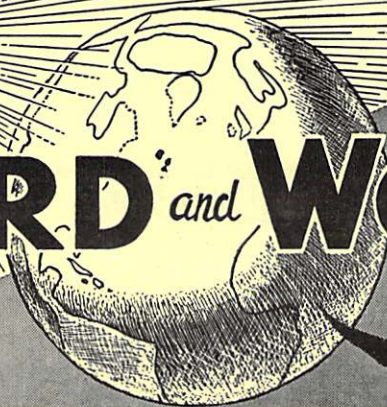


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God's Family

W. R. H.

ARISE AND EAT

And the angel of Jehovah came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God. I Kings 19:7, 8.

Most of us are familiar with the account of Elijah's great victory over the prophets of Baal at the contest on Mt. Carmel. Jehovah not only answered with fire from heaven, but even the stones of the altar burned, and the water in the surrounding trench was licked up. All who witnessed the victory said, "Jehovah, he is God; Jehovah, he is God."

But the wicked queen, Jezebel, who had sponsored the whole company of the prophets of Baal, immediately sent a messenger to the prophet Elijah, threatening prompt death. Fleeing from the wicked Jezebel, he presents a sad sequel to the performance on the mountain-top. God's great prophet was under Satan's great attack, and as if being caught off balance, he turned and fled for his life.

Bible teachers have made much of this episode, and well so, for it is freighted with spiritual insights and warnings. We are hesitant to be too critical of Elijah's failure, for we realize that we would not have done any better. But the real thriller in the account, is the manner in which God dealt with the fear, the weakness, the failure. Notice these steps:

1. God ignored the prophet's request that he might die.
2. With food and water supply, an angel came and said "Arise and eat."
3. The next word was, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee." God knew that the journey was to "Horeb, the mountain of God," and the food was measured out in strength sufficient for the next forty days.
4. There was no command to get back into the battle, nor any strong rebuke.
5. Then another verbal communication: "Go forth and stand up on the mount, before Jehovah."
6. God then revealed some future plans for Israel, and gave more orders for the prophet to carry out.

THE JOURNEY IS TOO GREAT FOR THEE

Was God referring to the past journey, or what was ahead? Maybe some of each. Surely, what had just been endured was part of the reason for the present weakness. The contest at Carmel, and the events following had sustained, but yet, drained him. As with all of us, the "high" is invariably followed by a "low," and this one was an extreme low.

How often have you heard of a faithful servant of the Lord who has unexplainedly stumbled, embarrassed the Lord, and perhaps disgraced himself? Some unexpected pressure has come and strained almost to the breaking point. Some subdued sinful trait suddenly reasserts itself and the old man proves to be not "completely dead". There is the need to "weep bitterly" as did Peter when he betrayed the Lord, and then remember the promise, "my grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

We hear of a preacher who gives up the ministry, a missionary who goes into secular work, an elder who resigns his appointment, a treasurer who "turns it all over to someone else" or a Sunday school teacher who "gives those rowdy kids to someone else." We might be judgmental about each of them—and judgmental of Elijah, but there is a real promise to all of them as we study again the response of Jehovah God. The journey does become too great at times.

BREAD AND A CRUSE OF WATER

If you hike for several miles, especially on a mountain trail as in Big Bend Nat. Park or the Smoky Mountains, you know that food and water are the main thing. The physical body has its limitations. Crossing a wilderness is not the time to fast. Our intake must be adequate.

So it is in spiritual life. Jesus is both the Bread of life and the Water of life. "...he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on men shall never thirst." In this bread and water there is the nourishment to get us "unto Horeb, the mountain of God."

AN ANGEL TOUCHED HIM

Elijah needed to be awakened. Food was there for the taking. And he did eat and drink, and lay down again. And the angel of God came the second time and touched him. It seems that the first eating was to revive from the journey past, but now, a second eating is for the great journey ahead. With no derision, the angel simply touched him again, so that he might store up the provision of God. There is a long journey ahead. There is a goal; Horeb, the Mountain of God. And there are more assignments to God's service. God has not forsaken his servant at all, nor is He dismayed at failure. "I have made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art turned again, do thou establish thy brethren."

Perhaps an angel (messenger) of God is even now being sent to touch us, to say "Arise and eat." And again, "Arise and eat, for the (future) journey is too great for thee (as you are, hungry and faint and poor). May God send one of his messengers to each of us in the day of our distress, our failure, our backsliding. It may be quite a long way yet unto Horeb, the mountain of God.



Viewing the News

Jack Blaes

"THE FAITH OF A HUMANIST" IS THE TITLE OF AN ARTICLE written by Sir Julian Huxley. Sir Huxley took an active role in developing Humanism into its present form. He served as president of the first International Congress in 1952 in Amsterdam when the International Humanist and Ethical Union came into being, and has authored many books on Humanism. Following are some quotes from the article, "Faith of a Humanist": "I use the word **Humanist** to mean someone who believes that humans are just as much a natural phenomenon as an animal or plant; that their body, mind, and soul were not supernaturally created but are all products of evolution, and that they are not under the control or guidance of any supernatural being or beings, but have to rely on themselves and their own powers. And I use "Faith" in the sense of a set of essentially religious beliefs.

"How, then, can a Humanist be religious, you may ask? Isn't religion necessarily concerned with supernatural beings? The answer is NO. Religion of some sort seems always to have been a feature of human life; but some religions are not concerned with God, and some not with any sort of supernatural beings.

"Humanist beliefs are based on human knowledge, especially the explosion of knowledge of the hundred years since Darwin published **The Origin of Species, WHICH HAS REVEALED TO US A WHOLLY NEW PICTURE** of the universe and our place in it. We now believe with confidence that the whole of reality is one gigantic process of evolution. This produces increased novelty and variety, and ever higher types of organization; in a few spots it has produced life and in few of these spots it has produced mind and consciousness.

"Rejecting the supernatural, Humanist morality is an impulse to achieve the fulfilment of humanity's possibilities in the next phase of evolution . . .

"So humanity's most sacred duty is to realize their possibilities of knowing, feeling, and willing to the fullest extent, both in the development of individuals, in the achievement of societies, and in the whole human species.

"And I believe that a wider understanding of the extent to which humanity falls short of realizing their splendid possibilities will stimulate them to learn how they can be realized, and that this will be the most powerful motive of the next stage of human evolution. As a Humanist, that is my Faith."—From the **Pro-Family Forum Alert**

ALSO FROM THE PRO-FAMILY FORUM ALERT: Jack Sikes, superintendent of the Cornhusker Christian Home in Culbertson, Nebraska, writes: "I wanted you to know that Nebraska Social Workers have established written standards for all child care agencies licensed by the State of Nebraska and they say that these policies must be followed. The new discipline policy forbids physical punishment of any kind, and they now class a spanking as child abuse . . ." "The caseworker also told us that CCCH has to give them two weeks notice before a child can be baptized. We have also been told by private foster families that they have been notified that their foster child has the right to make the decision on whether he wants to go to church as well as which one. If he decided he doesn't want to go to worship, one of the parents will have to stay home with him."

A DES MOINES NEWSPAPER PUBLISHED A LETTER on Dec. 30, 1981, which began with the following start-

ling declaration: "After giving it serious thought, I have decided on Dec. 31 at 11:59 p.m. I will end my life." The writer went on to explain that he was taking this drastic step so that his destitute family could collect welfare. He claimed that this was his only alternative because heartless budget cuts by President Reagan were making it impossible for the poor to survive. A frantic search for this potential suicide was quickly launched by the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigations. Believing that the writer had fallen the "safety net," the authorities gave this project top priority. They were able to locate Lester J. Williams, the poor man who had written the heart-rending letter to the editor. In the course of their investigation to find and save this apparent victim of Conservative callousness, Iowa officials discovered to their chagrin that Williams was a professional welfare chiseler who was wanted for food stamp fraud in five states. Mr. Williams is now serving a three-year sentence in a federal prison in Milan, Michigan. What's more, at the time this able-bodied man wrote his "suicide" note, his divorced wife and child by that marriage, along with his current common-law wife and six children, were all receiving welfare! —American Opinion, Dec. 1984.

FROM THE PULPIT DIGEST. DEC. 1984. Half the people sentenced to life in prison get out after serving just 51 months or less. In a sample of over 100 thousand, about 40 percent served less than one year, while only one percent served more than ten years.

"OF ALL THE DISPOSITIONS AND HABITS WHICH LEAD TO political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these

firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politicians, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connections with private and public felicity. Let it simply be asked, Where is the security for prosperity, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in courts of justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect that natural morality can prevail in conclusion of religious principle." President George Washington's Farwell Address.



