

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The *Word and Work*



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

MARCH, 1994

A TIME TO REVIEW

- Baby Boomers: their strengths, weaknesses, and impact on the church
- Church Meetings: same old stuff, or the joys of a 7-course banquet?
- Charles Finney: astonishing praying, incredible revivals
- Did your great grandpaw have a pig's tooth?
- Is Vacation Bible School worth the hassle?
- From Africa to Heaven, in a hurry (see inside back cover)

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THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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THEME:

A TIME TO REVIEW

Alex V. Wilson

This month our theme articles do not all focus on one topic, as is usually done. Instead they deal with many subjects. Yet they all revolve around one center of gravity. Each one relates to some theme covered earlier, during 1993 and '92. For each theme was important.

Former editors Boll and Chambers review the WHO, or object, of Christian **worship**. Then, thinking of the HOW of worship, we have two articles. One deals with the matter of songs and hymns. The other is provocatively entitled "Dry Bread and Cold Potatoes?", and takes us to the buffet table. Both of them also address the issue of **change** within the churches, of "doing things differently." So does our question and answer column, in which Carl Kitzmiller writes of the generation gap and new ideas. And that leads to the subject of "Baby Boomers"--usually defined as those born between 1946 and 1964. That generation has been exposed to more changes and also desires more changes than anyone before their era.

Of course it is inaccurate and unfair to lump together a whole generation of people. But certain broad generalizations seem to fit many if not most of the Boomers, who are without doubt making a massive impact on our present era. So check out our two Boomer articles this time. The second of them brings back the topic of **world missions**. Remember that exciting June '93 issue, "The Good News about the Good News"?

And speaking of excitement, what can top real revival for that? Charles Finney may have been more deeply involved with spiritual awakenings than anyone else in church history. Some of the things he mentions seem incredible to us now. But that may just indicate how deeply we today need revival--and the prayer that precedes it.

Worship; change; world missions; revival. Think about them again. For review is essential in grasping new information, forming improved attitudes, establishing better habits, or mastering additional skills. So we make no apology for this review issue. Repetition is still the mother of success.

WHERE THE EMPHASIS BELONGS

R. H. Boll

We are apt to emphasize overmuch man's part in the religion of Christ. There is a natural reaction from a theology that tends to eliminate man's part altogether; yet it is not good to allow ourselves to be swept to an opposite extreme. We should endeavor to keep balance, to preserve the proportion and the emphasis the Bible places upon God's and man's part respectively. And a little quiet examination of the word of God will show that the bulk and the emphasis of the scripture turns vastly upon God--who God is, and what God has done, does do, and will do.

While man's responsibility is absolutely essential in its place, and must not be ignored, yet the place and space assigned to it, especially in the gospel, is comparatively small and very much subordinate, so that, after exercising all his share, man has no whit to boast of, no claims to recognition, but receives all from God freely, as a gift, by grace, and God alone is glorified. For that reason, if the two evils be compared, the extreme that exalts man's agency in salvation and gives God's comparatively little emphasis is more hurtful and results in a much more inferior Christianity than the opposite error. We are not obliged to choose between two errors. It is important that we study our Bibles with special regard to this point, and assign to God and man, God's part and man's part, their true relative importance.

God's Part And Man's Part

The Bible makes much of God, little of man. According to it, man is great only in proportion as he is connected with God. In and of himself, he is poor, miserable, blind, naked, ruined, helpless. In the plan of salvation, what man can do, though indispensable in its place, is of no intrinsic worth and merit. God prepared the Feast; the man, invited, comes and sits at the table. God gives; man sets himself in a receptive attitude, takes, enjoys; and in turn, through the very blessing bestowed on him, becomes a blessing to others. God saves him and works in him both to will and to do his good pleasure; man, with reverence and awe, works out that which God worked in him. (Phil. 2:12,13.)

Note how the apostles represent it--how completely the part which God performs overshadows man's side of it. "Ephesians," for example has six chapters: the first three are taken up with the exceeding great things God did for us; the latter three are full of loving exhortations and admonition how we ought to walk; and those instructions depend

for their force and basis purely on what preceded, on what God did. For it was God that chose us, called us, blessed us with all spiritual blessings, whose exceeding great power worketh for us that believe; it is he who raised us up from the dead when we were dead in trespasses and sins, children of wrath even as the rest; who made us nigh by the blood of Christ when we were afar off and without God; and without hope in the world. "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:8-10.) And so in all the epistles. Even James who makes a specialty of man's part, does not do so without basing it on the all-important part of God, from which all man's acceptable work derives its origin. (James 1:17,18; 2:5.)

When God Is Given His Place

When a man receives the overwhelming supremacy of God and God's part in salvation, it has a wonderful effect on him. It humbles him: it makes him deeply thankful to God; it fills him with joy; it gives him unshakable confidence, for now the reliance of his hope is shifted from himself and what he can yet do, to God and what God has done and can yet do. He will forget self, and count it out of the transaction; he will magnify God. His efforts thenceforth will be directed not so much to self-discipline, but to drawing nearer to God and cleaving to him with purpose of heart, which results in the highest and truest self-discipline: the mortifying of the flesh and bearing the fruit of the Spirit. All boast will be taken out of his mouth, and in the place of boasting will be praise.

This sort are never braggarts; never self-conceited, loud-mouthed, overbearing ranters. They cannot preach self; they must proclaim Christ. They will not be cold and bitter and despairing of others, for the love and power God manifested toward them gives them assurance that he is abundantly able to save others, be they ever so weak and evil. Nor will they detract from aught God requires us to do; but they will esteem it a privilege to follow faithfully God's directions, as a hungry wanderer would be glad of the privilege to follow the steps that lead into a home and a banquet hall provided for him. This is the happy gospel of grace that delivers us from ourselves and makes God our all in all.

THE PERFECT PANACEA

Stanford Chambers

"Panacea: a remedy for all ills or difficulties, a cure-all."

--Webster's Dictionary

The sin-sick soul needs Christ. The sick world needs Christ. The heathen need Christ, the unlearned need Christ, the poor need Christ, the cultured need Christ, the scholarly need Christ, the rich need Christ. Christ received meets every need, meets it perfectly, and He alone does so. His redeemed should know this, and "Let the redeemed of Jehovah say so."

"Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ unto them." Of others it is stated that they preached the Word. But He is the Word. They preached the things concerning the kingdom, but He is the King, and to preach the kingdom is to preach Christ. They preached the gospel, but He is the Gospel. Its wording is only to set Him forth to those of need. The remedy for sin is Christ. Rules there are, but the rules are not the remedy; they are directions for taking the remedy, and the remedy is Christ.

The backsliding Galatians needed Christ. "My little children, for whom I am in travail again until Christ be formed in you, even you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was set forth crucified." "Christ in you the hope of glory," is just as applicable to the Galatians as it is to the Colossians, just as applicable to us. To the carnal Corinthians, "I am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ"--the Christ who was crucified. The Hebrew Christians about to apostatize are presented Christ in His deity and all His superiority and excellencies from the beginning to the end of the epistle. And to each of the seven churches of Asia He presents Himself the first thing in each epistle, following which in the rest of the Book He goes forth "conquering and to conquer" until the conquering is done and He stands forth revealed and recognized as "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

Preachers, shepherds, teachers, leaders need a deep conviction of the fact of *the one supreme need*, need to be ever conscious of the same, and be ever prayerfully striving to present *Christ*, that the need, in whatever form it may be discovered, may be adequately met. He, not the rules of faith and practice, is the need. What time is necessarily spent in making plain the rules, let it be baptized in prayer that *He* may be *appropriated* and then, the need be met.

