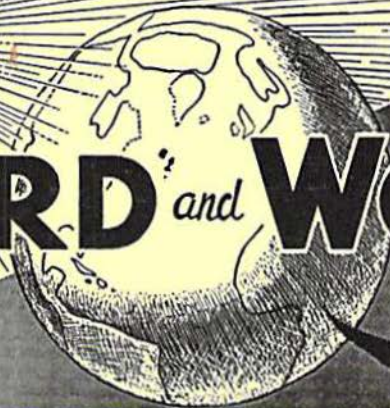


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MARCH, 1991

WHEN LIFE FALLS APART

Mary Jane—a vibrant Christian—had a young romance, joyful wedding, dynamic ministry for the Lord, and three wonderful children. All her dreams were coming true . . . UNTIL her husband was killed by a drunk driver!

* * * * *

PEACE IS NOT THE ABSENCE OF PROBLEMS,
BUT THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

J. Oswald Sanders

* * * * *

"It's not what happens **TO** you that makes the difference, it's what happens **IN** you! What happens to you is destructive only in terms of what you allow to happen in you.

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Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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THEME:

WHEN LIFE FALLS APART

Alex V. Wilson

Her name is Mary Jane Worden, and the Lord was bringing all her dreams to pass. Happy courtship and marriage . . . Christ-centered home . . . three fine children . . . a dynamic ministry too. Life was wonderful. BUT THEN—her husband was killed by a drunk driver. (Her story is told in *Early Widow*, published by I-V Press.)

What do you do when life crashes, when everything caves in? In various forms, it happens to many of us or at least to someone close to us. Several examples come to mind of tragedies that struck leaders of the Restoration Movement. While Alexander Campbell was visiting Scotland, his favorite son Wycliffe (eleven years old) drowned while swimming on the family farm at Bethany. Campbell didn't even learn about it till three weeks later when he landed in New York. In fact, of his fourteen children, ten died before he did! Ponder that.

Famous frontier preacher Raccoon John Smith also experienced catastrophe while away from home. His long cabin burned to the ground, killing two of his children. His wife became totally distraught as a result, and died soon after, while Raccoon John himself caught a stubborn fever that laid him low for four months. Another example was preacher and editor Isaac Errett. His son went to Paris, France, to study art. While there he was murdered.

Not one of us has a guaranteed immunity to disaster. So the question remains, How can we handle calamity when it comes?

Difficult Questions

I read of a Christian man who was hit by a car and hospitalized. A friend told him, "The devil has done this to keep you from serving the Lord." Another friend assured him, "God has put you here to be quiet and rest in Him." And his wife asked, "Why didn't you look where you were going?"

Time and again questions arise about God's will, Satan's work, and our responsibility. There are no easy answers. Someone told about a believer who narrowly escaped being struck by a speeding bus. He responded, "God loves me, for the bus did not hit me." Later on, he was hit and injured by a bus. He said, "God loves me, for the bus did not kill me." Still later in life he was killed by a vehicle. His Christian friends said, "God loves him, for He called him out of this sinful, unhappy world." Were all those claims valid, or were they just pat answers we give while ignoring hard realities, as unbelievers claim?

Well, nonchristians can't solve the puzzles either. Hinduism says pain and suffering result from Karma, the unbending law of sowing and reaping. Suffering results from sin earlier in life or in earlier lives. Buddhism teaches that life is pain; just endure it. "Christian

Science" says there is no pain; it is only a delusion of our mind and senses.

The Bible declares that suffering is real, and to some extent inescapable now. Much of it does result from reaping what we sow, but not all of it by any means. But—wonder of wonders— in His love God enters into our pain and shares it with us. "In all their afflictions He was afflicted" (Isa. 63:9). And, praise His name, suffering is temporary. God will abolish it at last.

A Classic Scripture Passage

Of the numerous Bible texts that deal with these subjects, one of the major ones is Romans 8:16-39. I'm tempted to write out the whole passage here, but limited space prohibits that. If you haven't read it recently, do yourself the favor. Some folks consider it the greatest chapter in the Bible. Notice some of the highlights:

Incomparable *glory* lies ahead of us at the end (17, 18, 21, 30). But in the meantime we face *sufferings*: frustration, bondage to decay, groaning, hardship, persecution, famine, danger, death, etc. Nevertheless, despite all this, there are some facts we *know*, are *convinced of*, and should *consider* (18, 22, 28, 38): We now have the Holy Spirit as the firstfruits of our salvation; He helps us pray (inward groanings should turn to upward groanings, 23, 26); the Father works for the good of His children whom He is conforming more and more to the likeness of Christ; we are justified through Him who died, was raised to life and to heaven, and now intercedes for us there; since all these things are so, absolutely nothing in the cosmos can separate us from His love. That's breathtaking and incredible!

And what should our attitude be during this groaning time? Note two phrases: *We wait eagerly . . . we wait patiently*, due to our sure hope (23-25). Wait with eager yearning; wait with patient endurance; remember the Glory-time is coming. These truths and attitudes can undergird and sustain us when life falls apart.

Others are Suffering Too

Peter gives other valuable insights (1 Pet. 5:8-11). After warning us about that prowling, devouring lion, Satan, he says: "Resist him . . . because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." That is, don't have a pity party, thinking you are the only one facing such heartaches. Then he adds, "After you have suffered a little while, Christ will . . . make you strong, firm and steadfast." The implication seems to be that He uses those very sufferings as His means of strengthening us and firming us up.

"Dear Abby" made the same two points in one of her columns. Here are some excerpts:

Blind him at 44, and you have John Milton, who 16 years later wrote "Paradise Lost."

Bury him in the snows of Valley Forge, and you have a George Washington.

Raise him in abject poverty, and you have an Abraham Lincoln.

Have him or her born black in a society filled with racial discrimination, and you have a Booker T. Washington, George Washington Carver, Marian Anderson, or Martin Luther King, Jr.

At birth, deny a child the ability to see, hear and speak, and you have a Helen Keller.

Label him "too stupid to learn," and you have a Thomas Edison. Call a slow learner "retarded," and write him off as ineducable, and you have an Albert Einstein. Call him dull and hopeless and flunk him in the 6th grade, and you have a Winston Churchill.

Make him a "hopeless" alcoholic, and you have a Bill Wilson, founder of Alcoholics Anonymous. Have him born of parents who survived a Nazi concentration camp, paralyze him from the waist down when he is 4, and you have concert violinist Itzhak Perlman. Your list would not be complete without a smiling Max Cleland, who lost both legs and an arm in Viet-Nam and later headed the Veterans Administration.

Spit on him, humiliate him, then crucify him and he forgives you, and you have Jesus Christ.

Yes, life sometimes crashes in around us, but by God's grace we can carry on. Said a man who every day has excruciating headaches, "*Pain is inevitable, but misery is optional.*" It all depends on our attitude. So with hope in our Lord, may we both wait eagerly and wait patiently.

* * * * *

Why Doesn't God Stop the Trouble?

Alan Redpath

I suppose this question is one which is more in the minds of thinking people than any other. The problem of the innocent who suffer with the guilty; the apparent hopeless confusion of world affairs; the collapse of any recognized standard of right and wrong—all bring such a question to the forefront of the mind and cause a great number of people to doubt the goodness of God, and even to question His existence.

May I, in the space here available, attempt to face this question with you? Before doing so, there are two preliminary comments which I must make. First, it seems clear that when you ask why God does not stop the trouble, you do not doubt His ability to do so, but your difficulty is that He does not act. Secondly, have you ever stopped to think into the nature of the Sovereignty of God as it affects us today? You see, there are two kinds of sovereignty which can be brought to bear upon any situation—the one is the sovereignty of the dictator which suppresses all other power; it is the devilish business of the concentration camp which ruthlessly seeks to exterminate all that stands in the way of complete control. Such, obviously, could never be the sovereignty of God.

There is another type of sovereignty, however, which allows man a complete freedom of choice and then claims to be able to overrule whatever course of action he may take, in a way which will ultimately acclaim the sovereignty of the one who allows it. Now this is the Sovereignty of God and if you think about it a moment, it is just the sovereignty which man wants—that which gives him absolute freedom of choice. In granting this, of course, there is created at once the possibility of evil through the choice being exercised wrongly, but yet God claims to be able to overrule for His ultimate glory any wrong action that man may take.

Now let us face the problem. In the light of what I have said, *why does God apparently do nothing about it?* He seems to let matters drift and you wonder why. Listen! What would be the use of God, by one tremendous flash of power, breaking into world affairs, and stopping wrong, if the same thing were to happen again? Think a minute, what is it He has to stop? If God really is to do something effective about it, He must stop drinking, gambling, selfishness, jealousy, lust, dishonesty and a whole host of other things, for are not these the cause of all suffering? Very well then, *the question really is "are you prepared to let God stop it in you?"* Yes, that is where the rub comes, the whole issue is essentially a personal one. It's just sheer nonsense—if you'll pardon my saying so—for you to ask why He doesn't stop it, when the *cause of all the trouble is in your own life. Are you prepared to let Him stop the rot there?* What about your selfishness, your jealousy, your sin? To be brutally frank, *if you're not prepared to let God start there, you can never again ask the question why doesn't He stop it all*, because you are only making the question an excuse to get away with it in your own life! Sorry—but that's true.

There is one thing absolutely certain—that *one day God will stop it all*, that He will break into world affairs in the Person of His Son yet again and destroy everything that is evil in the world—but, you see, that would involve the destruction of millions of men and women, for if we refuse to be separated from that which God must judge, namely the sin in our lives, then inevitably we become involved in its judgment. If He appears to be silent now, it is because He intensely longs to be able to deal with men in mercy instead of judgment.