FRANCE AND JAPAN ARE USING NUCLEAR POWER to make rapid strides toward energy self-sufficiency. The U.S. Committee for Energy Awareness reports that France is now getting nearly 60 percent of its electricity from nuclear power, and that by 1990 it will be getting 75 percent of its electrical power from safe nuclear plants. By turning to nuclear energy, France has been able to cut oil imports for electricity from 250,000 barrels a day in 1973 to less than 16,000 barrels a day this year. In July of this year, the Japanese government approved a plan to build 27 nuclear plants over the next 10 years. These plans call for a new \$4 billion nuclear facility for uranium enrichment, fuel reprocessing, and permanent waste disposal. Japan is developing 21 percent of its electricity from nuclear plants. France and Japan are among the world leaders in nuclear energy because of their consistent regulations and standardized plant designs, which allow them to build nuclear plants less expensively and more quickly than plants in the United States.



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

What part should Christians have in trying to affect the morals of society at large?

Obviously Christians are vitally interested in affecting the morals of society through the preaching of the gospel and the changes wrought by the new birth. This question does not deal with the changes that are brought about by spiritual rebirth or growth but rather with those that are brought about by the outside pressures of legislation, social pressure, economic pressure, and such like. How much effort should be made to establish moral conduct on the part of the unbeliever which does not arise from within but is brought about by pressure from without?

There are several facets to the question to be considered. The problem is not that morals of society at large do not need to be elevated. The problems of the worth of such conduct to those on whom it is enforced, what accomplishes the desired result, and how much emphasis to put on the matter must also be considered. Christians need to be careful that in trying to clean up the world to make it a decent place to live they do not forget the primary task—that of calling people out of the world to be a people of God. In the final sense, Christians are not instructed to make the world a better place to live but to preach a message that changes people and prepares them for a life out of this world. The father of the prodigal son (Luke 15) did not organize an effort to build better hog pens in the far country, nor did Jesus rebuke him for not doing so. Many of the Christian's attempts to change the morals of society at large are but little better than trying to build better hog pens, so people can be more respectable in sin.

It is, of course, true that sin left unrestrained soon leads to such wickedness that God's message goes largely unheard. Hearts become hard and sometimes are so committed to evil that before they know enough to choose God's ways they have become so committed to evil as to make any choice for God unlikely. Because of this, God has imposed some restraints on sin over the ages. He has acted in judgment to destroy certain cancerous segments of society. He has ordained that the present fruits of sin—disease, grief, loss, etc.—are such as to restrain it in many cases. He has caused law to be imposed, both religious and secular. One of the functions of human government is the restraining of evil (Rom. 13:3-4). And there is human conscience, which even in unregenerate people acts to restrain sin. God

still rules in the affairs of men and may use even unregenerate men to keep evil from completely dominating life.

Moreover, the Christian is "salt" and "light" in the world. There is definitely an influence the Christian has and ought to have in restraining evil. It is evident that the church is not only a factor in restraining the wrath of God (note the principle in Gen. 18:22ff) but that there is a great influence from her example and message. The question is not whether the church affects the morals of society but rather what methods to employ and what emphasis to give this matter. It is frightening to consider what might happen to society if the "salt" and "light" of Christianity were taken away.

The early part of this century was so influenced by modernism that many churches (of various stripe or denomination) practically lost the message of salvation and set about reforming the world. Political power was sought in making and reworking laws so as to change society. Since the supernatural was rejected, most of the emphasis fell on the present life and moral suitable to human happiness here and now. Modernism is not gone by any means, but many have become aware of its failure. Even so, in many instances the concern for social change has continued and has become the concern of more fundamental people. It has been deemed so desirable that instead of using the power of persuasion and the influence of godly living, there has been a distinct turn to seeking political and economic clout so as to force change even when there has been no change of heart. It is widely urged that churches organize in opposition to selected evils and immorality and that by political power, boycott, and other such manifestations of strength they try to change the world.

There is no quarrel with the end which is sought (unless some misguided persons suppose morality is sufficient to save). I much prefer to live in a world where moral standards are high, evil is held down, the temptations to which we are exposed are fewer and less appealing, etc. The problem I have is with the means which are used to achieve such an end and which seem to get only questionable results at best. Paul described the Christian warfare by saying: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh (for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds), casting down imaginations, and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ..." (2 Cor. 10:3-5). When all is said and done and we have found the nicest words possible, the fact remains that many widely accepted methods by which the Christian today is urged to affect society are *of the flesh*. There have been periods when concerted effort was made to "convert" people by the power of conquest and governmental edict. Generally such methods are totally rejected by thinking people; the results are not God's results. Yet, in the matter of morals, this principle is more frequently used. Now I want to see morals raised, but I do not believe the church can afford to stoop to a carnal show of power to do so. It is evident that "a man convinced against his will of the same opinion still," and those who are forced to conform rather than being persuaded by God's word only wait for the balance of

power to change. Human government can and should restrain evil by force, but the church has not been given such a weapon. Her power is the power of prayer, the power of a godly influence, the power of righteous protest through teaching truth, the power of God's word—spiritual weapons, not carnal ones!

Paul's preaching at Ephesus (Acts 19) turned men to Christ. Such ones ceased to buy the silver shrines of Diana. So many turned to Christ that the silversmiths felt the economic impact and "organized a riot." The church, however, had not organized a boycott against the silversmiths. There was a message which changed men's hearts. Those changed hearts stopped buying the shrines, not to force the silversmiths out of business but because they had no use for them. The impact was felt because their lives were changed and they were living as Christians ought to live.

We look in vain in the N.T. for efforts on the part of the church to change society short of conversion. There were no organized attempts to improve the society of that day except as such changes came through the new birth. There is *no commission* to clean up the world and to elevate the moral standards of the unregenerate. There is *a commission* to make disciples and to teach them all the Lord's teaching. This latter calls on Christians to live changed lives and to uphold righteousness. As Christians do so, their influence may be felt by the unregenerate, even to the point of adopting some of their standards. It is somewhat vain, however, to try to force Christian conduct on those who are not Christians.

Paul went to Corinth and preached the Gospel. There was no mention of any clean-up campaign for the city as a whole. He did not excuse Christians or lower the standards because they dwelt in a city of corruption. His attempt to change that society was through conversion and the power of God's word, not forcible restraint of some sort.

Now many Christian would agree that conversion is primary, but they believe we can also act in many ways to elevate moral standards in the world. And, indeed, if we can be faithful to our primary task and at the same time improve society, why not do so? Unregenerate moral people are still going to hell, but it does make for better living conditions for the Christians. Certainly as the Christian is faithful to $\tau\omicron$ be seen as "children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye are seen as lights in the world," he does right. Whenever we begin to go beyond the preaching by example and the power of persuasion by the word of God, however, we need to be careful.

We need to be careful that in an attempt to whitewash society we do not get turned aside from the business of washing white in the blood of Christ. Time, money, and energy spent in trying to clean up the world may be better spent in getting out the commissioned message.

We need to be careful that in an attempt to elevate society we do not make enemies to the gospel unnecessarily. When we require unregenerate men to live as Christians ought to live, we often succeed only in creating anger. These have neither the mind-set nor the aid of the Holy Spirit to enable them to do so.

We need to be careful that our emphasis on morality does not leave the man of the world content with morality or the Christian a legalist. This may not be the intention, but it is a danger.

We need to be careful that the methods we adopt are not methods of the flesh. Ours is a spiritual warfare and requires spiritual means. In an eagerness to achieve a goal we can adopt means that are not righteous or spiritual.

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THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“No Condemnation”

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. (Romans 8:1, 2 NIV)

The two verses quoted above are the opening encouraging note in one of the most encouraging chapters in all the Bible. It begins here with “no condemnation” and ends with “no separation.” It is often called “The Holy Spirit” chapter, and well it might, for it is full of information about the “other Comforter”, the One Who lives in the Church and Christians throughout all this dispensation. He is here to comfort and to help us in every way that we need Him to live the life that will glorify God and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

As usual when a passage is given us that should be of great help, Satan finds ways to have even Christians misuse the passage. This is one of the passages so often used to “prove” that once one has made a sincere profession of Christ as Savior that one is locked into a relationship with the Lord that can never be changed. It is even carried to the point of insisting that if you turn away to a life of degrading sin you are still a saved one who will spend eternity with the Lord.

This misuse of this passage reminds me of the way that such ones use John 10:28, 29. They like to quote those two verses, which read in the NIV: “I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father’s hand.” That is indeed a wonderfully comforting passage, to know that the God on Whom we have put our trust, is greater than all our opposition and will give us all help needed to stand before Him in His eternal home. But the use they make of it is to leave out and ignore the verse before those two, v. 27: “My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me.” Note three things about those sheep that

the Lord will keep: (1) They listen to what He says. They read it and meditate on it, believing it. (2) Christ knows them; that doesn't give me the right to claim to be the one who can decide which are truly His sheep. (3) They follow Him. Now, how one can claim that people deliberately turning back to a life of sin can be listening to Jesus and following Him is a bit beyond my ability to grasp. That is the kind of sheep He will keep, and since I am that kind of sheep I rejoice and feel safe, having no fear for my position as one of His saved ones.

