

*"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."*



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

*"Holding forth the Word of life."*

MARCH, 1990

**THE BEST BOOK  
DESERVES THE BEST TEACHERS**

Through the grace of God we have different gifts. If our gift is . . . teaching, **let us give all we have to our teaching.**

—Romans 12:6-7, J. B. Phillips paraphrase

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# NEWS AND NOTES

## Denham Springs Church of Christ, La.

The year of 1989 was a significant year for our church family. Of the eight who were baptized into Christ three were children of members and five were people reached by our brethren. In addition seven believers publicly expressed their desire to become part of our Lord's work here, ten made rededications, twenty-one made special prayer requests and fifteen others responded during our summer revival.

During the year we conducted classes on how to do "one-on-ones" with unbelievers and discipling new converts. We feel we are still lacking and are presently working on a training program to enhance our effectiveness in reaching and discipling people. We are also looking into using "small groups" as a support and evangelistic tool. In addition we held separate seminars for our men and women in order to encourage and exhort our people in their respective areas of work. We also had times of fellowship centered around Dr. James Dobson's family oriented videos. A number of husbands had their ribs elbowed during the viewing and discussion of "What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women." The sharing of homemade ice cream with one another was an enjoyable part of these times of fellowship.

The Young Adult class will have another "crawfish-boil" this Spring as a time of fellowship and a means of introducing new people to the class.

As we look to the future it is the dream of some here to see both cross-cultural missionaries and home-oriented preachers raised up from our church family. May God give the increase.

## Antioch Christian Camp

(Route 4, Bark Branch Rd., Frankfort, Kentucky 40601)

A meeting was called for March 10 to discuss important questions like long range plans for the camp; this year's deans and camp dates; food showers for camp to keep down the cost of tuition; forming a camp board; building and road maintenance; and building new buildings.

Tom Mefford serves as the director for 1990. (Tel.: 502-535-6389)

## Mitchell, IN

Dr. Dale Jorgenson, retired from

Northeast State University at Kirksville, Missouri, preached at the Bryantsville Church of Christ on Sunday morning and evening, February 25, and lectured on the Stone-Campbell Reformation Movement on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday evenings.

## Gallatin Church of Christ, Tn.

We commend four of our men for their commitment to a once-a-week class for 16 weeks that will prepare them for more effective evangelism. Bob Vaughn, V. K. Rutledge, John Mc-Nerney, and Barry Fowler will go to Nashville each Wednesday night. Pray for them and for us to in turn learn from them.

## Fisherville Church, Ky.

David Tapp will begin ministering with the Fisherville Church the first of April. He and Retta have served at the Ralph Ave. Church of Christ for a number of years. David has also carried on the Sowing the Seed radio ministry.

## Home Fellowship Groups

The Portland Church in Louisville began having bimonthly fellowship groups. They started in Jan. and will meet every other Sun. nite through May, a total of 10 times. They will then evaluate and see how the Lord leads after that. Between 60-70 people signed up for the share-prayer-&-care groups. Seven groups meet in homes around the Louisville area, and one at the church building. So far the reports are very good.

Eleven people were baptized at Portland during 1989, and 4 in February.

Bro. Alex Wilson is preaching a series of expository sermons on 2nd Corinthians.

## Summer Missions Program

Victor Broadus plans to lead another summer mission program to the Philippines, Japan, and (briefly) Hong Kong. It will take about 6 weeks, including June & early July. For more information, write him at P.O. Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555. This program has been valuable to many people.

Also, if anyone is ignorant of the Church of Christ World-wide missions office, and its various ministries, write Bro. Broadus at above address for an informative brochure. He seeks to

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# THE WORD AND WORK

*"Declare the whole counsel of God"*

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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## THEME:

# TEACH THE BIBLE BETTER

Alex V. Wilson

You've heard some of those humorous/horrendous stories about what children thought they were taught in Sunday school. "Daddy, who is that good Mrs. Murphy who will follow me all the days of my life?" "Mom, how come in our class we always pray for all the workers in the cornfield?" [Translate foreign field, in case that one is new to you.] Some children have sung about "bringing in the sheets," others about "bringing in the cheese." Pupils have for years lustily sung "Deep and Wide," without the foggiest idea of *what* is deep and wide. In fact, do *you* know?

We laugh, and yet what great damage is done—maybe oftener than we think. Be sure to read Dr. LeBar's grim portrayal in this issue of how sloppy teaching in the beginners' class leads to small attendance at adult prayer meetings years later. Four years ago this statement appeared in *Word & Work*: "Too often our Bible-teaching is ill-prepared, irrelevant, impractical and dull. (I hope yours is an exception to that statement). We need more *PRAYER*; also more *STUDY* of scripture and of the pupils and of effective teaching." Is that assessment accurate or not?

"More *prayer*:" It is so easy to assume that just because classes are being held, vital learning is taking place. But "it ain't necessarily so." Behind the scenes rages a spiritual warfare. Satan has blinded human minds, and only God's supernatural "Let there be light" can produce salvation and growth in holiness (2 Cor. 4). Wonder of wonders, our prayers play a significant part in that process. So let's intercede for our Bible classes, and students young and old, and teachers and trainer-administrators. Let's pray that God's Word will really *impact* lives so that families will be happier and "helpier," that young people will be pure and Christ-conscious, that adults will be bold witnesses for Him in their work-place, and that young Johnny—after a class on David and Goliath—won't say, "I'm gonna make me a slingshot," but rather, "God's gonna help me defeat the giant problems in my life this week!"

### *Brain-sweat is Important*

"More study—of Scripture, and our pupils, and teaching methods." We all give assent to the importance of Bible study, but some are doubtful about having teacher-training classes, etc. Likewise some folks spurn the use of commentaries and other such helps. Charles Spurgeon had some wise remarks on this point:

"The Spirit of God does not usually do for us what we can do for ourselves, and if religious knowledge is printed in a book, and we can read it, there is no necessity for the Holy Ghost to make a fresh revelation of it to us in order to screen our laziness. It seems odd that certain men who talk so much of what the Holy Spirit reveals to themselves should think so little of what he has revealed to others.

But of course we should beware of making such helps our crutch.

Keep independent personal study first, and *only afterwards* use your quarterlies, commentaries and other helps. Test everything by Scripture, of course. But now back to the topic of teaching-training: When so many profitable books, magazines, videos, correspondence-courses, etc. exist, it is a shame not to take advantage of them. Consult your local Christian bookstore for advice if you need it.

Meanwhile, let's honor the good teachers among us: *"Diligent, prayerful, Christ-like instructors, we thank God for you. We commend you, we love you, we are sorry that often we overlook your labors of love (though the Lord never does). We pray that He will make your tribe increase."*

\* \* \* \* \*

## Do We Settle For Second Best?

Joyce Zimpelmann

When you send your children to school, you expect them to receive a quality education. Although goals may differ with individuals, at the very least you expect your children to become literate in the basics—reading, mathematics, history, etc. As they progress from grade to grade you assume your children will be taught and successfully master progressively difficult and complex materials; learn to think, reason, and evaluate; and develop sound study habits. As they near the end of their formal education, you expect them to be prepared for the job market in the field of their choice. If progress is not seen, you become alarmed and investigate in an attempt to determine why your children are not learning what you expect them to learn. You may question the teacher's competencies, the administration's leadership, the courses of study offered, the textbooks used, etc. As parents you have a right and an obligation to do so for you want your children to have every opportunity to learn and mature to become successful, productive adults.

But what about your children's spiritual education? Is this not more important than their secular education? Parents are their children's first teachers and as such are responsible for their spiritual training and guidance; but most parents look to the church for assistance with this spiritual teaching. For many children, the church is the *only* source for such training. The church has both the opportunity and responsibility for providing an effective systematic teaching program not only for its children but for *all* who come its way. It is important, then, that each of us be aware of the teaching program of the congregation where we worship.

How would you answer these questions about the teaching program of your local congregation?

- 1) Am I knowledgeable of what is being taught in the Sunday School classes, youth meetings, etc. in my congregation? Do I care enough to find out?
- 2) What are the goals and expectations for the Sunday School program? Junior Worship? Wednesday evening classes?

- 3) Are there provisions made for the education of people having special needs, e.g., newcomers? young parents? singles? "bus ministry children"? Do classes change as needs change?
- 4) Who are the teachers? Are they well-grounded in Scripture and able to present the lessons so that the students can understand and respond appropriately?
- 5) Is there provision for teacher training? On-going teacher in-service or sharing sessions? Is there time for the examination of new materials?
- 6) What materials are being used in the various classes? Do they uphold sound doctrine and advocate those Christian principles and values you feel are essential?
- 7) Are the students eager to attend class and motivated to learn?
- 8) Do the students see the lessons and activities as relevant and applicable to daily living?
- 9) Is the educational program of the congregation developed and integrated so that the students are receiving a healthy, nourishing, balanced diet of God's word?
- 10) Are you seeing evidence of Christian growth and maturity in the lives of the students?

It is imperative for each of us as Christians to encourage and support a strong Christian education program within our congregations. We need many Timothy's as described by the Apostle Paul:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it and how from infancy you have known the Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.  
2 Tim. 3:14, NIV

It is important that the teaching program of each congregation be evaluated periodically as to goals and purposes, curriculum, teacher/learner effectiveness and needs so that all who attend may become fully-functioning mature Christians capable of sharing their faith and beliefs with others.

[Joyce Zimpelmann for many years worked in the field of public education as well as teaching the Bible. She currently helps lead the children's worship and writes some of the materials used at Southeast Church of Christ, Jeffersontown, Kentucky.]

