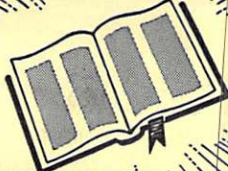
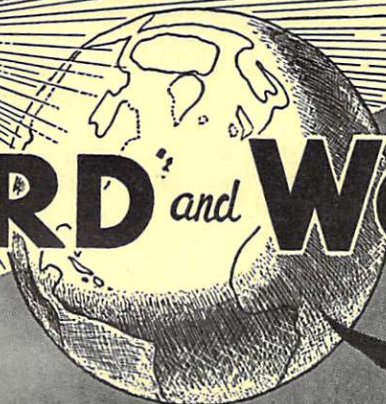


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God's Family

W. R. H.

THE SANCTITY OF CHILDBIRTH

After God created man from the dust of the ground, He breathed into him the breath of life and man became a living soul. Thus was the beginning of human life, that great miracle and mystery that has set this planet apart from all else of God's universe. And, from that time when God himself performed that first wedding in Eden, there has been a sanctity to the design and process of regeneration of human life stemming from the Father Himself. It is unfortunate that as society has tried to unfold the secrets of conception and genetics they have at the same time lost much of the awe and wonder that was innate to mankind. Now, as we have begun to manipulate the birth process, there is an attending disregard, if not disrespect for this miraculous life-giving power that God has delegated to mankind. As Christians, we need to rethink some of our basic attitudes.

THE GLORY OF LIFE

When the Lord told our first parents to "be fruitful and multiply," He spoke of the recreation of life as they then possessed it. He already knew that sin would enter the earth, and that death, through sin, would pass unto all men; but there was a plan that life, nevertheless, would be perpetuated, and that in the future a remedy would be provided for sin. That remedy would be in the birth, life, and death of a God-man, the man Christ Jesus. This work of saving grace, as well as earlier works by the fathers, the prophets, the judges and the kings, would all be accomplished by the birth process of those individuals who would commit themselves to His divine will and purpose, and accomplish their tasks in their bodies of flesh. And while all of their generations were marked by the fall, there remained life and vital force that enabled the plans of redemption to move steadily onward as man was taught to recognize his sin and need of an atoning sacrifice in the coming Prince of Peace.

NOT A PERFECT FAMILY TREE

One might surmise that since God was sending His only Son into the world to offer His life as a sinless sacrifice, that Son would be born into a lineage that was perfect; but such was not the case. As we studied the lineage of the Christ as it is given in Matthew, we found women listed by name: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth the Moabitess, and Bath Sheba. Was it by design that these four mothers, in

the lineage of Jesus, were listed by name whereas all of the others were passed over? Most surely so. The Holy Spirit makes no mistakes in His presentation of the mind of God. A new day of grace was beginning, and the Lord wanted mankind to know that each man shall give an account of himself to God. BFod was able to send "Him who knew no sin" into a sinful world, and provide an acceptable, sinless sacrifice—the only begotten from the Father, even though the lineage itself was flawed.

A GREAT FEAR FOR OUR CHILDREN

There are many couples who have a dread of bringing innocent children into such a sin-doomed world as we are seeing in our day. They fear that little ones will only be born into great trouble, and that the odds are so great against holiness that there will be little or no chance for them. This concern is understandable, if we look only to the natural resources of our ailing society. For those who are without God and without a knowledge of His ways, surely procreation is debatable. But to the Child of God, there need be no fatalism either for us or for our offspring. The God who guided the circumstances of Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Peter and Paul is still the God who hears prayer and influences destinies by the glory of His gospel and the convicting power of the Holy Spirit. It has really never been within the realm of man's power as to the holy instruction of the next generation. The successful parent has been the one acquainted with God. It is true, that fifty or seventy-five years ago more of society (in our western world) was of a spiritual turn of mind, and so more help was gained from the educational field, the business world, and even the entertainment and literary facets of life than there is today. Many school teachers, grandparents, godly neighbors and employers used to rally together to help the younger persons find themselves in life and work out a successful place in the world. But while those "fringe benefits" have been decimated by the present failure of the Christian family image, there is still the same morality available in the Book, still the same love among true believers, still the same indwelling power of the Holy Spirit, still the same witness of grace to shine forth from Christian parents to enlighten the little ones. We may need to get our priorities back into order—the two jobs may have to give way to one and the budget may have to be prayed over more often. Time will again have to be seen as most vital and valuable, particularly those first years of childhood, and play and teaching *will have to be God centered*. But don't fear for the ability of God to bring forward children—men and women who will do all of His will and will do it gladly.

God accomplishes many if not all of His eternal purposes by the instrumentality of man. "He has no hands but our hands, to do His work today; He has no feet but our feet to lead men in His way" said the poet. How marvelous that even from among ours, there may grow up a Gideon or a Deborah, a Mary or Martha, a Lois, or Eunice or a Timothy! Is anything too great for God?



Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

At a recent funeral a very ungodly man was "preached into heaven" on the basis of a response to Christ and baptism early in his life... Is this not an abuse of grace?

No one knows the reality of eternal condemnation or the Bible's teaching concerning the terrible tragedy of such a life delights in thinking that a deceased relative, friend, co-worker, neighbor, or any other has died in a lost condition. When death has touched the lives of people we do not ordinarily want to say anything which will further their grief or mark us as people who lack compassion. The desire to be kind, which of itself is much to be commended, may cause some persons to say things to grieving family members at the time of death which simply are not true. Deceased ones may be declared "so much better off" when in reality about the only possible fact is that they are in torment (cf. Lk. 16:22-23). There are times when silence is golden. We do not have to remind grieving people, especially while the wound is still raw, that their loved one was lost and is under eternal condemnation. Neither should we declare as comforting remarks that which is without foundation in fact.

Preachers are sometimes deceived concerning the status of a person, especially when they have not known that individual well. It is not unusual in such a case to inquire of some family member to be told the positive things relating to someone's spiritual status. Sometimes, in fact, the truth may be stretched to close to the breaking point. Because any comment on the life of such an individual is based on what he has been told, a preacher may unintentionally draw a false sketch of the person's life and works. Most of us have heard the story of the abused and needy widow who sat with her several children at her husband's funeral and listened as the preacher spoke glowingly of the deceased as a wonderful husband and father. Finally, she whispered to one of the older children, directing him to slip to the casket and to be sure that it was the father's body in there. Such misrepresentation is sometimes a misguided effort to be kind, sometimes it is based on false information, and sometimes it is based on a wrong doctrinal concept.

In the particular case forming the basis for our question, I do not know how much misinformation had been given to the officiating preacher, but a good bit of the problem was the particular doctrinal position that he held. He did not believe that one having become a child of God could ever be lost. He belonged to a religious group

which holds this as a doctrine, and he appeared to believe it without reservation. This is commonly known as "eternal security" or as "once saved, always saved." In the Calvinistic doctrine from which it arises it is known as "the final perseverance of the saints."

Let it be established that as to its basis salvation is by the grace of God, not of works. Let it be established that the true believer in Christ is secure as a *believer*. Opponents of "once saved, always saved" doctrine have sometimes gone to foolish extremes in an opposite direction and just as false as that which they oppose, which makes salvation very uncertain and assurance as impossible. This kind of reaction is not the solution to the problem. Let it be established that one is not a legalist (believing in salvation by works) because he believes that a life in Christ, given time and opportunity, will manifest itself in the way one lives. We are saved by grace through faith, but that faith is a scriptural, obedient, continuing faith, not a one-time, many-years-ago act largely denied by the rest of life. Saving faith in the New Testament is always a present tense matter—continuing action—not merely a past event. Several New Testament passages support the need for a continued faith (1 Cor. 15:2; Col. 3:21-23; Heb. 3:6, 12-14; etc.). Moreover, a mere claim to belief which is not substantiated by fact and evidenced by life is a lie (Read 1 John).

A minister of mature years among us recently made this observation in my hearing: "Many people claiming to be in the church of Christ say they do not believe in 'once saved, always saved' teaching, but they proceed to show by their practice that they do." He was referring to many who once responded to the gospel and were baptized but life now demonstrates very little in the way of obedience to Christ. These may drink with the drunken, curse with the worst of them, lead impure lives, seldom or never attend worship services, etc. But when they die, someone recalls that "at the age fifteen" or some such time, they responded in a meeting and were baptized. While believing in the essential nature of baptism in its proper place in salvation we cannot consent that it is a sure ticket to heaven, no matter what has followed.

If the conversion was genuine and scriptural at the earlier date, then the individual was saved. We do not say (as some do) that the failure to persevere shows the new birth never took place. The New Testament epistles speak of those who turned back, made shipwreck of the faith, and even denied the Lord after having been enlightened and made partakers of the Holy Spirit (1 Tim. 1:19-20; 2 Tim. 4:10; Heb. 6:4). It is true that some may never have done business with the Lord in spite of a profession of faith, baptism, and a period of church activity. When the "new" has worn off, they revert to the old life. There is no evidence of change. On the other hand, there are far too many warnings in scripture directed to Christian people for us to suppose that Christians cannot fall. We can draw back in faith, and our salvation is inseparably linked to faith.