HANDLING PREFERENCES IN CHURCH MUSIC

Feelings run deep on the topic of church music. Some months ago, in a "Reflections" article, the writer argued for a greater use of hymns in worship. A few days later we received a telephone call from a reader. He had been so upset by the article that he couldn't sleep. At the same time another reader wrote that she liked the article so well she couldn't wait to make copies for her church's elders and preacher to show them what they should do!

This illustrates the polarization that can occur. To some people, praise choruses shown on an overhead projector are an enemy to be opposed right along with drugs and pornography! To others, they are to be revered almost as much as the Bible. Such extremes are dangerous.

All of us have a right to our preferences. We also have an obligation to put up with some things we may not especially like, if they are meaningful to others.

Why can we not seek balance and variety in our church music? Why not rejoice when some people appreciate one kind of music and others another? Why not use all types of appropriate music so that we may reach as many different people as possible?

The apostle Paul gave us a good example. He was willing to accommodate others wherever it did not involve a matter of faith. "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22, *New International Version*). So should we, even when it comes to church music!

--Condensed from an editorial in **Christian Standard**

Sing praises to the Lord, enthroned in Zion,
proclaim among the nations what he has done.
I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart;
I will tell of all your wonders.
I will be glad and rejoice in you;
I will sing praise to your name, O Most High.

--Psalm 9

DRY BREAD AND COLD POTATOES?

Laquita M. Higgs

Most of the people walked confidently into the dining hall, but once they got inside, they were hesitant, for on the serving table were all sorts of exotic and unknown foods. "I like my meat and potatoes," huffed one, and he refused to consider the mangoes and lychees. "I've never eaten any of this, and I'm not about to start now," declared another. "I'm sure I wouldn't like it anyway," and she passed by the crisp pompadums. "I'm afraid to try that," commented another, as she eyed the luscious raspberry mousse gateau, "the raspberries are probably irradiated." Another's reaction was puzzling as he looked at the lentil casserole, "Yuk! Only low class people would eat that." And he missed the nutritious casserole as well as the tasty tabouleh salad. Over at the artichoke plate, one was heard to exclaim, "I'm not about to eat that; I don't even know how. It would make me look stupid!"

One by one they passed by the main serving table to go to a small one over in a dark corner. It didn't have much on it, but it was familiar food and would at least sustain them for awhile. They hurriedly ate their dry bread and cold potatoes and drank their water so that they could get out as quickly as possible. They never knew what they had missed.

Some churches are like that. They hurriedly get through the worship, and they are content. They have done their duty, and they have just enough to sustain them. Or have they? If only those churches knew the delights of a deeper and more meaningful worship, they would not be content with dry bread and cold potatoes. How sad for a church to be in the rut of complacent and dull worship. God probably gets pretty tired of it, too. In fact, it may not be true worship at all if it is complacent and dull, for genuine and intense worship is not going to be dry or cold. What a joy to be among people who are tasting of the Lord's delights, experiencing the awe of his presence, and singing to the Lord "with all their hearts"--as Paul in Ephesians 5 tells us to do. No dry bread and cold potatoes here.

How can we break out of that rut of dry-bread-and-cold-potatoes worship? Three steps may help. First, we have to *want* to break out of the rut, and this may be the biggest sticking point for some churches. Along with that must be a *willingness* to accept the awkwardness or discomfort that goes with making ourselves open to new experiences which can bring growth. Underlying both the desire and the willing-

ness must be a *trust* that God wants and honors our sincere attempts to worship him and that he will bring good results.

Wanting More of God

To truly know God is to desire him, and the more we know him and focus on him, the stronger will be our desire to worship him meaningfully. Dry bread and cold potatoes just aren't enough anymore. Praise and thanksgiving well up within us, truly drawing us closer to him--and to the heart of real worship.

The leaders of a church are crucial in fostering the hunger to come closer to God in worship. If they are sensitive, they will usually be ahead of the congregation in encouraging worship experiences which are spiced with a sense of the eternal newness of knowing God. If they adamantly opposed to any attempt to go beyond certain comfortable habits in the forms of worship, it may seem that a church is hopelessly blocked from exploring more meaningful worship experiences. In these hard cases, try prayer. Don't just pray at a distance that the leaders will allow some changes; seek respectfully and lovingly to pray with them. Pray that a desire to know God and be in his presence will spring up in hearts throughout the congregation. Pray that the Lord will provide opportunities for all the congregation to taste and know deeper worship experiences, but remember that you, too, must be open to God's challenges and instruction, just as you are wanting others to be.

Willingness to Accept Growth

Even when people know about the positive effects of praise-worship, they may still have certain fears which are a barrier. Some may be in the rut of concentrating on correct form and pattern in worship and assume that there is only one way (the old way) of doing things. Some may be afraid of the exuberance in more intense worship, and such people should be brought along gently and lovingly. Some of us grew up with the idea that emotion in worship was wrong and even dangerous. Yes, emotion can get out of hand and as a church we are to discipline ourselves so that worship is orderly and meets with the truths of God's word. On the other hand, we must not be afraid of showing emotion in our worship if it is expressing genuine feelings toward God. We love God with our head and our will, but we also love him with our heart. The deepest worship is going to involve our emotions, praise as well as tears.

Music has a special role in worship, so don't be afraid to learn new songs. When the Spirit is working among a people, new songs will emerge and old ones will come alive. Certain songs may become particularly meaningful to the congregation for a time, as they seem to ex-

press just what the congregation is feeling in its worship. Music, which is closely linked with the Spirit's working in a congregation in worship (Eph. 5:19), is a good barometer of a church's spirituality; a church that is alive and well in the Lord will have lively singing.

We cannot, of course, gauge our worship solely by how it makes us feel, by whether the singing moved us or whether exciting things happened. Our worship experiences must be checked with the truth of God. But truth is not sterile or lifeless. Jesus taught that truth sets us free, and he added that if "the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free" (John 8:32, 36). Truth is not restrictive; it is liberating.

Freedom, however, is frightening to some. Leaders sometimes worry that a freer worship will be too unstructured and disorderly, or that harmful elements will creep in. Freedom in worship does not preclude the planning of worship. Leaders should carefully, prayerfully and creatively plan worship services, for we must give our best to the Lord; but worship leaders should also be willing to abandon those plans if the Lord intervenes with a better idea. Sometimes our ideas of decorum may need to be modified. David's wife, Michal, was most unhappy when David brought the Ark of the Lord back to Jerusalem. David "danced without restraint before the Lord . . . Michal looked down through a window and saw King David leaping and capering before the Lord, and she despised him in her heart." David defended his behavior to Michal, "Before the Lord I will dance for joy, yes, and I will earn yet more disgrace and lower myself still more in your eyes." The writer then comments, "Michal . . . had no child to dying day" (II Sam. 6:14, 16, 22, 23). We must be careful not to look down our noses at those who are freer and less inhibited before the Lord than we are, or we may end up being spiritually barren, just as Michal was physically barren. Sometimes the less inhibited may want to use their body to express their praise, such as in clapping, raising of hands, or kneeling. We should not "despise" them, but realize that God may be wanting to use them to lead us all to a freer worship before God, using our body as well as our mind, will and heart.