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## Guiding the Preschool Child

Mary E. Lebar

It is common knowledge in educational and psychological fields that *the formative years, the most impressionable years of one's life, are preschool years when the child's basic pattern is formed and attitudes are shaped that affect the rest of his life.*

### DETERMINING YEARS

Testimonies are easily gathered from sources concerned with mental health, juvenile delinquency, and divorce—the social problems

of our day—as to the root importance of the first years of life in such areas. For example, according to *Parents' Magazine*, "Modern psychologists and psychiatrists are convinced that the chances for healthy mental development are largely determined during the first six years of a child's life." In a magazine put out by Roosevelt College, "It is a well-established fact that the seeds of insanity are sown from the ages of one to six." *International Journal of Religious Education* asserts: "By the time a child is five or six, his emotional pattern and his habit structure are fixed. Of course, variations in development can be expected in one direction or the other, but in general the pattern has become permanently set. . . . Preventative treatment is better than remedial medicine."

Says *Parents' Magazine*, "Still another recurring stereotype . . . is that juvenile delinquency mysteriously blossoms out among teenagers. The truth is: It begins very early! Citing a study of 500 delinquents, nearly half were noticeably delinquent before they were *eight* years old." Judge Joe Glasser makes this observation: "It is important for parents to concentrate upon the family environment. This is especially true during the first six years while basic behavior patterns are being established. . . . I am firmly convinced that almost 95 per cent of the juvenile delinquents are such because of environmental factors and improper parental guidance during the critical age above set forth." Dr. C. W. Hall, Professor of Bible at University of Texas said: "A study of the home backgrounds of 300 happily married individuals and of 300 divorced individuals reveals the fact that the atmosphere of the home during the early impressionable years of a child's life determines his later success or failure in marriage. In other words, a successful or unsuccessful marriage is usually made in childhood." And *Time Magazine*, reporting a gathering of leaders from industry at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka, said that some of the businessmen "boggled over the immense importance attached by experts to the preschool years in character formation." Dr. Roy Burkhardt of Columbus, Ohio, declared he was more concerned with what went on in the nursery of his church than what went on in the pulpit.

How much weight does the average church attach to such knowledge? If most church members come through the Sunday School, as is widely stated, church leadership ought to be concerned with the basic training that future church members are receiving. Can we say that the best teachers are being chosen to teach the two through five year olds? Is there insistence that teachers be trained for such specialized work? Or is just any willing individual being urged to perform a baby-sitting service? Perhaps some zealous soul is seating little children in rows and preaching to them diligently each week to "give their hearts to the Lord."

### MISLED CHILDREN

*Look briefly at the kind of training that goes on in the average church. Take the matter of prayer, for instance. Here is a concrete situation: Mrs. S. tells her group of two and three year olds, "Now we're going to pray. Close your eyes. Bow your heads." She stands before them, closes her eyes, and proceeds to pray. She prays for the*

pastor and the missionaries, the young men in service, the events of the coming week, and for the whole Sunday School. This is a good prayer to utter when she is home alone, but with two and three year olds, it is not, for none of them are praying. As the teacher continues, they open their eyes and begin enjoying their moments of "freedom." Some even get up and walk around till an assistant corrals them, while others play with any object at hand or with each other.

*Unfortunately the situation is not one of "no learning." Children are constantly learning.* They are learning that prayer is meaningless, long, tiresome—something to avoid when possible. *They are forming attitudes that will militate against their being in prayer meeting when they grow up.* Such attitudes may be changed, of course, but they are always harder to break once they are established, and many never are changed.

As to the *reading of God's Word*, we may ask what attitudes are engendered in young children toward learning Bible verses and having the Bible taught to them? Do teachers "assign" verses for parents to teach at home? And how do parents "teach" verses? Are children understanding what each verse *means*, or are they being told to *repeat words*, the truth of which they will need years later? We would hardly teach algebra to first graders on the grounds that it will be so useful when they get to high school! God's own laws of learning and remembering are against the system so widely used in churches to justify some of the material given to small children.

Nonetheless, *the child still learns something about Scripture.* It is meaningless, it is a chore, verses are something to be said for adult approval, a star, or a prize. The Bible has no relevance to life, and so he forms a habit of sitting and outwardly "listening" to get adult approval with his mind turned off. He repeats glibly, "Let us love one another," and forthwith proceeds to hit the child next to him. The teacher scolds him but makes no connection between the Bible verse and the deed; neither, of course, does the child. Pastors grieve over the unchanged lives of adults who sit Sunday after Sunday through biblical sermons. But early in life the people learned to let pious truth and daily living run in parallel courses.

### **RIGHT GUIDANCE**

Children are so pliable, easily led, open to suggestion, and ready to love what we make lovable to them. Good training *is* available, not only in secular schools and Bible schools which give educational insights even by correspondence, but in easily available books. Curricula for nursery and beginner departments have methodology and helps for the untrained teacher in recognition of the usual local church situation. Bible materials suitable for the young child and ways of teaching to make truth vital and relevant to his life may be obtained from evangelical publishers. Would that churches insisted that teachers follow such material. Within the lessons, verses and Bible stories are carefully selected, carefully used, and repeated to make them a part of the child's thinking and living. Short verses are repeatedly used in conversation, rather than formally taught in parrot-like repetition. Activities are so geared into Bible teaching that the



child, from his first years in the nursery department, learns he is responsible to live what he knows. Real teaching involves helping the child to understand the truth and to put it into action.

In regard to *giving*, it is certain that good habits of bringing money to church will begin long before the child has much appreciation for the value of money. The time when he does come into such appreciation varies from child to child, depending upon his experiences. His offering should be called "money," not "pennies," and should be brought for the valid motive of love for the Lord. It is not "to give to Jesus," but "to help in Jesus' work." "Giving to Jesus" is taken too literally by the nursery child to render it a clear expression for him. That is, he is likely to identify the Sunday School secretary who collects offering envelopes as "Jesus," as some little children have done. The generalization, "Jesus' work," may be defined, even in the nursery, as buying pictures and chairs, or paying for the lights and the heat.

*Prayer* also may be real and a delight for children two and three years old. One idea is enough for one prayer, which must be offered when the child is prepared and feels thankful or ready to confide in the Lord something of interest to Him. Expression must be short and pointed. Posture is perhaps the least important thing, although even a small child can feel the helpfulness of closing his eyes so he does not see other children while he talks to God.

#### TRAINING FOR TOMORROW

Were pastors and church leaders to look into the preschool departments of their own churches and see how few of them operate with understanding and skill, they would begin to show concern for the foundational training that is being given. Children will continue to grow up with habits that defeat what the pastor is trying to accomplish. And pastors will continue to grieve over the hardness of the human heart. Adults will act as they have been trained to act, for the laws of human development are God's laws.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS HEAR

## Cries of Broken-Home Teens

Teens whose parents separate or divorce feel vulnerable, rootless. When homes are split, according to counselor James Hilt, Sunday school teachers and youth leaders must be prepared to hear and respond to four cries of broken-home teens.

1. "If I were good enough or responsible enough, Mom and Dad wouldn't have split." Adult leaders need to show the teen that this is false guilt. The responsibility for the separation or divorce rests squarely on the parents. The teen's guilt is counterfeit, guilt which God does not want him or her to suffer.

"If their false guilt is not resolved," cautions Hilt, author of *How to Have a Better Relationship with Anybody* (Moody), "teens may

punish themselves consciously or unconsciously by doing drugs or alcohol, withdrawing, or even trying suicide to 'atone.'"

2. "Please let me cry." The multiple losses of a ruptured home cause a teen to grieve. Let him or her know that's healthy and it will take time. Teachers should encourage the grieving teen to draw support from them. This "venting," which the psalmist repeatedly did with the Lord, helps release pains and aids in the "grief work" process.

3. "I hate them." The teen may fixate on all the harm and loss that has come to him or her and will replay the painful events as one would play records. This is natural for a while, but eventually, the needle must be taken off.

The teen needs to begin forgiving those who hurt him or her. This may be the most difficult thing the young person has ever done. God can give the power to accept and forgive each person toward whom he or she is bitter.

At the same time, the teen needs to see that accepting circumstances does not mean having to count the sources of trouble as good. The bitter disputes and severance of marriage are never good. Acceptance is not the same as approval.

4. "I'm no good." Often teens' self-esteem plummets. Caring Sunday school teachers can help raise it again. Find ways to affirm teens. Help them keep their heads above water emotionally, until feelings of God-given value and personhood begin to stir inside them once more.

"Statistically, the tragedies of separation and divorce may seem overwhelming," said Hilt. "But teachers and youth leaders can wonderfully touch some of the victims of this epidemic. And they will never forget your help."

-This article distributed by David C. Cook Publishing Co., 850 N. Grove, Elgin, Illinois 60120.

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## A MESSAGE FOR TEACHERS:

# Jesus, The Master Teacher

David R. Reagan

Jesus was the greatest teacher who ever lived, for He was God in the flesh. The book of Job says:

*God is exalted in His power.*

*Who is a teacher like Him?*

Job 36:22

The answer to the question posed by this scripture is, of course, no one; and Jesus of Nazareth proved that.

In Matthew 7:28 we are told that "the crowds were astonished at the teaching of Jesus because He taught them as one who had authority—and not as their scribes." Let's consider some of the reasons the teaching of Jesus was so powerful and effective.

### *Grounded in the Word*

To begin with, the teaching of Jesus was grounded in the Word of God. When He began His teaching with the Sermon on the Mount, He said: "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished" (Matt. 5:17 & 18).

On another occasion Jesus said "The Word of God is truth" (John 17:17). Jesus preached the Word. He taught the Word. He lived the Word.

