

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

JANUARY, 1994

HOW IMPORTANT

IS THE

HOLY SPIRIT?

A WONDERFUL YEAR AT PORTLAND CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Donald Rucker, Principal

I want to start by bragging a little bit on the seniors. We spent Thanksgiving weekend at White Mills Christian Camp near Elizabethtown. This weekend built upon what we did at our original retreat in September. We sang a lot of songs, shared testimonies, and had a very special communion service on Sunday morning. As a group, they really impress me as young people who are willing to let God work in their lives. I look forward with eager anticipation to the things that this class will accomplish in life. 12 of the 13 seniors were on the second grading period honor roll. That is 92% of the class. The seniors who have taken the ACT so far this year have earned very respectable scores. Several have been contacted by colleges regarding scholarships.

Our school chorus continued the tradition of singing at the Thanksgiving service at Atherton High School on Thanksgiving morning. In addition to the whole chorus singing, there was a presentation by a double quartet. This group was not originally organized by the chorus director, Phyllis Mullins, but was put together by the students themselves out of sheer love of singing. After the service, someone said that the chorus was the best she had heard at the Thanksgiving service in twenty years. As the chorus makes final preparation for the trip to Louisiana, they will be available to sing in area churches on Sundays and Wednesdays during the month of March. If your church is interested in having the chorus come and sing, contact Phyllis Mullins at the school.

The chorus did something a little different on the last day of school before Christmas break. Traditionally, this is a day when not a lot of earnest school work is accomplished and most students try to persuade teachers to have a Christmas party. This year the chorus visited five area nursing homes during the day to share the spirit of Christ. The high school students not in chorus shared the spirit of Christ as well. While the chorus was away they spent the morning in the home ec room baking cookies and other goodies to take to The Lord's Kitchen for the noon meal. They spent part of the day fixing and serving meals to disadvantaged families.

This is the 70th year of Portland Christian School's operation. Our alumni banquet is a great opportunity to celebrate all the wonderful things the Lord has done and continues to do in the school. The banquet will be held in the school gym on Saturday, April 30, 1994. Why don't you make it a point to be there, especially if you have missed the last several years? For information, call Rita Smallwood in the school office (778-6114).

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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In This Issue

Theme: How Important is the Holy Spirit?

Editorial -- Alex V. Wilson	2
One of the Churches Greatest Needs -- Tom Bradshaw	5
An Unpublicized Tool -- David R. Mains	5
Tongue-Tied Preacher -- R. A. Torrey	8
Thought Provokers from Here and There	10
Your Church Doesn't Believe In the Holy Spirit -- Roger W. Thomas	11
The Baptism in the Holy Spirit -- R. C. McQuilkin	15
Heroines of Faith -- Betty Ratliff Smith	19
Voices from the Fields	21
Questions Asked of Us -- Carl Kitzmiller	24
Glimpses of Persecution During 1993	27
Why Christians Meet -- To Worship or Edify -- A. V. W.	29
NEWS and NOTES	31

THEME:

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Alex V. Wilson

"Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you . . ." 2 Tim. 1:6

Our theme two issues ago was God our heavenly **FATHER**. Last month we emphasized the humanity and deity of Jesus Christ His **SON**. Now we focus on the third member or "person" of our great three-in-one Lord, **THE HOLY SPIRIT**. We last devoted an issue to the "Spirit of the Living God" back in Sept. '89. There were articles about His personality, and also His ministries as "paraclete" (counselor/comforter/helper/friend/strengthener); His work of producing wisdom and Christlike character in us, His aiding us in our praying, and His imparting of boldness and abilities to us so we may serve the Lord. How **essential** He is for Christian life and service!

And yet numerous believers do not know nor esteem Him properly, which results in inner weakness and poverty. May God enlarge our knowledge, hunger, and experience of His Spirit. For, as Steve Green sings, ". . . It's always time for growing./We need so much more/ Of the Spirit of the Lord. You can be as full as you want to be./ Look inside your heart and you will see/ All the places that you need to give to Him." If you don't believe that, then consider Tim.

Highly Privileged

We read in Acts 16 how Paul reached Lystra and found a young disciple named Timothy. He was much esteemed by the believers there, and Paul asked him to join his missionary team. Obviously Tim was already converted to Christ, and thus *born* of the Spirit and *indwelt* by the Spirit. Doubtless he gave evidence of the *fruit* of the Spirit--loving character--and had to some extent exercised one or more *gifts* of the Spirit in service. Otherwise the believers would not have recommended him nor Paul invited him.

Having agreed to join the Paul-and-Silas evangelistic team, apparently Tim was "ordained," just like the seven men in Acts 6 whom the apostles appointed for special service to poor Christians. This is mentioned in 1 Tim. 4:14, "Don't neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you." Also in 2 Tim. 1:6 Paul refers to "the gift of God, which is in

you through the laying on of my hands," presumably on the same occasion. What was this gift which Tim received at that time? Not the Holy Spirit himself, as in Acts 2:38, for he had received this at his conversion. And not the initial endowment of spiritual gifts either—"birthday presents" imparted to enable believers to serve Christ in some way—for every Christian receives that too when he is born again. Peter tells *each* Christian to use whatever gift he has received (1 Pet. 4:10); no believers are have-nots when it comes to the gifts of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7,11).

In other words, at conversion God gives the new Christian the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit gives the new Christian some endowment so he/she can work for the Lord (for example, by teaching, helping or leading, etc.). But Timothy had been converted earlier, receiving his spiritual gift then. So what did he receive at his "ordination" or appointment to Paul's team? Probably either some additional abilities, or some deepening of the gifts he already possessed.

Privileges bring Responsibilities

Now notice this: Scholars estimate that approximately 18 years elapsed between Tim's call (Acts 16) and Paul's second letter to him. Consider these facts: 1) Tim had been a growing, strong Christian for 20 years or so before Paul wrote 2 Tim. 1:6 to him. 2) Tim had been appointed by God (through the elders and Paul) 18 years before this, and at that time was given some special "plus," some additional gift to equip him for further service. 3) He had then lived, traveled, worked, prayed and suffered alongside the great apostle Paul off and on for all those years. He had heard his teaching, seen his miracles, and joined in his praying. What fantastic privileges. 4) Tim had been a dedicated, faithful, useful assistant to Paul and servant to Christ during that time. Paul wrote the Philippians, "I have no one else like Timothy, who takes a genuine interest in you." (Notice 2 Tim. 1:3-4 also.) He had taken advantage of his privileges without wavering.

And yet . . . and YET EVEN TIMOTHY needed to be urged, "Fan into flame the gift of God which is in you"! If *he* needed to be thus exhorted, how much more you and I! Our God-given abilities and endowments are like fire, which, left alone and untended, will die down and burn low. All fire, to continue burning, needs fuel and air, or it goes out at last. So we must keep stoking it and poking it if we want it to burn on. "God lights the fire within us," says John Stott, "but we must fuel it. There is a constant danger that the Christian's inner fire will die down until there are only smoldering embers." So we must beware of apathy, declining interest, decreasing zeal and fading love.

There is another danger too. There are people around us who want to put out our fire. It annoys them! Paul goes on to mention "suffering for the gospel," and the fact that he is a prisoner (he was soon beheaded). So we must look out not only for careless unconcern inside us, but for persecutions outside of us--tempting us to shame (v.8) and timidity (7). "Timid Timothy" needed exhorting. Do we? Are we standing up for Jesus? This world is full of firemen with hoses trying to put out the fire of our faith, love, hope and service. Let's not let them.

How To Keep the Flame Burning?

How can we fan into flame the gift of God imparted by His Spirit? Notice the context of 2 Tim. 1:6. 1) *Exhortation*: If Tim did stir up the gift within him, it was at least partly because Paul urged him to. We too need to be stirred and warned by God's word. Thus personal Bible study plus classes and sermons are important. 2) *Remembering*: Note verses 3-6, "I constantly remember . . . recalling . . . reminded . . . I remind you." Wow--God must realize how short our memories are. We need to recall what we learn through study, or else it soon evaporates. We should remind ourselves of Christ's cross (via the Lord's Supper, for instance). And we should review God's mighty acts in church history and our own experiences with the Lord.