Trusting God for Good Results

If we are to step beyond our fears, we must trust that if we are truly humbling ourselves before God in adoration and praise, the effects are going to be his glory. God delights in our worship, and in turn our praise quickens our desire for God. As praise brings us into contact with truth--for God is Truth--we become more conscious of the need for truth in our own lives. True worship does not always make us feel good, but if we acknowledge our poverty before him and approach him in the truth of our nothingness, he will bring us even closer to

himself. David wrote, "The Lord is near to all who call upon him, to all who call upon him in truth" (Ps. 145:18).

One critic of a church with vigorous and joyful services was heard to say that it is not good to come out of worship "on such a high because you'll always hit such a low afterwards." If it is merely a search for a "high" experience, then it is not true worship and there will only be a let-down afterwards, sometimes even a crash. But if it is true worship, centered upon God, it will be a stabilizing influence in our lives, producing the fruits of faith and loyalty to our Lord. Worship which has carried us into the presence of the Lord's glory will edify and strengthen. It will send us back into the world with a renewed sense of mission and eagerness to serve him.

Worship is not always the lyrical song of joy, of course. Sometimes it is silence and deep awe in his presence. Recently at the end of one of our worship services, the congregation continued sitting at the end; no one moved for several minutes. We all knew we had been in the presence of the Lord in a special way, and it was truly awesome.

We cannot manufacture moments of awe; they come only from the Lord. No matter how hard we try, our worship services are going to be barren without the Spirit of God to help us worship. You might think that we could at least worship him in our own power, but we cannot. As Paul writes, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord!' except under the influence of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). It is the Spirit who explores "even the depths of God's own nature" (1 Cor 2:10). It is the Spirit who guides us into all truth (John 16:13), not just the truth of doctrine, but the truth of a relationship with God. Even in giving God our love and our worship, we must have the help of his Spirit.

If your congregation is feeding only upon dry bread and cold potatoes, call upon the Lord to plant in your congregation a new desire for him, a willingness to grow and a deep trust that, if he is in charge, all will be well. If possible, pray with others for each of your worship services. It is good to have a regular time of prayer before each service, attended by the leaders of that service and any others who want to come. When the prayer-room is full of people earnestly praying, the subsequent worship service will be full of the presence of God. May your congregation come to his feast and be willing to taste adventurously of his delights. As David wrote, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!" (Ps, 34:3).

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QUESTIONS ASKED OF US

Carl Kitzmiller

What makes old people so unyielding to new ideas? Some of our churches are dying because of resistance to change.

It would be nice if all problems were as simple as some people wish to make them. I have no doubt that some churches are dying and that resistance to change may be a factor involved. But not all of the starry-eyed advocates of change have the correct analysis or the fool proof answers that they think they have, either. It is likely true that as people grow older there is a greater resistance to change. A fairly observant person does learn a few things by experience and is not so ready to follow every new idea just because it is new. If one has had his shins barked a few times in the process of running after promising ideas that were duds, it stands to reason that he might be a bit more careful the next time. But I have found closed minds to be something not exclusive with old folks.

A few years ago I had an experience with a group of senior-high age campers which made me realize that in some matters young people can be just about as much hide-bound traditionalists as anyone else. "We have always done it this way," can be the cry of youth as well as age. "Always" in such a case does not have to span a lot of years.

We are often very subjective when it comes to rating people as to resistance to or acceptance of change. The people who like our new ideas are considered to be open-minded, alert to progress, and forward-looking people. Those who do not like our new ideas are dull traditionalists, non-progressive, unwilling to accept anything new, and just old stick-in-the-muds. Moreover, Monday morning quarterbacking is an affliction of both young and old. It is always so much easier to blame the other person for the woes of the team, or of society, or of the church. Of course, if they had only used our own brilliant idea . . . ! Talk is cheap.

It gives me grief to hear older Christians unfairly critical of the younger members of the Body, and to hear younger Christians unfairly grousing about the stupidity and lack of vision of the older Christians. In a sense some of this is normal, just as the teen years are sometimes marked by a false evaluation of parents by child and a lack of awareness of development in the youth by the parent. However, some of our modern methods and approaches tend to magnify rather than minimize these differences, both in the home and in the church. The church needs both its young and its old. Without the young a congregation is

just one generation from extinction. Without the old it may be only one generation (or two) from apostasy. The healthiest situation is not where the young people run things or the old people run things but where all are considered brethren and seek to have each one fill his rightful place.

Age is not synonymous with spirituality or wisdom. One could easily find a lot of gray heads, "in the church" for fifty years, who are yet babes in Christ and are carnal, not spiritual. Their only wisdom is largely a wisdom of this world. We are sometimes almost overwhelmed by the realization of how prevalent this is. A man might absorb a little over the years, but generally speaking be as worldly, as lacking in spiritual content, as the very young and immature. One can also find Christian young people who are wise beyond their years and who show a knowledge of spiritual things far surpassing what one might expect. Youth does not have to mean carnality, and age does not necessarily signify spirituality.

Nevertheless, *other things being equal*, there is an advantage to age. The Lord has committed the oversight of His church to elders--older men. He has seen fit that those who fill this office should manifest certain qualities, some of which require age and experience. He did not commit the church into the hands of beginners or novices. Ideally, these are men of mature understanding in doctrine, able to judge the new idea not only as to its immediate effect but able to see ahead and also able to judge as to its scripturalness. There is a balanced judgment and a mellowing that come with age which is gained in no other way.

In practice, elders are never perfect--they belong to the human race. And some have become elders who are about as fitted for the job as a left-handed monkey wrench for turning screws. But it is a sad day for the church of the Lord when proven and reasonably qualified men are not accepted as leaders or when these leaders feel they have to dance to the tune piped by the young, the inexperienced, and often the carnal.

Of course change is sometimes needed. If people are holding to the truth of God there should not be any veering from that. Even in this, however, if there has been truth before unperceived or that from which there has been a drift, any drawing closer to the teaching of the Word is to be encouraged. Change of method which does not compromise truth may sometimes be needed, in an effort to reach a changing age or peoples of different background. Even change for the sake of variety, if it does not compromise the truth nor selfishly disturb the church, is acceptable. It is very unfortunate when those who make up a given congregation do not have the discernment needed to bring

about this kind of change. People can settle into a rut, unwilling to do anything different, mistaking sameness for faithfulness! It may be such a situation the questioner has in mind. It is not so much that unwillingness to change will lead to death as it is that a certain deadness has led to the static situation.

But I have also noticed a trend in which there is a call for change which does compromise truth. Whether by ignorance, lack of spiritual growth, rebellion or whatever, there is sometimes a willingness to trim here and there, sacrificing a part of the whole-counsel of God for the sake of what is seen as greater success. Of course we have to allow a certain freedom of conscience in issues that are not specifically treated or about which the Word may be indefinite, but there is a body of truth to which Christians ought to be committed and which they have no right to change for any reason. The world is full of religious bodies which bear little resemblance to the church of the Lord Jesus because they have, for a variety of reasons, accepted change from Biblical truth. It may have resulted in growth for them; a watered-down, doctored version of spiritual truth seems to "sell" better than the truth. People without discernment or ability to take any solid nurture may be deceived thereby. It may look like success to the worldly and the weak. The workman of God who handles aright the word of truth may be regarded as an outdated number by those who want this kind of change, but this refusal has the approval of God.