It was, in fact, Jesus' emphasis upon the Word of God that resulted in His death. As He preached the Word, He drew people away from the traditions of men, and that infuriated the scribes and Pharisees who therefore plotted against Him.

### *Energized by the Spirit*

Another reason for the effectiveness of Jesus as a teacher is that He taught in the power of the Holy Spirit and not in the power of His flesh. I don't believe Jesus ever once prepared a lesson that was based exclusively on His own experience, insight, or wisdom. He looked to God. He operated on the power of the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of prophecy (Isa. 11:2).

Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit from birth. Yet, He did not go forth to preach and teach until He had received a mighty anointing of the Spirit at His baptism. Jesus recognized the source of His teaching power and He often acknowledged it publicly, as at the synagogue in Nazareth when He applied the words of Isaiah to Himself: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me ..." (Luke 4:16-19). On another occasion He said, "The Father who dwells in me is the one who does my work" (John 14:10).

### *Focused on Jesus*

A third reason the teaching of Jesus was so powerful is because His teaching focused upon Himself:

- "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except by me" (John 14:6).
- "Whatever you ask in my name I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John 14:13).
- "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another even as I loved you" (John 13:34).
- "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live" (John 11:25).
- "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was—I am!" (John 8:58).
- "If you knew me, you would know the Father also" (John 8:19).
- "You search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; but it is they that bear witness to me" (John 5:39).

### *Adapted to Needs*

A fourth characteristic of the teaching of Jesus that made Him so

effective was His adaptability. He adjusted to circumstances. He was willing to toss aside His lesson plan and focus on the needs of the moment.

A good example of this characteristic of His teaching can be found in Luke 12. As the chapter begins, Jesus is speaking about the evils of Pharisaism. He gradually shifts into what appears to be a major discourse on the leading of the Holy Spirit, but He hardly gets started before He is rudely interrupted by a young man who asks Him a totally irrelevant question.

But Jesus responds to the impertinent question differently than most of us would. He does not rule it out of order and then return to His learned discourse on the Holy Spirit. No, He sets His lesson plan aside and zeroes in on the covetous attitude of the young man who interrupted Him. In the process, He proceeds to present the parable of the rich fool, and through that parable He teaches a powerful lesson about relying on God rather than the riches of this world. Now that's what I call adaptability!

#### *Varied in Method*

Another thing which contributed to the power of Jesus' teaching is that He was very flexible and varied in His teaching methods. Note the great variety of techniques which He used:

1) *Startling hyperbole*—"Pluck out your eye." "Hate your own life." "Become like a child."

2) *Vivid analogies*—"Be born again." "I am the vine." "I am the bread of life."

3) *Probing questions*—"Who do men say that I am?" "Which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say 'Rise up and walk?'" "What man of you, if he has one sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out?"

4) *Profound paradoxes*—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." "The first will be last and the last first." "Whosoever would be great among you must be your servant."

5) *Penetrating observations*—"Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." "Render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's."

6) *Fascinating parables*—"The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in a field which a man found, covered up, and went and sold all that he had so that he could buy the field."

7) *Exciting action or object lessons*—When He turned the water into wine. When He fed the 5,000. When He called the little children to Him. When His disciples reaped grain on the Sabbath.

The teaching of Jesus was grounded in the Word, energized by the Spirit, focused on Himself—and it was adaptable and flexible.

#### *Lived in Life*

A final factor which gave power to the teaching of Jesus is that His teaching was exemplified in His life. Jesus lived what He taught. The quality of His life transformed the lives of thousands. And the quality of that life continues to this day to transform the lives of millions, for "although He was the Son of God, He learned obedience

through what He suffered; and being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him" (Heb. 5:8 & 9).

Now, having completed this survey of the characteristics of Jesus' teaching, let me ask you a question: How does *your* teaching compare to that of Jesus, the Master Teacher?

### *Questions for Teachers*

For example, is your teaching grounded in the Word of God? Or does it proceed from the wisdom of man? Paul said: "I do not teach the gospel with eloquent wisdom lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power." (1 Cor. 1:17). Paul also said: "I do not want your faith to rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. 2:5)

Is your teaching energized by the power of the Holy Spirit? Is it bathed in prayer? Or do you rely upon your own cleverness? Paul wrote that the mysteries of God's Word must be "spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:6-16). Paul also wrote: "We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways: we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's Word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. 4:2).

Is your teaching flexible and adaptable, always aimed at speaking to the needs of people? Or is it rigid, stifling, aloof, and theoretical? Do you teach with compassion and love, or do you have a dogmatic, sectarian attitude? Paul advises us that "the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to every one, an apt teacher, forbearing, correcting his opponents with gentleness" (2 Tim. 2:24).

### *More Questions*

Is your teaching Christ centered? Or is it focused upon the traditions of men? Which are you more interested in: indoctrinating people with doctrines or bringing them into a closer relationship with Jesus? Do you focus on Jesus in *all* your teaching? For example, when teaching the creation, do you point out that Jesus was the Word by which God spoke the creation into existence? Do you point out that the animal coverings which God supplied Adam and Eve were a sacrificial type pointing to the sacrifice of Jesus which would provide a covering for our sins? Do you show students how Jesus is portrayed in Noah's ark and the ark of the covenant? Do you show them how Jesus is reflected in the lives of Joseph, Moses, Joshua, and David?

Finally, do you live what you teach? Do you present a good life style example to your students? Paul said: "Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity" (1 Tim. 4:11).

Do you communicate by your actions that you consider your teaching responsibility to be an important one? Do you arrive at class on time? Do you take a personal interest in your students? Do you prepare your lessons? Do you *really* prepare them? Or do you throw them together hurriedly on Saturday night to the inspiration of Fantasy Island and Love Boat?

### *Apostolic Advice*

The Apostle James says; "Let not many of you become teachers, for those of us who teach shall be judged with greater strictness"



(James 3:11). Don't let that statement frighten you; let it sober you. Let it impress upon you what an honor and glory it is to be called of God to teach His Word.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Want to be a good teacher? Read this!**

## **BIBLE TEACHING—Fun and Awesome**

Joe Bayly

*Sept. 2: It's fun to teach Sunday school.*

I know it's a heavy responsibility, it takes time for preparation, it ties me down, it's draining, it's hard to get through the lessons when I have a headache—but it's fun.

To see comprehension replace puzzlement on a student's face, to hear words of certainty from one who not long ago was filled with doubt, to follow another into the joy of discovery, share a smile or laugh, be aware of quiet trust and expectant waiting, feel warmth and respect and love—it's fun to teach.

It's awesome to teach.

To speak for God, to explain His Word, point out the way, share with others the lessons His Spirit is teaching me—it's awesome to teach.

I teach with fear and trembling, fear lest I obscure the way rather than reveal its radiant track, trembling lest I be a hypocrite, castaway.

Yet I teach. By faith in God, I teach . . . the God, "who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy . . ."

And teaching, I am taught. My teachers are God and my class. Each teaches me of the other, each brings me closer to the other.

### *Sept. 16: Learn by Doing*

Sometimes I assign projects to members of the class I'm teaching. Things like reports on books, what the Bible says about a certain subject.

When we studied Amos, which speaks of God's judgment on a nation that forgets the poor, I asked one man, a sociologist, to prepare a report on poverty in the United States. (When he gave the report, we discovered he'd concentrated on poverty in DuPage County, the county in which we live. That brought it home to all of us in a way that the whole country wouldn't.)

At the end of that series of lessons, I assigned a project to each member of the class: Bring in a project you intend to do personally, or as a family, to help poor people. It was exciting to see how creatives and yet down-to-earth the projects were.

I'll have to think up more projects related to lessons. This takes time, which may be why I don't do it very often. But the results far exceed the investment of time, like a lot of things related to teaching a Sunday school class.

### Oct. 7: A Lousy Classtime

I failed today.

The lesson didn't come off. I know it and the class knows it.

First, there was that tangent. I should have stuck to the lesson when Matt raised the question; I should have said, "Matt, if you want to, we can discuss that after class. Or sometime during the week. I want to get through the lesson, and I don't think enough people are bothered by that to justify taking the time to discuss it now."

I know, and Matt knows, that there are some questions that bother so many people that it's necessary to consider them in class, even if you never get back to the lesson. But this wasn't one of them. So we wasted fifteen minutes. I mean, I wasted fifteen minutes.

Then I tried to cover everything in the lesson in the time that remained. I rushed through the material; I even said, "There's no time for questions" when Grace raised her hand.

I know I should have settled for getting the main point across. But I didn't. I had to dump the whole load because I'd prepared it.

Then the culmination of the miserable class session was when Frank disagreed with me and I cut him off. I could see people's heads jerk back.

I'll have to tell them I'm sorry next week. I hope they'll forgive me.  
*I hope You'll forgive me, Lord. Thanks.*

### Oct. 29: Good Teachers Care

I spoke at a Sunday school convention in New Hampshire last week.

During a workshop, I asked the people if there was one Sunday school teacher from their own childhood they remembered above the rest. About half of them answered yes, there was. So I asked why, and they had some interesting answers—like the ones I've had in other place.

"I was special to her. I could tell she was pleased that I was in the class."

"He came over to the schoolyard during the week to play ball with us."

"She told me my dress was pretty. We were poor, and my own mother and father were so busy they probably didn't have time to notice me or compliment me. But my Sunday school teacher did."

One woman said, "My mother died when I was eight years old. My Sunday school teacher literally carried me through the next two years by her love for me."

What always strikes me when I ask that question, "Why was the teacher special?" is how it's the caring that people remember, the love, the affirmation those teachers gave to their students by their words and actions.