We cannot here deal with all the passages which have to do with the doctrine of "once saved, always saved," but we recommend to our readers a book by Robert Shank entitled *Life in the Son*. This is one

of the best treatments of the entire subject which I have ever read.

Yes, I believe great injustice is done to God and to the doctrine of grace when the impression is left that God saves even when there is no faith and when there is outright disobedience and rebellion against God. Christians do not live without sin, but the open continued life of sin which offers no evidence of repentance or a desire for repentance is another matter.

Backslidden Christians have one advantage. Even though they have been in "the far country," they can repent and be forgiven. This is not to say that they have not lost reward and dishonored God, but God will honor genuine repentance. Especially in those cases where a person realizes death is approaching, there may be time and even the desire to repent. Since this is a matter between a man and his God, we cannot always know when it has occurred. We cannot assume that it has occurred in every case, however, for sin hardens and unbelief may be so great that the time and opportunity for repentance is not used. We can hope against hope that the individual returned to God, and we need not "preach him into hell" since we do not always know what transpires between men and God, but to imply that God saves a man in his sins is surely an abuse of grace and a reproach on the name of God.

People are traveling one of two roads—either the narrow way that leads unto life or the broad way that leads to destruction. The fact that a person may at one time have started out on the narrow way does not mean that he cannot change course and travel the broad way. The destination depends on which way we are traveling when God sees fit to terminate our present earthly journey.

113 N. 6th St., Oakdale, La. 71463



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

"Our Great Intercessor in Heaven"

*Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life
—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.
(Romans 8:34b, NIV)*

This, the greater half of the thirty-fourth verse of Romans, chapter 8, completes the most amazing set of assurances for the Christian. Before looking at this verse for our help, note the three assurances together: (1) *The Spirit himself maketh intercession for us* (verse 26, the middle of the verse). (2) *God is for us* (verse 31, middle of the verse). (3) *It is Christ Jesus...who also maketh intercession for us*

(verse 34b, beginning and ending). If you will make these three assurances your personal property (supposing that you, of course, have come to Christ for His salvation), then you have something to keep you from fear of the future—or the present—or the results of the past! Two of the three persons that make up the one God are said to be interceding for us—the Holy Spirit Who is dwelling in us, and the Son Who is in Heaven at the right hand of the Father, having pleased the Father by completing the work the Father had sent Him to do, that is, to provide His salvation for us by taking our place and dying on the Cross. Then, in between, we are told, as should be obvious anyhow because of what He has done for us, that the Father is for us. Never forget that picture!

Now let us look for a little while at our partial verse for this month. First we have the unbelievable (humanly speaking) truth that the Son of God, Who never gave up being God but gave up His outward glory and became a true man, took our sins upon Him and died, taking not only our sins but also the wrath of the holy God against sin, and then died the death that we deserved. Thus, as the little chorus goes, "He paid a debt He did not owe, I had a debt I could not pay"—and thank God, it was my debt that He paid, and yours—even if you haven't accepted that wonderful payment yet. He paid it, now receive it by putting your complete trust in Him, realizing you could never wipe away one single act of sin by anything you do.

But the verse does not stop with His death—it says He was raised to life, rising with resurrection life to give to us. Have you ever thought about the body that came out of the grave? It was recognizable as Jesus Christ, but it was enough different that He could disappear from sight, pass through a closed and locked door, enter Heaven (think of the speed He used to get there after disappearing from sight!), and stay there throughout all this dispensation at the right hand of the Father. And that is the kind of body we will have when we go to the place He is preparing for us (John 14:2) since "we shall be like Him" (1 John 3:2) and we know that "(Christ) will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Philippians 3:21). Truly "We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Roman 6:4) No human being could have designed or even imagined such a glorious thing and would not have dared to risk being laughed at if he had written it. But we can trust God, for He is faithful and cannot lie, and therefore we can know that that is our wonderful future after being kept through this life as our Great Shepherd in Heaven intercedes for us along with the Holy Spirit interceding from within us.

This verse, then, gives the past work of Christ for us (died and was raised) and His present work for us (interceding at the right hand of the Father) and all this implies what the rest of this chapter tells us—that we will never be separated from Him. As the preceding verses had asked, in the present or the future, who could possibly bring anything up against us that would endanger our position as God's people through eternity? Satan is a powerful spirit being, but "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world." Satan

is the prince and God of this whole world system, but his doom is sure and he will not be able to accuse you before God, for he cannot go beyond the limits that God gives him and we are in the Father's hands and no one will be able to snatch us out of His hands (John 10:29).

In closing, then, may I remind you that, if you are a Christian, God can not be for you and at the same time condemn you. Christ cannot intercede for you and yet speak against you, the Holy Spirit did not take up His place in you interceding for you in order to have His intercession fail and you be lost. We don't go through life "on a bed of roses", but we can be sure that not one of His chosen ones will be at the judgment when sins are judged and condemnation handed out. But maybe it would be best to leave it at the close in the words of Jesus Himself—"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life" (John 5:24, NIV)—all quotations above also from the NIV).

Viewing the News

Jack Blaes



due to shortage of infants. Pro-life advocates have introduced over 200 amendments limiting abortion, only to be defeated.

—Light for the Christian Walk

The Public Health Service has recorded 14,739 cases of AIDS and 7,545 deaths from the disease, which causes a breakdown of the body's ability to fight off infection. Major Edward Koch of New York City, where more than 5,000 cases of AIDS have been reported, has ordered the closing of bath-houses because they "sell death there." The U.S. Public Health Service said on November 14th that no special restrictions are needed for food-handlers and health-care workers infected with AIDS because there is no evidence that the deadly virus can spread through casual contact. Doesn't make me feel any safer to have an organization like that in charge of public health services.

—The New American

Since the legalization of abortion, there have been more than 16:5 million legal abortions in the United States. It is beyond human comprehension how many illegal ones. The Vietnam War claimed 55,000 lives during a period of 14 years; yet in two weeks there are over 56 thousand abortions, 4,200 babies are sacrificed on the abortion altar each day. In fact, abortion claims the life of a child every 20 seconds. Undoubtedly Satan, the god of this age, is pleased. More than 97 percent of all abortions are performed for elective, non-medical reasons. Nearly one-third of all abortions in America are performed on girls 15-19 years old. Functioning neurological structures necessary for pain sensation are in place as early as eight weeks after conception. During the controversy of Roe vs. Wade, more than 1,200 U.S. Clergymen actively lobbied to legalize abortion. In Washington, D.C., there are more abortions per day than births. In 1983, two million American couples were denied adoption

The Communist Danger in South Africa

This article is from the **Christian Anti-Communism Crusade**. "The communist periodical, **Information Bulletin**, published in Czechoslovakia by the **World Marxist Review**, reports on the **World Congress of the South African Communist Party (SACP)**. The report affirms the existence of an alliance between South African Communists and the **African National Congress (ANC)**. It states: The Congress pledged that the SACP would continue to work for the further strengthening of the revolutionary alliance of the African National Congress, the SACP and the South African Congress of Trade Unions, which is headed by the ANC. The delegates hailed the fact of the growth in the strength and popularity of the ANC inside our country and the further heightening of its prestige internationally. They reaffirmed their confidence that the liberation alliance headed by the ANC would carry out its historic mission of leading the masses of our country to victory in the struggle for the seizure of power by the people and the success of the national democratic revolution."

It must be noted that the communists regard "The National Democratic Revolution" as the first state of the process which will lead to communism.

Other significant statements in the report are: The participants noted that the Party had continued to grow in strength, especially inside our country, drawing into its ranks outstanding working class and youth activists in particular . . .

The conditions therefore exist for the further growth of our party, attracting to itself the most advanced and conscious sons and daughters of the working class of our country. At the same time, this organizational work as well as the practical, political and ideological involvement of our party with the workers in particular, will ensure the continued growth of the influence of the communist cause and enable the working class of our country to carry out its historic mission of taking power from the capitalist class and building a socialist society.

The congress also extended its revolutionary solidarity to all forces struggling for national liberation, democracy, socialism and peace, especially the people of Namibia, Western Sahara, Palestine, El Salvador, Nicaragua and

East Timor. It agreed that the international situation demands the convening of a world conference of the communist movement in order to further strengthen the unity and effectiveness of this movement as well as the anti-imperialist forces as a whole.

The communists regard the revolution in South Africa as an important component of their world revolution that will lead to the establishment of the "World Dictatorship of the Proletariat". Their control of the military wing of the ANC is most sinister and significant.

.

