that we are reading of some atomic explosion—some type of fission that is so remarkable that it affects the whole universe. As the figs fall to the ground when a high wind blows the tree, so the stars of heaven fall when judgment takes place. We are told by John that heaven (the sky) looked like a giant scroll—as if one came with a knife and split it down the center. It immediately rolls up, as scrolls do when they are not kept in the hands. These are going to be days of tremendous judgment upon the earth.

Now let's look and see what is happening on the earth. Would we be expecting that men would be running to the churches for pro-

tection? No, We are told that all—great and small—are trying to hide in the rocks and the mountains. The most amazing thing to me about this fact is *not* that men do not repent. Many of these have heard the gospel of Jesus Christ day in and day out. They may turn on the radio and hear the gospel, or the television, but they are absolutely unmoved. If they are not moved by the Word of God, they are not going to be moved by the judgments of God. I'm not so much surprised at that, but I am surprised that they know the exact cause of all their difficulties. They say, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb." They know the cause of wrath, and the one thing they dread more than the tumbling mountains around them is the presence of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Isn't that a remarkable thing?

Basically, the heart of man's difficulty is not that he does not have something that he can grasp intellectually; it is not because his reason has not been satisfied; it is because his heart is spiritually obtuse and stubborn and unbelieving. Man is a rebel against God; he wants to be God himself. That is his difficulty. He cannot stand the presence of God the Father; he would rather have the rocks and mountains to fall on him, than to face the presence of the everlasting God. Right in the beginning we have the clue to all of this. When man sinned in the garden in disobedience, when God came down into the garden, what did Adam do? He ran and hid himself among the bushes of the garden. Ever since that time man has been hiding from God. We see that man will continue to hide from the face of Him whom he has wronged—even if the alternative is to be covered by the tumbling rocks and mountains!

Here are men that no doubt have sneered at praying men, "What do you mean, praying to a God you cannot see?" But now these men go to prayer with a will, "Hide us from the face of the One that sits upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!" These who had thought it folly to call upon a living God now are praying to the dead rocks and the dumb mountains. Men will know a lot more about prayer in the future than they do now.

John adds, "For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?" This a pressing question. Who shall be able to stand? The Psalmist replies, "The wicked shall not stand in the judgment." Thank God that "There is therefore now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus!"

Review of AM I NOT FREE

Carl Kitzmiller

A privately printed volume entitled, "Am I Not Free?" by John S. May, of Linton, Indiana, has recently come to my attention, and I believe *Word and Work* readers should be made more aware of this help. It is a large-page, well-printed volume of 230 pages that should be a valuable help to Bible students and to Bible-class teachers. Sub-titled, "A New Testament Commentary," the volume covers all of the New Testament with comments and notes on single

verses and verse groupings, in order. At appropriate points the author has developed topical doctrinal themes. The topics are indexed in the front of the book and can easily be found for later reference. One is pleased to find well-developed scriptural notes on baptism, the Lord's supper, prophecy, the virgin birth, and many other themes of interest (over 100 in all). Priced at \$5.95, it is a book bargain in today's market.

I have only skimmed through the volume, reading at selected points; and, in any case, the reader will understand that this review does not constitute a complete endorsement of every line and comment. As the title implies and the preface more clearly indicates, the author sets forth some positions that will not please everyone in the church. In fact, one topic, perhaps the longest in the book, on the "one-man-pastor system" struck me as being unfairly overstated and considerably more dogmatic than the N. T. justifies. On the whole, however, the impression was good. It is refreshing to read a believer in the premillennial return of Christ who also holds solidly to N. T. baptism. It is refreshing also to read comments by one from a Restoration background who views baptism in perspective, in its proper relationship to faith and repentance. Much solid Bible exposition is surely to be found here.

Brother May is a capable Bible student, and he has written concisely and has put a lot of material on these pages. In many cases the reader will wish he had expanded the comments to greater length. The format and comments are designed to promote Bible study and understanding, not commentary discipleship.

I would commend Brother May for his work and recommend it to you as a valuable tool. —Carl Kitzmiller

"Be Ye Filled With the Spirit"

Frank M. Mullins, Sr.

