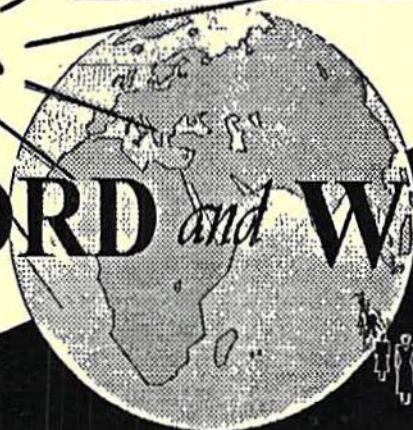


"Holding fast the faithful Word . . ."



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



"Holding forth the Word of life. "

SEPTEMBER, 1992

I am the Lord, Who HEALS You!

**"We believe that God heals the
body in one or more of these ways:**

- 1. by medicine, 2. surgery,**
- 3. scientific nutrition, 4. climate,**
- 5. mental suggestion, 6. deliverance
from underlying fears, resentments, self-
centeredness, and guilt; 7. direct action
of the Spirit of God upon our bodies,**
- 8. by the Resurrection."**

--E. Stanley Jones

18th Annual

CENTRAL LOUISIANA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

November 16-19, 1992

THEME: THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST

All sessions at Glenmora Church of Christ, Glenmora, Louisiana

MONDAY

7:00 P.M. "The Lord of Creation" Earl C. Mullins, Sr.

TUESDAY

9:30 - 10:00 Prayer Time

10:00 - 10:50 "The Purpose of Life" (Phil. 1:20) Dennis Kaufman

11:10 - 12:00 "The Pattern of Life" (Phil. 2:5) Alex Wilson

1:15 - 2:30 Afternoon Workshop: "Spiritual Gifts" Paul Estes

7:00 P.M. "The Lord of His Church" Carl Kitzmuller

WEDNESDAY

9:30 - 10:00 Prayer Time

10:00 - 10:50 "The Profit of Life" (Phil. 3:7-9) Victor Broaddus

11:10 - 12:00 "The Position of Life" (Phil. 3:20,21) Nathan Burks

1:15 - 2:30 Afternoon Workshop: "Spiritual Gifts" Paul Estes

7:00 P.M. "The Lord of Life (Home)" Ben Rake, Jr.

THURSDAY

9:30 - 10:00 Prayer Time

10:00 - 10:50 "The Prayer of Power in Life" (Phil. 4:6,13) A. J. Istre

11:10 - 12:00 "The Provision of Life" (Phil. 4:19) Doug Broyles

1:15 - 2:30 Afternoon Workshop: "Spiritual Gifts" Paul Estes

7:00 P.M. "The Lord of Judgement" Dale Offutt

Hospitality Committee:

Dennis and Melva LeDoux

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Audio tapes of the Fellowship messages are recorded by Don Stump

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THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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SEPTEMBER, 1992

No. 9

In This Issue

Theme: I Am the Lord, Who HEALS You!

What a Mighty God We Serve (editorial) -- Alex V. Wilson	258
Broken Ribs and Pierced Lung Healed Overnight! -- C. Peter Wagner	260
Christ Heals Wife of Chinese Communist Official -- Brother Andrew	262
Did God Make You Well? -- Alex V. Wilson	263
Thought Provokers from Here and There About Healing	266
The East African Revival, And Healing -- Gresford Chitemo	269
Divine Healings Throughout Church History -- Part Two of a book report by Jon Mayeux	272
"They Don't Get Well from That Kind of Cancer" -- Jesse Z. Wood	274
VOICES from the FIELDS	278
Questions Asked Of Us -- Carl Kitzmiller	283
Paranoid Love -- Mike Root	285
NEWS and NOTES	288

THEME:

I AM THE LORD, WHO HEALS YOU

What a Mighty God We Serve

Alex V. Wilson

Does God perform miracles today? Should *Christians* perform miracles today? We began discussing these questions last month, after defining miracles as "actions which demonstrate *power*, arouse *wonder*, and convey *significance*." Now let's continue our study.

While the Lord is a living, almighty God, He has not performed miracles constantly and evenly throughout history. As we look at the Biblical record, it becomes apparent that there were a few major clusters of mighty miracles, performed at four periods. The first period was at the Exodus from Egypt and conquest of Canaan, around 1300 B.C. Moses and Joshua were the leaders. Miracles included the many plagues on Egypt, the Sea's dividing for Israel but destroying Pharaoh's army, manna to feed the people, marching on dry land through Jordan River, the fall of Jericho's walls, etc.

The second era was at the height, or rather, depth, of apostasy of Israel, the northern kingdom. This was around 800 B.C., the time of Elijah and Elisha's mighty ministries to people who stood wavering at a moral and spiritual crossroads. Then around 600 B.C. came another cluster of miracles, not so many, but awesome in impact. Judah, the southern kingdom, had fallen to Nebuchadnezzar's war machine, and so it seemed that the Lord God of the Jews was weak and defenseless against the gods of Babylon. But the Lord took care of His reputation and humbled the super power's kings: Daniel was enabled to tell Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its meaning; his three friends walked unharmed in the furnace; Daniel alone could interpret the supernatural writing on the wall; and after the Medo-Persians conquered Babylon, Daniel was preserved in the lion's pit.

The fourth period was when God became man and walked the earth, plus those early years of the church, when His chosen apostles and other men like Philip wrought many signs and wonders. One great purpose of those miracles was to confirm and authenticate the good news they preached. But as we saw last month, a second purpose of supernatural gifts was that God's assembled saints might be edified--built up, stirred up, cheered up (1Cor. 14:3,12, 26, etc.). That is, miracles were not only given for evangelism, to impress the unsaved who had never heard the good news before. They were also to help and heal saints, apart from evangelism; see James 5, for instance. And scripture nowhere gives an expiration date to some "era of miracles." So let's not say God won't do the same today, if and when He chooses. He can and He does, sometimes, as this issue bears witness.

But let's not say God *always* or *constantly* works in supernatural ways, either. Also let's not say that He *must* heal, or that those who are not healed must be guilty of sin or unbelief in their lives. Some folks do teach that, and dump immense loads of guilt on sick Christians. In Old Covenant times there were periods of years when God performed hardly any miracles at all, as we saw above. Yes, there were a few between those "clusters"--such as the conception of Isaac by barren, elderly Sarah; Samson's fantastic strength in battle; King Jeroboam's altar being split and his arm withered at a prophet's word; Jonah's being swallowed and then vomited up by the great fish, etc. But that's the point; they were few. Moses, Elijah and Elisha performed numerous miracles. On the other hand, Jeremiah, Ezra, Nehemiah, John the Baptizer (see John 10:41) and others did none at all so far as we know; yet they too were great men of God. True, they lived in Old Covenant times, but even during the age of the apostles there were several of Paul's co-workers who were sick: Timothy, Trophimus, Epaphroditus. And check Gal. 4:13, about Paul himself, a sometimes unhealed healer!

And Now, Our Main Point

Despite the above points, our emphasis in this article is on God's mighty works, not His seemingly inactive times! Were it not that some believers *over-emphasize* miracles, we would not need to stop and clarify things so often in our desire for balance.

We have already named many of the Almighty's supernatural acts. Some were done directly, apart from human activity (e.g. death of the firstborn in Egypt; sending manna to the people). Others were done through human channels (e.g. Elijah raised a dead boy; Daniel read the writing on the wall; Peter and John spoke healing to a lame man). The book of Acts is filled with miracles of all kinds. Did such things continue through the centuries since then?

To answer that question we must turn to church history, including the present. Jon Mayeux's book review is revealing, as author Sidlow Baxter surveyed evidence from many times and places. Last month Jon quoted Augustine (354-430 A.D.), but here are three additional quotations from him which are relevant to our study:

(a) "In the earliest times 'the Holy Spirit fell on them that believed, and they spoke with tongues' which they had not learned, "as the spirit gave them utterance." These were signs adapted to the time. . . . That thing was done for a sign, and it passed away." [Some writers have used the preceding two sentences to try to prove that Augustine believed all miracles ceased after the time of the apostles. But note the following quotations.]

(b) [From a later book commenting on his earlier writings:] "What I said is not to be interpreted that no miracles are believed to be performed in the name of Christ in the present time. For when I wrote that book, I myself had recently learned that a blind man had been restored to sight. . . and I know about some others, so numerous even in these times, that we cannot know about all of them or enumerate those we know."

(c) [From another book, *The City of God*, XII, 8:] I realized how many miracles were occurring in our own day which were so like the miracles of old, and also how wrong it would be to allow the memory of these marvels of divine power to perish from among our people. It is only two years ago that the keeping of records was begun here in Hippo [North Africa], and already at this writing we have nearly seventy attested miracles.

Augustine's testimony, which takes us into the fifth century, and similar experiences of godly men and women up to and including now, stand as a refutation to the "no miracles now" school of thought. Yes we know that "health & wealth, name it & claim it" teaching is mistaken, for it says we can demand from God now what He has guaranteed only for the age to come. But the opposite error is more likely to ensnare us--the error of expecting too little from God.