If a young or inexperienced Christian (or an old but not spiritually-literate Christian) proposes a new idea and finds that idea resisted by good, solid, spiritually-mature men noted for their discernment, he will do far better to reexamine that idea and seek fuller understanding than to act in brazen independence and insist that those men are merely old fogies without whom the church could make some progress. On the other hand, God's people need to be alert to legitimate change which improves, not sleeping away with the senility of old age. Age does not need jealousy to guard its power. Thank God for those who have not fallen into discouragement, who have good new ideas that breathe life into His work. And let us not use these things to drive a wedge between the young and the old. There are some unsavory characters and some gems in both groups, and some who fall somewhere between.

I'M SICK OF HEARING ABOUT BABY BOOMERS!

Mike Root

Why the Big Fuss?

Have you heard it yet? It's the sound of older brethren scratching their heads and voicing their dismay about "all this Baby Boomer stuff." Why is everybody making such a big fuss about the Baby Boomers? Since I am a Certified Baby Boomer (it's stamped on my birth certificate somewhere), I'd like to offer an answer to that troubling question.

In your congregation, all the members who are roughly between the ages of 30 and 48 are Baby Boomers. In many churches this is a large chunk of the congregation. Many congregations, including most of the larger churches, have preachers who are in that age group. Many of the deacons, teachers, and new elders are also Baby Boomers. It is safe to say that most men who will become elders in the next decade will come from this group too. Nearly all of the children in your Bible school program have parents who are Baby Boomers. So? So, they are not only a vital part of the church right now but they are the next line of leadership for the church, and as such will have a huge influence on the future of the church for decades to come.

But sadly, my observation is that among those leaving the church, more members come from this group than any other. A study of Christian college graduates from the '60s and '70s would make an interesting research project. I think we would be shocked to discover how many are either attending a denomination or not attending anywhere at all.

Is the Church Relevant to Boomers?

Even among those Baby Boomers who are active members, many have serious reservations about the relevance of the church to their lives. There is a strong undercurrent of discontent, frustration, and even cynicism. Many are struggling with careers, some are having a difficult time in their marriage or with parenting, and all of them are dealing with worries and stress that require much of their time and energy. They find it difficult to slip into a coat and tie or dress and hurry off to church where they must look faithful and "together," there to participate in classes and assemblies that don't meet any of their needs. All too often, their primary reason for church involvement is their children.

Do They Care About the Church?

It almost sounds as if Baby Boomers are selfish, shallow, and faithless, but nothing could be farther from the truth. Baby Boomers, especially those who have been raised in the church, love the church. They love Jesus and believe that our personal relationship with Him is paramount to all else. They love His Word and are loyal to the basic premise of the Restoration Plea. Most Baby Boomers are dedicated and dependable, and they quietly do their tasks with very little need for recognition and attention. They are not rebels, conspirators, or malcontents, but they are very concerned about the future of the church.

How are Boomers Different?

First of all, *why* are Baby Boomers so different? It's not because of the Kennedy assassination, Vietnam or Watergate. Few, if any, church Baby Boomers were protesters, flower children, or radicals during the '60s and '70s. They are unique, not because of socio-economic reasons or political leanings, but because of their experiences growing up in the church. These experiences have led them to a priority list that differs from that of the previous generation.

Now, *how* are they different?

For one thing, Baby Boomers refuse to accept 19th century traditions as gospel. This is not to say they reject all traditions. Traditions are a wonderful bonding device and they give a church a deep sense of family and uniqueness. But the inflexible and dogmatic enforcement of century-old expediencies only reenforces the irrelevancy of the church and de-emphasizes the centrality of Jesus. Church furniture, assembly times and structures, formal attire, classical two-hundred-year-old songs, sanctuary mind-sets, "walking the aisle," P.M. services, and mid-week Bible classes--just to name a few--are all traditions that at one time were expedient. While these may still be good, acceptable ways to do things today, elevating them to law just won't wash with Baby Boomers.

Also, younger Baby Boomers are the first generation to be raised with youth ministers and well-organized youth programs geared to their needs. They were part of a church group that emphasized building relationships with each other and with Jesus. They sang contemporary songs with messages that touched their hearts. Their gatherings were informal, spontaneous, discussion oriented, and even emotional. Then, nearly overnight, they were dropped back into "the adult church," with a '50s format, antique songs and a funeral parlor atmosphere. Some made the transition, but many didn't.

Year after year, for two decades now, young people have "graduated" into the traditional conventional, and formal church and have wondered, "Why can't we change things and why can't we rediscover the excitement we used to have about church?" The only answer that has been given is "This is the way we've always done it, and we're not about to change it now. Besides, it's the correct, biblical way to do things." The Baby Boomer quietly shrugs his shoulders and resigns himself to fitting in, but at the same time he thinks, "Are they reading the same Bible I'm reading?"

The Baby Boomer has very little loyalty to the external acts of "faithfulness" they were raised to accept. Unfortunately, many Baby Boomers were not raised on the gospel of Jesus as Lord. We were raised on the gospel of "acceptable behavior." The classes and sermons were about dancing, mixed swimming, smoking, lusting, short dresses, long hair, forsaking the assembly and what was wrong with everybody else's doctrines. I distinctly remember being rebuked by church leaders for not wearing socks, not having my shirttail tucked in, and wearing a long-sleeve shirt that had been cut to short-sleeve so that it had strings hanging at the end of the sleeves. It was the style, but not for Christians. I'll never forget being checked for whiskers after chapel at my christian college, while standing under the picture of the school's founder--who had a chest length beard. Someone, somewhere had decided that Christian young men had to be clean shaven, have short hair and conform to certain dress codes before they could study the Bible and earn a degree. My children laugh when I tell them those stories today. I think they believe I make them up to show them how "easy they have it."

We didn't have it hard twenty years ago, but we did discover the hypocrisy of believing that a coat and tie made one a dedicated Christian. We also discovered grace and realized that checklist religion and blind obedience to tradition have very little to do with faithfulness.

As a result, *Baby Boomers do not feel the same sense of loyalty to church attendance as their predecessors do.* They don't see it as an act of faithfulness, especially on Sunday night, Wednesday night, and many special events. This doesn't mean they don't see these assemblies as important, it is just that their personal relationship with God is more important than the judgment of brethren, who see faithfulness in terms of attendance and not the heart. After all, you can't judge hearts, but you can judge attendance. That is exactly the kind of legalism Baby Boomers reject.

Baby Boomers embrace love, grace, and Jesus as free gifts that cannot be earned. Their experiences of growing up in the midst of squabbles, debates and self-righteous condemnation of all non-con-

formists caused them to see the importance of emphasizing Jesus. Many do not understand when we talk about being "needs oriented." It is not that we want to turn the church into a huge Christian counseling center, though there is clearly a need for such help to exist, but rather that we recognize Jesus as the answer to our needs. His Word and his Spirit give comfort, guidance and nourishment; while legalism, traditionalism and formalism provide only facades, fakes and fractured churches. Jesus is always relevant and when he isn't, it is because we have gotten in his way.

Baby Boomers are far more interested in discovering how the message of the Bible applies to real-life situations than they are in arguing over methods of interpretation. Many of the mainline doctrines, especially those based on binding examples, are not important issues to the Baby Boomer. Their priorities are in a totally different vein. When you mix this contrast in priorities with church leaders who are more interested in their authority than in real spiritual shepherding, real problems can occur. Each edict and dictum escalates the alienation. Too often, Baby Boomers have the perception only older, heavy contributing members have the ear of the elders. So they pull back into their ministries, usually working with some aspect of children's ministry or benevolence, and basically ask to be left alone.

Again, these are generalities and do not describe every Baby Boomer in every congregation, but I believe it truthfully depicts the feelings of many.

