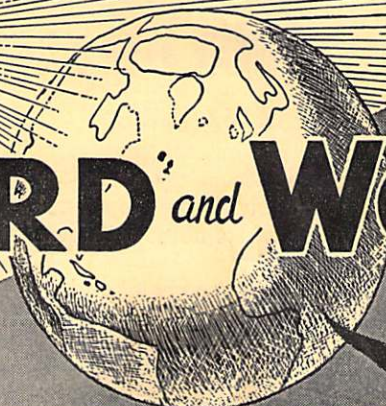


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."



The **WORD** and **WORK**



"Holding forth the Word of life."

JANUARY, 1989

Fellowship With Fellow-Christians

"I do not have time for a narrow, sectarian view of the gospel or of the church. I have little use for those who boast that they are the only loyal church in a hundred miles or those who think they are about the last of an almost extinct species called 'sound' preachers. None of them have a monopoly on truth, and most of them have only the truth-according-to-them. Deliver me from such a nearsighted outlook! God is too big for that. The gospel is too broad for that. The world is too lost for that.

"It is senseless for each of our segments to live in its own little isolated world. We have built walls around each sect so high you can't get over them and so thick you can't hear through them. And each sect has sentenced itself to solitary confinement."

—Reuel Lemmons, in IMAGE Magazine

"Because we may not in everything see eye to eye, can we not do anything shoulder to shoulder?"

—Robert O. Fife

"It's not our differences that hurt, but our manner of differing."

—J. N. Armstrong

THOUGHTS FOR THE NEW YEAR

TIME FLIES

A newborn infant
tumbles from my arms,
and trudges off to school;
A youth walks home with her;
their child
brings me a shawl and stool.
—Author unknown

GOD IN THE TOMORROW

The Oriental shepherd was always ahead of his sheep. He was in front. Any attempt upon them had to take Him into account. Now God is down in front. He is in the tomorrows. It is tomorrow that fills men with dread. But God is there already, and all tomorrows of our life have to pass before Him before they can get to us.
—F. B. Meyer

SUFFERING

“The purpose of our lives in this world is not comfort and security but training; not fulfillment but preparation. The world is a lousy home, but a good gymnasium. It’s like an uphill bowling alley. The point is not to succeed in knocking down all the pins but to train our muscles. We misunderstand the point of this world if we expect it to be happy.

“Paradoxically, those who expect happiness in this world are usually the most unhappy people, while those who expect unhappiness are the happiest people. . . . The world is a soul-making machine.”
—Peter Kreeft

15th ANNUAL TELL CITY - LILLY DALE WORKSHOP

FEBRUARY 24-25, 1989

AT THE LILLY DALE CHURCH OF CHRIST

Friday, February 24

7:00 Worship Time, led by Dave Schreiner
7:45 “God’s Care—The Greatest Miracle”

Bill Colwick

Saturday, February 25

9:30 “What On Earth Is God Doing?”
11:00 “Love Those Christians Anyway”
“Puberty: Love It And Then Leave It!” (Youth Meeting)
1:30 Worship and Praise
“The Greatest Thing in All The World!” (Youth Mtg.)
2:30 “The Challenge Of A Vigorous Ministry”

Dwayne Smith
Alex Wilson
Steve Hill
Jeff Monday
Mike Abbott

Overnight Housing for Friday night may be arranged by calling the Pledgers at 812-836-2338. For those desiring a motel the number at the Lincoln Trail Inn is 812-547-3474.

THE WORD AND WORK

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

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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congregations within two miles of the other in rural areas. We also encourage fellowship among our churches." (Malawi) "In the past, a non-instrumental missionary worked together with our Bible Institute. He was a wholly Christlike person." (Italy)

"The non-instrumentals own campgrounds and we've been active in helping get facilities there prepared each year. It is also free to be used by our congregation for special outings if we desire. Our children attend the camp (usually led by their folks) and are involved in other activities throughout the year." (Belgium)

"A cappella missionaries were asked to speak at the 1985 Pan Africa meeting." (Kenya) "We use one of their men on a regular basis at our seminary." (Canada) "When we started services in the mountains I would often go to the city to bring up an elder from the non-instrumental Church of Christ to preach for us." (Honduras) "There have been some joint men's meetings." (Kenya) "Periodically we exchange hosting at what we call 'Great Family Gatherings' (a sort of area-wide fellowship)." (Belgium) "I conduct each summer a small unity effort Bible study for the young men of our two segments. The more they come to know each other, I feel the wall is getting melted down rapidly." (Japan)

"There have been shared evangelistic meetings. Also their group has a large food relief program here right now. At their invitation we cooperated with them in distributing food to areas where we have churches without any mention that there are 'two groups.'" (Zambia) "Two non-instrumental men have been asked to serve on the board of Pioneer Bible Translators." (Papua New Guinea) "One of their missionaries writes Sunday school lessons which we publish and distribute. Many of them helped finance this." (Brazil) "We invited a non-instrumental missionary to have a book stall at our All-India Convention. We will not have instrumental music when an a cappella missionary speaks." (India) "We have immersed folks in areas where there are non-instrumental churches and left these converts in their care." (Belgium)

"Currently three Pioneer Bible Translator members are non-instrumental. They are opening a new work. They will be supported almost totally by non-instrumental churches." (Papua New Guinea)

Perhaps the most thrilling statement—because of the Jesus-like spirit it portrayed—was by an instrumental missionary in Italy named Harold Fowler. He wrote of his experiences there: "Everywhere I have gone among non-instrumental Christians, I have been treated with a brotherly spirit and found a warm welcome. I have preached in non-instrumental churches and presided at the Lord's table. Bible study materials I have written and printed have found a usefulness and welcome among many of their churches here. A bit of homespun but definitely Christian philosophy has been my guideline: 'It is pretty hard to keep kicking a dog that keeps licking your hand.' And by the grace of God, I for one am determined to be that dog. I have already experienced the joy of the Spirit alive in my brethren on both sides of the keyboard, and rejoice in the truth and righteousness, the growth and power that is evident in each precious brother or sister. Every effort that has been made to encourage unity has been richly rewarded, even if initially it was difficult to break the ice. So often, I have found beneath the seemingly forbidding exterior, a Christian to love, and in loving him, found a brother."

Other exciting things are happening. When "Mr." Jack Harris moved from Tennessee to Louisiana he discovered some premill Churches of Christ that would acknowledge him as a brother in Christ. In fact, if I understand correctly, he and a few of "our" preachers

together conducted a Bible-institute. And he has spoken at the Louisiana Fellowship Week more than once.

Then get a load of this recent news item in *Christian Standard*:

The 1989 Open Forum scheduled to be held at Traders Point Christian Church (Indianapolis) March 14-16, will consist of a 5-session discussion with persons from the Church of God International (Anderson, Indiana).

The five topics to be covered include History of Each Movement, How We View Biblical Authority, the Ordinances, Holiness, and the Local Church.

The planning committee for the Open Forum presents this discussion as a dialogue between two groups that make similar claims about themselves when representing themselves to the wider Christian community. "This discussion is exploratory in nature, focusing on similarities of the two bodies. The purpose is to seek to understand, to inquire, and to relate within the context of Christian fraternity. We are not discussing merger. We want to know from each other, what does restoration of New Testament Christianity really mean? What is the goal? How is it to be achieved? How is it identified?"

Can't you hear Barton Stone shouting, "Hooray—praise God!" And Raccoon John Smith exclaiming, "Go for it, brothers!" And the Campbell duo saying, "Amen! It's time we got better acquainted with other folks who love our Lord too."

What, not Where

This reminds me of a statement made at Akron by Marvin Phillips, preacher for a very, very large Church of Christ in Tulsa. He is a dynamic speaker constantly invited to preach for all sorts of churches and other audiences. He told us, "Judge me by *What* I say, not *Where* I say it."

That's fair, isn't it? R. H. Boll, longtime editor of this magazine, no doubt felt the same.

[His] breadth of fellowship was time and again demonstrated. He often invited our amillennial missionaries to speak at the Portland Church, although such engagements were given no publicity lest unsympathetic brethren use them to destroy the missionaries. Often Christian Church brethren, visiting the Portland prayer meeting, would be invited to speak. Brother Boll consistently participated in the [Christian Churches'] Cedar Lake Bible Conferences, and on one occasion spoke before a large Baptist congregation in Dallas, Texas, at the invitation of their minister, Dr. Luther Peake. He was also featured on Dr. Peake's radio program. Aside from the latter occasion's causing mild concern in one premillennial congregation in Dallas, I never knew of any of these actions being called into question by his premillennial colleagues.

—From a Unity Forum message by LaVern Houtz in 1967

A veteran Christian Church professor told me at Akron that he had heard Brother Boll preach years ago at the North American Christian Convention. The N.A.C.C. is the annual Bible conference and fellowship week of the Christian Churches. It is a time of inspirational preaching and many practical workshops. This year it will be held in Louisville, July 11-14. I encourage you who live within range to take advantage of the fine opportunity for fellowship and learning. We can benefit greatly even if we don't agree with 100% of what is said or done.

I close with another highlight from Akron, from Calvin Warpula's message on "The Centrality of the Cross of Christ":

The more our religion is full of the cross the more it is full of Jesus.

In his seventy-plus years, my friend Ervin Waters of Temple, Texas, has lived through twelve major splits in the restoration movement. He admits that he himself has been a chief protagonist in some of them. Now he sees his error. In humility he writes, "If an omniscient God accepts ignorant me at the foot of the cross in the blood of His Son, then I can accept ignorant you at the foot of the cross in the blood of His Son. If a holy God accepts weak and sinful me at the foot of the cross in the blood of His Son, then I can accept weak and sinful you at the foot of the cross in the blood of His Son."

