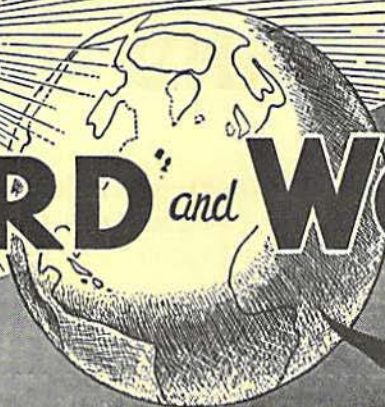


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MARCH, 1988

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In This Issue

Theme: *GOD CAN RENEW AND REVIVE!*

Is It Too Late For Revival? — Alex V. Wilson	66
Joel, Pentecost, and the Coming World - Revival — D. M. Panton	69
Revival, Our Greatest Need — George C. Galanis	70
The Normal Christian Life—Today — Alex V. Wilson	71
Fossilization — R. H. Boll	74
"Be Filled with the Spirit" — R. H. Boll	75
Revival, The Fruit of Obedience — A.W. Tozer	76
Questions Asked of Us — Carl Kitzmiller	78
Building Better Christian Families — "Teens and Discipline" — Fred W. Schott	80
Dear Nieces and Nephews — Cecil Garrett	83
Viewing the News — Jack Blaes	84
Thoughts From Romans — The Christian and the Church — E. E. Lyon	86
MISSIONARY MESSENGER	88
When We Talk — Amy Carmichael	88
Rescued By Stunning Grace — Dennis Kaufman	89
Treasures, Old and New, About "Love The Brotherhood"	92
Baptism—How Important?	93
NEWS AND NOTES	95

THEME: GOD CAN RENEW AND REVIVE!



Is It Too Late For Revival?

Alex V. Wilson

"In the last days grievous times shall come," wrote Paul to Timothy. And our Lord asked, "When the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Due to these and other similar verses, some believers feel that revival—"times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19)—cannot come any more. It's too late now, they say. In fact, some folks take the view that revival now would be counterproductive!—it would just delay the Lord's return. I heard the late Edwin Orr (whom God used as an instrument in several deep spiritual movements, and who wrote outstanding books on the history of various revivals) say that back in the 1930's there were preachers declaring there would be no more revivals "till the church is gone and God raises up the 144,000 Jewish evangelists." Yet since the 1930's there have been powerful spiritual awakenings in East Africa, the Hebrides islands near Scotland, South Korea, Indonesia, and western Canada. And that list is not exhaustive.

It is important to realize that "grievous times" and revival can exist at the same time and place. By revival I mean *the Church's becoming what it ought to be all the time*: holy, prayerful, enthusiastic in worship, bold in witness, sacrificial in giving, joyful amid sufferings. In other words, filled with the Holy Spirit and His fruit and gifts and power from on high. Many of the first century churches were like that. They weren't perfect, not by a long shot. But God was at work among them, impacting the society around them so that it had to sit up and take notice that lives were being dramatically salvaged by Lord Jesus. So the Churches grew. Yet at the same time, that first century was filled with grievous times—morally, politically, educationally, socially, etc.—just like century 20!

Unprecedented Stirrings

Amid the deadness that prevails in so many churches in the U.S., we need to realize that fantastic things are happening in other places. Dr. Ralph Winter, director of the U.S. Center for World Mission, is a missionary leader whose knowledge of God's worldwide work is perhaps unmatched. Recently he declared, "All around the world things are happening that have never happened before. Behind the scenes, outside the range of the newspapers and what they talk about, mighty things are happening."

What kind of things is he referring to? Here are a number, some of them reported by him and some which I have gleaned from other sources.

Interest in World Missions: Last December occurred the largest meeting in all of European history of students interested in fulfilling the Great Commission. That same month, 19,000 people, mostly students or recent graduates, gathered in Urbana, Illinois for five days of intense study of missionary work. Such conferences are held every three years, and already over a thousand of those who attended in 1984 are on the mission field.

Again, in November of last year, in Sao Paulo, Brazil, occurred what Dr. Winter calls "the largest world-level meeting in history focused exclusively on the cross-cultural missionary task of evangelizing all the remaining peoples of the world." Few Americans were there, which is significant, for it shows that "third world" Christians have awakened to their missionary responsibilities. (Do we somehow feel that the U.S. churches must be God's major agent?)

There were 1000 key people from Brazil and Portugal, 2000 from the other countries of Latin America, and about 400 "observers" from Asia, Africa, and yes, a few from North America. The special quality of these people is the amazing thing: these are people specifically interested in missions, sending people to other peoples not their own, to finish the Global task. . . . It just seemed like every mission leader I have ever known from every country in Africa, Asia and Latin America was there. (Winter)

Growth Despite Communism: An article in *Christian Chronicle* (12/87) reports that indigenous Churches of Christ in Nicaragua are "alive and flourishing." John Johnson, an elder of the Falls Church, Va., Church of Christ, has made twenty trips to that land since the Sandinistas took over in 1979. He says the government has found it useful to say there is a minimum of religious persecution, so by and large they allow freedom for Christians to meet and also to evangelize. Nicaraguan preachers are highly evangelistic. Many of them graduated from a Bible institute "begun in 1979 by Salvadoran Christians in Nicaragua. . . . Two of the largest churches of Christ in Central or South America can be found in Managua and Leon;" one has 429 members, the other 400. "Today about 2,000 active members can be found among the 22 churches of Christ, representing one of the most dynamic works in Latin America, said Johnson."

This fits in with Dr. Winter's claim that "the evangelical movement in Nicaragua is ten times as large as it was when the Sandinistas came in."

We should be thankful that religious persecution in that Marxist land is minimal, but even in countries where gruesome persecution has been unleashed on Christians, the blood of the martyrs has proved again to be the seed of the church. (The early Church leader Tertullian made that observation when Caesar was trying to wipe out Christianity.) "There are more Christians in the Soviet Union today than in 1917" when the Marxists seized control of that land. "The percentage is not as high, but the quality is very much higher" (Winter). And in China? After 37 years of Communism, and many severe and brutal crackdowns on Christians, there are at least twenty times as many disciples of the Lord as there were in 1950, and perhaps as many

as *fifty* times more, while the general population has merely doubled! It is possible there are more born-again believers in China than in the U.S. This is one of the greatest examples of church growth in history, and we in the West were unaware of it until a few years ago when China opened doors in its bamboo curtain. The Most High brought to pass a stunning, far-flung spiritual awakening during the reign of a most repressive dictatorship: revival amid grievous times!

God's Exciting Works

More news from the U.S. Center for World Mission: "In a stunning movement, more than 400 families in a certain *Muslim country* have turned to Jesus as their Messiah and Lord." (The country cannot be named lest publicity cause persecution.) . . . In oppressed *Romania*, there is a tremendous revival going on! . . . A Polish government truck loaded with 27 tons of illustrated New Testaments printed in France recently crossed the border into *Poland*, protected by a consular seal. . . . Christianity is growing incredibly in such an unlikely place as *Nepal*."

You should also be aware of "big" things God is doing through Restoration Movement churches. Most readers of this magazine are aware that *Words of Life* radio programs blanket most of the Philippines, some of Europe and much of Africa, in addition to various areas in the U.S. Also *World Christian Broadcasting Corporation*, backed by mainline Churches of Christ, cover 2/3 of the world's population each day, in English, Russian and Chinese languages.

Then there is W.B.S. John Fisk writes, "*World Bible School* is a worldwide teaching ministry by correspondence in the English language . . . sponsored by those in the non-instrumental fellowship. However, for some years, over one thousand of the instrumental brethren have been helping in this united effort to bring the saving message of Jesus to the world. In 1984, over 62,000 were baptized by this effort. In 1985, the number baptized was 80,000."

Here's an Idea: Pray for Revival

In the *Philippines* there is political, governmental and economic chaos. But Filipino Christians know where to turn. In November, 72,000 of them gathered in Manila for a seven-hour prayer marathon, praying for their nation! Is it any wonder that amid the crises there, many people are turning to Christ?

Let us in America, where there is much moral rot and spiritual deadness, also cry out to God. Pray constantly for revival. Lots of other people are; let's add our prayers to theirs. Jim Bevis of the Conference on Spiritual Renewal (a revival-emphasis movement among Restoration churches) reports a great hunger for revival around the U.S. He says there are over 12,000 prayer-groups for awakening, with 50,000 people committed to this. Some people are devoting two hours daily to intercession for revival! Members in two hundred churches around Seattle fasted during one week on behalf of revival!

Let us also urgently seek God's face. In our great need, shall we not travail for a mighty moving of His Spirit among us, for His glory? Is it too late for revival? *NO!* We need it, and God can give it.

Joel, Pentecost, and The Coming World-Revival

D. M. Panton

It is an inexplicable omission over the whole range of prophetic study that there is an almost total unawareness of the colossal coming work of the Holy Spirit. Throughout the prophets, no prediction of the Spirit's action is more precise and more positive than Joel's forecast of a double Pentecost—the Christian dispensation clasped at both ends, like a jewel, in a bracelet of miracle (Joel 2:28-32, also Acts 2:15-21). Like the imminent second coming of Christ, this coming downpour of the Spirit is a star that never wanes; an electric flare in the blackest midnight that earth will ever see; a revival so sure that prayer for it is an ease and a delight; an outpouring of the mercy of God second only to Calvary.