Let's trust God for answers to prayer. And let's trust Him for providential providing and protecting. But beyond that, let's trust Him for mighty miracles, praying it will be good in His sight thus to glorify His Name. And then let's trust Him also when He seems to be silent and absent; for He knows what He is doing. He is Lord.

BROKEN RIBS AND PIERCED LUNG HEALED OVERNIGHT!

C. Peter Wagner

[The following is excerpted from **ON THE CREST OF THE WAVE**, published by Regal Books. Peter Wagner is professor of Church Growth at Fuller Seminary.]

Last month's report re: spectacular church growth in China revealed that incidents like the following have occurred in numerous places there. This is not an isolated case. --Editor]

David Wang, general director of Asian Outreach, has personally told me numerous stories about the supernatural working of God in China which are astounding. Wang is a native of Shanghai who visits mainland China frequently. [On one trip he met privately with a young medical doctor who wanted a Bible.]

The doctor said, "I have been an atheist and a Communist. I believed the party line. I've never even seen a Bible until tonight, much less read one. But I believe in God with all my heart."

Then he went on to tell about his encounter with God. "A few months ago a peasant woman arrived in the emergency room. As she was working in her commune, a huge rock fell on her chest and crushed her. The barefoot doctors in the commune could do nothing, so they sent her to the city. As soon as I saw her I knew there was nothing I could do either. Every bone in

the left side of her chest was shattered. The X-rays showed that the broken ribs had pierced the lung and destroyed it.

"As I helped place the woman on her bed to die, I heard a faint whisper, and I put my ear down to listen closely. I thought she was unconscious, but I heard her whispering, 'Jesus, save me!' Nothing registered with me at the time, so I went home.

"The next morning I went back to the hospital and walked into this woman's ward. I could not believe my eyes! Instead of an empty bed, there she was sitting up and gulping down a bowl of rice soup. In my astonishment, I shouted at her: 'What are you doing?' The poor woman was so frightened she handed the bowl to me and said, 'I'm sorry, doctor. The nurse asked me if I was hungry, and I said yes!'

"At first I thought there must have been a mistake. But I checked her name and her work unit number. It was definitely the same woman. I rushed her back to the X-ray room and discovered that every bone had been perfectly healed overnight. The lung was functioning normally. I don't know much about Him, but I now believe in that woman's Jesus because I have seen His power. I'll read the Bible you brought me from cover to cover."

GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS: Pray only on Sundays. . . Don't pray for the sick or exorcise demons.

Wang now has reports of how God has subsequently used the peasant woman. She returned to her commune and began to preach Christ openly--with one X-ray picture in her left hand and the other in her right hand. Of 120 families in the commune, 80 had become Christians as of the last report.

Supernatural signs and wonders have become so powerful and widespread that the Communist government has begun to take steps to curtail them. For example, in Honan Province the government-related Three Self Church has published a list of "Ten don'ts" that Christians in Central China should observe. The list contains items like this:

Don't criticize the party and its policies in the name of preaching.

Don't pretend to be a pastor or elder and conduct ordination or baptism or otherwise increase the number of Believers.

Don't pray every day; pray only on Sundays.

And then, this revealing item:

Don't pray for the sick or exorcise the demons.

CHRIST HEALS WIFE OF CHINESE COMMUNIST OFFICIAL

Brother Andrew, Feb. 1991 Newsletter

A team of seven Chinese evangelists were arrested because they held a revival meeting the same night as the Public Security Bureau (PSB)--much like the KGB in Russia--held their local meeting. Everyone in the city chose to go to the revival meeting over the Public Security Bureau's.

The PSB officials became so angry they arrested all seven Christians and took them to the highest authority in the province--the provincial governor. He asked the Christians about the charges.

They replied, "We are guilty if the charge is believing in God and doing good for others. All we have done is to ask Jesus to help others, and He has done this in marvelous ways. We have seen violent men become loving; lazy people become hardworking; sad people become joyful...and even the lame walk."

"The lame walk?" exploded the governor. "What utter nonsense is this?"

"It's true," said the Christians. They then introduced a twenty-year-old girl who had been paralyzed for eight years. She told the governor how Jesus had healed her.

Clearly moved by the girl's story, the governor said, "I have spent years and much money trying to heal my wife of enteritis. If you can ask your Jesus to heal her, I will let you go and stand up for you any time you are accused."

The team went and prayed for the official's wife. They prayed for over an hour, and as they got up to leave she said she felt wonderful. The next day she was examined by her doctor who was in shock. He said to her, "I have known you to be suffering from this illness for many years, and only last week I treated you. But today there is absolutely nothing wrong with you!"

When the PSB officers came back to ask the governor what he had done with the Christians they arrested, he replied, "They have all been set free." "Set free!" shouted the appalled cadre, "after all the trouble they caused?"

Then, remembering his promise to stand up for the Christians, the governor spoke, "I could find no crime to accuse them of. Would you like me to accuse them of teaching others not to scold, not to fight, not to steal, not to do evil, not to commit crimes, not to fall into debt? It is not wrong to believe in Jesus."

He ended his speech to the amazed roomful by saying, "I can only say that the more influence they have on the people of this province, the more the Communist Party will be achieving the efficiency we are all striving to achieve."

The first in a four-part series on God's ministry of healing.

Did God Make You Well?

Alex V. Wilson

John Q. Christian is gripped by an excruciating and incurable disease. But he suffers from perplexity as well as from pain. For contradictory advice bombards him from all sides. His buddy from work urges him to visit a healing campaign now going on in their city. John's preacher visits him often and assures him of the church members' daily prayers; but John knows they don't expect him to get well. A nephew in Ohio sent him a book with the testimonies of nine people who were all instantly cured by "exercising unwavering faith and requesting prayer from God's present day miracle-man, Brother Bob Carr. Aunt Sally reminds him that her husband Harry was an outstanding Christian leader and yet he died from a lingering illness, "so just trust God for grace in the midst of pain." A longtime Christian friend says that the elders in his church practice praying and anointing with oil as taught in the book of James. And John's sister Ellen tells him his trouble is simply in his mind, for she recently joined "Christian Science"!

Sickness and healing are important subjects for personal reasons, as the above semi-fictional example shows, but they are also important because they relate to more urgent issues, such as the spread of the Gospel of Christ. For example, *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* reported that in Ivory Coast "the whole country was stirred" when meetings were held in various places "accompanied by numerous healings and conversions." Not only there but also. . .

In other parts of Africa, missionaries report a causal relationship between healing and church-growth . . . Healing was one aspect of the early church's ministry that attracted immediate attention and in some places led to a rapid increase of converts. Perhaps in the final days of this age, as God's Spirit moves across the world, healing may become as much an asset to the church's witness as it was for the early Christians. [See last month's article about China, also.]

It is difficult to discuss healings because there are various kinds. Many sick people recover naturally, through the recuperative powers God built into our bodies. These are divine healings even though they are natural, not supernatural. An old saying in medical circles recognizes this: "I set the bone; God healed it." But we will restrict our present study to healings that seem to be supernatural. Even here it is important to define our terms carefully, especially the terms "miracle" and "miraculous." The late Rendle Short, a Christian doctor well known in England, suggested this definition: to be considered a *miraculous* healing, a cure should "be a sudden, complete, and long-lasting recovery from *organic* bodily disease."

Over a decade before that, editor and Bible teacher Donald Barnhouse warned regarding such tricksters. He mentioned a book "in which the woman who was personnel director for the Bosworth brothers' healing campaigns exposed the methods which they used. No person with a serious malady was allowed to appear in front of the public. Only people with very suggestible minds who might be impressed were allowed anywhere near the public meetings. The others were anointed in private and sent away." Barnhouse then gave another example

Not too long ago in the South newspapers exposed a "healer" by publishing photographs of "healings" in different cities. The photographs demonstrated that the same man complete with bandages and crutches was healed in half a dozen different cities, throwing away his crutch with a cry of triumph, and always just before the offering was taken. (Eternity Magazine, Feb. 1953).

We are not saying that all healers are hypocrites, nor that all healings that occur in healing campaigns are either psychosomatic, demonic, or fraudulent. But let's not close our eyes to the facts noted above.

What then can we conclude about healing? First, that the subject is complex to say the least. Second, then our God still can and sometimes does heal miraculously today. Third, that we should not be gullible regarding claims of healings and healers, but should investigate them carefully, prayerfully, and Biblically, for seemingly miraculous cures may be produced by forces other than the power of God.

THOUGHT PROVOKERS from Here and There About HEALING

Ask, Don't Demand--But Ask Boldly!

"Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul lists a number of spiritual gifts. Among them are *gifts of healings* (1 Cor 12:9). We have no evidence that this healing ministry was limited to the apostles (there were none in Corinth at the time) or that it would soon end. The early Christians looked to the risen Christ for freedom from sin and sickness, not as a right to be demanded but as a gift to be received.