Yes, Christ's cross is the basis and motivation for Christian fellowship. Let's gladden His heart and help answer His prayer (John 17) by building bridges, not barriers.

* * * * *

"WHAT A FELLOWSHIP . . ."

by James M. Wells

[James Wells ministers with an Independent Christian Church in Norton, Va.]

It all began about three years ago when one of "them" knocked on the church door. He introduced himself and said that he was the new preacher for the a cappella church of Christ down the street. I invited him into my office and wondered where the conversation would drift in the next hour or so. My experience with a few of "them" had not been pleasant and I decided that I would not allow myself to debate issues which I believed were so silly.

We sat down and began to talk. At first we were both uneasy, but that soon disappeared. As the time passed, I soon discovered that this gentleman did not live up to my prejudiced expectations. He was very kind and polite and simply wanted to get to know me as a fellow servant in Christ. Little did I know then that that meeting was the start of a close friendship and fellowship that continues to this day, even though we are now separated by hundreds of miles.

I was invited by my new friend to a meeting of a cappella preachers held every other Monday morning. I was a little apprehensive to go, but was assured that I would be accepted with love and enthusiasm. I decided to go with him and I was very impressed with their openness and warmth. I was received with love and was very comfortable with them.

I went to another meeting and then to another and continued to go to these very special meetings until I moved away to work with another church. Those moments with several preachers and elders of the local a cappella churches were precious times that I looked forward to with great anticipation and happiness. They possessed and displayed the Spirit of Christ and I learned things that have influenced my thinking in many areas of my life and ministry.

I learned much about myself as a result of the fellowship with these men. The truth of being "quick to hear and slow to speak" became a reality to me. I had been too quick to judge, basing my judgment mostly upon what I had heard and read. This taught me that I could indeed be wrong about things.

I now try to get to know preachers and leaders of other churches as individuals. While it is difficult at times, I attempt to fight back the urge to write them off as hardheaded legalists or anything-goes liberals. I was taught the divine practice of love and patience by these men who loved and served the same God as we do. I suppose there are many Christians who refuse to widen the circle of the brotherhood and rationalize that all who do not agree with us on every point are false teachers and we are to have no part of them. Well, I used to think this way, but all of that was only an excuse for laziness and arrogance. It was a very enlightening thing to learn that perhaps we have some false teachings of our own.

I learned much about our non-instrumental brothers also. They are human beings saved by grace through faith like Christians of the instrumental churches. They eat and drink, work and play, read and pray. They have the same problems, experience the same summer slumps, fight the same frustrations, and rejoice in the same victories. While it is true that many of them hold the use of an instrument in worship as a test of fellowship, it is equally true that many of them do not. We of the instrumental churches must rid ourselves of any bitterness and prejudice and extend our right hands, because there are many out there who will reach out to shake them in true fellowship.

(This article first appeared in *Christian Standard*, and is reprinted by kind permission of the author.)

* * * * *

Opportunities in Fellowship

Robert O. Fife

(This message was presented to the Conference of Fellowship Together in Serving Others at the Bering Drive Church of Christ in Houston.)

Two Incidents

At the railroad station in Mukden, Manchuria, in 1904, two Russian army officers named Rennenkampf and Samsonov got into a fist-fight. Ten years later, with the outbreak of World War I, the same officers, now generals, were placed in command of two Russian armies facing the Germans. Knowing the ill will between the two, General von Hindenburg attacked General Samsonov at Tannenberg. Hindenberg knew that his own outnumbered forces would be no match for the combined Russian armies. But he rightly predicted that Rennenkampf would not come to Samsonov's aid. The German army surrounded Samsonov's forces and destroyed them. Samsonov committed suicide. Then Hindenburg turned on Rennenkampf and forced him to retreat from East Prussia.

Viewing the event, a German officer said, "If the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, *the battle of Tannenberg was lost on the railway platform at Mukden.*" The friendships formed in school had enabled the allied leaders at Waterloo to march united to victory. The enmity spawned at Mukden left the Russian generals divided and defeated.

Since being invited to address the theme before us, I have had difficulty putting this vignette from history aside. It seems to me that it speaks to us who are gathered to consider whether we who profess the Name of Jesus may labor together despite our differences, or whether our various differences are of such import as to forbid any common endeavors.

The historical incident to which I have referred involved a bitter, rancorous spirit harbored for years. We must confess that such a spirit has not been altogether absent among us. But most of us are like the soldiers who served under the Russian generals. They were committed to Mother Russia. We are committed to the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. They did what they believed to be their duty. So would we. But in doing their duty, soldiers who had never heard of Mukden found their fate bound up with what happened there. So is our present situation profoundly influenced by events which have preceded us, events both glorious and tragic.

Having been in the Service, I can well imagine there were indeed differences between the two Russian armies. So are we aware of differences among ourselves. But we must ask, Are these differences of such significance that we ought not, indeed cannot, join together to face a common enemy? *Are our differences of such magnitude that they overshadow the common faith we confess in our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Messiah?*

Because we may not in everything see eye to eye, can we not do anything shoulder to shoulder?

During our time together we shall be hearing of victories won through our working together. But unfortunately, such endeavors are not very common among us. In community after community Churches of Christ and Christian Churches pursue their own agendas, being either indifferent to each other, or often actually in opposition. Thus our call for restoration for the sake of unity, for the sake of mission, has been brought into disrepute.

Once the Restoration Movement marched victoriously across the land, winning multitudes for our Christ and His Church. Indeed, it seemed for a while that the "Current Reformation" which our fathers advocated would win the nation. Now, in community after community we are in disarray over cups, classes, missionary societies, television programs, musical instruments, the role of women, and the authority of elders. Until these issues are settled, many of our congregations have been led to believe they dare not march together lest they be found faithless.

An accusing finger has often been pointed at those who introduced the organ, or who chose to work through missionary societies. But it seems no one is free from accusation, for *across the whole spectrum of our differences each segment places the blame for division on the group which introduced the "innovations" it opposes, or opposes the "innovations" it approves.*

We have become so involved in mutual finger-pointing and re-primination that the real Enemy laughs with delight. Knowing our hesitation to join forces for battle, he marshalls his militant regiments

of secularism, materialism, drugs, sexual perversions, broken homes, cults and other false religions. Thus we, too, have become terribly vulnerable to the old strategy of "divide and conquer." Could it be that the Restoration Movement's battle for the soul of America has already been lost at our Mukdens?

The second incident is found in the Gospel according to Mark. There we read,

John said unto him, Teacher, we saw one casting out demons in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followed not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man who shall do a mighty work in my name, and be able quickly to speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is for us. (Mk 9:38-40).

I realize that for some, this incident bears no relationship to our present situation. The reason is that these brethren believe very strongly that congregations which exercised their autonomy to work through missionary societies, or use instruments in worship have violated the authority of Jesus. As Max R. Miller wrote concerning Restoration Forum IV in *Contending For the Faith* (April, 1986),

The title [of the Forum] assumes unity; the announced topics for discussion imply that unity has been accomplished. Just how the two divided bodies may worship together is not slated for discussion. There can be no unity—no Biblical fellowship in any degree—until this chasm can be spanned.

"No Biblical fellowship in any degree," says the article. Does this mean that if we cannot worship together, we are forbidden to serve together? Not even to the extent of joining to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the sick, minister to the dying, or proclaim the Gospel?

If as some say, "worship" is what takes place in our assemblies on the Lord's Day, why should they object to our associating together "outside of worship" to do the Lord's will in the world?

I believe that the story of the "Unknown Wonderworker" *does* speak to our situation. Note the similarities:

First, the "Unknown Wonderworker" believed in the Name of Jesus. So do we.

Second, he used the Name of Jesus to perform works which Jesus would have done. So have we sought to do the Lord's will.

Third, Jesus honored the "Unknown Wonderworker's" use of His Name by granting His mighty power. We daily pray for the same blessing.

Fourth, despite the obvious evidence that Jesus was working through the "Unknown Wonderworker," the Twelve forbade him to continue. So have some groups among us thought to monopolize the saving power of Jesus.

Fifth, the prohibition by the Twelve was made on their own authority. Some among us have presumed similar authority.

Sixth, the reason for the prohibition was their sectarian spirit. Significantly, it would appear that there is not in this whole movement a leader who has not been excluded by someone.

Seventh, Jesus refused to approve of their prohibition. Neither is He bound to honor ours.

Eighth, as an ultimate irony, the Twelve had just failed to heal a demon-possessed child. How often have we judged others who were doing greater works than we?

Ninth, when the Twelve enquired why they had failed, Jesus said, "This kind can go out by nothing, save by prayer." (Mk. 9:17-29)

Perhaps we should hear again the words of the Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery: "We will that the preachers and people, culti-

vate a spirit of mutual forbearance; pray more, and dispute less."

The point of this incident which speaks so loudly to us is that the power of Jesus' Name is not subject to any limitations which we may presume to impose upon it. So some may refuse to join us in exalting the Lord by seeking to cooperate together in doing His will. But we choose not to forbid any good work done in His Name simply because someone "is not of us." I believe that if a disciple is doing Jesus' work through the power of Jesus' Name, He is one of us! Where the power of Jesus' Name is, there is Jesus; and where Jesus is, there is His Church.

But let me address our subject through another question:

Does Fellowship in Anything Constitute Approval of Everything?

This seems to be a genuine problem for many earnest brothers and sisters—a problem which our Movement must resolve. Let us examine it in the form of some simple questions:

Is it true that those who cannot in conscience worship together, ought not for the sake of conscience serve together? If I have "fellowship in any degree" with someone in error, am I "fellowshipping his error?" If so, am I prepared to have Jesus apply the same judgment toward me? If Christ died for us "while we were yet sinners," on what ground do I limit my fellowship to "perfect" saints?