Much of the work of God today is done in the flesh, and is but "wood, hay, and stubble" for the fire of His proving what sort it is (1Cor. 3:13). Repeating what an outgoing missionary said, "The Holy Spirit could leave the church of today and 95% of the work would continue without even noticing it." This is tragic but true. But it is nothing new. The apostle Paul dealing with this very issue was moved by the Holy Spirit to write: "Be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be ye filled with the Spirit"... To paraphrase: Do not be under the influence of fleshly incitements attempting to do the will of God (Eph. 5:17) and in the works He created for us to do, for the work of God can be accomplished only by Spirit-filled Christians. At least nine times in the book of Acts it is said the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit...some more than once...but in no two instances when they were filled did the same thing occur. Note the following passages in Acts where it is stated they were filled and the result that followed their filling—Acts 2:4—They spake with other tongues (languages —vs. 6, 11)

- Acts 4:8—Peter, being filled for the second time (Compare: Acts 2: 1, 4; 4:8) preached a simple gospel message before the Sanhedrin
- Acts 4:31—The church received boldness to declare the word of God in the face of persecution
- Acts 6:3—The seven chosen to wait on tables when trouble arose in the church in Jerusalem must be men filled with the Holy Spirit
- Acts 6:5—Stephen, one of the seven, was full of the Spirit and of faith . . . Great faith will characterize every Spirit-filled Christian
- Acts 7:55—Stephen, being filled with the Spirit, “looked stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing” there . . . Heaven will open and Jesus become real to every Spirit-filled Christian
- Acts 9:17—When Ananias baptized Paul he told Paul he would be filled with the Spirit and become a witness for Christ . . . and so will every Spirit-filled Christian
- Acts 13:9—Paul, filled with the Spirit, was able to discern the evil in Elymus, the sorcerer. The Spirit-filled Christian can discern, but the carnal Christian cannot (Compare: 1 Cor. 3:1-3; Heb. 5:13-14)
- Acts 13:52—The disciples were “filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit” . . . The Spirit-filled Christians are happy Christians.

Note carefully the varied experiences of these New Testament born-again believers when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost Peter spoke in “other tongues,” but before the Sanhedrin he spoke plainly in the language of his people and pointed them to Jesus as the only Savior (Acts 4:12)... When persecution arose in Jerusalem the church met for prayer for boldness and being filled with the Spirit they witnessed boldly under persecution...How sorely this is needed today! ...When trouble arose in the church “the apostles continued stedfastly in prayer and the ministry of the word,” while other Spirit-filled men looked after the physical needs of the Grecian widows...How tragic it is today that the preacher is called upon to be “a jack of all trades” until he has no time for prayer and ministry of the Word if he yields to the demands of the church...Stephen, filled with the Holy Spirit, ministered in the lowliest task, then saw the glory of God in heaven and Jesus at God’s right hand, and then died victoriously echoing the very Spirit of Christ on the cross, forgiving those who put him to death... Paul must be filled with the Spirit before he was to witness to the Gentiles...Paul could discern evil in Elymas, while today so many Christians are saying, “I don’t see any harm in this thing or that”... the very things that destroy spiritual life and power...they but witness against themselves they are without experience and yet carnal (Heb. 5:13-41)...The New Testament Christians found fulness of joy in their salvation and service unto God when they were filled with the Spirit, regardless of circumstances...as Paul and Silas

in the jail at Phillipi singing the praises of God in the midnight hour of shame and humiliation and even physical suffering—their joy was based on an inward source and not on outward conditions in which they found themselves.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO “BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT?”

It means just the opposite of being “filled with wine,” or that which incites the flesh. It means the flesh is crucified, the heart is surrendered to the will of God (Acts 5:32). It is not like pouring water in a glass until it is full. The Holy Spirit is a Person. One does not have just a part of this Holy Person dwelling in them and then they get more and more. The Greek word for “filled,” here is “plarou,” meaning “to be fully possessed by,” “be completely under the influence of” (Harper). Chafer defines it this way: “Not a receiving more of, but a more complete possession by”...“A more complete release to His control and will” (Sys. Th. V. 6, p.174). “BE YE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT”. It means sufficiency to do what God wants done under any circumstance.