That leads me to say one last thing. When you ask that question, "Why doesn't God stop the trouble?" have you ever thought about the *Cross? Why didn't He stop it there?* Why did not God stretch out His hand and deliver His well beloved Son from murder at the hands of ruthless, unscrupulous and wicked men? There is only one answer to that, you know: "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5). God allowed it to happen in order that the judgment of human sin should be borne at the Cross. He is, therefore, now able to deal with men in mercy because judgment has been met. Yes, all will be judged, the only difference is this, that all who put their faith in Christ, Crucified and Risen, are able to say that judgment for them is not future but past. The wonderful thing is that in response to repentance and faith on your part— a repentance which means a change of attitude towards the thing that is rotten, and a faith which means that you trust Christ who died for you—in response to this, God can give you power to stop it all in your own life, for He himself will then come to live within you and impart His life and power to you.

If you are prepared to face that, He will begin dealing with you now in mercy; if you are not, He must one day deal in judgment. God has the last word with your life—He will either make you or break you and you alone can choose which! Will you trust Him now and ask Him to make you?

The Christian and Anxiety

John Wesson

Everyone of us knows something about being anxious. In the form of plain "worry" it is one of the most common distractions of daily life—worrying about managing on a fixed income in inflationary times, worrying about those exams which are looming up, worrying about my health or the health of a relative. This is the kind of anxiety we cannot hope to totally escape. Someone who was *completely free* from anxiety of any kind would be the subject of some concern to us—how would we help him manage his money, how would we stop him endangering his life, and so on. It would appear that some level of anxiety is necessary to normal healthy living.

And yet as Christian people we are aware that Jesus Christ taught explicitly "Do not be anxious about your life, about what you eat or drink . . . about tomorrow" (Matt. 6). Moreover the apostle Paul wrote quite directly to first-century Christians "Have no anxiety about anything." So we have to ask ourselves, what does this mean in practice? How can I live my life and yet obey the New Testament and be anxiety-free?

Defining our terms

We use words like "anxious" and "anxiety" in different ways. I write at the end of a letter "I am anxious to get this matter settled" and I express no more than mild concern. But doctors can speak of an "anxiety state" which may be a crippling morbid dread reducing an individual to hopeless inactivity. It is important then to be clear where Jesus Christ's "do not be anxious" fits into this spectrum of meaning. It will be helpful to distinguish three positions.

First, *fear or natural apprehension*. This kind of fear *has a definite object* which can be faced and tackled. I am afraid I am not so well as I was so I will take more exercise. I am afraid of losing my job so I will work harder, or I will explore other job possibilities. I am afraid of failing that exam so I will study more diligently. In each case there is an object of fear. Moreover, a certain level of fear or natural apprehension is normal and healthy—it's an incentive to effort and action. Our Christian experience will not deliver us from that state—nor should we want it to.

Second, *over-anxiety*. Suppose that perfectly natural apprehension about the exam tips over into an over-anxiety which cripples us. Suppose that understandable concern about having life's necessities becomes a dreaded burden on our daily existence. Then we have entered the area of which Jesus speaks: "Do not be anxious, i.e., over-anxious about your life." We shall return in a moment to coping with such a situation.

Third, *the anxiety state*. Here is anxiety *without* a definite object. It is a state of a person's mental health in which he gets worked up for no apparent obvious reason. He may be the victim of a "floating anxiety" which fastens on any possible situation which give an excuse for worrying. Or he may translate his inner anxiety-state into

an exaggerated fear of open spaces, or heights, or cats, or almost anything. He may have physical symptoms of headaches or dizziness or simply persistent tiredness.

Now this sort of anxiety is unfortunately common today but it is *not* the kind of which Jesus Christ spoke. His remarks were about specific worries (food, clothing and so on)—not about anxiety states. If we say to someone in an anxiety state “do not be anxious,” we simply give them one more thing to worry about—their inability to stop being anxious! When an anxiety state has reached a certain pitch of intensity it is the concern of the doctor or the trained counsellor to deal with the personal conflicts which have produced the state.

The anxiety state is often the subject of Christian confusion. If a Christian should find himself in this situation, it is more than likely that he will get more anxious *simply because he is a Christian*. What produces this sad state of affairs? At least two things.

a) *The texts we're considering*. He reads “Have no anxiety about anything” and he says “I’m anxious—therefore I must be a very poor Christian” and that makes him more depressed. He imagines the Christian life as some ideal crest of the wave experience all the year round, an experience to which he clearly does not conform. So he says, “I’m no good!”

But he is altogether too selective. The Bible is full of people of very varied personalities: some with more anxious and depressive temperaments like Jeremiah; some placed in very difficult circumstances like the Psalmist in Psalm 42. Or look at the prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 19, anxious lest he be killed by Queen Jezebel. God gives him a good sleep and a square meal and then he acts “in the strength of that food” (v. 8). Some Christians want to be more super-spiritual than the Bible, but we must not despise the physical means at our disposal. There is nothing “unspiritual” in using medication or skilled counselling resources for our personal health.

b) *The Christian in an anxiety state fears what will be uncovered*. We prefer to hide even from ourselves the less attractive parts of our make-up. But Jesus Christ faced the very worst in human nature with undiminished love and compassion. An exciting aspect of our faith is that in his presence we can come to terms with the most unlovely aspects of ourselves and know we are still accepted, not because of what we are but because of his love and grace. We deny the gospel itself whenever we think our faith stands on our being fairly respectable people, unable to admit the distorting conflicts in our nature.

All this arises from these unfortunate anxiety states. Don't imagine you are too “spiritual” to face your problem. Don't allow your Christianity to make you more anxious.

Jesus on over-anxiety

Let's return to the other forms of anxiety and in particular that over-anxiety where natural concerns tip over into becoming crippling burdens upon us. In many ways the present climate of opinion is a stimulus to just such an attitude. The world would positively encourage us to be over-anxious as we see life savings ebb away, unemployment threaten and standards of living decline. But it is to just

such a spirit that Jesus speaks. In Matt. 6 he combats over-anxiety with good sound reasons for adopting other attitudes.

Life is more than our petty anxieties (v. 25). We are prone to worry about our lives, but life is the gift of God. Now Jesus is saying: if God has given you this great gift of life itself, do you think he is going to deny you himself and his provision in the things that are distracting you? What are increased rents, inadequate student grants or rising prices to such a God? In the face of God-given life, our small anxieties pale into insignificance.

Many people are trying to tell the Christian the opposite—that life *is* food and the body *is* clothing, so start worrying. Of course we cannot do without food and clothing, but Jesus says life is *more*. Have you recognized that? Life is living in God's creation, its beauty, its wonder; life is using our talents in the service of Christ and other people; life is relationship with God and with people made in his image. Life is much more than material worries. Praise God for life itself and then your petty anxieties will assume their proper proportions.

God knows what your needs are (v. 31). How do I know my needs? Again plenty of people will tell us what they think our needs are. Look in the color supplement advertisements and you're half-way to over-anxiety.

"The Gentiles seek all these things," but the Christian is not to over-anxiously seek them. Why? Because "your heavenly Father knows you need them all." My real need, not my supposed needs, or the ad-man manipulated needs. And if the God who gave me life knows what I need, he will meet that need.

So I don't have to worry! That's basic Sermon-on-the-Mount Christianity. Is it part of your experience? Indeed Jesus goes on (v. 33) to say "Seek first the Kingdom of God." We defeat worry when we concentrate on God's will, when we make God the dominating power, the guiding principle of our existence.

Life is to be lived a day at a time (v. 34). "Don't worry, it may never happen!" we sometimes say light-heartedly. That's not so very far from what Jesus is teaching here in this rather strange verse. Every day as it passes proves that the previous over-anxiety wasn't really necessary. So Jesus encourages us to handle each day as it comes, without worrying about the unknown future and the things which may never happen. Our temptation is to see the months stretching out before us and some aspects can overwhelm us—each of us has our secret fears about the future. But Jesus is saying, "Let's take Monday and get that out of the way first." That is his method of approach. It's the attitude of the famous hymn, "Lead, kindly light":

I do not ask to see

The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Three reasons, then, for *faith* rather than *fear*. For it is the trusting confidence of a faith in God that underlines all these reasons. For some Christians faith is a word they associate with the beginning of Christian experience, initial belief in Christ. Faith is certainly involved there, but it is not then put behind us. It is to be a daily attitude. The apostle Paul tells us that what he did with his faith was to

live by it—"the life I now live in the flesh, *I live by faith* in the Son of God" (Gal. 2:20). Faith is a whole new way of seeing things. It is the pair of eyeglasses through which the Christian views his situation. It is the perfect antidote for over-anxiety.

Has this topic brought to the surface of your mind your worries, your problems, the things that loom large in an unknown future? It is no more than human to be concerned, but Jesus says, "Do not be over-anxious." May God give us the experience of a trusting confidence in him which defeats worry and proves his grace in our lives.

* * * * *

The Parable of the Citrus Trees

Neva Salser

Our citrus trees were obviously sick. The leaves were spotted. Bare limbs here and there attested the presence of disease. But every living limb was covered with fruit and blossoms.

We had mulched the trees well during the summer's heat. But still . . .

When we showed them to a horticulturist, he said, "These trees are dying."

"Dying? That can't be! Look at all the blossoms!" we protested.

"The heavy blooming is the surest symptom of their coming death," he replied. "The Creator's law for dying things is: 'when death is imminent, all the ebbing energies are used to bear fruit, assuring the survival of the species.' The result of this law is that animals will bear larger litters, plants will bloom profusely, and fruit will mature earlier than normal.

"Your mistake with these trees was excessive, misguided care! Citrus trees must never be mulched. Mulching conserves moisture, but moisture encourages fungus that kills the roots. You loved your trees to death. You should have let them suffer through the summer's heat. If you had, they would be strong, thriving trees now because their roots would have found underground water."