But let us for the moment place the question amidst common life. Am I "endorsing the error" of a brother if I pump the water to fill a cup which he would give in the Name of Jesus to a famished soul? Am I "endorsing the sin" of a lifeboat crew if I man an oar to help rescue drowning seamen? If an orphanage were burning would I dare to join a bucket brigade drawn from the local pub, if it might save the children? If only one chaplain were allowed on death row, would I refuse to support him if he were Pre-Millennial?

What is the point of such questions? It is to demonstrate the fact that *the purpose of one's involvement determines what he is "endorsing."* The purpose of pumping the water for the "erring brother" is not to approve of his "error," but to help save a famished soul. The purpose of manning the lifeboat is not to approve the lifestyles of the crew, but to rescue the shipwrecked. The purpose of joining the bucket brigade is not to endorse the local pub, but to save the children. The purpose of supporting the chaplain on death row is not to endorse Pre-Millennialism. Rather, it is to assure that condemned prisoners have an opportunity to confess Jesus before they meet Him in eternity.

It is therefore obvious that fellowship in something does not itself constitute approval of everything. We need to do away with that notion, or else we are doomed to fragment over and over again into a scattered army of little remaining use to our King. How often has fear of seeming to approve of some group's "error," caused us to refuse their hands extended for meeting the enormous need of a dying world?

Do we not know that our attempt to please Jesus by avoiding "fellowshipping error," may actually bring His judgment for failing to do what only united hands could accomplish? How tragic it would

be to appear before Him in garments "unsullied by error," only to hear Him say,

"Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me." (Matthew 25:45).

My brethren, the apostle Paul was willing to become "accursed" for the sake of Israel's salvation (Rom. 9:3). And I am willing to pay whatever price is necessary to cooperate with "erring brethren" in doing the work of Jesus in the world. If to accomplish His mission the Savior "ate with sinners," surely, to accomplish ours, we may by grace cooperate with "mistaken saints"!

* * * * *

HEROES OF THE FAITH:

Armstrong, Fighter For Freedom

Alex V. Wilson

[Last month we saw J. N. Armstrong's outstanding contribution to the Christian college movement. He is best known as the founder and president of Harding College (now University). But there were also other aspects of his character and ministry from which we today can draw inspiration.]

Though Armstrong was tremendously popular with his fellow-teachers, and the students, and many of the churches, yet he faced much criticism and opposition as well. Incredibly, he and his father-in-law James A. Harding were strongly attacked because they emphasized what came to be known as "special providence." This was the label given to what might simply be called practical trust in God's promises and provision for His children. Harding for years taught and experienced scriptural principles like "In nothing be anxious. . . seek first God's kingdom and all these things shall be added unto you. . . my God shall supply every need of yours. . . . be not anxious for tomorrow," etc. The Lord had often answered his prayers and supplied his needs in marvellous ways. But some people, perhaps because such trust exposed their unbelief, criticized him, and later Armstrong, as impractical fanatics.

Armstrong wrote in his magazine, "God is a great loving Father, and as other fathers care for their children and provide for them, our Father so cares for his children, but on an infinitely greater scale." That statement aroused great antagonism from some quarters! He replied,

From a great deal of teaching done today, one could conclude that God has retired to private life and turned the world over to natural laws on the one hand and to men on the other. Each man is left, it seems from this teaching, to work out his own success. Natural law must simply run its course and produce the same effect, whether you believe in God or don't believe in him, whether you pray or don't pray. God is no more than a stone image. God, who made this wonderful world, has so fixed himself that the very laws he has made are more powerful than he.

This is not the God of the Bible. He claims to have control of all

law and force. Just because God works in and through natural laws and there is no manifestation of his power we are apt to conclude that everything happens solely as the result of natural law. In supposing that, we are making a great mistake, for God can cause natural law to work out the very result he desires.

But Armstrong faced even more intense hostility over issues related to prophecy and fellowship.

"Agree with Me, or Shut Up!"

In L. C. Sears' biography of Armstrong, he comments, "It may seem unbelievable to many that friendships could break up over what Jesus intends to do when he returns to earth, especially since human opinions will probably in no way alter his plans. But R. H. Boll's view, that Jesus on his return would rule over the earth for a thousand years (the millennium) before the final destruction of the forces of evil, was anathema to many. In the heat of emotion some forgot all Christian love and forbearance" (*For Freedom*, 213f.).

Debates were held, sometimes with ugly bitterness. A number of churches split wide open. Even families experienced tension and hostilities—"She's left the Lord's Church by marrying that premillennialist!"

How did such an unspeakably tragic situation arise? Here's the historical background: From around 1910 till 1930, Churches of Christ in some places became agitated over differing prophetic views being taught among them. Dispensational premillennialism was spreading: the Scofield Reference Bible had been published in 1909 and a number were finding its literal interpretations attractive (had not the Restoration Movement always stressed letting the Bible mean what it says?) Others still clung to the optimistic postmillennialism which Alexander Campbell had usually espoused. But during World War-I many turned from that position to amillennialism (or more accurately, "realized millennialism": the millennium is now, between Christ's first and second comings).

But during that period (1910-30), though tensions arose from time to time, almost everyone believed that such disagreements should not sever fellowship nor disturb harmonious relations between those who differed. A written debate in 1927 between pre-mill R. H. Boll (editor of *W&W*) and a-mill H. Leo Boles demonstrated this fact. In brother Boll's closing remarks he wrote, "The avowed purpose of this debate is, not to mark lines and partisan distinctions, but to foster good will and brotherliness." And brother Boles replied, "Brother Boll and I hold many things in common—enough to fellowship each other as brethren in the Lord. . . . Our differences do not keep me from esteeming him very highly as a brother in Christ Jesus."

But during the 1930's a different spirit arose and became widespread. A group of preachers and editors became

determined to disfellowship not merely Boll and all who believed with him, but even all who disagreed with Boll but who refused to disfellowship him. Pressure was brought against preachers, the religious journals, and [Harding] college to "line up." Two radical new papers sprang up

to lead in the elimination of Boll and all who would not disfellowship him. (Sears, p. 281)

Now J. N. Armstrong did not agree with R. H. Boll's views on prophecy. But he did strongly believe in two precious Biblical liberties, *freedom of conscience* and *freedom to teach*. And because he refused to go along with the anti-Boll group who insisted that everyone must parrot the party-line or else be ostracized as heretics, Armstrong himself became a constant target of those men. "All the religious journals, as well as the colleges, felt the pressure of the group who wanted to *exclude from the church all who believed in a millennium or even tolerated those who did*" (330).

Gross Carnality

It is incredible and unspeakably sad to read of the *fleshly attitudes and tactics* used during those bitter days. How much the bombastic, blacklisting preachers demonstrated the works of the flesh. "Dissensions, factions, and discord" is the NIV rendering of three of those products of the sinful nature (Gal. 5:19ff.). Other translations use synonyms like "party intrigues" and "a contentious temper" (NEB), "strife" and "party spirit" (RSV), "the feeling that everyone else is wrong except those in your own little group" (Living Bible)!

Not only factionalism but also dishonesty and the dirty tricks of power politics were often at work.

Armstrong's speeches over the radio and his letters answering questions were constantly misrepresented, so that he often hesitated to answer a letter. "Some things I have written in the last few years in letters and otherwise have been ruthlessly treated, and I have been made to say or mean what I did not say and never dreamed of saying, so that I am nearly afraid to put out anything lest I be abused."

Hundreds who believed as he did [regarding freedom and love despite disagreement] were afraid to speak out. The unchristian attitudes were reflected chiefly in the religious journals, which in turn scared into submission local leaders and preachers. (288)

One of the main causes of sectarianism and strife is *legalism*. A root cause of much of the bitter bickering was the feeling that salvation depends on being doctrinally correct without defect! "How could God save a person who believed wrong doctrines?!" And so churches were purged to keep them doctrinally "pure" and their members saved. What a pity that many knew little of God's grace, and the assurance that comes from salvation-not-because-of-our-good-works-but-despite-our bad works. "Well, then," some might respond, "shall we believe error that grace may abound?" God forbid! But if eternal life depends on knowledge that is both complete and perfect, not one of us will make it. Armstrong realized that fact, and was trusting in God's undeserved mercy. So did Boll, for his major emphasis was always on grace, not prophecy.

Freedom and Unity

God wants His people *free* from tyrants; dictatorship is deplorable. Yet He wants us to experience *unity* too, not splitting and splintering. But it is often hard to wed freedom and unity. Are they really compatible? Here was Armstrong's counsel; note four important points.

It is right for each of us to present his honest convictions concerning any difference of teaching he may hold. Having done this, let us leave it with that, and not try to force our teaching upon each other. An effort to force always produces opposition, strife, bitterness, and finally division. What we need is to love one another, and magnify our agreements (277)

The Lord had taught him these lessons through men he had studied under. In later life he reminisced,

When I entered the Nashville Bible School (1893) it was well understood that E. G. Sewell and Dr. Brents differed on the appointment of elders, on the millennium, and on other questions. So it was understood of Lipscomb and Harding, Taylor and Lipscomb, and others. Each freely discussed his side of the controversial point. That any one would consider another "unsound," "disloyal," or unworthy of the most hearty fellowship never entered one's mind. Such an idea would not have been tolerated for a second. The thing that is now causing trouble is this divisive spirit, this self-righteous, dogmatic, intolerant spirit, that has made a determined effort to divide an otherwise united brotherhood. As a result some have "lined up"; some "shut up", and others suffered martyrdom for their convictions. . . . It's not our differences that hurt, but our manner of differing." (185)

In those days when he studied in Nashville, a regular activity at the college was a weekly meeting in which young men discussed any issues they wanted to bring up. Often on debateable points leaders on each side of the issue were brought in for discussion—either regarding doctrines or practical matters such as whether Christians should vote and run for public office. "At such times, though men spoke their convictions freely and vigorously, and emotions might run high, the meetings usually closed in a spirit of friendship and goodwill. In such free discussions he was learning to differ from others even heatedly and yet with humility, to respect and love his opponent—experiences which influenced profoundly his whole life." (32)

It was only natural, then, that in the schools where he later taught and presided, he promoted similar attitudes and activities. If only such principles of loving unity-in-diversity had prevailed more widely, instead of the belligerent "We're gonna stomp out anybody that disagrees with us" attitude that became so widespread—think how much more the Lord could have used us all in the past sixty years.