God Himself emphasizes the universality of this effusion. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit"—not distil, but pour forth in great abundance; not in dribbles, but in floods. "... upon all flesh"—all mankind, as the Hebrew expression denotes: all races, Jew and Gentile; both sexes, sons and daughters; all ages, young and old; all classes, bond and free.

Now we know, on the authority of the Spirit Himself, that at Pentecost this vast prophecy found an initial fulfillment: "*This*," says Peter, "*is that*" (Acts 2:16). But the context of Joel, as well as Peter's own quotation, makes it certain that both ends of the Christian Age receive the effusion. Pentecost was a partial but not an exhaustive nor even the main fulfillment of Joel. The downpour came then, yet it is still to come.

Both the prophet and the apostle so *intertwine and interlock the effusion of the Holy Spirit and the second coming judgments* as to put beyond all doubt that Pentecost did not exhaust the prediction. "... in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of Jehovah cometh. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered" (Joel 2:29-32, also Acts 2:19-21). Great terrors will mingle with mighty salvations. "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9). Just as Pentecost was a cloud-burst that followed hard on the awful lightnings of Calvary, so the last effusion of the Holy Spirit will fall from clouds laboring up from the horizon, big with judgment.

It is certain that we are rapidly approaching this world-wide downpour of the Holy Spirit; for the very judgments which we see in the earth warn us of the revival dated to arrive before the final scenes, and seem to intimate that we are in the immediate neighbor-

hood of this immense movement of God the Holy Spirit. So, in *linking up ourselves with myriads of Christians throughout the globe in praying for world-revival, world- evangelism, and the world-return of our blessed Lord, we are praying for solid coming facts, and therefore we know that we are praying according to the will of God. God's promises are to provoke prayer, not to prevent it.*

* * * * *

REVIVAL, OUR GREATEST NEED

George C. Galanis

In our previous article, we mentioned that our greatest need today is a genuine revival. There are four conditions to meet if we are to experience revival: humble ourselves, pray, seek God's face and turn away from our wicked ways. God promises to hear from heaven and forgive our sins and heal our land (2 Chron. 7:14).

United, continued prayer

The second condition God sets for the lukewarm believers to revive them is prayer. But this condition does not become effective until after the first is fulfilled. Prayer without self humbling is powerless. There cannot be church or personal revival until you pray frankly and sincerely for that. Self humbling before God must be coupled with fervent gripping prayer.

Nothing is more profitable than reading the history of revivals. You will find that sometimes revival has come after a group of believers, perhaps a mere handful, who were almost breaking their hearts because of the state of worldliness in their district and because of the deadness of their church, met together to pray to God to intervene. God can even hear the earnest prayer of one dedicated believer.

There was a lifeless church in England for which a faithful paralyzed woman prayed earnestly. For years she begged God to send revival. Her petition was: "O Lord, send Mr. Moody to our church". She kept on praying for three years. Finally the Lord intervened and in fact did send D. L. Moody. As that man of God started preaching the audience did not pay attention. But Moody kept on and finally the Spirit of God gripped their hearts. They humbled themselves and broke down. When Moody asked them how many wanted to get revived and start a real spiritual life for God, almost the whole congregation responded. A real revival broke out that day, not only in that particular church but also in the whole district as a result of one woman's prayer. So the Lord used a physically paralyzed woman to revive a spiritually paralyzed church.

I am fully convinced that the revival God will send us will be given in answer to prayer. Let us have this truth graven deep in our hearts: *Every revival comes as the fruit of united, continued prayer.* The word of God says: "You have not, because you ask not" (James 4:2b). "Ask and it shall be given you" (Matthew 7:7). Perhaps our greatest sin is lack of PRAYER.

Can the prayer of Psalm 85:6 be answered in our days and gener-

ation? "Will you not revive us again; that your people may rejoice in you?" Yes, God can do that even today, since He is the same yesterday, today and for ever. All over the world there are those who are crying to God for another mighty manifestation of His power in the lives of His children. When we learn to humble ourselves and travail in prayer, then we will have real revival.

The third condition: Seek God's face

The face of a person is the means by which we identify him. God says, "if you seek my face," which means if you have a great desire to know me deeper, this knowledge will create closer relations and will establish a more intimate fellowship with me, your great God! Here is how dedicated men expressed their great yearning for the living God: "O God, you are my God; early will I seek you, my soul thirsts for you" (Psalm 63:1). And again: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God; when shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. 42:2). God calls His people to seek His face, He even calls you now to seek His face. "When you (Lord) said, Seek my face; my heart said unto you: Your face, Lord, will I seek" (Psalm 27:8).

The Christian who desires to be filled more and more with the Spirit of God is the Spiritual Christian. He lives after the Spirit, not after the flesh. The spiritual Christian does not love the world neither the things of the world. He loves the Lord. He is busy with the Lord. Let me ask you, Christian, what are you busy with? Now remember the face of God is fulness of joy and so you do not need to seek after sinful pleasures of the flesh. If you do, you need to repent, humble yourself, pray and seek God's face, to get revived. God calls all the backsliders, the worldly, the lukewarm Christians to seek His face. The great prophet Elijah challenged the lukewarm Israelites this way: "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kings 18:21). Will you answer to God?

* * * * *

The Normal Christian Life—Today

Alex V. Wilson

Last month we saw what Normal Christianity is—New Testament beliefs, practices, attitudes, and power. Now let us look at two examples from more recent times, to extend our vision and deepen our thirst. Church history is valuable for us in this matter, because many times the examples given in Acts and the teachings of the epistles fail to challenge us as they should. This is because we subconsciously feel, "Oh, well, that's the way things were back then, but we can't expect God to work like that now." And so we act as though for all practical purposes God retired from business many centuries ago! (Of course we'd never say it that way.) But church history clearly shows that such a view is mistaken. Let's see:

In the early 1700s, religious persecution was still bitter in Europe. Your job and property might be taken if you didn't belong to the right church. The right church was whichever one your king happened to belong to. Several hundred Christians from various places, all fleeing from such persecutions, sought protection by coming to live on the estate of a wealthy Christian nobleman, Count Zinzendorf of Moravia. Some of these refugees followed Luther's teachings, others Calvin's, but most of them were followers of the reformer John Huss, who had been martyred several centuries before. As a result of their different backgrounds, arguing and bitterness and name-calling soon raged throughout the group. Protected now from outside danger, there was war within the camp!

Because of the bitter enmity, the more spiritual members began praying desperately for God to overrule. Count Zinzendorf then interviewed all of them individually and had each one enter into a solemn *personal covenant* with the Lord Jesus. Each agreed to dedicate himself entirely to Christ's service, whatever his particular position and calling might be. The Count then had the group draw up and agree to a "*brotherly covenant*"—to emphasize the great truths upon which they agreed rather than always and only stressing their differences.

Several days later they assembled around the Lord's Table. They had done this many times before, but this time there came upon them all a deep deep "sense of the nearness of Christ," as Zinzendorf later described it. They had quit judging each other because each one had become convinced of his own unworthiness in God's right. All bitterness melted away and their hearts were knit together in forgiving love. That meeting lasted for hours, as they overflowed with joy unspeakable.

But that was just the start. Now that God had some instruments He could use, He planned to use them. Again, prayer paved the way. Yearning for others to know the Lord as they had come to know Him, they spent much time in intercession. Some days later, impressed by the fact that in Old Testament times the fire upon the temple altar was *never* allowed to go out, they started around-the-clock praying. Their prayer meeting lasted more than 100 years! Twenty-four of the believers (later many more joined them) divided up the twenty-four hours of the day among themselves by lots, so that by relays prayer without ceasing could be made for the Lord's work in every place. And for over a century, at any time of day or night there was someone in that village interceding before God's throne.

God works when His people pray, and He soon burdened them to take the Gospel to the ends of the earth. During the following years evangelists went not only through much of Europe but also to North and South America, Africa, and Asia—in a period when such a thing as foreign missions was unthought of throughout all Christendom. From that one small village community in Moravia, more than 100 missionaries went out in twenty-five years.

That was Normal Christianity: wholehearted devotion to the

Lord Jesus; loving unity among themselves; persevering prayer; and the most remarkable missionary vision and activity since the days of the apostles.

But other examples also can be found in church history. In the opening years of this century quite a few missionaries were located in Korea. In general they were quite pleased with their work, for according to reports they were winning more converts and establishing more churches than missionaries in either Japan or China. After all, they were *above* average. Around 1905 however, they heard about a mighty revival in India which far surpassed anything they had ever experienced. Thus they realized that though they were above average they were nevertheless subnormal. This produced in them a deep hunger of heart, resulting in burdened prayer for revival. They prayed for months, and found out—as often happens when people pray seriously—that there were some things in their own lives which needed changing. When they humbly began to straighten out those matters, God began working among them in mighty power.

In very many places overwhelming conviction of sin accompanied the preaching, resulting in large numbers of conversions—in some districts by the hundreds. New congregations sprang up by the dozens, month after month, sometimes in places where no missionary had ever been. One urban church, for example, during 1907 reproduced five other churches in nearby rural areas, yet grew in numbers itself at the same time. But numerical growth alone is no foolproof indication that a movement is a work of God, for some false cults also show amazing growth. So we must look at other characteristics of this revival.

The transformed character of many of the people was noteworthy. In one place many unbelievers were heard to say, "A new Jesus has come to our city." This was because many of the professing Christians had for years been cheating and quarreling with their neighbors; some of them also beat their wives. But this "new Jesus" was making those people confess their sins publicly and afterwards apologize to their heathen neighbors and make restitution when it was owed. Men even apologized to their wives, a thing unheard of in Korea!