—In *The Evangelist*

How Should We Get Missionaries? (Besides Praying)

One of the most intriguing aspects of the book of Acts is the total absence of any appeals for volunteers. I was extremely embarrassed when asked at a large convention recently to give an appeal for young people to come forward as volunteers for missions. My text, as it happened, was Acts 11:22, “They sent Barnabas.” The passage indicates that it was the congregation in Jerusalem which selected and sent one of its own most gifted members to Antioch. The Holy Spirit, the Author of Scripture, chooses to say nothing about appeals for volunteers or Barnabas’ subjective sense of call, but focuses attention upon the Jerusalem congregation’s corporate responsibility for the selecting and sending of an individual.

It is significant that in all the subsequent “sendings” of missionaries in Acts, the emphasis made by Scripture is never upon an individual volunteering or upon his own subjective sense of call, but always upon the initiative of others. Saul goes to Antioch because Barnabas fetches him there (Acts 11:25-26). It is the whole group of prophets and teachers in Antioch to whom the Holy Spirit says “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (Acts 13:1-4). Later when Barnabas and Paul parted company, we are told that Barnabas “took Mark” (15:39) and Paul “chose Silas” (15:40) “and departed, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.” Subsequently, Paul “wanted Timothy to go with him” (16:3) though we are pointedly reminded that “he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium,” so that the congregations then were consulted and involved in his going out.

Whereas we today seem to have emphasized exclusively the individual's subjective sense of a highly personal call of God, and often reinforced this by emotional appeals for individuals to volunteer, the New Testament by contrast stresses either the corporate initiative of congregations, or the informed initiative of missionaries in selecting suitable people.

—From GET INVOLVED IN MISSIONS, by Michael Griffiths, Director of the Overseas Missionary Fellowship (the former China Inland Mission)

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Shichiro Nakahara,

Shizuoka City, Japan

Dec. Newsletter

There has been a burden on our hearts and our prayer ever since last summer when we were made aware of a tremendous need and great opportunity presenting itself in Vancouver, B.C., where hundreds of Japanese-speaking people are now living, and as far as I know at present there are only two Japanese language Protestant churches (denominational) in the city. There is no Church of Christ there as yet and none of us has ever paid any attention or concern as we should. Consequently there has been no one that ever went to proclaim the Good News of salvation to them. My heart is now heavy with the burden for them. The more we pray, the heavier the burden gets . . . Humanly speaking, it is much easier for us as a family to remain at the same old place to do the work for Him if that's what I really desire, but our desire as children of God is to do the will of Him who sent His only beloved Son, even Jesus, to die for us on the Cross so that we can be what God wants us to be. My faith and understanding of the truth is just that simple.

Mac and Peggy LeDoux

Saigon, Vietnam

Jan. Circular Letter

Our hearts ache for the masses here in Vietnam who were born in time of war and have never known peace, inward or political. Not having Jesus what do they have? By contrast there are thousands here who do know the inward peace of God's cleansing and are serene even in great conflict.

The Holy Spirit is beginning by working among the foreign missionaries. There is a real movement toward repentance, confession of sin and animosities between various missionaries in all missions. There is a renewed spirit of love between them. There is an examination of attitudes, programs and priorities. Missionaries are really searching their own hearts. They are attempting to dethrone their denominational bias and return to the Bible prin-

ciple of being simply Christians. This is surely of the Holy Spirit. Pray that this revival sweeping foreign missions will touch all believers in Vietnam.

Dennis L. Allen

Hong Kong

Feb. 4, 1975

This morning Betty has gone to visit a Chinese Doctor who came out of China about two years ago and is skilled both in western medicine and acupuncture. We were introduced to her last week and were impressed with her manner and sincerity. We hope the contact will be fruitful.

Sunday night two young ladies came to visit us who came out about two years ago. We had a good opportunity to witness to them, but they apparently had heard nothing about the Lord before. It's not easy to know how to approach one who does not believe in God and who apparently has never even thought about such things. They listened attentively but only the Spirit can open their hearts. They were sent out in the countryside to work and finally decided to escape. They came at different times and each swam for 7 or 8 hours to reach Hong Kong. They came through waters where sharks are not such a menace. They had done much practicing in the river before they attempted it.