This true incident serves as a parable of the Christian and suffering. *We may try to avoid suffering or attempt to cut it short, not realizing its positive results.*

But the Bible says,

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy. 1 Peter 4:12, 13

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18

Wherefore let them that suffer according to the will of God

commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator. 1 Peter 4:19

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that you have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 5:10, 11

Suffering, then, is not a cruel twist of fate. It is intended by God to perfect us and to prepare us for the greater glory of eternity with Him.

* * * * *

Living in the PRESSURE COOKER!

Prentice A. Meador, Jr.

It's enough to turn your hair white or, in my case, make it fall out! It can ruin an otherwise perfectly good stomach! It's the kind of thing that causes ulcers to have ulcers! It's the stuff of sleepless nights, headaches, family fights, and tension. It causes normal-acting people to question their sanity. It's more than the blahs, feels different from simply having "a bad day," and stops just short of depression.

What is it? It's living in the pressure cooker, facing the strain and coping with the wear and tear of daily life. A friend who lives in Los Angeles expresses it this way, "If I miss the green light at 7:00 a.m., it throws my entire day off!" Traffic, noise, hassles, temper, bills, cancellations—these are just a few of the things that daily drive us next to distraction. As Charles Bukowshi writes:

It's not the large things that send a man to the madhouse . . . no, it's the continuing series of small tragedies that send a man to the madhouse . . . not the death of his love, but a shoelace that snaps with no time left.

So psychologist Richard Lazarus of the University of California, Berkeley, believes that the everyday annoyances of life "contribute more to illness and depression than major life changes" (*Time*, June 6, 1983, p. 49).

Take it from me, "major life changes" can do the trick too! During a three month period, our family experienced the following:

- Lori Ann (our oldest child) graduated from college.
- Mark (our middle child) married and moved to another state.
- Kimberly Lynn (our youngest) graduated from high school and entered college in another state.
- Barbara and I sold our house and moved to Dallas.
- Barbara and I changed our employment.

Why, it's enough to knock the top out of the Holmes-Rahe Stress Test! All the hormones elevated! Welcome to the pressure cooker!

What Is The Pressure Cooker?

It is a sign of our times that the three best selling drugs are Tagamet (ulcer medication), Inderal (hypertension drug), and Valium (tranquilizer). Stress has been called the "emotional virus" of our time. More than 100 million Americans take tranquilizers. Stress

continues to be one of the reasons that "psychologists are seeing more teens than ever before" ("The Family in America," March, 1989). The Center for Disease Control estimates that 52.3% of deaths between the ages of 1 to 65 result from stressful life-styles. Physicians tells us that over two-thirds of office visits are prompted by stress-related symptoms. In short, life is out of control for an increasing number who live in the pressure cooker.

Stress really can't be eliminated from our lives. As philosopher Alfred North Whitehead states, "From the moment of birth, we are immersed in action." Positive, healthy stress keeps us going. So we face a certain amount of stress as a built-in factor of what it means to be alive.

But the noted stress researcher, Hans Selye, uncovers *changes* as a major ingredient of the pressure cooker. Your company fires you. Your son turns to drugs. Your daughter suddenly wants to divorce her husband and marry someone else. Your big plans fail. Your doctor informs you that you have cancer. Change—unpredictable, rapid, sudden change.

Such moments cause our body to respond so that we may cope with the changes—the pressure cooker—of life. Increased neural activity, increased cardiovascular activity, increased metabolic activity—these are a few of the reactions that can give us a kind of "white knuckle" life-style. Chronic stress impairs our immune system, contributes to heart disease, ulcers, and cancer. Not only does our body react to undue stress, so does our spirit. Perhaps the spirit receives the most harmful effects of living in the pressure cooker. Confusion, feelings of inadequacy, loneliness, resentment, and self-centeredness—these are just a few of the damaging hits to our souls. If you ever feel this way, join a long list of biblical greats including Abraham, Moses, David, Elijah, and Paul. It is both unfair and untrue to conclude that feeling the spiritual throes of stress means that you have a poor relationship with God. The presence of stress in your life may mean that Satan is launching his most severe attack on your soul and that you are winning the battle. After all, only the dead feel no tension.

Strategies For Coping With The Pressure Cooker

How do we deal with the enormous stresses that normally pound us day after day? Perhaps, there are no simple formulas, but the Bible reveals the strategies Jesus used for managing stress and reducing its more harmful effects.

1. Jesus practiced certain spiritual disciplines.

The primary focus of our life is Jesus Christ. It helps us to know that he experienced confusion, stress, ambiguity, and expectations of others during his ministry. What spiritual disciplines did Jesus practice to reduce the stress? Daily prayer and a strong, active devotional life with God reduce the tension.

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus . . . went off to a solitary place, where he prayed (Mark 1:35).

Jesus went out into the hills to pray, and he spent the night praying to God (Luke 6:12).

Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives (Luke 22:39).

In his last discourse with the apostles, Jesus revealed the secret of his daily life and his ability to handle life's pressures: . . . "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" (John 14:11). Jesus realized that he was able to give to others and to minister to people out of what the Father gave him.

Prayer, Bible reading, and meditation comprise spiritual disciplines so necessary for living in the pressure cooker. Peace of mind and a deep sense of purpose result. Such peace and purpose coexist in the very midst of struggle, stress, and tension. No wonder Hans Selye says the secret to coping with stress "is to have a code of life, to know how to live, to find yourself a port of destination."

2. *Jesus developed positive relationships.*

Jesus seemed to really work on his friendships. Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene, and numerous unnamed friends nurtured Jesus in friendship. Among the 12 apostles, Peter, James, and John seem to be especially close to Jesus. Though none of the apostles clearly understood his mission, they did provide him with some support, communication, and friendship. Clearly, Jesus learned to relax among his friends and was a frequent dinner guest in numerous homes. He was able to ease into an emotional peace and allow the tension in him to relax.

3. *Jesus managed his time wisely.*

Unlike most of us, he was not captive to the clock. For Jesus, people were more important than time, and the gospels record numerous interruptions and the quick response of Jesus to the real needs of people. Neither did he waste his time, but was a careful steward of time.

Because unwise use of time builds stress, consider the following suggestions:

- Allow more time than you think you may need for appointments, catching planes, and important meetings.

- Use your downtime more effectively ("downtime" refers to those moments when you have to wait—unscheduled time).

- Arrange by priority those things that must get done.

- Stop trying to remember everything. Instead, make notes—notes to yourself.

- Drop annoying, time-consuming activities, such as long conversations on the phone.

In short, set yourself free from the chains of time, from useless worry over things you can't change. Enjoy the satisfaction of allowing yourself "Minute vacations" which rest the soul.

4. *Jesus physically cared for himself.*

Even a quick glance at the gospels tells us that Jesus did a great deal of walking. In fact, he walked up and down Palestine. Even though some artists have painted Jesus as a blue-eyed blond with milk colored skin, the gospels paint an entirely different portrait. Because Jesus lived outdoors, he was bronzed, muscular (for his carpentry), and strong. No doubt, his exercise, nutrition, and hard work helped him combat the harmful effects of stress.

I used to claim that I was too busy to engage in daily exercise until three years ago. After checking with my doctor, I began a daily program of running. Running gives me a new perspective on my problems, relieves tension, and keeps me in general good condition. Walking, swimming, and other exercises reduce blood pressure, weight, and heart rate. They combat the effects of stress.

5. *Jesus developed an optimistic attitude toward life.*

Jesus had a great spirit of optimism and a wonderful sense of humor which helped him to overcome the enormous hurdles in life. He knew that God controls daily life and he stayed in the presence of God.

No wonder the emphasis of Christianity is on joy. No wonder God says "Yes" to our lives and wants us to live worry free. No wonder celebration is the dominant note of God's music. Paul, who faced immediate Roman execution, could look death in the face and exclaim, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say Rejoice!" (Phil. 4:5). David—who knew tension, stress, and severe problems—affirms, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).

A good friend gave me this poem when I was facing severe stress. Wilfred A. Peterson sums up the case well:

Slow Me Down, Lord.

Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind.
Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach
of time.

Give me, amid the confusion of the day, the calmness of
the everlasting hills.

Break the tensions of my nerves and muscles with the
soothing music of the singing streams that live in my
memory. Help me to know the magical, restoring power
of sleep.

Teach me the art of taking minute vacations—of slowing
down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to pat
a dog, to read a few lines from a good book.

Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots
deep into the soil of life's enduring values that I may
grow toward the stars of my greater destiny.

—from *IMAGE* magazine by permission

* * * * *

In Times of Darkness

R. H. Boll, 1931

To every Christian there come seasons of darkness, when it seems that God is far away and has hid His face from us; when it is difficult to pray; when the springs of joy fail and the lamp of hope burns low; when the remembrance of our miserable failure overshadows the soul and we feel that we can only be outcasts. I do not say that it ever has to be or ought to be so; nevertheless so it is sometimes. John Bunyan represents the pilgrim imprisoned in the castle of the Giant Despair—by his own fault, to be sure (for what business

had he in By-path Meadow?)—but there he is and does not get out until he recalls to himself the “Key of Promise” which opens all the locks and dungeon doors. It seems quite easy to make fun of the periodic desolations in our forefathers’ religious experiences—even enshrined in their hymns: who has not heard the wondrously deep and tender poem,

“How tedious and tasteless the hours
When Jesus no longer I see”—

but I venture the assertion that every serious minded Christian passes through such seasons of spiritual depression sometimes—and not always rarely, sometimes far too often. Those are also times of spiritual danger. The adversary will be whispering, “What is the use”; and “Do as you like—why stick at this or that—it makes no difference anyway.” At the best it tends to paralyze one for the time, and you may lose zeal and interest in measure, and love becomes cold, and Satan tries to shake one’s convictions.