I'm pretty sure they must have known the Bible, must have prepared carefully. But that's not what these grown-up men and women remember years later . . . when they have picked up the responsibility for teaching and carrying.

A Sunday school teacher doesn't just teach the lesson; he/she is the lesson.

### *Nov. 11: Good Classes Care*

We had a great time of sharing concerns and praying for each other at the beginning of class this morning.

I think the class would continue to meet, even if there were no lesson. We've found out that we can depend on each other, that we can trust each other, that we can be open with each other.

I guess one thing we've found out is that we're not alone with our problems. Other Christians have the same ones, whether it's older children who have gotten away from the Lord, relatives who are seriously ill, loss of employment, final exams, important decisions, personal or family crises of various kinds.

This week I had a letter from a woman in another part of the country. That letter made we realize what a priceless treasure we have in our class' warm fellowship.

"A young couple in my church separated—the wife left her husband to return to her parents in another state. The young man broke down in a Wednesday night prayer meeting and asked for prayer, saying that he had examined himself before God and thought that he was doing everything he knew to make things right with her. But he wanted the people to pray for their reunion. I felt strong embarrassment on the part of the congregation, and lack of deep caring. The church is his only family. My distress for him was made worse when the only comments I heard later were that he should have known better than to speak of such a private affair in a public service."

Thank God we can speak of "private affairs" in our Sunday school class. I think every church needs such safe places, places of refuge and Christian concern and support.

### *Dec. 2: A Fly in the Ointment*

A pastor was discussing a problem involving the highschool class in his church with me at a Sunday school convention.

"We've got the best possible man to teach those kids," he said. And when he explained the teacher's background, work, family and interests, I had to agree. "Yet we keep losing students from the class. It's about half the size it was when he took it over."

"Tell me more about the man," I said. "What's he like as a teacher? Have you seen him in action, if not in the teaching situation, then on the church board or somewhere else? What's your first impression of him?"

The pastor was silent for several moments. Then he said, "I know the answer to the problem with his class. He's sarcastic. He can make you feel that big"—here he spread his thumb and index finger about an inch apart—"if you disagree with him or don't quite see things his way."

Teenagers are tender plants, easily wilted by a strong wind. A tender touch, a tender teacher is needed.

For adults too. And children.

### *Jan. 13: Acting it Out*

This morning I tried role play, a teaching technique I've seldom used. (Maybe I don't try different ways of teaching because I'm afraid they might fail.)

But this role play really succeeded, both in holding the class' interest and—more important—in advancing what we were studying.

We'd been thinking about the Christian person's attitude toward death, especially in the light of the ethics of the right to die. So I read a case study of a teen-age girl who suffered complete kidney failure and was on dialysis.

I asked different people in the class to take the parts of the girl, her parents, her younger sister, her physician and her pastor. The girl had separate conversations with each of these people about her desire to go off dialysis and be permitted to die.

Most of the people who played the roles matched the sexes and ages. But when it came to the girl's conversation with her doctor, I asked a physician who is part of the class and a young woman to take the parts—then switched the roles. (The real-life physician played the teen-age girl; the young woman played the physician.)

The high point was a conversation between the teenager and her younger sister. The two young women (college students) actually seemed to become the persons whose roles they had assumed. Mine weren't the only moist eyes after that particular role play. Talk about psychodrama!

We were as close as we could possibly come to such a heart-rending problem without actually experiencing it. And we understood the difficult emotional and ethical considerations in far greater depth than would have been the case if I'd merely lectured.

#### *March 24: Accepting, not Judgmental*

It must have been about a year ago that John and Kathleen asked to say something to the class. I had a hunch that they were going to tell about their daughter, Becky. I was right.

John was the one who told the story, one that I knew already, along with the pastor and a few others. But the class—and the church itself—had not previously been aware of the serious problem.

In a simple, straightforward way, John told how, nine months before, their fifteen-year-old daughter had run away from home. They notified the police and searched for her everywhere, without success.

Then, about a month ago, the police found her: living with prostitutes, addicted to hard drugs, in an evil part of Chicago.

Becky was really spaced out when they found her, but it was only after examination by a team of psychiatrists that John and Kathleen realized how seriously she had been damaged. "They tell us she has to be put in a mental institution," John said, struggling for control. "She's so sick that they don't think she'll ever be able to leave. One of them even said it would be no help to visit her there—that perhaps we'd better just forget we ever had a daughter."

Then, after a moment of silence, John concluded: "We wanted to tell you about this so you'd pray with us. Becky's in the institution now, but we know God can do anything. He can heal her, and we hope you'll pray with us that He will—in spite of what the doctors told us." John and Kathleen sat down.

The class was deeply moved. Someone stood up to pray; then others prayed too.

Like I said, that was about a year ago. And we've been praying ever since.

This morning John and Kathleen asked to say something again. Only this time the two of them were radiantly happy when John spoke.

"We want you to know that Becky came back home last week. They've discharged her from the state hospital as cured. And she really is. She's already back in school, and she'll even be getting a job. I think you can guess how we feel. We want to thank you for sharing our heavy burden, for praying for Becky."

Again people prayed, this time praising and thanking God.

And in my heart I thanked Him for a class that cares, a group of Christians with whom John and Kathleen felt safe in sharing such a heavy concern—safe from a judgmental attitude toward them, or Becky, or how they had raised Becky.

I had one other thought: "Ye have not because ye ask not."

#### *April 21: Stimulating Questions*

I can't explain it.

Sometimes there are three or four hands in the air at once. (My class is too large for students just to speak out). Then I'm pretty sure the lesson is making people think and respond.

Other times there are no hands. I ask a question and nobody answers.

I've found that the questions that get results start with "how" and "why." Like "How do you think Moses felt when his own people turned on him and refused his help?" Or "Why shouldn't we worry about the future?"

When I ask that sort of question, I'm making people think, expecting them to think. I'm letting them put things together in their own heads.

In my opinion, people of all ages (not just adults) like to discover things for themselves, rather than be limited to what the teacher says. When I ask a "how" or "why" question, I open up this possibility to my class.

There's another question I like to ask. It's this: "Have any of you had a similar experience?" For instance, "to what Moses had when his own people rejected him?"

Why should the class be limited to my perceptions, my feelings, my experiences, when they have equally authentic ones to share? And when someone does share, his/her experience will probably speak to members of the class who can't relate as well to my age or lifestyle or background.

Today I asked the right kind of questions and the class still sat on their hands. I gave them the opportunity to share their own thoughts and experiences, and only one or two responded.

Maybe it was just the rainy Sunday doldrums. It's a miserable gray day.

Or am I rationalizing?



### July 4: A Teacher's Rewards

I taught a series of lessons on death and the Christian a few months ago.

Today Bruce came up to me after class and said, "I want you to know that those lessons on death you taught some time ago have changed my whole attitude.

"I've had a series of tests at the hospital this past week, tests that could reveal something pretty serious.

"I don't know the results yet, but the surprising thing is that I'm at peace. I've found I can really trust God. So I wanted to thank you."

Adapted from I Love Sunday School, by Joseph Bayly. ©1987 David C. Cook Publishing Co. Used with permission.

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## Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



*Church-going seems mostly to be sitting and listening to dull preaching, and I get so tired of it. Why isn't there something for Christians to do?*

One cannot always lay the blame for dull church-services at the same place. Of course it is possible for preachers to be dull, giving out very little and taking a long time to do it. In hearing preachers I am sometimes amazed at how a bushel of words may be used to express a pint of thought. Some are guilty of the lack of study and preparation that lies back of "inspiration." Likely most churches are not careful enough in providing a bit of variety in the services. Those who lead in the worship services do sometime allow things to be mechanical, habitual, and dry, as though there were virtue in "sleep-walking" through the standard routine.

In most instances it is not fair to classify the church services as mere preaching services even if the preaching is dull. Nor can the general unrest with church-going be traced totally to the preaching. Since it comes in for a good measure of criticism, however, and since it occupies more time normally than any of the rest of the service, we must deal with it. With all the failures, it is likely true that more good preaching is being done in our day than ever before (We speak here of the ability at speech-making, not the doctrinal content). This does not stop the unrest. Although one could justifiably be impatient with much preaching which lacks in Bible content and as a message from God, the dissatisfaction voiced in the question is also to be found where true servants of God faithfully and ably declare His Word.

The hearer must share considerable blame. He may be dull of hearing (Heb. 5:11). He listens to the preacher in about the same way a poor student listens to his algebra teacher. Neither one intends to disturb many brain cells. Of course, the best of presentations soon become boring when this is the case. Again, modern man is so conditioned to having music, words, advertisement and such like from the radio or television flowing around and over him that he finds it easy to sit in the church service and let the same thing happen. He does not really listen unless the preacher has a good comedy routine to rouse him from his thoughts (or sleep).

After years of observing I am persuaded that many are bored with church services because they have a very poor concept of worship. Many people simply do not participate in the services as worshippers of God. They think in terms of "listening to someone say a prayer" or "listening to a sermon" or "enjoying (or failing to enjoy) the songs." Perhaps too often all of us are listeners and observers rather than *participants* in the church services. As the question implies, much dullness can be overcome by something to do—by participation! In the kind of worship services that truly please the Lord, *everyone will be doing something*. That "something" is not necessarily a public part—reading, leading a song, etc.—but active worship! Brother Blank's prayer may be dull if we just half-hearted listen to it, but if we pray with him and see ourselves as petitioners before God's throne, even including our own whispered praises or pleas, and intelligently say the "Amen," it will be a totally different matter. If we just "listen" to that sermon on fundamentals which we learned years ago it may bore us, but if we think of the unsaved ones in our midst and "help" the preacher bring that message by our prayerful concern, it will be a totally different matter. If we really tune our hearts to listen for the voice of God to us through the voice of His messenger, the sermon will take on a new dimension. In a great measure the problem of boring church services is solved when we cease to be church-goers and become one of the assembled worshippers of God.