"Agnes Sanford urges us to ask God for healing, not 'if it be thy will,' but 'according to thy will.' Between these two phrases lies a great chasm. On one side hesitates a wavering doubt; on the other stands a confident faith. We need to affirm our confidence that God desires to heal and then leave the method, extent and timing to Him.

"Across the country some churches now have regular healing services and a team which carry out their ministry through prayer, anointing with oil, laying on of hands and counselling. Gifts of healing are manifested through many members of the body. As a result, sometimes there is a full cure, often there is relief, always there is comfort." --Charles Hummel in *Healing*

"Expecting a miracle does not bring it about, but not expecting a miracle can prevent it" --Rodney Kvamme, *Miracles Today*

* * * *

Various Means, Various Methods

"We believe that God heals the body in one or more of these ways: by 1) medicine, 2) surgery, 3) scientific nutrition, 4) climate, 5) mental suggestion, 6) direct action of the Spirit of God upon our bodies, 7) by the Resurrection." --E. Stanley Jones, in *Abundant Living*

* * * *

Health and Healing

"Health is a mosaic of physical, emotional, spiritual and sociological factors Our well-being is determined primarily by our behavior, nutrition and environment. Self-control and sane living, good diet, exercise and positive relationships foster health. Health is more than lack of disease; it is a way of living.

"In some hospitals two-thirds of the patients suffer from diseases of lifestyle involving smoking, alcohol and drug abuse, inadequate diet, overeating or promiscuous sex. These diseases are preventable Emotional factors also figure strongly in disease. The spiritual and psychological element in illness varies from sixty-five to seventy-five per cent

"Many are sick because of addiction to tranquilizers, coffee or alcohol; overeating or overworking; or wrong attitudes toward others, God or themselves. Relationships may need rebuilding where they have become strained or broken. Physical healing, whether through prayer or medicine, often does not occur until these causes are dealt with." --Charles Hummel, in *Healing*

* * * *

Answered Prayer, or a Miracle? Don't Quibble

"When we turn to the Scriptures, we quickly discover that the gifts of miracles and healings appeared sporadically. One can therefore expect that these gifts, if given today, would be rare but not nonexistent

"In the interests of charity, it would be better if two things were promoted vigorously today. The first is that there are miracles and healings that take place today, but that, in the main, they derive from prayer rather than from individuals with gifts of healing and miracles. Second, those who claim that sign gifts have died out would do well to examine the evidences that seem to contravene their opinion, and instead stress the infrequency of the sign gifts, while acknowledging that they do appear here and there from time to time. A mutual spirit of reticence, as to whether what we are seeing afresh today is from prayer or from the gifts of the Spirit, would allow for what is happening. In the final analysis, we should rejoice in what God is doing and leave open the question whether He is doing it from prayer or from the Spirit's special gifts". --Harold Lindsell, in *The Holy Spirit in the Latter Days*

Song of a Quadriplegic Believer

Joni Eareckson's faith and writings, especially the book *A Step Further*, have inspired many sufferers. She sings this song:

I rejoice with him whose pain my Savior heals,
And I weep with him who still his anguish feels,
But earthly joys and earthly tears
Are confined to earthly years,
And a greater good the Word of God reveals.

In this life I have a cross that I must bear,
A tiny part of Jesus' death that I can share;
And one day I'll lay it down
And He has promised me a crown
To which my suffering can never be compared.

* * * *

God Is Doing It, but Only Here and There

"God does not always choose to heal us physically, and perhaps it is as well that he does not. How people would rush to Christianity (and for all the wrong motives) if it carried with it automatic exemption from sickness! What a nonsense it would make of Christian virtues like longsuffering, patience and endurance if instant wholeness were available for all the Christian sick!

"But healing is a gift that God has given to some members of the body of Christ, to enable them to act as channels of His love and compassion to others. 'Have all the gift of healing?' asks the apostle. The answer is 'No'. But those who have this gift are to use it for the benefit of others. It seems to be one of the good gifts of the Spirit which is increasingly being realized today, and Christians who had no idea that they possessed it are finding that they are being used in this ministry of healing. There have recently been large out-breaks of healings in two cathedrals, one in Africa and one in Asia, where I have personal friends who were present and witnessed them. They tell me of thousands who came, and many who were healed of blindness, cancer, lameness and other diseases, whilst many more came to a living faith in the Saviour. The reality of this gift can only be doubted by those who are not prepared to examine the evidence.[See following article] Equally, those who maintain that Christians should never, if they are living close to God, suffer illness, and who maintain that healing and salvation are always and properly inseparable, do not match up to the evidence of Scripture, history or experience". --Michael Green, in *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*

The East African Revival, And Healing

Gresford Chitemo

The East African Revival came down from Uganda and reached Tanzania in 1939. From there it spread mainly in the evangelical section of the Anglican Church known as the Church Missionary Society.

One of the people who was caught up in the revival was Pastor Yohana Majani Omari. He was convicted by the Holy Spirit of superficial Christianity, hate, hypocrisy, and other sins, and he repented of all these errors. He had to be reconciled to his wife and to his congregation; he was broken before them, confessing many things to them.

Then the Holy Spirit filled the pastor's life, even though he did not speak in tongues, prophesy, or perform miracles. The Holy Spirit made his ministry very effective by using it to convict many people of sin and make them repent and turn to Christ in faith. God used Pastor Omari in Tanzania and East Africa and overseas to bring many into his Kingdom. For example, during my visit to Australia in March 1984, I met a few people who had received Christ through his ministry when he had visited there in 1958. Missionaries from Ireland, England, and Australia have expressed their gratitude to God for using this man to bring them to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus in their lives. Praise the Lord!

Although I was convicted by the Holy Spirit while reading the New Testament, by God's grace Pastor Omari was the instrument that God used to help me know the Lord better and to grow in my Christian life.

In 1955 Pastor Omari became the first African bishop. Through this office the Lord opened a very wide door for him to preach the gospel to almost all the Protestant denominations in Tanzania, despite strong opposition from some of the church leaders. Others later joined Pastor Omari in his evangelistic efforts: two secondary school teachers from Uganda, some pastors who were touched by the Holy Spirit, and some lay evangelists whom God called.

In 1963 Pastor Omari was called to be with his Master. But after his death many people who were saved during the revival became witnesses for Jesus Christ. This helped the church to grow very quickly indeed. It was during this time that God called me to full-time ministry in the church. I thank God for the East African Revival, through which Jesus saved my soul.

The main characteristics of the East African Revival were these:

1. Openness in confession and repentance of sin.
2. Making restitution and reconciliation where relationships were broken. (I remember that many of the boys in the school where I was teaching used to ask for permission to go back to the primary schools they had attended in order to put things right with their teachers.)

3 Brokenness (not insisting on one's own rights) and readiness to admit sin or fault when one's error was pointed out by a brother or a sister

4 Meeting for fellowship--sharing testimonies, "walking in the light" (being completely honest and open about motives, intentions, and actions) When someone wanted to build a house or start a farm. He "walked in the light" so that all the brothers and sisters knew what was happening. Likewise, those who wanted to marry "walked in the light" regarding their engagement. We prayed and read God's Word together. Then one brother or sister spoke on the passage, and others shared how the passage had helped them. After that we prayed for matters that had been brought into the light.

5 Acceptance of evangelistic responsibility Each believer knew that he or she had a responsibility to let Jesus be known to others. This was the way the gospel spread everywhere. One day in the bush, for example, I found some women collecting firewood, and one among them was telling the others about the Lord Jesus.

This revival is still going on today, and there are conventions everywhere--in parishes and even in small churches. The aim is to strengthen those in the fellowship and to reach out to others and bring them to a living faith in the Lord. Through the East African Revival, which is the work of the Holy Spirit, the church is growing despite the fact that there are still many traditionalists, Muslims, and people of other religions like Hinduism and Buddhism--mainly immigrants from Asia or people of Asian origins. But we still need the prayers of brothers and sisters all over the world for the work of evangelism in Tanzania.

A New Dimension

One day in 1973 I heard of Edmund John, a man of God. This man was being used by God to preach the gospel, and many were convicted and repented of their sins. He was also praying for those who had diseases, and they were being healed.

I went to see Edmund John to find out if he was indeed a man of God or if he was one of those about whom the Lord Jesus had said, "Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evil-doers!'"

When, at an open-air meeting, I heard about his conversion, about the time he spent with the Word of God and his experience with the Holy Spirit and the way Jesus Christ had spoken to him, I was impressed. I was impressed with the quality of his humility and the way he glorified the Lord Jesus and his saying that only Jesus is the healer. In my heart I was convinced that he had been with the Lord.

After this meeting I asked Edmund John to come to our diocese in November 1973. Fasting, vigils, and faith healing had not been a part of the East African Revival, but that changed when Edmund John came to Beraga. He ministered in the church from Sunday afternoon until Wednesday morning.