This reminds me of a story that Bro. Boll told in one of the few classes that it was my privilege to take under him. Someone had brought up in a class sometime before that a question about sin, asking if Bro. Boll thought a person could sin all he wanted to and yet be saved. Instead of answering directly, Bro. Boll asked a very perceptive member of the class if he thought he could sin all he wanted to and yet be saved. After thinking it over for a little, the student replied, "Yes, for I sin more than I want to." That, of course, is the point. Because we are still in these "bodies of our humiliation" we sometimes do what we don't want to do and shouldn't do, we slip and sin. But if you are a true child of the Lord, then that is more than you "want to" so far as sin is concerned. To compare that to someone deliberately making trial of God by professing Him and then living as if He didn't exist or wasn't holy, is more than ridiculous. And those who teach such a doctrine would be among the first to agree if they would think this point through.

What I have been trying to say about this is rather clearly shown in Romans 8:2—"because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death." That is far removed from the belief that you can go on living in the depths of sin and yet be a saved one. It says that we are now free from that horrible law that was pulling down the man of Romans 7 because the Spirit has come and set us free in Christ. We never overcome that power in ourself, so Romans 7:25 thanks God for deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord. He sends the Spirit to make His life real in us and delivers us from the terrible pull of sin. We don't have to live perfectly to be saved, but we certainly have to want to!

I am thankful that Paul goes on to develop this whole subject and illustrate it through this wonderful chapter. Let us look at it together month by month and rejoice in God and His Word.

The Contented Life

Paul A. Kenyon

There is a way of life planned by God for His people which is quite fully disclosed in the word "godly." This life is characterized at all times and in all things by an attitude Godward and a consuming passion to be well pleasing to Him.

There is a kindred word in the New Testament which can be translated "according to God." It speaks to us of an "according-to-

God" pattern of life, which is to be the goal of all who are called by His great name.

Such is the meaning of godliness. Those possessed of these dispositions of heart toward their Heavenly Father are worthy to be numbered among the true saints who have been ransomed by the blood of the Lamb. It is this way of life, coupled with the Biblically prescribed pursuit of God, which brings contentment in a confused and troubled world and is here declared by the apostle to result in "great gain." Properly speaking, then, this specific means is said to be God's way to spiritual success, His way of achievement, in contrast to the erroneous conception that "gain is godliness" (verse 5).

But while contentment is a state to be desired, it is questionable that it will ever be possessed by any except the godly. It is a flower that comes into full bloom and beauty only in a carefully prepared environment. The primary word, selected for us by the Spirit to describe contentment (*arkea*), means "to be sufficient" or "to be enough for a thing or situation": consequently to be satisfied, gratified, pleased and therefore in continuous rest and peace. Contentment is not included in the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22, 23), though certainly it is closely allied.

There is a reason for this. It appears from a careful study of the Word of God that this contentment must be earned by meeting certain specified conditions. And here we might add that we will not consider this subject philosophically, but only from the standpoint of the scriptural statements of fact.

In this initial statement to Timothy, Paul writes the young man: "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (verses 7, 8). Then follows a fearsome warning concerning the results in the lives of those who enter into the mad scramble for the accumulation of the stuff, which constitutes the main pursuit of the children of this present age (verses 9, 10).

So, one must rid himself immediately of the notion that any measure of genuine contentment will come with the possession of the things we so much desire of this world's goods. This is a common delusion even among the elect, and Jesus dealt with it quite thoroughly. "Take no thought," our Lord said, "for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on" (Matt. 6:25). And of course He meant what He said. Then He asked a question which demands an answer, and men dare not remain silent when questioned by the Son of God. "Is not the life more than meat?" "Certainly," we must reply, "it is!" The silencing retort of Jesus to us is: "Therefore take no thought . . . your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Have we not lived so long with the plain declarations of eternal truth that familiarity has bred, not contempt, but a casual indifference which can be just as fatal? The least we can say is that we ignore the practice of truth that would, if obeyed, bring the contentment we so much desire.

Our tireless seeking after more and yet more has left the family circle of the household of God so completely exhausted, frustrated and spiritually depleted that we have no time or thought or energy for

the pursuit and practice of the godliness that gives birth to contentment.

The way to contentment becomes less desirable for the covetous heart when the next step forward is seriously contemplated: "Let your conversation (manner of life, or conduct) be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have" (Heb. 13:5). This injunction was never intended to prohibit having the necessities of life. "My God shall supply all your need." But it was meant to put a curb on the covetous soul. And as to our real needs, is it not better to let the all-wise God determine what we really need? Many of them are "wants," not necessities.

Covetousness is one of the most subtle of all sins. The Colossians were told that this grasping attitude of the heart was actually idolatry (3:5). The heart is no longer fixed on the living and true God but is passionately attached to a series of consuming desires that can never be satisfied. Our modern, complex system of living on credit adds much more fuel to an already hot fire which burns on and on with the combustibles of a never-satisfied inner passion.

Jesus again said, "Beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Paul unveiled the deep secret of contentment from the covering that envelops it with his own illuminating testimony: "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (Phil. 4:11). This is contentment in spite of conditions, and it can be learned. Graduation from the divine schooling into this blessed state comes only to those who study their lessons well and then actually apply what God is teaching them day by day. Contentment is bound fast to our reaction to every fact and act of today's living.

There are other words in the New Testament which throw some further light on this "life of the satisfied." The applications can vary greatly but the principles are always the same. For instance, briefly consider these words: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased (content) to dwell with him, let him not put her away" (1 Cor. 7:12). Here the simple situation is that of an unsaved woman "content" to dwell with a saved husband. There are many similar serious situations which confront the children of God—conditions which are far from the ideal. In this imagined case at Corinth the Christian husband could contribute to his own peace and contentment by his attitude toward his unsaved wife who was satisfied to live with him in spite of their "religious differences." Similar cases in this day are innumerable. But actually in this specific case you cannot separate the attitude of the wife from the disposition of her husband.

The principle here is applicable to a thousand situations which confront us every day in Christian experience. There is a great area of discontent which arises out of rebellion against the necessary exigencies of normal living. The godly soul has learned to accept these as they are and create for himself a state of contentment in spite of all to the contrary. He pacifies others about him, without compromise, because he does not stir up an atmosphere of frenzy. He waits upon God to bring release in His own time and way. "My grace is sufficient for thee" is his assurance, and that means under every condition in

which he is impounded.

The word "sufficient" which God used in answering Paul's prayer for the removal of his "thorn" is the same word translated "content" elsewhere: "My grace is contentment for thee." What a glorious revelation! Submit to circumstances that you cannot change. His grace will supply the lack and will yield the promised contentment. And Remember that rebellion against circumstances can be rebellion against God, for God is the God of the circumstances which surround His saints. He will be your rest in the very midst of all the turbulence of today and tomorrow.

Finally, read Second Corinthians 9:8: "God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things (contentment, satisfaction with what one has), may abound to every good work." The word translated "sufficient" here in our King James Version is the identical word translated "contentment" in First Timothy 6:6. This statement of God's grace, bringing contentment in all things, needs little clarifying. It is a gilt-edged, certified promise of the God who has power to bring to pass all that He says. He wills contentment for His own.

Yet it is imperative to recall that godliness and contentment are companions. They never travel alone. One cannot exist without the other. This whole way of life is conditional. It does make serious and trying demands on those who would enter in to possess it. There are no short cuts to its rewarding ways. But for those taking God at His word and will to meet the specified conditions, the results are never disappointing. They will find for themselves that "godliness with contentment is great gain."—from *The Alliance Witness*

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Moto Nomura

Tokyo, Japan

September 4th

Greetings in Jesus Christ from Tokyo. I hope this letter finds each one of you well in His grace and care. We miss you and long to see you face to face to share our joy in Jesus Christ. We also want to send our gratitude for your love, prayer and concern for us and our work for Him. We are happy and well with a bit of more gray hair on our empty head.

On March 21st our time, I received a phone call from my *Old Kentucky Home*. It was Mrs. Price telling me of a sudden departure of Mr. William A. Price for his Home in glory to be with Christ. The sad news struck me for a couple of months, but now I am all right. Heaven has become a step closer reality. Our daughter Megumi was able to attend his funeral services from W. Va. school.

The hot summer this year was unusual. It was 39.4 C or 103 F yesterday in our area with much humidity. I felt we were in a sauna

steam bath. Due to heat our 9-year-old dog died last month. Before he was going to die, with his last strength he dashed into the room where we were, and soon departed to the world unknown to his master. He was a faithful dog. When my Lord calls me Home in glory, I wish to be ready like the way our dog died. He taught me an important lesson.