Love of the Bible and for prayer were outstanding characteristics. It was very difficult to hold enough Bible classes to satisfy the desire of the people. It was not at all unusual to see Christians carrying their Bibles with them wherever they went, to study during their spare moments, and a great deal of memorizing was done. Also it became the customary thing throughout the churches for the people—large numbers, not just a handful—to gather for prayer meeting early in the morning before going to the day's tasks. This was the regular practice, not an exceptional thing. The practice of family devotions was so widespread that any Christian man who did not hold family worship every day ran the risk of getting a strict talking-to from the elders! To neglect it was considered a sure sign of backsliding.

The Korean Christians gave sacrificially to the Lord's work. One

missionary told a visitor, "I don't dare mention money to these people, because they are giving too much now!" (Preachers, have you ever had that problem?) Daily witnessing for Christ, both privately and publicly, was common too. Many Christians used their vacation time to visit and evangelize needy regions. Willingness to endure persecution was another characteristic of this revival, for some Christians were fiercely opposed by their clan and in a few cases the ruling Japanese officials used Christians as scapegoats.

From the six or eight characteristics of this movement that we have mentioned, it is easy to see that they were experiencing the Normal Christian Life. And if God did it there and then (for it is *His* working that produces such Life), why can't He do it here and now? The revivals both in Moravia and in Korea came about when some Christians became thoroughly dissatisfied with their present condition, and began with great yearning of heart to repent of their sins and to pray for God to work among them in His supernatural power. Cannot we do the same?

I do not want to overdraw the picture: God has used us and in His grace is using us now—to some extent. Also, certainly we realize that the Moravian and Korean Christians were not by any means perfect. They, along with the first century disciples, had some weaknesses, problems, and sins. Yet, taking all of these facts into consideration, is it not true that there remains a *great gap* between their level of spiritual vigor and ours, so that the two are hardly comparable? God's "mercy-drops 'round us are falling," but do we not desperately need the full "showers of blessing"? Oh God, make us Normal Christians!

* * * * *

FOSSILIZATION

R. H. Boll — 1932

A fossil is a thing that was once alive, or was formed from once-living substance, which after death became *petrified*, that is, was turned to stone. A fossil is lifeless. It cannot move or grow or change its condition. It is hardened and senseless—a mere form without life or power!

Now there are human fossils also—men who have really ceased to live, though still existing, whose minds and hearts no longer function, who no longer grow, or go on, or can take in further truth. They have learned what they have learned, once; then the door was closed, and now their thought moves only in the circling track of mechanical repetition of the same bit of truth, long since become lifeless in them, or in the same rut of error, never questioned. The old prophet said of them, "He cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?" (Isa. 44:22) In the shape and impress their mind took long ago, they solidified, and such as they are they are and evermore shall be.

It is a mistake to call such men orthodox, or safe and sound. Orthodox means "right-thinking," but these do not think at all, except in the worn habit-channel of long accustomed cerebration. "Safe" they may be—they certainly never have disturbing ideas; but after all, they are not *sound*, for true soundness comes only in going on in Christ and in the exploring of Him.

It is worth the while and the pains to keep alive and grow (for all living things grow) in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is good for us to go back to the Word often (to *all* the Word), with minds swept clean of all we think we know, and to learn again and anew at the feet of Jesus like unto little children. But be sure it is *to Him* that you go, and that you do not drink at any and every fountain. False progress is as fatal as petrification (2 John 9). But *in Him* are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden. "As therefore ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and grounded in your faith as ye were taught, abounding in thanksgiving."

* * * * *

"BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT"

(Ephesians 5:19)

R. H. Boll

It is an exhortation, a command to God's children—"Be ye filled with the Spirit." They all had the Spirit—else they could not have been God's children (Rom. 8:9). Immediately upon becoming a son, the believer receives the Spirit (Gal. 3:26, 27; 4:6). Yet—evidently, it must be one thing to *have* the indwelling Spirit, and another thing to be *filled*. For he speaks to Christians who were already in possession of the Spirit, and exhorts them to be filled with the Spirit. Let us note now a few truths that most certainly are involved in that exhortation.

1. It must be *possible*—for God would not urge it upon us if it were not for us to attain.

2. Manifestly it is God's will: *He wants* us to be filled with the Spirit.

3. It is clear that this filling is not dependent exclusively on God; it must depend on some step or attitude of ours. The command is addressed to us, "Be filled with the Spirit."

4. It follows that if it is possible, if God wants it, and if it devolves on us whether we are "filled with the Spirit" or not—it is a great failure for a Christian to go through life without it.

5. What a Christian life not filled with the Spirit is, is too well known. For where the Spirit does not occupy and hold full sway, the flesh holds place. Half-hearted, double-minded, lukewarm, weak and unreliable conduct follows. But in the man who is filled with the Spirit, the abounding fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22) will testify that he is indeed a child of God.

REVIVAL, THE FRUIT OF OBEDIENCE

A. W. Tozer

TO OBEY, in New Testament usage, means to give earnest attention to the Word, to submit to its authority, and to carry out its instructions.

The Church of our day has soft-pedaled the doctrine of obedience, either neglecting it altogether or mentioning it only apologetically and, as it were, by the way. This results from a fundamental confusion with works in the minds of preacher and people. To escape the error of salvation by works, we have fallen into the opposite error of salvation without obedience. In our eagerness to get rid of the legalistic doctrine of works, we have thrown out the baby with the bath and gotten rid of obedience as well.

The Bible knows nothing of salvation apart from obedience. Paul testified that he was sent to preach "obedience to the faith among all nations." He reminded the Roman Christians that they had been set free from sin because they had "obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." There is no contradiction in the New Testament between faith and obedience. Between faith and law-works, yes; between law and grace, surely; but between faith and obedience, not at all. *The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith.* The two are opposite sides of the same coin. Were you to split a coin edgewise, you would destroy both sides and render the whole thing valueless. In the same way faith and obedience are forever joined and are each valueless when separated. The trouble with many of us today is that we are trying to believe without intending to obey.

The message of the Cross contains two elements: (1) Promises and declarations to be believed, and (2) Commandments to be obeyed. Obviously faith is necessary to the first, and obedience to the second. The only thing we can do with a promise or statement of fact is to believe it; it is physically impossible to obey it, for it is not addressed to the will, but to the understanding. It is equally impossible to believe a command; it is not addressed to our understanding primarily, but to our will. True, we may have faith in its justice; we may have confidence that it is a good and right command, but that is not enough. Until we have either obeyed or refused to obey, we have not done anything about it yet. To strain to believe that which is addressed to our obedience is to get ourselves hopelessly entangled in a maze of impossibilities.

The doctrine of Christ crucified and the wealth of truths which cluster around it have in them this dual content. So the apostle can speak of "obedience to the faith" without talking contradictions. It can be said, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth," and "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." There is nothing incompatible between

these two statements when they are understood in the light of the essential unity of faith and obedience. (Rom. 1:16; Heb. 5:9).

The weakness in our message today is our over-emphasis on faith with a corresponding under-emphasis on obedience. This has been carried so far that "believe" has been made to double for "obey" in the minds of millions of religious people. A host of mental Christians have been produced whose characters are malformed and whose lives are out of proportion. Imagination has been mistaken for faith and has been made to do service for obedience.

There is a mental disease fairly familiar to all of us where the patient lives in a world wholly imaginary. It is a play-world, a world of make-believe, with no objective reality corresponding to it. Everyone knows this except the patient himself. He will argue for his world with all the logic of a sane man, and the pathetic thing is that he is utterly sincere. So we find Christians who have lived so long in the rarefied air of imagination that it seems next to impossible to relate them to reality.

Nonobedience has paralyzed their normal legs and dissolved their backbones; so they slump down in a spongy heap of religious theory, believing everything ardently, but obeying nothing at all. Indeed they are deeply shocked at the very mention of the word "obey". To them it smacks of heresy and self-righteousness.

All this we might pass over as merely one more of those things, were it not that this creed of the moral impasse has influenced practically every corner of the Christian world; has captured Bible schools; has determined the content of evangelistic preaching, and has gone far to decide what kind of Christians we all shall be. It is the conviction of the writer that the modern misconception of the function of faith and the failure of our teachers to insist upon obedience have weakened the Church and retarded revival tragically in the last half-century. The only cure is to remove the cause. This will take some courage, but it will be worth the labor.

What does all this add up to? What are its practical implications for us plain Christians today? Of this we can be certain: God is waiting in all readiness to send down floods of blessing upon us as soon as we begin to obey His plain instructions. We need no new doctrine, no new movement, no "key", no imported evangelist or expensive "course" to show us the way. It is before us as clear as a four-lane highway. To any inquirer, I would say: "Just do the next thing you know you should do, to carry out the will of the Lord. If there is sin in your life, quit it. Put away lying, gossiping, dishonesty, or whatever your sin may be. Forsake worldly pleasures, extravagance in spending, vanity in dress, in your car, in your home. Get right with any person you may have wronged. Forgive everyone who may have wronged you. Begin to use your money to help the poor and advance the cause of Christ. Take up the cross and live sacrificially.

"Pray, give, attend the Lord's service. Witness for Christ, not only when it is convenient but when you know you should. Look to

no cost and fear no consequences. Study the New Testament to learn the will of God, and then do that will as you see it. Start now by doing the next thing, and then go on from there."

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



Is there forgiveness of sins in those cases for which restitution cannot be made?

Absolutely!