Back to Square One—Which Direction?

A former student of Armstrong's at Harding told how Armstrong "spent a summer at Wheaton College [well-known trans-denominational school] and upon his return to Harding gave a glowing report of the spiritual lives he observed among the faculty and students at Wheaton." Which reminds us that the original goal of the Restoration Movement was not to unite various fragments of the Restoration Movement, but rather to unite "Christians among the sects." After 190 years, we have slid back to -10 and are struggling to regain square one. To get back to square one would be advance, not retreat! But at least we're not still back at -40 or - 50, as we were in the 1930's, 40's and 50's. Praise God, some progress is being made.

Like Armstrong, may we have and teach Bible-based convictions, but also love and listen to disciples who disagree with us—working

with them where possible, for the glory of the Heavenly Father, whose family is one.

(Quotations with page numbers are from *For Freedom*, by L. C. Sears. This book is out of print but copies are still available from Harding University Bookstore, P. O. Box 927, Searcy, Arkansas 72143, @\$5.95. For more study of the question, "Should doctrinal differences be barriers to Christian fellowship?" see David Reagan's article in our Sept. 1988 issue.)

* * * * *

Was King Josiah Saved?

A. Christianson

It is easy to prove that a man cannot be saved in this New Testament era unless he is baptized. A number of other verses could be used, but for our present purpose Acts 2:38 is sufficient. Here is our proof:

(Step A) Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Step B) Mr. X has not been baptized. (Step C) Mr. X's sins have not been forgiven and he does not have the gift of the Holy Spirit. The case seems watertight. There is no possible refutation or loophole.

But wait a minute. By the same process we could prove that Josiah, king of Judah, was not a saved man, at least for the first seventeen years of his reign. Here is our proof. (Step A) Numbers 9:13 says, "The man that... forbearth to keep the passover, that soul shall be cut off from his people (by excommunication, or perhaps, by execution); because he offered not the oblation of Jehovah in its appointed season, that man shall bear his sin." (Step B) Josiah did not keep a passover until the eighteenth year of his reign (2 Chron. 35:1, 19). (Step C) Therefore, Josiah was not a saved man during his first seventeen years as king, but was a guilty sinner, under God's condemnation, and should have been cut off from God's people.

That case seems watertight too, does it not? But the conclusion is entirely false. For 2 Chronicles 34:1, 2, summarizing the entire life of Josiah, says, "He did that which was right in the eyes of Jehovah, and walked in the ways of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left." Likewise, 2 Kings 23:25 says, "Like unto him there was no king before him, that turned to Jehovah with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him."

Confusing, is it not? Which was he, a sinner deserving to be cut off because he disobeyed God's command to keep the passover, or a righteous man walking wholeheartedly with God? God's recorded verdict is the latter.

Since our "proof" in the case of Josiah turns out to be disproved, could it be possible that our "proof" in the case of unbaptized Mr. X might also be inadequate? Might our verdict on his standing with God be wrong? Maybe our formulae prove too much. Maybe we

are overlooking something important. Perhaps God's logic does not square with ours. Maybe he is more willing to allow exceptions to his commands, on the part of those whose hearts are right but whose minds are not fully enlightened, than we think.

But how could such a thing be possible? Does God give his commands to be obeyed? Of course he does. We may not pick and choose among his commands and obey only the ones which appeal to us, may we? Certainly we cannot, if we are Christians indeed. Perhaps we can solve our dilemma by examining the life of Josiah more closely. We discover from 2 Chronicles 29-35 that ignorance of God's law was widespread. Idolatry was common. The temple services had declined and the temple itself had fallen into disrepair. No observance of the passover is mentioned between the reign of Hezekiah and the feast instituted by Josiah, perhaps a century later. The Lord made allowance for this ignorance. He judged Josiah not for his omission but how he responded to the truth he knew. Chapter 34 reveals how zealous and obedient the king was when the opportunity presented itself.

God still reads not only men's actions but their hearts. He knows the ignorance and misinformation about baptism. Will He not react today as He did in Josiah's time? There is not one ounce of comfort in this for the person who knowingly and wilfully disobeys the Lord. But I believe it should cause us to be more hopeful and charitable than we often are toward those disciples of Jesus who are unimmersed.

WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

This is a vital question. How we answer it will profoundly affect our attitudes and actions. Who is my brother in Christ? Where should I draw the line of fellowship? Various answers are given to these questions within the restoration movement. (1) At one end are those who say, "Only those who belong to the restoration movement (or our segment of it) are saved, for we are the New Testament church." For example, one preacher remarked, "Baptists are just outside the door, and Catholics are far from it, but both are outside, so what difference does it make?"

(2) The middle view says, "People in other churches are saved too, if they trust Christ and are immersed." (3) At the other end of the spectrum are those who say, "All who truly repent of sin and trust in Christ, turning to Him as Savior and Lord, are Christians even if they are not immersed (although they should be immersed)."

Though doctrine is not decided by beliefs of men, even great ones, but by the inspired word of God, yet it is profitable to notice what various leaders in the restoration movement have believed on this issue. It is remarkable that Thomas and Alexander Campbell, Barton W. Stone, Walter Scott, Benjamin Franklin, Isaac Errett, and David Lipscomb all disagreed with the first view listed above. Not one of them believed that only members of the restoration movement are members of the body of Christ.

Most of them, if not all, straddled the fence between answers 2 and 3. For while they taught baptism is for the remission of sins, and that immersion is the only valid form of baptism, at the same time

they taught there were truly saved persons among Presbyterians, Methodists, and Episcopalians (those who were unimmersed because inadequately informed). Here are a few typical quotations.

Alexander Campbell: "I suppose there are many consecrated, moral and Christian Presbyterians; and that, although our Savior has no Presbyterian church in heaven or earth, yet I doubt not but that he has had many, very many that loved and honored him in that worldly church, whom he will honor in the world to come." "I will be asked, How do I know that anyone loves Christ but by obedience to his commands. I answer, in no other way. But mark, I do not substitute obedience to one command for general obedience. It is the image of Christ the Christian looks for and loves; and this does not consist in being exact in a few items, but in general devotion to the whole truth as far as it is known. John Bunyan and John Newton had very different views of baptism; yet they were both disposed to obey, and to the extent of their knowledge did obey the Lord in everything." (This second quotation is only a small part of the "Lunenburg Correspondence" in which Campbell discusses at length the question of unimmersed disciples. The entire correspondence is important. It may be found in *Attitudes and Consequences*, by Homer Hailey, pages 116-131.)

David Lipscomb: "There are persons in the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches who were baptized to obey God rather than to please the sects. In this they rise above the sectarian spirit, despite the parties in which they find themselves. They ought to get out of the sectarian churches, but they see so much sectarianism in the non-sectarian churches that they think they are all alike."

Isaac Errett: "Corruptions crept into the church because of popery, and have scattered the people of God into various sects. Our plea is for a reunion of the people of God. While our plea does not recognize these sects as of divine origin, yet it recognizes a people of God among them. We are compelled therefore, to recognize as Christians many who have been in error on baptism, but who in the spirit of obedience are Christians indeed."

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES?

The Bible itself contains two lines of teaching which need to be held in proper balance. The first line consists of such facts as these: (1) In the great commission Christ commands us not only to make disciples but also to baptize and teach them. (2) Romans chapter 6, plus the Greek words for baptize and baptism clearly show that baptism means immersion. (3) Acts 2:38; 22:16; Galatians 3:26, 27, etc., show there is a relationship between baptism and salvation. (4) There were no unimmersed Christians in the primitive church, so there should be none today.

The second line of Bible teaching is seen in the following facts: (1) Repentance and faith have always been essential for salvation in all ages, from the time of Adam until now, but the outward expression of these has differed from one era to another. (2) A man's heart-attitude toward God may be right even if the outward expression of it is unknowingly deficient. "If a man who is uncircumcised keeps the

precepts of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? . . . For he is not a real Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. He is a Jew who is one inwardly and real circumcision is a matter of the heart" (Romans 2:26-29).

(3) God gave Cornelius and his household the gift of the Holy Spirit before they were baptized (Acts 10:45-47; 11:17). Even though that was an exception to his usual practice (according to Acts 2:38), surely the Lord is free to repeat the exception as he sees fit. We realize exceptions do not overthrow a general rule. But if God's word records that he has made exceptions to his rules on a number of occasions, we do well to realize that fact also.

Here are some examples of his exceptions, beside those of Josiah and Cornelius. Rahab the harlot (Joshua 6:25 versus Deuteronomy 20:16-18); Naaman's religious practices (2 Kings 5:17-19); the conditions for keeping the passover in Hezekiah's day (2 Chronicles 30:13-20 versus Numbers 9:1-13); God's forgiving David though he committed adultery and murder, each of which deserved the penalty of death according to God's law (2 Samuel 11 versus Leviticus 20:20 and Numbers 35:30, 31); David's eating the temple showbread (Matthew 12:1-7); and such passages as Isaiah 1:11-15, Amos 5:21-24, and Malachi 1:10, where the Lord decries and condemns the feasts and offerings he had commanded the people to observe.