3) *Fellowship*: "I long to see you," writes Paul (v.4). We too need each other. One of the best and most natural means of exhorting and reminding is fellowship-groups. A small number of Christian friends meeting regularly to share joys and bear burdens is invaluable. This is one of the Spirit's best tools. 4) *Prayer*: "I constantly remember you in my prayers" (v.3). There is no higher privilege nor more binding duty.

May God help us to stir up the inner flame He has given us, and not let ourselves burn out. Using these four disciplines (and others too), we can do so. For. "we can be as full as we want to be."

ARE YOU HUNGRY?

"It is not uncommon in any church to see one or two people who are ablaze for God, while the rest accept things rather calmly and without much interest. If these latter grow at all, it is doctrinal knowledge, not spiritual fervor.

It may be set down as an axiom that **our spiritual condition perfectly corresponds to the intensity of our desire**. Each of us enjoys as much grace as he actually wants. Where there seems to be a discrepancy between what we possess and what we desire to possess, we may safely conclude that our desire is not as great as we had supposed. We want God, it is true, but we want something else more. **And we get what we want most.**" -- A. W. Tozer

ONE OF THE CHURCH'S GREAT NEEDS

[R. H. Boll was a longtime, outstanding editor of this magazine. Tom Bradshaw recently wrote a master's thesis on Brother Boll. One section was on his beliefs, summarizing a number of his views on important doctrines and practices. But as happens in thesis writing, Tom's first draft was too long, so that section had to be eliminated. Here is the part about our theme for this month, the Holy Spirit.]

Brother Boll believed that the Holy Spirit is God living in man, working in the body of Christ to accomplish His will on earth. Many in his day neglected to study and teach about the Holy Spirit. They claimed that they could not understand what the Bible had to say about the Spirit. Boll wondered if "I can't understand" meant "I can't believe it, the way it stands."

Some felt that concentrating on the teaching about the Spirit might lead one to excessive emotionalism or to a depreciation of the value of the written word of God. "These fears are groundless," wrote Boll, "in so far at least that a faithful study, acceptance and presentation of God's teaching on this subject can produce only good results." An honest study and application of what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit will lead to "a larger faith, a stronger hope," and "more courage and reliance upon God;" and "your fidelity to the word of God will not be a whit abated."

So his counsel was, "Let us seek to understand all God would have us know about the Holy Spirit. It is one of the great needs of the church today."

AN UNPUBLICIZED TOOL WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT USES

David R. Mains

The Bible mentions the conscience a great deal. Let me give you a few of these references. Hebrews 9:9 refers to the inadequacy of the Old Testament sacrifices which could not clear the conscience of the worshiper. In 1 Peter 3:21, baptism is seen not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a clear conscience. In 1 Timothy 1:15, Paul says that the aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a clear conscience. In Romans we are urged to obey governing authorities, not only to avoid God's wrath, but also for the sake of conscience. And there are more references.

Christ, by the Holy Spirit, indwells every believer, and He leads us in new directions. As a Christian, every time you step out of line, it will be like a buzzer going off ... BZZZ. It goes off all the time when you first become a Christian. After a while you begin to say, "This is getting very annoying. Don't I ever do anything right?" The truth is that you are finding out that there is an incredible difference between being a good American and being a good member of the kingdom of God.

I was in Denver right after the Billy Graham crusade. There were numbers of converts. Suppose one of those converts works in a factory. He goes to work the next day and begins to talk about the bozo down the line that he doesn't care for. As soon as he starts to talk ...BZZZ. Then he is very aware that God is serious about his learning to love Him and other people. Now you can do what many individuals do who have heard the Spirit of Christ going BZZZ. They shut it off. It is an unwelcome alarm clock. If you silence that alarm over a period of time you end up in a very difficult position because now you must be the one who is teaching yourself how to walk the way of Jesus. You have taken one of His basic areas of teaching (through the conscience) and said, "I do not choose to be obedient in that area."

How do I know that the BZZZ is from God? Cannot the devil put the thought in my mind too? It is not usually that hard to tell the difference between when it is God and when it is the devil. If you honestly do not know whether it is God or the devil, I say do not worry about it.

Let me give you some of the names of the Spirit that will help you know when it is from God or when it is from the pretender. For example, He is called the "Holy Spirit." So if BZZZ is in regard to a matter of holiness, you just assume that it is God. The devil is not going to correct you in that area. I am glad, frankly, that God is gracious to us and does not say something to us in an audible voice--especially when we are doing something wrong. How would you like to be sitting in a class and begin to think lustful thoughts and this great big voice says, "Ralph, get the dirty thoughts out of your mind." Thankfully, God uses our conscience instead of speaking aloud.

Another name of the Spirit in the Scripture is the "Spirit of Truth." If your life is anything at all like mine, you will find Him again and again hammering at this area until your words are precisely so. I do not want to imply that I tell huge whoppers, because I never was very good at lying. But I was quite adept at exaggerating and twisting stories so I would come out looking a little better. Now, as I have grown in my walk with the Lord, I find when I do sense that BZZZ, I do not really question whether it is God or the devil. I know it is God.

Let me move from negative checks to what is more exciting--the positive encouragement of the Holy Spirit. You have heard this phrase many times; "the love of the Spirit." When you sense that you are prompted to do a loving act on someone's behalf, you know that did not come from the devil. Just assume that it came from God.

A term that is synonymous with the Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of Jesus." Who is this Spirit who indwells us? It is the Spirit of Jesus. He cannot physically crawl inside of us and live out His life. But He literally comes inside of us by His Spirit--the Spirit of Jesus. So when you sense that you are prompted to do a Jesus-like act, then do it. You become Jesus' hands and feet, His tenderness, His graciousness. Assume that the Lord is involved in what is going on. Over a period of time you will learn a great deal through trial and error in the Christian walk. I am not saying trial and error in terms of whether a commandment is right or not--that is the objective Word of God. I am talking about the subjective areas related to your conscience where you are not sure whether it is God or not. You try it and see what happens. Be responsive to the BZZZ of your conscience. Does that make sense? God does work that way. We learn. We never are perfect. We are always a little confused. But the conscience is a wonderful tool when it is in sync with the spirit of Christ who created us and now wants to live through us.

Unfortunately, a lot of people follow a policy of not being obedient to the conscience. I remember a story I read by Dr. David McKenna, president of Asbury Seminary. In one of his books he told about the troubled soul who went for professional help. "What is your problem?" asked the counselor. "I do not have the will power to resist temptation, and my conscience is uneasy." "You would like to strengthen your will power. Is that right?" the patient paused, dropped his head, and answered sheepishly, "Not exactly. If it is all right with you, I would like to have my conscience weakened." It is possible that you have been trying to become accustomed to a troubled conscience. You would not state it out loud that way. But in practice that is what has been happening. If so, you are missing one of the greatest joys you can know in the Christian walk. That is the delight of enjoying the beauty of a clear conscience--day by day, hour by hour and moment by moment.

[Condensed from a chapel talk at Bryan College, Dayton, Tenn.
David R. Mains is the director of The Chapel of the Air, Wheaton,
Illinois.]

TONGUE-TIED PREACHER

R.A.Torrey

I became a minister of the gospel simply because I had to, or be forever lost. I do not mean that I am saved by preaching the gospel; I am saved simply on the ground of the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and that alone. But my becoming a Christian and accepting him as my Savior turned upon my preaching the gospel

For several years I refused to come out as a Christian because I was unwilling to preach, and I felt that if I became a Christian I must preach. The night that I surrendered to God I did not say, "I will accept Christ," or "I will give up my sins"; I said, "I will preach "

But if there was ever a man by natural temperament who was unfitted to preach, it was I. I was an abnormally bashful boy, and a stranger could scarcely speak to me without my blushing to the roots of my hair. When I went away from home visiting with other members of my family, I could not eat enough at the table I was so frightened to be among strangers....Think of a man like that going into the ministry.

Even after I was a student in Yale, when I would go home on a vacation and my mother would have callers and send for me to come in and meet them, I could not say a word. After they were gone my mother would say to me, "Archie, why didn't you say something to Mrs. S. or Mrs. D.?" and I would say, "Why Mother, I did." And she would reply, "You did not utter a sound." I thought I did, but it would get no further than my throat and stick there.

