

THE WORD AND WORK

"A monthly magazine set to declare the whole counsel of God."

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God's Family

W. R. H.

EDITORIAL BIAS

I read with interest the editorial of a university magazine, wherein the writer (evidently now graduating) was berating the administration in general and certain members of the faculty in particular. Perhaps he had majored in journalism and so was making one final effort to establish some sort of reputation. Whether he was trying to muster up the dissidents or just letting off steam, who would know? We are still in the wake of the editorial stampede of the 60's, when it suddenly became popular to find fault with anything old. Customs, values, realities, and standards all bore the brunt of the "now" generation's pen. What couldn't be knocked down or up-rooted was often abandoned, buried or otherwise ignored.

There is still power in the printed page. As a case in point, we can consider the Bible on the one hand, compared with modern textbooks on the other. God's word leads to faith and eternal life, while men's wisest counsels are trails to destruction. For, "there is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." So we now have Christians locked in legal battle with the state concerning which kind of books will have precedence in Christian schools.

Editors—as with preachers, teachers, and organizers—are salesmen. We need to find out what they are trying to sell us! There is an axe to grind somewhere. There is a purpose, an aim, a calculated end toward which the writing is dedicated. Let's look at some of the goals that inspire writers today.

(1) To give a platform for voicing the opposition. This is not all bad, even in religious papers. This is a help for that "cause that lacks assistance" and can be light shining in a dark place.

(2) To expose error, prejudice, ignorance or vice, with a purpose of giving the reader enough information to make a judicious choice. This kind of writing grapples with

“the wrong that needs resistance.”

(3) To encourage the reader in “forgetting the things that are behind” (or even the *present* besetting sin) and making inquiry and preparation for what is ahead. In so doing, men’s thoughts are set on things that are above, and they are left better prepared for “the future in the distance.”

(4) To supply a steady flow of healthful meditative stimuli. “As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” If we can exhort one another to love and good works, that is surely some of “the good that we can do.”

Of course, there can also be evil purposes in writing. These include: trying simply to be men-pleasers; to antagonize, intimidate or coerce; to sway by blatant misrepresentations; to destroy by innuendo; to raise a smoke-screen. Such tactics are common in the world and can easily infiltrate the church. Let us pray for dedicated and consecrated writers.

Jack Blaes preaches at the Antioch Church, Frankfort, Ky. and teaches at the Portland Christian School in Louisville.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE SUPREME COURT decides a church can run a school. The ruling settled a two-year-old controversy between the New Testament Baptist Church of Concord and the city of Concord. The court held that the five-day-a-week school “is a facility usually connected with a church” and can continue to operate. “While every church may not ‘usually’ have a full-time school associated with it, we hold that the Heritage Christian School is a proper permitted use connected with, and is part of, the New Testament Baptist Church,” said the Supreme Court.

The church argued that no special exemption under the Concord Zoning ordinance was in fact needed because the school was under the ordinance

allowing “facilities usually connected with a church.” The court recognized that the parents and members of the congregation “believe as a matter of religious conviction that their children should not be taught secular humanism in the public schools but receive a Christian education.”

Citing colonial America when the school house “was generally near the church and was regarded as a sort of annex to it” as well as schools of the early Quakers, the Justices said a school “may be considered as an integral and inseparable part of a church.”

SOMETIMES WE SEE THE TERM CHRISTIAN HUMANISM used in connection with some sort of Christian service group. “Christian humanism” is a misnomer because humanism de-

stroys whatever there may be of "Christian" as it may be used in that connection. Humanism is defined as "a mode of thought or action centering upon distinctively human interests or ideals." It denies the existence of God, and is militantly set to destroy from the minds of men any concept of anything greater than man himself. Call it what you will, secular or Christian, it is one and the same. And many churches are teaching it as well as the public schools.

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A SYNDICATED COLUMNIST, PATRICK BUCHANAN, tells of two Washington, D. C., schools. School A is an affluent institution. Some \$2000 is expended per year per pupil. Teacher's salaries start just under \$12,000 and rise to \$23,000. Classroom size averages 25 pupils. The academic performance here is dismal, however. By grade eight, children are reading, writing and spelling at a mid-fifth-grade level.

School B is less prosperous. Only \$500 per pupil is spent annually. They pay their teachers from \$4325 to a maximum of \$11,000. Each classroom has from three to 13 more pupils than School A. The building was erected in the administration of William Howard Taft. But the eighth-grade level of achievement of pupils in School B lags only six months behind the nation's average. This is extraordinary for a D.C. grammar school. School B is Our Lady of Perpetual Help, largest parochial school in Washington, D. C. Fifteen percent of its pupils are welfare children, 42 percent are non-Catholic, 50 percent are eligible for federal aid, and 99.4 percent are black.

All children are required to wear uniforms; the boys must wear ties. Unruly children are sometimes spanked. The utterly undisciplined are expelled. Each child is required to do two hours of homework a night. Daily religion classes and daily mass are required of all students, including non-Catholics. Columbia Teachers College, please take note.

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A PAIR OF LIBERALS, Sens. Joseph Biden (D-Del.), and Thomas Eagleton (D-Mo.) co-authored an anti-busing measure which has been signed into law. This legislation prohibits

HEW from using federal funds "to require, directly or indirectly, the transportation of any student to a school other than the school which is nearest the student's home, except for a student requiring special education." This law is not an indication that segregation is desirable, but it is a clear signal that growing numbers of Americans—both black and white—believe that busing has been a dismal failure.

On a recent edition of "Tony Brown's Journal," rated as the No. 1 black public affairs program on public TV, Brown, who happens to be black, labeled forced busing "a solution in search of acceptance." Following are the results of a poll he had taken among 100 black leaders.

—60 percent do not believe that busing is effective in achieving school desegregation.

—66 percent feel that busing has a negative psychological effect on black children.

—93 percent do not believe that school desegregation via busing will automatically improve the quality of education for all students.

—68 percent do not believe that black students' self-esteem and aspirations will improve when attending a mostly white school.

—91 percent feel that black teachers serve as inspiring adult role models for black pupils, and

—75 percent answered "no" to the question: "Are separate schools necessarily equal?"

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MORE ERA SHENANIGANS. The national ERAmerica took out a full-page ad in the New York Times denouncing this "vocal minority of extremists who deal in deception." Among those claims which the ad says are "ludicrous" is the "scare tactic" charge that the ERA would "cause women to be drafted." When asked for the name of a constitutional expert who would back up the assertions in the organization's ad, John Lofton, Jr. was referred by the public relations director, Kathleen Currie to Thomas Emerson, Lines professor of law emeritus at the Yale University Law school. According to Ms. Currie, Emerson is "the best" legal authority on the ERA.

When faced with the statement: The ERA will NOT cause women to be drafted, Emerson said: "This is wrong. The ERA will cause women to be drafted." He explained: "Without ERA, in the time of war, if the draft is reinstated, the Congress could specifically exempt women from conscription because of their sex. However, if the ERA becomes law, and war breaks out, and the draft is reinstated, such a sexual exemption would be illegal. Thus, the ERA would cause women to be drafted." The best legal authority on the ERA went so far as to say that if the ERA becomes law, those women who are drafted could be forced to fight alongside men in the combat zone. With the ERA in effect, women could not be limited to noncombatant roles, because this would be sex-discrimination, and therefore illegal."

WHEN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MOVES TO "HELP." After that we really need help. A case in point. Since the Employee Retirement Income Security Act was enacted in 1974, according to Senator Robert Dole (R. Kan.), "Federal regulations have increased to the point where they must be administered by three government agencies." Jerome Kurtz, I.R.S. Commissioner, informed a congressional Subcommittee not long ago that perhaps 30 percent of the nation's 500,000 private pension plans have gone out of business since E.R. I.S.A. came into being allegedly to "protect" worker retirements.

TREASURY SECRETARY MICHAEL BLUMENTHAL stated recently, "The Carter Administration has about reached the limit of what it can do to make business happy . . . There is nothing we can do. I can't explain

the stock market. Or course, I am concerned if the stock market goes down, but there's nothing more we can do." Congressman Hagedorn offers some advice and suggestions to improve the economy which he hopes the bewildered secretary will consider. He proposes reducing Budget deficits expected to exceed \$60 billion in both fiscal 1978 and 79 with estimates of the budget reaching as high as \$100 billion. In short, he refers the Administration to the tried and true American way of letting private citizens support themselves without government handouts and subsidies, and reducing the government to doing only those things that free and energetic men are not able to do as individuals.