The Bible mentions only one unpardonable sin—blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10). If we have understood this matter correctly, a chief reason such a sin cannot be forgiven is because the offender cannot be brought to repentance (Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-29). He is hardened by his sin and does not even have a desire to repent. All other sin can be forgiven. To state it another way, all sin of which men desire to repent can be forgiven. And to say that sin cannot be forgiven if restitution cannot be made is to create many more unpardonable sins!

There are conditions of forgiveness which God has imposed and which must be met, of course, and the individual unwilling to meet such conditions cannot be forgiven. They are not impossible conditions, however. They are not even necessarily difficult conditions. But they do require "doing business" with our Lord.

Repentance toward God is always a vital part of man's response toward God in the matter of forgiveness of sin. And, normally, restitution is a fruit or result that can be expected. In many cases the absence of restitution is evidence that real repentance has not taken place. But not in every case! There are sins for which there can be little or no restitution because of the very nature of the offenses. The querist mentions murder and gossip. One cannot restore life, and often one cannot recall evil words and correct false reports. Surely God does not require the impossible of us, for to do so is to establish, as has been observed, many unpardonable sins when God says there is only one. God looks on the heart and He knows when we repent, whether the fruit of restitution is visible in outward action or is found in the desire of the heart.

In passing, however, it is worthwhile to remember that, while there are sins for which no restitution can be made, real repentance will cause one to go as far as he can. A murderer cannot restore life, but if genuinely repentant, he will do what he can to remedy

the sufferings he may have created for loved ones of the victim. A false report cannot be recalled, nor can we likely contact everyone who may have heard it, but genuine repentance will cause us to correct what we can within reason. If a public statement before the church (or some other group) will correct even a part of the misinformation, then we will not withhold it on the grounds that it would be embarrassing or would cause us to lose face. The unpleasant corrections that we do not make because we want to "repent" and still come off smelling like a rose may speak of failure to genuinely repent. In other words, we need to distinguish between restitution that we truly *cannot* make and restitution we find unpleasant or would like to avoid. If one cannot make restitution, that is one matter. Our God knows the impossibility. But if one simply finds restitution expensive, unpleasant, humbling, or difficult, that is another.

The querist, citing a case of gossip in which restitution could not be made though there was repentance and a seeking of God's pardon, further asks: "How can one forgive one's self?" We reply that in one sense it is certainly not always easy. Paul, for example, seems to have remembered so fully the fact that he had once persecuted the church (1 Tim. 1:12-16). Our sins seem so uncalled for when we look at them through cleansed eyes and heart. To remember that we have been guilty of certain sins does not necessarily mean we have not forgiven ourselves though, and it may help us to appreciate the goodness of God. Perhaps the biggest need in forgiving one's self is to *believe* that God has forgiven us. Self-condemnation is often the result of not actually believing the promises of God concerning forgiveness. And we should deal with that unbelief as we might with any other.

Please explain the passage of scripture in Matt. 22:11-14. What is the wedding garment?

This passage is a portion of one of Jesus' parables during the last week before His crucifixion. He spoke several parables at this time directed against the Jews (cf. Matthew 21:28ff; 21:33ff), including this one. The Jewish people were certainly those who turned down the invitation. Those gathered out of the highways and byways represent the Gentiles, who would soon figure prominently in the salvation offered through Christ. In the parable Jesus goes on to speak of the wrong attitude that could characterize Gentiles as well as Jews, and His words serve as a warning to Gentiles not to become haughty (cf. Romans 11:17-22).

A helpful bit of information we need in order to understand the wedding garment incident is this: Eastern kings of that day provided suitable wedding garments for their guests. Hence, the man without a garment did not so appear because of his poverty, lack of time to prepare, or some other such matter beyond his control, but because of his unwillingness to wear the provided, suitable garment. In other words, though he "accepted" the invitation and attended, he really despised the king and the occasion and haughtily appeared in his own garment.

As to interpretation, this surely portrays the individual who professes faith in Christ but who tries to stand before Him in his own righteousness rather than in the righteousness imputed to the true believer in Christ. The wedding garment provided by the King and sufficient to make one acceptable before Him can be none other than Christ's imputed righteousness (Romans 3:21 - 5:21). The condemnation of the presumptuous guest speaks of a similar condemnation for those who, being recipients of God's gracious invitation, suppose that acceptance of such grace makes no demands on them.

Building Better Christian Families

by Fred W. Schott



"TEENS AND DISCIPLINE"

Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels. —2 Tim. 2:23

"I tried your KIPP Principle (Keep It Positive Parent) and it didn't work!" "Tell me more," I said to the exasperated father of two teenage daughters. "Well," he continued, "they wanted to go to this party and I said no. But, I did what you said. I was calm, empathetic, kind, and positive. I said, 'Girls, I realize that to you it sounds like I don't trust you. You are entitled to your opinion. And by the way, you've done an excellent job of expressing your opinion. But, the answer is still no. I'm confident you can accept this with maturity.'"

"That *was* great!" I said to the rest of the class. And it was. Examine the statement above. It was firm, but kind. Dad empathized by noting his daughters' right to their opinions. He even complimented them and planted a positive prediction. But, it didn't work! "What happened?" I asked.

The father went on to explain how they would not take no for an answer. They kept bringing up all kinds of side issues. They even wanted to call grandma to find out how late their dad had come in when he was a teenager. They said it was only because they were girls. They used guilt. "You really wanted sons, dad. Now you're taking it out on us!"

Dad explained how it went on and on. No matter what he said they had another argument. He even suggested they consider law school and set up their own firm. He knew anybody who could argue so well, so creatively, would do well in a law practice. His attempt

at humor and positive predictions did not work either. Everybody ended up angry, hurt, and feeling guilty. To top it all off, he found out later that the girls had gone to the party anyway! Now he had to discipline, but lacked confidence and didn't know where to start.

Situations like this are difficult. Teenagers have a way sometimes of dragging us into them. There are no easy answers, but a place to start is the Apostle's advice to Timothy. "Avoid stupid, endless arguments." They are simply counterproductive and lead to quarrels that hurt everyone involved. In short, just do not argue. Sometimes it's hard to know the difference between arguing and honestly talking things out; between relating and quarreling.

It's important for parents and their teens to learn how to reason together, even to negotiate. The difficulty is knowing when reasoning has deteriorated into silly arguments which are counterproductive. "But, why can't kids just do what their parents tell them to do?" many exasperated parents ask. There are several good reasons.

This is the age when the breaking away process begins in earnest. It is during the teen years that our children begin to learn to think for themselves. It is an important stage. It has a purpose. It helps to prepare them for adulthood. To simply "do what their parents say" without question would not prepare them for early adulthood. We should expect teens to challenge, question, disagree, and ask an endless string of why's and why-not's. In some ways it is an encouraging sign of growing independence. But it is a frustrating stage that takes patience and understanding.

Parents of teens are the adults with God-given responsibilities. Dealing with our children will require more giving and more understanding on our part than we will usually receive from our children during this stage. We should not expect 50/50 give and take when reasoning with teens. We hope they understand better when they become adults. Most of us now understand what our parents meant when they said, "Just wait until you have children of your own."

Another reason we must learn to reason: We earthly parents are *not* always right and we should not pretend to be. Even our perfect Heavenly parent during a period when the children of Israel were being particularly rebellious began His appeal to them, "Come now, let us reason together." (Isaiah 1:18, NIV.) If God is willing to reason with us, we too should be willing to reason with our children.

"But, there comes a time when reasoning and negotiation won't work with a teenager!" That is true. It is true with most teenagers from time to time. The father of the two teens who argued with him, not knowing when to stop and then went to the forbidden party anyway, what should he do? Again, there are no easy, pat answers. One tip that helps parents avoid endless arguments is the "broken record" technique. Obviously in this example dad had listened well. He understood and, as we stated, was empathetic to his daughters. He remained calm and positive. After listening and trying to understand, he stated his position clearly. From then on he could have become a broken record. "I'm sorry, kids, the answer is no" to every silly argument; to every insult, putdown, and guilt trip the kids used to try to

get their way; dad could have calmly—without sarcasm or insult—kindly, firmly said, “I’m sorry girls, the answer is no.” The broken record is worth a try. It keeps us from getting sucked into silly, adolescent tangents.

But, it also works in disciplining. These teenagers defied their father and went to the party anyway! The broken record and reasoning can work together. Dad sits them down and says, “Girls, I told you you could not go to that party. You defied me and went anyway. I’m hurt, disappointed, and angry. You will be punished. You will have to do something, something major to make up for what you’ve done. What are you going to do?”

We can just imagine some of the responses that will be made by these bright, articulate, but argumentative teenagers. Here’s where dad again uses the broken record to avoid “silly arguments.” But, also note dad is being reasonable by giving them some opportunity to have a say in their punishments. And by focusing on what they are going to do, he makes action the focus of discipline. Even with teenagers, action is so much more important than words, threats, and lectures.

The broken record response to all of the following arguments will be, “*I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?*”

Watch how it works:

Teen: But dad, after we talked for hours I thought you changed your mind.

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: Dad, nothing bad happened, so it’s O.K.

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: But dad, you’re not being fair!

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: Dad, grandma said she could not keep you in on Saturday nights.

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: You’re just being childish and stubborn, dad.

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: The preacher’s daughter was there.

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: You’re going to punish us? How barbaric!

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: Just lock us in our room for life!

Dad: I said no. You went anyway. What are you going to do?

Teen: OK, OK, how about if we stay home all next weekend. Will that satisfy you?