I was so bashful that I never even spoke in church prayer meeting until after I entered seminary. Then I thought that if I were to be a preacher I must at least be able to speak in my own church prayer meeting. I made up my mind that I would. I learned a piece by heart. I remember some of it to this day, but I think I forgot some of it when I got up to speak that night. As soon as the meeting was open for participation, I grasped the back of the seat in front of me and pulled myself up to my feet and held on to it lest I should fall. One Niagara went rushing up one side and another down the other, and I tremblingly repeated as much of my little piece as I could remember, and then dropped back into the seat.

At the close of the meeting a dear old Christian lady came to me and said, "Oh, Mr. Torrey, I want to thank you for what you said tonight. It did me so much good. you spoke with so much feeling."

Feeling! The only feeling I had was that I was scared nearly to death.
Think of a man like that going into the ministry.

My first years in the ministry were torture. I committed my sermons to memory, and then I stood up and twisted the top button of my coat until I had twisted the sermon out. When I finished I dropped into the seat back of the pulpit with a great sense of relief that that was over for another week. But then the thought would at once take possession of me, "Well, you have got to begin tomorrow morning to get ready for next Sunday." Oh, what a torment life was.

But a glad day came, a day when the thought took possession of me that when I stood up to preach--though people saw me, there was Another whom they did not see but who stood by my side. All the responsibility was upon Him and all I had to do was to let Him do the preaching. From that day to this, preaching has been the joy of my life. I'd rather preach than eat.

Sometimes when I rise to preach, the thought of Him standing beside me able and willing to take charge of the whole meeting and do whatever needs to be done, has so filled my heart with exultant joy that I can scarcely refrain from shouting.

[R.A. Torrey, 1856-1928, wrote over 40 books, was long associated with Moody Bible Institute, and conducted a series of remarkable evangelistic campaigns worldwide between 1902-1906. The above article was taken from a sermon on "The Personality of the Holy Spirit." The following is also by Torrey.]

I Use "It" or HE Use Me?

If we think of the Holy Spirit only as an impersonal power or influence, then our thought will constantly be, "How can I get hold of and use the Holy Spirit." But if we think of Him in the biblical way as a divine Person, infinitely wise, holy and tender, then our thought will constantly be, "How can the Holy Spirit get hold of and use me?" The former conception leads to self-exaltation; the latter to self-renunciation.

If we think of the Holy Spirit merely as a divine power or influence, and then imagine that we have received the Holy Spirit, there will be the temptation to feel as if we belonged to a superior order of Christians. But if we think of the Holy Spirit in the biblical way as a divine Being of infinite majesty, condescending to dwell in our hearts, it will put us in the dust, and make us walk very softly before God.

Many can testify of the blessing that has come into their lives from coming to know the Holy Spirit as an ever-present, living friend and helper

THOUGHT-PROVOKERS FROM HERE & THERE

About the Holy Spirit

Again and again, we must give ourselves whole-heartedly to the person of Christ himself. The Spirit is called the *Holy Spirit* because he is. He's the *consecrating* (holy) Spirit, sent not to focus us on himself but to bring us into an exclusive allegiance to Christ. So, the more we love Christ, desiring everything for Christ--the more powerfully the Spirit can carry out his own commission among us. --David Bryant in *World Christian* magazine

Is There a Short Circuit Somewhere?

Christianity comes with the batteries included. If there is a power loss problem, it is not in the provision but in the faulty hookup and most probably in our pride. --Jim Carter of Atlanta, in the Brookvalley Church bulletin

This is for YOU, for EVERY Believer

Unfortunately, many of today's books about the Holy Spirit have high-lighted the experience of the Spirit's filling by centering their attention on evangelists and ministers. This leaves the impression that the filling of the Spirit is only for the few and mighty--not for the everyday believer. This was true, to a degree, in the Old Testament, but not the New. The Spirit's filling is available to the housewife, the businessman, the truck driver, the secretary, the physician, the student and the men and women on the assembly lines of the factories. No one is excluded from this blessing, and every life can be a better one when it is lived in the power of the Holy Spirit. --Harold Lindsell, in *The Holy Spirit in the Latter Days*

Gifts from the Holy Spirit

Everyone has some gift, therefore all should be encouraged.

No one has all gifts, therefore all should be humble.

All gifts are for the one Body, therefore all should be harmonious.

All gifts are from the Lord, therefore all should be contented.

All gifts depend on His fullness for power, therefore all should keep in close touch with Him. --A.T. Pierson

Seeking the Spirit's Fullness—and Finding

A dear sister said to me once, "I am going to spend a whole day praying for the Holy Spirit." She went to a hut in a wood, and she came back at night and said, "I have had a grand day, but I am a bit disappointed. I do not feel that I have more of the Holy Spirit now than I did."

"But," I said, "is Jesus much to you?"

"Oh," she replied, "Jesus never was so precious as He is now."

"Why, my dear woman," I said, "that is the Holy Spirit, because He glorifies Christ. When the Holy Spirit works most, you do not think about the Holy Spirit, but you think about your dear Lord."

—F. B. Meyer, *The Christ-Life for My Life*

"YOUR CHURCH DOESN'T BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT"

Roger W. Thomas

[This article first appeared in *Christian Standard*, the leading magazine among the "Conservative Christian Churches." They and the Churches of Christ are co-heirs of the "restoration movement," and what he says applies to at least some of us too. —AVW]

"The Christian Church doesn't believe in the Holy Spirit!" I've heard that statement or ones similar to it a number of times through the years. I've probably even half believed it myself.

I've known Pentecostal brothers to level such an accusation primarily because we didn't agree on every interpretation of Scripture regarding the work of the Spirit. Other charismatic-oriented friends have queried me about that because Christian Church preachers they knew didn't talk much about the Spirit.

More often than not, such a notion is expressed by Christians who have grown up in a restoration movement tradition and have come to feel betrayed because no one taught them about the continuing ministry of the Spirit of God in the life of the believer. When they discovered long overlooked sections of Scripture on their own or had them brought to their attention by someone outside of their normal circle of

Christian associates, they rightfully began to ask some tough questions. And when the answers seemed evasive or are less than helpful, they often concluded, "The Christian Church doesn't believe in the Holy Spirit!"

An Undeserved Criticism

Is the charge right or wrong? While I know the critique is wrong, at least in the circles in which I have lived and worked, I also know there are some tendencies within the restoration movement heritage that can sometimes make such a statement sound almost believable.

First, the restoration movement was born in the emotionally charged atmosphere of the frontier revivals of the early nineteenth century. To counter the abuses common to such an environment, early restoration leaders preached a rational faith, grounded first in the teaching of the Bible, not the subjective spiritual experiences of the believer. Such an emphasis was valid then and remains valid today. But it does lend itself to exaggeration and sterile scholasticism.

Also, the restoration movement has always been very much a "gospel" enterprise. Its primary goal was and is to call men and women to saving faith in Jesus. The preaching of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus became central. In the early years "no creed but Christ," was an often repeated call. Baptism and the Lord's Supper, the two most gospel-oriented Christian activities in the New Testament, quickly became the hallmarks of the restoration churches.

This intentional emphasis on Jesus could, at times, sound like the Holy Spirit was being ignored. Sometimes He was! But more often, this tendency was simply an application of what Jesus taught. "When the Counselor comes, ... he will testify about me" (John 15:26).

The Unrestored Movement

Of course, on the other side of the coin, some of the criticism is deserved. We have sometimes "thrown the baby out with the bath water." Not wanting to sound like or be confused with those we consider in error about the work of the Spirit, we have sometimes simply sidestepped valid teachings of Scripture.

At other times, humanism--the first cousin of rationalism--has ruled supreme. We have so emphasized human responsibility that we have sometimes ignored divine initiative. While perhaps understandable, such a tendency is deadly! And inexcusable!

Two areas, in particular, call for renewed study and concentration by those in the restoration heritage the valid role of gifts of the Spirit

and the relationship of believing prayer and healing. For many, though not all, Christian Churches these remain two unrestored dimensions of New Testament teaching.

New Lessons from Old Voices

One of the most helpful experiences for this writer has been the discovery of a largely unknown body of written materials on the ministry of the Holy Spirit from within the restoration tradition.

Twenty years ago when I first began to explore this topic while in seminary, I became discouraged by the lack of helpful materials in print. The library I was using, a good one, had only a handful of works on the Holy Spirit in its collection. Works by restoration movement writers could be counted on the fingers of one hand. I came close to concluding that we didn't believe in the Spirit.