Turning to church history we notice a number of people who loved God, repented of sin, trusted in Jesus as redeemer, and demonstrated in their lives the fruit and power of the Holy Spirit, although they were never immersed. Think of Luther, Whitefield, Wesley, Finney, Wycliffe, Livingstone. These were mighty men of God. Think of John Newton, Horatius Bonar, Fanny Crosby, and others whose hymns of warm devotion we love to sing. For us to consign such followers of Christ to outer darkness because they were not immersed seems equivalent to accusing Josiah of great wickedness because for years he kept no passover. Will not God's verdict contradict ours?

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of these things, especially the two lines of Biblical teaching, I distinguish between what I practice and what I recognize. I *practice* immersing without delay those who repent and trust in Christ, upon their confession of faith in Him as divine Lord and Savior, for such is the Bible's command and precedent. At the same time I *recognize* there are a number of unimmersed disciples of Jesus who are Christians, for they trust in Him, seek to obey Him and to the extent of their knowledge do obey Him in everything.

In teaching followers of His who are not baptized it is not necessary to try and prove they are lost. I find the best passages to use with them are Matthew 28:19, 20 (Christ's command that they should not only be baptized themselves but also baptize their converts); Acts 10:47, 48 (Peter's command to Cornelius after he had received the Holy Spirit) and John 14:15 ("If you love me, you will keep my commandments"). This seems to be a valid approach. —In *Mission Messenger*

FOOD FOR THOUGHT – and ACTION

The Whole Flock of God

Jesus is not the shepherd of a sect but of the whole flock of God. He is not the Lord of a faction but of the whole church of the redeemed ones. A concept which embraces anything less than the ultimate unity of all who believe in Him as one mighty army, is too meager to match his prayer, and will be self-defeating. There is no power in the universe by which we can reduce the body of Christ into a faction or expand any faction into the body of Christ.

We reject the spurious proposal that we must remain apart and at sword's point until we have argued every action of every faction, debated every detail of every dogma, and reached conformity on every conclusion of every complaint among us. This is the sectarian way. It is the way of prolonged strife and drawn out dissension. We are not called to feud to the death but to find the life that is in Christ Jesus. Our peace is not in a program, a proposition, or a platform. It is in a person. "He is our peace who hath made both one." The way to have unity is to unite, not to have a debate. We cannot argue ourselves into agreement nor debate ourselves out of division! In all of our decades of debate we have not overthrown or eliminated a single sect, but we have created a great many new ones!

Let us resolve to make way for the Spirit and we will find the path of peace. The Spirit of God will not divide the family of God. It is men who are devoid of the Spirit who set up divisions. If we will allow the Spirit to have his way with us, we will be united in the way with Him. *We must cease getting in the Spirit's way, and start walking in the way of the Spirit!*

—Carl Ketcherside

Re: "Churches of Christ" and "Christian Churches"

Together we have concluded that regardless of how pure our doctrine may be, it will repel instead of compel, when set forth in bigotry, intolerance and animosity. Together we are understanding that *unity and love at the expense of doctrine is unacceptable and doctrine at the expense of unity and love is obnoxious.*

Together we are growing tired of bickering over trifles or ignoring each other in a world of crisis. We are becoming weary of carrying the banner of feuds bequeathed us from generations past.

Together we are recognizing that partyism has in most cases been nurtured by such "acceptable sins" as jealousy, pride, insecurity, unforgiveness, bitterness and vengeance.

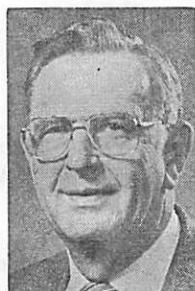
What we have been doing together has allowed us to see some of the *symptoms of a divisive spirit:*

1. A reluctance to admit the truths held by others.
2. Inability to rejoice over the good done by others.
3. Unwillingness to hear both sides of an issue.
4. A tendency to abandon the search for truth and to rest satisfied.

—Tom Burgess at Restoration Forum V, 1987

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



I don't hear much said anymore about being non-sectarian. Some of the older preachers stressed this point a great deal. Is it not just as important today?

Just as important, yes, but maybe more difficult to recognize. One problem is disillusionment with the success of the advocates of the non-sectarian position. In too many cases the "non-sectarian" has ended up with a party all his own. It may lack formal organization and a written creed, but it is really not much different from what he opposes. In many cases the preaching has been far better than the heart attitude and the practice. The ideal is hard to achieve. The Bible still condemns the sectarian party spirit, but we do not get rid of it by declaring that our party is not a party.

Personally I believe the ideal should be pursued, and I find much in the past efforts of the Restoration movement that must be commended. One great failing has been the attempt to get rid of sectarianism—a mark or symptom of carnality (1 Corinthians 3:1-4)—without seeking the spirituality that would give the effort meaning and success. There are many things which are right about the non-sectarian plea, and, in the power of God, we need to press on always to the ideal.

We also need to recognize that the religious situation we face today is not quite identical with that faced by the church of the last century. Many people in our age are probably not as sectarian in spirit as may have been the case in an earlier day. Those who belong to an openly avowed denomination do not seem to offer the same rabid defense for their party as was once the case. The defenses offered for the various denominations are generally not very loud today. Partly this is due, not to greater spirituality, but to a great lack of conviction. Unbelief is eating the heart out of commitment to anything but self. And, of course, part of the declining stress on sectarianism is due to the fact that ecumenism has become a strong current of the day. The kind of ecumenism currently promoted, however, possesses a weakness all its own in that it pursues unity (or, more accurately, union) at the expense of truth. Hence, it seems to solve sectarianism, but only to create a more serious problem.

Another change in our day is the failure of old party lines caused by new and different issues. We are seeing a probable realignment of professing Christians along new lines created by liberalism, social activism, the charismatic movement, etc. These

issues have cut across the old party lines and tend to make them less binding. We do not say the party spirit is absent by any means, but things are in a state of change. They may crystallize as firmly as the old denominational lines, but some are now undecided about what to fight for or whose party to support.

Those who would be "just Christians" will find the devil trying to defeat their efforts in several possible ways, but it is a mistake to surrender the ideal just because it is difficult to achieve.

I have the problem that although I want to do what is right I am often uncertain as to what is right to do. Many issues and activities are neither wholly good or bad, and the right cause is not always evident. How can I know what I ought to do?

Let's assume that your self-evaluation is correct, that you do indeed really want always to do what is right, and that your problem is lack of knowledge and not a lack of desire. I'm sure many Christians really do feel this way. We have truly repented of sin, and we would like to live our life without sinning. This is not to say that there's never a conflict with the flesh, or that temptation is not enticing, or that we are always successful in doing even the right we know. But in the inner man there is the deep desire to please the Lord and to do only what is right. Of course, this is as it ought to be.

Unfortunately it does not seem that all professing Christians really have this desire. They have repented of some sins but not of *sin*. They don't want to commit vicious criminal acts, but they do not have much hesitation about what they might call "little" sins. They do not have a very strong hatred of sin, and they have a ready excuse for it. Needless to say, without this desire to do right always we cannot live victorious lives. Satan will have too many victories even when we take a stand in our hearts against all sin.

Sometimes issues are complex. Advocates of almost every cause argue the virtues of their cause and appeal to Christians for support. It would be humorous were not such serious matters involved to examine how professing Christians line up on political and social issues of the day. The answer that gets a majority of religious support is not always the Christian answer. Evil men have always tried to make merchandise of religion to use it for their own purposes, and that is still taking place today. Fads of thought come and go, and succeeding generations wonder how their fathers could have ever considered their answers as right and Christian. I do not profess to have the wisdom nor the ability in this short answer to "solve" all these complex issues. The best we can do is to try to understand the issue, to immerse ourselves in the word of God, and by prayer to seek the wisdom and guidance of the Lord.

We lose the battle sometimes because of ignorance of the Word. It is not enough to want to do right but neglect that instruction of the Word and substitute feelings, vague impressions, etc. "Thy word have I laid up in my heart that I might not sin against Thee"

(Psalm 119:11), declared the Psalmist. The word is able to furnish us completely for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17). Surely then, a deep understanding of the word of God applied to our hearts by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10-16) and a humble, prayerful attitude of teachableness will go a long way toward solving the problem you mention. Good Christians do disagree on many things in the Bible, but I've noticed that those who really respect and love the word and allow it to rule generally are not as far apart in right and wrong as it sometimes seems.

Perhaps the Lord allows us to be confronted with complex issues and those times when light seems to be lacking so as to show us the degree of our desire for understanding and to teach us reliance on Him.

REPRINT:

SEED THOUGHTS

J. L. Addams

(This month, in honor of the memory of J. L. Addams, who recently went to be with the Lord, we include some excerpts from his popular column that ran in *W & W* for a number of years.)

WARNINGS!!

Psychologists have learned that if you put a frog into a pail of hot water he will jump out, but if you put him in a pail of cold water and then gradually heat it up, the frog will permit himself to be cooked. Apparently, by this method, he is unable to decide when the water is so hot as to be unbearable. So it is with sin. When sudden heinous temptations rear their ugly heads, most people shrink back; but the thing that causes many to get away from God is the almost unnoticed day-by-day drifting. The best protection is to get out of the "pot" when the water even begins to get warm. (Check your companions, friends and amusements. You may save yourself or your children from being "scalded".)