A few evenings ago we had a most refreshing experience. We had the privilege of talking to two overseas Chinese young men from the Philippines who have had two trips into China—the last one specifically to hunt for the Lord's people there. They were here in Hong Kong three months trying to get addresses, but people who did know of Christians were afraid to give them addresses. Three days before time to go they had nothing, but before they entered they had four addresses. At one place they found an old lady 89 years old. The first thing she said was, "I thought we had been forgotten." They were able to take in four Bibles. They found that some have copied out Bibles by hand. They heard one preacher speak. There was no singing. After prayer he began to talk. Did not even have a Bible, but his message was powerful and full of the Scriptures. At one place they found 500 believers. The day before they arrived five of the leaders had been arrested and paraded through the streets. Because of this things were quite tense, and they were not able to meet with the believers. Most groups were small. At another place there was an underground Bible school. They don't tell names or even place names, because it could be dangerous for the Christians. They hope to go in again this year some time. They already have five new addresses—one a lady whose picture they showed us who has contacts with ten different groups of believers. They have a real burden for these believers. They also want to encourage other Chinese Christians to go into China and take at least one Bible with them. So many think it is impossible but they have proved that it is not. Actually the Chinese constitution guarantees freedom of religion, but in actual practice it is far different.

Alvin Hobby

Livingstone, Zambia

January 1, 1975

One big item of news for December, at least for us, is that Randy Mitchell arrived on the 3rd, a 7-lb. 2-oz. boy. Mother and child are both doing well. This is the third child for Dennis and Anita, and the eighth grandchild for us.

During the time we were at Bulawayo, we visited some of the four or five congregations of the church in that area, taking part in the services as opportunities were presented, and also visited some of our old friends, including the Leonard Baileys and the W. N. Shorts, with whom we lived and worked for several years at Namwianga Mission.

After the baby arrived, I came back to Livingstone, arriving Dec. 7, leaving the Mitchells and Georgia to stay another three weeks in Rhodesia. While Anita was convalescing, Anita, Dennis and Georgia were able to visit Dennis' brother, Loy, who lives and works at Umtali; and Dennis' father, mother and oldest sister who were visiting in Rhodesia at the time.

Donald L. Harris

Salisbury, Rhodesia

January 21, 1975

I haven't written in some time for being so busy. I am to start to school at the good old age of 41 next Tuesday evening. Lord willing, I am going to study the Shona language, so that I may better serve the Lord here. The work here is a blessing in itself and we continue to love and be loved.

The expenses have grown more and more, but the Lord still provides. With three more children and keeping the whole twenty twelve months around the year instead of nine; well you can see what I mean. The prices keep going up just like everywhere else, also.

Dollie Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

January 21, 1975

I bought vegetable seeds yesterday for Langasoni to get planted for our winter garden. He is a good gardener. He and his wife do the manual work in the Home. The children each have their jobs every day. Today was wash day for Donald, Delores and me. Two showers made us hurry out and bring things in and hang them on the veranda.

Elaine Brittell

Livingstone, Zambia

January 18

Yesterday I received a telegram from Lester saying our precious Daddy passed away on the 15th. After a long stay in the hospital, we rejoice that he is now at home with Jesus and the saints of all ages—as each day he was looking forward to seeing the Savior he loved so much and served 70 years—pointing many to the Lord to live daily—as if Jesus died yesterday, was buried and risen today, and is coming tomorrow. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Ps. 116:15).

Robert L. Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

January 19, 1975

The past year, in spite of a number of problems, has been a good year. We have been given much cause to rejoice in the Lord

because of solid spiritual growth we have witnessed in a number of congregations.

The Gatooma church has completed the extension to their building. The original building that Dad had built in 1956 was becoming too small for their growing membership. They began praying and preparing to enlarge the building. As they were able they bought bricks and the necessary steel window frames. I drew the plans and helped them to mark out the foundations. The men of the church dug the foundation trenches and poured the concrete. After the foundations were poured and built up to floor level and the floor slab poured, the entire front wall and entrance were demolished so that the extension could be added and the new entrance built.

Patrick and Betty Machaya are doing a good work there at Gatooma. They recently suffered the loss of one of their twin daughters. Ruth went to be with the Lord in November. She died from complications after measles. The remaining twin is Esther.