In a world in rebellion it should be no surprise in the turn of events in the Catholic Church in these past twenty years. The Second Vatican Council was an enormous gathering in Rome of Catholic bishops (almost 3,000 of them) which lasted from 1962 to 1965 and produced 16 documents about Catholic belief and behavior. It was called by Pope John XXIII. He was a very loving and in a good way a simple man who was wanting this Council to express more clearly to the world what Catholics believe and what rules of morality are dear to them, and at the same time not abandoning one small part of their belief and morality. The council of Bishops consider burning issues, discussing and openly debating them, and finally drawing up a document which serves as a guideline for Catholics the world over as to how they should think and act on each issue. Thus the 16 documents of the Second Vatican Council were arrived at.

There were a number of very clever and active bishops and theologians who managed to get the wordings adopted in these documents to be so ambiguous and full of holes as to make it possible to be interpreted to say just the opposite of what the bishops really intended to say. There were enough priests and nuns waiting in the wings of that act to take up with these ambiguous documents to work effectually to bring about the changes that these clever bishops had in mind when they hijacked the Council. They interpreted the documents in such a way as to permit a wide variety of violations of Catholic morality and departures from Catholic belief—all, they said, "In the spirit of Vatican II." This is what has been happening world wide in the

Catholic Church for the past 20 years.

We will be hearing in the news about another meeting held by Pope John Paul II between Nov. 25 and Dec. 8. Pope John Paul has seen first hand all over the world that these bishops with their renegade priests and nuns have been supporting the communist revolution. He even found five priests participating in Nicaragua's government at the cabinet level. He found that scores of other priests and nuns were collaborating with the Nicaraguan Communists throughout the country. All of them were fomenting hatred for capitalism and for the United States, and working to establish Communism in all the countries of Central America. And all of this is being done in the name or spirit of Vatican II. All this and much more the Pope has been finding in his various visits around the world. And so, he has called this meeting of Catholic bishops to Rome.

The pope is not thinking of a conference of "give and take" discussion, but the pope has called the bishops to Rome to lay down Roman Catholic law to the bishops' representatives, so that they will go back home and inform their fellow bishops the pope's mind. Should the pope be successful in controlling the bishops, and through them their priests and nuns throughout the world, if he could establish the real meaning of the Second Vatican Council documents, then the rising tide of revolution in Latin America and elsewhere would lose its steam. And brothers and sisters, this is worth praying for.

Thank you for encouraging remarks. I know you can't enjoy the news, but many of you tell me that you appreciate the discovery of so many of these things. Now we need to "light candles" of prayer to dispel the darkness of these days.

The Importance of the Devotional Mood

A. W. Tozer

Maintenance of the devotional mood is indispensable to success in the Christian life.

Holiness and power are not qualities that can be once received and thereafter forgotten as one might wind a clock or take a vitamin pill. The world is too much with us, not to mention the flesh and the devil, and every advance in the spiritual life must be made against the determined resistance of the trinity of evil. Gains made must be consolidated and held with a resolution equal to that of an army in the field.

To establish our hearts in the devotional mood we must abide in Christ, walk in the Spirit, pray without ceasing, and meditate on the Word of God day and night. Of course this implies separation from the world, renunciation of the flesh and obedience to the will of God as we are able to understand it.

And what is this devotional mood? It is nothing else than constant awareness of God's unfolding presence, the holding of inward conversations with Christ and private worship of God in spirit and in truth. Public worship embraces the the community of believers and is genuine only as the individuals who compose the company assemble in this mood of reverent devotion. Anything short of this is sheer formality and must surely be unacceptable to God.

Among the enemies to devotion hardly another is so harmful as distractions. Whatever excites the curiosity, scatters the thoughts, disquiets the heart, absorbs the interests or shifts our life focus from the kingdom of God within us to the world around us—that is a dis-

traction; and the world is full of them. Our Science-based civilization has given us many benefits but it has multiplied our distractions and so taken away far more than it has given.

One thing is certain, however: we cannot turn the clock back to quieter times, neither can we hide from the persistent clamor of the twentieth century. We must learn to live in such a world as this and be victorious over it.

In the normal course of things a certain number of distractions are bound to come to each of us; but if we learn to be inwardly still these can be rendered relatively harmless. It would not be hard to compile a long list of names of Christians who carried upon their shoulders the burden of state or the responsibilities of business and yet managed to live in great inward peace with the face of the Lord in full view. They have left us a precious legacy in the form of letters, journals, hymns and devotional books that witness to the ability of Christ to calm the troubled waters of the soul as He once calmed the waves on the Sea of Galilee. And today as always those who listen can hear His still, small voice above the earthquake and the whirlwind.

While the grace of God will enable us to overcome inevitable distractions, we dare not presume upon God's aid and throw ourselves open to the unnecessary ones. The roving imagination, an inquisitive interest in other people's business, preoccupation with external affairs beyond what is absolutely necessary: these are certain to lead us into serious trouble sooner or later. The heart is like a garden and must be kept free from weeds and insects. To expect the fruits and flowers of Paradise to grow in an untended heart is to misunderstand completely the processes of grace and the ways of God with men. Only grief and disappointment can result from continued violation of the divine principles that underlie the spiritual life.

The multiplying of artificial objects of attention has not made people happy; it has made them quite the opposite. Think of the contented grandmother of American tradition, a look of sweet serenity on her face, quietly knitting on the hollyhock-fringed porch, and compare her with the nervous, exhausted housewife of today, moving tensely among her labor-saving devices trying to get her work finished in time to keep an appointment with her psychiatrist. These pictures may be slightly overdrawn; the grandmother being, possibly, not *quite* so contented and the modern housewife not as frustrated as we suppose, but there is a lot of truth here nevertheless. Things cannot bring happiness; they can only add more weight to the already too great burdens of the heart.

The remedy for distractions is the same now as it was in earlier and simpler times, viz., prayer, meditation and the cultivation of the inner life. The psalmist said, "Be still, and know," and Christ told us to enter into our closet, shut the door and pray unto the Father. It still works.

"Let us return to ourselves, brothers," said the Greek saint Nicophorus, "...for it is impossible for us to become reconciled and united with God if we do not first return to ourselves, as far as it lies in our power, or if we do not enter within ourselves, tearing ourselves—what a wonder it is! from the whirl of the world with its

multitudinous vain cares and striving constantly to keep attention on the kingdom of heaven which is within us.”

Distractions *must* be conquered or they will conquer us. So let us cultivate simplicity; let us want fewer things; let us walk in the Spirit; let us fill our minds with the Word of God and our hearts with praise. In that way we can live in peace even in such a distraught world as this. “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.”
—from *The Alliance Witness*

I Couldn't Do Everything— But I Wasn't Supposed To

Howard Snyder

In 1974 I found myself working as pastor of a small church in a growing, working-class community on the edge of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

It wasn't an ideal situation. I was a North American missionary living 20 miles away, clear across the city. Responsibilities at our seminary meant that I could get to the church only twice a week. But the Lord taught me a lesson that also strengthened the church.

At church planning meetings, I noticed that one man, Andre, always took notes on a little pad of paper. I was surprised. Andre was a fairly recent convert, about three years old in the Lord. He was a little older than I, perhaps 38, and had only a third-grade education. He had been a well-known alcoholic in the community before he met Christ and was carefully disciplined by the former pastor.

As I got to know Andre better, I found that he had a gift for organization. He knew how to bring people together around a common purpose and get a job done. He seemed to have a sense of responsibility that would be natural for someone in an administrative role. I was impressed by the insights he would bring to bear in planning sessions. He had not learned this anywhere; it was a gift of grace.

My seminary training had taught me that administration was a big part of pastoral work. I was to be the chief church administrator. But here I was with limited time, working in a church where I had to overcome language and cultural barriers. I simply couldn't do that job of administration that should be done, and I was becoming increasingly convinced that even if I could, that wasn't God's plan.

So the Lord gave me Andre. I had 16 years' more formal education than he did, but he could do something I couldn't. As designated pastor I still had overall administrative responsibility, but I found I could turn over many organizational tasks to Andre. He became involved in the finances of the church; he helped set up the schedule for our main Sunday service.

Andre also had a natural desire to work with young people. He brought them into his home and was able to draw them together and teach them. So he was made advisor of the youth group. This led into more than administrative work for him. I maintained close contact with him, and we were able to work together in caring for the younger members of the church.

The results were threefold: Andre found a significant ministry, many jobs got done better than I could do them, and more of my time could be given to shepherding and teaching.

Scripture teaches that the church is a community in which each person has been given one or more charisms for building the body and extending its ministry in the world.

His gift of administration was needed to supply a lack and to make my ministry more effective. It was but one of several ministry gifts which the Spirit began to awaken in our little congregation.

I confess I don't yet understand fully all the New Testament teaches about the gifts of the Spirit. But through my brother Andre, God showed me that the Spirit does indeed give gifts, and that these gifts are useful in building the body of Christ.

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Opening Eyes, Hearts, Hands

"Our vision for famine relief is that we will truly be able to look at people and say, 'We're here with you for good. You are people we love and value. And whatever we can do to enable you in your own path of development—both economically and spiritually—we want to do that.'"