Years later I discovered a veritable gold mine of written materials that had gone largely unexplored. The problem was that most of these nearly 1,200 items on the Holy Spirit and His work are found in the periodicals of the movement. Only a limited amount is available in more accessible book form.

My reading in this treasure of bygone literature brought to light some interesting information. Not the least of which was a correction to the misguided belief that the restoration movement never had anything to say about the Holy Spirit. It was interesting also to note that the old issues and controversies seldom die. They simply return in new garb and slightly altered forms.

Much of the literature of the 1800's discussed the relationship of the Holy Spirit to conversion. Writers and scholars debated whether the Spirit works in the sinner and then in the Christian apart from the Word or through the Word only. This issue revolved around the authority of the Scripture and the ever present plague of subjectivism.

In the 1970's, the articles mostly wrestled with the meaning of the "indwelling of the Spirit," the "baptism of the Holy Spirit," and the nature and extent of the Spirit's gifts. These issues were obviously related to the then rapidly expanding charismatic movement.

The most interesting period in the literature took place between the years 1896 and 1899. During this period the *Christian Standard* published an article almost every other week on the role of the Spirit. From December 1896 to February 1899, a period of twenty-seven months, sixty-six different articles appeared. Much of the writing centered around a series of articles by W.A. Oldman and A.B. Jones.

An article in the *Christian Standard* of December 12, 1896 (p. 1588) is typical of the period. In the piece, Jones accuses Oldman of trying to "reason the Holy Spirit out of our religion." He concludes his essay with the powerfully worded challenge that ignited the controversy that would continue in the pages of the periodical for the next two years.

Jones' words are as deserving of attention nearly a century later as they were then. He wrote:

It is painful to know that a large percent of our preachers have no apparent understanding or appreciation of this prominent New Testament doctrine. They shy around a passage that has the words Spirit, spiritual and Holy Spirit in it, just as the average sectarian preacher shies around a passage that has baptism in it. If we would save our churches from the death of "natural causes," ...our preachers must give their attention more to this doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We can never have spiritual churches until we have a spiritual ministry. When our preachers give as much attention to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as they have given to the doctrine of baptism, we will more speedily and more effectively accomplish our mission as a people. No man can ever become and remain truly spiritual in his heart and life who denies the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

In the decades that followed this period of interest in the Spirit, the movement fell on hard times. During the era of debate and division in the 1920's and the years that would follow, very little was penned in the periodicals about the Holy Spirit. In the *Christian Standard*, for example, 165 separate articles on the Holy Spirit were published between 1890 and 1919, most of these within the space of a half dozen years around the turn of the century. By comparison, in the sixty years between 1920 and 1980, only 144 articles would appear!

There is little wonder that a generation would arise that would think that the restoration movement had little to say about the Holy Spirit!

It isn't true that the Christian Church doesn't believe in the Holy Spirit. But it is true that we have much to learn about the Spirit's power and promise. Much of it we can learn from our own history. And like it or not, some of it we can learn from our charismatic and Pentecostal brothers and sisters. We can and must learn that the spiritual life is impossible without spiritual power. We can learn that the same passage that teaches "baptism for the remission of sins" also promises the "gift of the Holy Spirit." We can learn that the same Lord who empowered and guided the church of the New Testament can and will guide the church of today.

THE BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

Robert C. McQuilkin

The essential doctrine of most Pentecostal teachers may be stated thus: The baptism of the Holy Spirit is a supernatural endowment for which each Christian should seek, an experience of being born of the Spirit when one accepts Christ as Savior. Most Pentecostal teachers give, as the seal or evidence that this baptism has been received, the speaking in an unknown tongue. Usually a distinction is made between speaking in tongues as a "gift" of the Spirit, referred to in 1 Corinthians 12, and speaking in tongues as the "seal" of the initial baptism. One may be baptized with the Spirit, speaking in an unknown tongue, and yet may not have the *gift* of speaking in tongues and may thereafter never speak in tongues.

There are a number of other teachings not usually classed as "Pentecostal"--often they are called "Holiness"--which hold that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is an experience subsequent to conversion, to be sought by every Christian, but that it is not evidenced by the speaking in tongues. Some teach that the baptism is for *power in service*, and the evidence of it is new power in soul-winning. Others teach that the baptism is for *purity of heart*, or holiness, and that the evidence is some special inward "witness of the Spirit," an emotional experience of some sort, but not the speaking in tongues.

At no point is it more necessary to stick closely to the Word of God than in these matters where varying personal experiences are involved. We want to lose nothing of this earnest seeking for the fullness and power of the Holy Spirit, and at the same time give Satan no advantage through wrong teaching.

Have All Christians Been Baptized?

When we go to the epistles we are met by the startling and, to Pentecostal teachers, disconcerting fact, that the baptism in the Spirit is mentioned directly just once in all the epistles: "For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free, and were all made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13, ASV). And in this passage the plain teaching is that *every* Christian has been baptized in this way, thus cutting across the central idea of the Pentecostal teaching of today.

To read the books of Pentecostal writers, and of others who teach the baptism of the Spirit as a second work of grace, one would gather that the supreme need of Christians is to seek the baptism of the Spirit. And if their doctrine were right, that indeed would be the supreme need. But what shall we say of the New Testament epistles, *which contain not so much as a single exhortation* to Christians to seek the baptism of the Spirit? Pentecostal teachers answer by saying that all the Christians *of that day* were baptized with the Spirit, and did not need to be exhorted to seek it.

Two facts should safeguard Christians from making such a suggestion as this in support of any doctrine. The first is that New Testament teaching for the Early Church is given by the Holy Spirit in such a way that all the truth needed for the Church through its whole history is included. It is inconceivable that God should leave not a line of instruction upon the most essential truth needed by Christians today; for if the Pentecostal teaching about seeking the "baptism" is true, then it is the most vital teaching to be urged upon Christians, as salvation is the most vital truth for the unbelievers.

The second weakness of this suggestion that all in the apostolic Church had received the "baptism," must be seen in the fact that those churches were filled with carnal and powerless members, Christians who were as spiritually needy as many today. The letters are full of earnest and often heartbroken exhortations to have them get right with God. They certainly needed something. If they all had the "baptism," we must conclude that this experience is one that leaves many Christians spiritually poor indeed, and gives no guarantee that its teaching will solve the need of the Church. As one earnest Christian testified in a conference in which the writer was speaking "I was born again on such a date, I was entirely sanctified on such a date, but the trouble was I did not have victory in my life." In that conference I had spoken in a little Pentecostal church, and one after another of the members came with confession of defeat and discouragement and deadness of spiritual life. What was I to preach to them? Not the "baptism" for they all had it, and the "baptism" is something not to be repeated; they had all spoken in tongues and some of them had the gift of tongues along with their deadness and defeat. The marvelous spiritual awakening that *some* Christians attribute to their special experience of the "baptism" is indeed a *genuine* and Spirit-given experience. But they are *interpreting it wrongly* and thus sowing the seeds of this confusion and defeat I have found in several Pentecostal circles that I have been in touch with--and in sympathetic, not criticizing, touch.

One writer, a friend whose zeal for the Lord I covet, explained I Cor. 12:13 by saying that there is a distinction between baptism *in the Spirit*, referred to in this passage, and baptism *with* the Spirit, men-

tioned in verses in Acts. This explanation he gave with the thought of overcoming the difficulty that all Christians are there spoken of as baptized in the Spirit. But the Greek word for "in" and "with" in these verses he quoted is exactly the same and this bit of interpretation is an example of what one is driven to when he begins to bend Scripture to fit his explanation of some real and glorious experience he has had.✻

Crisis or Process?

There is one great crisis taught in Scripture, the crisis of regeneration, passing from death to life, from darkness to light. The normal life for a Christian is to go on in the power of the Spirit, abiding in Christ and growing in grace. But what of the Christian who is not doing this but is instead defeated and dissatisfied? He needs a crisis. *Not* a second work of grace, but *getting back to what he had*, or entering into the realization of what salvation means.