What Choices Do They Have?

The reason many older members are unaware of how the Baby Boomers feel is that Baby Boomers have such a deep love for the Lord's church that most refuse to be divisive about their feelings. Some are optimistic about opportunities to change things, and they want to constructively help bring about some of those changes. Others, however, are slowly backing away into inactivity and even out the back door. They are saying, "If people throw a fit over the preacher not wearing a tie or over singing a song during the communion, what are they going to do when we ask to change some really big things?" So they are faced with a dilemma. Do they push to bring about changes (not doctrine, only expediencies) and seek to improve things for the vast majority--even though it will drive away a few older brethren who will feel threatened by the change? Or, do they do nothing, and watch dozens of young and middle aged families slip through the cracks?

What About the Children?

Personally, I am not as worried about the Baby Boomers as I am their children. For the most part Baby Boomers have developed their own little niche in the church. They have learned to live with it, for awhile anyway. But they are asking questions about the future and about their children. After he baptized his daughter, a Baby Boomer father said to me, "By the time my daughter is a young adult, I don't think she will be willing to accept the church's traditional role for women. I wonder what she will do."

Our children have even greater needs and higher expectations than we ever had. If it has been hard for Baby Boomers to accept being part of a 50s church, how hard will it be for our children in year 2000? Will they make the transition from a dynamic youth program and an energized college experience to an assembly that refuses to adjust from the post World War II era? If expert researchers are describing Baby Boomers attitudes about church by saying, "It's just that the church doesn't do anything for them," what will they say about our children in five or ten years?

How Can We Improve the Situation?

The churches that survive and thrive in the next decade will be those churches that are not afraid to adjust and be flexible where God has given us the freedom to do so. These congregations will have to make some tough decisions for the future and recognize that some people aren't going to like them and may leave. Of course, changing things just for the sake of change is not worth causing people to leave. But we haven't hesitated much in the past when there was a need to build a new building, start a bus program, eat in the building, or any number of things that we knew would chase some folks away. The rationale was appropriate then and still is today: You do what is best for the future majority of the church in order to better carry out the Lord's work.

It is not my intent to be critical or to be a prophet of doom. I am merely trying to help us understand why most Baby Boomers are quietly leaving the church or seem distant and uninterested or, at the very least, think differently than some of their older brethren. I do not think the situation is hopeless, or that serious divisions are imminent. On the contrary, I think the future looks wonderful because I see a spirit of concern, love and loyalty to the Lord and His body.

The key to working through this problem is in the Book. I can't help but think of three short Biblical principles: *First*, "We keep His commandments and do the things that are pleasing in His sight" (1

John 3:22). This must always be the starting point for brethren who care about doing God's will. *Second*, "Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15). Because our desire is to be Christ-like, we need plenty of face-to-face communication where we speak truthfully and lovingly. We are not "old fogies" or "young whipper-snappers," but brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Snobbishness or arrogance have no place in the family of God. That is why the *third* passage that came to my mind is, "Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation . . . so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Rom. 12:16,18).

There is no such thing as a generation gap: the problem is with communication gaps. Surely people who love the Lord and each other can find a way to sit down and discuss their feelings, needs and perceptions. Elders need to take the lead and spend some time visiting with Baby Boomers in their homes, their Bible classes and in their ministries. Members--young and old--need to open their hearts, minds and Bibles and reach out to each other so that the church of A. D. 2000 will be stronger and larger than it is today.

"So then, let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another" (Rom. 14:19).

--From July/August 1992 **IMAGE** by permission

AFTER THE BOOMERS COME THE BUSTERS

The Baby Boomers make up almost 1/3 of the U.S. population, and get lots of attention. Their younger brothers and sisters, or children born between 1965 and '83, are called Baby Busters. That's because the birth rate declined during those years--the baby bust followed the boom. Yet Busters make up 27% of the U.S. population. What are they like, in general?

They are skeptical about institutions and pessimistic about the future, due to increasing crime and scandals plus a precarious economy. They lack commitment to their jobs and think it normal to change jobs regularly. They value their leisure time, feeling it's important to develop personal relationships--which they think their workaholic parents neglect. They spend large amounts of time viewing TV and movies. And religiously? "They want a faith that will show them how to grow personally and how to enhance relationships, rather than a faith that focuses on rules and traditions."

--Based on **The Invisible Generation**, by George Barna

Changes! Due to Boomers' weaknesses and strengths...

MISSIONS AND BABY BOOMERS

Doug Priest, Jr.

A new day has dawned for missions in our churches. The time of the Baby Boomer has arrived. Baby Boomers have not only invaded the White House and our churches, they have also invaded our mission fields and our church mission committees.

Baby Boomers are a well known sociological phenomenon. Born in the years between 1946 and 1964, they are moving into more and more leadership positions in our society. The Baby Boomers include those who came of age in the turbulent '60s--the time of the Vietnam war protests, the hippies, and the Jesus People Movement. Many of them were deeply influenced by the "Me" decades of the 1970's and 1980's.

From a religious point of view they were also influenced by the charismatic renewal movement that swept through Christianity during this period. Boomers in churches today generally prefer contemporary worship services. The Baby Boomer reality is so well known and documented that there is little need to give a more detailed description.

This article seeks to examine the role Baby Boomers are playing in the missionary outreach of our churches today. For whether we like it or not, the Baby Boomers with their unique value system are becoming the major moving force in our church mission endeavors.

Short-term

Boomers have infected the missions movement with a short-term perspective. When I entered Bible college in 1970 I was terribly impressed by the large number of students who held weekend ministries. Some of my "idols" were the fellows who served as youth ministers, many of them for three years at the same church during their four years of Bible college.

I joined their ranks. But by the time I was a senior in 1974, the number of students who were serving weekend ministries had dwindled severely. Of those, most seemed to limit their ministries to a year or even less. There was a tremendous shift from long-term to short-term commitments in the early 1970's. Let us recall that the Baby Boomers are the people who have made the divorce statistics shoot off the graph. They do not like to make long-term commitments. They quickly move from one job to the next (though with today's economic situation this is changing).

Over the last twenty years I have been involved with recruiting missionaries. When I first began recruiting in the 1970's I used to tell prospects that we wanted those who would "make a lifelong commitment" to mission service. But on my furlough in 1983 I realized that the language of recruiting had changed. Now we said things like, "We would like you to consider a commitment of four years." This obvious change was to fit the Baby Boomer mentality.

Nowadays, even the phrase "long-term mission commitment" has been pared down to mean a two-year commitment. Some who manage to stay on the field for even six months call themselves long-term missionaries to distinguish themselves from those who go for shorter terms, like a two week visit!

No doubt in missions we are in the phase of the Short Termer. It is a unique missionary indeed who has been on the field for eight years. Most mission candidates today simply will not agree to a lifelong commitment. In fact many will not agree to more than a two-year period.

That the short-term perspective has arrived in mission activities should not be at all surprising. After all, it was the Baby Boomers who made many fast food chains prove to be wise investments. They are the ones who pioneered the use of instant food, microwave ovens, and disposable diapers.

Hands-on

Boomers insist on hands-on mission's involvement. It used to be that our churches would determine to support a missionary financially, pray for them, occasionally write to them, and see them once every five years or so when they came to report while on furlough. Those days are largely past.

Today church people who are interested in missions want to have more involvement than giving, praying, and letter-writing. Now they want to have a say concerning missionary strategy, principles and accountability. Many churches require missionaries to fill out yearly or even quarterly reports. Missionaries who fail to do so find that they soon receive letters asking why they have not kept their supporters better informed. They are made to realize that continued financial involvement will require better field communications from the missionary.