That's Kevin McFarland's nutshell description of what motivates him as director of the development assistance organization, "Manna International." While not discounting the need for emergency relief aid, the Church of Christ leader is one of a growing number of Christians who recognize that long-range development is a vital component in the struggle to provide famine victims with assistance that lasts.

During a recent visit to World Vision's Monrovia offices, Kevin handed President Ted Engstrom a check for \$67,225 to be used in an innovative agricultural development program in Ethiopia's Ansokia Valley. "Our decision to fund this project was based primarily on the impact that that project has on small farmers," Kevin explained. "The project provides intensive training for the farmers and brings the benefits of the production back to the producers."

Sharing that excitement and vision for long-range commitment is Jerry McCaghren, director of "Bread for a Hungry World." After serving as a minister in the Church of Christ for 21 years, Jerry decided to devote full energy to raising funds for famine relief and generating awareness of hunger needs among fellow Church of Christ members.

While Kevin and Jerry were in Monrovia, WORLD VISION magazine Associate Editor Randy Miller queried them about their goals, dreams and their interest in working with World Vision on certain projects.

Kevin, how and why did Manna International get started?

My involvement grew out of my work with young people in Redwood City, California, and a desire to create a context where young people and others in the church could encounter God's work in a

powerful way. The hunger issue has tremendous potential to awaken in us a faith in God's ability to use us and to work through us to bring about new kinds of realities.

The primary concern of Manna, outside of relief works, is a strong emphasis on development. We're especially interested in Sub-Saharan Africa. We'd like to see some ecologically sensitive, small-scale development works implemented in those areas.

Jerry, what were the origins of Bread for a Hungry World?

Bread for a Hungry World grew out of a dream of several Church of Christ brethren. It's an outlet for us to take the word *love* and really make it practical.

Bread for a Hungry World began in May 1984 out of a desire, initially, to help meet relief needs. But Kevin has helped us to understand that there is a greater need than relief, and that is to equip people so they can sustain themselves—providing for them the tools, the seed, the education, and whatever else is essential for them to be self-sustaining.

Kevin, what's behind Manna's desire to financially assist the Ansokia Valley agricultural development project?

I met with John McMillin (World Vision's large-scale agricultural development specialist) about a year ago, when he'd just come back from Ethiopia with plans for development projects. John had the same kind of vision we had: a real desire to see progress in water development. And also to see certain areas to the Rift Valley become production centers. He told me about Ansokia Valley, and I was very interested. There seemed to be a lot of production potential there. We began to discuss it here at home, and I also went to Ethiopia to visit some of the projects. The work at Ansokia Valley displayed one of the best development projects we knew of anywhere. It was right at the heart of what we wanted.

Jerry, what is the nature of Bread for a Hungry World's involvement with World Vision?

To me, the beauty about our relationship with World Vision is that we are able to use our own infrastructure while drawing upon World Vision's research, methodology and expertise. World Vision has a lot of people who've been involved in relief and development for many years. We're a new organization, so we're trying to draw upon what they've been able to learn.

World Vision can help a denomination or agency carry out a more effective ministry. By supplying us with goods and technical help, they enable us to be more effective, efficient and better stewards of our resources.

Kevin, what motivates you in your work, and how do you hope people will change as a result of their contacts with Manna?

In the purest sense, my motivation is that I seek to be submitted to the call of God in my life today. I believe God has called me to work in this area. What grows out of that is a desire to help other Christians encourage one another toward the kind of faith that believes God can still do life-changing, beautiful things.

What we want to say to people is, "We think it's great that you cared enough to give sacrificially. But it's not enough, just to meet a

crisis. You know, God didn't just meet our crises; He dwells in us and stays with us. And we've got to stay with these people—to meet their needs for production, for reclaiming their soil and helping them develop.

Kevin, what do you see as the role of young people in meeting the hunger crisis?

We work with youth groups to create a sense of anticipation of God's involvement, to create a sense of hope that God can actually move and do things in this world and that He is concerned. We do that with college students on about 140 campuses right now.

We've also produced family enrichment materials designed to challenge kids and to get kids to challenge their parents. There a lot we can learn from our youth groups and our children. When kids look at hunger they say, "People die of starvation and God hates that. It really breaks God's heart. That means it shouldn't happen. And that means that if we have something, we ought to give it away."

Jerry, what are your dreams for Bread for a Hungry World?

My dream is really to help the Church of Christ get out of a "crisis syndrome" and into an attitude of committing ourselves to the world. It's too easy for us to sit in the lap of luxury. I'm convinced that Jesus died for a whole lot more than a Sunday morning worship service. We've got to get our people out into the community where people are hurting. And the hurting people are not all just in Ethiopia; a lot of them are in their own neighborhoods.

I also want to help us understand what evangelism is. We've left evangelism mostly to missionaries, but the essence of evangelism lies in capturing the Spirit of Christ.

Another dream I have is to take young people overseas for summer-long cross-cultural experiences in developing countries. I'd like for kids to become involved. Let them make bricks, let them unload food, let them dig wells, let them get some dirt under their fingernails, let them hurt, let them sleep out under the stars and hear the wailing of people and the crying of mothers. When those kids come back they'll be servants until the day they die.

I hope we'll be able to prepare our people so that if famine is threatening a country, we can get in there before it really strikes and help to stave it off.

Jerry, you mentioned being thankful to God for this famine. What did you mean by that?

I don't want to be misunderstood about that. What I mean is that this famine has made us in the Church of Christ—and many other Christians worldwide—recognize that God doesn't want us to be isolationists; He wants us to pull together.

People all over the place are getting involved. After I spoke at a church last Tuesday a youth group handed me a check for \$4500. I spoke to a group another night and a man wrote me a check for \$1000. Elderly widows are committing \$50 a month. This is pulling us together, getting our eyes off ourselves, and it is really making us free. Through this crisis, the Lord is helping us see our brothers and sisters clear around the world. And right here at home, too. —from *WORLD VISION* magazine, Oct./Nov. '85.

GLEANINGS

Compiled by Larry Miles

THE LIGHT OF THE DAY

I thank Thee for the light of day; I thank Thee for a time to pray.
Please keep me, Lord, from ev'ry sin, as I this day with Thee begin,
And watch me lest I go astray, along the broad, forbidden way.

—J. A. Maker

TURN YOUR EYES UPON JESUS

Turn your eyes upon Jesus!
Look full in His wonderful face;
Things of earth will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.

—Selected

A CROSS-BEARER

Often a person who claims to be a "cross-bearer" is really just a "cross bear." To be a "cross-bearer" is scriptural; but a "cross bear" who poses as a "cross-bearer" is miserable himself, and spreads his misery to others. A true "cross-bearer" suffers, no doubt; but he does it with joy! "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, Rejoice." (Phil. 4:4). "But inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's sufferings, rejoice; that at the revelation of His glory also ye may rejoice with exceeding joy." (I Pet. 4:13).

—Richard Ramsey

YOUR LIFE IS AN OPEN BOOK

You are writing a gospel, a chapter each day,
By deeds that you do, by words that you say;
Men read what you write, whether faithless or true:
Say what is the gospel according to you?

—Selected

OUR ELDER BROTHER

Though now ascended up on high,
He bends on earth a brother's eye.
Partaker of our human name,
He knows the frailties of our frame.
In every pang that rends the heart
The Man of Sorrows has a part,
He sympathizes with our grief,
And to the sufferer sends relief.

—Selected

CHRIST IS EVERYTHING

Christ is everything. He is everything to the heart of God, and He desires to be everything to the hearts of His people. That it may be so with you is the highest blessedness I can desire for you.

—A. C. Harrington

Until next time, **MARANATHA!**

LEADERS MUST PLAN GOALS

Howard W. Norton

Vacations are over, students are back in school, and it is time for local churches to plan seriously for calendar year 1986. There are different ways to gear up for a new year of work, but there is no one infallible way to do it. We do know, however, that the Lord's work deserves careful and thoughtful planning. Here are some suggestions which might prove helpful for church leaders who are looking for a way to prepare for 1986.

First, leaders in every church of Christ should set aside time individually and collectively to meditate and pray about the work which the Holy Spirit has appointed them to do. If possible, they should seek to spend this quiet time in an atmosphere away from the telephone, television, doorbell and every other distraction. The Lord's work deserves our best mental concentration.

Second, church leaders should reaffirm their commitment to the divine purpose and mission of the local church as it is defined in the Scriptures. The purpose of the church is to glorify God and provide a support group for all who desire to glorify him through their lives.

God's word teaches that the church glorifies Him by guiding human beings to become like Jesus Christ. The church, therefore, exists to bring the lost to Christ (evangelism), to strengthen the saved (edification), to honor God (worship), and to treat others the way Jesus treated people (benevolence). When the church pays attention to the reason for its existence, it glorifies God and inspires others to honor the Creator and Sustainer of life.