A dear friend of the writer's, formerly a drunkard and outcast, was raised from spiritual death by Christ. He was born of the Spirit, filled with the Spirit, began witnessing in the power of the Spirit, leading others to Christ, filled with the joy of the Lord. After some time he got in touch with his old stepfather, who was delighted when he heard the news and wrote his son something like this: "Now, son, you must not stop with being justified. You must press on and seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit." The son had not heard of this before, but if there was something his Lord wanted him to have, seek it he must. So he began to seek for the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He lost his joy and peace. He lost his fervor in witnessing to Christ. He spent his time praying and agonizing for the baptism of the Spirit. He read book after book on the subject. He prayed for hours, he beat his head against the floor, pleading with God for this new gift. For months this went on, till he finally got relief from a suggestion that after praying for the baptism he should simply trust God that the answer had come. Fortunately he had not gone so far as to insist on speaking in tongues as the evidence of the baptism. So he yielded and trusted, and peace came again--a "new" experience which was in every way just what the Lord had given him when he trusted the Lord Jesus as his Savior from sin!

God Works As We Pray

I recently had the privilege of reading a letter from a Pentecostal missionary to her brother. The letter was fragrant with love for Christ

✻ Though McQuilkin wrote this article before the rise of the Charismatic movement, a number of teachers in the present movement advocate the idea mentioned above. E.g H C Frost writes that at conversion "it is the Spirit that baptizes us into Christ (1 Cor 12 13)" whereas "accordint to John the Baptist, Christ is to baptize the believer into the Holy Spirit (Matt 3 11)" But as McQuilkin observes the wording in the Greek does not support this distinction

and fairly glowed with zeal for souls and with New Testament fervor. She told something of the glorious things that had come to her life through the "Pentecostal blessings," and real indeed were her spiritual blessings. The letter incidentally told of her great joy in rising at four o'clock each morning before the children and others were about, and holding sweet communion with her Lord for two hours or more. Small wonder that this missionary went forth with love and power in soul-winning. Was it her Pentecostal experience and speaking in tongues that was the secret of this power?

I have just read again that leaflet that has been so blessedly used to stir Christians to a real prayer life, "Is Prayer Fundamental or Supplemental?" It tells of a missionary in India living and working in a mission station devoid of power, when God called her to believe that prayer was really her chief business. What miracles followed, what joy and peace and power in her own service, and what revival in the station, with hundreds turning to Christ where dozens believed before! Yet this missionary never had any "Pentecostal baptism" nor had she spoken in tongues. God honors a yielded life that lives by His power, whatever explanations we make of our own experiences.

Another Danger

Let us be aware of another peril just as deadly as the dangers associated with Pentecostal movements. There is the possibility that a dead "orthodoxy" may self-righteously condemn extreme and wrong "Pentecostal" views, and yet run to the other deadly error of natural wisdom and a form of godliness without divine power. *Shall we not frankly recognize the fact that the vast majority of church members today need something utterly different from what they have? They need the supernatural power of the Spirit.*

Let us not limit God in His working, and let us not fail to be ready for new and great outpourings of the Holy Spirit in the closing days of this age. For the days are upon us when nothing will avail to break through the overwhelming power of the enemy except supernatural power beyond what most Christians have known anything about. But all of this has no necessary connection with a doctrine that every Christian should seek and experience of "the baptism of the Spirit," looking for a supernatural sign like the speaking in tongues.

Originally published in THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TIMES.

Heroines of Faith:

OVER HALF A CENTURY OF MISSIONARY SERVICE

Betty Ratliff Smith

Dollie Garrett probably had some interesting thoughts as she reviewed the first 90 years of her life--crossing the Atlantic on a small cargo ship that only had room for 12 passengers, serving as a missionary in Africa for many years and moving to Winchester to enjoy her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Her parents, the late Perry Leon and Anna Adamson, were homesteaders in Woods County, OK. However they traveled to Kiowa, KS for her birth and according to Mrs. Garrett, "I've been traveling ever since."

She recalled how her mother would harness her and tie her to a clothes line to keep her from wandering off and how she attended school in four different places.

She married Stanton Dewitt Garrett on June 20, 1926 in Morrilton, AR. Her husband, Mrs. Garrett said, was a printer by trade, so they moved to Shelbyville, IN where he worked for a newspaper. He was a missionary by choice and when the opportunity arose, the young family--Dollie, Dewitt and two sons--left for Africa. It was June, 1930.

Cecil, who now resides at 399 College St., Winchester, Ky., was only nine months old when the family sailed from Montreal, Canada on the small ship carrying Canadian pine to Cape Town, South Africa. Five people, the four Garretts, and a man going to Sierra Leone, Africa, were the only passengers on the 30-day voyage. Cecil, according to Mrs. Garrett, literally crawled across the Atlantic Ocean, since he had just reached the crawling stage.

After a short stay in Cape Town, the family traveled to Wuyu Wuyu to help with a new mission station before traveling to Salisbury, Rhodesia. This time, they were accompanied by another son, Robert, born May 21, 1931.

In addition to teaching, Dewitt helped another missionary build a larger brick room for meetings so the congregation could move from the small corrugated steel room which was very uncomfortable, especially in the hot weather.

The Garretts' first daughter was born March 5, 1933. The family was receiving \$60 a month and had to pay rent, water, lights and buy fuel for the wood stove. The African men wanted a night school, so two teachers were hired. Dewitt taught Bible and the teachers taught math and English. For Six years, he conducted school from 6 until 9 p.m. A second daughter arrived Oct. 6, 1936. In order to avoid paying rent, the Garretts borrowed money and bought one acre of land at Highlands and built a four-room house. The family moved into it in 1938 with one floor down, and before any windows or doors were installed. They were added as time and money permitted.

The family returned to the United States and settled in Searcy, AR where the children were enrolled in school. Due to World War II, the family could not return immediately to Africa, so Dewitt got a job in the college print shop and preached at different locations on Sundays. He also finished his B.A. Degree. The third daughter arrived Sept. 14, 1942.

In 1946 the Garretts returned to Africa, taking one son and three daughters and leaving two in the United States to attend college. They also took a 1946 Ford and a small luggage trailer. They arrived in Salisbury July 1, 1946 and bought their first refrigerator and electric stove as wood had become very difficult to obtain and very expensive.

In 1953 Dewitt and Dollie returned to the United States on a brief sabbatical, and returned to Africa in 1954. Their third son, Robert, went to Africa in January 1960 to help his father, taking with him his wife and three children. "Before, we could only enjoy our grandchildren through pictures and letters. Now we had them with us. While in Africa, Robert's wife, Joy, gave birth to triplets.

Dewitt and Dollie returned once again to the United States in 1963, traveling alone for the first time and living a short time in Sellersburg, IN, before they returned to Africa in December 1964. Dollie remembers the Arcadia church building and the orphan home for Mulatto children, designed to hold eight boys and eight girls in addition to Dewitt and Dollie.

In January 1972 the Garretts returned to United States as a team for the last time. Dewitt died Sept. 8, 1972. Dollie recalled how she returned to Africa and the school, and remembered the many friends she made along the way and the obstacles they overcame.

She came back to the U.S. in 1982 to attend the wedding of her youngest daughter Anna Marie. It was the only wedding of any of her children that she had been able to attend. She went back to Africa for the last time in July 1983 and stayed until December, 1989.

Now she makes her home with her son, Cecil, and his wife Betsy. The children she cared for in the Arcadia Children's Home keep in contact with her by letters and pictures and although her eyesight has failed, she has her family to read to her. Today she is a member of the Belmont Church of Christ and keeps busy in the kitchen and with her crocheting.

As she reviewed her life on Aug. 29, her 90th birthday, she took comfort in the fact that she and her husband had left a legacy of service, to her country, to those in Africa with whom she came in contact, to family and most of all to her God.

And according to Dollie, "I am looking forward to my very last journey."

Who could ask for more?

(From the *Winchester Sun*, September 22, 1993)

VOICES from the FIELDS

Robert L Garrett
November 6, 1993

P.O. Box 30, Ruwa, Zimbabwe

We had a very successful men's camp meeting at Rockwood Bible Camp October 16-17. There were 61 men in attendance. On Saturday we had four one-hour lessons in the morning and four one-hour lessons in the afternoon. Instead of having one large assembly we divided the men into four classes to rotate through the four teachers (Brethren Machaya, Chivengwa, Kwenda and Garrett). So each of the teachers had to repeat their lesson four times. Having smaller groups helps make the lessons more personal. The evening meeting was time for questions and discussion. Sunday morning we had a 2 hour Bible study and the normal worship service.