In Mufakose I helped the men of the church to put up the necessary fencing around our church lot. The building plans have just been approved and we hope to begin building as the Lord provides the funds. Building requirements here in Salisbury (Mufakose is an African Township in Salisbury) are much more stringent than in Gatooma and costs are high. Please pray with us concerning this (\$18,000 needed) and also that the Lord will direct us to the right building contractor. It is far too large a job for me to undertake without letting the spiritual side of the work to suffer.

A new congregation was started in Gwelo last year. Gwelo is a growing town 170 miles from Salisbury. Gatooma is halfway between on the same highway. Bro. Machaya and a few men from the Gatooma church go down to Gwelo once a month to help the new church there. There are some good leaders in that new congregation and it has much potential. Your prayers will greatly assist it in realizing that potential to the glory of our Lord.

MILCAH

Mrs. Paul J. Knecht

Milcah is first mentioned (Gen. 11:29) as the daughter of Haran and wife of Nahor who was the brother of Abram whose name was changed later to Abraham. The name "Milcah" means "counsel, advice."

Josephus suggests (according to Merrill F. Unger) that she was the sister of Sarah who is identified (by Jerome and the Targum Pseudo-Jonathan) with Iscah (Gen. 11:30-31). Apparently Haran was the father, not only of Lot, but also of Milcah and Iscah (or Sarai) (Gen. 11:27, 29). Since Hebrew relationships are not always clearly defined it is possible that Sarai was Abram's niece instead of his half-sister.

Milcah is mentioned again (Gen. 22:20, 23) as having borne eight children to Nahor. One of those sons was Bethuel who be-

came the father of Rebekah. This, Unger says, was about the year 1950 B.C., or nearly 4000 years ago.

A scant record this, yet it tells us something. Milcah's name appears seven times in these few verses concerning her family. She was the daughter of Haran, wife of Nahor and mother of Bethuel (Gen. 11:29). This is unusual in the Bible records. Even in the kingly line unless there was some special reason for it to be otherwise, the kings' mothers were often named almost casually (2 Chron. 24:1; 25:1; 26:3; et al.). But the fact of Milcah's name being recorded so many times in comparison, coupled with the meaning of the name, justifies the suggestion that perhaps she was capable of wise counselling and exercised some ability to counsel or advise.

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



Viewing the News

A GROUP of people apparently based in Louisville are getting up a campaign that looks like it could be of help. They are suggesting that as long as the oil-exporting countries keep the price of oil artificially high the United States should put an export tax on wheat to even off the balance of trade—and make the other countries pay cash.

HOW WOULD YOU like for your school children to be taught the best way to “enjoy to the uttermost” the inhaling of marijuana? At least one of the textbooks objected to in West Virginia and other states goes into detail, making “pot” smoking sound like a joy the students should take part in.

“THE HIDING PLACE” is being made into a movie and is now expected to be released in most major U.S. cities by Christmas. World Wide Pictures is making the film. Tedd Smith did the original music score.

CHRISTIANS in Zaire (half of the population!) are being persecuted by

president Mobutu. He has switched Christmas to June 24, abolished Christian names, closed theological faculties, and banned religious instruction in schools. Chad's president Tombalbaye has been torturing Christians fighting “yondo” rites and it is now rumored, though doubted by most, that he has told Christians to deny there is a God or die. This does not mean the end of the Church in those areas. Three years ago a great many Burundi Christians were massacred but now Christians are projecting 93% increase in the next five years.

AN INDIANA reader has asked me to comment on Hal Lindsey's *The Late Great Planet Earth*. There isn't space to comment in detail on Lindsey's prophetic studies, but I can say I am glad he has called the attention of many people who were unaware of this that God has a plan for the world and that there are many signs of His beginning to work out His design for the end of this age. Lindsey, like so many prophetic schol-

ars, gets to the point almost of proph-ecying and certainly tries to milk too many details out of the Scrip-tures, but his general look at the fu-ture is good and fits with the events of the day. Very few people can specialize in prophecy and keep his head level like R. H. Boll did, and we might as well not expect them to

TWO CHURCH OF CHRIST col-leges in Arkansas, according to news sources, have joined with 10 other church-related colleges and universi-ties to form the Arkansas Council of Independent Colleges & Universities especially to seek financial support from the state. The two are Crow-ley's Ridge College and Harding Col-lege.