Third, local church leaders should lead out in establishing clear and accomplishable goals which will enable the church to fulfill its purpose of glorifying God through evangelism, edification, worship, and benevolence.

Let leaders beware of vague and immeasurable goals for the church. Write the goals this way: We want to teach and baptize 50 people by Dec. 31, 1986, or we want to recruit and train five couples who are between 30 and 45 years of age to provide spiritual nurture for our high school young people by March 1, 1986.

Approaching church work with well-defined goals gives direction to our labors and permits us to evaluate our progress. It follows the Jerusalem example of the apostle Paul who clearly stated that he wanted to visit Rome when he had finished his mission to Jerusalem. Then from Rome, he wanted the church to send him to Spain.

Like a great general, Paul laid out his strategy for conquering the world for Christ. He was always thinking several moves in advance. Do local leaders and their followers dare to do less?

Fourth, local leaders and their followers should prepare the church budget *after* they have established the goals. It is a mistake to set the budget first and then determine the goals. Even in family financial planning, a study of needs precedes the plan for spending the available funds.

While churches must behave in a fiscally responsible manner and not overcommit themselves financially, they must also recognize there

is more money available in most local churches than is now being given if the churches' goals are challenging.

Carefully constructed goals motivate generous giving, but poor goals—or a total lack of them—encourage stinginess and materialism.

Fifth, local leaders should provide ample opportunity for every member to state his or her ideas concerning plans for calendar year 1986.

Once information has been gathered from the whole congregation and the basic plan for 1986 is in place, church leaders should provide a clear and full description of that final plan to the entire congregation. This kind of full disclosure will challenge the congregation to rise up and carry out its dreams to the glory of God the Father.

As the clock ticks away at what remains of 1985, church leaders should move boldly and guide local churches in developing plans for the new year which permit the church to function like the body of Christ is supposed to function. —from the *Christian Chronicle*, September 1985

HEROES OF THE FAITH

GEORGE MULLER'S LIVING GOD

Does God really hear and answer your prayer? Take a look at God's dealings with George Muller, a man who said, "I have joyfully dedicated my whole life to the object of showing how much may be accomplished by prayer and faith."

One of the main works of his life was the establishment of a large orphanage at Bristol, England. In sixty-four years from the outset of this work, Mr. Muller cared for 10,024 orphans; established seven day schools which 81,501 children attended; founded twelve Sunday schools which instructed a total of 32,944 children; and aided twenty-five Sunday schools in England and Wales. He contributed large sums of money to foreign mission work, distributed 1,989,266 Bibles and parts thereof, circulated 3,101,338 books and tracts, and traveled in forty-two countries preaching the Gospel to three million hearers. In all he received from and gave back to God \$7,500,000, at no time asking any one for so much as a penny.

He was a man who knew by experience what it is for God to "give us this day our daily bread." He remarked, "From August, 1838, to April, 1849, . . . we had day by day almost without interruption, to look to Him for our daily supplies, and, for a great part of the time, from meal to meal."

Materials were not the only thing this man of God received in prayer's answers. He made this statement. "Thousands of souls have been saved in answer to my prayers."

What was the secret of Muller's power with God? He took time to be alone with God in prayer, meditation, and Bible study. He would study the Bible on his knees. He spent hours every day on his knees in prayer. He said, "I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk, when I lie down, and when I rise. And the answers are always coming. Tens of thousands of times have my prayers been answered.

When once I am persuaded a thing is right, I go on praying for it until the end comes. I never give up!"

Conditions of prevailing prayer which were always before his mind were:

Entire dependence upon the merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of any claim for blessing. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it" (John 14:13, 14).

Separation from all known sin. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me" (Psalm 66:18).

Faith in God's word of promise. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: . . . he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

Asking in accordance with His will. Our motives must be godly. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).

Importunity in supplication. There must be waiting on God and waiting for God. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them" (Luke 18:7)?

BOY NUMBER 92

Dorothy C. Haskin

Jim stood by the window, looking out so he would not be expected to play with the other boys. He felt too miserable to play. Life had been tough enough when his father died and he and his mother lived alone.

But now, she was gone. The man at the church said she had gone to be with Jesus. Then, this day, Aug. 8, 1839, the man had brought Jim to this orphanage in Bristol, England.

A boy came up to him and said, "I'm Davey. You'll like it here." Jim didn't answer. He wasn't sure he would ever like it.

"Look, that's him," Davey whispered.

"Who?" Jim asked, staring out at the man who was coming out of a house across the street. He was an ordinary looking man, except he had such a pleasant expression.

"Why, Mr. Muller who prays for us orphans! He says he himself doesn't take care of us; he just prays for us every day, and God does the work."

"That's a lot of praying," Jim answered. He had not done much praying though he knew his mother had. "Mr. Muller has to pray if we are to eat."

Jim's eyes grew big. He had hoped that at the orphanage he wouldn't miss any meals. He had missed a lot of them since his mother had been sick, and missing meals gave him an awful gone feeling. "Doesn't he have any other way to get food?"

"No, he doesn't have any money at all, but God sends what we need."

That didn't sound too dependable to Jim. He glanced at the bunch of boys and figured it would take a lot of food to feed them.

"Are there many of us?"

"I heard that you are boy number 92."

That was a lot and maybe God had only enough food for 91 boys! He was 92 and if there wasn't enough food, he'd be the one who didn't get any!

Jim shook his head. It was all new to him. All he had ever heard was you worked and got money and bought food. It was bad enough losing his mother without having been brought to a place like this, where the only way to get food was to pray for it.

A loud gong struck. Davey said, "Come on, that's supper."

Good! Jim thought. Now he'd see if there was enough food. Shortly Jim sat down at one end of a long table and glanced down. There was a spoon, plate and mug for each boy, but no food! He swallowed a big lump.

At the end of the table stood George Muller. He smiled kindly and said, "Boys, as you know we have a Father who is Father of the fatherless. Some of you have been with me several years. Have you ever gone to bed hungry?"

"No," answered the boys.

"And we know that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. As He provided for us in the past, He will provide for us today. We do not, as yet, have our evening meal. But I have gathered you all together that we might say Grace, thanking our Father, for we know He will provide."

The boys bowed their heads and George Muller prayed.

There was a long, shrill ring of the doorbell. Jim looked up. Mr. Muller said, "Wait, boys, this is our answer." He disappeared into the hall.

"Do you think it is?" Jim whispered.

"Sure." Davey nodded.

Jim grit his teeth as he waited.

In a few minutes George Muller came back into the room. Smiling, he said, "That was a man with some money for us. It will take a little while to get the food but soon it will be on the table. Boys, always trust God. In the years I have run this orphanage no meal ever has been more than a half hour late, and it won't be to-night."

Jim sighed. He felt good. It was wonderful to know that he too, could have a heavenly Father to take care of him!

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GOD'S REMARKABLE ANSWERS TO GEORGE MULLER'S PRAYERS

A few of the many remarkable answers to prayers which George Muller received during his eventful life as contained in his own narratives, are here recored.

June 13, 1853 — We were now very poor. Not indeed in debt, not even with all the money gone; there was still about sixty dollars in hand; but there was needed to be bought flour, of which we buy generally ten sacks at a time, four thousand two hundred pounds of

oatmeal, four hundred-weight of soap. There were many little repairs going on in the house, with a number of workmen employed, besides the regular current expenses of about \$280 per week. Over and above all this, on Saturday, the day before yesterday, I found that the heating apparatus needed to be repaired, which would, in all probability, cost \$100. It was therefore desirable humanly speaking, to have \$500 for these heavy extra expenses.

But I had no human prospect whatever of getting even two hundred cents—much less \$500. In addition to this, today was Monday when generally the income is little. But in walking to the Orphan House this morning, and praying as I went, I particularly told the Lord in prayer, that on this day, though Monday, He could send me much. And thus it was I received this morning \$1500 for the Lord's service, as might be most needed. The joy which I had cannot be described. I walked up and down in my room for a long time, tears of joy and gratitude to the Lord raining plentifully over my cheeks, praising and magnifying the Lord for His goodness, and surrendering myself afresh, with all my heart, to Him for His blessed service. I scarcely ever felt more the kindness of the Lord helping me.

Sept. 30, 1868 — From Yorkshire \$250. Received also \$5000 today for the Lord's work in China. About this donation it is especially to be noted, that for months it had been my earnest desire to do more than ever for mission work in China, and I had already taken steps to carry out my desire, when this donation came to hand. The precious answer to prayer for means *should be a particular encouragement to all who are engaged in the Lord's work, and who may need means for it.* It proves afresh that, if our work is His work, and we honor Him by waiting upon and looking to Him for means, He will surely, in His own time and way, supply them.