In the matter of "something to do" both in and out of the worship services we need some better concepts than those which generally prevail. In all except the smallest churches there simply are not enough "official" and organized duties to go around. Women, moreover, are limited in their participation in the services (1 Cor. 14:34). So long as we think of doing something merely in terms of speaking, song leading, ushering, etc., there will be those who have no part—nothing to do. The truth of the matter is that there is more than enough to do—if one is not looking for prestige, credit, recognition or such things. The Christian who lives his convictions, maintains his morals, befriends others, and has the reputation of being a good man is doing something! The Christian who carries on his own personal work campaign, spending untold hours trying to reach someone, digging in to discover better how this is done—is doing something. We need to dismiss the idea that in order to do "church work" that work must be organized, recognized, and scheduled for (let us say) Tuesday night. This is not to say that some organized programs may not be

very useful and cooperation with them desirable. There is strength in unity. Our plea here is for Christians to recognize the wide range of "something to do" that is open to them.

Or must we be like a child who declares, "But I don't want to do *that!* I want something big, important, or glamorous to do!"

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## **VOICES from the FIELDS**

"The Field is the World"

Irene Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

February 6, 1990

Winston and I want to express our appreciation for each telephone call and letter received these past two months. Especially do we thank each one who upheld us in prayer. God has answered and I am much improved from the virus which laid me low Dec. 4. It caused much pain and weakness but complete recovery is expected. We were warned of the danger of lung involvement, but that never occurred. It is wonderful to be relieved of the years'-long coughing caused by bronchiectasis. We believe the statement, "All that we now experience will be used by the Lord some way. Nothing will be in vain."

Our expanded facilities are a joy to the group here and several new ones are attending. We continue working on interior furnishings.

Alaska has had an over-abundance of snow this winter (reported to be 70% above normal), along with a lot of sub-zero weather—20 degree below is predicted for tonight. There is concern that breakup will cause widespread flooding.

We're looking forward to having Norman (regrettably without his family) with us June 23 - July 9 and David and his family June 30 - July 7.

Moto Nomura

Japan

January 27, 1990

*This year 1989 was our most wonderful, richest and busiest year in Jesus Christ as we endeavored to serve Him in serving His churches and His people within the Church or without. I wished/wish I had 48 hours a day instead of only 24 hours. I realize that prayers of many in churches in U.S. have been behind us. I don't know how to thank them for their love, prayers, and sacrifices.*

The mountain ministries have been suddenly well rewarding as we have come much closer to various kinds of people here in meeting their needs with our smile and love that come from our Savior Jesus Christ. Two high school kids want to attend Portland Christian School if it is Okayed by Uncle Sam to issue an 1-20 form for foreign students.

The unity efforts within churches in Japan promoted by me have been richly answered by our Lord. Dr. C. Leonard Allen, the co-author of *Discovering Our Roots* came to our Bethany Home and conducted an annual preachers fellowship study together with missionaries from Christian Churches in Japan.

The Hachiman-yama House-Church ministry is also wonderful. Starting this year we will remain in the mountains on every 5th Sunday to serve the people here while they will hold their own meeting in our daughter's apartment. It is a small house-church but is rich in fellowship with each other in Jesus Christ.

I teach both Church History and Historical Christian Thought on Fridays in our newly started American Christian College, an extension program of Milligan College in Johnson City, TN. This semester we have two boys. Last semester one. We hope to see some additional students in next semester that starts next April.

The mountain ministries *do need missionary hands more than ever before*. We are seriously praying to God for more workers. We've cultivated good soil for more workers to come in to assist us.

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

February 13, 1990

Sophia's health is slowly running down. Only the medicine she takes every day keeps her in shape to do her household duties. She is, however, growing in the Lord. Her great affliction has taught her to trust the Lord and obey.

The Lord keeps me very busy in His field. I am the main minister at Coridallos church, and responsible editor of our magazine "Search and Believe." I have the care of three thousand precious souls (who enrolled in the correspondance courses), and occasional visits at different small congregations in the country. Besides a lot of studying and praying for effective preaching.

The Fund for the church planter is coming up slowly. We are earnestly praying for the right person. Only God can provide funds and person to do the job.

Crystal (& Ted) Hardin

Tegucigalpa, Honduras

February, 1990

Honduras is in difficult straits at present with shortages of many goods. Several of our teachers have not had propane for cooking for a month. We almost had to close school because there was no diesel fuel for buses. Gasoline has been rationed at the pump for weeks, and there is no bright outlook for coming weeks. Inflation has been bad—many prices up 30% in the last two months.

Elizabeth (& Tom) Lowe

Till April 30: Operation Mobilization

February 26

P. O. Box 28, Waynesboro, GA 30830

In November we traveled to Louisiana with my brother Victor Broaddus and his wife Mae. She and I were speakers at a ladies' meeting. . . . Tom and I have both been very sick with pneumonia since January, and are having a hard time getting our strength back.

We have given notice to the O. M. team here in Waynesboro that we will be leaving the end of April. Tom has been training Robert DeBron from Holland since he arrived the middle of October to take over as the literature warehouse manager. We have felt for some time now that we need to go home and do something with our house. We came in August of 1986 to help out for 6 weeks and after seeing the

need agreed to come back and work through the winter. . . . We need your prayers as to selling our home and just what our future holds for us. We have several mission groups we could work with that could be more part time. There are also other O. M. fields open to us. Please pray that we will be willing to do what the Lord would have us to do. After April 30th our address will be 636 W. Utica St., Sellersburg, IN 47172.

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## **Hosea, The Heart and Holiness of God**

### **"Leave Him Alone"**

(HOSEA 4:1 - 19)

Ernest E. Lyon

The opening of chapter four introduces nearly all the rest of the book. In it the great emphasis will be on the holiness of God, but the loving heart of God will always be present. Probably we have here a condensed account of Hosea's preaching over about a seventy year period. It is an indictment of the nation in its terrible pollution. We will note some of the most important of these things as we go through the chapter, with the last five verses as the climax of this message.

The first verse closes with this terrible indictment of Israel: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land." The people of Israel were acting contrary to what God had called them for. Then note how thoroughly verse two points out that they were breaking the Law He had given them. These things are the underlying cause of the judgment already showing and the worse judgment that was coming.

"Because of this, the land mourns"—solumn words indeed to the people that God wanted to bless and use. But please do not think that these words apply only to Israel. Just look around you in this country and see how living conditions in this country have deteriorated over the past few decades. Locked doors, alarm systems, fear of Aids, drug addiction, murders multiplying with our national capital the "murder capital of the country," thousands of homeless people with no homes, etc. You might ask why, but just remember our heritage and the fact that we now have the authorities taking God out of all public life and public officials joining in the sins that Israel had. Just as much worse was to come for Israel, so we need to pray for our country that it turn back to God.

In verse six we get to the root of the problem: "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests." This was very true of Israel, of course, but have you considered how true this is of America? Just think how the knowledge of God is available in this country today. Yet also think how prophetic this verse is of the 1990's. All kinds of false religions can be taught and read in our schools, for example, but



in many places for a teacher to have a Bible on his desk is considered enough of an offense to bring about being fired. We have the Bible in more translations than any other country probably, but even though an amazing number have been sold, think how few ever get studied, even by church members.

God's reaction to man's rejection and the deplorable conditions that are the results of forsaking God take up most of verses 6b through 14, so let us pass on to the last five verses of our chapter.

The verse which I would emphasize is verse 17, "Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone!" This verse is often misunderstood. It is often taken to mean to keep away from the sinner, have no contact with him, forsake him. And this is done with the implication that God will treat Israel that way. But remember that later on in 11:8, God cries out, "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel?" No, it is not to abandon Israel that he is warning, but for Judah to have no part in the sins of Israel. The cry in 15a is correct—"Though you commit adultery, O Israel, let not Judah become guilty." When the saint and sinner become bosom companions, it is most often the saint that is changed, not the sinner.

Let us look at the subject of idolatry before we go further. The most common idolatries of the Old Testament were the worship of Baal, Moloch, Israel's worship of the golden calf at Sinai, and in Hosea's time, the calves in Bethel and Dan. Outside the Bible—Zeus, Diana, Astarte, Venus, etc., show the idolatry of the pagan world of the New Testament days. But as you think of idolatry today, don't turn to Africa, or India, or Japan—think about America. In this country idolatry generally consists in an attempt to worship God while denying the finality of the unveiling of God that came in the person of Jesus. "He is the image of the invisible God" (Col. 1:15). Treating Jesus on a merely human level, thinking of Him only as the greatest human teacher, this too is idolatry.

But let us not forget that covetousness (greed) is idolatry, the worship of possessions. That, I am afraid, makes this as idolatrous a nation as there is in the world. People talk much about the "American dream." What is that?—nothing but the desire to have enough to be independent of God! That is a subtle form of idolatry that affects many without their realizing it. It is then appropriate to note that "joined to idols" literally means "being held under by idolatry"—fascinated in an evil sense; held by the spell of idolatry. Just as Israel was drugged with its own pollutions of golden calves, much of America is drugged by the desire to have *more*, and need I point out any more proof than the fact that lotteries are becoming so popular and many church members are taking part. Why? Because they want to be rich, independent of God or man, by getting money that was spent by others on the lottery instead of buying the necessities that were needed to provide their families with their needs.