RED CHINA MAKES HER PLANS KNOWN. A few months ago Huang Hua, foreign minister of the Peiping regime, delivered a long speech in which he detailed Red China's plans to increase trade, cultural, scientific, and technical exchanges with the United States. "We are discussing trade with the U.S. with a view to expanding it and opening the door wider to take full advantage of the opportunities it presents to build socialism at home and abroad. The U.S. is a developed capitalist nation, whose industrial workers are very powerful and constitute a vast reservoir of strength for revolution. By means of such exchanges, Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tsetung's thoughts will be propagated there, and like seeds, will take hold, grow and flourish. This would accelerate the nurturing of the domestic revolutionary movement in the U.S. By opening the door of China-U.S. relations, we are opening the door which leads to revolution in the U.S."

DALLAS PROPHECY CONFERENCE

David Reagan

An unusual prophecy conference was held in April at the Central Church of Christ in Irving, Texas.

The first unusual feature of the conference is that it featured speakers with a variety of prophetic viewpoints. The second thing that made it unusual is that the conference was hosted by a main-

line congregation whose membership is decidedly amillennial in outlook.

The conference began with a presentation by Dr. Leroy Garrett of Denton, Texas. Dr. Garrett is the editor of *Restoration Review* and is considered one of the foremost historians of the Restoration Movement. He is currently writing a history of the Movement for College Press.

Dr. Garrett's topic was "The Prophetic Viewpoints of the Early Leaders of the Restoration Movement." He emphasized that prophecy was not one of the burning issues or concerns of the first generation of Restoration leaders. Alexander Campbell wrote more on the topic than anyone, and his 26 articles published in the *Millennial Harbinger* in the 1840's were written in response to the spreading popularity of the Miller Movement which looked for the world to end in 1843. Campbell, like all the early Restoration leaders, was a postmillennialist who expected the new American nation to provide the perfect atmosphere for the triumph of the Gospel and the spread of the kingdom of the church all over the world. After a one thousand year reign of the church, the Lord would return for judgment.

Dr. Garrett took delight in pointing out that the first of the early Restoration leaders to take a different millennial viewpoint was the second generation leader, Moses Lard. Although Lard's hard-line conservatism is greatly admired today by the mainline, amill churches, Lard was a thorough-going premillennialist—a fact the mainline churches would like to forget.

The second speaker was Mr. Johnny Ramsey, pulpit minister for the Southwest Church of Christ in Austin, Texas. Although Mr. Ramsey was asked to speak on "Why I Have an Amillennial Viewpoint," he refused to do so, preferring instead to entitle his talk "Why I Believe the Premillennial Viewpoint is Wrong."

In his attack on premillennialism, Mr. Ramsey indiscriminately lumped together the historic premillennial viewpoint with the Dispensational premillennial viewpoint which was developed in the 19th century. Thus, he zeroed-in on the "heresy" of premillennial teaching that the church is not the kingdom and that the church was an after-thought of God, established only as an "emergency measure" when the Jews rejected Jesus' offer of the kingdom. The result was that much of what Mr. Ramsey had to say was irrelevant since the premill Churches of Christ adhere to historic premillennialism (the premillennialism of the first century church fathers) and not the Dispensational variety that was developed by John Darby and C. I. Scofield in the 19th century.

During the question and answer period that followed his presentation, Mr. Ramsey was asked point-blank if a premillennialist could be saved. He responded by saying that *he* could not be

saved if he were a premillennialist, because he knew the doctrine was wrong, and one could not be saved if he were "in error." This response seemed to raise more questions about Mr. Ramsey's concept of salvation than his concept of prophetic interpretation.

The featured speaker at lunch was Mr. Robert Boyd, minister for the Rangeland Church of Christ in Louisville, Kentucky, and well-known speaker for the radio program, "Words of Life." Mr. Boyd's topic was "Bible Prophecy and Current Events." His presentation was followed by some very tough questioning concerning the meaning and fulfillment of specific Old Testament prophecies, particularly Jeremiah 31.

The first afternoon speaker was Ben Rake, Jr., minister of the Piedmont Church of Christ in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Rake's talk was entitled "Why I Believe the Premillennial Viewpoint is Correct." He emphasized the logic and simplicity of the literal approach to Biblical interpretation and the significance of believing that God will literally keep His promises which He has made in prophecy.

The final speaker of the day was Dr. David Reagan, the pulpit minister for the host congregation. Dr. Reagan's talk was entitled "Why I Have an Eclectic View of Bible Prophecy." He surveyed the various millennial viewpoints, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses, and concluded with a plea for unity in which he emphasized that there was no reason for Christians to draw lines of fellowship over differences in prophetic interpretation.

The conference was well attended by more than 150 people from a five state area. One of the highlights was a fascinating display of prophecy charts drawn in the 1920's by the great Dispensational author and illustrator, Clarence Larkin. The charts were giant-sized, some measuring as large as 6' by 12'. There were also extensive displays of prophecy books written from very conceivable viewpoint.

All the presentations were taped, including the question and answer periods which followed each talk. The tapes may be purchased for \$1.75 each, or all five bound in an attractive tape album may be purchased for \$10.00. Send orders to Tape Ministry, Central Church of Christ, 1710 W. Airport Freeway, Irving, Texas 75062. Make checks payable to The Central Church of Christ.

NOTE: A similar conference featuring Dr. Leroy Garrett and Dr. David Reagan, as well as other speakers, has been scheduled for Amite, Louisiana, for the weekend of June 9 & 10. The conference is being coordinated by George Fulda.

Editor's note: The Louisville area brethren have just recently had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with bro. Reagan. He is a recent subscriber to *Word and Work* and came to Winchester, Ky. to give the Commencement address at Southeastern Christian College early in May. He had earlier, attended the Spring Lecture-series there, and addressed the students and then the entire group.

We hope to have an article from his pen in our next issue.

Carl Kitzmiller is a Minister in Oakdale, Louisiana.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

Why do we use the New Testament instead of the Old Testament when discussing questions such as how to be saved?

This question comes from a young person who has “grown up” in the church and who knows that in his experience a good bit of emphasis is put on having a N.T. answer to many questions. However, when challenged during a religious discussion as to why a N.T. passage was any more significant than an O.T. one, he found himself at a loss to explain. Perhaps he has not used many of his opportunities for growth and for being informed in this matter, but we suspect there are great numbers of older people who if challenged could not give a satisfactory answer. They have accepted a practice more on the basis of custom than from understanding the reason.

First, let it be pointed out that it is in the matter of the covenants that the N.T. takes supremacy over the Old, not in all matters. All of the Bible is inspired, and in many ways the O.T. is of great importance. The history found in the O.T. is true and reliable. We have information given there which is found nowhere else. The *prophecy* which is found therein is of great interest, both as to that which has been fulfilled and that which is yet to be fulfilled. What God has spoken is certain of fulfilment. The revelation of God's character as found in the O.T. is never changed by the N.T., because God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The O.T. is rich in *examples* of God's dealings with mankind. The N.T. often *alludes to or quotes* much given in the Old, so that a good understanding of the New requires an understanding of the Old. No one should suppose that the O.T. is to be written off, ignored, left without study, or even despised, as some have done. It belongs to God's inspired record. But while all of the Bible is God's word, we have to make distinctions as to what part directly applies to us.

The writer was most blessed of the Lord in that a small booklet was put in his hands about the time he became a Christian. This was to greatly help in sorting out the very matters which are of a concern to the questioner. The booklet was “How to Understand and Apply the Bible,” by R. H. Boll. I had done a good bit of Bible reading but knew very little about the basic divisions of the Bible. This helped

me to some basic knowledge which was taken for granted as being understood by most of the preachers and much of the preaching I had heard. The booklet is still most timely and relevant and is available from the publisher of this magazine. In developing the answer to this question I will quote several times from the booklet.

Suppose we begin reading the Bible and, as we do with other books we begin at the first to read through it. We will find Genesis, the first book, very interesting, but if we are trying to discover how to be saved or how to worship God we will be puzzled. As Bro. Boll says:

“Has God told me here how to serve and worship Him? Shall I offer up animals upon an altar like Abel and Noah? Shall I circumcise my children like Abraham? If not, why not? Or, if yes, why is there not some clear indication that this is applicable to me, and that I am to follow it?”

You are ready to see a second important truth; namely, that although all the Bible is God's word, some distinction must be made between what directly applies to you and what does not. Looking over the index you become aware that the Bible is really a library—not simply one book, but a collection of books, sixty-six in number. These were written by the inspiration of God, by different men in different portions, during a period of 1,600 years, to different peoples in different languages (the Old Testament in Hebrew and Aramaic, the New in Greek), and covering in extent of its application all time, from the dawn of creation to the ‘ages of ages.’ Different methods of worship and service, arranged by Jehovah, succeed one another. We would like to go patiently from book to book and watch the development of God's plan until it reaches us—but is there no readier way for me to learn God's will concerning me today? The study of all else in the Bible must be profitable, but tell us how to be saved now, and then at our leisure we will return to trace the paths of God in past and future.”