THE U.S. Court of Appeals in Boston has ordered the University of New Hampshire to permit homosexual dances and other open homosexual gatherings. This, if not overturned, could affect every university in the country.

DANGER: The Arab nations are very smartly putting out publicity pressure to make the American people aware that our country is supporting Israel and saving that that is the reason for high gasoline prices and inflation. This could lead to a strong anti-Israel and anti-Jewish feeling here. That would hasten the national suicide our leaders are heading for.

IT IS SAD to read that the British are now returning Chinese refugees to Red China. They claim there is no room for them in Hong Kong, but they ignored Taiwan's offer to take them. More than 50 were returned in the first week of December, 1974, I hear—returned to a living death or a rapid horrible death.

RELIGIOUS observers in Japan say that the changing times are turn-ing many Japanese to religious think-ing. As a consequence more are turn-ing to Christ than ever before, but many are turning back to traditional Japanese religions.

THERE ARE NOW 52 million fam-ilies in the U.S. 21 million of them bought at least one religious book last year, 9 million buying a Bible and 12 million other religious books. Incidentally, the New American Standard Version of the Bible, one of the best if not the best of the new

translations, is said to have outsold every other Bible last year.

MEMBERSHIP in the United Church of Christ dropped to 1,895,-016 last year, about an 8.3 per cent drop in 10 years.

AUTO ACCIDENTS in Ontario rose 339 per cent among 18-year-olds, 346 per cent among 19-year-olds, and 150 per cent among 20-year-olds when the legal drinking age was lowered to 18.

IT IS INTERESTING to note that Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger, who, in cooperation with Henry Kissinger, is giving away our tanks faster than we are building them (and we are under one-half strength in our best tanks) is a protege of Daniel Ellsberg, who gave the Pentagon Pa-pers to our enemies.

THE UNITED METHODIST Church was formed by the combining of the Methodists and the Evangelical United Brethren seven years ago. The combined denomination has lost mem-bers ever since then and now has fewer members than the Methodists alone did in 1965.

RELIGION REPORTERS for sec-ular newspapers, magazines and wire services each year rate the top re-ligion stories of the year. For 1974 they gave first place to the ordination of eleven women as priests in the Episcopal Church. Second place went to the troubles in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which had held first place the preceding two years. Third was the effect of Watergate on re-ligious leaders and fourth was the belated drive by evangelical religious leaders to get their institutions to join in the fight against hunger. Fifth in the list was the reactions to "The Exorcist." Other stories getting votes were: The role of religion in the text-book controversy, the persistence of the charismatic pentecostal renewal movement, the role of church leaders for and against government regimes in various places, and the Lutheran and Roman Catholic theologians de-ciding that papal primacy no longer needs to be a barrier to the reconcili-ation of those churches.

IT BEGINS to look like there is a chance of the Equal Rights Amend-ment to the U.S. constitution to be passed. It will be a sad day for

women in particular and for the country in general if this happens. Even the "liberals" who have supported the amendment are now admitting that every wife and mother will lose her right to be supported by her husband unless she has pre-school children, and she even loses the right to be supported by her husband while she has pre-school children if child care centers are available. I have mentioned in past columns a good many other rights they will lose and that rest-room facilities and other such things will no longer be separate. The fact that the promoters of the amendment were not seeking rights for women is obvious from the fact that they rejected the modification that Senator Hayden suggested when the amendment was being debated in the Senate: "The provisions of this article shall not be construed to impair any rights, benefits or exemptions conferred by law upon persons of the female sex." That modification was rejected, so the amendment will take away far more "rights" than it will give women.

LAST MONTH I mentioned that Carl McIntire surprised everyone and met the deadline for a million dollar payment on his Cape Canaveral complex. I just read that that million will enable him to keep the Shelton College and Bible-conference center portions even if he can't meet the rest of the payments. A magazine that doesn't favor McIntire says that nearly half of the million was in short-term loans, but I have not noted that in any of his own writings.