The joy which answers to prayer give, cannot be described, and the impetus which they afford to the spiritual life is exceeding great. The experience of this happiness I desire for all my Christian readers. If you indeed believe in the Lord Jesus for the salvation of your soul; if you walk uprightly and do not regard iniquity in your heart; if you continue to wait patiently, and believing upon God, such answers will surely be given to your prayers. You may not be called upon to serve the Lord in the way the writer does, and therefore may never have answers to prayer respecting such things as are recorded here; but in your various circumstances, your family, your business, your profession, your church activities, your labor for the Lord, you may have answers as distinct as any here recorded.

Sept. 4, 1869 — Only one cent was in my hands this morning. Pause a moment, dear reader! Only one cent in hand when the day commenced! Think of this, and think of nearly fourteen hundred persons to be provided for. You, poor brethren, who have six or eight children and small wages, think of this; and you, my brethren who do not belong to the working classes, but have as it is called, very limited means, think of this! *May you not do what we do, under your trials?* Does the Lord love you less than He loves us? Does He not love all His children with no less love than that with which He loves His only begotten Son, according to John 17:20-23? Or are we better than

you? . . . Well, let us hear then, how God helped when there was *only one cent* left in my hands, on the morning referred to.

Shortly after nine o'clock I received \$5.00 from a sister in the Lord, who does not wish the name of the place where she resides mentioned. Between ten and eleven o'clock the bag was sent from the Orphan Houses, in which a note stated that nearly \$6.00 was required for today. *Scarcely had I read this* when a carriage stopped before my house, and a gentleman, from the neighborhood of Manchester was announced. I found that he was a believer, who had come on business to Bristol. He had heard about the Orphan Houses, and expressed his surprise that without any regular system of collections, and without personal application to anyone, simply by faith and prayer, I obtained more than \$10,000 annually for the work of the Lord in my hands. This brother, whom I had never seen before, and whose name I did not even know before he came, gave me \$10.00, as an exemplification of what I had stated to him.

July 28, 1874 – "It has for months appeared to me, as if the Lord meant, by His dealings with us, to bring us back to that state of things, in which we were for more than ten years, from August, 1838, to April, 1849, when we had day by day almost without interruption, to look to Him for our daily supplies, and for a great part of the time, from meal to meal. The difficulties appeared to me very great, as the institution is now twenty times larger than it was then, and our purchases are to be made in a wholesale way; but at the same time, I am comforted by the knowledge that God is aware of all this, and that if this way be for the glory of His name, and for the good of His church and the unconverted world, I am, by His grace, willing to go this way, and to do it to the end of my course. The funds were thus fast expended; but God, our infinitely rich Treasurer, remains to us. It is this which gives me peace.

"If it pleases Him with a work requiring about \$222,000 a year, to make me do again at the evening of my life, what I did from August, 1839, to April, 1849, I am not only prepared for it, but gladly again would I pass through all these trials of faith with regard to means, if He only might be glorified, and His church and the world be benefitted. Often and often this last point has of late passed through my mind, and I have placed myself in the position of having no means at all left, and *two thousand one hundred persons* not only at the table, but with everything else to be provided for, and all funds gone; one hundred and eighty-nine missionaries to be assisted, and nothing whatever left; about *one hundred schools*, with about nine thousand scholars in them, to be entirely supported, and no means for them in hand; about *four millions of tracts and tens of thousands* of copies of the Holy Scriptures yearly have to be sent out, and all the money expended. Invariably, however, with this probability before me, I have said to myself: God who has raised up this work through me, God who has led me generally year after year, to enlarge it, God who has supported this work now for more than forty years, will still help and will not suffer me to be confounded, because I rely upon Him, I commit the whole work to Him, and He will provide me with what I need in the future also, though I know not when the means are to come."

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Moto Nomura

The Yatsugatake Range, Japan

October 30th

Though it looked like as if we had lost our battle of Alamo in Tokyo, and had to retreat to this remote rural area far from big city like Tokyo, we clearly see the leading hand of the Holy Spirit in our ministry in Japan ever since I came back from the States in 1961. The same Holy Spirit who brought His Church to us on the day of Pentecost still works and leads His children for His own glory and honor, and what a privilege to know that His grace makes us earthen vessels to serve His Eternal Purpose according to our capacity. The ministry is our joy and hardship a tool to make us long for His grace more. We appreciate prayers of His saints, the readers of the W & W, and members of His Church in USA. By His grace we are happy & busy. Life is filled with His blessings and is of Hallelujah & Amen.

There had been a fanatic young Buddhist priest working among the villagers here before we came in. He tried to organize some elders of the community as soon as he learned that a Christian was coming to the village. He did give us some problems such as refusing to use village path to our property. Bro. Victor Broaddus saw it when he was with us this summer. But now we have built our own road and he can not bother us any more. I have never seen him since.

There is another powerful and famous Buddhist sect called "Soka Gakkai" (meaning Value Creating Society) which is also a powerful political power in Japan, and their cells and their activities are active in this area, too. They are militant and aggressive... at times so aggressive that many normal Japanese people frown on them many a time. The community people here are also skeptical of their ultra aggressive religious activities. So they try to stay away from any religious invitations. I notice these two Buddhist elements and abhorrent atmosphere prevailing in this mountain community.

Addition to this Buddhist function there is also that of the Jehovah Witness group working hard in this Nagasaka Town. They also have an American missionary evidently here. So our villagers are confused and can not tell the difference between them and us. They are stubbornly persistent and often one-sided. People do not like them. We pray that the village friends will someday know the difference between them and our reason why we are here now. Please do pray for us.

Village children do not come to our night classes for a while ever since their parents became busy with autumn harvest. We hope and pray that they will come back to the meetings though dark and severe cold winter is approaching. They are a bit different children from the children we used to know in Tokyo city. So we have to learn from

the beginning to understand them to reach them. Patience is an important element in rural ministry. The Holy Spirit who has led us thus far will continue to lead us for His work, and am humbly asking the Spirit to take over ourselves for a better service and a deeper or closer walk with the Lord though our present task in this new conservative rural ministry is harder and more lonely than that of Tokyo.

We do need workers for the Lord here in this vast area where we can not find any Christian activities or congregations. I wish Church in U.S. can send us some young people even for a month or two to help us. I think Church will be blessed by sending their young people to the fields. We are praying for workers.

I hope to write you again. Thank you for your ministry. God bless you and keep you healthy.



Studies in the Book of Acts

Larry Miles

THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY

THE MINISTRY IN PHILIPPI

Acts 16:12-40

From Neapolis they journeyed inland to the city of Philippi. Philippi was a Roman colony. According to Garreth Reese a Roman Colony enjoyed three things,

“(1) *libertas* or self-government, (2) *immunitas* or freedom from paying tribute to the Emperor and (3) *jus Italicum* or the rights of those who live in Italy—including Roman dress, language, coinage, and holidays.”

Luke mentions six different Roman Colonies in Acts. They are: Pisidian Antioch, Lystra, Troas, Corinth, Ptolemais and Philippi. We're told that the missionary party stayed in the city of Philippi for a few days.

In verse 13 we're informed that it is the Sabbath Day. Luke tells us that they went outside the city gate seeking the place of prayer. They found that place beside the river. The river here is the Gangites River. Luke tells us that he joined along with Paul and Silas, in speaking to the women assembled. In verse 14 we're introduced to Lydia. Luke informs us that she was from the city of Thyatira. She was a worshipper of God. She was a seller of royal purple. While the missionaries were speaking the Lord opened her heart to respond. The Lord had caused the words spoken by Paul to touch this woman and lead her to Christ. Verse 15 tells us that she, along with her whole household were baptized. She was baptized without delay.

See also the words in Acts 2:38 and 8:38. It was the practice then, and should be today, that when one professes faith in Jesus that person should comply with the command of Jesus to be baptized into His death. Her whole household believed and was baptized. Lydia urged the missionaries to stay at her house. She was offering her hospitality. It was something that she could do to show her gratitude to Paul and his company for caring for her so much that they related to her the Good News.

The events in verse 16 take place at least a week later. The reason being that they are seen going to the place of prayer, implying the Sabbath Day. We're introduced to the slave girl with the spirit of divination. She was bringing her owners much profit. She kept following after Paul and his company and crying out, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved." (NIV). Verse 18 tells us that she kept it up for many days. But Paul was fed up with it. He didn't want the Philippians to think that he needed the testimony of demons on his side. He said to her, "In the Name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!" (NIV). Immediately the evil spirit came out of her.

In verse 19 the girl's master realized that the game was up. They have been left out in the cold. Their way of making money has been taken away from them. They seize Paul and Silas and drag them before the authorities. Verse 20 says that they were brought before the magistrates. The two men made this claim, "These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice." (NIV) H. Leo Boles wrote the following,

"Roman magistrates would not pass sentence on abstract theological questions (Acts 18:15); but if the peace was disturbed or a secret sect was organized, the magistrate would pass sentence on these things."