G. Campbell Morgan made a comment about sixty years ago which sounds very up-to-date: "The supreme terror of the present hour is that of the satisfaction of humanity with false forms of religion, which satisfaction is issuing in lust, and license, and dethronement of God."

That attitude believes that there is no God who cares and we should do "what feels good." Humanism, the religion of our government, is the denial of moral responsibility and we are seeing the results in our locked houses, our dangerous streets, abortions, murder, etc.

"Leave him alone." Remember your loyalty to God, and do not compromise. Loyalty to Christ cannot let us co-operate religiously with those who deny Him in any sense. I knew a man who went to no church who used to make a statement of the belief of many—"Now there abideth faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is tolerance." He was speaking of the tolerance that is high treason to God. Such people have a patronage of Jesus which consents to name Him as one among others and make them equal with Him. We must stand firmly for the absolute supremacy and finality of Jesus.

As much as I respect and love the Jewish people and am grateful for the things they stood for in the ancient world in holding to one God and giving us the Bible and providing the way for Jesus to become a man, I can not sit down with a Rabbi on equal *religious* terms. He must stand by his conscience, but I must stand by my Lord and Savior. Jesus Christ is the "Image of the invisible God" so I can not compromise.

God told Judah to leave sinful Ephraim (i.e., Israel) alone. But *He* is not going to let them alone; He is going to deal with them. When the days come that Israel realizes that Jesus is their Messiah, then we can stand with them religiously—but not till then.

However, this call to separation does not include bitterness toward those from whom we separate religiously, whether it be Jews, Muslims, or any other religion. They are human beings and in need of being shown Christian love as much as our fellow church members.

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## No Man is an Island

Don McGee

We called him "Oz" and you can find his name engraved on "The Wall" in Washington, D.C. with over 50,000 other names. He was young, good at what he did and certainly had no desire to die at such a young age. Oh, he knew he was taking a chance. But we all knew we were taking risks, yet they were calculated risks—*not* unlike the risk one takes each time he drives to work or dines out. Anytime you fly 9,500 feet over enemy territory you take a certain risk. But we knew where the anti-aircraft artillery batteries and the surface-to-air missiles were located and those sites were conscientiously avoided.

Except on that night. The aircraft commander, a young man in his early twenties, decided (against procedure) to maneuver the plane for greater mission effectiveness and in his maneuvering the young Captain got too close to an enemy weapons system. The radar tracking alert system sounded its warning but it was too late. In less than one second after impact my friend and three other men were dead. A Russian built surface-to-air missile took them out—not a

trace of anything was ever recovered. Today my friend's bones are scattered over the Vietnamese landscape, thousands of miles from his home. He died because of the inexcusably foolish decision of another man.

No man is an island. What we do, say or believe in (or don't believe in) will affect someone else. Believe it! I've seen mothers recoil in horror while fathers, with clenched fists, scream "Why?!" when notified of the death of their teenager in an alcohol related crash. Sometimes the answer to "why" is found in only a few steps to the family refrigerator where Dad's beer is kept. In one instance one had only to drive to the parents' place of business—a very profitable liquor store. How terribly expensive the price for their affluence.

Young girls have been known to throw themselves at the feet of the first man to show them any kind of attention and affection. They simply never received any from their fathers. On occasion a young man will become a life-long agnostic because a godless university professor showed him more attention and encouragement than his Christian parents.

No, my Christian friend, we are not islands in a sea. To a very great degree we are our brother's keeper; and especially so when that one is a member of our family. We must be adamant about instilling this great truth into that person we see in the mirror each morning.

I certainly hope a member of my family does not physically perish because of a foolish decision I make as a pilot or as the driver of an automobile. But more importantly I do not wish to see one I love so much, and am responsible for to a large extent, perish in hell because I was a stumbling block. The sea with a millstone would indeed be better.

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## **RESTORATION LEADERS:**

### **W. Carl Ketcherside**

#### **From Piecemaker to Peacemaker**

by Boyce Mouton

William Carl Ketcherside was born on May 10, 1908, in a crude miner's cabin in the midwestern United States.

He was an exceptionally gifted child and when he entered the first grade he was advanced to the second in only two weeks, the third by Christmas, and was in the fourth grade by the end of the school year. He was permitted to borrow only four books each week from a travelling library. In four days he had read each of the books twice and was eagerly awaiting the next arrival of the library. He remained an avid reader throughout his life and at one point averaged reading a book a day for a period of seven years.

Carl began preaching at the age of 12 and from then until his death was much sought after as a speaker. He authored 34 books and became the subject of two Master Theses and three Doctoral dissertations.

For more than thirty years, Bro. Ketcherside was a leader in one of the most narrow and factional groups in Christendom [the anti-Sunday-school, anti-orphanage, anti-Christian schools sect of the Churches of Christ—ed.]. He frequently engaged in public debates with other Christian leaders over the meaning of the Scriptures. Later he described his former ministry as that of a “piece” maker instead of a “peace” maker.

A dramatic change came over him in 1951 while preaching in Belfast, North Ireland. In that divided and strife torn part of the world he saw his bigoted and divisive mentality in a new light. Though he had been a preacher for more than thirty years, his own spiritual life was miserable and desolate. Like the church at Laodicea he had once considered himself as “rich and increased with goods and in need of nothing” when in reality he was “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.”

Carl came to realize that the words “Behold I stand at the door and knock” were not spoken to alien sinners, but to a lukewarm church. So he applied these words to himself. That night he knelt down on the cold floor of an unheated church house and agonized in prayer. A deep snow was upon the ground outside. For more than an hour he wrestled with his own conscience while the persistent Christ continued to knock at the door of his heart.

At last in desperation he opened his heart to God in a new and living way. “Jesus” he said, “did just exactly what He said He would do.” Carl Ketcherside arose from his knees a new man. He not only had a new relationship with God . . . but also with his fellow believers. For the first time he was able to listen to and learn from those with whom he differed.

Carl became recognized by Christian leaders around the world as an apostle of peace and unity. For many years he was the editor of a monthly journal called “Mission Messenger” which was read by people across all denominational lines.

Carl was determined to spend his “retirement” years in the inner city. He sold his home in suburbia and moved into a modest apartment. The base of his operation was a building which had formerly been a tavern and house of prostitution. Just before Carl claimed this building for Christ it had been firebombed, killing one of the women.

When his wife Nell passed on to be with Jesus he continued in the work but found it difficult to sleep at night. Though physically exhausted from a long day ministering to the “least of these” he found himself the victim of such chronic problems and pain that he would lie awake for hours or spend much time before dawn in prayer and the study of Scripture.

Neighbors found Carl’s body on the morning of Thursday, May 25,

1989. He had apparently died in his sleep. Thus, Carl Ketcherside has come to experience the ultimate freedom. On this earth he was free from factional fear and human manipulation. He never had a salaried position in the church from which he could be fired or a religious contract which anyone could cancel. He lived so modestly and frugally that even his meager Social Security check was completely adequate for all of his earthly needs.

He still, however, was clothed in a body of humiliation. An earthly tabernacle which groaned and travailed with the rest of creation.

Now, however, he is totally free! He has passed from this vale of suffering to a land where there are no tears and where the former things have passed away.

May we be imitators of him, even as he was of Christ.

• • • • •

## Envoy of Love and Unity

Leroy Garrett

Carl Ketcherside was a "wing commander," to use his term, of one of the most legalistic sects among Churches of Christ, and he accepted only those who conformed to his party line. When I met him for the first time, 40 years ago, there was some question in his mind as to whether he could fellowship me. I had to pass his litmus test, and since I was as sectarian as he was, he had to pass mine! But in the years that followed we embarked together upon a great adventure, freedom in Christ.

*This I would name as the essence of Carl Ketcherside's long and fruitful ministry: his capacity to change course and move in a different direction.* Like Alexander Campbell before him, who confessed that "I was once so strict a sectarian that I was like the Indian's tree in that I leaned a little the other way," Carl often admitted that he was once factious and divisive and that he had asked God to forgive him. He was able to give the last half of his life as a peacemaker and was an envoy of unity. He believed that *his most important discovery was that peace and unity could never come to God's people through argument or debate but only through forbearing love.* "Only the dynamic of love will do it," was his continual theme.

Even though he had only a high school education, he was unusually knowledgeable. This was due not only to a gifted intellect but to a lifetime of consummate reading. Even as a boy he read everything he could get his hands on. Along the way he learned to think—critically, creatively, boldly. He often plowed new ground in his study of Scripture, *Mission Messenger*, which he edited for 37 years.

### *Shedding the Shackles*

Some of the distinctions he made went far in freeing people from sectarian shackles, such as the difference between fellowship and en-



dorsement, that is, we can fellowship a person without endorsing or approving of all that he may believe or practice. The distinction he drew between the apostolic proclamation (gospel) and the apostolic teaching (doctrine) was also effective, the former being what creates fellowship and the latter being what enriches fellowship. Most liberating of all may have been the distinction he drew between the New Testament (*New Covenant* is better, he would note) and the New Testament Scriptures. The New Testament is not the 27 books that we call the "New Testament," but the covenant relationship we share in Christ through faith and baptism. It disturbed some people to be told that issues like speaking in tongues, societies, and instrumental music are quite apart from the New Covenant and the gospel of Christ. It also set folks to thinking when they were told, "All truths are equally true, but not all truths are equally important."

Another ingredient to his genius was his eternal optimism. He was always up and never down, and he was always out on the growing edge. He was convinced that this is a great time to be alive, and that we are at the very brink of a glorious reformation of worldwide proportion.