Dad: Maybe. At least now we’re getting somewhere. Let’s negotiate. We can work something out. But, you’re going to have to do something.

Once again, the scripture, Old and New Testaments, give parents insight into practical parenting tips. Pray for guidance and special gifts from the Holy Spirit that will enable us to be able to “reason” with our teens without getting trapped into “foolish and stupid arguments.”

Dear Nieces and Nephews,

Back when I first began dating, my Grandmother Anna Adamsom gave me a book entitled "What Every Young Man Should Know". It carried in the first ten pages a long list of endorsements from overweight dowagers and bearded preachers (complete with their photos). That book would be considered out of date today. Many others from Dear Abby to professional Counselors give advice on marriage in our time, but unless their principles are derived from the Bible, their success is going to be limited. There will be some whose marriages fail who will tell you they tried Christianity and it didn't work. But the people to go to for endorsements are those whose marriages have been a success. They have been applying the right principles either by accident or as a result of following God's Book.

For example, there is little divorce in India. They marry very young, their families choose their mates, and yet they succeed. Have you seen the movie about the life of Gandhi? There is a heart-warming episode in which they describe the process to a reporter, and the love they have for one another after many years is touching. One Indian lady has said of our customs, "You Americans fall in love, get married, and have problems. In India, we get married, have problems, and fall in love." They succeed in doing this because their commitment to the family is greater than any vexing personal problems they encounter along the way. Where marriage is concerned, they are individually less self-centered than the present generation of Americans.

Another interesting film that treats the same subject is *Fiddler on the Roof*. After twenty-five years Tevye asks his wife Golde in the beautiful song, "Do You Love Me?" Of course she did, but it was not that love which brought them together originally. They (and the Gandhi's) began their married life with a commitment to something more important than romantic feelings about one another. And their marriages succeeded. That is the same perspective that Jesus had in mind when he says "If you save your life you will lose it, but if you lose your life for my sake (committing myself to something much more important than my personal selfish interests) you will save it."

God's intentions about marriage are first described in Genesis 2:24. He makes both male and female out of one body, then brings them together as husband and wife and declares they shall become one (again!) In Matthew 19:29—Jesus explains how God's plans are thwarted by divorce. "In the beginning it was not so—" He intended marriage to be for life and only hardness of heart (pure selfishness) would bring about divorce.

Betsy and I still have disagreements after 34 years, and sometimes they loom large, and our feelings get quite intense. But our commitment to God's plan for the family cause these problems to remain mole-hills, instead of becoming marriage-threatening mountains. If we focus on our own "needs" we will be operating with the wrong

center. If we focus on serving God and use His standards for marriage, these conflicts can become stepping-stones to greater maturity. But it takes yielding, or submitting to one another, as we mentioned last time. You have to "give a little," right?

Love from Uncle Cecil

Viewing the News

Jack Blaas



SIX PERCENT OF AFRICA'S BLACK POPULATION, which lives in South Africa, owns more autos than 100 percent of the USSR's entire population. But that can be changed. One way would be for the USSR to discontinue its despotic rule and recognize the God-endowed rights of humanity. But that doesn't fit into the plans of the Soviets. Their plan calls for the spoiling of South Africa to bring it down to the level of the enslaved world. The U. S. Congress apparently approves of the Soviet method. Personally I find such plans very repugnant.

For the past five years, free black education received the greatest part of government spending by the white South Africans—even ahead of defense. Blacks in South Africa enjoy the highest life expectancy, the finest medical facilities and are the greatest number of homeowners and entrepreneurs than any other black Africans. All of these things they are sure to lose by the actions of the U. S. Congress. Also, due to outside meddling, they have the greatest number of torture deaths by necklacing than any other people in the entire world. This Ms. Nelson Mandela seems very fond of.

In 1652, when the white settlers first came into South Africa, the closest black Africans were living 600 miles to the North. The Black people were lured in later by the prosperity they would enjoy due to the development of the region by the white settlers. In spite of all the agitation to the contrary, the vast majority of Black South

Africans support the government of South Africa, and, far from trying to "escape" from South Africa, one of South Africa's main problems is the huge number of Blacks who are trying to enter the country from other areas each year to avail themselves of the creature comforts found there. There is a tremendous shortage of ship-loads of South African Blacks emigrating to the USSR searching for the better life there. But that does not trouble Gorbachev.

“AROUND THE OM WORLD,” A PUBLICATION OF OPERATION MOBILIZATION, in a special edition recounts the story of the sinking of OM's ship *MV Logos*, God's servant ship for seventeen faithful years. “Only a few minutes before midnight on January 4, 1988, the crew was startled awake by a harsh, grating, scraping noise... a few minutes later the crew heard shouted instructions: ‘put on your life jackets! Don't panic!’ The *MV Logos* was hard aground on Solitary Rock and listing badly.” George Verwer, International Director of OM relates: “I received the awesome news that the *Logos* was rapidly sinking after running aground on some rocks. I was hit by a wave of sadness, followed by great joy when I heard that all the staff and crew were safe. Again, tears came. Only the Lord knows the collision of various emotions and thoughts that hit many of us at that time. Ultimately, we could only give thanks for the crew being spared and for 17 years of ministry since the

Logos first sailed from Rotterdam in 1971."

The story of the OM's Logos—the vision that was behind it, the faith to procure it, the cooperation in giving, praying, volunteer workers in unbelievable measure—and, now this seemingly final chapter of this truly miraculous endeavor for Christ's greater glory—has to go down in the history of Christian missions as one of the most thrilling of the Christian era.

The vision of Christian missions has always been expressed by the phrase, "to the ends of the earth." It seems fitting that if this great missionary servant of Christ's was to expire somewhere, that it would be at this place in Beagle Channel at the tip of South America, "the end of the earth."

"The Logos was not lost through rusting in a port. She fell in battle! Our plans are: Full speed ahead!" Dale Rhoton, Coordinator, OM Ships.

IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH and Human Services issued new regulations barring family planning groups that receive federal funds from offering counseling or referrals that would help women obtain abortions. Nabers Cabaniss, who is in charge of federal family planning programs, said that the rules are intended to insure that no federal funds are used "to funnel women into abortion clinics." In some cases, according to Cabaniss, the counseling process has been abused, and pregnant women were more or less told that abortion was the only positive option. The states of New York and Massachusetts and organizations such as Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the American Civil Liberties Union quickly filed suit to block the implementation of the regulations on the grounds—yep, you guessed it—that they violate free speech.

ACCORDING TO A RECENTLY RELEASED BRIEFING PAPER of the Institute on Religion and Democracy of Washington, D.C., roughly one-third of all religions dissidents imprisoned in the Soviet Union today, have been sent to jails, prisons, labor camps, and psychiatric institutions since Secretary Gorbachev came to power. . . . Religious discrimination and persecution touches virtually all denominations in the Soviet Union. . . . The best

way to test glasnost is not to count the number of cases resolved, but rather to ask if legal and constitutional discrimination has been abolished. The answer is that structural and institutional persecution against believers remains firmly in place under Mr. Gorbachev. . . . Mr. Gorbachev talks about religious freedom, but he does nothing to abolish the provisions in the Soviet constitution which permit only atheistic propaganda, but not religious propaganda. The laws which govern religious groups are virtually unchanged since they were inaugurated in the late 1920's. And these statutes fly in the face of any assertion of true freedom and true glasnost.

HOMOSEXUALS GENERATE ABOUT 3 MILLION DOLLARS for political activity each year. They now have the 18th largest independent political action committee in the U.S. One hundred twelve individual national politicians were handed a quarter of a million dollars from their funds in 1986. Sexual perverts outspent their most significant opponent more than 50 to one. All levels of government and the various professional societies are almost paralyzed in dealing with AIDS lest homosexuals find offense. And they are very sensitive. Over fifty cities and a state have enacted special legal protection for homosexuals.

EVERYONE HEARS THAT THE ONE PLACE TO CUT the cost of government is to reduce military expenditures. The liberals in congress have spoken loudly and frequently along this line. Representative Jon Kyl has been seeking for a good place to start this knifing of the military. He noted that the Grace Commission Report points out that the Defense Department operates some 4,000 military installations and properties in the U. S. Some of his Fellow Congressmen felt that not all of these installations are vital to national defense, but they are costly. So they concluded that this could possibly be a place where some savings of tax monies could be found. They then asked the General Accounting Office to conduct a study into the savings that could be realized if some of these bases (less than one percent) were scaled back or their functions consolidated with other bases. Even

before their request was made public, a storm of protest arose from the Congressmen (most of whom were strongly on record to cut defense spending). A high-ranking official of the Republican Party complained that the re-

quested study apparently "does not take into account the fact that some bases are critical to the economy, although they may not be critical to the national defense." I hope that Kyl and his few friends are able to make this one go.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

The Christian and the Church

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. (Romans 12:9-13, NIV).

The New International Version (NIV) gives headings to sections of the New Testament. Its heading for Romans 12:9-21 is simply "Love." In many ways that is a very good heading for that section. However, I like to divide the verses into two sections with these headings: vv. 9-13, "Rules for the Christian in his personal life and conduct within the church;" and vv. 14-21, "Rules for the Christian in his daily intercourse with general society." Verse 16 does not exactly fit into that category, but the rest does. However, in this article we want to deal only with vv. 9-13. Everything here does, as the NIV indicates, arise out of pure love, and all of it deals with relations of Christians with each other.