WATCH THE LAMBS

Dr. W. B. Riley once spent a vacation in the home of an aged sheepherder. The man was a "good shepherd" to his flock. Dr. Riley noticed that his host was depressed, and, upon some questioning the man burst into tears. "I lost sixty-five of my prized lambs last night," he said tenderly. "The wolves got into the fold." Dr. Riley expressed his concern over the great loss and asked, "How many older

sheep did they kill?" Thoughtfully the old shepherd replied, "None. A wolf will never take an old sheep as long as he can get a tender young lamb." Dr. Riley always remembered this lesson and he remarked later, "Yes, God's 'tender lambs' are always eagerly sought by the Enemy of our souls. The only way to safeguard these immature and delicate ones is to bring them immediately to the bosom of the Good Shepherd."

Parents, take your children to Sunday School and church. Make a special effort to have them in EVERY service during the week. But don't depend on this alone. Speak to them about the Lord, pray for them, and provide the right example and environment for them. Remember: "To bring up a child in the way he should go, you must travel that way yourself."

CALLING RETIRED CHRISTIANS

Surely, there are no "retired" people in the service of the Lord. Naturally, advancing years make changes in our assignments and duties, those daily duties in connection with one's livelihood, but the child of God is never released from his responsibilities in the work of the Lord. To be sure, he may not be as active about so many things

as he once was, such as visitation, ministrations to the sick or duties requiring physical effort. However, it seems that there might be a great unrealized source of power for God's cause which is not being used fully by the church or God's elderly people.

Often some dear old saint is heard to say, "There is not much I can do any more." But the truth of the matter is that that one could and should be in the position to render service to the Lord in a way not permitted theretofore.

One of the greatest acts of service that can be offered by anyone is that of the ministry of prayer. Someone said regarding Christ: "He gave thirty years to living, three years to public ministry, one gracious act of dying and 1900 years to intercession." It is true,

"He ever lives above for me to intercede." But, He needs and wants helpers.

Our "senior" members are (or should be) those mature, established Christians. The years of relationship with the Lord should have put them in a special place of power and blessing. What a wonderful opportunity this group has to be that "power" behind the Lord's work as it is being conducted more actively by those of younger age! How much more time is theirs to spend at God's throne of grace! How much do many of God's servants want their prayers!

No, it is not so that there is not much you can do any more. The fact is that you are in a position now to be of the greatest service in the work of the Lord.

BOOK REVIEW by Dennis L. Allen

WISE AS SERPENTS, HARMLESS AS DOVES

Christians in China tell their story.

What God has done in China during the years since the Communists took over, is one of the great stories of God's work in this century. Now the story is beginning to be told in greater detail.

This book was produced by The Christian Church Research Center in Hong Kong. During the past ten years Christians who have come out of China were interviewed. A number of interviews have also been carried out inside China, so these are all first-hand accounts.

In the Introduction the history of the relations of the government with the church is traced from the early days of comparative freedom after the Communists took over to the horrors of the Cultural Revolution and finally to the relaxation of some of the restrictions and the reopening of many churches in recent years.

Many of the interviews are with leaders in the house church movement where most of the Christians are located. There are numerous accounts of the wonderful ways in which God has worked for His people and honored their simple faith.

These interviews reveal some of the reasons for the tremendous growth of the church in spite of persecution. One is joy and victory in spite of suffering. This has attracted many others to want to hear the Gospel. Another is answers to prayer especially for healing the sick. This has also attracted many to hear the Word.

There is a great hunger for the word of God. Traveling evangelists are expected to preach two or three hours and afterward there are questions far into the night. The greatest growth seems to be occurring in rural areas. Some villages have no Bibles at all—others only one or two. One brother from Shanghai visited in Zhejiang

province spending only one night in each place, because there were so many Christians who were so eager to hear. He himself was greatly blessed by their genuine faith and sincere love. These Christians are meeting in homes. Naturally, with so few Bibles and hymn-books Christians are handicapped, but the Lord still works. There are, of course, misinterpretations of Scripture and some heresy. Christians from house churches who want to go to seminary usually have no opportunity, as government policy is to allow seminaries to accept only those who are members of government-authorized churches.

This book bears abundant first-hand witness of God's working in the Chinese church. It is well worth reading. Here is an excerpt:

In the South Fujian area, most worship services or prayer meetings are held in private homes and meeting places change from week to week. The content of worship services does not differ too much from what it used to be, except that they are now less formal and are not held in church buildings. The number in attendance ranges from twenty to thirty, and varies from place to place.

As a rule, only trusted friends and relatives are allowed to come to prayer meetings or worship services.

The content of sermons usually falls under three categories: affirming the existence and reality of God, proclaiming the basic salvation message, and reassurance of the Christian hope.

There is a great spiritual hunger among the believers. One brother said, "If I could only sing out loud once again the hymns I love so much and hear the Word of God preached, I would be satisfied to depart from this earth!"

The teaching ministry is continued by retired pastors in their seventies or eighties. There is no systematic training of younger ministers, but children of former pastors or elders and deacons from earlier days carry on preaching and pastoral ministry.

Bibles are still very scarce in Fujian. During the Cultural Revolution most Bibles were confiscated and burned by the Red Guards. The lack of Bibles is a serious problem for Christians in China. Some believers use their meager income to buy paper and copy Bible portions or other Christian literature on mimeograph masters and print them for local use at a great risk to their lives.

Evangelism is conducted only among very close friends and trusted relatives; otherwise one may be betrayed.

Every few months there are occasions for baptism. Usually a baptismal service is conducted in the countryside by a village or mountain stream. Some twenty to thirty candidates from several surrounding villages, especially youths, gather together for baptism. There is no formal baptismal training class, but the candidates are asked about the major articles of faith. In China, for a person to accept baptism means that he is willing to die for Christ.

Available from William Carey Library, P.O. Box 40129, Pasadena, CA 91104. Price \$8.10 plus 50¢ postage. (Retail in regular book stores is \$10.95.)



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“There is Only One Judge”

For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written

*“As surely as I live,” says the Lord,
“every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will confess to God.”*

*So then, each of us will give account of himself to God.
(Romans 14:9-12, NIV)*

I hope that when reading these four verses from Romans you were impressed by the central thought that we have one Lord and one judge and that every single one of us will have to appear before Him and give account. To be sure, the Christian and the non-Christian will not give account at the same time. Christians will appear before the judgment seat of Christ to give account for our works (2 Cor. 5:10) and the lost will appear before Him in the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20 to be shown why they are being cast out into the “outer darkness,” into the “lake of fire,” into the “eternal destruction” of eternal separation from the Lord.

If you are a Christian, then you know how tremendously important the death of Christ is and that it was a matter of great sacrifice to our Heavenly Father and great suffering to the Lord Jesus Christ. Connected with that, of course, is the importance of the resurrection of Christ, His “returning to life.” Paul here tells us of one of the great purposes of those two important events—that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. And yet unthinkingly many Christians take over that lordship for themselves by judging other Christians as well as deciding who is or is not a Christian without being able to look into the inner life of the individual he is judging. For over an entire chapter here in this extremely important book of Romans we have this emphasized over and over. May we see the day when Christians in general will take this seriously!

Let us never forget that when Jesus “returned to life” He left the earth after a short stay and is now at the right hand of the Father interceding for us. He is our Lord; He is our judge. So let us not try to lord it over one another or judge one another! When we

do that we are taking something that belongs to the Lord, something for which He paid a great price. And when we appear before Him at His judgment seat that is one of the things we must give account for. Whether you are the strong one or the weak one in faith, Paul re-emphasizes here that you should not judge. If you are one whose faith is strong, then do not look down on the one whose faith seems to be so weak he can't do the things the Lord says he can. But if you are weak, then don't judge the other for doing what the Lord has said he can do. Maybe we need to re-read and meditate on the story of the woman taken in adultery in John 8. Remember that Christ told the one of them without sin to cast the first stone—and no stone was cast. That is very different from our subject, but the principle is the same; the Lord is the only One able to judge correctly. He is the only One Who was tempted in all points as we are and yet did not sin at all. His judgments are always right; ours are thrown off by our lack of knowledge and our own lives. Let us leave the judging to Him.

I look forward to that wonderful day when all the world will bow down before our Lord and make confession to God. For many that will be too late, for their destination has already been determined by their lives. But the realization of the fact that the One they have rejected and maligned is truly the righteous, holy, loving One Who died for them that they might not have to enter into that terrible judgment—that will make their condemnation even more painful. What wonderful opportunities they will have passed up to escape the lake of fire and spend eternity with the Lord! (And that should make Christians even more zealous to win them now.)

Could I close by suggesting that you memorize and frequently review two of Paul's statements in this section—"For we will all stand before God's judgment seat—So then, each of us will give account of himself to God." That last statement is important. You might have to give account of why you did not witness to some lost neighbor, but that neighbor must give account of himself to God. The account you and I will give is of ourselves. God has given us a number of years here after becoming one of His sons and we should use that time to serve Him. What kind of account will I give? What kind of account will you give?

Viewing the News

Jack Blaes



IN HIS SYNDICATED COLUMN OF points up a July 19 report of the New
SEPT. 26, 1988, Patrick Buchanan York City Department of Health that

the current estimate of 200,000 to 250,000 homosexual men in New York carrying the AIDS virus had been cut back to 50,000. This means that the total number of estimated New Yorkers carrying the HIV infection is 200,000 instead of 400,000. Health Commissioner Stephen G. Joseph said that the report was not saying that AIDS was not as prevalent in the homosexual community as was previously thought, but that the homosexual community was only one-fourth as large as had been estimated. This tells us that all of the suffering and death that has been brought upon the American people as a whole by this abominable scourge of AIDS results from the chosen life style and irresponsible acts of vastly fewer people than was being reported. It also means that the political influence that homosexuals have been exerting over the legislative, judicial and social communities is way out of proportion to their real numbers.