We fasted from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening. At that time all of us ate something except Edmund John, who neither ate nor drank anything. The pastors congregated in one room and prayed all night. A few of us stayed with Edmund and prayed with him during the night. We prayed every hour on the hour. We did not offer the usual prayers of supplication. We praised and thanked God for his blessings and the wonders of creation--hills and mountains, lakes, rivers, and seas, valleys and springs of water, animals, humankind, and so forth. You might think that these were childish expressions, but at the time it seemed as if a torch light was shining up to heaven. Edmund John called those expressions of thanks "greeting the Father."

After three days of fasting and three nights of prayer came the time of preaching. As we came out of the church, we heard people crying and saw them shaking with evil powers, and we could barely quiet them. We all preached in turns. Edmund John preached a very simple, straightforward sermon on salvation. He told people that God offered the gift of healing as bait. People came to be healed of physical illness, but God wanted to save. The response to this sermon was good.

Then came the time to pray for the sick people. Edmund John said that we should start by praying for those people possessed by evil spirits because there were so many of them: when they entered the church, they filled three-quarters of it. Some were crying; others were rolling on the floor, some were speaking nonsense; a few were even reciting Scripture or singing Christian songs or hymns. Edmund prayed in the name of Jesus, the King of Kings, the most powerful name, and all were freed. Then a group with other diseases entered. The records in my diary show the following figures: on Wednesday, November 21, 503 entered, and 280 were healed; on Friday, November 23, 683 entered, and 567 were healed.

During the time of praying for the sick, the pastors and other brethren were kneeling in one section of the church, saturating the proceedings in prayer. On the third day, before he left, Edmund John asked three pastors to continue praying for the sick. (Unfortunately, I had an appointment in Nairobi, so I left before the work ended.) This was a real apprenticeship. The pastors prayed and people were healed.

Since that time, pastors visit each parish to minister to the sick and those who need spiritual power. Because the gospel preaching is accompanied by the work of the Holy Spirit and there are signs and wonders, the power in the name of the Lord is apparent. People come to be healed of diseases or freed of demons. After they are prayed for and healed, they are instructed and prepared for baptism.

This gospel with its signs and miracles has caused many--Muslims, traditional people, and nominal Christians--to believe in the saving power of our Lord. As my experience has shown, the work of the Holy Spirit is truly marvelous.

[Reprinted by permission from the book, *God the Evangelist*, by David F. Wells. c. 1987 by Wm. B Eerdmans Pub. Co.]

Divine Healings Throughout Church History

(Part II of a book review by Jon Mayeux)

A new day dawned upon the church as the winds of reformation swept across its foundation bringing new life, hope and light. *During the 1500's* men such as Luther, Calvin and Zwingli loudly proclaimed the Good News and thus broke the shackles of ignorance that bound men tightly in the preceding generations. Let us now consider some of the occurrences of divine miraculous healings from those times and later.

Martin Luther reacted "against the superstitious pseudo-miracles of the corrupt ecclesiastical system which he was challenging." However he said, "How often has it happened and still does, that devils have been driven out in the name of Christ; also that by calling on his Name in prayer the sick have been healed!"

The case of the healing of his co-reformer Philip Melancthon during a visit of Luther remains outstanding. The historian Sechendorf records it as follows:

Luther found Phillip about to give up the ghost. His eyes were set; his consciousness was almost gone; his speech had failed, and also his hearing; he had ceased to take either solids or liquids. As this spectacle Luther is filled with the utmost consternation. Turning away towards the window, he called most devoutly on God.

After this, taking the hand of Philip, he said, "Be of good courage, Philip, thou shalt not die: . . . While he uttered these things Philip began, as it were, to revive and to breathe, and, gradually recovering his strength, was at last restored to health. In a letter Luther referred to this healing as "an evident miracle of God."

The Scottish Covenanters were Protestants who were bitterly persecuted *during the 1600's*. They left many testimonies of miracles that took place among them. One of their number, Thomas Hogg, was noted for miracles of healing. We give only one example.

A good woman having come with this sore lamentation, that her daughter was distracted [insane], Mr. Hogg charged one or two devout persons (for he frequently employed such on extraordinary occasions) to set apart a day and a night for fasting and prayer, and join with him in prayer for the maid next day. Accordingly, when this appointment was performed, she recovered her senses as well as before.

During the 1700's a powerful spiritual awakening occurred among Christians in Moravia, near eastern Germany. Their leader was Count Nicolas von Zinzendorf. The historian Bost provides the following information:

At this juncture various supernatural gifts were manifested in the Church, and miraculous cures were wrought. The Count rejoiced at it with all his heart, and praised the Saviour, who thus willingly condescended to what is poor and little. [The Moravian believers were probably fewer than 1000 in number at this time.]

Zinzendorf wrote, "I owe this testimony to our beloved Church, that apostolic powers are therein manifested. We have had undeniable proofs thereof in the . . . healing of maladies in themselves incurable, such as cancers, consumptions, when the patient was in the agonies of death, etc., all by means of prayer or of a single word.

In the Twentieth Century

We shall present just one more example from Baxter's book, though he mentions many others. R. A. Torrey was a leading evangelist, Bible teacher and author in the *late 1800's and early 1900's*. He was the dean of Moody Bible Institute, and several of his books are still in print. His booklet *Divine Healing* gives a balanced presentation of Scriptural teaching. It also includes at least five examples of miraculous cures in his ministry, though his emphasis was always more on evangelism than on healing. Here is one incident he tells about.

There was a Methodist minister in Dakota who had a child that was improperly formed. There was some defect in her backbone so that she was bent together and the abdomen protruded, causing constant pain, and she could not sleep. The parents brought her to Minneapolis to see what specialists could do, but the specialists told them that there was no hope for the child, that they might put her in a plaster-cast so that she might live, deformed, not longer than two or three years . . . They brought her over to my house, a little child about two years of age, terrible misshapen and greatly suffering. I took her in my arms and prayed for her. God gave the necessary faith and she was healed. Relief came immediately. That night she slept normally for the first time, even the defective part of her body was made right.

Something like eighteen years later I was holding meetings in Petoskey, Michigan. In one of the meetings a minister from one of the neighboring towns came in. He got up in the meeting and told this story, saying he was the father of that daughter and that she was completely healed and a candidate for the foreign mission field. She herself came in a few days later, a beautiful, perfectly formed young woman.

So what should we conclude? In view of the tremendous examples, I think the conclusion is clear. Baxter so rightly concludes:

I shall not hesitate to say that in my own opinion there is ample evidence through sufficiently trustworthy witnesses to establish the fact that direct divine healing of the body has been taught, experienced, observed, and faithfully reported among Christian believers, at intervals longer or shorter, right from post-Apostolic times until now. However cleverly some of the testimony may be devaluated (supposedly), more than enough remains which is unimpeachable.

[This article, along with last month's, is adapted from a book report written for church history class at the School of Biblical Studies in Louisville. The book under review is *Divine Healing of the Body*, by J Sidlow Baxter. It was published by Zondervan Publishing House in 1979.]

"They Don't Get Well from That Kind of Cancer"

Jesse Z. Wood

[This article has been adapted from a chapter written years ago for Winston Allen's book, *Have Faith in God*. Ruth Wood later became Mrs. Alex Wilson.]

It was summer 1955. Our daughter, Sarah, had been to Southeastern Christian College in Winchester, Kentucky. While there she became engaged to Kenneth Preston. They were to be married in September, so while the family was still together we decided to take a last vacation trip. We traveled to my brother Clark's ranch, out from Slaton, Texas.

The next morning our daughter, Ruth, came to her mother and said, "Mother, my hips ached all night." Her mother said, "It was probably just a touch of rheumatism." But when we got home to Denton, Texas, every night brought on the hip pains, which increased steadily in intensity. We took her to our physician. He could find no cause, but suggested "rheumatism." In a few more days we took her to the Flo Memorial Hospital in Denton for x-rays. The doctors there could see nothing wrong.

Soon Ruth could not comfortably lie in her bed. We had to prop her up with pillows on the front-room couch. One night I went into the kitchen and found her holding on to the top of the refrigerator door with her finger tips while her chin was resting on top of the box. I asked, "Honey, what are you doing?" She said, "Daddy, I'm just trying to find some comfortable way to sleep." She could neither lie down nor sit comfortably.

Another night, hearing her voice, I went into her room in the wee hours. She was praying by her bedside, and in her earnestness was rolling her head from side to side while crying out to the Lord for relief. On another occasion Ruth asked us at three in the morning, "Daddy, can't you do something to help me?" I said, "Honey, I'm doing all I know to do for you. The kitchen

cabinet is full of every pain medicine we can buy for you." She asked, "Isn't there something that will ease me?" I replied, "I don't know of any."

The pains kept getting worse. A friend suggested a chiropractor. We tried him. He began treatments which were very painful to Ruth. Although he assured us he could cure Ruth, after some ten or twelve treatments he gave up saying, "I just am not doing her any good and will not charge for what I've tried to do."