A key verse is Heb. 1:1,2. Here is a divine division of the Bible. Here we discover that in these last days God has spoken to us by His Son. A little further digging will show that it is the New Testament which reveals the Son. The first four books of the N.T. give His earthly story. The remainder of the N.T. gives us his teachings as it has been passed on to us by His apostles (Matt. 28:20). Of Christ, the Son, the Father said: “Hear ye Him!” (Lk.9:35). This was said in the presence of Moses and Elijah, representatives of the O.T. Not Moses, but Christ. Quoting again from “How to Understand and Apply the Bible”:

“This one, first, simple rule God gave for the division of His word (Heb. 1:1,2) will, if kept in mind and faithfully applied, solve a lot of problems and correct many of the errors of the discordant religious doctrines and practices today. When any question pertaining to our duty toward God in worship or service arises, Jesus must be consulted. Moses cannot settle it, the prophets have not told us. They spake to the fathers. But unto us God spoke through His Son.”

Most of the O.T. is taken up with material dealing with the Israelites and the covenant God made with them at Mt. Sinai. Jeremiah, one of the prophets of the O.T., spoke of a new covenant Jehovah would make (Jer. 31:31ff). In the N.T. book of Hebrews we have these covenants discussed (Heb. 8 & 9). The covenant at

Sinai is referred to as the first covenant and the one established by Christ as the second or as the new. With the death of Christ the first covenant was removed (Heb. 10:9; Gal. 4:21-31; Col. 2:14) and the new covenant came into force. Quoting again:

"But now, this death having taken place, and Jesus risen from the dead, may we not look for the announcement of the new covenant? Even so. Jesus after his resurrection, met His disciples in Galilee, and said unto them. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.' Matt. 28:18-20. It is now no longer 'what Moses commanded' but 'what I have commanded.' He is the sole spokesman of God now. Once those who would enter into covenant relationship with God had to come to Moses, for he was the mediator of the old covenant; but now Jesus is the Mediator of the New Covenant, and no one cometh unto the Father but through Him. (John 14:6)."

". . . Attention is now called to the fact that this is the announcement of the new order, the new covenant, under which we must be saved, which came subsequent to the death and resurrection of the Lord. This is the 'continental divide' of the Bible, the watershed between the two covenants."

As we become more familiar with the Bible we will realize that much evidence is to be found therein that the multitude of laws relating to atonement for sin and worship as given in the O.T. have been superseded by the great atonement made by Christ in His death. This forever freed us of the need of animal sacrifices, the need for a special priesthood, and made obsolete many acts of worship as taught in the O.T. The basis of salvation is no longer human works and animal sacrifices. The N.T. contrasts the works of merit of the O.T. with the salvation by grace through faith under the new covenant. So the distinction between the two covenants is seen in the N.T., leaving no doubt that Christ fulfilled the old covenant (Matt. 5:17-19) and took it away, giving the new covenant to those who have lived since that time. This is why, therefore, in matters of salvation, worship, our relationship with God and what He requires in obedience, we are careful to discern N.T. teaching.

Because God's character does not change, many moral regulations of the O.T. remain virtually the same in the New. Even some of these, however, were given new meaning by Jesus. Because so much about Jehovah has been revealed in the O.T. it is an important source of knowledge about Him. It is important, therefore, that we do not reject the O.T. or fail to study it. It is at the same time very important that we learn to "rightly divide the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). For any who need further help in understanding these issues, we cannot recommend the little booklet from which we have quoted too highly. You may write me for a free copy or order it from the Word and Work bookstore.

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



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“YOU ARE IN DEBT”

“I am debtor both to Greeks and to Barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish” (Romans 1:14). Later on in Romans we will read Paul’s urging Christians to “owe no man anything save to love one another.” Love is the one debt that can never be “paid off” but one that you can keep up on the payments due if you will simply allow, in Paul’s words in chapter five, the Holy Spirit to “shed abroad . . . the love of God” in your heart. Here in verse fourteen of chapter one Paul recognized that there was another kind of debt that he owed, a debt that each one of us should take on since we have been given the same gospel that Paul was given and it was not given for us alone but to be shared with others. His debt, of course, was to make known the wonderful gospel, or good news, of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection that man might be saved from eternal death. This is really a part of that debt of love we owe.

Now note first what Paul meant when he said, “I am debtor.” He meant, according to the Greek word he chose, that he was held by an obligation, bound by a duty. This sets Paul very much aside from the prevailing philosophy of our day that we are born with “rights” instead of obligations, that we are owed something by “society” instead of having a duty to perform toward others. The McGuffey readers with their morals drawn from stories are derided and the philosophy of “doing your own thing” or doing whatever feels good, tastes good, or otherwise pleases ourselves, has been pushed till most people feel their only debt is to themselves.

My life is not my own; it belongs to God Who made me and paid a tremendous price for me—the blood of His only begotten Son. My life should be dedicated to Him, offered to Him and Paul will elaborate on that in later chapters. But my life not only belongs to God, it is to be used for the good of other men. This is the point that Paul is making here, that God has given us something of tremendous value and that can and should be shared with others without losing any of it for ourselves.

Note also then the classifications of people that Paul felt he was obligated to—to sum them up, it is to every man living, for he divides all men into two classifications, the Greeks and the Barbarians, and the wise and the foolish. The “Greeks” were the cultured—those who spoke the language that was the most universal one and that originated where learning, philosophy, and culture were highly regarded. The rest of the people of the world were considered barbarians by comparison. Maybe you don’t like this classification, so Paul gives another one—the “wise” or intelligent and the “foolish” or unintelligent, a very obvious double classification that includes everyone. Paul stopped there but he could have classified us by color, by race, by sex (or by any of the myriads of classifications that men use today). He simply wanted to emphasize that since God had given the wonderful gospel to him it was his duty to bring that matchless message to every man that he could possibly reach, no matter how others might look on the message or the ones to whom he was taking it.

As I said earlier, we all have that debt, but doesn’t it appall you to find how few Christians recognize that indebtedness, or, at least, how few make any move toward paying that debt? The average Christian has no concept any more that we have a “Way” of life and has reduced his religious life to attending public church services as a spectator. A result of this, by the way, is showing up in our day in decreased attendance in church services and increased attendance in more exciting spectator sports—basketball, football, etc.

But the fact that most Christians have no feeling of indebtedness or at least no real concept of paying that debt does not excuse you and me from telling the story to our neighbors instead of searching for a reason not to tell. Let us be like Paul who said, “To me to live is Christ” (Philippians 1:21); “I labor, striving according to Christ’s working in me mightily” (Col. 1:29); “I am ready to spend and to be spent for your souls” (2 Cor. 12:15). Let us pay our debt, let us tell the gospel to the whole world, starting in our own neighborhoods.

WE CAN’T BEAT THE SYSTEM

Charles E. Kranz

One definition of the word system is “an orderly collection of rules and principles.” I like that definition and this article is based on that meaning as it applies to God’s system. As to the word “beat,” our discussion will be based on the two-fold meaning of either to win against or to improve upon.

Thus, as more fully expressed, our subject is **WE CAN’T WIN AGAINST OR IMPROVE UPON GOD’S ORDERLY COLLECTION OF RULES AND PRINCIPLES.**

Trying to beat the system is nothing new. Adam and Eve tried

it. My, how they lost! Further, their loss has hurt every man, woman and child, and necessitated the crucifixion of God's son. A few of the other examples are Cain, the children of Israel, king Saul, most of the kings of Israel, some kings of Judah, and the Jews of this dispensation. Naaman, the leper, wanted to beat the system but was persuaded not to try.

But you say, what about today? My answer. There are more people who profess to be Christians who are trying to beat the system than there are those who are supporting it.

Part of God's system for being saved (popularly called today as being born again) is baptism. Yet most people are trying to beat this part of the system. Rarely do those who discuss and write on being born again include baptism. One noted evangelist stated on television that baptism is not a part of being saved. He and others teach that he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized. One lady wrote that she had been saved in a shower. By a stretch of the imagination, I more nearly would have believed her had she been in a bath tub. At least she got wet, which is more than most do who claim to be born again. Maybe I shouldn't be so glib about a person whose soul is at stake.