Carl had a way of giving people hope, even a drunk or a prostitute on the street. He made people feel better about themselves just by being around him. Like his Lord, he sought to save people, not to condemn them. Being in his company was sheer entertainment.

A born public speaker, he was an orator of the old school. Even as a boy he won forensic contests. He began preaching when only 12, standing on a box so that he could be seen from behind the pulpit, and he was holding revivals at age 13. His hosts would call him in from playing marbles, saying, "Come on Carl, its will soon be time for you to preach." Whether for his own good or ill, he was billed as the boy wonder preacher. He wore knee pants until he was a teenager. The elders of one church told him that if he was going to be a preacher he needed to discard his knee pants, so they took him to town and bought him his first suit—with long pants! He could move an audience as few people can. One man who often heard him in his prime was recounting the large numbers that Carl baptized, and added, "It was hard to stay in your seat with Carl Ketcherside preaching." Even in his latter years it was common for him to receive a standing ovation when he pleaded for unsectarian Christianity, as he did at the World Convention of Churches of Christ during its San Juan assembly.

We miss the real Carl if we do not recognize his delightful sense of humor. He believed an audience would listen to him with less prejudice if he could give them something to laugh about. The only time he ever spoke at Abilene Christian University he ran the risk of having a prejudiced audience. When scoring the shallowness of our sectarian thinking he said at one point: "And there's the division over *The Herald of Truth* TV program. Those who support it never watch it, and those who oppose it never miss it!" I noticed that the president of the college was laughing as was most everyone else.

Those of us who were his contemporaries and knew him personally were uniquely blessed. I am confident that he will have a noble

place in the history of our people. Future generations will be blessed by his writings, his ministry, and his life; and they will honor him more than we have.

A few lines from Edwin Markham catch the essence of Carl Ketcherside's life and work:

For all your days prepare,  
And meet them ever alike:  
When you are the anvil, bear—  
When you are the hammer, strike.

He was often the anvil, and he knew how to bear. He was sometimes the hammer, and he knew how to strike.

## Carl Ketcherside—Almost a Martyr

Bill Pile

In 1961 I had already decided I didn't like Carl Ketcherside. He was dangerous. He believed that division was a tragedy. He thought God's sheep were scattered on sectarian hills. Of course, I couldn't swallow that. I wasn't even ready to acknowledge that I was on one of these sectarian hills. I wouldn't (and didn't) walk across the street to hear him speak.

I always wondered who was the scoundrel who put my name on the *Mission Messenger* mailing list. For sure I never let other members of my sect know that I was reading it. I made sure no one was in my study when I read it.

Then I read each issue. No, I dissected it. I underlined the errors faithfully. I wrote rebuttals in the margins. I even rushed to my typewriter to counteract the errors in my own publication. But the bottom line was—I read it.

In keeping with my worst fears, I fell in love with Carl's style. And then I began hearing what he had to say. And swallowing hard when I knew he was right. And getting a headache when I pondered the implications. Finally, I ended up on my knees, this time with a different prayer. Repentance. Not only for being a sheep on a sectarian hill, but for helping build those hills. And fencing them in.

O how I loved his style! How could anyone not! But it was more than style. The truth he wrote hit me with all the force of a plank planted between the eyes of a mule. Hear him who "still speaks, though he is dead."

We are not in Christ because we belong to the church; we are in the church because we belong to Christ.

Only a vertical fellowship can be sustained, for if each is joined to Jesus directly, and through Jesus to his brethren, he must first sever himself from Jesus in order to be divided from any other member of the body.

Most of those who have written have begun with a false premise about fellowship. They have been misled into assuming that fellowship was something extended or withdrawn by the church. Contrary to this view, fellowship is a state or condition into which we are called by God through the Good News concerning Christ (1 Cor. 1:9)... Fellowship is not endorse-

ment. It is not unanimity of opinion or conformity in interpretation. We do not come into the fellowship because we see everything alike, but because we are in fellowship we strive to see things alike."

Carl's pen was sharp. If you read *Mission Messenger* very much you shed some blood.

In our congregations are many who have been convinced of the propriety of "water baptism" who have never been committed to the Christ-life at all. They trust in a name over the door of the meetinghouse or in their conformity to a rite. We do not derogate either of these when we point out that the basis of our hope is our relationship to the Father through the Spirit. This is the reason why the congregations are filled with persons who partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week and partake of worldliness the other six days. It accounts for the action of many who never forget to watch their favorite television program and never remember to study their Bibles. It helps to understand why men will rush from the meetinghouse with the final Amen to light up a cigarette and burn the lung-searing incense to the great god Nicotine, spending more for the tobacco they puff into the air than for the support of proclaiming the Word to the lost.

Carl knew how to love his antagonists into fits of heart-burn.

The reaction to my stand by entrenched partisans is interesting. Because I steadfastly refuse to become aligned with any of their parties and retain the right to think for myself "without benefit of clergy" they assume that I am not sincere and am a mere self-serving opportunist. They just simply cannot conceive of how any man can love those who differ with him, so they consider that my love is not genuine. They are waiting (somewhat wistfully in some instances) for me to crack up and reveal the same old bitter factional attitude which I once manifested. They wait in vain. There have been too many long nights of weariness and praying, too many tears, too much heartache to return to the narrow, bigoted, intolerant, selfish, arrogant attitude of yesteryear, forged by the chains of orthodoxy. Whatever happens to me now, whether I live or die, it will be to the Lord and to no party. I shall face any eventuality as a free man in Christ Jesus. Praise his holy name!

His humorous stories were legion. And he wrote them with a very funny pen.

I shall never forget that once when I went to a southern state I visited the home of a brother who was an elder in a little congregation back in the piney-woods. I went to invite him to my tent meeting but he could not come because the brethren with whom I was working used individual cups in the Lord's Supper. For two solid hours I listened to him as he argued for "the faithful church" which was "true to the Book" on what he referred to as "the cups question." One year later when I returned to the area he was in prison for moonshining. He was operating a still and the Feds had him under observation at the very time he was talking so earnestly to me. Bootlegging was not bad if you had only one cup on Sunday... Not every case of camel-swallowing is as obvious as this. Some brethren have been engaged in the art for so long that they "pop camels" like others do pills. (Swallowing Camels, Ensign, 11/78)

Carl's lack of formal education beyond high school was a real shock to me. Rarely have I met a better educated man. The acclaim he received world-wide attests to the validity of learning at the feet of Jesus. I discovered in private conversation the exact reason why he ended his influential magazine, *Mission Messenger*, in December 1975. It was becoming too influential. A cult was forming around him, he told us. And that was the last thing he wanted. Thus he virtually ended a brilliant journalistic career.

In his humility he had his proud moments. At his home he was anxious for us to see a plaque awarded him by a Texas congregation. It was their "Marty Award," [granted to those who "almost become a martyr"], given to Carl for having taken the slings and arrows of the brotherhood so graciously. Engraved on the large plaque was a soldier shot full of arrows, and below it the appropriate inscription for Carl.

Carl was an oral communicator too. At the first meeting we attended at the Cornerstone, Carl spoke for about 40 minutes to 50 teenagers on suicide. They listened, and stayed to talk. His lessons from 1 Peter at Oak Hill Chapel were delivered completely without notes, yet were replete with historical, grammatical, hermeneutical and theological references. No wonder many of the students had been attending for 37 years. He gently taught the street people at the Cornerstone about grace. And we listened the day they fed back to him their understanding. It was profound! As profound as you might expect in a seminary classroom.

Soaring above all Carl's qualities previously mentioned was his love for people. We found out early why his waistband was a bit strained. He ate with everyone. At the drop of a plate, fork, knife and spoon. He never forgot a name. He was a hugger. He was conversant with street people because he was on the streets (at age 80). He was shattered for weeks when one of his alcoholic friends was found dead in an alley near the Cornerstone.

Perhaps the memory of Carl we want to cherish most was his custom of beginning each Tuesday morning Bible study with the song "Because He Lives," arm in arm with Tim, a Down's Syndrome young man in his twenties. They shared the message of that song, both in different ways, but both with equal conviction. Tim will be joining Carl, sooner than later. And we're clapping for an encore.

[The 1st and 3rd articles were originally in *One Body*, and the 2nd in *Integrity*. All three are condensed. For more about Brother Ketcherside, see the Aug. '87, Nov. '87, and Aug. '89 issues of *Word and Work*.]

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## THREE GOOD BOOKS ABOUT DEPRESSION

Some helpful books dealing with depression (last month's theme):

*More Than Coping*, by Elizabeth Skoglund (World-Wide Publications; 102 pages) is back in print! Years ago in Manila I was helped by this book and its "different" approach—part biographical and part topical. The four main chapters are about coping with depression, with suffering, with human needs, and with imperfection. They contain insights from the lives and teachings of Charles Spurgeon, Amy Carmichael, Hudson Taylor and C.S. Lewis, respectively. Since all those folks fit into my top-100 favorite people, it was good both to read about them and also many quotes from them. Here are some of Spurgeon's thoughts about depression:

Glory be to God for the furnace, the hammer and the fire. Remember that the Lord is nigh us. The refiner is never far from the mouth of the furnace when the gold is in that fire, and the Son of God is always walking in the midst of the flames when his holy children are cast into them.

If the Christian did not sometimes suffer heaviness [depression], he would begin to grow too proud, and think too much of himself. Instruments shall be used, but their intrinsic weakness shall be clearly manifested; there shall be no division of the glory, no diminishing the honor due to the Great Worker. "Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Those who have been in the chamber of affliction know how to comfort those who are there. Who shall speak to those whose hearts are broken, who shall bind up their wounds, but those whose hearts have been broken also, and whose wounds have long run with the sore of grief?