Ruth's grandmother, Mrs. C. Y. Pettigrew, wrote us to send her out to Abilene to her doctor. We did so. After a week of visits to the clinic, this new doctor said, "Rheumatoid arthritis." So we brought her home to Denton and our family doctor began weekly examinations and prescribed Cortisone. For a time we settled down to the sad probability of seeing Ruth suffer a lifetime of growing arthritis.

By this time, the fall of 1955, Ruth was a senior in the local high school. She studied hard and made all "A's," but she came home many times crying with pain. Toward the end of 1955 she would sometimes collapse in the school corridors. It soon became apparent that she was becoming paralyzed. Her fellow students became so sympathetic they would bring her home in their cars and help her into the house. She had begun to walk with difficulty, needing something or someone to hold onto.

Although the doctors were insistent that Ruth had Rheumatoid-arthritis, her gradual weakening made us fear she had more than that. My wife and I prayed much. We finally asked for specific guidance in the matter of going to Dallas to consult Dr. John Bagwell, who had been my parent's diagnostician. On the way Ruth said, "It's useless; please just let me die." She hated to miss her classes at school. But, school or no school, we sensed that something had to be done. Later in his office, Dr. Bagwell asked if Ruth had any swelling or pain in her hands or feet. When we told him, "No", he replied, "Well, it's not arthritis, for such severe pains from arthritis would also be showing up in her extremities." When he compared his X-ray pictures with the Denton doctor's X-ray pictures of Ruth's back he called me over and said, "See the cloudy area there on that vertebra?" It was obvious that a change had been taking place. "I'm going to have to send Ruth to a bone specialist, and maybe also to a nerve specialist," he told us. "Send us anywhere, doctor," I said. So in a day or so we were in Dr. Glenn Cherry's office. After taking more pictures, he slowly ran a nerve thermometer up the spinal column. The temperature jumped when a particular spot was reached. "I'm going to have to operate", Dr. Cherry said. "It could be a ruptured disc; we can repair that easily. Or it could be an infection. We have medicine which can take care of that." Ruth did not hear him say "It could be a tumor; we can take care of that unless it is malignant. If it should be malignant, there's not much we can do about it, for they are always fatal!"

Other doctors in the Medical Art Building took an active interest in the case. During the several days it took to prepare adequately for the operation, Ruth became weaker and more paralyzed. While the long operation was in progress many Christians who had been contacted by phone were praying.

After the operation Dr. Cherry reported he took a thumb-size tumor from Ruth's vertebra. Tentacles running from it encircled the spinal cord, and he was not able to remove all of the tentacles. The cord itself was pressed flat (like a flat tire on a car), and the tumor had caused the vertebra to decay badly. Ruth would have to wear a brace, and would suffer the same pains for perhaps a year until the cord resumed its full shape. We were to come back at the end of three days to learn whether or not the tumor was malignant.

At the proper time Dr. Cherry told Ruth's Mother and me that he had "bad news" for us. He had arranged for the hospital chaplain to be present. He assured us he would not tell us what he had to tell us unless he was absolutely sure and there was no doubt about the matter. Dr. Bagwell, two other neuro-surgeons of national repute, and specialists who had examined the tissue agreed with Dr. Cherry that the tumor was the worst kind, Osteogenic sarcoma. "We've never experienced any recovery from this particular kind of malignancy", said the surgeon. "They just don't get well from it!" Ruth's mother asked, "Doctor, how long does she have?" The doctor replied, "Only about six to twelve months at the most." Then the doctor brought in a hypnotist who called Mrs. Wood aside and told her that since such terrific pains would return to Ruth, he would like permission to hypnotize both Ruth and her Mother, and then teach Mrs. Wood to hypnotize Ruth. Although Ruth insisted that she herself tried to cooperate with the hypnotist, she did not go under his influence. Her mother said later she was so confident the Lord was going to heal Ruth, she was praying during the process that the hypnotist would fail if the Lord indeed intended to heal her.

Ten days after the operation we were again in Dr. Cherry's office with Ruth. He asked Ruth where she hurt. She said, "Nowhere. I don't have a pain in the world." This was difficult for the doctor to believe, but Ruth insisted, "I never felt better in my life!" He then asked her to walk a straight line across the floor. She did. He marvelled, saying, "And you can walk without a brace! Why, I cut so much of your vertebra away, I can't see how you walk at all."

Dr. Cherry sent us back to the Cobalt department at Baylor Hospital in Dallas where they gave Ruth five minutes of radiation with cobalt daily for five days one week, then five days again the following week. "We'll try it", he said, "but we doubt it will do any good. Five minutes is too little, but we're afraid to subject her to more of it because of the area involved." He indicated again to us parents that she faced death and they had no real confidence in further efforts of theirs.

Ruth's mother said, "Daddy, I'm going to pray that the Lord will raise up Ruth in spite of all they say, and if the Lord chooses to take her to the farthest corner of the earth to use her, I'll praise Him for it." So we prayed that the Lord would use Ruth as a living testimony--a demonstration of what God can do when we trust Him completely.

The doctor told us we should take Ruth to the Cobalt Department every six months in order to have the assurance we had done all we could. Then I told him Ruth wanted to attend Southeastern Christian College in Winchester, Kentucky. He became impatient with me and said, "I told you she wasn't going to live, Mr. Wood!"

We moved to Kentucky in August, 1956. The operation had been in February. We had not told Ruth the tumor was cancerous because we wanted her to be free of concern regarding the doctor's predictions that she positively could not survive. However, seeking to follow the doctor's advice and leave no stone unturned, we went to Dr. Glenn Spurling in Louisville, a neurosurgeon of world renown. (When Gen. George Patton was fatally injured in an accident in Europe, the government rushed Dr. Spurling over to try to save his life.) When we told Dr. Spurling the full particulars, he said, "Mr. Wood, unless I examine the smear-slides of that tumor, I cannot believe your daughter had *Osteogenic sarcoma* because they just don't get well from that kind of cancer. *We have no record of a single cure,*" I promptly wrote to Baylor Hospital in Dallas requesting that the entire file dealing with Ruth's case be sent to General Hospital in Louisville for Dr. Spurling to examine. Later, after examining the material, Dr. Spurling said, "*That's the first time I have ever seen a case of this kind healed in all my years of practice.* But, I'd still go for the cobalt treatments every six months for the full five years." So we went to the radiologist of General. After examining Ruth's back, the doctor said, "I'm not going to give this girl any treatments. She doesn't need them. The treatments with cobalt are cumulative in their effects, and I wouldn't let her have any more; she's well. I've never seen such a nicely healed case."

Downstairs we stopped at a soda-fountain before beginning the trip back to Winchester. Ruth said, "Daddy, I had an operation for removal of a tumor a year ago. You keep taking me back again and again to the doctors! Why? I'm healed, completely! Why take me out of school and subject me to all this?" It was then and not till then we told her the complete story. Her response was, "Since the Lord healed me, promise me one thing; promise that you'll never take me back to any doctors." "Is that the way you want it?" I answered. "Yes," she said. So we agreed. And never again did we take her to a doctor for this.

At first the doctors had said, "She has six months to live." Later when she appeared to be well they said, "If she should live five years, she may be considered well." At this writing, thirty-six years have passed since the Great Physician took full charge of Ruth's case and demonstrated what He can do when His people humble themselves and pray.

A Note from Ruth: At the time that many people were praying for my recovery, many of the same ones were praying for healing for Doe Valdetero, the wife of Bro. Antoine. Doe was a young preacher's wife with several small children, and she also had cancer. Yet the Lord chose to take Doe. Why? And why has He chosen to take a host of others for whom much prayer has been offered before the throne of Heaven? I do not know, but I know that He is sovereign; He and only He knows the whole picture, and we do ourselves a great disservice when we demand healing from Him. He told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you," and indeed it is. To know Him is better than life itself and thus better, even, than physical healing. I believe that my case, and others, show that He has full power to heal, but our greatest joy will come from accepting from His hand whatever He sovereignly chooses to send our way.

VOICES from the FIELDS

Winston and Irene Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

July 28, 1992

Recently on a TV News program from Anchorage it was stated, "Fewer people (per capita) go to church in Alaska than in any other state." Three reasons were given: (1) Young population (medium age about 30), (2) Transient population, and (3) "The old ways do not attract the baby-boomers." There is a close connection between the above and recent headline and article which stated, "Alaskans Health Habits Rank Poorly." 30% of Alaskans smoke compared to the national median of less than 23%. 24% of Alaskans are "acute or binge" drinkers compared to the national median of 15%. Chronic drinkers are nearly twice the national median. Rejecting the Lord and turning to broken cisterns account largely for the above-average crime, divorce, suicide, drug abuse rates.

In view of the fierce opposition of Satan's kingdom, we are thankful to the Lord and to workers in His kingdom that average attendance at the Spring Brook Church of Christ this summer has been considerably more than last summer, and we have had four baptisms. The church is now in the process of selecting Elders and Deacons. Prayer is requested regarding important decisions to be made.