The following is from the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. Question: "I have read so much lately about being a born again Christian. Can you tell me how I can accept Christ into my life?" In answer the evangelist quotes John 3:16. Second he says to repent and confess sins to God. Next he says to commit yourself to Christ. Finally he says, "When you do this, God accepts you and adopts you as His child. He forgives you and you become part of His family. You have been born again!"

If that isn't enough, we generally find these same people trying to beat other parts of God's system. Remember, we are concerned not only with rules but also with principles. Briefly, these include, but are not limited to, (1) calling the bride of Christ by other than His or His Father's name (how many husbands would permit this?), (2) worshipping with the instrument (orthodox Jews today do not worship with the instrument and neither do "orthodox" Christians), (3) tithing, instead of God's system of freewill laying by in store as we have prospered, not grudgingly but cheerfully, (4) seldom remembering Jesus in partaking of the Lord's Supper, (5) praying to other than God, our Father, (6) worshipping upon week-days instead of upon the first day of the week, the Lord's day, (7) calling church leaders not only by unscriptural titles, but erroneously by scriptural titles, (8) organising denominations to include layer upon layer of hierarchy over groups of churches in substitution for elders of individual churches, and (9) teaching once saved always saved.

Why do so many try to beat the system? We will limit our answer to such things as not knowing the Scriptures, failing to search the Scriptures to see if the truth is being taught, rebellion against authority, unwillingness to conform to standards, going along with

the crowd, popularity, a holier-than-thou attitude, and timidity in standing up for the system.

How do I know we can't beat the system? For brevity, only a few of many Scriptures are quoted. You will note the central theme in these Scriptures is outright disobedience.

1 Sam. 15:22: Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

Matt. 7:21: Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matt. 7:26: And every one that heareth these words of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a man who built his house upon the sand.

Matt. 15:9: But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines, the precepts of men.

Acts 26:14: Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the goad.

Bible Exposition -- Matthew

Matthew 24:29-31

The Second Advent,--The Hope of the World

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

Introduction

Our society is characterized by the absence of hope and the presence of fear. Stephen Travis, the author of a fairly recent book called *The Jesus Hope*, has written, " 'But there's got to be hope,' cries Mary in the film *On the Beach*. A nuclear war has wiped out civilization in the northern hemisphere, and radioactive dust is drifting southwards, inexorably dealing out to all men radiation sickness, death and oblivion. The film tells how Mary, her husband Peter, and other Australians on the coast of Victoria live out these last doom-filled months before the End. One comforts herself in alcohol, others take reckless risks to win a motor race. Some pack as much pleasure-seeking into the time as they can. Others continue their daily routine as before, resigned to the inevitable. And open-air religious crusades hold the attention of thousands. For Mary's sake, Peter plants trees and buys a rustic garden seat in a charade of hope that somehow there will be a future for themselves and their baby Jennifer. 'There's got to be hope.' But if there isn't, what then?" That's not a bad question, "If there is no hope, what then?" Speaking of the resurrection hope, the Apostle Paul answered the basic point of the question in this way, "If, after the manner of men, I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what doth it profit me, if the dead rise not? Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15:32). In other words, if there is no hope, there is only doom.

We do have the prophets of doom with us, too. We remember George Orwell's 1984, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, and others. But, of course, it may be said, "We've been saying the world is getting worse for centuries, and it's still with us." That's true. Aristotle long before the time of Christ said, "When I look at the younger generation, I despair of the future civilization." What would he have said of our younger generation? At the end of the nineteenth century the Duke of Wellington said, "I thank God I shall be spared the consummation of ruin that is gathering around us." The facts are that our Western world has gotten better and worse down through the centuries. Many things are better, if we speak materialistically, and some things are worse. We've had Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin, and we've had Hiroshima and Nagasaki,—and, some would add, the Panama Canal!

In spite of this tendency to advance and retreat down through the ages of the past, it is fair, I believe, to say that we are living today in an age that has good reason to fear the future. Let me list some things. In the first place, we are still involved in an arms race, storing up great masses of military equipment and arms for the possibility of war. I, for one, think this is necessary, but the situation is still a perilous one.

In the second place, there is a population crisis. The world's population is now doubling every thirty-five years, even though it took two centuries to double between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. How shall this mass of people be fed and clothed?

Third, there is the problem of inflation and its impact on food resources, business, commerce, and our everyday life.

Fourth, there is the problem of the preservation of our natural resources, which are not limitless, and the connected problem of pollution. "A car traveling 625 miles," it has been pointed out, "uses up as much oxygen as a man breathes in a year; a Boeing 747 burns up fifty tons of oxygen in a single Atlantic crossing. Already the United States produces only sixty per cent of the oxygen it consumes, and if we go on polluting the oceans and thereby killing the oxygen-producing sea-plants, we could reach the stage where there is no longer enough oxygen to support human life. Then man will be like a beast of prey who runs out of victims—and starves to death." It is a frightening picture.

The real problem, of course, is man himself, a being created in the image of God, who now after the Fall has an almost infinite capacity for fatuous folly. If only he longed for the regeneration of the Spirit and the new life that God gives! But alas! there is none that seeketh after God, no, not one. Is there, then, no hope? For the individual there is the sovereign saving grace of repentance and faith, and the resultant everlasting salvation from sin, guilt, and condemnation. And, as for the future, there is the second coming

of Jesus Christ, which shall be the ultimate solution to the problems of the world and the future. It is this of which Matthew writes in the section we study now.

I THE COSMIC AGITATION

The date (24:29). As events move toward their climax in the second advent of the Son of man, the description of the period of time turns to cosmic agitation. The sun is darkened, and the moon does not give its light. The stars fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens are shaken. It is a foregleam of the Son's work of subduing the earth and the heavens, preparatory to the bringing in of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

The cosmic disturbances are said to occur "immediately after the tribulation of those days." Mark adds that the disturbances occur "in those days" (13:24), and his use of the word "in" seems to locate both the tribulation and the advent within the same period of time, but as successive events. The time between the advents is primarily in view, but obviously the time of the advent is included in the period.

The fact that the Lord speaks of the advent and the accompanying disturbances as occurring "immediately after the tribulation" is important. The prophecies of the Lord, as well as the true prophets of the Scriptures are definite. It is that that marks out as prophecies of God. Human prophecies are usually quite general and indefinite. There is a common saying to this effect, "He who lives by the crystal ball soon learns to eat ground glass." One of the pieces of advice given to economic analysts who wish to look into the future and attempt to forecast it is this, "Give them a number or give them a date, but never both." Our Lord is not afraid of numbers and dates, and He is well able to give them both.

The description (24:29). The description of the disturbances is taken from the Old Testament (cf. Isa. 13:10; Ezek. 32:7; Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15; Isa. 34:4; Hag. 2:6, 21). The passages are not cited formally, but are blended together into a beautiful mosaic of the Old Testament teaching on the second advent and the institution of the Kingdom. The earth, or the whole creation is groaning together and travailing together in birth pains at the present moment, Paul says (cf. Rom. 8:22). These are the climactic pains that issue in the new birth of the Messianic Kingdom upon the earth.

There is a remarkable likeness between the Olivet Discourse and the description of the unfolding of the seal judgments in Revelation six. The verses there that are parallel with this section of the Olivet Discourse are Revelation 6:12-14.

The picture is that of the greatest blackout ever known, and those of New York City shall be infinitesimally small in comparison with this one! While some of the commentators have contended that the words should not be taken literally, I see no real convincing reason

why we should not take them in this way. A. E. Houseman, in his poem *Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries*, has referred to the first World War as "the day when Heaven was falling, the hour when Earth's foundation fled." The chances are that he derived his terminology from the Scriptures rather than from his own poetic skills and the creativity of allegory.

II THE KINGLY ADVENT IN GLORY

The sign (24:30a). It is at the time of the cosmic disturbances that the coming of the Son of man takes place. The Lord says, "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in the heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

There have been a number of interpretations of the "sign" of the Son of man. The Patristic commentators envisaged the appearance of a special mark or emblem in the sky. In fact, they thought that there might appear a huge sign of the cross in the heavens. There is nothing in the text to suggest this.

It is better, I think, to understand the genitive, "of the Son of man," as an appositional genitive. In that case the words should be translated in this way, "the sign which is the Son of man," that is, the sign is the Son Himself. It is the personal appearance of the glorified Son on the clouds of heaven in power and great glory that is the sign of his coming and of the end of the age (cf. v. 3). The text makes it plain that the sign is something definite, for it reads, "*the sign*." Possibly we are to think of something similar to the shekinah glory of the Old Testament, the pillar of cloud and fire by which Israel was led through the wilderness to the promised land, and which eventually abode over the tabernacle and the temple. The fact that Mark and Luke in their accounts leave out the word *sign* and simply say, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory," would seem to confirm the view that the sign is the personal appearance of the Son Himself.