. . .

THIS NEWS COMES FROM A LETTER WHICH WAS FIRST published in the SATURDAY EVENING POST. It was written by a young mother whose parents were dying of AIDS. AIDS was introduced into the family through the irresponsible conduct of the father who for 20 years "frequented homosexual bars and bathhouses. He courted boys the age of his young son and hosted them in penthouse suites of the finest hotels." It was found out later that during this time he carried, lice, gonorrhoea of the throat, herpes and other diseases as the result of his homosexual encounters into the walls of his home. This father underwent open-heart surgery which had 20 health-care professionals in attendance. A short time later the results of his profligacy was discovered—tests revealed that he had AIDS. This man felt no responsibility to inform those who should have meant the most in his life (without natural affection, 2 Tim. 3:3), and the law prohibited the medical authorities to inform his wife and family of the danger he had placed them in.

"My mother," the letter writer continues, "is in the ARC (AIDS-related complex) stage now, and she's given one month to five years to live. She is a beautiful woman who visits me frequently. She holds my baby and makes

meals, but I live daily with the realization that her blood is lethal. I think back eight months, during a happier time, when she stood beside me as I gave birth to my first child. If there had been any complication, I would have asked her to give me blood. I would have slept beside my husband and breastfed my newborn child."

In this report I have used some strong words. I deliberately selected them. I resent the remarks I hear about those who "have no feeling" or those who "are insensitive" toward those who have AIDS. I do have feeling—my blood is boiling as I review these reports. We should never wait until one has an incurable disease to have feeling for him. Feeling does him but little good then. If we had had the proper feeling for him soon enough, perhaps he could have been saved from it. And, with the proper feeling for humanity in general, we would be taking wise and time-tested steps to prevent the spread of this scourge.

. . .

THE ELECTION IS OVER, BUT THE ISSUES REMAIN. Mr. Bush ran as a dedicated conservative, and who can doubt that his conservative rhetoric was what secured his election. Now we move from "Read my lips" to "Watch me." Conservatives who watch like what they have seen in the appointment of New Hampshire Gov. John Sununu as his White House chief of staff. Sununu was very influential in Bush's primary win in New Hampshire, and followed it up by tirelessly campaigning for him across the country. Some of Bush's longtime aids strongly resisted the choice of Sununu. These aids were not sympathetic with the Vice President's conservative stance during the campaign, and will exert influence to keep him from following through on his campaign promises. Sununu has been very successful in business and teaching, and as governor of New Hampshire. As governor he has pursued pure conservative principles. The debt has been eliminated, welfare rolls reduced by 46 percent, the unemployment rate is down to 2.5 percent and business is booming. He has been a vigorous champion of lower taxation. Don't you hope Mr. Bush "reads his lips!"

. . .

PAINFUL TO MOST CONSERVA-

TIVES IS THE WAY SOME BUSH key aids have been following the media and other Dukakis democrats in their treatment of Dan Quayle. There is a major effort underway to keep Quayle from selecting his own staff. As Vice President he will have around 100 persons on his staff. Ten to fifteen will be filling important policy-related positions, including a national security adviser. NBC commentator, Andrea Mitchell, in a recent broadcast parroting "top Bush aids" dismisses him as "a good guy, but naive." "They (Bush's aids) talk about his short attention span. And are concerned that he will listen too much to conservatives." And they're nervous about the influence of Marilyn Q., by all accounts more ideologically conservative than her husband. Mitchell brought her commentary to a close with the observation: "Most people (she conveniently dismissed the fact that "Most people" voted for Quayle) expect that Dan Quayle, unlike recent Vice Presidents, will not be given major responsibilities. Bush advisers hope that Quayle will cooperate and become completely irrelevant."

THEY REALLY DON'T LIKE MARILYN EITHER. John Lofton reports

and comments on Jane Pauley's interview with the Veep-elect's wife. Early on Jane established that (though) Marilyn did strike people as an extremely intelligent and a serious woman, a good mother and so forth, "don't you come from a very religious family and didn't you grow up with the taped sermons of a Texas fundamentalist who is a bit controversial in evangelical circles?" Mrs. Quayle told her that now she and her husband were attending a Presbyterian church in Virginia, and that before that they went to another Presbyterian church—hardly controversial. But her childhood must be exposed, so Ms. Pauley: "But is it not true that you grew up with your mom listening to these taped sermons, and that both your parents and in-laws attended intensive week-long seminars with this Texas preacher." Evidently Jane sees something sinister here! Mrs. Quayle wondered about that line of questioning, reminding the liberal news woman that John Kennedy (Marilyn's no Jackie) was also dogged about his religion, and that the American people's interest in the Quayle's religious philosophy was only as to their stand on everyone's right to freedom of worship. Do you honestly believe that Ms. Pauley and her NBC bosses learned anything about the American way of life?

Missionary Messenger

"Greater things for God"

Winston & Irene Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

December, 1988

Some of the memorable events here in "the great land" during 1988 include the following:

Early in the year we were encouraged by the coming of several new ones who lived in the area. Their faithful attendance and helpful interest have been a blessing.

During the summer there were a number of visitors from the South-48. Our younger son, Norman, from Iowa, was here three weeks in August, preaching each Sunday.

Two in our group were recently baptized and others are considering this important step.

Due to problems in the economy related to falling oil prices, it has been estimated that 33,000 people have left Anchorage during the past three years. We have keenly felt the loss here, especially in

the departure of Ed and Sheila LeFebvre. Brother Ed had grown spiritually to the point of helping out in the teaching ministry.

Most of the hurdles have been overcome regarding necessary permits to complete the church building. However the greatest need is for more and younger workers and leaders. We are now 69 and 67.

Our older son, David, has invited us to spend the Christmas holidays with him and his family in the Atlanta area. Norman (regretably without his family) will join us there for the New Year's weekend. Eight and one-half years have passed since our immediate family of four has been together. Naturally we are eagerly looking forward to this reunion.

James Ashley

December, 1988

(December thru January the Ashley's address is: 302 E. Hatcher Rd., Phoenix, Arizona 85020. After February 5, 1989 their address will be: Box 139, Honiara, Solomon Islands)

Susan Alice Ashley was born by C-section in Phoenix, Arizona on November 25, 1988. We are delighted to have a "filly" in the family. Both she and Karen were discharged from the hospital on the 28th.

Before I go any further, though, I guess I ought to backtrack and fill in the spaces since our last letter. For the months of August and September I devoted myself to building our house in Sa'a. During those two months God enabled us to get enough of the house finished so that we were able to move into it three days before we left. This was accomplished in spite of my inexperience in construction, many interruptions, numerous time-consuming mistakes, and a shortage of supplies. There are no hardware stores on the island, and it turned out that I had underestimated how much I would need of just about everything. God was good, though, and we were able to order some things by radio. Others were rounded up from local sources, and some stretched almost miraculously to fit the need.

While I was working on the house, Karen managed the home and also picked up where I had left off on our analysis of the Sa'a grammar. Working with our translator David, Karen moved through a study of the Sa'a noun phrases and then tackled the verbs. She and David are still puzzling over the complexity of the transitive and intransitive verbs, and David is continuing to work on them while we are gone.

On October 1 we left Sa'a village to return to the United States. Our trip here was necessary because the hospital in Honiara was very reluctant to consider performing a planned C-section on a foreigner.

Cyrus Gesulga

Mindanao, southern Philippines

We began our 2nd semester of the Words of Life Training School with 10 fulltime students. There are 4 cooperating teachers.

Every Thursday I preach publicly at our city plaza, from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. I usually divide the time as follows: 4:00-6:00, preaching; then 6:00-9:00 open forum [answering questions asked by anyone in the crowd]. Beginning this month of November my stu-

dents will be with me. I will use this program as a training ground for their public preaching [open-air evangelism]. So I will assign 2-3 of them every Thursday to preach at the plaza and let them practice also in answering questions during the open forum. Please pray for this work.

Myrna Auxtero

Bohol, Philippines

December 1988

In our town we are now being branded as Satanists. A drama at the public high school's Christmas concert pictured all "born-again" people as Satanists. It was entitled "The Prodigal Son," and written by local religious leaders, but was malicious from the beginning to end. Now some people, especially children, run away when they see us coming. Attendance at meetings has dwindled. We are the talk of the town, the topic of the fish vendors in the market place. Killings and rapes are blamed on us.

Also on the small island of Guindacpan, the believers worship in danger. One leader's roof was broken. Another leader was preaching when a group of men challenged him to fight. During every meeting stones are thrown at the people at least 2-3 times. The barrio (village) captain allows this. Christians have received many threats. Please pray for God's protection, and that believers will control themselves from fighting back, and that God will guide us whether to bring this to the authorities on Bohol or not.

MEET A MINISTRY

There are many valuable specialized ministries today which can help us as we serve the Lord—if only we know about them. So from time to time *W & W* will provide information about these diversified organizations. In fact we have already been doing this. Last June we gave a brief description of the American Family Association and its *Journal*. Then in August we told of material published by Pure Life Ministries to help those who are struggling to get out of the sex-and-pornography whirlpool that is sucking so many in our society down to defeat and destruction.

In coming months we hope to tell about literature available for those who are terminally ill plus their family members. Again, if you know any foreigner who doesn't understand English very well, Christian materials in many different languages are available to help you evangelize or edify such friends.

Maybe *you* know of some helpful ministry organizations which are not widely known. If so, why not write up a brief report and send it to us for publication?