Mission committee members today want to experience the mission situation firsthand. So they make trips to visit their missionary on the field. Their awareness of the actual field situation is heightened through such visits. They can give up-to-date reports to their congre-

gations when they return. They are better able to pray for their missionaries. These visits are made possible because of the ease of travel around our globe today, and the reasonable price for airfares.

Surely it is a positive feature that our churches are now more personally involved with their missionaries. When I was in Africa it was not uncommon for me to go for several years without a personal letter from some of my supporting churches, despite much correspondence from me to them. That situation has changed for the better.

While the benefits of visiting missionaries on the field are many, one danger is that some visitors quickly become "mission experts" without putting in the requisite time in the classroom or on the field to qualify them for the role. Baby Boomers are people who have no qualms with challenging the status quo. They can be quite fickle (as both Bush and Clinton know), and easily switch their allegiances.

As Baby Boomers take more and more of the seats on our church mission's committees the trend of desiring hands-on experience will escalate. Churches today are simply not as willing to let the missionary do his or her own thing while reporting to the church after the fact.

National Christians come to the States for Bible college and to raise funds, and churches get behind these brothers and sisters and then later visit them on the mission field. These churches have come to realize that they can accomplish some of their mission objectives quite apart from mission boards or even from American missionaries.

New Strategies

Boomers will consider new mission strategies. There are two symbols of today's Baby Boomers that show they place a high value on variety. One is the satellite dish through which they receive hundreds of television channels instead of the traditional three (remember the days when all we had was ABC, NBC and CBS?). The other is the craze in ethnic foods. Steak and potatoes gave way to tacos, bagels, pasta, sushi and chicken salad (lite). For the Boomer, variety is the spice of life.

Missions too have awakened to the need for a variety of ministries. For years the note has been sounded: "The day of the pioneer missionary is over." The mission situations I was involved with in Africa required the "pith helmet" sort of missionary. But as more time goes by, this jack-of-all-trades missionary role is giving way to missionary-specialist role.

Today's missionaries are those who can go to a country and help the church that has already been established there. Today's missionaries are agricultural experts, medical personnel, teachers, leadership development specialists, theologians and advisors. Bible college training for today's missionary is no longer enough. Many missionaries are not even allowed to have a visa to work in a foreign country unless they have a professional degree from a university.

When a missionary candidate comes to our churches today, the Baby Boomers on the committee will ask searching questions about the exact role the missionary expects to play on the field. No more will answers like "God called me there, and I'll just do as He leads me" suffice. A heart of gold, a backpack and enthusiasm are not seen as enough for today's missionaries.

Baby Boomers realize that national Christians are usually better evangelists than foreigners. And because Baby Boomers have put in years of training to achieve expertise in their profession, they expect that missionary candidates should also be similarly prepared.

Baby Boomers are breathing new life into our congregations. They are the vanguard of a new awareness and a heightened involvement in the missionary work of the church. They are the ones God is using to lead us into the twenty-first century.

[Doug Priest, Jr., the Asian Coordinator for Christian Missionary Fellowship, lives in Singapore.]

VOICES from the FIELDS

Winston Allen

Eagle River, Alaska

Feb. 28, 1994

[From a letter to the W&W office:] Yesterday I baptized two ladies. So we need more copies of Dennis' booklet, *A New Creation*, if they are still available. [Yes, they are, @ \$1.40. --Editor]

February here has been very severe, so it is good to know that, at least according to the calendar, spring begins before the end of next month.

Our son Norman is scheduled to be here July 9-25. Our grandchildren are growing up and we hardly know them. Perhaps sometime in '94 there can be reunions.

**Mark and Candy Garrett Leaving Canada, heading for Africa
February 26, 1994**

Exactly one month from today (March 26) we'll be landing at Dakar International Airport in Senegal! Looking at the snow drifts out my window, that idea seems a little bizarre. We've just lived through the coldest January in Quebec in 50 years! The average *high* temperature last month was -5 F.

Leaving Quebec will be hard on the heart. In 14 months we have built some good friendships. Our friends here have encouraged us in language study and have shown a real interest in the work in Senegal.

One of God's provisions for us is a house full of furniture ready to use when we arrive in Senegal. A missionary family is leaving our field, so we bought most of their furnishings. This will enable us to jump into ministry and language learning that much more quickly!

February 11 to March 12 is the month of Ramadan for Muslims around the world. Practicing Muslims do not eat or drink from sunrise to sunset each day. So, they rise very early in the morning to eat and drink enough to fast through the daylight hours and then they eat again after sunset. It is not an easy discipline, especially because they may not even drink water. But they are motivated by their desire to earn a right standing with God. Pray that the Wolof people will choose the free gift of salvation through Jesus instead of the futile pursuit of works to please God.

Many Muslim countries make entry difficult or impossible for any Christian missionary. But Senegal, 90% Muslim, allows easy entry for American missionaries. We are not even required a visa. This wide open door should call us to action! Would you pray for more workers in this needy country?

Why did Candy pack five dozen cloth diapers for Africa? Because in June we three are expecting to become we four. Yes, our second child is on the way! Candy's pregnancy is progressing normally and we look forward to a safe delivery in Senegal. We thank our Lord for another precious gift.

Send letters to: La Mission SIM,B.P. 274,Thies, SENEGAL
W. Africa

Send Address changes to: c/o 399 College St., Winchester,
KY 40391 USA

The final months of the old year saw James making a survey trip around Small Malaita to get additional feedback on the adjustments we had proposed to the Sa'a writing system. These adjustments had been adopted years ago by the Sa'a Translation Committee, but not every one has agreed to them.

We were pleased with the results of the survey. We polled more than a thousand people, and upwards of 85% of them preferred the writing system we are using. We were especially gratified that some who had previously opposed it listened to our explanations and decided to accept it. Literacy rates were as expected--only those few with the equivalent of a high school education (about 6%) can read English with a satisfactory degree of understanding. Pijin literacy was only marginally better (although spoken Pijin is understood by many people).

While most people prefer the writing system adopted by the committee, there is a very small segment of the population that vehemently opposes it. We have done all we can to resolve this problem -- including delaying production of some books in hopes of a resolution. The time has come, though, when we feel we must forge ahead and leave the opposition in God's hands. Please pray that these people will see the advantages of what we have proposed and will stop trying to make trouble for us.

Beginning in July our director, Freddy Boswell, will be going on furlough. Unfortunately, the office won't run by itself, so James has been asked to fill in temporarily. This means we will be in Honiara for the last half of '94 and the first half of '95. While we will have ready access to wonderful things like telephones, photocopiers, stores, and ice cream, it also means our translation program will slow down to a one legged limp as most of our time will be taken up with administration. David and Timo will keep on translating, but checking will only happen if office headaches drop to an all-time low.

On the spiritual side we have seen some positive things happening here in Sa'a. David and some others in the village have been meeting every Friday night for several weeks now for fellowship and Bible teaching. Pray that it continues and flourishes both in numbers and in meeting the people's spiritual needs.

Revival, Our Greatest Need --

Charles G. Finney,

His Experiences and Teachings

This remarkable man of God was born in Connecticut in 1792 and lived until 1875. He had a fantastic ministry as an itinerant preacher. Multitudes were converted through his meeting, both in small villages and in large cities such as New York and Philadelphia. But more amazing were the powerful spiritual awakenings that occurred time after time, in place after place. God was working in seemingly inescapable ways! Not everyone was converted, of course; but multitudes were deeply impacted by God's truth, whether they turned to Him or not.