The sequel (24:30b). The coming of the Son of man provokes wide lamentation on the part of those who see Him. Matthew writes, "and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." The passage is built upon the great text in Zechariah 12:10, 14, where we read, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and they shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn" (12:10).

There are several things to be noted here. In the first place the word translated "earth" in the Authorized Version may also be translated *land*, in which case it would refer to the land of Palestine. In other words, the reference to the mourning may be of the mourning of the nation Israel as they reflect upon the fact that they have crucified

the One who is their King, Messiah, and Savior God. It would then picture the last great triumph of the Son of God over Jewish unbelief, which finds such a beautiful illustration in the story of Joseph and his brethren (cf. Gen.45:1-15).

In the second place, the use by our Lord of the passage from Daniel 7:13, "I saw in the night visions, and behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him," makes it evident that He believed that the Daniel passage applied to Him, and not to Israel, as so many modern commentators assert. He is the Son of man who comes with the clouds of heaven.

In the third place, the same thing can be said of the passage from Zechariah 12:10, for that passage has been taken by the Jewish interpreters in this sense, "because they (the nations) have thrust him (Jews who fell in defence of their city as martyrs for their faith) through." Some modern commentators see the passage as referring to an unknown martyr who suffered death at the hands of the people, who are stricken with remorse over it. But our Lord sees Himself as the Son of man who comes, and also as the One over whom all the tribes of the earth (or land) mourn. He sees Himself as the fulfillment of the Messianic passages, for He is the Messiah.

The fourth thing to be noted is this: In this passage we have a joining together of the passages in Daniel and Zechariah, just as is the case in John's great Apocalypse (cf.1:7). It would seem that we have here an illustration of the way in which the apostles learned to interpret the prophetic word. They learned their interpretations from Him!

Incidentally, it is clear that the Lord Jesus knew how to distinguish between the passages in the Old Testament that referred to His first coming and those that referred to His second coming (cf. Heb. 12:5-9).

It is clear from the description given by our Lord that His second advent is an event that is both seen and heard (cf. v. 31) by the world. It will be a time of great blessing for the genuine believers, who shall joyfully hail Him at "King of kings and Lord of lords."

III THE FINAL ASSEMBLING OF THE ELECT INTO THE LAND

At His second advent other great events take place, and one of them is mentioned in the final verse of our section, "And he shall send his angels with a great trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (24:31).

The mention of the trumpet is the evidence that His coming is both seen and heard. The identity of the "elect" is a matter of some debate, some opting for an identification of the term with Israel alone, while others take it to refer to both the nation and the Gentiles. Cf.

vv. 22, 24. I am inclined to agree with Walvoord here, who writes, "Probably the reference is to all those who are chosen, that is, the saints of all ages, whether in heaven or on earth, for all these will converge upon the millennial kingdom scene." Cf. 25:32.

This regathering, so far as it pertains to the nation Israel, is a regathering in belief. It may be contrasted with the present regathering in the land, which is almost entirely a regathering in unbelief. Cf. Isa.27:12-13; Acts 15:14-18; Jer. 23:5-8.

This great scene is the goal of the promises made to Abraham, the time when the nation comes again into possession of her land under her great King Messiah. It is also the time when the full significance of the promise that in Abraham's Seed all the families of the earth would be blessed shall be seen. Lord, hasten the day!

Conclusion.

We began by saying that our society is characterized by the absence of hope and the presence of fear, and we suggest that the second coming of Christ is the ultimate solution to the absence of hope and the presence of fear. The reason for this is that the second advent underscores two great facts.

(1) First, it underscores and illuminates the ultimate triumph of Jesus Christ over the forces of evil. The crucified Savior will one day come again as the Lord of life to assume the governorship over His creation. Therefore, we are not without hope, and we, therefore, can no longer fear. He is the First and the Last. Shall I fear anything of old? He is the First. Shall I fear anything to come?? He is the Last! Helmut Thielecke has put it beautifully, "We do not know what will come. But we know WHO will come. And if the last hour belongs to us, we do not need to fear the next minute."

(2) Second, it underscores the fact that history is going somewhere. It is no endless cycle, as some of the ancients would have it. We are moving toward that of which Tennyson wrote,

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves."

In Memoriam

Therefore, we look into the future with confidence and surging hope, and we respond to the revelation of the divine promises concerning the coming again of our Lord with the words of the Apostle John, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Knowing Of Whom Thou Hast Learned

Stanford Chambers

Part Three of A History of Premillennial Interpretation

Writers Before the Dark Ages

Cyprian (Martyred 258)

Treatise on "The Unity of the Church," at close: "Let us always with solicitude and caution wait for the sudden coming of the Lord, that when He shall knock, our faith may be on the watch, and receive from the Lord the reward of our diligence. If these commands be observed, if the precepts be kept, we cannot be overtaken in slumber by the deceit of the devil; but we shall reign with Christ in His kingdom as servants that watch."

Treatise on "The Lord's Prayer," 13. "There follows in the prayer, 'Thy kingdom come.' We ask that the kingdom of God may be set forth to us, even as we also ask His name may be sanctified in us . . . We pray that our kingdom, which has been promised us of God, may come . . . that we who are first His subjects in the world, may hereafter reign with Christ when He reigns."

Tertullian (Died 230)

On Prayer. "Thy kingdom come". . . For when does God not reign, in whose hand is the heart of all kings? But whatever we wish for ourselves we augur for Him, and to Him we attribute what from Him we expect. And so, if the manifestation of the Lord's kingdom pertains unto the will of God, and unto our anxious expectation, how do some pray for protection of the age, when the kingdom of God, which we pray may arrive, tends to the consummation of the age? Our wish is that our reign be hastened, not our servitude be protracted . . . Nay, Lord, thy kingdom come with all speed,—the prayer of the Christians, the confusion of the nations, the exultation of the angels, for the sake of which we suffer, nay, rather, for the sake of which we pray!"

Antidote to the Scorpion's Bite. Ch. 25. "In the Revelation of John, again, the order of these times is spread out to view, which 'the souls of the martyrs' are taught to wait for beneath the altar. . . . Taught, I say, to wait in order that the world may first drink to the dregs the plagues that await it out of the vials of the angels, and the city of fornication may receive from the ten kings its deserved doom, and that the beast Antichrist with his false prophet may wage war against the church of God; and that after the casting of the devil into the bottomless pit for awhile, the blessed prerogative of the first resurrection may be ordained from the throne; and then, again, after the consignment of him to the fire, that the judgment of the final and universal resurrection may be determined out of the books."

Irenaus (Died 202)

Book 5, Ch. 20. "Gives us to see the faith of all is one and the same, since all receive one and the same God the Father, and believe in the same dispensation regarding the incarnation of the Son of God, and are cognizant of the same gift of the Spirit, and are conversant with the same commandments, and preserve the same form of ecclesiastical constitution, and expect the same advent of the Lord, and await the same salvation of the complete man, soul and body. And undoubtedly the preaching of the church is true and steadfast, in which one and the same way of salvation is shown throughout the whole world."

Same Book, Ch. 30. "But when this Antichrist (preceding sections have had Antichrist under consideration) shall have devastated all things in the world, he will reign for three years and six months, and sit in the temple at Jerusalem; and then the Lord will come from heaven in the clouds, in the glory of the Father, sending this man and those who follow him into the lake of fire; but bringing in for the righteous the times of the kingdom, that is, the rest, the hallowed seventh day; and restoring to Abraham the promised inheritance, in which kingdom the Lord declared that "many coming from the east and from the west should sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob."

Chap. 33 takes up Isa. 11:6 and following, and says, "I am quite aware that some persons endeavor to refer these words to the case of savage men, both of different nations and various habits, who come to believe, and when they believed, act in harmony with the righteous. But although this is true now with regard to some men coming from various nations to the harmony of the faith, nevertheless in the resurrection of the just, the words shall also apply to those animals mentioned. For God is rich in all things. And it is right when the creation is restored, all the animals should obey and be in subjection to man and revert to the food originally given by God." (Compare Lipscomb's comments on Acts 3:21, also Milligan on Heb. 2:8).

In succeeding chapters Irenaeus elaborates on the same theme, but sufficient has now been quoted to show that things so objectionable to some were in the early days of Christianity held and taught by the whole church.

Polycarp (Died a martyr 156)

"If we obey Christ in this present age, we shall receive the age to come. He will raise us from the dead, and we shall live and reign with Him. The saints shall judge the world."