Well, what can be done about it? The best remedy is to *go right* on—without joy, without enthusiasm, without hope, if need be, without feeling or satisfaction—go on with the thing you know to be right, though for a time you see not a particle of use for it—do good, read, pray, give, obey, show kindness for Jesus’ sake, refuse temptation. “Who is among you that feareth Jehovah, that obeyeth the voice of his servant? he that walketh in darkness, and hath no light, let him trust in the name of Jehovah, and rely upon his God.” (Isa. 50:10) When the skies clear up again (and they will likely clear soon) the fact that you have stood fast through the season of darkness will bring you a peculiarly rich reward of peace and joy and confidence for the days to come.

* * * * *

TRAGEDY or TRIUMPH

In a booklet, “Tragedy or Triumph,” Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse tells of visits to two men, each sick with tuberculosis. The first one became very angry and began to curse. “Why does God make me spit my lungs into this cup? Oh, God is so cruel to me!” He cursed God for his suffering.

The second one had to spend 23 hours each day in bed and could be up for only one hour. One night he spent his hour walking and stopped in to rest where Barnhouse was preaching. He heard the story of the love of Christ and received Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord. From that time on, he used his daily hour to witness in the neighborhood. Soon he was too weak to go out. He asked Barnhouse to come to his home to preach to his friends. They were seated on the stairs, upstairs, in the kitchen, on the floor. After the message, this sick man said, “I know that the next time you are all together it will be for my funeral, and I want to witness to you about Christ.” A few days later he died, triumphant in Christ.

Barnhouse goes on to explain:

“I believe that God permits whatever happens to an unbeliever also to happen to a Christian. The unbeliever cries out against

God but the Christian says, "Lord, do to me whatever You please." No matter what your condition in life, if you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, God has a double of you somewhere who is believing in Jesus Christ. If you are in the Home for Incurables, and do not know Christ and think your lot is terrible, someone else in the Home for Incurables is praising God. The Devil has his doctors, and God has His doctors who live in simple faith and trust the Lord. The Devil has his lawyers who connive and cheat; God has His honorable, upright lawyers who seek to aid those in difficulty. God has His rich men and the Devil has his.

"Describe yourself to me. Tell me how old you are, what is your education, what are your circumstances. I will duplicate them in the life of some Christian. To put it the other way around, whatever happens to a Christian, the same is happening to an unbeliever, and he is crying out, "God, you can't do this to me!" But the Christian can say, "O God, You can do anything You wish to me. You redeemed me. You bought me with your blood. I am yours, and I know that all things will work together for good because I love You."

Dr. Barnhouse also tells of a bird building a nest in some branches a farmer had pruned from his orchard. As the bird flew around chirping distress as if to say, "How cruel this man is," the farmer destroyed the nest. The next day the bird tried to build its nest in the pile again. And again the farmer destroyed the nest, although no doubt the bird's flutterings and scoldings meant, "This evil man. How terrible he is to destroy my nest." On the third day the farmer noticed the bird had built its nest in a rosebush near the house. He smiled and let the nest alone. The nest was completed and the eggs were laid. But before they hatched the pile of pruned branches had been burned. If the farmer had allowed the bird to build in the pile, the nest would have been destroyed. So in great kindness he had torn it apart.

"Sometimes God reaches down and spoils our plans. We chirp and protest, "God, don't do this to me." But He knows what He is doing. Instead of fighting against His will, say, "Lord, show me where to build."

* * * * *

GOD USES INADEQUATE PEOPLE, and UNPLEASANT CIRCUMSTANCES

Ronald B. Hickman

The sheep were grazing peacefully under the shepherd's watchful eye. He was relaxed but keenly aware of his surroundings and the movement of his sheep. He jumped and his heart began to race as a bush in the distance burst into flames. He moved toward the bush to smother the fire before the pasture became an inferno and the sheep were scattered defenseless over the mountainside.

As he neared the bush, he was amazed that the bush though

roaring with fire was not being consumed. Having his attention, God spoke and said, "... I am sending you ... to bring my people ... out of Egypt."

The shepherd replied, "Who am I ... Suppose ... What if ... I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue ... Please send someone else to do it!"

How many times have we been approached to serve, assist or lead but because we see ourselves as imperfect, blemished or inadequate in some way, we decline and prefer another take our place.

John Woolman, an itinerant minister, a tailor and proprietor of a small dry goods shop in New Jersey during the 18th century, had some things to say about how we see ourselves. In a letter written to a friend, he wrote:

"We may see ourselves crippled and halting, and from a strong bias to things pleasant and easy find an impossibility to advance forward; but things impossible with men are possible with God; and our wills being made subject to his, all temptations are surmountable.

"This work of subjecting the will is compared to the mineral in the furnace, which, through fervent heat, is reduced from its first principle: 'He refines them as silver is refined; he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver.' By these comparisons we are instructed in the necessity of the melting operation of the hand of God upon us, to prepare our hearts truly to adore him, and manifest that adoration by inwardly turning away from that spirit, in all its workings, which is not of him. To forward this work the all-wise God is sometimes pleased, through outward distress, to bring us near the gates of death; that life being painful and afflicting, and the prospect of eternity opened before us, all earthly bonds may be loosened, and the mind prepared for that deep and sacred instruction which otherwise would not be received. If kind parents love their children and delight in their happiness, then he who is perfect goodness in sending abroad mortal contagions doth assuredly direct their use. Are the righteous removed by it? Their change is happy. Are the wicked taken away in their wickedness? The Almighty is clear. Do we pass through with anguish and great bitterness, and yet recover? He intends that we should be purged from dross, and our ear opened to discipline."

We can take courage by remembering that no matter how imperfect and inadequate we may be or perceive ourselves to be, as members of Christ's body, the church, "... Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the Word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless" (Eph. 5:25-27).

Father, you who loved me while I was yet a sinner and gave your Son in my behalf, help me to give my will and my self up to you for your service as completely as you gave yourself for me. Through Jesus, amen.

God and Jonah—God and Me

INTRODUCTION TO JONAH AND HIS GOD

Mrs. Florence Olmstead Collins

(See News and Notes about this new series)

Throughout life, the final phrase of the book of Jonah, "and also much cattle," has prompted questions in my mind. The first of these queries were those of early childhood—"How did the cattle look wearing sackcloth?" (3:7, 8)—"Will there be cattle in heaven?" Now past my allotted threescore and ten years, I still have no answers for these two questions. But I have learned to trust the faithful God who loves each part of his creation to the extent of pointing out his care for babes in arms, toddlers and cattle (4:11).

This loving God has never broken his covenant with me, made when I accepted his Son as my savior. At times my faith in him has been broken and my obedience has been far from constant. But he hasn't dealt with me after my sins, nor rewarded me according to my iniquities. (Psalm 103:10)

In those ways I am like Jonah, whose faith and obedience vacillated. When my story is told, I hope that, like Jonah, I will not play the leading role in the tale. Just as in every book of the Bible, so in the Book of Jonah, God himself is the most important character.

As in the life of Jonah, so in my life, the most important thing is my daily, even hourly, relationship with God. To know God is to love him, for he is love (1 John 4:8). If we love him we will obey him (John 14:15). Therefore, these articles aim to help us know God as he is presented in the Book of Jonah. Knowing *about* God helps us to personally know him *only* if we believe what he says, trust him and obey him. If we believe him in a way that causes us to do what he says, we will learn that his commandments are not burdensome (1 John 5:3).

Questions Often Raised

Throughout the ages the story of "Jonah and the Whale" has been one of the world's best-known narratives. It is familiar to both non-believers and believers of the Bible. But there have been differences in the story's interpretation. In this introduction, we will discuss some of the questioned technicalities of the book; afterward, we can devote our minds and hearts to the Originator of the story—God.

Let us consider first the question, "*Is Jonah an historical or fictional character?*" 2 Kings 14:25 tells of another time when the Lord used a man with the same name with a father of the same name to deliver a message. On that occasion, the message was sent to Israel. In addition, Jesus Christ vouched for the existence of Jonah in Matthew 12:40 and in Luke 11:29-32. Therefore, we can conclude that the experiences recounted in the Book of Jonah happened to a real, live human being.

The next question we may ask is about *the city of Nineveh*. Was it really as large a city as the Book says in Jonah 1:2 and 3:3? We

know that it is called "a great city" in Genesis 10:11, 12 and in the Apocrypha (Judith 1:1). "Skeptical Bible critics long believed the statement that Nineveh was a great city to be greatly exaggerated. When the walled city was excavated, it was found to be less than nine miles in circumference. There were claims that the author did not know what he was talking about; but the real Author, the Holy Spirit, was being overlooked. Later excavations proved that Nineveh had many suburbs, three of which are mentioned in connection with it in Genesis 10:11, 12. One first century writer, Diodorus Siculus, justifiably says Nineveh was a quadrangle measuring about sixty miles in circuit." (*The Amplified Bible*.)

The total population of Nineveh is thought to have been 600,000 at this time. According to some authorities, it was larger than the city of Babylon. Various scholars set the date of the Book of Jonah between 858 B.C. and 780 B.C.

For many years after Nineveh's repentance the city thrived, reaching its supremacy between 704-606 B. C. Then again it became an enemy of God and in 606 B.C. he brought about its end with flood and fire (Nahum 1:1-8; 2:6-8; 3:13-15).

Another premise is that since *the diet of whales* includes only plankton, shrimp and very small fish, never large animals, a whale would not have swallowed a man. This assumption is based on the unfortunate and inaccurate translation in the King James version of Matthew 12:40. The word translated "whale" there means "great fish" or "sea monster."