Finney preached for more than forty years. He made several fruitful visits to Great Britain. For decades he also taught theology at Oberlin College in Ohio, and even served as its president. Under his influence it became a center of evangelical activity. He was a zealous reformer as well, and a strong crusader against slavery. But our interest here is in his experiences and teachings regarding revival. Notice the importance of prayer in his ministry, as we quote from his autobiography.

"I used to spend a great deal of time in prayer; sometimes, I thought, literally praying 'without ceasing.' I also found it very profitable, and felt very much inclined to hold frequent days of private fasting. On those days I would seek to be entirely alone with God, and I would generally wander off into the woods, or get into the meeting-house, or somewhere away entirely by myself.

"The spirit of prayer that prevailed in those revivals was a very marked feature of them. There was a great pressure of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of Christians; and they seemed to bear about with them the burden of immortal souls. They manifested the greatest watchfulness in all their words and actions

"In regard to my own experience, I will say that unless I had the spirit of prayer I could do nothing. If even for a day or an hour I lost the spirit of grace and supplication, I found myself unable to preach with power and efficiency, or to win souls by personal conversation. In this respect my experience was what it has always been."

Many of the revivals which took place during Finney's early ministry occurred in western New York State. For example, here is his ac-

count of what happened in Rome, N.Y., after the Lord began moving powerfully there.

"The state of things in the village, and in the neighborhood round about, was such, that no one could come into the village without feeling awe-stricken with the impression that God was there in a peculiar and wonderful manner. As an illustration of this, I will relate an incident. The sheriff of the county resided in Utica. There were two courthouses in the county, one at Rome, and the other at Utica; consequently the sheriff had much business at Rome. He afterwards told me that he had heard of the state of things at Rome; and he, together with others, had a good deal of laughing, in the hotel where he boarded, about what they had heard.

"But one day it was necessary for him to go to Rome. He said that he was glad to have business there; for he wanted to see for himself what it was that people talked so much about. and what the state of things really was in Rome. He drove on in his one-horse sleigh, as he told me, without any particular impression upon his mind at all, until he crossed what was called the old canal, a place about a mile, I think, from the town. He said as soon as he crossed the old canal a strange impression came over him, an awe so deep that he could not shake it off. *He felt as if God pervaded the whole atmosphere.* He said that this increased the whole way, till he came to the village. He stopped at Mr. F-----'s hotel, and the hostler came out and took his horse. He observed, he said, that the hostler looked just as he himself felt, as if he were afraid to speak. He went into the house, and found the gentleman there with whom he had business. He said they were manifestly all so much impressed they could hardly attend to business. He said that several times, in the course of the short time he was there, he had to rise from the table abruptly, and go to the window and look out, and try to divert his attention, to keep from weeping. He observed, he said, that everybody else appeared to feel just as he did. Such an awe, such a solemnity, such a state of things, he had never had any conception of before. He hastened through with his business, and returned to Utica; but, as he said, never to speak lightly of the work at Rome again. A few weeks later, at Utica, he was hopefully converted.

"The Spirit's work was so spontaneous, so powerful and so overwhelming, as to render it necessary to exercise the greatest caution and wisdom, in conducting all the meetings, in order to prevent an undesirable outburst of feeling

"The moral state of the people was so greatly changed that Mr. Gillett often remarked that it did not seem like the same place. Whatever of sin was left was obliged to hide its head. No open immorality could be tolerated there for a moment. I have given only a very faint

outline of what passed at Rome. A faithful description of all the moving incidents that were crowded into that revival would make a volume of itself.

"From Rome the work spread to Utica, where the largest hotel in the town became a center of spiritual influence, and many were converted there. The stagecoaches as they passed through, stopped at the hotel; and so powerful was the impression in the community that I heard of several cases of persons that just stopped for a meal, or to spend the night, being powerfully convicted and converted before they left the town. Indeed, both at this place (Utica) and in Rome, it was a common remark that *nobody could be in the town, or pass through it without being aware of the presence of God*; that a divine influence seemed to pervade the place, and the whole atmosphere to be instinct with a divine life.

* * * *

The above quotations are from Finney's 477 - page autobiography, still in print! If you care to learn about him, but not that *much*, Dr. Keith Hardman recently wrote an acclaimed biography entitled *Charles Finney, Revivalist and Reformer*.

Following are some of Finney's teachings about revival. All but the last section are from his *Revival Lectures* -- probably one of the most influential Christian books of the past century and a half.

WHAT A REVIVAL IS -- by Charles G. Finney

It is the renewal of the first love of Christians, resulting in the awakening and conversion of sinners to God. In the popular sense, a revival of religion in a community is the arousing, quickening, and reclaiming of the more or less backslidden church and the more or less general awakening of all classes, and insuring attention to the claims of God . . .

A Revival always includes conviction of sin on the part of the church. Backslidden churchmembers cannot wake up and begin right away in the service of God, without deep searchings of heart. The fountains of sin need to be broken up.

Backslidden Christians will be brought to repentance. A revival is nothing else than a new beginning of obedience to God.

Christians will have their faith renewed. While they are in their backslidden state they are blind to the state of sinners. . . . But when they enter into a revival they no longer see men as trees walking, but they see things in that strong light which will renew the love of God in

their hearts. This will lead them to labor zealously to bring others to Him.

A revival breaks the power of the world and of sin over Christians. It brings them to such vantage ground that they get a fresh impulse towards heaven.

When the churches are thus awakened and reformed, the reformation and salvation of sinners will follow, going through the same stages of conviction, repentance, and reformation.

WHEN IS REVIVAL NEEDED?

When there is a lack of brotherly love and Christian confidence among professing Christians, then a revival is needed.

When there are dissensions, and jealousies, and evil speakings among professing Christians, then there is great need of revival.

When there is a worldly spirit in the church. It is manifest that the church is sunk down into a low and backslidden state when you see Christians conform to the world. . .

When the church finds its members falling into gross and scandalous sins, then it is time for the church to awake and cry to God for a revival.

When there is a spirit of controversy in the church or in the land, a revival is needed.

When the wicked triumph over the church, and revile them, it is time to seek for a revival.

When sinners are careless and stupid, and sinking into hell unconcerned, it is time the church should bestir itself. It is as much the duty of the church to awake as it is of the fireman to awake when a fire breaks out in the night in a great city.

WHEN IS REVIVAL AT HAND?

When the wickedness of the wicked grieves and humbles and distresses Christian.

A revival may be expected when Christians have a spirit of prayer for a revival.

Another sign that a revival may be expected is when the attention of ministers is especially directed to this particular object, and when their preaching and other efforts are aimed particularly at the conversion of sinners.

A revival may be expected when Christians begin to confess their sins to one another.

A revival may be expected whenever Christians are found willing to make the sacrifice necessary to carry it on.

A revival may be expected when ministers and members are willing to have God promote it by what instruments He pleases. Sometimes ministers are not willing to have a revival unless they can have the management of it, or unless their agency can be conspicuous in promoting it.

Strictly I should say that when the foregoing things occur, a revival, to the same extent, already exists. In truth a revival should be expected whenever it is needed.

EMOTIONS AND MORALITY

The high degree of excitement which is sometimes witnessed in revivals of religion must necessarily be short, or the people must become deranged. It seems sometimes to be indispensable that a high degree of excitement should prevail for a time, to arrest public and individual attention and draw off people from other pursuits to attend to the concerns of their souls. But if any suppose that this high degree of excitement is either necessary, or desirable, or possible to be long continued, they have not well considered the matter.