Another helpful book is *Here I Stand*, a splendid biography of Luther by Roland Bainton (available in paperback; 336 pages). An entire chapter of eleven pages is devoted to "The Struggle for Faith"—Luther's lifelong bouts with depression, and ten or so tactics he used to overcome it. Let me add here the fact that Luther also had his share of happiness and (like Spurgeon) also had a well-developed sense of humor. Yet his emotional struggles were sometimes titanic.

*When Someone Wants to Die* is a 32-page booklet about suicide. The author, a Christian, has often wrestled with desperate cravings to end it all. She tells various experiences of her own and of others. She also points out that in the U.S. more people die from suicide than from homicide, and that there has been a 300% increase in adolescent suicide since 1965. The last three sections of the booklet are "Do You or Someone You Know Want to Die?"; "What to Do if You are Alone and Thinking about Suicide"; and "What to Do if Someone says, 'I am Going to Kill Myself.'" Published by InterVarsity Press @ \$1.95.

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#### NEWS AND NOTES, continued from inside front cover

promote world missions awareness and action; and also forwards money to overseas workers without deducting for his services. Every church should know about CCWW!

#### Young Preacher Seeks Summer Placement

Russell Westbrook of 202 Martin Drive, Richmond, KY 40475 is the son of a teacher at SCC during its time. He went with Victor Broaddus on a summer missions project to Asia. He was involved in campus witness, leading Bible studies at ECU; also has preached at times, and now is a junior at Ky. Christian College. He is interested in summer ministry. For further information contact him; or Victor Broaddus (800-253-9834).

#### East London, South Africa

In the current issue of my youth magazine, *Future Leaders*, I condensed

an article from the April 1988 *W & W*—about the Bible's teaching on creation, written by Cedric McEwen. I chose this article because it is an intensely timely discussion of issues affecting our young people.

I didn't have time to write to ask for permission to reprint; I hope you are not offended.

Editor's Reply: The preceding letter was from John Kernan. We are delighted that he gave that article a 2nd chance to be heard! As far as I am concerned, anyone is free to reprint *W & W* articles (except those from other sources which are copyrighted), so long as they are used in a positive manner—not to stir up strife. Brother Kernan is the grandson of a dear member at Portland, now long deceased. *Christian Standard* recently noted that John & his wife Heather will observe their 40th anniversary of missionary service in South Africa in April. He

has worked with church planting and publishing Christian literature. He "established the Christian Literature for Africa mission. John also preaches & teaches in the churches. Heather teaches & encourages the women in the churches and carries on a program of 'Food for the Elderly.'" Their home address is II Jasmay Place, Nahoon Valley, 5241 East London, South Africa.

#### Teach World Missions in Sunday School

It's encouraging to see some S. S. publishers stressing missionary work. For instance, Sweet Publishing Co. (serving Churches of Christ mainly) has a quarterly for 4th-8th graders, entitled Passport to Adventure. Lesson titles include, Will the real missionary please stand up?; People are more alike than different; What color is God's skin?; To eat or not to eat; Meet a real live missionary; etc. That sounds good! Address: P. O. Box 161909, Ft. Worth, TX 76161-1909.

Then Colloge Press, Box 1132, Joplin, MO 64801 (serving ind. Christian Churches mainly) has produced 13 Lessons on Missions. It is written for adults who will never become missionaries themselves but should be informed about God's worldwide plans and work. Every Christian should be interested in that, and this quarterly looks helpful. Chapter titles include Missions—what? why? where?; What missionaries are like & how they live; How they get to the field; Understanding "furloughs"; Missions & strategy; Missions & the local church.

We recommend you check up on these materials. They could be used either during S.S. or on Wed. nights.

Portland Christian School, 2500 Portland Ave., Louisville, KY 40212

Since our indebtedness was wiped out last year, contributions have declined & we are slipping back into debt. The income is falling short of meeting expenses by approximately \$3000 each month, & we are presently 3 weeks behind in salaries. Regular gifts, small or large, from churches, classes or individuals can overcome this problem by God's help.

#### CALLING ALL LADIES

The annual Ladies Inspiration Day will be held at the Portland Church in Louisville on Saturday, April 21. The theme, "Compelled by His Love, Com-

mitted to His Service," reflects the dual aims of the day which are spiritual enrichment and encouragement to be involved in practical service to God. The "L.I.D." is a meeting held yearly which meets in a different part of Kentuckiana each time.

#### Many Conversions in Tell City, Ind.

The death of a man on New Year's Day gave opportunity for Bob Morrow and Jerry Carmichael to hold home Bible classes with his extended family. Result was that 12 people were baptized Feb. 20 and 8 more—all from the same family—were baptized March 1. In addition 3 other young people received Christ on Feb. 25th. We rejoice in this harvest of souls.

#### New Book by Dale Jorgenson

Theological and Aesthetic Roots in the Stone-Campbell Movement is the title of Dr. Dale Jorgenson's latest book. It should be interesting to those who enjoy church history and also the arts. He wrestles with the question, Are there theological reasons why this movement has produced only a few outstanding painters, poets, musicians, etc.? He explores common Restoration attitudes over the years about the relationship between truth & beauty, mind & heart, practicality & the arts, "the cabbage & the rose," as someone has put it. An interesting fact is that famous poet Vachel Lindsey has strong ties to the Restoration Movement. And an interesting 7-page essay is contributed to the book by Trudy Jones McRae, an SCC alumna and member of Ebenezer church, an artist in sculpture and painting.

Because the publisher, Thomas Jefferson University Press, made only a small press run of this book, its price is out of sight: \$39. It will be used as a reference work in Christian colleges probably. I'm glad I was sent a free reviewer's copy. If you live nearby, I'll lend you mine!

#### Bouquet from a New Reader

First issue of W & W received. Such good reading—it makes for sisterly discussion. Keep up this good work. You are in my prayers for this labor.

—Mrs. Robert Koll, Jennings, La.

#### BIG GIFT FROM A LONGTIME READER

One dear lady from the south recently sent in funds to pay for the

subscriptions of twenty-four different individuals or families!! Friends, why don't we all "go and do likewise"!

#### **Jennings Church of Christ, La.**

##### **LADIES HELP OUT**

Seven ladies volunteered their services for church secretarial work. A new directory is the first project they will work on, plus typing calendars and keeping up with attendance.

Six teams of 8 or more ladies will rotate in helping at fellowships, funeral meals, and shower refreshments. Each team has a chairman and will be responsible for a given activity.

##### **YOUTH RALLY REPORT**

The second annual LA-TX youth rally took place January 26-28 and was an immense success, thanks to the cooperation of our church family and Christian brethren from other churches. Some 170 young people registered at the Rally whose theme was CLEAN LIVING IN CHRIST'S PROMISES.

Mark Worley, director of student recruitment for Dallas Christian College, was key-note speaker on topics of "Growing close to God," "Studying His Word," and "Walking in His Grace." Leonard Stone, minister at Robert's Cove Church of Christ, delivered a challenging message, complete with visual aids, about wearing "The Armor of God." Thirteen other men and women directed workshops on clean bodies, words, hearts, actions, minds, and futures.

"Reassurance," four Christian young men from White's Ferry Road Church of Christ, West Monroe, La., sang at several intervals for us. Their concert Saturday night was well attended and appreciated. The "Revelators" put in a surprise appearance and sang a few songs for us also, adding to our time of praise.

We enjoyed a skating party, volleyball, and a hamburger supper, also. The culminating service Sunday morning saw 284 in attendance! Praise the Lord for such a wonderful weekend!

#### **Highlands Church, Louisville**

At recent fellowship meals we 1) honored Ann & Jack Blaes on their 25th anniversary; 2) heard Robert S. Johnson tell about Brazil, where he was a missionary for about 30 years, and Mozambique, Africa, where he and his wife and daughter plan to go in a few months, D.V.

#### **Borden Ind. Church of Christ**

The first Sunday in March will be the beginning of our second year at Borden. Sherry, Josh, and I want to thank everyone for the past year.

I am indebted to all of you for your kindness, cooperation, and love. With patience and understanding, you also have put up with my mistakes and shortcomings. Thank you! I am grateful to those of you that are faithful to our study & worship services. It was my privilege to baptize 7 people, I'm thankful for them.

—Mike Abbott

##### **THOUGHTS . . .**

"To be ready for the Lord's coming is a necessity. To deny the Lord's coming is heresy. To fix a date for His coming is lunacy."

"We ask God to provide our needs, and when He does, we congratulate ourselves on our ability and cleverness."

"Vision isn't enough—it must be combined with venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps—we must step up the stairs!"

—from Locust St. Bulletin,  
Johnson City, Tenn.

#### **Cramer & Hanover Church of Christ, MONTHLY PRAYER PLAN**

##### **Lexington, Kentucky**

A "Monthly Prayer Plan" has been put into effect among our membership. It involves signing a day of each month for which you will be personally praying for specific needs. Once the month is complete with signatures, a Prayer List will be handed out. These are items we want to keep before the throne of grace!

The plan is in no way to take the place of your present prayer time. We are using it to encourage greater involvement and praying specifically!

#### **Belmont Church, Winchester, KY**

The Lord blessed us with a great singspiration and fellowship Sunday evening. Songs were led by Bud Haggard, Wayne Marlowe, and Henry Jones. There was spontaneous singing, too, as the Lord brought appropriate songs to our hearts from the audience. Mary Lynn Houtz was a real blessing as she sang a beautiful praise song with a Jewish melody.

Congratulations to our young people who are participating in the Bible Bowl competition. One team placed fourth and brought home a trophy.



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