LAST DECEMBER the congregation of the 250-member University United Methodist Church of Madison, Wisconsin voted 32-19 to support the ordination bid of a self-described homo-sexual. The motion lost for lack of a two-thirds majority. Also, the thirty-member UM Council of Youth Ministry has announced it will ask the 1978 General Conference of the

denomination to amend its Book of Discipline to read: "Sex, race, marital status, or sexual orientation shall not be a bar to the ordained ministry of the United Methodist Church." And so Sodom and Gomorrah continue to develop in our country. This is only a sample of the things going on in support of this anti-Biblical trend.

SAMPLES OF A Gallup Poll survey: For the fourth straight year 40 per cent of adults attend church or synagogue in this country in a typical week; churchgoing is less frequent in West Coast states than elsewhere; young people with college backgrounds are more likely to attend than those who haven't gone to college; married persons have a better attendance record than singles.

REPORTS on South Korea are greatly in conflict. Some reports by conservative Christian leaders say that President Park is giving individual freedom and making economic progress, while other reporters speak of him as an oppressive dictator.

ARAB OIL money is being put into missions—for Islam (Mohammedanism), a very natural result since the Arabs are Moslems.

CHRISTIAN MAGAZINES are finding themselves in a tight squeeze financially. Christianity Today and Christianity Applied have both recently announced cutbacks in programs and staff. Magazines without endowments or denominational support are in need of help.

CHARLES SECREST, a Billy Jas. Hargis associate, reports that the violence in W. Va. was done against, not by, the "anti-book protesters," as the press has labeled the ones who protested against immorality and subversion in books.

MANY THANKS for your support. Keep your news and questions coming to Ernest E. Lyon, 2629 Valletta Road, Louisville, Ky. 40205.

A Church With Hundreds of Ministers

Silas Shotwell

I read last week of a Community Church in California that is experiencing a dynamic growth. In three years, its Sunday morning has risen, from 400 to 2500. There are 1900 in Sunday school, 10 children's church services, 800-900 actively engaged in some form

of weekday church activity, 21 of its young men presently studying for the ministry in one seminary alone.

What is the secret? There are no contests, gimmicks, or prizes. There is no large staff of professional promoters. The preacher preaches hour-long sermons that may tend to be a little heavy with content. The primary secret is that every member is a minister. The church is looked on as nothing more than a training place to equip believers to be full-grown saints and to send them out to exercise their spiritual gifts. Sounds frightfully Biblical, doesn't it?

The preacher, John MacArthur, noted the truth today of the Hosea passage that says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." MacArthur saw people unable to live as God intended because they didn't know who they were. He set out to preach a message of Christian identity. He also stressed that each Christian is to be perfected in study in order to be a minister. Members of the congregation were urged to study the Scriptures diligently in groups of 15 and make specific applications to local situations. When a member or group of members would bring a suggestion to the leaders, the leaders would say, "Go to it. It's your congregation—your ministry." The youth program, the benevolent, the educational program, all programs came to be directed by members.

Those of us in the Restoration movement helped to pioneer the idea that we are all kings and priests in the body of Christ. Every Christian is a minister. There is no clergy-lay distinction in the church. But in many instances we have gone the full circle, and now other groups are having to show us what God intended for the organization of the church. Let's get back to God's way.

—In Action

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Chattanooga, Tenn.: We had pretty good interest during our short meeting in November. One family which had attended is coming regularly. We could use a young man or a couple from S.C.C. to work with our young people and he could, perhaps, lead the singing. If such is interested, please contact me. —Howard Sawyer, 606 Maple Lane, Chattanooga, Tenn.

N. Wilson Burks Improved

Despite the early reports, I am doing well, and hope to be preaching very soon. Have an appointment with the Fern Creek Church of Christ Feb. 9th.

Actually, the doctors banned me from certain activities because of a poor-circulation difficulty. I must give up high school teaching, which means a sad farewell to a most enjoyable

teaching experience at Portland Christian School.

One never realizes how many friends he has until he goes through the valley of serious illness. The folks around Louisville surely must know how to pray, as do thousands everywhere, especially the Harrodsburg and Mercer County people. God bless you all and thanks so much. —N. Wilson Burks, 2121 Belmont Rd., Louisville, Ky. 40218.