First we are told that love must be sincere, not hypocritical, with no pretense that we love more than we really do. I never tire of reminding myself that Jesus set the standard and told us that we must love one another even as He loved us (John 13:34, 35). That is a high standard, but He would not have told us to love that deeply unless He knew that by the help of the Holy Spirit we could fulfill His command. And let us remember that He gave this command the night before He was crucified as our substitute, a death that He could have avoided if He had not loved us and the Father so.

Love always requires hate. You can not love righteousness without hating sin, especially listed here as "evil." Knowing the harm that evil does to our fellow Christians should make us hate evil intensely,

though we should continue to love the one doing the evil. That is negative, of course, but Paul immediately gives us the positive side of this—"cling to what is good." Love knows the harm of evil and the benefits of good, so these two commands must be observed if we truly love.

In v. 10 we are reminded how love should especially be concentrated on other Christians, a love, may I remind you, that is to be sincere and discriminating. Not only is that love to be a real devotion, it is to be so sincere that we will honor other Christians above ourselves. No one but me can know how worthless I am, how much sin "lives in me" (Rom. 7:17 and 20), but I can't know what is inside you and I also know that Christ died for you. Therefore I should prefer that you be honored ahead of me, "considering others better than myself" (Phil. 2:3). What a difference real love can make in our attitudes when the Holy Spirit is given His place in our lives.

Paul, and other Bible writers, strongly believed that Christian doctrine should influence Christian practice, Christian lives. In v. 11, he gives us three little commands, or, as MacLaren calls them, three graces, also arising out of honest Christian love. First, we are always to be zealous. The Lord hated lukewarmness (Rev. 3:15, 16). A lukewarm Christian does not win souls to the Lord. The King James Bible says "Not slothful in business" here, a phrasing that misleads people in the 20th century. One can be very diligent or zealous about what we call "business" today without touching the command (or grace) here urged upon us. The Lord wants us on fire for Him, a kind of zealousness that will win souls to Him. We do need, of course, to serve faithfully in our jobs, since we are being paid and earn our living for ourselves and our families that way, but eternal things are much more important than any earthly occupation. Even in our business, of course, we are to do this as "serving the Lord," not simply serving our bosses faithfully.

Very practical ways of showing our love are shown in the last two verses. In v. 12, for example, we have three more commands (or "graces") urged upon us—To rejoice or be joyful in hope, to be patient in affliction, and to be faithful in prayer. We should never let our blessed hope fade out of our consciousness, for to do so would be to make this life an end in itself; thus life would seem so unfair and we could give away to depression and despair. Life is not "fair" if it ends all, but there is nothing that can come on us here that is not slight in comparison with "the glory to be revealed unto us." Don't dwell on the evil things coming to you; be joyful in hope. That, of course, is carried into the next command, "patient in affliction," and I have really treated the two together. But let us emphasize the great importance of a much neglected command and gift from God that closes the verse—"faith in prayer." Samuel rebukes most of us in I Samuel 12:23. The Israelites had rejected Samuel as their judge and God as their King and asked for a human king. Samuel could have had no more to do with such ungrateful people, but instead he said, "As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you." How many times do we sin against the Lord

by failing to pray? Prayer does not "change things," but prayer lays hold of the power of God that does change things. God is much more ready to listen than we are to pray, His ears are always open to our prayers but we fail to take advantage. Be faithful in prayer.

Our section closes with two commands (or "graces") that are practical everyday ways of showing our Christian love. First the sharing of our goods with those who are less fortunate than we are. God never gives us an abundance so that we might live in luxury, but He does give us much that we might be able to share with others, thus showing, as we do it in Christ's Name, that we have real faith, real love. And remember that the only extended teaching on giving in the New Testament is 2 Cor. 8 & 9, and it deals with giving to the poor, especially to the poor among the Believers. A related suggestion ends our passage, "practice hospitality." In this day of much violence in our cities it would be easy to excuse ourselves from really opening our homes and hearts to others. But God is not looking for excuses; He is looking for hearts tuned to His love of mankind. He gave His Son to die for us; shouldn't we listen to His desires for us?

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

George C. Galanis

Athens, Greece

February 4th

We feel the great need of a dedicated man of God to travel around and water and edify three thousand precious souls that have been cultivated for ten years by our magazine and correspondence courses. We are earnestly praying for such a gifted and faithful church planter and edifier of the believers. Only God knows and can call the right person to serve Him sacrificially and effectively. We have seen several candidates thus far, but we have not seen God's anointed one yet.

Encouraging news for our mission work is that my son-in-law, Dr. Tassos Paschos is now working with me in the office of The Greek Bible Center part time. He, however, eventually is willing to undertake full responsibility as a director of the whole project.

Please pray for my wife's health. She tells me that she is losing strength day by day. Her spirit, however, is in good condition.

WHEN WE TALK

If we write it down as a law of the house that the absent are not discussed to their detriment, that no belittling stories are told of anyone, nor anything said about anyone unless it passes through the three sieves: Is it true? kind? necessary? If we humble ourselves if

ever, unawares, we break this law, we shall be astonished at the amount of talk of the kind that harms the spirit which it rules out with a stroke. And the frothy talk of nothingness, the mere noise of words that can dull and make dusty a whole table of Christian people, will not taste good to us if by His grace we keep that law. Talk can pull down as well as build up, and it can entrap and weaken in a very curious way. But the talk that is the kind He would enjoy, frank and simple and sincere and happy as the song of the birds—this kind of talk lifts up and helps. Imagination is in place here. Imagine the Lord at table or in the room (and He is); how would our talk sound to Him! All we need, all we want, is to have His ungrieved Presence with us always.

—Amy Carmichael
in *God's Missionary*

RESCUED BY STUNNING GRACE

Dennis Kaufman

Train whistle howling, his son crying out for help, John Griffiths was eye to eye with a horrifying decision.

John was the proud operator of a draw bridge over a busy river, back in the 1930's. Each day he'd yank the levers that would elevate the old railroad bridge to allow passage of ships below.

One Saturday John invited his 10-year-old son Peter to spend the day with him at the bridge. Peter whooped with excitement. He'd always marveled at the bridge and its levers and big gears. His dad had the best job in the whole world, he figured.

As an old fishing boat eased up the river toward the bridge, John showed his son how the levers performed. With a grinding hum and a few creaks the old bridge separated and rose toward the autumn sky. Peter gasped and chortled while the boat crept upriver and out of sight.

John began watching his gauges and jotting notes in his report book. Then came the unmistakable sound that sent him back to his levers: the piercing whistle of the 10:05 southbound train. The 10:05 was a little early—and a little late in blowing the warning whistle. John knew he must lower the bridge quickly to avoid a tragedy.

His big gloved hands grasped the shiny levers and pulled. He looked over his shoulder for Peter. Where was the boy? "Peter?" John's stomach knotted as his eyes nervously darted up and down the bridge. "Peter!"

The bridge began its descent. "Daddy! Daddy!" Frantic with worry, John peered over the edge and saw his son atop the huge bridge gears. The giant teeth of the rotating machinery had consumed the boy's jacket. Now his hand and arm were being devoured, slowly pulling his entire body into the grinding gears.

John lunged for the levers. But here came the 10:05 loaded with passengers, whistle howling, roaring toward the bridge. "Daddy! Help me!" The terror of the boy's voice seemed to pound within every muscle of his father's body.

John glanced at the train, then at his helpless son. In that split second he was faced with deciding between the life of his pleading son, or the hundreds of lives aboard the rushing train. In agony he held firm on the levers, and the bridge positioned itself to support the train and its passengers.

John wept and shook as the machinery squeezed the life from his only son. As the boy's shrieks melted into echoes, the 10:05 sped across the old bridge. The vacationing passengers had no idea what had just transpired below the bridge. In comfort and happiness they waved and smiled at John as they whizzed past. . . .

When God's Son prayed in the garden of Gethsemane for deliverance from the cup of suffering, the Father faced a similar decision. In Rom. 3:21-31 we read about His reaction to the dilemma.

For three chapters Paul has been mounting proof of the fact that all have sinned and by law are guilty. In chapter one he has stated that the Gentiles are without excuse for their atrocities. One can almost hear the Jews cheering in the background as Paul lambasts the foreigners. However, he then points the finger at the Jews and concludes that there are *none* righteous.

This is a sobering truth to those who were apparently boasting about their own righteousness (3:27). As Christians, we still run into this mindset on a regular basis as we talk with people. It seems that even many Christians cannot get away from a works-salvation. People everywhere still think salvation is obtained by the balanced scale approach. They say, "Be a good person and don't hurt anyone and you will be saved." This warped approach is so widespread in the religions of man that it easily creeps into our thinking if we are not careful. For those who wish to be saved by keeping the commandments, let them keep what Jesus said was "the greatest commandment."

In light of these things, remember that Paul's main point in these first three chapters of Romans is that no one will be declared righteous by lawkeeping. The law does not save us but condemns us before God.

Redeemed and Propitiated

So here we all sit on death row awaiting our day of execution. Can you picture the hopelessness of that situation? But now, of all things, the word is being spread that there is someone who wants to die in our place. Could anyone possibly be so gracious as to die for enemies and lawbreakers? In Romans 3:23-26 we may well see the gospel in its most concentrated and powerful form.

Verse 24 states that we are justified (declared righteous) freely by His grace through redemption that came by Jesus Christ. This word *redemption* has a rich Old Testament history and is worth some

special attention. The best and simplest illustration of the concept of redemption is seen in the passover event (Exodus 12 - 13), where the Israelites' firstborn sons could be redeemed only with the offering of a substitute lamb. There is an obvious foreshadowing here of the substitutionary atonement of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Because of this redemption, we who trust in the blood of Jesus will experience the *passing over* of the death angel in judgment. Like those on the train, we are safe because of *the son's* death.