In verse 22 the crowd rose up against Paul and Silas. The chief magistrates tore the robes off Paul and Silas and ordered them to be beaten with rods. Garreth Reese writes the following,

The beating was done by the 'lictors', whose job it was to administrate the punishment ordered by the court. Apparently there was no serious investigation of the charges against the missionaries. This beating was one of three that Paul suffered during his lifetime of service for Christ. Paul was humiliated by the treatment, for he tells us in I Thess. 2:2 about how he was 'shamefully treated' at Philippi."

After the punishment was inflicted they were thrown into prison. They were placed into the custody of the jailer. He was commanded to guard them securely. Concerning the responsibility of a Roman jailer, Reese writes the following.

"It was customary to hold a jailer responsible for the safe keeping of prisoners, and to subject him to the punishment the prisoners would have received if he permitted them to escape."

Further on in verse 24 we're told that the jailer fastened their feet in the stocks. J. W. McGarvey wrote the following

"These men's faith would have been heroic indeed if some painful questioning did not intrude as why God allowed them to receive such a reward for their faithful service."

In verse 25 Luke tells us that the time is about midnight. Paul and Silas are found singing hymns of praise to God. In the next

verse we have an earthquake. We're told that even the foundations of the prison shook. All the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. Now Paul and Silas, along with the rest of the prisoners, had a chance to escape. It was at this time that the jailer realized what was happening. He was roused out of sleep thinking that all the prisoners would escape. If that happened he would be put to death by his superiors. It was at that moment that he decided to kill himself with the sword. As he was about to do it Paul cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here."

In verse 29, the jailer, after discovering that all the prisoners were accounted for called for lights. He rushed into the prison trembling with fear. Luke informs us that he fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas.

In verse 30 we have one of the most important questions ever asked. The jailer said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (NIV) This same question was asked on the Day of Pentecost. We all know what Peter's answer was that day. Is Paul's answer contrary to Peter's? Are they teaching different gospels? No! We must be willing to teach the whole counsel. We must be willing to take all the Bible says on a subject.

The answer the Philippian Jailer was given was as follows, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved—you and your household." Is faith only being taught here? No it is not. Those who claim it is do not continue to read the narrative. Luke reports to us that Paul and Silas "spoke the Word of the Lord to him and all the others in his house." In verse 33 we are told of the baptism of the man's family. Yes, baptism has a part in salvation.

We're told that the jailer brought them into his own home and fed them. There was joy in the house because they had come to the Lord of Glory.

In verse 35 daylight has come. The magistrates who have sentenced Paul and Silas to the prison sent their officers to the jailer. He was to release them. The jailer relayed the message to Paul and Silas informing them that they could leave and go in peace. But Paul would have none of that. In verse 37 he informs them that he and Silas are Roman citizens. He tells them that they should not have been subject to the treatment they received. Paul says that the magistrates must come and escort us out. Verse 38 tells us that the officers reported back to their superiors of what had taken place. When the magistrates found out that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens they became alarmed. They then came personally and escorted them out of the prison. They requested that Paul and Silas leave the city.

Before Paul and Silas complied with the request they went to the house of Lydia and met with the brothers and encouraged them. Then they departed.

We have just finished the study of the 16th chapter of Acts. We have seen how the Gospel was introduced to the European continent. We have seen different ones come to the Lord Jesus Christ. We invite all to be with us next time as we continue studying the events on the 2nd Missionary Journey. The next essay will deal with Acts 17:1-15. It will be titled "The Work in Thessalonica and Berea."

Reprint:

Evangelism: A Contrast in Ancient and Modern Times

James Robert Ross

Christians who understand our present situation cannot help but feel that a great gulf separates the experience of the primitive church from that of the contemporary church. And this is true nowhere more than in the contrast between our feeble, stammering attempt to give expression to our faith and the dynamic, world-shaking witness of the first century when a little band of 120 disciples grew to 3,000 and rapidly to 5,000 and beyond. Today even the word "God" has been called in question; to some it appears at best, meaningless, and at worst, a dirty word.

In such a situation the church may attempt by artificial and activistic programs to reduplicate the success of the first century. For example, at a ministers' workshop a preacher gave a report on the latest technique to increase soul-winning enthusiasm among church members. The kit included readings and recordings to be used over a fourteen week period in which the user learns to "psyche" himself up with the use of Dale Carnegie and slick, "You-can-do-it" slogans. The kit also included several small Testaments plus the entire New Testament on records—all for only \$89.00. The preacher noted that the materials might be used to stir up interest in personal evangelism. But he wondered about the price. Was it a soul-saving kit or a dollar-saving scheme for the producers?

Evangelism is susceptible to several motives unworthy of the name of our Lord. In the first place, it can be motivated by nothing more than a selfish, competitive spirit, which desires only the numerical growth of one's own brand of Christianity. I am reminded of frequent references to the impressive growth of the Churches of Christ in the past twenty-five years, and I get the impression that our triumph does not consist in the redemption of people for whom Christ died but in the fact that our rate of growth is so much greater than that of the Baptists or the Methodists. Perhaps we can, like Paul (Phil. 1:15-18), rejoice when Christ is proclaimed even "from envy and rivalry," but we cannot rejoice in the actual motive.

There is an interesting difference between the first century church and our own. In spite of our lack of genuine evangelistic enthusiasm, we have a strong and somewhat vested interest in the growth of our churches' memberships. Strange as it may seem, I do not detect any anxiety in the Acts about the growth of the early church. Perhaps evangelistic power is something you only have when you have no compulsive need to see your group grow. An ostensible concern for "souls" may actually hide an egotistic preoccupation with the success of our organization. When we have trouble communi-

cating, it may be that our prospects realize that we see them that way, namely, as just "prospects."

A second motive which thrives unusually well in a secular, age is the neurotic need to convince others of the truth of our own position in order to bolster our flagging faith and still our nagging doubts. A friend of mine, a Ph.D. candidate in sociology who is very critical of Christianity, says that he would like for everyone to wear a button stating their faith and reminding others that it is their own private affair. His feelings are a reaction to the high pressure tactics sometimes used not only by Jehovah Witnesses but also by other denominations including ourselves. This kind of thing grows out of a psychological need for support of views that are generally considered outdated, unscientific or superstitious. We want to convert the other fellow for our own sake, in order to satisfy our personal need for the approval of our neighbors.

Of course, this motive is contrary to genuine faith. We can recall, for example, that when Jesus was confronted by rejection, He never felt it necessary to pressure the one who rejected Him. The rich young ruler was one of these. He turned and left Jesus, and Jesus let him go. To have forcibly detained him, either by physical or psychological manipulation, would have made it impossible for the young man to have ever made a free decision to believe. Perhaps he never did. The point is that *he* needed Jesus; Jesus did not need him. And we must ask ourselves if our potential converts need faith, or does our faith need converts.

A third unworthy motive for evangelism is the self-righteous judgment of others which is often implied in our attempt to make converts. We say, "He is wrong, I am right. And what a pleasure it is to tell him so!" The world, we must realize, often sees evangelism as that process by which those who think they are without sin cast the first stone at their ungodly neighbors. And if this is our motive for the proclamation of the gospel, we need to be reminded of how that greatest of all evangelists, who was Himself the Evangel, Jesus of Nazareth, was able to attract sinners to Himself. Strangely, those who were most different from Jesus in character and reputation, that is the harlots and publicans, were most attracted to Him. In contrast the Christian today often seems utterly unattractive, absolutely repulsive to the outsider. How many of us attract criminal types, prostitutes, and drunkards to us? The difference between Jesus and ourselves on this score must cause us to search our hearts. Those who proclaim the gospel must do so as those who themselves stand under the judgment and grace of God.

The Power of Jesus' attraction seemed to lie in His identification with all men, especially the poor and the outcast. He came as one of the lowest of the low, not to judge but to save, not to condemn but to forgive. Surely we are no better than the Master. We must identify with those to whom we witness, and our motive cannot be that of sadistic glee in pronouncing sentence upon the unbeliever, especially in any light or off-handed manner such as one evangelist used when he smirked and said that it was a matter of "either turning or burning."

A fourth motive which is often set forth as proper for evangelism is that of obedience to the Great Commission of Christ. This motive sounds biblical. However, *as a motive* I question whether we are using it biblically. The Great Commission understood as a legal requirement, understood as law, can never provide *motive power* for evangelism. Law *per se* produces not obedience but rebellion (Rom. 7:7-29). A motive of law is a contradiction in terms. Exhortations to get out and get the job done, to visit our neighbors, to give to missions or to go to the mission field will by themselves fall short if they are presented in the hope of moving the church to a fulfillment of its evangelistic task.

As a result of all these distortions there are many in the church who conclude that there is no place for evangelism in the modern age. They see the selfish sectarianism, neurotic insecurity, hypocritical judgment, and the cold legalism which has moved underneath too many evangelistic efforts. They then conclude that Christians would be more true to the gospel if they forgot about converting others. "We show Christ," they say, "not by what we say, but by what we do."