Between April and July, I was teaching a general church history for two students of Osaka Bible Seminary almost 600 kilometers (380 miles) west of Tokyo. It is a school started by a pioneer missionary of our Restoration Movement heritage church before the Pacific War. It has eight students now. A missionary teacher was unable to return back to Japan to teach the course. So I was asked to pinch-hit for him. Every week I left home on Tuesday morning and came back by Thursday evening, a 55 hour a week service. They paid transportation fare and the rest was my service for the kingdom and for the Restoration Movement cause. Every week-end I had to spend some more time to get myself prepared for the next week lessons. The service consumed most of my energy and time during this period and I was unable to sit down and write you letters. I enjoyed the fellowship with the brethren in Osaka Bible Seminary and appreciate this rare privilege in the Lord. Now I am free again with a bit of more free time of my own to be with Yoriko and our church members at home.

History of our church, in the past 2,000 years, teaches us that our church has not always been so faithful to what the Lord told us in such passages as John 13:33-35 or 17:20-21. Church has failed to present the world and its people the beauty and holiness of Christ Jesus and God our Father, but has given the world ugly picture of church divided with power struggles within. How can we convince the peoples of the world the wonderful message of Jesus Christ while we are divided within with hatred toward each other in His church? Unity Movement, Restoration Movement, or Stone-Campbell Movement, whatsoever we want to name it, this our plea for unity of Christians is so important.

June 21st made me 53 years old. I don't care for any more birthdays, however. Brethren in Jacksonville, Florida, sent me a birthday card and I deeply appreciated their prayer and love for me. It was heart moving. Thank you. This old horse needs encouragement of his Christian friends to charge himself to serve the Lord faithfully here in this difficult land till his end. Dr. Wood in Dallas send me recently a cassette tape in which I hear the late Frank M. Mullins, Sr. speaking. What a surprise and encouragement it was to hear him talk on a book in the O.T. Your prayers mean so much. We thank God for our faithful friends who pray for us, friends like you.

Between August 3-6 we conducted our annual Motosu Christian Camp with 38 campers. Lack of workers, particularly teachers of the Word, was keenly felt this year. Can a young person come and help us for a while? Can a congregation or group of friends send one helper for us for a while? Two boys out of Tokyo, after having attended our camp for the first time, wrote me a thank-you letter and said it was their first time to hold a Bible in their hands, turn its pages and read about a Man named Jesus who died on a tree for the sin of the world.

They were astonished at this Stranger. They said next year they would bring their parents together to the camp to hear more about this Great Man. Three little girls started attending our Sunday school after the camp. Our work is slow, as slow as a snail's walk, but the Lord gives us victory for His glory. Praise Him.

Megumi (Grace) is still at Ohio Valley College in Parkersburg, W. Va. doing well. She is not allowed to work for money due to immigration law. She has to be supported. Our son Makoto (truth) enjoys his Ibaraki Christian College study. He went back to ICC last week for the new semester. Though a semi-church of Christ school there is no scholarship for preachers' children. Thus two children's educational needs practically eat up more than 60-65 % of our instable monthly income. Financially we are now facing with our most critical and perhaps last stretch struggle to send them to schools for a better service for the Kingdom, but I know *He* is able. Praise Him.

Mother is doing well. She is almost 76 (?), still active. Yoriko helps my ministry. House-church is doing well with good quality and a steady growth in number though slow. Everything is in His care and grace. We are thankful for our daily life with you through prayers in Jesus Christ. He is so good and faithful. My health is generally well but low blood pressure, 64-96, is a bit of a problem. Till we meet again, God bless you and keep you in His love. Hallelujah, Amen.

Timothy Nakahara

Shizuoka City, Japan

October, 1984

Now is the season of harvest—all sorts of grain and fruit are fully ripened for harvesting, which reminds me of the words of Jesus in John 4:35 where it says, "Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest?' I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields. They are ripe for harvest." Again, in Luke 10:2 we find the following words, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

It is good to be able to report on a harvest of some souls we've gathered so far this year, at such a harvest time as this. In the very beginning, we started out with a goal of ten to reach and win for Christ, but we've had only five as we did last year, which has made us realize our failures in two ways: one is that we haven't prayed enough for soul-saving business and the other is for lack of concentrated efforts in communication. So besides our regular Wednesday night prayer meeting, once every first Sunday morning we gather together to pray and also after each Sunday morning worship service everyone in separate groups of two or three spends some time in prayer together before leaving the church. Some of us had felt it useless to continue our home visitation program with little result after three years, but so happened that I came across an article telling us about a similar experience a church went through and it said that it would take at least five to six years before getting any result out of such a program. It's blown away a sense of uselessness and revitalized us to keep at it until we get some result. So our prayer to God now is for more open-

doors and more people with open hearts and minds with interest and concern about their own souls. This is how our business of sowing is continued with new zeal and anticipation.

We thank God for granting us our prayer-request over many years and consequently the lot we'd prayed about has now come into our possession for 12,500,000,00 Yen which we paid off on Oct. 1, though we are still short of \$10,000.00 which is due in March of 1986. Now we would like to take this time to express our great appreciation to you who have had part in helping us obtain the lot through a special contribution. The building plan is our next step to undertake after we get everything else clear of the way. We know not how long it will take us before the dream come true, but we'll go forward under the leadership of Jesus to accomplish the project. Your prayer is, therefore, so much appreciated.

Now we want to conclude this letter with so much thankfulness for your lovely gift we've received each month, which has enabled us to carry on the work of the Lord free from the care of this world. May the Lord continue to use you in the joint efforts to spread the Good News of our Lord Jesus Christ in Japan. Thanks again for your continued support for the work here.

Joy Garrett

Harare, Zimbabwe

October 13th

Last Sunday we took the big Caball truck and filled it as full of people as we could at Glen Norah Church and went North to Raffingora. From Ruwa this took 3 hours. There we picked up two who guided us a further hour's journey to Keystone Ranch. It was a hot dusty ride.

After tea we had the morning service under the trees by the side of the new grass thatched mud church building that we call pole and dagga. It was very well done and must have taken much hard work. Inside were benches and pulpit all of dried mud hardened with ant hill and manure.

That morning before we arrived 37 were baptized as a result of the camp meeting. There are many teenagers in their choir whose leader is their school teacher. Robert spoke on "What is Man?" Glen Norah's choir also sang both in Shona and Chichewa. Most of these farm laborers are Chichewa from Malawi. Just at the end of the service (after 3 P.M.) a light rain began to fall. We are in dire need of rain here.

Today we have a group of primary school children 4-7 here at Ruwa for a day's Bible teaching. There are 71 of them. Ten older young people are cooking over wood fires and serving the younger ones. We have lots of big balancing rocks and forest here so we have named this place at Ruwa Rockwood Park. One of the morning Bible classes was held in a crack between two big boulders—giving both shade and a place to sit!

Joy Garrett

Harare, Zimbabwe

November 8th

Last month our evangelist, Bro. Agrippa Chivengwa, of Tafara was invited to preach at Nhowe Mission School for a week's meeting. The Lord really blessed, helped overcome problems and 60 were

baptized. We praise God for continued open doors.

Bro. Agrippa helped in the pouring of our concrete foundations for a work shop here at Ruwa on Saturday—along with 28 other men and boys. Then one Sunday to preach at an all day meeting at Patronage Mine. That night he became ill and had to be hospitalized for a day. He is improving but not fully well. Pray for our evangelists.

HEROES OF THE FAITH

Count Von Zinzendorf

Harry M. Savacool

A stormy family conference swirled through the palatial residence in Berlin, Germany, in June of 1721. Center of the storm was a determined young man, Nicolaus Ludwig, a hereditary nobleman of Zinzendorf, a district in the state of Saxony.

"My mind is made up, Mother," said the 21-year-old count. "My inheritance is now mine to do with as I will. I plan to resign my position with the government and give my whole time to organizing a religious community on my estate."

"But, Nicolaus," protested his mother, "as a count in the Holy Roman Empire, you have a responsibility to your country. You have had seven years to training in two universities to fit you for government service. It is not right for you to throw all of this away to serve as a religious leader."

"Mother, you and Grandmother taught me to give my heart to Christ and to serve Him. I am just following through on what you taught me."

"We do want you to serve God, Nicolaus, but Christian statesmen are scarce. There are many who do not have your rank and training who can serve as religious leaders."

The family conference surged on. Nicolaus' mother, carrying on family tradition for her long-dead husband, strove to convince Nicolaus of the privilege and responsibility of public service. The 300-year-old alliance between German rulers and the Roman Catholic Church existed in name only, but government service was still an honorable occupation.

Nicolaus recognized the advantages. Serving on the state council would bring him prestige and authority, as well as an opportunity to honor God in civic affairs, but Nicolaus felt called another way, a way that had been becoming increasingly clear to him in recent years.