The men were the first to enjoy the newly completed floor of the all-purpose building. Previously it had been very rough concrete but now it has been given a smooth cement topping.

We have had to make several quick trips to South Africa recently for car parts not obtainable in Zimbabwe. Three gear boxes have broken down in one month. We thank the Lord for Brother Zilawe of the Zengeza congregation who gives his labor to help repair our vehicles.

We request prayer for an abundant season of rain. We thank God they have begun on time--first week of November--and pray they will continue.

Mark And Candy Garrett
November 20, 1993

Quebec City, Canada

Candy and I can see the last leg of our French studies fast approaching. After evaluating our progress, our SIM language advisors recommended that we continue in Quebec a short while in '94. So, after Christmas visits with our families in the US, we plan to return to Quebec. At Laval University we have learned both written and spoken styles of French. Our goal in the new year is to concentrate on fluency in *spoken* French to make us more effective when we arrive in Senegal. It will be our sprint to the finish line. We will hire a tutor and arrange for conversation partners for 9 weeks. Talk, talk, talk, talk This means we will arrive in Senegal the third or fourth week in March with jaw fatigue from all that talking.

During our mid-semester break we traveled to Massachusetts to meet with Steve and Barbara Vannah. Steve Vannah is our team leader in Senegal. They are back in the US for a furlough until next summer. We had a great time of fellowship as they shared their insights into the work in Senegal, and we now have a better picture of how we will fit in.

The team uses scripture songs as a key teaching tool, so our musical abilities should be a help. When we arrive in Senegal our first task is to learn the Wolof language. However, since non-stop language learning can "make Jack a dull boy," I'll have the opportunity to assist part-time with our reading room ministry. Most of the men who inquire at the reading room speak French as well as Wolof, so I should be able to help there.

Our classmates here at the university continue to give us opportunities to tell of the power of the Gospel. Sometimes our discussions both in and outside of class touch on problems that only Jesus can solve. "Are Ouija boards dangerous?" "Are people who don't become Christians going to Hell?" "Why are there problems in the North American family?" What a privilege to tell of Christ's power!

Arsenio Eniego

Altadena, CA, U.S.A.

December 1993

The Lord willing, at last I'm returning to the Philippines on Jan. 29th. In His direction, I'll be visiting first the churches in San Jose.

and then Manila, Bulacan, Bantangas, and Bicol. [These latter 3 are provinces in the Philippines.--AVW]

I would like to contact a missionary team working among the Muslims in Manila, mostly around the Quiapo mosque. As the Lord opens the door, I would like also to make a survey in Muslim areas of southern Mindanao.

My sister Senia wrote that the Lord is answering our prayers for revival in San Jose. Praise Him!

Robert S. Johnson Caixa Postal 1616 Maputo, Mozambique
December 15, 1993

We thank God that the peace in Mozambique is still holding! The troops of both sides are beginning to turn in their guns to the UN forces. And the rains are still regular! Malaria has diminished. Progress is being made in the restoration of this war torn country. There is more political, economic, and religious liberty.

We now have seven student groups in seven provinces. They are all new, small and weak, but they are there. There are some individuals who are strong Christians with a vision. Our latest endeavor of expansion is to organize a group among graduates. We only have two who have come through the movement, but there are several professionals who are Christians with interest in student work, mostly of the teaching profession.

We praise the Lord that our student movement is now registered with the Ministry of Justice. We have ceased to be clandestine. Our registration certificate will help appease school administrators who may be reluctant to let us conduct activities on campus.

It seems that our day to day is very hurried and I often wonder what is really being accomplished. I'm sure you know the feeling. I've been hurring for three years in Mozambique. As I look back, I realize that in spite of all of my hurriedness, the Lord has made His presence seen. Then we were a single group in the capital city of Maputo, now we are eight student and graduate groups nationwide.

QUESTIONS ASKED OF US

Carl Kitzmiller

At what age should a child be encouraged to turn to the Lord?

The word of God does not always give us some of the specific answers we seek. Or, sometimes it does not provide the specific detail that we would like. We are told how people can become Christians and of the universal need of man the sinner. This is largely a matter of believing and accepting what God has said. But when is a child's conversion a true act of faith in Christ so that there is new life, and when is it merely a fiction, or even an inoculation against a new life?

Let it be said that there is need for a measure of wisdom in trying to reach *anyone* for the Lord. Even in dealing with adults, it is possible for us to pressure some people into being baptized when they are not ready for it. There is no conversion--only a statistic, another "notch" on someone's counting stick, another powerless "Christian." Of course there is an urgency we must not lose. Of course we do not want to let people put off a decision they are ready for if we can help them realize their need. But it is the individual's faith, not our own, which must motivate the action. We who know the Lord and the blessings of sins forgiven would believe for everyone in the world, if we could! But we cannot! In some respects salvation is a very personal matter and any attempt on our part to make it otherwise is to destroy it. Preachers need a measure of wisdom that they do not, via oratory, present a strong emotional appeal, or in some other way cause people to respond when it is not the Spirit of God who is convicting of sin and begetting new life. All of us need to be careful that we do not unduly influence the actions of others so that they are really trying to please us.

Communication and methods of getting response from people are today organized fields of study, the use of which in reaching people for the Lord may be overdone. A salesman may be so persuasive that some people buy that vacuum cleaner, only to regret it the next day when they weigh everything in the light of saner reasoning. Our government, aware of this weakness in some and of the power of persuasion, now insists that there must be a time during which the contract can be legally cancelled. Men may handle the gospel after the fashion of the high-pressure salesman, so that the formalities are carried out and a "sale" is reported but about the only birth is a stillborn one. Christians are not just salesmen and the gospel is not merchandise. Salvation deals with the heart, the inner being. God uses human vessels for carrying His message, but life is from Him, and there is no new life until the Spirit of God effects it. So we repeat, even in deal-

mg with adults we need a measure of divine wisdom so that we may be God's instruments for true conversion rather than peddlers of religion. Paul told the Corinthians that his method with them was such that their "faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:1-5).

Since improperly motivated actions can be obtained from adults, it is evident that they can be obtained from children more easily. Children are often eager to please their parents, their teachers, or a "hero" they may have established. Belief in some human may be mistaken for belief in the Lord or in His word. It is not necessarily a mark of a good Sunday School teacher that several small children in his or her class are all upset and want to be baptized, even having bad dreams at night from fear that they might go to hell. Anyone can do that, given enough teaching opportunity. Children are easily molded and can be taught for example, to say "I love you," long before they have much of a concept of what it really means. It is not enough in spiritual matters to deal with externals. Parents, teachers, anyone dealing with children should seek the wisdom of the Lord in trying to bring them to salvation, so that when the effort is made it will result in genuine conversion, not some soon-to-be-forgotten fantasy.

At what age should this process begin? In the sense that Bible training is foundational, it should begin just as soon as the child can learn the word of God. Timothy, taught by mother and grandmother, had known the scriptures from a babe (2 Tim. 1:5, 3:15). Bible teaching should begin quite early. I am persuaded there is value in reading the Bible to a child (in child-sized doses) even before he is able to comprehend much that is read. There is much that he needs for a foundation for faith before the consciousness of sin and an intelligent awareness of his need of salvation takes place. It seems to me that when a diligent and sensible program of Bible study is followed the child arrives at an awareness of his need of salvation without some special evangelistic effort being directed at him. At the right time, when he understands what it is to be a sinner and what it means to believe on the Lord Jesus, he will become concerned about salvation.

While Bible teaching should begin quite early, this does not mean that an effort to get some kind of profession of faith or to get the child baptized should begin quite early. If we are after responses, so we can report what great soul winners we are and how many we have won to the Lord, then indiscriminate child evangelism will be the easiest way to get such results. But if we are concerned about true conversion, then we will not try to get the child to accept the externals of conversion until he is able to believe and respond in a truly scriptural way.