Papias (Died a martyr about 150)

Ch. 6, Eusebius' Church History: "He (Papias) says there will be a millennium after the resurrection from the dead, when the personal reign of Christ will be established on this earth." The historian was not pre-millennial. Mentions that Papias claimed to have received the sayings of the apostles from those who heard them.

Ignatius (Died a martyr, 116)

Writing Polycarp: "Be every day better than other; consider the times; and expect Him who is above all time, eternal, invisible."

Writing the Philadelphians: "All the saints therefore are saved by Christ, hoping in Him, waiting for Him." (Ch. 5). (No millennium seen between.)

Clement of Rome (Died Possibly 101)

His First Epistle to Corinthians: "All the generations from Adam even unto this day have passed away; but those who, through the grace of God, have been made perfect in love, now possess a place among the godly, and shall be made manifest at the revelation of the kingdom of Christ . . . For it is written, 'Enter into thy secret chambers for a little time, until my wrath and fury pass away and I will remember a propitious day, and will raise you up out of your graves.'"

Second Epistle (possibly by another) Ch. 12. "Let us expect, therefore, hour by hour, the kingdom of God in love and righteousness, since we know not the day of the appearing of God."

Barnabas (Epistle written 130-131)

Ch.6, Epistle: "Kept alive by the faith of the promise and by the word, shall live ruling over the earth . . . For we ought to perceive that to govern implies authority, so that one should command and rule. If, therefore, this does not exist at present, yet still he has promised it to us."

Ch. 14. "When His Son, coming again, shall destroy the time of the wicked man, and judge the ungodly, and change the sun and the moon and the stars, then shall He truly rest on the seventh day . . . giving rest to all things."

Ch. 21. "The Lord is near, and His reward."

Justin Martyr (Died a martyr near 150)

To Trypho, the Jew, Sec. 14: "Of these and several other such like words" (after having quoted from Isa. 55) "which were spoken by the prophets, some of them, Trypho, said I, relate to the first coming of Christ, in which it is foretold that he was to appear in an inglorious, dishonorable, and mortal state; and some of them relate to his second coming, when He shall appear in glory and in the clouds, and your people shall look upon and acknowledge Him whom they have pierced, as the prophets Zecharias and Daniel have foretold." (Ref. Zech 12:10 and Dan. 7:13).

The same, Sec. 32: He "whom the prophet Daniel foretold was to continue for a time, and times, and the dividing of time. But you, not knowing how long he was to continue, interpret it otherwise. For you say that a time signifies a hundred years. If this is the true meaning of the word, and we take times to mean only two times, the man of sin must reign three hundred and fifty years at least, to fulfill this prophecy of holy Daniel."

Sec. 34: "For Christ is said to be a King, and Priest, and God, and Lord, and Angel, and Man, and Captain of the Host, and Stone, and Child that is born, and that he was first to be exposed to sufferings, and then to be taken up into heaven, and to return from thence with glory, and to receive an everlasting kingdom, as I can prove from the Scriptures. But that you may the better understand what I assert, I will recite the words of the Psalm, which are these:" (Here follows the whole of the 72nd Psalm).

Sec.39: Trypho answers: "For that the Scripture foretold that Christ was to suffer, and to come again with glory, and to receive an everlasting sovereignty over all nations, all the kingdoms of the world being made subject to Him, you have abundantly proved by several passages which you have already produced from thence. But proceed to prove that this is the very Christ."

(We have quoted these men not as authority, but to *show the fact* that they so taught).

Origen

Origen, who comes later than those whom we have quoted, farther removed from the days of the apostles, "influenced by the Platonic philosophy," according to Klingman's Church History, "introduced the allegorical and mystical methods of interpreting the Scripture. *This resulted in many controversies and divisions . . .* Regarding the millennium controversy, Mosheim says, 'Long before this period (third century) an opinion had prevailed that Christ was to come and reign a thousand years among men, before the entire and final dissolution of the world . . . but in this century its credit began to decline, principally through the influence and authority of Origen, who opposed it with the greatest warmth, because it was incompatible with some of his favorite sentiments.'" Klingman's Church History, p. 31.

Mosheim, Neander (not a pre-millennialist) and the rest of the church historians show that much of the teachings of the early Christians began to be supplanted in the fourth century by what was considered more compatible with the "advanced age." As the church—changing and being corrupted—came into temporal power, and the kings of the earth began to take orders therefrom, then it was that many fell in with the idea that the millennium was *then being ushered in*, that the kingdoms of the world were becoming the kingdom of Christ. Satan was surely being bound, the "Golden Age" had set in. Popes and cardinals so believed. In OUR "opinion" it was the Dark Ages instead. Just as far afield are those who say the millennium is NOW;—"Jehovah Witnesses," e.g. and some brethren, alas!

"Spirits of the Martyrs"

Some post-millennialists are offering a cheap interpretation of John's prophecy of "the first resurrection," saying it is simply a "revival of the spirits of the martyrs." And who are the martyrs? After the apostles, the earliest martyrs are Ignatius, Papias, Justin Martyr,

Cyprian, Polycarp and others. It would not be bad for such a spirit as possessed these "Church Fathers" to be revived, though the puerility of such an interpretation is evident. But hold!! these martyrs were ALL premillennial. Who can name an early martyr who was not? Do our "markers" really want such a spirit revived, after all? Be not surprised if they begin to mark these martyrs!

Heresy?

A modern anti-premillennial, enthusiast, though he admits widespread premillennial teaching in the earliest centuries of the church, pronounces all said teachings unmistakable "heresy"! Therefore Polycarp, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Clement et al. were HERETICS! But they were the representatives of the church in those early days after the apostles! Therefore the church was represented by heretics; had no other representatives! *Reductio absurdum!* But if it be said that we have later martyrs, like Huss, Wycliff, Tyndale, Ridley, then be it known, as all have a right to know, that they too, were premillennial. And they are men who died for the truth—truth which you and I have fallen heir to. Such heroes of the cross shall be our judges. But who are these modern issuers of dictums making Christs' martyrs heretics? Whence come these *markers*? Such markers are not near martyrs.



W. L. Brown

Salisbury, Rhodesia

April 20, 1978

We rejoice that we have been counted worthy to serve the Lord here in Rhodesia for so many years. During this long time in our lives we have made many friends and have been given many many opportunities to witness for the Lord.

Last month we baptized four Europeans into Christ here at the Waterfalls church. Two also came confessing and asking for prayers. This month there has been one restored.

On April 29th I am to conduct a very big wedding here in the chapel. The Mother and Father of the groom are members of the Waterfalls church. I'm wondering if the auditorium will accomodate all the invited guests. —The Rhodesian Government have a very strict Marriage Act, and only those who have been appointed as Marriage officers are permitted to solemnize marriages, other than the Magistrates.

We rejoice that we started the European work here in Waterfalls some 10 years ago. It is far more rewarding to work with the Europeans today than the African people as they are so full of politics. Many of the African churches are "hot-beds" for politics.

Many of the leaders attend political meetings on a Sunday morning rather than to attend worship. It seems that politics is taking first place and God second. I'm so glad that this is not true with the European people.

It is quite obvious that unless the Carter administration changes their views on Rhodesia that in the not too far future the Communists will take over. There are over 45,000 Cuban troops on the Continent of Africa today.—Its time people in America wake up. If Africa falls to the Communists so will America.—God is still on the Throne!

W. L. and Addie Brown Waterfalls, Rhodesia April 3, 1978

We were thrilled to get a Word and Work in the mail last week, for we have had none since the Nov.-Dec. issues, but upon opening the envelope we found a March 77 issue! How disappointed we were! The mail has slowed down. We do enjoy W&W so much and hope we soon get the January issue. I feel Brother Heid's articles on God's Family are exceptionally fine.

Interest in spiritual things continues here in spite of the political unrest. There were four baptisms here at Waterfalls in March and two rededications. We lost one couple to S. Africa recently. We hear that 11,000 whites have left Rhodesia.

The Wednesday night studies of Revelation are a blessing to all of us. The ladies' Tues. morning class continues with good attendance and interest. I thank the Lord for His grace and mercy to us in these difficult times. How we need to gird up our minds and set our hope on the grace that Christ will bring at His coming! He surely will soon come.

Alvin Hobby Livingstone, Zambia, Africa March 10, 1978

Here it is the rain that is causing problems just now. Some roads are closed, some are passable only when one uses a 4-wheel drive vehicle, and the tarmac is getting full of pot-holes. Then the small airport at Francistown, in Botswana, has been closed until September. Yesterday, we could not go to Kasiya for the Thursday morning Bible class because the people could not get across the river to come to the meeting place.