Regarding the economy in Alaska, a headline earlier this year read "Oil decline presages tough times." The shutting down of one local newspaper, layoffs in aviation, oil and other industries over this year and slow growth or no growth in other sectors are signs of a slowing economy. Shortening days and longer nights remind us that another long winter is ahead when times will be more difficult for many. May the Lord enable us to be a light house in this dark world until He returns.

... late word from Eagle River dated Aug. 24th. (The ash mentioned is from the eruption of Mt. Spurr.)

Today we've had brief periods of sun, then clouds, followed by light showers. But this evening we've had hard rain. Winston took advantage of the rain's force to use a wide broom to move some of the gritty ash covering on the church parking lot. It will take a long time to clear it completely. Anchorage's coverage was 1/4"-more than ours. Except where it is wetted down, moving traffic stirs up a cloud of dust. When wet, it is very heavy and must be scooped

I stayed inside all day Wednesday because of the ash conditions, but kept busy sorting blueberries to freeze and preparing the house for the weekend company. Winston worked outside hours (wearing a mask) hosing ash off the sheds, vehicles, garden, driveway, etc. Any exposed area was gray. The ash is very gritty like sandpaper and is acidic. Much of the business world was closed down and we had no midweek meeting. Thursday we went to the laundry and grocery, driving slowly so as not to stir us too much of an ash cloud, which clogs car filters

Jesus and I had a "deal" when I came to the Philippines: I would continue working toward the completion of a New Testament as long as He kept the doors open. The Agta New Testament is now completely translated and the door seems to be closing on our further involvement in an Agta setting. The Agta NT is not perfect - and I think it would be a mistake to publish it once-for-all-time in its present form - but it is completely translated and the Agtas can, and are, using it. I'm vitally interested in what kind of changes it will need over the next few years, but there's no way of knowing that without the Agtas simply living with it for a while. That was my thought all along; I was going to work on literacy while the Agtas lived with the scriptures. But "peace and order" problems have taken over my hoped-for literacy program and the geographic area. The Agtas are learning to read by other means. ("The Lord works in mysterious ways.") We'll have to trust Him for ways to get the Agta NT to these new readers as an alternative to what they're being taught to read.

My commitment for the past sixteen years has always been to Jesus Christ the Person, first, and to Wycliffe Bible Translators, second. Now it seems the Person might be indicating it is time for a "leave of absence" from the organization for a while. I would not be averse to continuing with Wycliffe in some other capacity (and neither would Wycliffe), but at this present time that does not seem to be the direction I'm sensing from Him.

What then of the Agta NT? Will it not be published? Yes, it will, but in a limited number of trial copies at first by means of a desktop publisher. Maybe ten now, twenty later. More, when I'm confident that it is as good as it can reasonably be expected to get. Joe and Grace McAlpin still expect to work with the Agtas after they receive more training. I will assist them by returning to Agtaland with them from time to time.

The consultant checks on the final 20% will be conducted via mail, as we set up residence in Winchester, Ky. An opportunity has come up for me to take on an apprenticeship in a key Christian bookstore for my hometown area. I am impressed with the ministry potential. We fly from Manila on September 1 and will spend two months in Colorado before settling in Kentucky.

Needless to say, this next year will be fraught with unexpected changes. We need your prayers as much now as ever. We don't want to miss a step in His directions.

Please continue to pray for Gilliam, Diner and their vision to lead the Agta church. They're hearing many competing voices regarding politics, spiritual things, American missionaries, etc. Tuberculosis is rampant; I'm going out next week to see what can be done.

George Galanis

Athens, Greece

Aug. 18, 1992

Regarding the construction of our church building, our good contractor continues bricking in spite of the fact that our debt to him has reached the astronomical amount of \$34,210.00 thus far. We steadily trust the Lord to provide what we need to finish up our project. I am sending you a picture (taken in June, 1992) to let you see how the building looks like today.

It is very encouraging that we do not have to pay rent every month any more. All our brethren are very thankful to the Lord for His gracious blessing to give us our own building. We, of course, are well aware that we still have miles to go before we can say we have finished.

The next step of the work is plastering. I am sorry to say however, that we do not expect our contractor to start plastering before we pay off our debt to him. We are contemplating striking a loan of \$25,000.00 from some organization. This is the only way to be able to continue the work of this project. We count on your prayers. Any desiring to send material help may make checks to "Church of Christ World Wide" and write on bottom left "for Greece Building Fund". Mail check to Victor Broaddus at P.O. Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555.

Note New Address: 126 ERYTHROY STAVROY STR., 186.48
DRAPETSONA, PIRALIA GREECE

Earl, Sr. & Ragna Mullins

At large

August 1992

Between June and the first of August we often commented that it was as if we were standing at the center of a circle waiting for the Lord to point (or kick) us in the direction He wanted us to go. Several avenues were open, yet we were not sure which was the Lord's will.

Waiting is hard on the flesh. But we were encouraged by the interest shown in missions in recent months on the part of many individuals and congregations, as well as, interest in knowing about our plans.

Then the elders, deacons and minister (Dale Offutt) of the Sellersburg Church of Christ decided to sponsor Ragna and myself as "Missionaries-at-large." This concept is new for them and us. So we are especially thankful for the desire on the part of the Sellersburg congregation to be involved in mission work of this kind. We covet your prayers as we look to the Lord in using this opportunity of entering doors yet open to the gospel throughout the world.

Though our long range plans are not definite, the more immediate mission will be to go to Russia with the Association of Christian Schools, International (ACSI) to meet with Russian government school staff members and officials in two cities. Our purpose there will be to introduce a Biblically based morals curriculum which is to be put in the Russian schools. Three

tracks of meetings and educators will be involved: elementary, secondary, and administrative.

We have been involved with ACSI for many years through Portland Christian School. They have already sent several teams to Russia this year. Their long range plan is to have 100 couples go to Russia for a minimum of one year to establish home Bible studies and work with schools.

We are praying about our involvement in this one year plan. In the mean while there are other areas of work in which we will be involved.

Ragna and I are still very much interested in the Lord's work in the Philippines. Presently we are working on an evangelistic booklet which Cyrus asked us to see about getting reprinted.

The booklet is in the national dialect, therefore we are slow in typesetting, etc. It is 44 pages (8.5 inches by 11 inches) with 15 pages of illustrations. It will be bound so that it can be used as a tabletop flip chart. Each page and the covers will be laminated to help protect it.

Other mission doors which we want to explore include the following:

1) During our stay in the Philippines, we started a teaching newsletter for the national preachers. It was in English and well received. We would like to continue sending such communications to these Christians on a regular basis.

2) Along the same line some correspondence lessons were started. It would be good to continue these also and eventually translate them into the national dialect.

3) Several of the ladies in the Philippines asked about children's material being translated and printed in the Cevuano or Tagalog dialects.

4) We have tentatively been invited to make teaching trips to Mexico and Africa.

If you care to have a financial part in these efforts, contributions should be sent to:

Sellersburg Church of Christ

211 New Albany St.

Sellersburg, IN 47172

Designate gifts for: "Missions".

A slide program concerning some of what the Lord is doing through Words of Life in the Philippines is available to present to groups. Our address is: P.O. Box 1509 New Albany, IN 47151

James and Karen Ashley Box 986, Honelra, Solomon Islands Aug. 13, 1992

10:00 pm July 27----Ashleys are scheduled to board the Princess II for their return to Small Malaita.

3:00 am July 28---The Princess II sank!

But we weren't on it, praise God! We had rescheduled for the following week because our crates had arrived earlier than we expected, and we were busy claiming and re-packing them.

Actually, even if we had travelled on schedule, we would not have been on board the Princess when she sank. The Princess had gotten into trouble on Monday morning on her way towards the capital. The engine had stopped at sea, but at noon the crew got her restarted. She then proceeded on her trip, and at a small village she idled just offshore while fifteen more passengers got on. As they found their places, the captain signalled the engine room to get under way, and just then--only 20 feet from the reef--the engine died again. In minutes, the wind and waves impaled the ship on the coral, and it was evident that she would not be leaving soon. The crew got everyone off safely, and then even salvaged much of the cargo and equipment in the thirteen hours before the ship finally sank.

Although we have never enjoyed travelling on the Princess, we are truly sorry to see her go. Now we will have no regular shipping to Small Malaita, and whatever does come our way will surely be less frequent and more crowded.

Our two cotranslators are in good health and continuing steadily with the translation. David and I worked together on checking Philippians, and it has now been submitted to a consultant for further checking.

Please pray for us as we again become part of the Sa'a community. Susan will be spending time with her friends learning Sa'a all over. Philip will be starting a new school year in the 3rd grade and Kent in the 6th with Karen as their teacher, while I will be concentrating on checking the books of Luke and James. Karen and I will also be looking for the best strategies to get people's feedback on the Scriptures we have translated, and we hope God's Word will, at the same time, take root and grow in the hearts of those who hear.