At the age of six, Nicolaus had experienced a real conversion. His wealth and aristocratic family were members of the "Pietist movement, a group within the Lutheran Church who stressed holy living and earnest Bible study. Even at the age of ten when Nicolaus entered boarding school at Halle, his spiritual fervor was so noticeable that scoffing classmates tried to make him a laughing stock. But in the last two years of his five years at Halle he won a group of pupils to a conversion experience and organized them into a praying team called "The Order of the Grain of Mustard Seed." The leaders of the Pietist

movement were teachers at the University of Halle, and they strongly influenced Nicolaus.

During his three years in the University of Wittenberg and another three at Utrecht University, Nicolaus' spiritual experience deepened and he began to feel the call to a life of Christian service. He daily gave two hours or more to prayer. Often he spent a whole night praying. The prospect of a government career appeared dismal in comparison with a life of building the Christian Church.

Finally there was a compromise in the dispute. The young count agreed to remain in government service for a time. And his mother agreed to offer no opposition to his future plans to use the ancestral estate and resources to establish a religious community.

Six years later the restless count launched his long-dreamed project: a haven for religious refugees who were suffering persecution by government or church leaders because of their resolute faith. The community was named Herrnhut, meaning "The Lord's Watch."

Most of the refugees who answered Count von Zinzendorf's invitation were Bohemian Brethren, followers of the martyr John Huss, who had opened the battle against Rome's religious tyranny in Prague, Bohemia, 100 years before Luther. The Hussites who had survived the years of violent persecution came now from Moravia, neighboring land to Bohemia.

To help in managing Herrnhut, Zinzendorf sought a wise spiritual partner, and he found one in the person of Countess Reuss, whereupon he suggested they be married as servants of Christ to further His work. After extended prayer for guidance, they decided it was God's will, and were married. Romantic love played no part in it, but the marriage seemed to be as successful as they could hope.

Serious disagreements rose among the refugee settlers, however, because of their diverse backgrounds. The Moravians, for example, opposed going to the Lutheran church in the nearby village, while the German Pietists were not yet ready to withdraw from membership in the Lutheran state church. Zinzendorf repeatedly smoothed over differences on his visits to Herrnhut, but in 1727 his wife told him:

"Count, unless you stay here all of the time, Herrnhut will be destroyed by these dissensions. You will have to resign your government post and give all of your time to God's work here."

He did resign. Under his dedicated leadership the community gave itself to prayer almost night and day. A great revival broke out and continued week after week. Discords ceased. Brotherhood became a reality. The climax came during a communion service when the Holy Spirit came mightily upon the whole assembly.

Herrnhut was now a place of prayer. Every day began and ended with a prayer service. For the next 100 years there was always to be someone at prayer, 24 hours a day, interceding with God for the salvation of souls. The fame of Herrnhut spread. Visitors came long distances. Among them was John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, who came from England in 1738, three weeks after his life-changing experience at a gathering of devout Moravian Christians in London.

Wesley found a staunch, peaceful community that was manifesting its love for Christ and for fellow men by sending groups of missionaries

to unevangelized lands. This was almost a new idea, as most Christians had been preoccupied with escaping the sword during the persecutions and wars that followed the Protestant Reformation.

Zinzendorf first became concerned about missionary work while studying at Halle, where the Pietist leaders Philip Spener and August Franke were sending out graduates into evangelization work at the request of government leaders in other lands.

Zinzendorf dramatized the spiritual needs of foreign lands to his people at Herrnhut by bringing a Negro slave from the West Indies. It roused the Moravians, and in 1732 two missionaries were sent to the West Indies. Soon two more were sent to Greenland. A school for training missionaries was started at Herrnhut.

"Begin and continue with Jesus as Saviour," counseled Zinzendorf to every missionary. "It is your whole message all the time, to the high and the low, the educated and the ignorant. We will send you out. We will do all we can to help you but we cannot guarantee your support. You will be expected to earn your support if possible. In that way we can send out more to preach Christ to the ends of the earth."

In 1735 Count von Zinzendorf, now an ordained minister in the Lutheran Church, set out on the first of what he called a "walking-preaching journey." Without any set plan or schedule and with no advance publicity, he walked from town to town in South Germany and Switzerland preaching wherever he could assemble a little group and witnessing for Christ to every possible individual. Later he went to Holland and England.

To perpetuate their religious heritage, the Moravians sought to ordain Zinzendorf as a bishop in the Unity of the Brethren, the group organized by John Huss among the Bohemians, and after much prayer he consented to this second ministerial ordination in 1739.

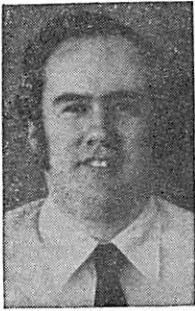
The following year Zinzendorf decided to visit the missionaries in the West Indies, and his preaching and organizing genius strengthened the mission work there. Four years later he visited the Moravian community of Bethlehem, Pa., and investigated the extensive mission work among Indians along the Susquehanna River.

Rather than increasing greatly in size as some churches, the Moravian Church increased greatly in missionary zeal. Almost 200 years after Zinzendorf's death in 1760, Robert H. Glover, the missionary statesman, wrote this unique tribute:

"The Moravians have set and maintained a standard of missionary devotion never yet approached by any other church body. . . . The Moravian Church sends one in every 92 (of its membership). They furnish the unique spectacle of having three times as many members in their foreign missions as in their home churches. . . . No missionaries of the Cross have been bolder as pioneers, more patient or persistent under difficulties, more heroic in suffering, or more entirely devoted to Christ and the soul needs of men than those of the Moravian Brotherhood."

The world will always be in debt to this far-sighted German nobleman and his far-ranging Moravian Brethren.

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Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

PERSECUTION FROM WITHOUT

Acts 12:1-25

THE DEATH OF JAMES: ACTS 12-1-2

In verse 1 of the 12th of Acts we are given this statement, "Herod the king." Which Herod was this? There were many in New Testament times with that name. The Herod spoken of here is Herod Agrippa I, the grandson of Herod the Great. The last three years of his life is covered in the events in Acts 12.

The text tells us that Herod, in about 44 A.D., laid hands on the church to mistreat them. Apparently many members of the Lord's Body were persecuted. Luke chooses to give us the account of 2 who were singled out for persecution that, in one case, led to death.

In the second verse we're told that Herod had James, the brother of John executed. This was the James who was one of the 12 original apostles. He was the first to be martyred. It is said that he was put to death by the sword. This would imply that he was beheaded. James' death is the only one mentioned in the New Testament writings. J. W. McGarvey wrote the following,

"The death of James, the first apostle who suffered martyrdom, must have been a source of indescribable grief to the church in Jerusalem; and to an uninspired historian, it would have furnished matter for many pages of eloquent writing: what shall we think, then of Luke as a writer, who disposes of it in a sentence of seven words in the Greek? Surely, there is an indication here of some supernatural restraint upon the impulses of the writer, and it is accounted for only by his inspiration."

THE ARREST OF PETER: ACTS 12:3-4

After King Herod found out that the killing of James pleased the people he thought he would go after another of the leaders of the Christian Community. He chose the Apostle Peter. Garreth Reese writes the following,

"Peter was one of the apostles of Christ, just as was James. He was a leader in the church. And he would be a special target of the persecution if it were triggered by the church acceptance of the Gentiles to fellowship without demanding of them all the old Jewish customs and taboos, for he was the one who

went to Cornelius' house and preached the Gospel to them; and he was the one who instructed all Christians to do likewise as he defended his actions before the brethren in Jerusalem. Such actions so infuriate the fanatical Jews. When Peter was arrested, did he think that perhaps the time had come for Jesus' prediction about his manner of death be fulfilled?"

It is said that this took place during the days of The Feast of Unleavened Bread. This is the Passover and the 7 days after it. Herod knew that there would be many Jews in the city during this period. H. Leo Boles wrote the following,

"Luke, the historian, here indirectly locates the time of the year when Peter was arrested; those were the days of unleavened bread. The Feast of Passover came on the fourteenth day of the first month, Abib, or Nisan; the feast of unleavened bread followed the Passover; and continued seven days. (Ex. 12:12, 13, 29, 30; Lev. 23:5-8; Deut. 16:1-8)."

In verse 4 Herod has Peter thrust into prison. It further tells us that he delivered him to four squads of soldiers. Each squad contained four men. They were responsible to guard Peter around the clock. Herod wanted to make sure that there was no way humanly speaking that Peter could escape. The text tells us that Herod, after the passover intended to bring Peter out before the people. This would imply a public trial and execution.

PETER IS RELEASED THROUGH THE POWER OF GOD: ACTS 12:5-11

The very night before Herod was to bring Peter to the people for execution the power of God began to show itself. The Passover would end at 6:00 p.m. Saturday. Thus King Herod could have Peter executed the next day. The text tells us that Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with chains. There was no way humanly possible that he could escape martyrdom for His Lord. But the God of Heaven had further need for the services of Peter. It says further that two more soldiers were positioned at the front of the door.