The great fish which swallowed, then three days later vomited Jonah, was a specially prepared animal with a specific commission from God (1:17; 2:10). Men can build nuclear ships in which they can live underwater for many months. And the Creator of the universe can make any kind of creature required in order to carry out his purposes for nations, peoples and individuals.

Some readers of the Book of Jonah consider it to be only an *historical account*; others view it simply as an *allegory*, using fictitious symbols to teach lessons for life. According to Jesus, it is both literal and spiritual truth. He compared Jonah's three days inside the fish with his own soon to be experienced three days in the tomb (Matthew 12:40). The actual death, burial and resurrection of Jesus have been proved by both religious and secular recorded history. This means that the story of the man Jonah is as factually true as the story of Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

Jesus also used the events that happened to Jonah and to Nineveh to teach the lesson of repentance. In Luke 11:29-32, he verifies both the historicity and timeless spiritual value of the Jonah account. To argue with either the historical or parabolic facts of the Book of Jonah is not an argument with human knowledge, but with Jesus Christ himself.

Before studying this book, you should become thoroughly familiar with the biblical text. Reading the Book of Jonah from several translations will help you learn the order of events in the story. In

our study, many of them will not be dealt with chronologically, but as to their spiritual import as we come to know God.

I pray that our study will intensify our knowledge of God and cause each of us to say,

“As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
So panteth my soul after thee, O God.”

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller

What happens when we die?

The answer to this question might be said to depend somewhat on how we have lived. The same answer cannot be given for each one. There is a great deal of difference in the death of a Christian and the death of an unbeliever. Death is a common experience of mankind, but what happens after death must be divided into at least two different categories. There appears to have been some distinction in what happened in the period preceding the death of Christ and that which follows. We will assume that the concern is for what happens now—in this age, at this present time—when someone dies.

The great thing which separates into two companies those who die is whether or not the individual is “in Christ” at the time of death. What follows for the Christian is entirely different from what follows for the unbeliever. Even so, the difference is not necessarily evident to those who remain. Yes, there may have been such a clear testimony by manner of life and attitudes that we can assume one has died in Christ. There may also be such a disregard of spiritual things and eternal values that we may know one has died “without hope and without God.” Any other estimate of the life is only kidding ourselves. There are still others, however, whose status we may not know. The testimony of their life has not been clear as to whether they stood forgiven in Christ. The simple truth is that we are not left with some mark on the physical body which informs us of the eternal destiny of that one.

When we die, the spirit^o leaves the body. This is the same for believer or unbeliever. That which remains for loved ones or friends to dispose of is a corruptible physical body. That body may have been ravaged by illness or accident and racked by pain. The facial expression left by death cannot be an indication of what has happened to the spirit. True, there may be those who are so at peace with God that they seem to die with a smile upon their face. But others may be so hardened, so committed to fatalism or so insensitive to spiritual values,

^o It is not our purpose here to try to distinguish between soul and spirit. The words do not seem to be strictly separated as to meaning in the Bible. We here use the word “spirit” to speak of that essential part of man which survives death. That there is a difference between soul and spirit is evident from 1 Thess. 5:23, but it does not affect our discussion here.

that they also seem to die in peace. Moreover, the undertaker's art is such that almost any unmulatated face can be given an expression of calm and rest. The destiny of the spirit is not determined by the condition of the physical body, the expression on the face, nor by the manner of death.

As a rule, the physical body is prepared, a funeral service is held, and the body is then put into the grave. Over a period of time, unless exceptional measures are taken, the body decays and becomes a greatly reduced quantity of "ashes," the chemical residue of those compounds of which the body was composed. Aside from the living family's sense of respect or expression of love, it matters little what is done to the body. A costly funeral will not obtain eternal blessing for the one who has died, nor will a poor funeral deprive that deceased person of any good. The Bible tells of a rich man who, no doubt, received a lavish funeral and of a beggar who probably had none (Luke 16:19ff). The probability is that the beggar's body was thrown on the trash heap and was eaten by the dogs. The disposition of the bodies had no effect, however, on the eternal destinies of the spirits, nor will it affect the resurrection of those bodies in the last day.

The bodies of both the believer and the unbeliever are to be resurrected in the end time (John 5:28-29). The difference between the Christian and the unbeliever is not in the fact of a resurrection but in the kind of existence to which the body is resurrected, whether the resurrection is unto life or unto condemnation. The resurrection of every one who dies will be accomplished by the power of God, which is sufficient for the task. Graves may have been lost (to men); bodies may have been buried at sea, eaten by animals, blown to bits by explosions, or burned to ashes and scattered over great areas. While the power and knowledge to bring about the resurrection of every human body from all the conditions staggers the human imagination, it is not beyond the power of God. We do not have to know the "how" if we realize "who" has promised it. None will be lost in the process.

Before that body has gone into the grave, however, something of far greater importance has occurred. At the moment of physical death, the spirit leaves the body. If the person is in Christ, the clear testimony of the Word is that the part of one's being which survives death, the real person, goes to be with Christ (2 Cor. 5:6-8; Phil. 1:21-24). This is not the eternal state, which it to come later, but it is a condition of great blessedness. If the person is not in Christ, then the indication is that he goes to a place of torment (Luke 15:23). This is not as yet the lake of fire, the eternal condemnation of the unbelieving (Rev. 20:11-15), but it obviously partakes of many of its torments. There is not a long period of "soul sleep," in which all the dead await the determination of a final judgment. Neither is there a purgatory or half-way house where sins are further removed or forgiveness is made more complete. The Bible knows nothing of either of these errors. The only part of man which "sleeps" is the body, as it awaits the resurrection. One's eternal destiny is settled the moment death takes place. All come into some form of judgment, but it is evident that

the purpose of such judgment is not to determine whether one is saved or lost. That matter was settled when the spirit left the body and went to be either with Christ or to the place of torment. Before the body is laid in the earth, before the undertaker has wrought his ministrations, yes, before the doctor has certified death, the spirit has already arrived at its eternal "home." We use the word "home" in a loose sense, seeing that there is yet a bringing in of the eternal state and because for the unsaved "home" is too happy a word to describe their existence. At this point all the prayers, rituals, flattering words, or tears that the living can produce will not change a thing.

At the second coming of Christ, there will be the resurrections mentioned earlier—first the resurrection of those in Christ, and later the resurrection of the unsaved. The spirits and bodies will be reunited and in due time the eternal order will be brought in. Those who have died in Christ will have an eternity of total blessedness. Those who have died out of Christ will spend eternity in the lake of fire. The latter is not pleasant even to think about, but multitudes of people need to know that it is true.

Surely this answer points out the need for all to be in Christ—for having by faith put Him on in baptism and for abiding in Him. Our whole eternity rests on our relationship to Him. In Christ we are saved and safe. Apart from Him we stand condemned. And in a moment of time our destiny may be sealed.

Why do you use the name "Church of Christ"? That can be as denominational as any other name.

Likely the observation is correct. I know of no truth which may not be denied, abused, or misused. I know of no name which may not be corrupted. There have been those positions taken and attitudes demonstrated by people wearing the name of Christ which bring reproach on His name. It may be that because of this, the name "Church of Christ" sometimes carries wrong ideas to the world at large. This is a problem we face, however, with whatever name or combination of names we wear. There are some "Americans," some "Louisianians," some "Kitzmillers," yes, some "Christians" of whom I feel ashamed, and I just hope that somehow the world will not judge me by what it sees of them.

I use the name "Church of Christ" because it is scriptural, because it properly declares the church as Christ's, because it is an honorable name, and because it possesses as great a potential for unity as any name we could use. It exalts the One who gave His life for the church; who is the Head of the church, and who is the future Husband. Still further, in a practical way, in many places it identifies a body of people with whom travelers and visitors may worship in a simple New Testament manner, including a weekly observance of the Lord's Supper. The use of the name does not necessarily make one sectarian or denominational, and the refusal to use the name does not guarantee freedom from that spirit. That matter goes deeper.

If God Owns the Cattle on 1,000 Hills, How Come I'm Eating Bologna?

(By a preacher known to many of our readers)

So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel. 1 Corinthians 9:14

Several years ago someone gave me a little booklet called "Why No Revival?" On one page two men were discussing their minister and his salary while their children were close by listening. One man says "Look, our pastor's getting \$300 a month. He only preaches a few hours a week—I'm against any cost of living increase—anyway, pastors aren't supposed to make *big* money!" His brother in the Lord replies, "But his family is in rags—and *that's* their only income!" The young ears take all of this in and reply, "I hate church" and "Me too—our pastor is no good—just listen to Daddy!"

What is a "proper" salary for a minister? What is enough? If you asked 5 people you would get 5 different answers. This is one man's opinion, from the back side of the pulpit.

I think we would all agree that times have changed. The day of simply providing a minister with a home and a small salary will simply not make it anymore. With skyrocketing health costs, changes in the tax code, etc., it is very difficult for many ministers to survive. Some are leaving, not because they want to, but simply because their family cannot handle the strain of a "fishbowl" existence *and* financial pressures. What can a local congregation do to help? Here are a few suggestions:

1) Pay a living wage. For different men this may vary. A young man with small children may require more than a retired family. A good scale would be to take 10 families of the church and divide the sum of their income by 10. Is the minister's salary close to this, or does it run well behind?

2) Review the salary on a regular basis (yearly) without your minister having to bring up the subject. This helps him to know that his ministry is appreciated. He may feel degraded when he has to be the one to initiate the discussion.

3) *Provide* a solid health insurance plan for him and his family. The key word here is *provide*. So many of our ministers have suffered because of poor or no coverage.

4) Realize that most ministers have no retirement plan except what they can set aside for themselves. Possibly the church could help their minister to plan for this.