Georgia still seems to be enjoying her 21 forty-minute class periods of Bible teaching each week, to 7th grade pupils in three of the public, primary schools of Livingstone. Just now, I am reading and correcting Tonga manuscripts of Judges and Isaiah.

We were very glad the Mitchells got back across the border on Sunday, Feb. 26th, before an incident on the 27th that caused the border to be closed on the 28th! After that, there was no way they could have driven their new diesel Peugeot pick-up back to Zambia.

T. W. Hartle Cape Town, R.S.A. April 3, 1978

Not certain if I had mentioned this in my last letter about the special meeting I had conducted with a small congregation who meet in a home, about 12 miles from my apartment on the evening of March 2nd in which I presented a Biblical series entitled "1st Century Christianity Today", there were 26 present, though with no im-

mediate results, but we can pray that its results shall follow later Lord willing we have done our part, God will do His.

Then it was between February 23rd and the 9th and 16th of March that I also conducted the same Biblical series "1st Century Christianity Today" along with "How We Got The Bible" series, in a private home of a family who are Christians and who invited their neighbors and friends, which to the Glory of God, resulted that on the evening of the 22nd of March, one of the future daughters-in-law of this family requested to be baptized. With the interest exhibited by those who are attending, I intend to continue another series of Biblical visual aids, for another 3 weeks in this home Lord willing.

Then on the evening of the 12th of March, I was again privileged to present at a small congregation meeting in a school room, the series "1st Century Christianity Today;" there were 110 present that evening, and apart from the "lustrous singing by young and old", the service terminated with a mother and her daughter requesting to be baptized, isn't that just wonderful? Glory be to God for His unlimited power to save!

Am still busy conducting services at the City Chest Hospital, Green Point, Cape Town on Monday afternoons, in various wards where the patients are, and have also been showing them interesting Biblical visual aids, on the 14th and 21st of March in the evening. The attendances were very good which included nurses as well. Am hoping to present another series of Biblical visual aids, at the hospital Lord willing, the dates will be organized when convenient. And ask you to continue to bear me up in your prayers to the intent, whatever might be the mediums I may be using, in this my efforts for the extension of the Lord's Kingdom, with my status of a "travelling Evangelist" even be it the distribution of tracts here and there, visiting and preaching at various congregations, or be it a possible call to conduct a gospel campaign that "the harvest shall be rich, giving cause for rejoicing to the Glory of God."

Joy Garrett

Salisbury, Rhodesia

April 6, 1978

We opened the Arcadia church for Bro. Wirth's funeral; he died March 28. Bro. George Wirth was born in the year 1900. He was taught at Forrest Vale mission by Bro. Sheriff and became a stone mason. He was a well-loved member of the Arcadia church. He had been seriously ill for the past couple of years with silicosis, and often came to the services even while very weak and in pain. He was a well-liked member of the colored community. The Arcadia church building was full for his funeral. Bro. Harris conducted the service at the church and Bob spoke at the graveside.

Bob went to Patronage Mine church with some brethren from Harare. There were two restorations and a baptism. They have a pole shelter covered with a tarpaulin; when it rained the floor was flooded as it stands on a slope, so the women who had been sitting on the floor had to stand during the service. Patronage Mine is a mission point started by the Harare Church.

Our school year ended with commencement on March 19. Though over 100 students enrolled, we had only one graduate! There are several reasons for this. The main one is that most of our students have so many duties outside (either university studies or a job) that they don't carry a full load at CBI. Thus instead of finishing up with us in 3 years, which is possible, it takes them 4, 5, or 6 years, and few of them can stay that long. Would you please pray that more students will be able either to carry fuller class-loads or else stay with us longer, so that more will finish the course?

Our graduate this year was Mr. Juan Capili. He is one of our older graduates, being a widower with several teenage children. Formerly he was a newspaper reporter and now he works for a bank; but some years ago he also began preaching at a church in Tondo. He is thankful that CBI has better equipped him to fulfill his pastoral call.

We are thrilled that Carmencita Lama, who studied at CBI during '76-77, is now preparing for missionary work among tribal people in the Philippines.

A number of our alumni are in the merchant marine or navy: Andy Alvaro, Joel Barrios, Nestor Cadut, Eli Melchor, and the most recent one, Terry Tagarino. They get to visit many interesting places, but sometimes loneliness and temptation are strong. Ask the Lord not only to keep them from evil that is so common around them, but also to use them as His missionaries to their fellow-sailors. He has wonderfully answered prayers for them in several instances.

During '76-77 one of our students from a strong Catholic background showed great interest in his Bible classes. He was truly converted that year, but this past school year he went to Baguio to attend medical school. Eugene Daus is his name. The Lord has used him as a witness to his fellow-students, and also to his family—2 of his brothers have received Christ. The only non-Catholic church in his hometown is not too sound or strong, but Eugene has made quite an impact there. He recently preached during their youth Sunday, and taught the teenage class in their Daily Vacation Bible School. He leads the young people's group when he is able to get home on weekends. He hopes to return to Manila this coming school year, and study medicine at UST. Perhaps the Lord will lead him into medical missionary work, he says.

The Contradictions In Mormonism

by Alex Wilson

Mormons say we should follow the Bible, but also three books written by Joseph Smith, their founder. These books are *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants*, and *The Pearl of Great Price*. Of these three *The Book of Mormon* was written earliest and is a little nearer to the teachings of the Bible than are Smith's later writings.

Mormons also believe that the official teachings of their "latter-day apostles and prophets" are fully inspired by God. They look upon Joseph Smith "as a prophet of God, in the same literal sense as they look upon other prophets of the Old and New Testaments, and they so accept Joseph Smith's successors, from Brigham Young and including the present president of the Church." So writes apostle Richard L. Evans in "What Is A Mormon?"

Mormon missionaries visiting in your home can make their message and claims sound convincing. But really their beliefs are permeated with numerous contradictions. Mormonism contradicts the Bible, and history, and even itself. Knowing some of these contradictions can equip us to help people who are being confused and deceived.

Their Teachings Contradict Each Other

1. *How many Gods are there?* *The Book of Mormon* speaks of the "true doctrine of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, which is *one God*, without end. Amen." (2 Nephi 31:21). (In this article, all the italics in the quotations are mine.) Again it mentions singing praises "unto the Father and unto the Son and unto the Holy Ghost, which are *one God*" (Mormon 7:7).

Again it tells how Zeezrom asked, "Is there more than one God?" and Amulek replied, "No." A few verses later the statement is made, "*There is but one God*" (Alma 11:28, 29, & 35). Of course these statements agree with the Bible's teaching of God's tri-unity.

But note the following contradictory statements: "And the *Gods* said among *themselves*, on the seventh time we will end our work which we have counseled . . . And thus were their decisions at the time that they counseled among themselves to form the heavens and the earth" (Doct. and Cov.: Abraham, p. 44).

Again, "In the beginning, the head of the gods called a council of the *Gods* . . ." (Joseph Smith, *The Journal of Discourses*, Vol. VI, p. 5). Again "In the heaven where our spirits were born, *there are many Gods*, each of whom has his own wife, or wives, which were given to him previous to his redemption, while yet in his mortal state" (Apostle Orson Pratt).

2. *Is Adam our God, and did he make the world?* "The God of Abraham and the God of Issac and the God of Jacob . . . created the heavens and the earth and all things that in them are. Behold, he created Adam." Thus speaks *The Book of Mormon* (Mormon 9:11, 12). With these statements we agree.

But listen to the declaration of Mormon president and prophet Brigham Young. "When our father *Adam* came into the Garden of Eden, he came into it with a celestial body, and brought Eve, one of his wives, with him. He helped to make and organize this world. He is Michael, the archangel, the Ancient of Days, about whom holy

men have written and spoken. *He is our Father and our God, and the only God with whom we have to do*" (Journal of Discourses, Vol. 1, p. 50).

If Adam is our God, and helped make the world, then who is the God of Abraham who created the earth and also created Adam? I asked two Mormon missionaries who visited our home about this. After quoting Brigham Young's statement, I asked if they agreed with it. They squirmed and tried to wriggle out of answering by changing the subject.

But after they were directly confronted with the question two or three more times, they said "Yes," they believe his statement. Their attempts to explain it were quite pathetic, especially after I quoted *The Book of Mormon* and the Bible to the contrary. Young's statement and also Pratt's (quoted in no. 1) accurately unveil Mormonism's weird theology.