In verse seven the angel of the Lord appeared on the scene. We're told that a light shone in the prison. The angel had to wake Peter up from his sleep. Then it is stated that his chains fell off. In verse 8 the angel told Peter to get dressed and put on your sandals. Peter followed the angel's instructions. The angel then told Peter to put on his outer garment, and to follow him. It is stated at this time that Peter thought that he was seeing a vision. The power of God caused the soldiers to not see what was happening. The angel of the Lord led Peter past the first and second guards to the iron gate that leads into the city. The door opened by itself. After they were safely outside the angel departed. It is recorded in the 11th verse that Peter came to himself. Peter further gives God the praise for delivering him from certain death.

PETER RETURNS TO HIS FELLOW BELIEVERS: ACTS 12:12-17

After Peter realized that he was free he made his way to the house of Mary the mother of John Mark. This was one of the major meeting

houses for the Christians in the city of Jerusalem. There many gathered there praying.

Peter is then found knocking at the door of the gate. A servant girl named Rhoda goes to see who is at the door. Verse 14 tells us that she recognized Peter's voice but because of joy did not let him in. She went back to tell the rest that Peter was at the door. In verse 15 we see that they did not believe her. She kept insisting and Peter kept knocking. Finally the people went to the door and opened it and sure enough there was Peter in the flesh.

Peter told them to be silent. He then described to them how God had released him from the Clutches of Herod Agrippa. He told them to report these things to James and the brethren. This James was the Lord's brother and the one who presided over the Jerusalem Conference in the 15th chapter. He was apparently a leader in the church at Jerusalem. Here we're told that Peter departed and went to another place. Where did he go? We are not told.

HEROD EXECUTES THE GUARDS: ACTS 12:18-19

The next morning it was discovered that Peter was gone. Nobody had an explanation for his escape. Verse 19 says that even Herod looked for him. He examined the guards personally. He then ordered that they be led to execution. It is then stated that he went down from Judea to Caesarea. This would put the events in the next few verses happening in 44 A.D.

THE DEATH OF HEROD: ACTS 12:20-23

The text tells us that Herod was angry with the people of Tyre and Sidon. The people from those areas came to Herod. It says that they won over Blastus, the king's chamberlain. They were asking for peace. Then in verse 21 is stated "And on an appointed day..." Josephus tells us that this was the second day of the games held in Caesarea in honor of Caesar. The text continues that Herod put on his royal apparel and took a seat on the rostrum. He began presenting an address to the people. What it is about neither Luke or Josephus reveals. In verse 22 the people were overcome and were shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man." It was at that time an angel of the Lord struck him. Herod Agrippa I had been willing to let the people regard him as a god and it had cost him his life. Why? Because he did not give God the glory. The text tells that he was eaten up with worms, and died.

THE RETURN OF BARNABAS AND SAUL: ACTS 12:24-25

Verse 24 informs us that the word of the Lord continued to grow and to be multiplied. In verse 25 we are reintroduced to Barnabas and Saul. It says that they returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their mission. Returned where? To Antioch. The text tells that they took along with them John Mark.

We invite you to be with us next time as we study the 13th chapter of Acts which starts the first missionary journey. This is a long chapter. We ask that all read it beforehand in anticipation of the study.

Until next ime, **MARANATHA!**

(Summary of a sermon preached by J. R. W. Stott. Used by permission.)

THE PROMISE TO YOU

Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him. (Acts 2:38, 39 R.S.V.)

When the Holy Spirit came on the day of Pentecost, like the rush of a mighty wind and tongues of flame, the crowd which gathered looked and listened. They were spectators of an extraordinary event. It probably did not occur to them at first that they might share in its blessings themselves. They stood and stared, perhaps a little embarrassed and alarmed by it.

But, in answer to their question, Peter concluded his sermon with the words "You shall receive the gift of the Spirit . . . for the promise is to you . . ." The Pentecost experience was available not just for the 120 who first received it, but for others; not just for the first century but for future generations ("you and your children"); not just for Jews, but also for Gentiles ("them that are far off"). The prophecy of Joel was that God would pour out His Spirit upon "all flesh" without distinction.

We must heed this word today. The promise of the Spirit is for us. We are the generations and the people afar off to whom Peter referred.

It is true, however, that in two senses Pentecost was unique:

(a) *It was historically unique.* Pentecost was the historical fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy, and Peter recognized it as such. Now that the prophecy has been fulfilled, we do not look for a repetition of it, any more than we look for a repetition of the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. The "promise," which Peter says is to us, refers not to a fresh Pentecost, but to a share in the Pentecost which has already taken place.

(b) *It was phenomenally unique.* That is, we do not look for a repetition of the marvellous phenomena which accompanied the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. On that occasion a rushing wind was heard and tongues of flame were seen. But these audiovisual phenomena are not necessarily repeated. We need to discern between the essential blessing of Pentecost (the gift of the Spirit) and the supernatural externals (wind and fire). It is the former we need and can enjoy, with its moral and spiritual results, not its miraculous accompaniments.

What then are the great results of the gift of the Spirit?

A NEW AWARENESS OF GOD

"Fear came upon every soul" (v. 43). It may be strange at first sight that we select "fear" as the first result of the gift of the Spirit. Certainly joy was another result, and it could have been said of Jerusalem, as it was later of Samaria, "there was much joy in that city."

But if there was much joy, there was great fear also, for Biblical joy and Biblical fear are not incompatible. The whole Church throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria is described in 9:31 as "walking in the fear of the Lord."

Biblical fear is such an awareness of the presence of God as leads to reverence, awe, humility and holiness. Jacob experienced it when he awoke from his dream of the ladder at Bethel and said "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not." And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:16, 17). The Bible indicates, in both Testaments, that such "fear" should be the normal characteristic of the Christian. "Continue in the fear of the Lord all the day" (Prov. 23:17). "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (1 Pet. 1:17).

Now it is the Holy Spirit who creates this fear of the Lord, for He is God and where He is, He makes God known. He makes us aware of the spiritual realities to which we had been blind before. This fear is needed in our Christian lives today. It is needed in our worship, lest we become so preoccupied with the externals of ceremony that we remain cold and dead in heart, neither drawing near to God nor sensing His approach to us. We need it also in our homes and work, so that we go about our business consciously in God's presence and sight. This experience is possible for us, because *the promise is to us*.

A NEW LOVE OF THE BRETHREN

The results of Pentecost were social as well as mystical. The early Spirit-filled Christians were not content merely to draw near to God; they were irresistibly drawn to each other also. This is important. A spurious mysticism is often betrayed by its individualism. We should be suspicious of any spiritual experiences in which a person becomes so absorbed in God that he gives no thought to right relations with his fellow men.

The early Christians avoided this trap. The gift of the Spirit which gave them a new awareness of God, gave them a new love for the brethren also. Indeed, the very concept of "Christian fellowship" was born on the day of Pentecost. "Fellowship" in the New Testament sense had not existed before Pentecost, for fellowship is the fellowship of the Spirit, a common participation in the Spirit, such as would not have been possible before the Spirit was given. But now we read that the new converts "continued in the Apostles' fellowship" (v. 42), and that all who believed "were together" (v. 44) and were "of one heart and soul" (4:32). They felt themselves knit together in a spiritual fellowship which was supernaturally caused by the Holy Spirit Himself, whose first fruit is love and who indwells and animates the whole body of Christ. The new love expressed itself in various ways.

(a) *They learned together*, "They continued... in the Apostles' doctrine" (v. 42). They were not content, as so many church people are today, with a juvenile smattering of religious knowledge. They had a hunger to grow in the knowledge of God; so they came together to study and learn.

(b) *They worshipped together*. They continued also "in the

breaking of bread and prayers" (v. 42). The Lord's Supper (which is probably what is meant by the "breaking of bread") was the center of their fellowship. They loved to gather at the Lord's table, and did so in the context of the "agape," the early Christians' community meal, or love-feast. Their breaking of bread was a true "holy communion," a sweet and sacred fellowship with their Saviour and each other. They also prayed together, spontaneously, naturally, extemporaneously.

(c) *They shared together.* They had "all things common." Luke is describing what actually happened; he is not necessarily recommending his readers to copy it. Indeed, there is no command of universal application to Christians in the gospels or epistles to sell all their possessions. It may be God's will for some, as it was for the Rich Young Ruler. Others He calls to be faithful and generous stewards of their money. But, although we may not be called to sell our goods, we are certainly to concern ourselves with those in need. This is the essence of what the early Christians did. They "distributed to those in need," so that "there was not a needy person among them" (v. 45 and 4:34).

(d) They ate together. They, "breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart" (v. 46). They loved to visit each other in their homes. They were hospitable and friendly. They sat down to table fellowship together.