5) Allow, encourage, and even help your minister to buy his own home, if he should so desire. When I first began in the ministry an older preacher that I had great respect for told me, "Don't be like me: I bought my first home at age 55!"—Some ministers have had to throw themselves at the mercy of the state because of this very situation.

6) Invest in your minister in other ways: —Invite him and his

family to your home. Let them know they are welcome and loved. Tell him from time to time that you are blessed by his service to the Lord and to the church. Volunteer babysitting services. Send your minister to conferences and seminars that will help him be more effective in his work. *Use your imagination! The list is endless!*

7) Last but not least, pray for your minister and his family. They are under enemy attack and need the prayer support of the church.

May God reveal His will to each church that wants to follow Him fully in this important matter.

Church Employees Face Scant Retirement Income

Preachers and other church employees suffer a form of stress uncommon to other care givers. This is anxiety over an inadequate retirement income.

John C. Stevens, chancellor of Abilene Christian University, chaired a committee in 1972 that studied provisions for preachers in their old age. He states, "We found too many elderly preachers without even a minimum retirement program." Waymon Miller, an evangelist for 37 years, conducted a survey in 1978 to determine why preachers leave the ministry. The primary reason given by more than 1,500 men surveyed was the "lack of any retirement plan."

Charles Sheppard and Jim Mankin, Abilene Christian University professors who specialize in problems faced by ministers, note "Many of our lifelong soldiers of the cross are destitute because of the false hope that brethren would take care of them in their declining years." . . .

In the depression years of the 1930s the federal government [established] the Social Security Supplemental Income Program. People misunderstood it, thinking that "the government is going to take care of us." Social security was designed to "supplement" a retirement program, not to be a retirement program.

Sheppard indicates that those few churches providing retirement for their staff members do so in one of three ways. Some withhold a percentage of the salary and invest this in a savings/retirement plan. Others match the staff members' investment, up to five percent of their salary. A few set aside a fixed amount per year toward staff members' eventual retirement. . . .

—Condensed from *Christian Chronicle*, Dec., 1980

TEACH THE BIBLE BETTER

Preschool Sunday School: Play-and-Talk Teaching

Play is children's work. Through play, children gain new experiences, discover new possibilities in the use of materials, develop their

personalities and think constructively. As a Sunday school teacher, you can use play as a teaching method—play with a purpose. God has planned for children to grow through playing.

Young children can play out situations in Sunday school. They get a feeling of reality, a “you are there” quality.

Children learn through a wilderness march or by role playing the crowning of the Boy King Joash. When they use blocks to build the walls of Jericho, they learn what a walled city is and they remember the story. Children pretend to carry a basket-boat to the river and wait in the rushes for the princess. As they play, they have a sense of realism about the story of Moses. Children pretend to be tiny seeds huddled on the ground, awaiting God’s sun and rain. They develop a deeper appreciation for God’s plan for growing things. When four and five year olds draw pictures of themselves helping parents, they have a better understanding of what it means to help than if they merely hear a teacher say, “We want to help at home, don’t we?”

Every play activity you plan should be fun for preschoolers, but the fun must have a purpose. Christian educator Larry Richards, author of *Preschool: The Huggable Learners* (Cook) explains: “If an activity does not tie into the lesson aim, it should be reevaluated and probably discarded. Finger plays, records, art activities, playing out stories and even helping to return materials to storage may all appear as play to the child, but you, the teacher, know better. And planning carefully for these activities is not play for you.”

Guided conversation is another important teaching method associated with educational play. Guided conversation requires a listening ear to discover where the child is in his or her experience and thoughts. You also need a listening heart to be ready for God to help you to know what to say.

Consider this conversation between Sara and her teacher. The teacher was laying the foundation that would allow Sara to someday understand the profound Biblical doctrine that God is omnipresent, and Jesus is God. With a three-year-old, the teacher was making these concepts meaningful by simply teaching “Jesus sees me.”

The teacher opened a book and asked, “Can you see the dog?” Sara nodded. The teacher closed the book. “Now, can you see the dog?” Sara shook her head. The teacher played out this idea several times in different ways. Then she said, “Did you know that Jesus can see you even when you can’t see Him? Jesus always sees you.”

“Does he see me now?” Sara asked. She pushed her point. “Does he see me at home?” The teacher nodded. “Does he see me when it’s dark?” The teacher smiled.

“Well,” said Sara, “that’s nice.”

There is power in conversational teaching. A power that comes first from God, but also from using the ways of learning that God has built into these youngest of our boys and girls.

—Published by David C. Cook Publishing Co., 850 N. Grove, Elgin, IL 60120.

REPRINT:

The Unseen Elements of Prayer

W. Robert Heid, 1978

If we consider the act of prayer, God's promised response, and the wide range of details that can become involved in answers, then we will have a new flexibility in our expectations, and more amazement at God's personal involvement in the affairs of His children. Actually, we know very little of what goes on when the wheels of prayer begin to turn, but there are some things that have been revealed, which we will review.

First of all, prayer is a spiritual activity, and the major part of its working is in the spiritual realm. Several scriptures bear this out. One is in Daniel, where Daniel prayed that he might understand the meaning of the vision. The answer to this request involved an angel being sent, and twenty-one days of conflict on the angel's part, before he could get past the Prince of "Persia" who withstood him. Again when Elisha prayed that the young man-servant have his eyes opened, it was a gift of spiritual eyesight that enabled him to see the multitude of God's protective host. A third case in point was when Satan had asked to have Peter that he might sift him as wheat, but Jesus made supplication for him (and told him so, before the sifting) that Peter's faith would not fail, but rather he would be the one able to strengthen His brethren. When the early persecution had broken out, and the disciples were threatened by the rulers, elders, and scribes, and let go, they prayed for boldness. In this instance the place was shaken wherein they were gathered, and they were filled anew with the Holy Spirit.

But praying also engages material activity. When, after the great contest at Mt. Carmel, Elijah prayed for rain to end that three-and-a-half-year drought, he prayed until a cloud arose in the distance, which cloud grew into a real downpour for the whole land of Israel. Again, when Eleazer asked God to guide him in choosing a wife for Isaac, a maid servant had to come to the watering-trough and offer her services of giving drink to the traveler and his camels. And, when the saints at Jerusalem prayed for imprisoned Peter, God involved an angel to go into the prison and awaken him, then guide him out of the prison corridors into freedom.

Sometimes our prayers may run head-on into the predetermined counsel and foreknowledge of God. The supreme example of this is when Jesus Himself prayed in Gethsemane, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me." The dregs of that cup were bitter enough to break His heart and cause sweat as drops of blood. But the Father's plan of redemption was unalterable. Again, when Moses desired entrance into the promised land, God only permitted him to behold it with his eyes. Moses was enabled to see all of the land from Dan to Zoar, a 200 mile span. And he took a good long look. But God already decreed that he would not get to enter in. Yet another example

is the prayer of David for the sparing of the life of his son, the first-born of Bath-sheba. God's word by the mouth of the prophet held fast.

There are prayers where the time element would seem insurmountable. Consider the prayers of Cornelius, when, in answer, he was told to send to Joppa and fetch Simon Peter. Before the men arrived to say a word of their mission, God had already prepared the heart of Peter, making him willing to go into the house of a Gentile with the words of salvation. Who can count the times that God has foreseen our needs and our askings, and has long beforehand provided, arranged, or supplied the very answers? It ought to remind us of that glorious promise of Isaiah 65:24: "And it shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." The context of this promise seems to be the Millennial Age, but God is the same yesterday, today, and forever, and we know that this method of retroactive answering is serving us now, too. How many missionaries and others of the saints can testify to asking for help for a certain need, and then receiving a check or other gift, in the very amount needed, that had been written and sent weeks or months earlier? And how many times has God's protective angel been on hand to sustain us before we even realized that we were in danger?

When I pray for the salvation of a man's soul, I immediately involve someone being a messenger, or some circumstance awakening the man to his need (or both), and then I involve the person's receiving some working of the Holy Spirit and a kindling of faith, without which it is impossible to be saved at all. In my prayer I involve some hearing of God's word in general (for faith comes by hearing), and some direct teaching about "what must I do to be saved?"

When I pray for healing for myself or for another, I am really asking God to get His book and look at the page where "they were all written, even the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was none of them" (Ps. 139:16) and see if in His Divine will, my present request of faith hasn't already been foreknown and answered! Oh! the glorious foreknowledge and love of God. "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out."

What a momentous spiritual transaction (and chain reaction) is one simple prayer of faith! And we have been encouraged time and again, all through the Bible, to pray.

VOICES from the FIELDS

Arsenio & Pat Eniego

Manila, Philippines

Feb. 28, 1991

We rejoice in the Lord, for what is happening in our time really serves to advance the Gospel. People's hearts are more open. We have more invitations to hold Bible studies in homes and offices.

Pat and I are privileged to keep ministering with the Manila church and Central Bible Institute. This "mother church" remains a small local church. The "daughter churches" are independent and indigenous—self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating. For

example: Bro. Jimmy Yee's church has now a membership of almost 200, and 3 daughter churches; Bro. Auxtero in Bohol has established 14 churches, a Bible college and Christian school; Bro. Crispin Carado in Malolos has 3 churches with their own outreaches; there are 10 churches in Mindoro where we ministered for several years by God's grace. I'm sure that there are several more who are scattered throughout the islands and abroad who are actively engaged in the Lord's work who had attended the Manila church and C.B.I. We are partly responsible for five young men in C.B.I. who are also helping in the ministry. We covet your prayers for them. Also two young couples and a single young man signify their intentions to go as pioneer church planters. Please pray for the Holy Spirit's definite guidance for them also.