Churches Needing Preachers

Here is a list given us (& it is not complete) of churches seeking preachers, with phone numbers of some leader. Ebenezer Church, near Harrodsburg, Ky. 606/734-7197. Tell City Church, Ind. 812/547-2793. Highway Church, Pekin, Ind. 812/967-3740. Eastern Hills Church, Garland, Tex. 214/240-6413. Henryville, Ind. Church. 812/245-2145. Amite, La. Church; no phone number supplied. *KY Ave, Beechel, Dozouis, Piedmont*

Locust Street Church in Johnson City, Tenn. sent in a notice of their own. It is in News/Notes. And the Southeast Church near Louisville, is seeking an associate minister especially to work with young people; 502/267-8352. *Pray for all these churches.*

Also, Winston Allen in Alaska has for years been seeking some co-worker(s) for the Eagle River congregation. The Allens are way past due having a furlough from their ministry, that they might become rested & refreshed.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF US

Carl Kitzmiller

Can we use the Old Testament to show what God approves or disapproves today?

Yes, but not in exactly the same way we use the New Testament. If we use the Old Testament without discernment, we can "prove" that God wants animal sacrifice and observance of days, allows divorce for many reasons, approves of vengeance slaying sometimes, forbids the eating of pork, expects us to work for our salvation, and many other things. Paul's admonition to Timothy was that he should "give diligence to present thyself unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, handling aright the word of truth"(2 Tim. 2:15). We need to handle aright the word of truth. This instruction is needed by all who handle the word of God, both in the Old Testament and in the New, and it is needed in a definite way by those who apply the Old Testament to life today. The Old Testament is a mine of information, instruction, and suggestion to those who follow the Lord, but it does require that we know something about how to use it. There are religious groups today which greatly err because they have tried with out proper discernment to combine the old and new covenants into a system of belief for us today.

Now there is a serious reaction to this possible misuse of the Old Testament. Some almost totally ignore it. They read, study and cite only the New Testament. It is almost as though the Old did not exist. Other than as historical material about Abraham or other Old Testament characters, or maybe historical references to Israel as a people, it is not regarded as being worth much. And this is to miss a wealth of material about many matters of importance to us as Christians.

Much of the Old Testament is taken up with instructions to Israel as a specific people, and much of it is a setting forth of the old covenant. It speaks its commands in great measure to a people who live under the Mosaic dispensation. It reveals the outworking of the law in the lives of such ones. Christians today, of course, are under the new covenant as a way of life. One of the first needs, then, is an understanding of the covenants and an understanding of what Old Testament teaching is distinctly a part of the old covenant. This portion was canceled by the death of Christ on the cross ("the commandments contained in ordinances," Eph. 2:15). In the matters of a salvation and manner of worship, the New Testament has teaching which replaces and changes the principles and practices of the old. Wherein the two testaments speak with a different voice, then, the New must be considered the instruction for our day.

In certain matters the New Testament represents fuller revelation of the will of God. Under the Old Testament some things were tolerated by God which were never a part of His will. God withheld making the full requirement of man under the old in some cases. Just as a parent must consider the ability of a child to receive certain limitations and must temper his requirements, so God was watching and waiting for the coming of the time when He could express His demands more fully to the human race. Hence, whenever

the New Testament raises the standards and requirements of God from those expressed in the old, we must recognize the higher expression of His will as binding on us.

Some of the teaching of the Old Testament is affected by the fact that it was given to Israel--a specific people, a nation set apart from all the other nations. The secular and religious were not so distinct as they are for people today. Jehovah was their King, in theory at least, and many of the events of Old Testament history are colored by the unique position Israel held among the nations. We need to be able to discern what teaching was limited to Israel and what was of a more permanent nature.

Having noted there are some ways in which the teaching of the New Testament has superseded the Old, Let us now note those areas of teaching that will give us great help. Since God is an eternal Being, there is much here that reveals Him. He may change His methods from time to time, but He Himself is unchanging. His character remains the same. Wherein the Old Testament reveals the character and attributes of God, we do well to take note of them, for we are dealing with the same Being today. And the Old Testament does reveal much about God--His love of man, hatred of sin, action in human affairs, readiness to reveal Himself to mankind, etc. We would be very much poorer without the revelation of his qualities as seen in the Old Testament. His faithfulness to His promises, His patience, His ultimate justice, including judgments on evil, are illustrated over and over again in the events recorded of old. And knowing the character of God is a help in knowing what He approves or disapproves today in our characters. Even those instances where we must make some allowances for the covenant under which the teaching was given, there are still basic truths which are at times evident.

The Old Testament contains a wealth of examples--both positive and negative--practical illustrations of God at work in the lives of people and in the world, example of how evil finds us out, cases of imperfection in men of faith, etc. We learn much about human nature in the Old Testament. Many of these things are illustrations of abiding principles, and others serve to show us why God needed to make a change of covenants. The unfaithfulness of the children of Israel serves as the basis for several warnings about unbelief, clear evidence that God meant for us to consider the examples of the Old Testament to discover what they have to say to us. We can read wrong conclusions into these examples, but that does not mean they were not written for our learning. Instead, it means we must discern what God meant to tell us. Even the truths of the New Testament can be wrested to our own destruction.

There is a great body of prophetic truth in the Old Testament--some of it fulfilled, some of it yet to be fulfilled. A study of the fulfilled prophecies is not only valuable for the identification of Jesus as the Christ, a solid foundation for our new covenant faith, but they also show how Jehovah keeps His word, guide us in principles of interpretation, reveal more of God's character, and establish the continuity of God's purposes. The unfulfilled prophecies are of great concern because they deal with things yet future and thus speak quite loudly to the redeemed of today concerning what God approves or disapproves. Prophecy is a lamp in a dark place, and that goes for the things revealed in the Old Testament as well as those revealed in the New.

We must be careful not to set the Old Testament against the clear teaching of the New. We must learn how to eliminate the non-applicable things and still get the message that is there for us. We must be careful not to misapply. We must not jump to conclusions that are not warranted. We certainly need to use care that we do not make the new covenant a new law, adding the requirements of the old to the new. But the Old Testament has the ability to help us greatly in understanding the will of the Father. It is so basic to our understanding of the new covenant that there is no real understanding of the latter without it. The church or Christian that writes it off and does not study it will be missing a most valuable resource which God has given. Satan will in a measure have had a victory, for it is still a part of the inspired word of God given to make us complete servants of God. It was the "Bible" that the early church used before the completion of the New Testament. It is a part of the whole counsel of God.

PARANOID LOVE

Mike Root

In a graduate class several years ago, I was required to read a book by Richard Hofstadter entitled *The Paranoid Style in American Politics*. To my surprise, rather than being the usual dry political history book that I'd come to expect, it was fascinating and scary. Hofstadter points out that much of American history has its foundation in an irrational fear of people and groups that we do not know or understand. Nearly every new political, ethnic, and religious group that came along was seen as a threat; everything was seen as part of a conspiracy or plot; and fear and hatred became the standard response by Americans. Groups from the Masons, the Jews, and the Catholics, to the Asians, the Afro-Americans, and the Hispanics have been alienated, persecuted, and discriminated against. Just pick a point in American history and you will find paranoia.

Unfortunately, churches have not been the bright oasis in the desert of fear. Fear has always been a driving force in conservatism and fundamentalism since there is clearly a protectionist mind-set inherent in both. Sometimes this protectionist mind-set has been justified as churches sought to stay true to their beliefs, but other times it has been the result of exclusiveness and intolerance. Hofstadter said, "What distinguishes the paranoid style is...the curious leap in imagination that is always made at some critical point in the recital of events" (*italics added*). Thus the conclusions reached are not based on facts or reality, but on imagined fears. This "curious leap" is seen regularly in Christians who are presented with something new or different.

In the body of Christ, the focus is on love. God loved us so much that he sent his only son to die for us (John 3:16). Because he loved us, we love him (1 John 4:19), and not just a little, but with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Then right behind that, we love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31). As his church we work, speak, and grow in love (Gal 5:6; Eph. 4:15-16) Why then do we operate in a spirit of fear?

"Just a second," someone says, "don't you know that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge?"

Yes, I know that, and I also know that only he can destroy both the body and the soul, so he is the only one truly deserving fear. After all, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and that was said to unfaithful Christians (Heb. 10:31).

That still does nothing to explain our paranoia. It does nothing to explain why we react out of fear rather than respond in love. If you have been around long enough, you've seen fear in the bulging eyes and red faces of brethren whose traditions are being threatened. We've seen fear of new ideas, new thoughts and approaches, and even new doubts. We fear emotions, grace, the Holy Spirit, and the implications of loving "the least of these." We preach unity, but we're afraid to really cooperate with sister congregations. Jesus proclaimed that the world would recognize his disciples because they'd be the ones that loved one another, but we have been so fearful of infiltration by false teachers and false doctrine that our reputation is one of contention rather than compassion.