The church must face the problem of saying anything meaningful to the secular man. Doubtlessly we have talked too much, or at least our talk has been too cheap. We have sermons, revivals, Sunday school, lectureships, campaigns, etc., etc., and so much of what we hear does not clearly involve the speaker in the very depths of his being. We talk but are not willing to stake our lives on what we say. These are facts we must reckon with. And we must search our hearts for all those motives which are unworthy of the Christ to whom we witness.

Nevertheless, when all of this is recognized, we are still confronted with the amazing experience of the early church: "They partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all men. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46-47). Is it not possible, we ask ourselves, for us to share in this experience? Cannot and should not the church continue to add believers to its ranks? Surely the Great Commission applies to the twentieth century as well as to the first. How we would like to see others drawn to Christ, to faith, to forgiveness, and to the fellowship of the Holy Spirit in the church!

This desire is proper, and there is a proper motive for evangelism. There is a power worthy of the name of Jesus which can enable us to speak that name again without fear or shame. It is reflected in the gladness or exuberance and gratitude which grows out of the kind of experience which these first Christians knew. It was, in the first place, an experience of the grace of God exhibited in Jesus Christ, a grace which in the resurrection of Christ assured them of victory over guilt, despair, and finally death itself. Who could possibly keep Easter a secret? Who could hide the news delivered at the empty tomb? "He is risen." Evangelism is not propaganda but the announcement of the most exciting event in all of history.

In the second place, the early Christians had been overwhelmed—"baptized" is the word used in our New Testament—with the Holy

Spirit. Pentecost set the church in motion in the first century. There may indeed be only one day of Pentecost, but if the experience which set the church in motion on that day is not also our experience, we will continue to fail to move men with our testimony. Our words will be a mere moving of air—mechanical motion without spiritual power. But the Spirit of God was given on Pentecost for all the church for all time (Acts 2:39). This is the source of power for a glad, sincere, explosive evangelistic program in the modern church.

Edited by Dr. Horace E. Wood

Paul and The Lord's Supper

S. Lewis Johnson, Jr.

I *Corinthians* 11:17-34

Part II

The two elements are a twofold parable of the saving work, and they say most emphatically, "I must die sacrificially," if you are to have life.

The words, "broken for you" (cf. v. 24), are literally simply for you, although some of the manuscripts do read *broken for you*. The words *broken for you* would be sacrificial in sense, the breaking being that of death, not of broken bones (cf. Exod. 12:46; John 19:31-37).

The words, "this do," are in the present tense and refer to that which is to be done constantly, or frequently. They speak of the compulsory nature of our participation, and of the fact that the Supper is to be frequently observed by the body of Christ (cf. Acts 2:42, 46). Yet there is no legalistic expression of our obligation. It is not said that it is a sin to miss the observance of the Lord's Supper upon occasion. It should be frequently observed as an expression of gratitude and devotion to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us (cf. Jer. 2:32; Isa. 49:14; Acts 2:46, "gladness").

The words, "in remembrance of me," may be an allusion to Moses at the Passover. They are to forget him, but from now on remember the Lord Jesus Christ. The "Me" is a reference to Him in His character as the One who died for us (cf. v. 26).

The ceremony of the wine (1 Cor. 11:25-26). In the ceremony of the cup some of the same ideas of the divine initiative in our salvation are found. For example, we read, "After the same manner also he took the cup." While the verb "took" is not found in the original text, it clearly is to be supplied from the preceding verse, and it connotes the same emphasis as there. The taking of the cup by the Lord suggests the voluntary action in His death.

"This cup is the New testament in my blood" is a most important statement. William Barclay paraphrases it in this way, "This cup is the new covenant and it cost my blood." The words take the reader back to the promises of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34 with their great stress on grace. In contrast to the Mosaic Covenant with its "thou shalt," this covenant is filled with the "I wills" of the Lord God. One covenant is to be written on stones, but the other on the

fleshly tablets of the heart. The promises of the latter covenant are grounded in the promise of the forgiveness of sins, which makes them all possible.

Everything in our Lord's ministry led up to that which procured the forgiveness of sins set out in the New Covenant, a covenant ratified in the death on Calvary's cross. The atonement accomplished by the Lord Jesus Christ is no afterthought, but the well thought out plan drawn by the Trinity in the counsels of ages past. The cup of wine, suggestive of the bloodshedding of a violent sacrifice, is the visible token, the guarantee, the seal of "your sins and iniquities I will remember no more" (cf. Jer. 31:34). What a blessing to those whose cry is, "Woe is me, for I am undone," to hear from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Cf. Isa. 6:5; Matt. 26:28). "Your sins and iniquities I will remember no more" comes to fruition in the sacrifice of God's Lamb.

It is sad to think that it is necessary to have Him ask us to do this in remembrance of Him, but it is necessary. We are so forgetful of the blessings we have received from our great Triune God. "Can a maid forget her ornament, or a bride her attire" Jehovah asks through Jeremiah, adding, "yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (2:32).

In the twenty-sixth verse reason is given for remembering Him in the Supper. As often as we eat the bread, and drink the cup, we proclaim His death till He comes. The Supper is, therefore, an acted sermon preached to all. The word translated "show," in the Authorized Version is one that means to *proclaim*, or to *preach*. Thus, the Lord's Supper is a preaching service.

In the Supper there is truth that has past significance (cf. vv. 24-25), present significance (cf. v. 26), as well as future significance (cf. v. 26). In the Supper, then, we look back, and out, and forward!

THE APPLICATION TO THE CORINTHIANS

The "Wherefore" of verse twenty-seven introduces the application, a consequence of the instruction. The word "unworthily" does not refer to the person of the one partaking, but to the manner of his partaking. All are unworthy always. To a woman who was reluctant to accept the elements Rabbi Duncan, the famous Scottish preacher and professor said, "Tak' it, woman, tak' it. It's for sinners." To be irreverent toward the body and blood of Jesus is to eat and drink unworthily. Verse twenty-seven finds further explanation in verse twenty-nine, where "not discerning the body" is probably to be understood in the sense of "not discerning the body and blood," and not in the sense of a reference to the church, the body of Christ.

The proper alternative to the irreverence is self-judgment, and Paul refers to that in verse twenty-eight. Incidentally, the word "damnation" in the Authorized Version of verse twenty-nine is better rendered by *judgment*, as most of the modern versions do. The important point is the necessity of preparation before participation. The reflection upon our trust in Christ, our present life in Christ, and espe-

cially our view of the meaning and significance of the elements are aspects of our meditation around the communion table. We have title to the communion table by virtue of our conversion to Christ, but our enjoyment of our right is related to our spiritual life's vitality.

Judgment has already come upon some of the believers in Corinth "for this cause," that is, for abuse of the Lord's Table. In fact, some had committed sin unto physical death and already slept in Christ (the verb *koimao*, "sleep," when referring to death, always refers to the death of believers (cf. John 11:11, 12; Acts 7:60; 1 Cor. 15:6, 18, 20, 51, etc.).

In the final words of the chapter the apostle points out that the preventive is to judge ourselves rightly (cf. v. 31). Even God's judgment, however is not eternal; it is designed to be family discipline, a "chastening of the Lord," to prevent being "condemned with the world" (cf. vv. 31:32). In this last statement the apostle uses the strong *katakrino*, which does mean to *condemn* in an eternal sense.

The concluding words are a practical appeal to the Corinthians to remember the unity of the body in their observance of the feast. And as for the rest of the injunctions he has in mind, Paul says he will attend to them when he visits them (what were they?).

May I close on the following notes. First, the Lord's Supper is an observance with divine authentication, traced to an historical inauguration by the Lord, and followed by apostolic corroboration by Paul. In the light of our Lord's moving, "do this in remembrance of Me," who would not want to give primacy to the service in which we worship and commune with Him over that in which we listen to man's voices? As we sing,

"Here, O my Lord! I see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand th' eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean!"

And, second, reflect upon the fact that He said, "take, eat," and "drink ye all of this," signifying that we are not only to remember, but to receive spiritual food from the communion as we meditate upon Him.

When her young relatives reached home after a communion service, an old Scotswoman was wont to enquire of them: "Did you meet anyone in the service?" and, if on their part the attempt was made to lessen the directness of the appeal by the mention of various neighbors who had been met, she would repeat with gentle insistence, "Yes, I know about these but did you meet anyone in particular in the service?" The aged Christian woman thought of the Lord's Supper as a *trysting-place* for the soul and its Lord. How appropriate!

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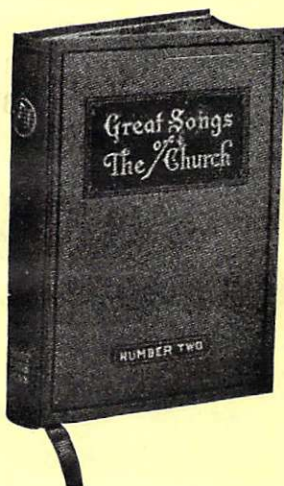
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