MISSILES PENETRATE THE DARKNESS OF THE BLIND

One of the delights of the Akron Restoration Forum was in getting to know Mike Smith and the organization he heads, called I.C.B.M. It has nothing to do with inter-continental ballistic missiles, but with spreading God's truth to the blind: the International Chris-

tian Braille Mission. The group operates under the auspices of the Boulevard Church of Christ in Charleston, West Virginia and its elders.

Mike and his co-workers publish a monthly braille magazine, *We Would See Jesus*. In one year's time the circulation grew from 380 to 470. That's good, especially since the paper began in 1975 with just 60 subscribers. But of course they hope it will keep growing. Do you know of people who should get it?

I.C.B.M. is also producing Sunday School materials in braille. In addition there is a recording ministry. The *Christian Standard* and *The Lookout* magazines are both available on cassette. I.C.B.M.'s paper (printed, not in braille) says, "If you know of someone who would enjoy receiving either one or both of these magazines, feel free to ask us. Please make sure that the person has a tape player."

Most of us know little about the blind and how they live and feel. But Mike, legally blind himself, reaches out to these people who are often neglected. He attends conventions like that of the National Federation of the Blind (2-3,000 in attendance), where he distributes Christian literature in braille.

Thank the Lord for these folks. If you want to know more about them, write: I.C.B.M., Kanawha Boulevard & Vine Streets, Charleston, W. Va. 25302.

NEWS AND NOTES

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

Important Dates in 1989

Feb. 24-25, 15th Annual Tell City-Lilly Dale Workshop, at Lilly Dale this year. See inside front cover.

March 16-17, 6th Annual SBS Lectureship, Louisville. See announcement in this section.

July 11-14, North American Christian Convention, in Louisville this year! Theme: "Holiness."

Aug. 7-10, Louisville Fellowship Week, Kentucky.

Oct. 20-21 (?), Belmont Missions Conference, Winchester, Kentucky.

Nov. 13-16, Louisiana Fellowship Week, Glenmora, La. Theme: "Great Themes of the Bible."

Mark your 1989 calendars.

1988 Louisiana Fellowship Week:

There was a splendid spirit of interest and love, and some stirring messages. Especially helpful were the expositions of Philippians. Gracious hospitality was enjoyed too.

"Attendance averaged 127 for the day meetings and 144 for the night meetings. The learning together and the great fellowship with Christian

friends keeps us going through the year," reports a letter from Glenn Baber.

Word and Work Office:

After the book review of *Another Chance* was made in W&W, several folks ordered the book from us, or tried to. We are sorry to say we do not carry it. Order it from your local Christian bookstore. The author is Merrill, publisher is Zondervan.

MANY THANKS to our readers who also are DONORS to the ongoing expenses of Word & Work. Because of your help, we are able to keep the subscription rate the same. We appreciate each one of you and your love-gifts.

6th Annual SBS Spring Lectureship— March 16, 17

Without doubt, one of the most encouraging developments in the church today is a growing interest in the area of missions. As the world continues its downward spiral, it seems that God is moving in the hearts of numerous young men and women, calling them to

cross-cultural work.

But how do we as individuals and local churches respond to this movement of the Holy Spirit? It would be easy to simply focus on what we are already doing in foreign missions and just maintain what we have. However, there is a problem with that mindset. The Bible clearly portrays the church as expanding and enlarging its borders.

The Lord is obviously interested in reaching the nations with the Gospel. We have committed Christians who want to "go" in accordance with the Great Commission. Thus, the title of this year's lectureship theme is "MISSIONS: THE NEXT STEP."

Please mark your calendar—March 16, 17—and be in prayer concerning this important topic as we wrestle with strategies to recruit, train and support new missionaries.

Henryville, Ind.:

We want you to begin thinking about joining the READING THE BIBLE THROUGH IN A YEAR club. We plan to have a poster made for you to sign. This is to both encourage us and to help us keep pace. Be looking for this and be preparing yourself to join in this very personally profitable endeavor.

—Ray Naugle, bulletin

A note of thanks:

On Nov. 27 our oldest son, David, was involved in a motorcycle accident. He was brain dead at the scene, but officially pronounced dead at 10:00 a.m. on Nov. 28. His wife, Annette, agreed to donate some of his organs to the organ bank. The six organs donated have all been transplanted and were functioning properly on the day of the funeral, Dec. 1. Our God, the great God of all comfort and grace, has sustained us. The outpouring of love and sympathy toward our family has been overwhelming. The purpose of this note is to thank you for your many cards, your calls, your love, your prayers. Words seem so inadequate to really tell you how we feel. This experience has shown us again that there is no bond like the bond of love among Christians. Thank you again and may God's blessings rest upon each of you.

Your brother in Christ,
Antoine Valdetero

Dugger, Indiana:

The Senior Citizens' Bus Tour to Indianapolis made for a very enjoyable day. A group of 42 from the area churches made the trip and hope for something like it again soon. Our thanks again to Bro. Eugene Pound who arranged and directed the tour for us.

—Vernon Lawyer

Buechel Church of Christ, Louisville:

We had a great time of sharing and fellowship at our "linger-longer" Sunday Evening. We had around 40 people enjoy this time of love and growth together.

Bro. Larry McAdams will begin an elective class during the Sunday School hour. We will be in a study of the books of 1 & 2 Thess.

Jennings, La.:

Last Sunday, Nov. 6, was another good day in the Lord as 198 gathered for the a.m. service and 128 for p.m. During the months of October, we averaged 200 for the a.m. and 130 for p.m.

MISSION CORNER: Today we begin a new section in our bulletin to spotlight different mission works each month, sharing news and needs from them. Matt. 28:19 "Go ye into all the world..." If we cannot go ourselves, we are exhorted to send, pray, and give. Today we feature Robert and Joy Garrett, who will return to Zimbabwe Dec. 1, 1988 after spending a year in the U.S.A. for rest.

Robert & Joy visited 57 congregations this year. His mother, Mrs. Dollie, will remain in the states after 57 years on the field. Thank the Lord for their safe travel and those who have been saved through their work.

News from the Nakaharas

Teruko Nakahara came to the U.S. during mid-November to visit her girls. Annette lives in Los Angeles and Stephanie in Chicago. They all felt it important to be together throughout this particular holiday season as it was the first since the passing of Shichiro Nakahara on September 1. While in the states, Teruko came to Dallas during mid-December to visit their sponsoring church.

While she was in Dallas, God blessed in a very special way. Michiya, her

son, had requested that some day the Piedmont church ordain him as they had done 30 years previously to his father, Shichiro. So Piedmont invited Michiya to come for this occasion and on Wednesday, December 21, the leaders of Piedmont along with several other men from the Dallas churches, conducted the ordination service, setting Michiya apart as a minister of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Teruko and Michiya will return to Japan on January 6 as he must enroll for the next semester of school at Osaka Bible Seminary.

Bob Yarbrough, Treasurer
Nakahara Mission Fund

The regular Youth Rally of the CCYBB will be Feb. 4 at the Sellersburg Church of Christ. Encourage your young people to attend.

Belmont Church, Winchester, Ky.:

Last Tuesday night several Belmonsters met to offer suggestions as to what they would like to see the church do to encourage its growth in the next five to ten, twenty, or more years. Many excellent suggestions were offered and will be seriously considered.

Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville:

Last Sunday, Oct. 16, we were blessed to have 43 visitors which swelled our "Homecoming" attendance to 262. Praise God!

Christian Youth Encampment, La.:

CYE RETREAT

Vickie Cloud

We had lots of fun at the Nov. 11 retreat. There were about 14 people from the Jennings church that attended. A few from Turkey Creek, Dallas, and Denham Springs came, making 54 people all together. We are especially thankful for the Denham Springs church for sponsoring it. We had different speakers each day. Bro. Donnie McGee, Victor Broaddus, Earl Mullins, Brian McReynolds, were the speakers. We are very thankful we could go.

—from "Teens in Touch" (Jennings Church)

Task Force Update

Last March, the School of Biblical Studies conducted a lectureship entitled "No Revival—No Survival." The

day session was designed to discuss concerns regarding the decline of so many congregations.

One of the practical ideas that came from this forum was the development of a task force to write some specific goals that would challenge and encourage our brotherhood.

Prayers and plans proceeded. A task force was established and met for the first time during the Louisville Fellowship Week and for the second time just before the Louisiana Fellowship Week. The current members of this task force are:

Texas - Billy Jack Smith, Chuck Gilbert
Louisiana - Doug Broyles, Don McGee
Tennessee - Ken Stockdell, Julius Hovan
Indiana - Bill Vickers, Hollace Sherwood, John Winchell
Kentucky - Dalton Hendren, Victor Broaddus, Earl Mullins, Sr., Dennis Kaufman

One of the key things which was discussed in the first meeting was the great open door God has opened in the area of missions. Bro. Victor Broaddus reported that there are 17 people vitally interested (some are ready) in cross-cultural mission work. The task force feels compelled to write goals that would encourage local church involvement in the recruitment, training, and support of these willing servants.

Goals concerning the training of church leaders and assistance of struggling congregations were also considered. Tears of concern were shed and prayers for wisdom from above were offered as this unified group of men expressed a sincere love for the Lord and His church. Of course the autonomy of local churches is recognized by all. There is no attempt to legislate for anyone, only to recommend and encourage.

CORRECTION:

In our Nov.-Dec. issue we stated that teachers at Portland Christian School are paid less than $\frac{2}{3}$ of what their counterparts in the public schools receive. Actually, it is less than $\frac{1}{2}$. That is all the more reason to ask the Lord to increase the donors and donations! The teachers do not consider themselves to be martyrs, but missionaries. But we should consider them to be worthy of much better support than they are getting.



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