Gallatin, Tenn.: Special consideration and prayer is asked regarding a decision the Winston Allens must make shortly. Their son, Norman, graduates from Bible school in LaGrange, Wyoming, May 16, and would like for them to attend the exercises. Bro. Allen's aged father in Louisville, Kentucky is becoming more and more in-

valid (he has Parkinson's disease). It has been almost five years since he has seen him or his son David, in Michigan. The question: Should they make a flying trip to the South 48 between mid-April and mid-May? The Lord will surely reveal His will. — Lester Butler, Treas. Allen Mission Fund, Gallatin Church of Christ, Gallatin, Tenn. 37068.

Louisiana Meetings To Come
March 2-7 Robert Boyd at Jennings
March 8-16 John H. Adams at Glenmora.

March 23-28 Bro. Stan at Crowley.
April 6-13 T.Y. Clark at Turkey Creek

Rangeland Church of Christ, Lou. Ky.:
"I thank God for guiding my hand that Sunday night I found you." The above statement is from a radio listener of Belvidere, Tenn., received a few days ago. We often receive comments like this, and wonder How could God guide her hand to find us if we were not on the air?

A WELCOME TO FLORIDA

Welcome, Brothers and Sisters in Christ, to FLORIDA FELLOWSHIP April 4 and 5, and to DEDICATION SERVICES, West Side Church of Christ, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, April 6th.; Morning, Afternoon and Evening Services.

Plenty of Free Lodging available. Please write for reservations to West Side Church of Christ, 11810 Northwest 19th Street, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. 33313. —Ben Rake, Jr.

Sao Paulo, Brazil: The printer did not get Bro. Boll's Book (Christ's Teaching on Prayer) off the press for the annual meeting last week. Over 1200 preachers were present. Hope to soon send you a copy. —O. S. Boyer.

Linton Church of Christ, Linton, Ind.:
In July of 1975, Richard and Janell Lewis will have been here eight years. They praise God for such a wonderful group of people with whom to work and look forward to many more blessings from the Lord. There are four deacons and three elders presently joining Brothers Oar and Lewis in cooperation, support, teaching, visiting, and prayers.

Whittier, Calif.: I enjoy getting the little paper. Has some good articles in, that I like. Am enclosing a check for \$25. I would like you to send the balance to Bro. LeDoux in Saigon, S. Vietnam when you are writing to

him. Not much, but it will help.—Marjorie Ewing.

Brandon, Fla.: The work here at Brandon is about the same. Much sickness with the flu at the present time. —Wayne Geatches.

Largo, Ind.: I really enjoy reading my issues, and when I finish, I pass it on to others, hoping they will be blessed as much as I was. Sincerely, —Pauline Coan.

Buechel Church of Christ, Ky.: We've started a choral group which meets each Wednesday evening under the direction of Ronnie Hines. Immediately after prayer service we have our practice, and at the present time we have sixteen members.

We have called an associate minister to Buechel. Bro. Terry Morrison will be the Minister in charge of the youth of the church. He and Mrs. Morrison (Colleen) are in the process of moving into their new home at Echo Valley Camp. The church has placed a very lovely mobile home on the campground and everything is being made ready for their occupancy very soon. We are looking forward to our association with Brother Morrison.

We rejoiced with Bro. John T. Glenn on the occasion of his 99th birthday. We were especially pleased for him about the write-up in the Courier-Journal in the column of Billy Reed this special occasion.

Portland Christian School

Brother Wilson Burks had been on our faculty since September and was carrying a heavy schedule of History teaching. Some weeks ago God permitted Bro. Burks to be laid aside—at least temporarily—by an attack of illness. Obviously P.C.S. needed a replacement History teacher and needed him badly—and at once! So God, Who sees the end from the beginning, intervened. "Waiting in the wings" as it were, was Bro. Bob Heid (P.C.S. graduate of 1967) who was a History major, home from graduate school for the holidays. Bob had already enrolled for his second semester in New Mexico, but, given the situation at P.C.S., was willing—yea, anxious—to teach History at his Alma Mater.

The school will be receiving a lovely cassette tape recorder as a result of the successful campaign just concluded for Campbell's Soup labels. Thanks to all of you who dictated on soup during this time!

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