It would be nice if we could set a certain age of accountability and as the age for gospel response, but the Lord just has not made it that simple. The Bible nowhere tells us at what age the child is able to believe. A bit of reflection will help us understand why. Children are not identical gadgets all stamped out of a manufacturing machine. They vary, both in their ability to know and in opportunity for development. The child who has grown up in Bible training will likely have an awareness of sin and understand what it means to repent of sin and to believe on the Lord much earlier than one who has never had any Bible training. Some children are much quicker than others to grasp any kind of teaching. The child reared in the Christian home and "in the church" is likely to understand what being a Christian is all about much sooner than the one who is bused in to the church from an ungodly home and whose religious teaching has probably been mostly negative.

We will have to use some sanctified judgment about how far of how fast to push both children and adults. We must not fail or refuse to act out of fear that we might do the wrong thing and we must not let zeal and enthusiasm, or even youthful stupidity, cause us to "pull the plums while they are still green." Not all of us will be of the same judgment, for a variety of reasons--our own experiences, the influences of religious teaching we may have had, our own maturity or immaturity, etc. All of us need to seek the wisdom of God, however. Paul was concerned that he be a wise masterbuilder. You and I need that same concern. We must not let our standards be set by the world and its philosophies. Rather they must be set by the word of God and the principles therein. We must be servants of God.

Some regard age twelve as the "age of Accountability." We have already indicated that there is nothing in the Bible which teaches this directly. Presumably this age was chosen because at age twelve Jewish boys became responsible for practicing the Jewish religion, and maybe because of the mention of Jesus in the temple at age twelve. Or, maybe in experience, it was discovered that an awareness of sin and of need seems to come to many children at about this age. I personally believe it is a mistake to settle on this as the age of concern. Nevertheless, in my experience, I find that the average child probably reaches a stage of development along about the years of ten to twelve which makes it an ideal time for turning to the Lord. I know that many respond during these years.

We do not practice infant baptism, declaring that faith is an essential prerequisite to scriptural baptism. It is! For the same reason we must avoid a too-early religious response and baptism. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Messiah of God requires some understanding, and action

Continuing the Spiritual Battle

GLIMPSES OF PERSECUTION DURING 1993

January

Saudi Arabia: A convert from Islam to Christianity is found guilty of insulting God and beheaded, according to the Saudi Ministry of the Interior.

Mexico: Villagers demolish a Protestant church. Several evangelists are injured in beatings and three are jailed.

February

Pakistan: Charges are brought against a Pakistani Christian, demanding his execution for allegedly defaming the prophet Mohammed.

Iraq: A Christian bookstore manager and his wife narrowly escape injury after a bomb explodes outside their home.

March

India: A group of six missionaries are severely beaten and expelled from the region. They were reportedly attacked for evangelizing and distributing religious literature.

China: Authorities arrest more than 90 Christians in Shaanxi Province as part of a brutal assault on five house church members. One died shortly after being beaten by Public Security Bureau officers.

April

Egypt: Educators are enforcing an unofficial policy of segregation according to religious beliefs, and Christian students are reportedly being beaten and called "devils."

Russia: Legislators have formed a council which potentially could regulate all religious bodies in Russia.

May

Saudi Arabia: The government abruptly expels an Egyptian Christian carpenter who had been sentenced to seven years in prison and 1,000 lashes for allegedly defaming Islam.

China: Bishop Ding, head of the official Three-Self Church, denounces "a wind of oppression" that is directed at churches nationwide.

June

Pakistan: A ten-year-old boy and two adults are arrested and charged with blaspheming the prophet Mohammed. If convicted, they face the death sentence.

Egypt: State Security Police arrest three Americans, an New Zealander and an Egyptian for evangelizing. They also confiscate large quantities of Christian literature.

July

Russia: Legislators vote to restrict foreign mission activities, but the bill is held up by President Boris Yeltsin.

Sudan: Government security forces arrest a leading pastor for providing humanitarian aid to civilians displaced by the civil war. The U.S. State Department accuses the Sudanese government of "accelerated religious persecution" in its drive for Islamization.

August

South Africa: Gunmen kill 11 including an Open Doors volunteer, in an attack on a South African church.

Sudan: The U.S. State Department confirms independent reports that the Islamic government is rounding up non-Muslims and enslaving them, sending massive numbers of women and children into bondage in other Muslim countries.

September

Iran: Reports say that believers are suffering from systematic, state-sponsored persecution in the city of Mashad, including arrest, torture and imprisonment of Muslim converts to Christianity.

Bulgaria: Threatened new laws are planned to restrict the activities of non-Orthodox churches, in the wake of a growing anti-evangelical campaign and efforts to restrict the influx of "sects."

October

China: Authorities in Henan Province are arresting Christians from unregistered churches and heavily fining them in order to pay for state construction projects.

Egypt: A leading Islamic cleric announces that an apostate from Islam should be killed if he does not repent, claiming that this is not a crime before God.

November

Turkey: Prison sentences are demanded for 14 Spanish tourists who were arrested for singing hymns and handing out pamphlets in a public square.

Pakistan: The Supreme Court officially endorses the concept that religious freedom guaranteed by the constitution is "subject to Islamic law" as the higher authority.

December

The struggle continues.

--From Open Doors *News Brief* December 1993--

Why Christians Meet--To Worship or Edify

A.V.W.

A brother in Christ who edits a paper in Missouri and also subscribes to W&W asked me to answer a question. (I've never met this gentleman, incidently.) He asks where in God's Word are disciples advised to meet together for *worship*? He agrees that Rom.12:2 admonishes us to engage in spiritual worship, but believes this refers to our *attitude* while engaging in *everyday* activities--doing all things to the glory of God (1 Cor.10:31). So it does not refer to "worship assemblies." On the other hand, Heb.10:25 does refer to Christian meetings, but omits mentioning worship. Rather it tells us to *encourage* one another. Nowhere are "worship services" mentioned in the NT, and thus the idea is merely a human tradition. "The 'worship service' theory fits well with a clergy system, but very poorly with NT Christianity," our brother concludes.

I had heard such ideas a few times previously, and was always befuddled by them. What were the questioners getting at? What's so bad about worship meetings? Then it dawned on me that they do not desire less worship, but more! They are against restricting it to certain times and certain places. Mike Root's book, **Spilt Grape Juice**, puts it this way:

When we think of worship, we should think of living for God and not have mental pictures of buildings, reverent atmospheres, long faces and

structured acts. Worship is synonymous with sacrifice, praise, obedience, and service . . . We will have *Sunday-only Christians* as long as we have *Sunday-only worship*.

Well, amen to that idea. It is valid and valuable. Hymnwriter William Cowper put it this way:

For Thou, within no walls confined,
Inhabitest the humble mind;
Such ever bring Thee where they come,
And, going, take Thee to their home.

That's worth pondering. Interestingly, though, the title of his hymn is, "Jesus, Where'er Thy People Meet," so in no way was he downgrading public assemblies. Nor is my correspondent.

Jerry Daniel's article in a recent *Integrity* magazine throws additional light on the issue. He says that before 1970, Churches of Christ more or less assumed that the "purpose of the assembly" is primarily vertical--to focus on worshipping God. In contrast, in recent years a number of folks have supported "the view that the assembly is designed chiefly to meet the need for edification. Drawing heavily on such passages as 1 Cor.14, it has been argued that the encouragement of fellow-Christians, the horizontal dimension, is a more basic goal for the public assembly than is praise of God, the vertical dimension."

Frankly, the solution to this disagreement seems incredibly simple to me. It's a matter of BOTH/AND, not EITHER/OR. For example, Eph.5:19-20 says, "*Speak to one another* [horizontal dimension] with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart *to the Lord*, always giving thanks *to God* [vertical dimension]." Or take 1 Cor.14, the longest NT passage on church meetings. True, the main thought is "edify/edification." These words appear seven times (in the Greek; some English translations use "strengthen" or "build up"). But what was involved in those edification-meetings? Besides prophesying and speaking in tongues (both mentioned over ten times, since they were Paul's main concern in this passage), and instruction (four times), the apostle mentions *prayer, singing, praising, and giving thanks*--all of which are related at least partially to worship.

Yes, let's worship our Lord in all activities of all our days, individually and in our families. But let's also meet with our local congregation of believers to worship Him with prayers, songs, praises and thanksgivings, and to remember Calvary at the holy meal. In addition let's edify one another by explaining and applying God's message to His children, that we may be strengthened, exhorted and comforted (14.3)--built up, stirred up and cheered up. As Jack Hayford wrote, "A worship service is convened (1) to serve God with our praise and (2) to serve people's need with His sufficiency."