Jonathan & Rozalia Garrett

Honduras

Jan. 31, 1991

Due to high inflation, our living allowance from the school has become inadequate to meet our needs. This lack of cash also eats up a lot of our time, since we usually take the cheaper forms of transportation which often take much more time. This time element took its toll on us last semester. Many things were put off, including this letter.

When the school gave us a raise in October they realized it was inadequate to help us keep pace with inflation. So they suggested that we raise \$400 (U.S.) monthly support to make up the difference. Now God is leading us, however, to leave Pinares and go to the Summer Institute of Linguistics in August to prepare for a career in Bible Translation or a career directly related to it. Also, connected with this, we would like to go to Quest, Wycliffe Bible Translators' 4-week orientation program this summer, to see if God would have us join Wycliffe. We are asking you to prayerfully consider helping us with these financial needs.

[Donations may be sent via Victor Broaddus at P. O. Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555. Make checks out to Church of Christ Worldwide, with a note that it is intended for Jonathan & Rozalia.]

God of the Now and Then

Alex V. Wilson

The doctrines of prophecy and of providence walk together hand in hand. They form two of the great themes of the Bible. Prophecy (in its predictive aspect) shows that the Lord will reign supreme at the End. The "providence of God" shows that He reigns—though in a different sense—even *now*. Together, they form good news indeed!

The expression, "providence of God," is used to mean God's present sovereignty over nature and nations and individuals. The *expression* is not found in the Bible, but the *idea* permeates it from beginning to end. A more complete definition is, "The Creator's control of His creation; God's continuous activity in all that takes

place, directing and overruling all things to fulfill His purposes." In other words, the Lord is not dead nor even God-emeritus, but is alive and active in these 1990's.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ISAIAH

The twin themes of prophecy and providence are especially prominent in three books: Isaiah, Daniel, and Revelation. The "Gospel of Isaiah" has much to say about the future Golden Age. It is a three-fold gospel that should make our spiritual mouths water. He portrays the King, the kingdom, and the Holy Spirit.

The coming King is described in several passages, but let's focus on the well-known 9:6, 7. This is a fascinating study in political science. It shows the characteristics of an ideal government, a true utopia. What are those characteristics? *Wisdom* to know what policies are best (contrast the many conflicting ideas of men; the radicals, liberals, conservatives, and reactionaries with their various schools of thought). Also *power* and *efficiency* to put one's perfectly-wise policies into practice (contrast the slowness and compromises of democracy, the best form of government to be devised for fallible men). Third, *permanence* to carry out those policies to completion (the lack of this is the fly-in-the-ointment of any beneficial dictatorship, for who knows if his successor will rule as wisely and beneficially?). The coming King has these three characteristics in full measure. Wisdom? . . . He is "wonderful *Counselor*." Power? . . . He is "*mighty God*." Permanence? . . . He is "*everlasting Father*." What a King! And Isaiah also tells the results of His perfect rule: He is prince of peace whose kingdom will abound with *justice* and *righteousness*.

Other passages in Isaiah add to the description of the kingdom-to-come. Men "shall beat their swords into plowshares . . . ; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (2:4). If the prophet were writing today, maybe he would put it something like this: Men shall convert their tanks into tractors and their bombers into commercial airliners, and there shall be no more R.O.T.C. nor huge budgets for military purposes. Then chapter 35 tells us more. "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert" (35:5, 6). No more crutches or hearing aids. No more deserts or earthquakes or floods. What a day that will be, when "the whole creation" which "has been groaning in travail . . . will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21, 22).

But Isaiah predicts not only the King and the kingdom, but also a time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. "The palace will be forsaken, the populous city deserted . . . until the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field . . . Then justice will dwell in the wilderness . . . and the effect of righteousness will be peace . . ." (32:14-18). Again, "I will pour water on him that is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your descendants, and my blessing on your offspring" (44:3; compare

John 7:38-39 and Acts 2:38, 39). Thus the Lord revealed to His people three great and glorious future blessings, intimately related to each other: (1) the Messiah-King, Jehovah's Servant whom He would uphold by His Spirit (42:1); (2) God's Spirit outpoured upon all His people, to uphold *them* as well; (3) The Golden Age, or kingdom of worldwide righteousness, peace, and restored nature.

Someone may say, "But those predictions have already been fulfilled!" Yes, there has been a *partial* fulfilling, for we now "taste . . . the powers of the age to come" (Heb. 6:5). The King has already come—to give His life a ransom for many. But He will come again, with triumphant splendor. The kingdom is here now—with *persuasion*, as the word of the kingdom is preached (Matt. 13:18-23). But the kingdom will come later with *power and judgment* (Matt. 13:37-43). The Holy Spirit has come, as the great blessing of the New Covenant (2 Cor. 3:6-8). But will there not be further and even fuller outpourings of the Spirit? Part of the New Covenant is "They shall not teach every one his fellow, saying 'Know the Lord,' for *all* shall know me, from the least of them to the greatest." Has the prediction been *fully* fulfilled yet? Or does it not await the day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea"? (See Jer. 31:31-34; Heb. 8:8-13; Ezek. 36:25-27; Isa. 11:9.)

And so Isaiah envisions a bright future, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed to all humanity, and He will banish sorrow and sighing. His Messiah will reign as Prince of Peace, and of the increase of His government there will be no end (40:5; 35:10; 9:6, 7). And yet, even *NOW* God is the high and lofty One, heaven is His throne, and the nations are like a drop from a bucket. Earth's inhabitants are like grasshoppers to Him; He brings princes to nought and makes the rulers of the earth as nothing (57:15; 66:1; 40:15, 22, 23).

His present sovereignty is especially shown in relation to the world's mighty conquerors. In Isaiah's day the most dreaded nation was Assyria, which conquered all of Israel and most of Judah during the prophet's ministry. The Assyrians were the Nazis of ancient history—the most vicious and cruel of imperialists. They followed a policy of deliberate devastation and torture in order to keep their subject nations cowed and submissive. And yet God clearly claims that *He* is using wicked Assyria for the carrying out of *His* plans! "Ah, Assyria, the rod of my anger, the staff of my fury! Against a godless nation (unfaithful Judah) I send him, and against the people of my wrath I command him . . . to tread them down like the mire of the streets." God will use this heathen nation to punish His own rebellious people, but He then will take care of Assyria as well: "When the Lord has finished all his work on Jerusalem, he will punish the arrogant boasting of the king of Assyria and his haughty pride. For he says, 'By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom . . . Shall the axe vaunt itself over him who hews it, or the saw magnify itself against him who wields it?' (10:5-15).

Again, in Isa. 44:24 - 45:6, the Lord not only foretells the feats of an as-yet-unborn king, but also calls him by name, Cyrus. This Persian ruler began his reign about 140 years later! God refers to

Cyrus as His "shepherd," for "he shall fulfill all my purpose, saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'" The Lord also calls him His "anointed . . . whose right hand I have grasped, to subdue nations before him . . . that you may know that it is I, the Lord, the God of Israel, who call you by your name . . . I surname you, though you do not know me." Ezra 1:1-4 shows the fulfillment of this prophecy. What a display of the providence of God!

The God of Isaiah has never resigned or retired. He overrules Russia, Israel, and the Middle East today just as surely as He overruled Assyria in the eighth century B.C. He raises up or casts down a Saddam, Gorbachev, Thatcher or Bush now just as surely as He used Cyrus then. This should not produce an attitude of fatalism in us—"whatever will be will be." Rather, it should stimulate us to intercession. For—wonder of wonders—*our prayers play a part in God's providence* (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). Indeed, the fact of God's sovereignty is what gives us assurance that our prayers can and do make a difference, even in world affairs. "Prayer moves the hand that moves the world." So, to the great truths of Prophecy and Providence, let us add the duty of Prayer.

(To be concluded next month)

THOUGHT PROVOKERS from here and there

THE MAIN THING

If you make doctrine the main thing, you are very likely to grow narrow-minded. If you make your own experience the main thing, you will become gloomy and critical of others. If you make ordinances the main thing, you will be apt to grow merely formal. But you can never make too much of the living Christ Jesus. Remember that all things else are for his sake. Doctrines and ordinances are the planets, but Christ is the sun. Get to love *him* best of all.

—Charles Spurgeon

NEEDED: PLODDERS

William Carey was a former shoe cobbler who went to India and served as a missionary for over 40 years. He is often referred to as a genius especially since he helped translate the Word of God in over 10 Indian languages and dialects! He referred to himself, however, as a *plodder*—a man who simply *kept at his task* no matter how boring or how difficult or how routine.

One missionary wrote, "After almost 10 years as a missionary, I accept the fact that much of what I do is routine. Missionary work wouldn't be so dull if it weren't so daily. And I've had to wrestle with monotonous chores. I've asked myself why I want interesting, exciting activity. I've come to realize that my thirst for excitement is really a distraction. It signals that I'm not at peace with myself, with my calling, with *God's sovereign purpose for my life.*"

One of the characteristics of a Christian disciple is the ability to complete a job, to continue, "to plod on" even though there may not be excitement. A youth director of a well known church wanted to send a group of young people to the mission field for the summer. He wrote a mission director, "I want this summer to be a thrilling adventure for our young people." The missionary wrote back suggesting that they not come!

The glory of missionary work is in discerning a sense of purpose and in sticking to that purpose. Within the difficult and routine, faith is put to its ultimate test. Without the difficult and routine, there would be no need for faith.

The problem with missions is that many people consider it a 100 yard dash. They don't realize that *it's a grinding cross-country marathon.* In the midst of problems, criticism and opposition, they need to "hang in there" and continue and work even in the midst of the routine. *We need to keep plodding as William Carey did.*

—Doug Nichols

ON PRAYING RE: "ALL OUR DISEASES . . ."