Another word that demands some focus is the word *propitiation* found in verse 25. Literally, this term means the turning away of wrath by an offering. Since sin entered the world, the holiness of God has demanded payment. By His very nature God must be just. Sins cannot be left unpunished. These truths concerning the nature of God helps us to understand the incredible significance of the cross.

Rather than directing His wrath toward us as sinners, it was deflected and laid upon Jesus. As He willingly absorbed the fury of God's punishment for sin, no wonder He sweat drops of blood in the garden. Is it any surprise that He cried out upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Considering what was happening one would be shocked had the sky *not* grown dark and the earth *not* quaked!

Propitiation was a common idea in secular Greek thought, but no one had ever heard of a God who demands justice and then pays the penalty Himself. This is indeed phenomenal. This is indeed grace.

That brings us to the climax of Romans 3:26,

He did it to demonstrate His justice at the present time so as to be *just* and the one who *justifies* the man who has faith in Jesus.

Now a Righteousness From God

Because of the work of Christ, there is a new way to be righteous. Before, it seemed that only through complete obedience to the law could one be declared righteous. But as Rom. 3:21 indicates there is now a righteousness from God apart from the law. This new way of relating to God is grace and it is obtained by faith in the blood of Jesus.

Ordinarily when you think of the righteousness of God, you think of God's perfect moral character. This, however, is little cause for rejoicing on our part because it is this righteousness that separates us from the Lord. Understanding the righteousness of God in this way in his study of Romans, Martin Luther was driven to even greater despair concerning his desire to be right with God. He then discovered that there is another meaning to this phrase "righteousness of God." For in the book of Romans it more correctly refers to God's gift to sinners.

Elsewhere scripture uses the idea of a robe of righteousness (Isa. 61:10). This is an excellent illustration of the righteousness that comes from God. We need a robe of righteousness because our own righteousness is like filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). Since we have no presentable robe of our own, our only alternative is to put on Christ. Gala-

tians 3:27 indicates that we do this in baptism; thus when God looks at us, He sees the righteousness of His Son.

Indeed the righteousness of God is a gift to sinners. This is the glorious gospel which thrilled Paul and made him so opposed to those who preach any other gospel or any other means of salvation.

Conclusion

Where is boasting? We have no room for it (v. 27). The proud Pharisee may list his attributes but God is not impressed. The Lord is impressed only when we throw ourselves upon the mercy provided through Christ. This new understanding should pave the way for us to live humbly before God, sharing this grace with others who need it so desperately.

TREASURES, OLD AND NEW, ABOUT "LOVE THE BROTHERHOOD"

(I Peter 2:17)

Regarding Peter's statement : "If we prostitute the word *brotherhood* to mean more than those who are truly Christians, then we have some kind of humanistic fraternity; if we prostitute it to make it mean less than all true disciples of Christ, then we have a sect. And it is much worse to be a sect than to be a denomination. We can avoid being sectarian, while it may be well nigh impossible not to be a denomination. To be a sect is to presume to be the whole of the Body of Christ when we are but a part. To be a denomination is to admit to separateness in name, organization, etc., but to claim to be a part of the larger brotherhood of Christians. If we hope someday to transcend denominationalism, we must first overcome our sectarianism, the 'us only' mentality."

—Leroy Garrett

• • •
"As a brotherhood of people seeking to be nothing more nor less than followers of Jesus Christ, we must be neither too lazy to learn nor so arrogant as to think we do not need to learn."

—Rubel Shelly, *I Just Want to Be a Christian*

• • •
"My brethren are Christians only. . . . There is no denominational wall around us. All Christians on earth, all who have believed and obeyed Christ, are our brethren. There is nothing around us to separate them from us. They may have fellowship with us at any moment without joining or coming into anything. We are separated from all denominational believers by the walls which *they* have erected around themselves. . . .

"No, we are not perfect. We would not claim that we have discovered all divine truth or that we perfectly practice that which we have found. But each of the thousands of congregations standing

with us for this great plea is absolutely free from all human authority, free under God to study, to understand and practice any and all truth revealed in God's word. It is this freedom, I repeat, that constitutes the glory of our plea, the greatness of undenominational Christianity."

—Jesse P. Sewell, at Abilene
Christian College in 1923

"A while back, as I visited in a hospital ward, one of the patients there asked me what church I belonged to. I told him, '*If you are a Christian, we belong to the same church.*' At first he seemed surprised at my answer, but then he said, 'You know, that's right. I really meant to ask you what denomination you belong to; but denominations just divide us, don't they?' The answer of scripture and history to that last question is: indeed, they do!"

—Harold Key

Baptism—How Important?

The subject of baptism is a sticky one. One camp gives it far too little emphasis, perhaps neglecting it altogether. Another camp goes to the other extreme, overstressing it, harping on it constantly. We desire not to belong to either of those camps. We deplore both extremes.

Consider this question. Suppose you become acquainted with a neighbor and discover that he is a Presbyterian, Methodist or Lutheran. Then you have a chance to talk with him on spiritual matters, which you've been looking forward to. What will be the first question you ask him—"Have you ever been immersed, as a believer?" If so, then no wonder many folks say we make a savior out of baptism! Our first concern, and our point of emphasis, should be on a person's attitude toward the Lord—Are you committed to Christ Jesus? What is your relationship with Him? Are you trusting in the grace of God, or in your church or your goodness or service to others? Isn't the Lord Jesus wonderful? Do you love Him, and His Word? Isn't it great to be His disciple? These are the basic questions, the matters of highest priority. (I'm not saying we should necessarily begin our witnessing conversations with those expressions. Circumstances should determine our approaches.) Later on, baptism and other matters may well need to be studied as we seek to follow and teach the whole counsel of God, but let's not make it our major emphasis.

On the other hand, we should warn folks against the tragic error of mishandling the Word of the Living God, of downplaying matters which are clearly commanded by our Master and Teacher. We should do this *primarily* by pointing out what SCRIPTURE plainly teaches in passages like Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:38-41, 10:44-48, 16:29-33, 22:16; Rom. 6:1-4; Gal. 3:26-27; I Pet. 3:21; etc.

On the other hand, sometimes another approach is helpful too, in trying to dispel prejudices people have. When faced with such passages, some people try to explain them away—perhaps sincerely, be-

cause of what they've been taught by their preachers. A man once told me, "There isn't a single drop of water in Romans chapter six." He believed it refers to baptism in the Holy Spirit rather than water baptism. But the former is a promise and the latter is a duty, a command.

Other folks say to us, "Oh, that's just the way *you* interpret those verses. You Church of Christ people see baptism everywhere, and you mis-interpret the Bible to make it fit your ideas." In dealing with folks like that, it sometimes helps to show them how our interpretation actually harmonizes with very many outstanding preachers and leaders throughout the ages, and with many leading New Testament scholars today. It is not some odd idea that originated only in the last century or two in the "Campbellite movement." Thus it may be valuable to share quotes such as the following, giving **VIEWS OF CHRISTIAN PREACHERS AND TEACHERS** outside the Restoration Movement, those who are known and respected in the evangelical world as a whole. Not that we bow to any uninspired person as a final authority; our authority is the Bible. But views such as the following lend weight to our *uninspired interpretation* of God's *inspired Word*.

WHAT GREAT CHRISTIANS TAUGHT ABOUT BAPTISM

Martin Luther, leader in the Reformation of the 1500's: "The Greek word for baptize means to dip something entirely in water. Without doubt the German word *Taufe* (baptism) is derived from the word *tief* (deep), so that one sinks deeply into the water. . . . On this account I could wish that such as are baptized should be completely immersed in water according to the meaning of the word, and the significance of the ordinance . . . as also, without doubt, it was instituted by Christ." (From *Luther's Works*, Vol. XI)

John Calvin, another leading reformer: "The word *baptize* means immerse, and it is certain . . . immersion was observed in the early church." (From *Institutes*, Book IV)

John Wesley, great evangelist, commenting on Rom. 6:3 and John 3:5, wrote: "We are buried with Him—alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion. By water then, as a means, the water of baptism, we are regenerated or born again: whence it is also called by the apostle the washing of regeneration.'" (Titus 3:5) (From *Notes on the New Testament*)

Andrew Murray, noted Bible teacher and author at the turn of this century: Commenting on our Lord's words in the Great Commission to baptize disciples into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Murry wrote: "The believing disciple, as he is baptized in the water, is also to be baptized or introduced into the name of the Three-One God. By the name of *the Father*, the new birth and life as a child in the love of the Father are secured to him (Gal. 3:26, 27; 4:6, 7); by the name of *the Son*, participation in the forgiveness of sins and the life that is in Christ (Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:5, 6); by the name of *the Holy Spirit*, the indwelling and progressive renewal of the Spirit (Tit. 3:5, 6). And every baptized believer must always

look upon baptism as his entrance into a covenant with the Three-One God, and as a pledge that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit will in course of time do for him all that they have promised." (From *The New Life*)

R. A. Torrey, outstanding evangelist, teacher, author, and first president of the Moody Bible Institute, in the late 1800's and early 1900's: Writing about "how the baptism with the Holy Spirit can be obtained," he lists first—accept Jesus as Christ and Lord, and second—repent: "renounce sin, all sin, every sin."