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaes

New Preacher at Parksville

John McNerney from Gallatin, Tenn. was to begin his ministry at the Parksville, Ky. Church on Jan. 2nd. The church has been looking forward to him and his wife Sheila coming to serve with them. John was trained for ministry by Julius Hovan, and his spiritual growth was a great encouragement to the folks at Gallatin.

Kenneth Preston has been preacher at Parksville for the past 10 years. He is still available for pinch-hitting from time to time, or for holding meetings. His new phone no.: (606) 734-4654.

Back Issues of W&W, Hardbound

We have hardbound volumes of W&W available for these years: 1991, '90, '81, '80, '45, '44, '35, '33, '30, and even a few from the '20's and earlier. For 1981 we have 2 copies, for the rest only 1 copy.

These are for sale @ \$12 per volume if in good condition, \$10 if in poor condition. Most are in good shape. You must also pay the postage, & Ky. residents must pay tax.

Bring Up A Child . . .

The following is a real letter which appeared in The Word and Work - News and Notes, December, 1931. It certainly has an application for our child training habits today. (J.B.)

"I wish everyone who has an inclination to bring up children without teaching them carefully that they must submit to control could know what I know about the desperate Texas bandit, Dell McCabe, recently

killed by detectives in another state. Some twenty years ago I had him as a lovable little boy in school. He was an orphan living with his aunt, and while she taught her children, a little older than Dell, to be obedient, she could not bear to see Dell crossed--it was mistreating an orphan. I knew him as an exceptionally sweet, bright child about eight, who was learning that he had no master. Then I read of his death as a desperado and I knew why." --May Lynn, Texas.

Sermon Topics

Nathan Burks will be preaching through Ephesians on Sun. Mornings during Jan./Feb., and through Acts at night. Then starting in March he plans to preach a series on How to Deal with Problems, such as discontent, judging, bitterness, selfishness, greed, temper, gossip, etc. It's good to see a balance of expository sermons & also topical sermons on practical subjects.

Alex Wilson in recent months preached on how to use time wisely, how to control TV, & the importance of your life's "wife"--Worship, Instruction, Fellowship and Evangelism. Then he preached 9 times on attributes of God. At night he has led a series of studies on Jesus from the Gospel of Mark.

May God direct those who preach in their choice of subjects, and their preparation and presentation of His Word.

Christian Youth Encampment, La.

In November, some 17 campers gathered for the retreat, along with

some 20 or more adults. Reports are that the group was good quality and had a good time. Bro. Victor Broadus and Bro. Motoyuki Nomura (missionary to Japan) led the campers in devotions and lessons. The Denham Springs church worked very hard to make the weekend a worthwhile time.

C.Y.E. SCHEDULE FOR 1994

Junior Week will be June 19-24, directed by the Jennings Church.

Junior High will be July 10-15, directed by the Turkey Creek Church.

Senior High will be July 24-29, directed by the Denham Springs Church.

Tax Code Changes to Affect Churches

Each charitable contribution of \$250 or more to a church or other non-profit organization must be verified by a written receipt according to a new provision in the tax act. The provision also concerns amounts paid partly for goods or services and partly as contributions. The act is effective as of January 1, 1994.

One change modifies section 170(f) of the Internal Revenue Code to require that a charitable deduction not be allowed for any individual contribution of \$250 or more unless the taxpayer substantiates the contribution by a written "acknowledgement" or receipt. In other words, cancelled checks will not be accepted as proof for any donations of \$250 or more at one time. The receipt must be received on or before either the date the taxpayer files his tax return or the due date of the return, including extensions.

Tell City / Lilly Dale

Missions Presents--

"PASSING ON OUR GODLY HERITAGE"

FEB. 25 - 27, 7:00 PM (E.S.T.)

FRIDAY: "OUR GODLY HERITAGE: WHERE WE CAME FROM" A presentation of basic Restoration Movement ideals --Paul Kitzmiller. SATURDAY: "OUR GODLY HERITAGE: WHERE WE ARE" An overview of the Restoration Movement in today's society.

--Nathan Burk SUNDAY: "OUR GODLY HERITAGE: WHERE ARE WE GOING?" The continuing ministry of the Restoration Movement. --Nick Marsh

For more information contact the Tell City Church of Christ at 547-6778. Housing is available.

Gallatin Church of Christ

Dr. John Mackay of the Creation Research Center in Brisbane, Australia spoke for us on Sunday, December 12, 1993. His topic was "The Day God Washed Away the World."

Post Abortion Counseling. You may have an abortion in your past, you may be a Christian, but there is a hidden area of unforgiveness in your heart. You may have unexplained anxieties or bouts of depression--all symptoms of post abortion stress. The Crisis Pregnancy Center is offering a support group beginning in January for a 9 week period.

Southeast Church of Christ

Megan McElwain was here to hand out some information about her plans to go to Russia on a missions tour. She will be accompanied by her sponsor, Pam Wilson, and fellow students Jodie Lyon and J. T. Henderson. Please help these Portland Christian School representatives on their mission trip. I am so thankful for the commitment

many of you have made to help the Mountain Mission School. Your commitment to Portland Christian School, The School of Biblical

Studies and Christian Colleges does no go unnoticed.

(Note to the editor from "Brother Val": Please print the enclosed. It is long overdue, but we wanted folks who knew her to know of her homegoing.)

BETTY VALDETERO ISTRE

1904 - 1993

On July 20, 1993 Sister Betty Istre went home to be with the Lord Whom she loved and served for many years. She was the wife of Bro. Ivy Istre who ministered the Word for over sixty years in Southwest Louisiana. She leaves behind two sons, Richard and Kenneth, who are both active in the Lord's work.

"Sister Betty," as she was affectionately known to many, became a Christian about 1920. Her dedication to her Lord was known to all who came in contact with her. She became a Christian at a time when doing so was not popular in SW La. In 1924 she married Bro. Ivy Istre and that couple became a force for the cause of Christ that affected the lives of many. In 1927 Bro. Istre became the minister in Jennings and served as minister and elder until the time of his home going in 1985.

In 1954 Christian Youth Encampment became a reality and these good people, along with Bro. Frank Mullins, Sr. and Bro. Herbert Ingalls, led the way in getting the camp going. Sis. Betty headed the kitchen crew until around 1970, when she "hung up her apron" for younger workers.

She taught many the Word of God. On the first Sunday of Nov., 1992, at the 75th anniversary of the Jennings Church, it was my privilege to bring her to the front and honor her. When I asked everyone who had been in her classes that were present to stand, over 50 stood. Add to that number many more who were not there or who had gone on to meet the Lord.

This dear lady always loved a good story and a good laugh. In fact, the Saturday prior to her fall that ultimately ended her life she told me a story of an incident that happened many years ago and just laughed as she told it. She believed that a merry heart was good medicine and she practiced it.

The song "There are lights by the shore of that country" always reminds me of Sister Betty. She could be counted on to be on the side of right whatever the issue. She loved the Lord dearly and served Him with great dedication. Truly, "a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised" is a fitting tribute to her. We miss her, but our loss is heaven's gain. It was my privilege, along with Bro. A. J. Istre, to conduct her memorial services on July 22, 1993. Yes, her children, and many more, will rise up and call her blessed!

Antoine Valdetero

WHAT DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT MEAN TO YOU?

Catherine Marshall

My friend Tay was looking at me curiously. "What does the Holy Spirit mean to you?" she asked.

I remembered the sermonette at the Cape Cod church. "Oh--one of the three Persons of the Godhead--the third Person of the Trinity."

"But I sense something in the offhand way you say that--" she looked at me sharply. "Let me guess that in your mind the Spirit has an insignificant and unnecessary place. Isn't that right?"

I nodded. "That's right."

"But I know from personal experiences that the Holy Spirit is just as great, just as needed as the other two Persons of Trinity. Anyway you still haven't answered my original question, what is He to you?"

Her intensity seemed to demand a candid reply. "I've got to be truthful, Tay," I replied. "He's nothing to me. I've had no contact with Him and could get along quite well without Him." Although at the time I believed my own statement, I was soon to find out that it was not so. As a matter of fact, I could not get along at all without the Holy Spirit. Some searching in the Bible told me why.

--From *Beyond Ourselves*, published by Spire Books