3. Does God condemn or commend polygamy? According to *The Book of Mormon*, God forbids polygamy and calls it "wicked" and "abominable." "Hearken to the word of the Lord; for there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none." "The people of Nephi began to indulge themselves somewhat in *wicked* practices, such as like unto David of old, desiring many wives and concubines." "David and Solomon truly had many wives and concubines, which thing was *abominable* before me, saith the Lord" (Jacob 2:27;1:15; 2:24).

Yet Joseph Smith's later writings make God contradict Himself completely, when He reportedly said, "David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon . . . and David's wives and concubines were given unto him *of me*, by the hand of Nathan . . . and *in none of these things did he sin* against me save in the case of Uriah and his wife" (Doct. and Cov. 132)!

Again, Smith writes that God said, "If any man espouse a virgin, and desire to espouse another, and the first give her consent, and if he espouse the second and they are virgins and vowed to no other man, then is he justified . . . And if he have ten virgins given unto him by this law, he cannot commit adultery, for they belong to him, and they are given unto him; therefore is he justified" (Doct. and Cov. 132).

Their Teachings Contradict the Bible

Already we have seen several examples of Mormon beliefs which totally oppose the doctrines of the Bible: there are many gods; the gods have wives; Adam is our God—the only God with whom we have to do; etc. Let us note only two more examples.

1. *Where was Jesus born?* This statement is made in *The Book of Mormon* about "the Son of God": "Behold, he shall be born of Mary, at Jerusalem . . . she being a virgin . . . who shall be overshadowed,

and conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost, and bring forth a son, yea, even the Son of God" (Alma 7:10).

But the Bible clearly says that "Jesus was born in *Bethlehem* of Judea" (Matt. 2:1-12), and the following verses tell how the wise men from the East first went to Jerusalem to look for the baby, but were then sent to Bethlehem, which was five miles away. The two cities were always distinct. Bethlehem never belonged to any "Greater Jerusalem" metropolis, or Jerusalem province or anything of the sort, as Mormans say.

2. *Was Jesus begotten by the Holy Spirit, or not?* The Bible, of course, says yes. An angel told Joseph, "Do not be afraid to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matt. 1:20, KJV). Even *The Book of Mormon* agrees; see the preceding quotation from Alma 7:10.

But Brigham Young said, "When the Virgin Mary conceived the child Jesus, the Father had begotten Him in His own likeness. He was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost." "Remember from this time forth, and forever, that Jesus Christ was *not* begotten by the Holy Ghost" (Brigham Young, *Journal of Discourses*, Vol. 1, pp. 50, 51).

Their Teachings Contradict History

The Book of Mormon contains a number of factual errors, especially in chronology. Dr. Gordon J. Lewis, in his book, *Confronting the Cults* (published in the Philippines by O.M.F. Publishers), lists the following blunders:

Laban wielded a sword made of "the most precious steel" before 592 B.C. (1 Nephi 4:9). Although compasses are thought to have originated around A.D. 1000, Nephi sailed across the ocean with the aid of a compass around 600 B.C. (1 Nephi 18:12). The earliest French developed from Latin about A.D. 700, but Jacob, before A.D. 421 concludes his book by bidding his brethren "adieu" (Jacob 7:27).

We have seen that *The Book of Mormon* is contradicted by *Doctrines and Covenants*, and by other writings or sayings of Joseph Smith, and by Brigham Young, and by apostle Orson Pratt. Yet Mormons believe that all of these books and men are authoritative sources of doctrine! But how can that be? You can take one side or the other, but not both. For example, either God condemned David and Solomon's polygamy, or He commended it; but He didn't do both.

Conclusion

More seriously, Mormonism opposes the Bible and its teachings. The contradictions are many, not just a few. And they involve major doctrines, not just minor ones.

So why does anyone need the Mormons' books and so-called revelations, filled as they are with inaccuracies and self-contradictions? The Bible by itself clearly reveals how we can be saved and can know we are saved. It tells us all we need to know about how to live for Jesus Christ, and how to serve Him, our Lord and Saviour.

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Jefferstown has at last got beyond the John 20:29 state and excavation can be seen for the basement of new building on Taylorsville Road about two miles south of Jefferstown.

Watch for dates of PCS closing program.

You are welcome to join the adults of Highland Sunday School as they listen, as a group of classes, to topics by Dr. John F. Walvoord. Dr. Walvoord gave five sermons on prophecy at the Bible Church during our icy February weather.

Word and Work would be glad to order for you a book highly prized by those who really study: **Major Bible Themes**. The copy now available is a revision by Dr. John F. Walvoord, President of Dallas Theological Seminary. Hal Lindsey's book, **There's a New World Coming**, also gives a clear presentation of the sequence of "His Story Yet To Be": (prophecy). W&W will gladly get it for you.

Following the resignation of Vaughn Reeves from the pulpit at Fern Creek, men from the congregation are bringing the teaching on Sunday mornings.

Likely each of us has a member of the family "Who have no hope" I Thess. 4:13.

Shall we pledge ourselves (Matt. 18:20) —are we not already praying—to pray daily for the hopeless in our lives.

Had you ever thought of **HOPELESS** as another way to spell Mortality and **HOPEFUL** as the spelling of immortality?

Your habitual life style is a living, daily record of your faith, your concern.

Do you have the hope, a promise that was not meant just as much for another as for you?

What will God have to bring into my life to move me along to the activity He has for me?

Are my unconfessed sins infecting

the bloodstream of the body? (I am attached you know) resulting in a lassitude, being mistaken for PEACE? Peace, a charastic of God, is a twin—always Joy is alongside.

Are we so deceived that lethargy, even stupor, is mistaken for Peace?

Jubilee Home Repairs, 458-5127 offers a variety of honest skills to our community. Seven young people dedicated to live the Christian way for two years in Louisville Area. Five of the young people sure made the singing at Highland on first Sunday of May sound much better.

Good reports are given to the annual music program at PCS May 5.

Bro. Antoine Valdetero is again the speaker at Highland, June 12-18. In October Bro. Carl Ketcherside returns after too many years away.

"BEYOND THE CROSS", a film about the persecuted church in Russia, was shown at Kentucky Avenue Church of Christ on May 7, at 6:00 P.M. The screening was well attended.

Portland Christian School had its showing of "THE HIDING PLACE" on Friday evening, April 28th. The film with screen play based on Corrie Ten Boom's autobiography played to a packed house.

Highview Christian Academy held its annual Spring festival on Saturday, May 13th. There were games, balloons, horseback rides, clowns, booths with bakery goods, food, and other goodies. There was gospel music by several local vocal groups. This is a real fun time for all who attended.

Cramer & Hanover Church, Lexington Last Sunday night a blessing was received by all who heard Joe Goins' presentation of the work in India.

NEWS FROM THE LEADERS
BREAKFAST: The Children's Home has secured one couple to help, but

still need a woman and help for the weekends . . . Charge for residents at the Sr. Division is now \$300 a month . . . The Kentucky Asso. of Christian Schools is now in debt \$27,000 for the law case they are in, which comes to trial early in June. Pray for them . . . John Fulda will not be able to be at the singing camp this summer at SCC . . . David Rea-

gan spoke at the SCC Commencement on May 3rd . . . Highview Christian Academy now has 158 students and is planning to expand to 200. They need \$9,000 for the planned expansion of the property . . . Although PCS will have school until June 9 the commencement is still planned for June 2 with baccalaureate the preceding Sunday evening.

REPRINTS:

THE POWER OF THE HOPE.

R. H. Boll, 1925

Cornelius Woelfkin, pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, of New York, a modern critic and post-millennialist, in a strong magazine article, admits the vast influence for good, the powerful incentive to sacrifice, earnest activity, unworldliness, and purity, which came to the primitive church through her hope of the pre-millennial and imminent coming of the Lord Jesus. "The religious appeal of Pre-millennialism grows out of the fact that it presents a clear, concrete, and comprehensive program of the purposes of God respecting past, present, and future; it enlists the imagination, stirs the emotions, and challenges the disciple to co-operate with this program of the Divine will." "It is not," he goes on to say, "a vague, mystic hope, but a definite scheme of historic unfoldings . . . For one who holds the hope as a vital certainty it is a living hope, stimulating personal virtue, inspiring evangelistic zeal and missionary enterprise." True he thinks that it was but a "dream conceived in minds laboring among the limitations of primitive knowledge." For those early pre-millennial Christians considered "the Bible the inspired, enerrant word of God;" which was of course highly unscientific according to modern ideas, but nevertheless productive of very happy results, so that he hesitates to ridicule their simple faith. "It was an illusion," he says, "not a delusion."

But such testimony from such a source is really all the stronger. If such was (and is) the fruit of the scriptural hope of Christ's return, we want it. "By their fruits ye shall know them."