He then continues, "The third step is found in this same verse: 'Be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins' . . . We must humble ourselves to make open confession of our sin and renounce it and accept Jesus Christ in God's appointed way, by baptism. The baptism with the Holy Spirit is not for the one who secretly takes his place as a sinner and believer in Christ, but for the one who does so openly. Of course, the baptism with the Holy Spirit may precede water baptism as in the case of the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:47). But this was evidently an exceptional case and water baptism immediately followed. . . . The passage before us (Acts 2:38) certainly presents the normal order." (From *The Baptism with the Holy Spirit*)

(To be continued, in July)

NEWS AND NOTES

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

MORE IMPORTANT DATES

FOR 1988

Last month's News & Notes listed a number of important happenings scheduled for this year. Here are some more we have learned about.

April 23, Ladies Inspiration Day, Louisville. See details below.

May 14, Antioch Camp, special day. See details below.

Nov. 14-17, Louisiana Fellowship Week, Glenmora, La. Theme: "The Joy Set Before Us."

NOTICE: Restoration Forum VI, which was originally scheduled for May 11-13, has been postponed to Nov. 1-3. The place is the same: Akron, Ohio.

Maple Manor Home, Sellersburg IN.:

Steve Smith is available to give a slide presentation of both homes (children's & senior citizens') to interested congregations.

Let your interest be expressed to Steve at: 1-606-774-8324, Winchester, Ky. or to Cindy Schreiber at Maple Manor, 1-812-246-2018.

Ladies' groups or other interested parties may enlist the services of Cindy for slide/oral presentations for the Children's Home.

—Robert Istre

Our supply closet is always in need of the following items: deodorant, razors, shaving cream, combs, hair brushes, shampoo, etc. At this time, it is in great need. If you are led to help with any of these items, please call Cindy or drop by to see us. Thank you for your concern and support.

—Judy Vest

Gallatin, TN. Parents Support Group:

Parents meeting this Sunday—Again our topic is drug education and we will be privileged to have members of the executive Just Say No board. Also, we will have samples of drugs that are prevalent in our society, for information purposes.

—Julius Hovan

Linton, IN.:

We are glad to report that the new bath-house at Woodland Bible Camp

for the boys is completed and a new sewer line has been installed, too. Your prayers and your support for this good work are needed.

—Harry Coultas

Turkey Creek Church of Christ News:

Brother Wayne Cook was our guest speaker Sunday February 7th. He spoke in behalf of the work at Christian Youth Encampment. It enlightened many as to the goals set forth there. (Editor's comment: Send W & W such news and we'll publicize it.)

Bro. Glenn Baber conducted a short brush-up course in a teacher's training session this month, which will enable our teacher's to stay abreast of things in our rapidly changing world.

The end of the quarter recital program was conducted Sunday Feb. 28th, at which time all the Sunday School classes participated. The children brought a good message to all in song and memory work, thanks to our teaching staff.

Our visitation program is well underway, and seems to be very successful. It is designed to visit each member of the Church for encouragement and exhortation, as well as an outreach program.

Some of us ladies are engaged in a weekly Bible reading program for the elderly ladies of the Church, who can no longer see to read and study their Bible. This brings great joy to them.

—Woodrew and Velma Johnson

Jennings, LA.:

We look forward to upcoming meetings with Robert Shank (March 24-27) and Richard Lewis in late April.

Bro. Doug Broyles encouraged more of the men to become involved in the worship services, i.e., make announcements, read the scripture text, call for prayer, make short talks, etc. Lake Charles would be a good place to begin to do this if the crowds at Jennings are a problem!

Acadiana Christian Workers Clinic: School time again for those who want to increase their Bible knowledge. Jan. 28 through March 17 on Thursday nights from 7 to 9, at First Church of Christ. Subjects are "The Holy Spirit" with Robbie Bacon; "Christian leader-

ship" with A. J. Istre; "Seven letters of Revelation" with Bro. Val; and "Social and family concerns in Proverbs" with Jack Harris.

Good News for Louisville:

Recently Frank James spoke to the Louisville area church leaders' breakfast re: Christian Conciliation Ministries of Ky., which he heads. This ministry seeks to train churches & individual believers in peacemaking, and also provide mediation or arbitration for Christians who are having disputes. Typical disputes they mediate include family conflicts, contractual & business disputes, property disputes, landlord-tenant problems, disputes over debt and intra-church disputes. They seek to prevent Christians from suing each other in court (1 Cor. 6:1-8), not only by mediation but also teaching Biblical principles of resolving conflicts between believers. They provide speakers, hold workshops, produce literature, etc. For more information, contact CCM, 1013 S. 5th St., Louisville 40203; 502-585-4673.

Louisville, Ky.:

A Renewal—Now! conference will be led by David Reagan at the Portland Church of Christ on Sat. & Sun., April 16-17. Sat. afternoon he will teach on renewal, from 1:30-4:30 (there will be breaks every hour). That night at 7:00 he will preach re: renewal. Then on Sun. morning he will teach the adults' Bible class and also preach—again on themes related to renewal.

Topics will include the authority of God's Word, the importance of prayer, the power of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

LADIES INSPIRATION DAY:

Saturday, April 23, 1988

9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

We invite you to participate in a day of Prayer and Praise as God leads us toward a greater commitment to become powerful "pray-ers." Please join us as we explore ways to make our prayer life more vibrant.

Southeast Church of Christ
12610 Taylorsville Rd.
Louisville, KY 40299

Antioch Christian Camp:

The camp has put on a new face for the new camp year. Last fall a new road was built for easier access to the

camp and cabins received new coatings of paint. Joe Strunk will be assisting Nick Marsh in the overall direction of the camp season.

May 14, 1988, will be a day of fun, food, fellowship, and fund-raising for the camp. There will be a carnival for all ages—pony ride, basketball shoot, dunking tank, ring toss, etc.—a homemade ice cream parlor, an auction of arts and crafts, a lunch store, and a gospel concert with some of our local talent. We want everyone to enjoy themselves as well as meet the staff of Antioch Christian Camp for 1988. All proceeds will go towards the camp for this season's operation.

The camp's address is:

Route 4, Bark Branch Road
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 223-7056

—Ramona Marsh

Work Hard—Christ's Return is at Hand!

It is encouraging to notice that our Lord's return is the main theme of at least 2 conferences that will be held this year by Restoration Movement church-groups. The Christian Churches' North American Christian Convention, to be held in Cincinnati from July 5-8, has the theme, "Till He Comes." Sermon titles include: Evangelize—"Til He Comes; Watch—"Til He Comes; Worship—"Til He Comes; etc.

And one group of Churches of Christ will hold a major evangelism seminar entitled "Speed His Coming." There will be messages on: Like a Thief in the Night; We Will All Be Changed; Unashamed at His Coming; etc.

May the Blessed Hope be an incentive to more and more of God's people to rise up and make Christ known to all the world

Tell City, IN.:

PRaise AND WORSHIP SERVICE:
On Friday, January 29th, at 8:00 PM, two Bible study groups, Bro. John Winchell's and Bro. Mike Vincent's of Owensboro, joined together for a praise and worship service. We had a wonderful time of praising our Lord. There was special singing. Bro. Milton Pledger was the praise leader.

—Bulletin

Buechel Church, Louisville, KY.:

Audio and video tapes of the Marsh Quartet (Sam, Joan, Nick & Ramona) are available. Audio tapes are \$5.00 and the video tapes are \$20.00. Please

contact Ivan Duncan. Ivan's address is:
3110 Commander Dr.
Louisville, KY 40220
Tel: 502-458-5144

Terre Haute, IN.:

There are many timid Christians out there who would love to do something for God but don't know what to do. Here's a suggestion for them: order 50 "Good News New Testaments" from the American Bible Society at only 40¢ each (that totals \$20.00) by calling 1-800-543-8000, operator 312, TEV order 02705. Then arrange with a super market, dormitory, etc. to make them available to the public, free.

—John S. May

Gallatin Church of Christ, TN.:

In addition to our usual joy of worship and fellowship we were challenged, encouraged, and informed by our elders. They presented a printed booklet which gave much general information about the church, a calendar of events, Sunday school information, youth activities and goals and programs for the coming month.

—Bulletin

Maple Manor Christian Home, Sellersburg, IN.:

Bro. Joe Blansett has decided to retire as administrator of the adult division after 15 years of untiring, dedicated service to this ministry (along with his devoted wife, Martha).

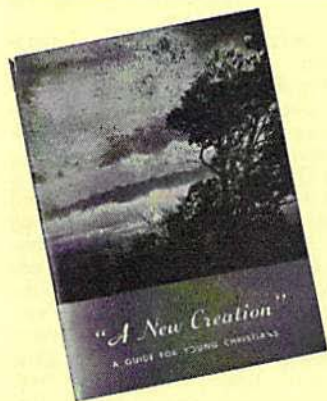
Praise God for directing the Board to a young man desirous of entering into this ministry. Bro. Al Flohr, formerly of Oakdale, Louisiana, has been prayerfully selected to take over the administrator's position after the completion of a necessary state-controlled internship and the passing of a state administered test. This process will take approximately seven months (beginning February, 1988) and require Bro. Flohr to immediately leave his current employment as vice-president of the Bank of Southwest Louisiana and come on to the payroll of Maple Manor-Adult Division.

Pray that God would supply the additional resources necessary to meet all expenses in this transition period. The estimate minimum costs for the transition including salary expense, moving costs, and housing is \$800 per week or \$22,400 for the first seven months of the calendar year, 1988.

Dwight Mellon, Secretary,
Board of Directors

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