One wonders where all this is today. Instead of this pristine churchgoing. Our shyness and reserve, our love of decorum and sense of the conventional and our cult of respectability threaten to quench the Spirit. But He can break down these barriers, and give us grace to swallow our pride of race and rank, so that we truly love the brethren. All this is possible because *the promise is to us.*

A NEW CONCERN FOR OUTSIDERS

These early Christians were not exclusively preoccupied with their fellowship with God and each other. The love which the Holy Spirit inspired within them was too expansive and compassionate for that. It embraced the world. "The Lord added to the Church daily such as were being saved" (v. 47), no doubt because of their faithful witness.

(a) *The Holy Spirit gave them boldness.* "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness" (4:31). Their sealed lips were prized open, and their stammering tongues began to proclaim the word of God. The freedom of speech which they had already experienced in prayer to God and in fellowship with each other, they now found in testimony to unbelievers also. Do not let us try to evade this responsibility. Every Christian is called to be a witness. It was not only the apostles who thus spoke the word. This is clear from chapter 8 verses 1 and 4, where we are told that those who were scattered abroad spoke the word of the Lord, and that these were the disciples "except the Apostles." The Holy Spirit's delight is to give speech to the spiritually dumb, to open their mouths in simple, humble testimony.

(b) *The Holy Spirit gave them power.* What is remarkable is not only the boldness with which they delivered the message, but the powerful effect which it had on the hearers. "With great power

the Apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (4:33). Their hearers were confounded and converted. They embraced the gospel and were added to the Church.

Are not these three marks of a true, Spirit-filled Church sadly missing today? The Church of Jesus Christ is in desperate need of a breath of fresh air. The rushing, mighty, invigorating wind of the Holy Spirit needs to blow through the stale and stuffy atmosphere of our modern ecclesiasticism. We see around us the coldness, deadness and ineffectiveness of the Church. We see so little authentic, apostolic Christianity.

But do not let us despair. There is no need to stand and stare at the early Church and give up hope. We must listen again to the word of Peter "*The promise is to you and to your children.*" If we repent and believe, we too shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and enjoy these blessed results of His fulness.

"LET EVERYTHING THAT HAS BREATH PRAISE THE LORD"

Do echoes never cease? Shall we always strain out a gnat and swallow a camel? Why do we look so hard to prove an obscure point when another proclamation in God's Word clearly reveals His will in a matter?

As a product of our brotherhood I cherish the Biblical foundation I received at the feet of Godly men and women. I greatly appreciate the opportunity given me to serve one of our churches, yet speak I must to the continuing erection of a wall God has no part in building.

There is no "old testament" or "new testament" God. "God is one!" His ways do not change! The Rabbis erred in that they were "Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men." God's word seldom, if ever, requires the microscopic examination that was applied to Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 in September's issue of "The Word and Work".

No such magnification is required to understand the clear call to praise as recorded in Psalm 150.

Praise the Lord!
Praise God in His Sanctuary;
Praise Him in His mighty expanse.
Praise Him for His mighty deeds;
Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.
Praise Him with trumpet sound;
Praise Him with harp and lyre.
Praise Him with timbrel and dancing;
Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe.
Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord!

If an instrument is odious to us in our praise of Him, where did such a conviction come from? Certainly not from the God who breathed forth this psalm.—Alvin J. Price

GLEANINGS

Compiled by Larry Miles

WALKING IN THE LIGHT

It is essential that there be a strong deterrent to sin in a Christian's life. It is equally essential that there be a basis of real assurance that final salvation is available in spite of imperfection. Without strong deterrents in his life one might drift into carelessness that will cost him his soul. Without assurance one's frustration will inhibit his functioning for the Lord and jeopardize his soul.

—William Wallace, quoted in *VANGUARD*

OBEDIENCE

Obedience, then is made the test of our love, as it is also made the only sure criterion of faith (James 2:14-16). And hence it is, that in the final judgment, the destiny of every man will be made to depend, not directly on the degree and intensity of his faith, but on the evidences of his faith; not directly on the purity and strength of his love, but on the evidences of his love.

—Robert Milligan

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

The primitive church thought more about the second coming of Jesus Christ than about death or heaven. The early Christians were looking not for a cleft in the ground called a grave, but for a cleavage in the sky called glory. They were watching not for the undertaker but for the uppertaker.

—Andrew Maclaren

HE DID IT

His work was finished (we are indebted to Bro. E.L. Jorgenson for this clear and true expression). John 19:30. Now that He did it, I do not need to do it. Since He won my salvation, I am not called upon to attempt the impossible feat. In fact, none of us can do so. For us to attempt such an evil thing is to insult and discount His finished work.

In Ps. 62:2 is a clear statement. Faith makes it our own. It reads: "He only is my rock and salvation." He plus what or whom? He plus nothing.

—N. B. Wright

MARANATHA! (1 Cor. 16:22)

A 20th Century Problem: LONELINESS

R. B. Roberts

Some time ago I read a story I have never been able to forget. An ocean liner was about to cast its moorings to cross the Atlantic. Many people were gathered on the decks farewelling their friends. Among

the chattering groups a solitary figure was pacing up and down, trying to conceal his uneasiness. He was a sensitive person and the fact that no one had come to farewell him was deeply disturbing. Suddenly the cheering hubbub around him became so unbearable that he walked quickly to the side of the ship and scanned the crowds gathering below. There he saw a little boy, a dirty, dishevelled urchin who had wandered on to the dock. A moment's thought, then the man dashed down the gangway to the boy and asked, "What's your name?"

"Oh—Oh—William!" was the bewildered reply.

"William, if I give you a shilling, will you wave to me when the ship sails?"

"All right; but what'll I wave?"

Hastily pulling the scarf from his neck the man said, "You wave this scarf and keep on shouting, goodbye! goodbye!" As the ship drew away from the dock that was one passenger looking relaxed at last as he waved to a grubby little boy, whom he knew only as "William"; a little boy vigorously waving his own scarf at him and yelling "Goodbye! Goodbye!"

Foolish? Remember, he was a very sensitive man; a poet; Rupert Brooke. Poets are sensitive people and sometimes they do foolish things. But loneliness does things to People. Have you ever done anything foolish because you were lonely? Did you ever get up from the little room where you were studying alone and go down into the crowded street to buy something which you did not really need? Most people have done something like that for loneliness attacks us all.

CHANGING CHARACTER, GROWING STRONG

Loneliness is a strange thing. Strange in the sense that it is losing its original meaning and taking on a somewhat different meaning. We used to think of lighthouse keepers and men marooned on desert islands as the only really lonely people. Coleridge has embodied that basic thought of loneliness in lines which every schoolboy can repeat:

"Alone, alone, all, all alone;
Alone on a wide, wide sea."

The loneliness of solitariness. But in our day the concept of the meaning of the word "loneliness" is changing. We are becoming more and more lonely not because we are alone but because we are not alone. We are becoming aware of a new loneliness, the loneliness of being just one unit in a great crowd.

When I was a boy we lived in houses widely separated from one another. But when we saw our neighbours in their gardens we waved to them; we spoke to them; we knew them by name; knew about their children; knew about their joys and troubles. We cared. Now I live in a big block of flats and although we have come so much closer physically to our neighbours, we have at the same time drawn further away. Although I have lived in that block for several years, there is little sense of neighbourliness. I cannot get through to them. There is a withdrawing, and unwillingness to become involved with the people next door. This is a growing problem wherever people are crowded together in modern housing units. It is the loneliness that arises out of

an over-concentration of people and we must brace ourselves for an intensification of this trend.

Recently I was most interested to read in a Taiwan newspaper of a raid by the police on a youth club in one of the big cities in Taiwan. They found forty-eight young people with a record-player producing beat music at top volume while they danced and shouted hilariously. The oldest of them was only eighteen years of age. The most interesting thing was the name they had chosen for the club: "The Club of the Seven Lonelinesses". "The seven lonelinesses": what did it mean? As I read further I began to understand. For these young people, each week represented seven lonely days. Sunday to Saturday was just seven lonelinesses in a row. This club was their attempt at defying loneliness. There is no shortage of young people in Taiwan. How is it that forty-eight of them were so oppressed by loneliness that they spent so much of their time in a club such as this? It is a tendency which can be observed throughout the world and it is increasing.

Besides changing its character, loneliness is, at the same time, rapidly growing more intense. The desperate feeling of being alone—alone in spirit—of being an isolated unit that finds it difficult to strike affinity with anybody or anything, is growing in the human heart. We are getting back to what might be called the fundamental loneliness.

How can we define this fundamental loneliness? Without attempting philosophic terms, it could be described very simply as the experience of a small baby suddenly separated from its mother. It wails, loudly, insistently. Mother has gone and Mother means everything. Without Mother panic ensues. That is fundamental loneliness. Is God deliberately allowing the pattern of human society to develop until each one of us comes to the point of fundamental loneliness? We are close to panic now. It is already finding its expression in some of the most outrageous philosophy; in some of the most outrageous art; in some of the most outrageous music. Is God squeezing us up towards the place where spirits are going to cry out as a baby cries, where at long last we recognize that what we need is—very simply—God?