Bodily afflictions like heart disease, cancer, diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, migraines, kidney disease, asthma, bronchitis, glaucoma, etc., are fairly common in most communities. These ailments represent immeasurable and inexpressible suffering. They often take so much energy that little is left for anything else. They are the kinds of pain that touched the heart of our Lord when He was here on earth. He took physical maladies seriously. He showed that they were matters of concern because He responded to them and He healed the sick. He made the deaf to hear and the blind to see. By His power and commission, He made the lame to walk again. Yes, our Savior healed all manner of physical afflictions when He walked with men, . . . and most certainly is still doing so today!

But how do problems of the body compare to problems of the mind and spirit? Do they have more potential pain and suffering than diseases like pride, bitterness, anger, greed, selfishness, impatience, gossip, cruelty, unfaithfulness, sensuality, apathy, self-indulgence, hypocrisy, envy, materialism, ignorance, laziness, etc. . . ? Which list keeps a person from knowing the wisdom, goodness, power and love of God?

Then why do we spend so much time praying about physical problems? Why do the majority of current Sunday and Wednesday prayers treat the first list without showing any concern for the second?

Judge for yourself. If Paul prayed over and over for the spiritual well-being of his brothers and sisters, if in the Spirit and example of Christ he prayed that the church would grow in the faith and love and power and wisdom and unity of God; then how can we justify an emphasis on broken bodies while we ignore the most important issues?

Stop praying for physical affliction? Certainly not! Let's just be careful that we do not neglect the weightier issues. The things that ravage the soul and spirit are more terrible than those things which ravage the body.

—Henryville, Indiana bulletin

NEWS AND NOTES

Maple Manor Christian Home Sellersburg, Indiana

Brother Al Flohr is no longer with us. We ask for your prayers for Bro. Al and Sis. Jo as they relocate.

After much thought and prayer, Bro. Ray Naugle has felt the call to apply for the responsibility of Administrator of the Adult Home. He was unanimously accepted by the board. Brother Ray is now in training and will assume his responsibilities the first part of July, 1991.

Bro. Joe Blansett has agreed to continue in the role of Administrator until Bro. Ray is able to assume that role. The ministry is continuing under Bro. Joe's able direction with the assistance of our dedicated staff.

A Series Ends, A New One Begins

Last month's article by Ernest Lyon ended his year-long series on the book of Hosea. Before that we ran his expository studies of the book of Romans. We are grateful for his writings, and hope that later on he might cover another "minor" prophet for us, since they are so often neglected.

Beginning this month, Mrs. Florence Olmstead Collins shares with us studies in Jonah—the man, the book, and most of all his God. Sister Collins has written study-booklets on the Gospel of John and some other parts of the Bible. Her book on Jonah is the latest, and she has graciously allowed us to condense it in W&W. It will run through the rest of 1991, Lord willing.

Linton, Indiana

Last Sunday evening Gideon Malcolm Stewart of the Owen County camp was our very interesting speaker. The love offering (including \$75.00 from the church) came to \$347.90. This money will be used to purchase scriptures to be distributed in Russia.

An area wide teen (grades 7 and up) meeting will be held twice monthly, beginning Saturday evening March 8 at the Duggar Church of Christ. This is being sponsored by the Duggar church.

Tell City, Indiana

The Tell City/Lilly Dale 1991 Workshop is now History. If you were not a part of it you missed a real blessing and treat! The messages were outstanding, the fellowship was sweet, the

meal was a full-filling one, and the time was enjoyed by all present. Tapes will be available through Brother Jerry Carmichael for any of the messages that you missed.

Cramer & Hanover Church of Christ SPRING WORKSHOP

May 17, 18, 1991

Theme: "Contemporary Crisis Confronting Christians"—Friday Evening: "Age of Stress"—Earl Mullins, Jr.; Saturday Morning: 9:00 Singing and Prayer, 9:30 "Christian Burnout"—Terry Morrison, 10:50 "When Anger Controls"—Bryan Whitehead; Afternoon messages: "Who's Depressed Anyway?"—Dr. Robert Ross; "Despising Not Thy Youth" (special youth session)—Mark Baker; "Releasing the Power in the Body"—Hall Crowder.

Back in the States . . .

Sharon and I have moved back to USA from Germany. Please continue our subscription. Our new address is: P.O. Box 6094, Metairie, LA 70009.

The Word & Work magazine has been a real blessing and a spiritual lift.
—Will & Sharon Reeves

An Invitation to W & W Readers

Write for us! Our May, June or July issue will be on the theme of family living. Let's have a symposium like one I saw elsewhere, but with YOU contributing! Write out short answers to some or all of the following questions, and send them to us by April 25. (But do it NOW or you'll forget.)

The article will be called "WHAT MY PARENTS DID RIGHT." Specific sections will be about these questions: 1) What do you remember most fondly about your relationship with your parents while you lived at home? 2) Which do you remember most: family times together or times alone with one parent? 3) Did you go through a rebellious period as a teenager? If not, why? If so, how did your folks handle it? 4) How did you react to your parent's failures? 5) What is the most important thing your parents taught you? 6) What did they do that was most important as successful parents?

Sign your name, and send them soon. We can't promise to use everything sent in, but we'll use as many as feasible.

Continued inside back cover

NEWS and NOTES, continued

WOODLAND BIBLE CAMP Schedule

May 27 - 31	Worker's Week
May 31 - June 2	Jr. & Int. Retreat
June 16 - 22	Jr. Week #1
June 23 - 29	Int. Week #1
July 5 - 7	Jr. High & Senior Retreat
July 14 - 20	Jr. Week #2
July 21 - 27	Int. Week #2
July 28 - Aug. 3	Sr. Week #2
Aug. 31 - Sept. 2	Young Adult Retreat
Sept. 8 - 13	Senior Citizen's Week
Sept. 13 - 15	Jr. & Int. Retreat
Sept. 20 - 22	Jr. High & Sr. Retreat
Oct. 19	Annual Meeting & Dinner

Cost: The price of camp is \$35.00 per person (after May 30, \$40.00 per person). The fee is to include an insurance policy which protects each person while traveling to and from camp and covers sickness and accidents during the week. The cost for Family Week is \$35.00 per person. A maximum of \$125.00 will be charged for an immediate family of four or more.

Mail registrations to: Woodland Bible Camp, Inc., 110 "B" Street N.E., Linton, IN 47441. Phone: 812-847-9248.

ANTIOCH CHRISTIAN CAMP

Teen Week	June 9 - 15	Ages 13 - 18
Cost	\$40.00	
Junior Girls	June 23 - 28	Ages 9-12
Cost	\$35.00	
First Chance	June 30 - July 2	Ages 6 - 8
Cost	\$18.00	For both boys & girls; ends on Tue. night.
Music Week	July 7 - 14	Ages Young Adult
Adult Music Week	July 14 - 17	Ages All Adults
Cost	\$25.00	Begins with registration on 14th; ends on Wednesday night.
Junior Boys	July 21 - 26	Ages 9 - 12
Cost	\$35.00	
Teen Retreat	Sept. 13 - 15	Ages 13 - 18
Cost	\$18.00	

Address: Antioch Christian Camp, 355 Bark Branch Rd., Frankfort, KY 40601

Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville, Kentucky

Operation Golden Apples—March 17: check your bookshelves—ask your neighbors—bring used (complete) or new Bible to church. They will be sent through "Lamb & Lion Ministries" to mission areas where Bibles are needed! Monetary donations will be used to purchase new NIV Bibles at a very

reasonable price and for shipping as well.

The ladies of our congregation are sponsoring a new project called "Can of Plenty." Next Sunday, March 10, is "bring a can of food" day. We are asking every person who attends here to bring one canned food item. This is an effort to help stock our church pantry which will be used for benevolent needs.

A Recommendation to "Full-time Ministers" from Ben Rake, Jr.:

I have just returned from a great two-weeks' vacation in Ft. Lauderdale. Housing cost for us? \$40 per week in a nice three-bedroom home in an area about two miles from the beach and very convenient to everything that you would want. We were responsible for food, clothing, and personal items. Everything else, including bicycles, barbecue grill, snorkeling gear, parlor games, etc., was provided.

Stipulations? You MUST spend the first and last nights of the two-week period and a total of at least ten nights there. Hugh Hoffman, president of this ministry, is VERY concerned that most ministers do not observe a weekly sabbath and that we are under continual stress as a result. He says that too many good ministers are in the cemetery and ministries are cut short.

Hugh owns two homes in Ft. Lauderdale. He urged me to encourage any qualified persons or families to apply for a vacation. I assure you, there is no catch.

Hugh is a very interesting person whose life was miraculously spared in the Pacific theater in WWII, and he has dedicated his life to the Lord's service as a result. Facilities are limited to immediate family—no inlaws or grandchildren.

Call for information, being ready to give your name and mailing address as this number often rings his answering machine. I found it best to call requesting an application as you will need to include information on a prepared form anyway. 1500 minister/families have vacationed there since the ministry began in 1961.

Call or write: Religious Vacations, Inc., 524 North East Sixteenth Court, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33305-3095; or phone (305) 763-8400.

Questions? See or call me: (606) 744-8530.

THE FOLLOWING ORDER FORM IS SUPPLIED TO ADVERTISE THE "CHRISTIAN ART" FULL-COLOR BULLETIN SERVICE AND TO MAKE IT CONVENIENT FOR CHURCHES TO ORDER SAME. ORDER MUST BE IN HANDS OF SUPPLIER 30 DAYS BEFORE SERVICE IS TO BEGIN. SHIPMENTS ARE MADE FOR A FULL QUARTER AT ONE MAILING. CONTACT WORD AND WORK FOR MORE INFORMATION.

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Please add the indicated **EXTRA** copies for special days. Quantities shown here are **OVER AND ABOVE** my regular quantity shown above: _____ Easter; _____ Christmas.