This is not to say that we are to be spiritually spineless, "love children;" spouting "love, love, love." *Love allows us to "contend earnestly for the faith"; fear makes us contentious about the faith. Fear sees an opponent as a threat to be squashed, while love causes us to correct an opponent with gentleness. Fear leads folks to speak harshly and to "nip it in the bud," while Christ-like folks are in the business of "speaking the truth in love."*

Fear, not concern for doctrinal purity, causes brethren to respond to a new idea with, "We've never done it that way before." The Pharisees were not interested in truth when they criticized Jesus and his disciples for not washing their hands, for harvesting food and eating on the Sabbath, or for healing and performing an act of compassion on the Sabbath. What concerned them was that their traditions were threatened. They didn't want to hear Jesus' indictment that they had elevated their traditions to be on a par with God's commandments. Because they feared Jesus and his teachings, they sought to kill him.

There is one other statement that reveals our paranoia as clearly as "What will this lead to?" Any change (or suggested change) in the organization for carrying out ministries, in the determination of times for events, or the schedule of assembly activities is quickly squelched by "If we do that there's no telling what it will lead to." We can't allow instrumental music to be used for a wedding because "The next thing you know someone will be rolling an organ down the aisle for worship services." We can't say "Amen" or "Praise the Lord" too often because "someone will think we are charismatic." I've even had an individual question congregational reading from the Bible because "They do that in denominations, and we've never done that here."

Several years ago I had our congregation show public appreciation for someone who had performed a much-needed task. The form of appreciation was applause from the whole congregation during the assembly. One upset brother wrote me a letter telling me that the applause was out of place because "The next thing you know people will be shouting and rolling in the aisles." I

am happy to announce that after several years of showing appreciation in this fashion no one has either shouted or rolled in the aisles; they did, however, get so caught up in showing appreciation for one brother that they gave him a standing ovation

On several different occasions, I have been honored to present a series of lessons on "The Christian Assembly." These lessons pose some challenging questions to brethren on the nature of New Testament worship and whether or not we have accurately duplicated it. In spite of the fact that I announced at the *beginning*, several times *during*, and emphatically at the *end* that my only objective is to make people think and study their Bible more, I continually heard the fearful refrain "What is this leading to?" Isn't it possible to question established tradition and even established doctrine and not be calling for wholesale change. It seems almost impossible to ask people to merely rethink without some seeing a subversive conspiracy to change things.

Have you ever suggested that maybe a slight change in the modus operandi for partaking of the Lord's Supper, not biblical imperatives, but just the format, might be uplifting? Then someone says, "Well if you do that the next thing you know you'll be having hamburgers and fries for communion." That's a "curious leap" in logic. Yet that same paranoia is offered for most new ideas. Recently, I had a article published in a brotherhood publication in which I questioned the practice of requiring coats and ties for those serving communion. Not only is it binding things that we have no business binding, but it contributes to the atmosphere of formalism, another tradition that we tenaciously hold to. I didn't expect everyone to agree with me, but I was surprised by the paranoid responses that it evoked. "Is he trying to put a premium on filthy attire in the service of the Lord of Lord and King of Kings?" one brother wrote. Another offered a classic paranoid rebuttal by saying, "I cannot see people waiting on the Lord's table in bathing suits..." Fear assumes that informal attire will lead to bathing suits worn in the assembly.

Spiritually mature individuals know what to fear--and it's not new ideas. What is deserving of our fear are old traditions and opinions that strangle the church. Even more than that, spiritually mature people fear God and would never do anything to harm his church.

The challenge is to grow beyond fear. With a secure faith in Jesus, a confident understanding of his Word, and a receptive, open heart, we can cast aside the fears that Satan uses to stunt growth, stop work, and split the church. As has always been the case, there is only one way to escape fear. John said it best. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, Because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. We love, because he first loved us" (1 John 4:18-19)

Only love can stop the polarizing of the church into liberal and conservative camps. Only love can heal the wounds of vindictiveness and smugness that many have felt through the years. Only love can show that we are true representatives of Jesus Christ. Finally, only love can propel us from paranoia into the bliss of real brotherly love

From *Image Magazine* by permission; condensed.

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaes

Tooger Now in Florida

Tooger and Nancy Smith plus sons Mike (now in college) and Mark have moved from the Linton, Ind. area to Port Charlotte, Florida. Tooger is the principal of Community Christian School, and enjoying it immensely. There is no permanent address yet, but the school's telephone is 813/625-8977.

Prayer Request from a "Closed Land"

Ismail graduated from a Muslim religious school which trains men to be imams. However, after finishing this training he ended up rejecting Islam altogether. In April he met a Christian worker and asked if he would teach him about Christianity. After meeting with the Christian and attending one worship service, he brought four pages of questions about things he had read in the Gospels. After his questions were answered he said, "I want to become a believer in Christ." In the next two weeks he read through the whole New Testament twice. We are unsure if he has followed the Lord yet in baptism. He has a photographic memory and a very high IQ. Because of his natural ability and in-depth knowledge of Islam he is a very influential person. Please pray for the continuing work on God in his life.

Cramer and Hanover (Lexington) Church of Christ

While Bro. Bennie and family were away on vacation, Brethren Victor Broaddus, Alan Carter, and Glen Knauer -- all from the membership -- brought the sermons in his place.--Bennie Hill, Minister

Locust Street (Johnson City, Tenn.) Church of Christ

I was in a meeting with the church at LeCompte, La., Aug. 14-19, and I don't know when I have participated in a more satisfying meeting. There was a spirit of enthusiasm, the attendance was good, we saw two young people baptized into Christ, the messages were well received, and we had some support from neighboring congregations. The services began at 6:30 P.M. with thirty minutes of congregational singing, then after about a five minute break the regular service followed. Bro. Stan Broussard led most of the singing at the 7 o'clock service. Phyllis and I had delightful time in the home of Dillard and Doris Fontenot. They are a real asset to the church there.

We were privileged to attend the first camp reunion at CYE, DeRidder on Saturday, Aug. 15. Some 150 to 175 persons were there, and we enjoyed the fellowship and meeting of old friends greatly.

MINISTER NEEDED: The Locust Street Church of Christ in Johnson City, Tennessee is requesting those who may be interested in serving this congregation to please send a resume' to: Locust Street Church of Christ, 110 W. Locust Street, Johnson City, TN 37601. Johnson City is a growing city of 50,000. College educational opportunities abound at Milligan College, Emmanuel School of Religion and East Tennessee State University. Locust Street Church of Christ is a small congregation with a strong core in an area with unlimited opportunities.

Pine Prairie Church of Christ

May 17, 1992 - Pine Prairie held a dedication service in their new building. -Tim Morrow, Minister

Southeast (Louisville) Church of Christ

Brothers Jeff Mayeux and Tom Mobley brought the sermons while Bro. Nathan and family were on vacation - Nathan Burks, Minister

Turkey Creek, La., Church of Christ

What in the world is going on?

You are encouraged to watch and take notes of the things you see going on in our world, both good and bad. One Sunday night soon we will have an open discussion meeting where we can all enlighten each other about the good things happening and the evil to be on guard against.

"In God We Trust" -The Campaign To Put God Back In America.

47 Billboards, will be put up in Washington, D.C. in January on Inauguration Day. This will be the beginning of a campaign to put God back in America. A campaign to let our voices be heard by those in Congress and all through our government. Voices for morality, family values, and against the many evils of our day. Another matter for you to add to your prayer list.-Glenn Baber, Minister

"ARE YOU BEING PRESSURE COOKED?"(OR JUST BASTED)

Plan now to attend the 1992 Ladies Retreat on October 16th and

17th at Cedar Ridge Camp near Fisherville, Ky. Teens are invited with an adult in attendance.

Betty Strunk and others will give a concert on Friday evening followed by fellowship activities. On Saturday Jackie Gill will start with a devotional, followed by Nancy Ford who will give an inspiration talk on our theme, and Maria Burks will discuss self esteem. Linda Roberts and Betsy Garrett will give their testimonies and Jan Potts will tell us a little about her stress at work as the activities director of Maple Manor and how she deals with her elderly patients and their families.

Registration begins at 6:30 P.M. Oct. 16th and the retreat will end at 3:30 P.M. on Oct. 17th. The fee will be \$10.00 per person. Everyone should bring a dish for the Potluck dinner on Friday evening. Breakfast and Lunch will be provided on Saturday. If you are unable to attend Friday night but would like to come on Saturday please try to be there by 9:00 A.M. for the first session. If you choose there are several hotels in Louisville in the Hurstborne area and they should be available. Please plan now to attend! If you have any questions contact: Ruth Wilson 502-897-2831, Sherry Marsh 606-744-3021, Melanie Mitchell 812-967-4861, Ramona Marsh 812-945-7209, or Linda Roberts 502-875-3330. Note: A free-will offering will be taken to cover expenses.

SEE URGENT NEWS ITEM AT BOTTOM OF PAGE 282.

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