LONELINESS AND JESUS CHRIST

It is interesting in this connection to look at the way in which one lonely man lived his life. I mean Jesus Christ. Did you ever realise what a lonely life His was? He was inevitably different from every other person in the world: He was human; yet He was divine. He knew all there was to know of human experience. He knew its joys. He knew its sorrows. But fundamentally He knew its loneliness. There was not one person on earth who could enter into the depths of His heart. There were a few who went part of the way but there was not one who could go all the way, just as there is not one person on earth who can go all the way into your thoughts, into your heart, no matter how wide you fling the door to another human person.

How did Jesus Christ meet His problem of loneliness? It is interesting to notice that the references to His loneliness are not concerned with those midnight vigils He spent in prayer on lonely mountain tops. That is when we might have expected His loneliness to come to the surface, but there is no reference to His having any sense of lone-

liness at those times. The two occasions when there was evidently a sense of loneliness creeping into His thoughts were both times of stress, when He was surrounded by people. The first was during a long debate. A cruel, rude debate with the men of the law, the men of philosophy, the men of religion of His own age. These men took up His words and misconstrued them; threw questions at Him that were not designed to add to their knowledge, but to taunt, to throw Him off balance. It was then that He suddenly looked at them and said: "You mustn't think that I am alone. He that sent me is with me" (see John 8:16). What calmness He showed at that time of social, mental, and spiritual pressure, the time when most of us are given to panic. When Jesus Christ was in those circumstances it seems that although there may have been a sudden onrush of loneliness, it was immediately followed by a counter-reaction: "No, no! If you think of me as being alone here in the midst of your attacks, you are mistaken! I am not alone! He that sent me is with me. He walks over the barriers that exclude every human person from the inner recesses of my heart. He is my Father and He is with me here." How much would you give for such an inner assurance?

The second occasion was in some ways more difficult to face. The end was near. The hostility was mounting. What had previously been verbal hostility had entered the physical stage—His life was threatened. During one of the times when this was most apparent he turned to His disciples and said, "You know, it won't be long before you twelve men are going to scatter. You're going to run away and I'll be left. The physical danger is going to become so intense that your love and loyalty will break under the pressure. You will all leave me." Then comes the triumphant word: "But I am not alone!" (see John 16:32). What a time to be able to say that! Every friend deserting Him; the entire world opposed to Him and no comfort to be won anywhere. What would you give in circumstances such as that to be able to face the world and say, "I am not alone. My Father is with me?" Is it possible for us, or is this something that was the exclusive privilege of the Son of God? A simple story points up the fact that this certainly is possible for everyone.

Some years ago a young Szechwanese, with little education, had begun to learn English. Soon he wanted to know how to write his name in English. It was "Lo", and scribbling "My name is Lo" became his favorite form of doodling. He progressed quite rapidly until he could begin to read the New Testament in English. Some time later he became a Christian. He entered into a living relationship with Jesus Christ, but there was something lacking in his experience and this distressed him a great deal. "Why is it that I still feel so much alone?" he asked his Christian friend. "You said that if I confessed my need of Jesus Christ as my Saviour and committed my life to Him, He would be with me and I would know that He was near." Nothing his friend could say seemed to satisfy him. Then one day, while reading the English New Testament, he came across something that almost made him faint with joy: "Lo, I am with you always." Jesus had said those words, and He had specially mentioned his name, "Lo." No wonder

did not represent his name at all, nothing could shake his new-found he was overcome. Even when he realized his mistake, that the word confidence. Jesus Christ was always with him—with him as an individual.

But how, you ask, can Jesus Christ, the God-Man who never knew the overwhelming desolation of loneliness, meet this need of modern man? The answer is . . . the Cross. In Gethsemane He touched the depths of human desolation. On the Cross He suffered the bitterness of desertion, not just by man but by God—His Father; a bitterness that burst forth in the cry, "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?" In those hours when He carried the sin of the world upon His sinless heart, when even His Father turned His holy eyes from the vile sin borne so willingly by His beloved Son—in those hours He won the right to deliver every man from sin and from the loneliness that sin brings. He died to save men and women from sin and loneliness and His Father acknowledged His right when He raised Him from the dead.

THE WAY OF RELEASE

One of the problems of loneliness and the modern man is that it is so embarrassing. Modern man dare not confess loneliness because it is part of the modern creed that he is sufficient in himself. Another problem concerns the human ego. Abraham Cowley has made a shrewd observation: "It is very contradictory in human nature, that men should love themselves above all the rest of the world and yet never endure to be alone." These are two irreconcilable facts and so man looks for a solution to his problem of loneliness.

What are the possible solutions? Perhaps noise is the most commonly sought. Many seem to think that noise is the best dispeller of loneliness, but they are still lonely. As the writer of the article about the club of the Seven Lonelinesses went on to say: "The world is a very unfair market-place. It is willing to sell us as much noise as we wish but it won't buy our loneliness." There is no demand for loneliness but there is a wonderful market place for noise. Noise cannot dispel loneliness and when we have spent all our money on records, and a bigger and louder radio, when we have numbed our minds with all the exciting noises of the world, this wretched thing called loneliness still persists in the heart.

There are lonely men and women and boys and girls who have turned to narcotics, only to find themselves in the coils of a strangling loneliness more terrible than anything they have known before.

Many, especially in the west, have come to think of the bottle as being the solution to loneliness. One of the saddest sights one can see is that of a man clutching a bottle, hoping that at the bottom of the bottle he is going to find the answer to his loneliness. There is an element of truth in his thinking. The bottle does seem to do something about loneliness. Many people are lonely because of their inability to break into the social world in which they live. We are afraid of being snubbed by our fellows. That is why many people serve alcohol at parties, for it is a social fact the alcohol breaks down reserve; conversation brightens; people sparkle; somebody suddenly finds that he is a wit; someone else finds that a dull joke is very funny. Before long the

guests are mixing freely. But it does not last and when the bottles are empty and the party is over, one has both loneliness and a headache.

What is needed is a willingness to take seriously the only possible solution, the solution towards which the human race is being inexorably pressed. It is clearly stated by Jesus Christ. Simply paraphrased, this is what He said: "Look, here I am, standing outside the door of your life. If you will open that door, I will come in and we shall eat together." It is in the last book of the Bible: Revelation 3:20. It is Jesus Christ's appeal to modern men and women oppressed by this growing sense of loneliness in the midst of too many people. "There is only one thing for you to do," He says, "and that is to open the door of your life and I will come in and we shall be together in harmony, in unity." Can there be loneliness if He is there? There will be moments of loneliness; all of us are subjects to depression. We all have our bad days when loneliness creeps in; but it cannot persist; it cannot pour its poison into our hearts when we have accepted that invitation. "I will come in and we shall be united in harmony." It is the offer of Jesus Christ who suffered the bitterness of loneliness, of death and of hell, in order that all who repent and receive Him need never suffer it.

There is no other solution to the twentieth-century problem of loneliness. —from *The Way*, 1966

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Once again it is a pleasure to send you my check for renewal of *Word & Work*. I not only enjoy the reading but my friends and co-workers appreciate the help in their search for truth and light. I save back copies as they never become out dated. May God bless

you and the readers. Keep up the good "Word & Work."

Ed & Carolyn McFerren

Thanks for an excellent publication. Its probably the best thing I do with four dollars.

Bill Golden, Jr.

THE SON OF GOD . . .

Jesus was a great moral teacher? Yes, but He was much more! There are those who like to talk of accepting His moral teachings while rejecting His supernatural power or His claim to being the Son of God. C. S. Lewis says:

"I am trying to prevent anyone from saying the silly thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That's the one thing we mustn't say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn't be a great moral teacher. He'd be either a lunatic—on the level with the man who says he's a poached egg—or else he'd be the devil of hell. You must make the choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit on Him or kill Him for a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But don't let us come with any patronizing nonsense about His being (merely) a great human teacher. He hasn't left that open to us."

NEW BOOK ON 2ND AND 3RD JOHN

By Dr. Dale Jorgenson

Word and Work is pleased to announce that there will soon be published a new devotional book entitled: "A DEVOTIONAL NOTE ON THE SECOND AND THIRD EPISTLES OF JOHN."

The author, Dr. Dale A. Jorgenson, of Northeastern Missouri State University, gives an in-depth study of these two short books. He points out that the gnosticism of the early days was little removed from the materialism humanism that is our foe today. We feel that this book will be a timely addition to the library of Christians who are concerned about the spiritual erosion of our times.

We hope that the booklet will be available very shortly.

—Robert Heid, editor

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