And here is one grand mistake of the church. They have supposed that the revival consists mostly in this state of excited emotion, rather than in conformity of the human will to law of God. Hence, when the reasons for much excitement have ceased and the public mind begins to grow more calm, they begin immediately to say that the revival is on the decline; when, in fact, with much less excited emotion there may be vastly more real religion in the community. Excitement is often important and indispensable, but the vigorous actings of the will are infinitely more important. And this state of mind may exist in the absence of highly excited emotions.

Thus says the high and lofty One . . . whose name is Holy: "I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly, and
to revive the heart of the contrite."

--Isaiah 57:15

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaes

A Strategic Ministry You Should Know

Christ's church is a worldwide family, and our orders are to preach Good News to every people on the planet. But it's easy to forget that fact & lose urgency for our international mission.

Victor Broaddus, veteran missionary to the Orient, seeks to keep our vision alive. His ministry, Church of Christ World Wide, forwards funds to many missionaries & projects around the world. He also leads summer missions projects: short term tours for on-the-field experience. He is available to lead missions-emphasis retreats, camps, church conferences, etc. And he publishes a prayer booklet to aid intercessors for the world.

Every church should get one of his newly-published Information Bulletins, which gives full information of the services he offers. Write him at P.O. Box 54842, Lexington, KY 40555. Daytime tel.: (606) 269-1312.

Notice Our Inside Front Cover

... about the Ladies Inspiration Day and the Restoration Lecture-ship, both coming up VERY SOON.

God at Work in the Philippines

A recent letter from Jimmy Yee, the W&W editor's former student, co-preacher & co-teacher at Central Bible Inst., tells of the church which Jimmy leads. In 1991 their average attendance was 120; in '92, 220; & last year it was 305. They baptized 129 people during 1993, & began 2 additional house churches. They continue their feeding program for

poor children. What's the "secret"? Much prayer. They have an early morning prayer meeting four days a week.

A "Different" Kind Of Book

MILLWARS is the unusual name for an unusual book on prophecy. We were sent a copy by the author, Harold J. Adams, nephew of Johnny Adams who is known to some W&W readers.

The paperback book of 200 pages is written in a catchy, humorous manner while dealing with important topics like the kingdom of God & endtime events. He critiques various writers & positions, but never in a bitter way. He uses thought-provoking explanations.

His letter to me says "the book is not comprehensive, but rather an effort to get people started in prophecy in the right direction. It is church-centered, not Israel-centered. It will no doubt challenge traditional Premills nearly as much as it does Amills." Yet he acknowledges influence on his thinking by Robert Shank, Robert Boyd, & his uncle.

Want to know more? Write the author at 2561 Woodfern Ln., Jacksonville FL 32223. His tel. no. is (904) 262-7630 (evenings).

The parts of the book I've read were helpful. My only quibble is his defining the Great Tribulation as God's wrath. It seems to me the GT is mainly man's wrath against God's people, while the following Day of the Lord is God's wrath upon the unrepentant.

Feedback Re: The Holy Spirit

"R.H. Boll was one of the most spiritual teachers among us. We all owe much to his dedication. In the spirit of his article in the Jan. W&W, here are a few comments:

"Part of the difference of views expressed by different believers is due to the fact that certain words are understood differently by different people. Some folks believe approximately the same thing but have a different set of words to describe it--baptism of the Holy Spirit, filling of the Holy Spirit, etc.

"Eph. 5:19 is clearly a command to people who were already saved, but still had a need to be filled with the Spirit. The same is true of the apostles who were baptized in the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 & were refilled in Acts 4. After being discouraged, they gathered together in prayer & were filled with the Spirit & went out & spoke the word with boldness. The 1st filling is sometimes called 'the baptism' whereas 2nd experiences or 3rd or the 10th is called a filling....

"The 20th century has been perhaps the century of the most activity of the Holy Spirit since the 1st century. And why should not the Churches of Christ have the full benefit of it?" --Woodrow Wilson, 3130 McKinley St., El Paso, TX 79910

God At Work In The Philippines - II

A letter from David Moldez, evangelist and teacher at Central Bible College (formerly Institute) in Manila, says in part: "Thank God for CBC. Two weeks ago I was in Mindoro, and met pastors and active church workers who studied at CBI....

"Praise God also for blessing the church planting ministry here. By God's grace the Maligaya church now has its own leadership & supports its own workers." He goes on to mention another new church. It is in a very poor area, but they were able to buy a small lot & are building a chapel to hold about 50 people. In addition there are two more "out-reaches," or new groups just forming. Eight people were recently baptized at one of them. "There is a tremendous need for such mission work here in Metro Manila," which has about 10 million people.

Antioch Church Of Christ Camp, Frankfort, Ky.

At a recent meeting in Frankfort, representatives of the following churches: Salem, Ebenezer, Cramer and Hanover, Belmont, Antioch, and Oakland discussed and planned for the future of the Antioch Christian Camp of Frankfort.

The schedule for this summer will be announced soon. Already the Music Camp is set for Aug. 7-12 with John Fulda directing. Remember too that churches may use the campsite when it is not already booked. For instance the Portland Church will have an overnight retreat for its men during May.

Turkey Creek, La.

A thought: We have several very good videos in our library now. Maybe someone would like to invite some neighbors to their home and have a "video party?" Could be a good outreach.

Youth emphasis week continues for today and the next two Sundays. Our young people are encouraged to continue to sit up front as you have been doing. It helps a lot to the entire service. Maybe you will like it

so much to become a good habit. (Hope so!)

Gallatin Church, Tenn.

"Of Thine own have we given Thee" These words were written by David in I Chronicles 29 and are set in the context of the generous giving of God's people. They are fitting for us in the light of the happenings of the past weekend.

First of all, the elders and ministers met to discuss ways to better accomplish our three-fold goal of: 1) Winning the lost; 2) discipling the saved; 3) glorifying God. From

verses 6-9 of the above passage we saw how the leaders set the example and how the people joyously followed. We are grateful for the leaders among us who do likewise and for those who follow their example.

Then, on Sunday night we received a full report of 1993 finances, and the budget for 1994. We were challenged to consider a minimum of a tithe toward the Lord's work. We, with David and Israel concluded that all we had given came from and belonged to God (v14), and gave in the uprightness of our hearts and did so willingly. (v17)

God Calls Home A Zealous Worker

With stunning shock we learned of the death of Robert S. Johnson on March 7. He was only 58 & seemed in good health. He & Corinne were visiting Pretoria, South Africa, when suddenly he began feeling ill. Taken to the hospital, he died 2 1/2 hours later! Perhaps a virus caused it.

Robert grew up in Brazil, where his parents were missionaries sent out by Churches of Christ. Later he studied at Portland Christian High School, where he and I were classmates & sang together in a male quartet. Robert had a bubbling-over love for the Lord, His people, and the unsaved. He also had a keen sense of humor, and a gift of making friends easily.

Later on he returned to Brazil, serving as a missionary for over 25 years. When closed doors into Mozambique, Africa (a Marxist land then) began to open slightly, Robert & his wife Corinne went there to pioneer Gospel work among college students. Mozambique was ranked as the country with the world's lowest living standard, but Robert was a natural pioneer. In about 3 years, having to work "underground" mostly, he expanded the number of student groups from 1 to 8, as described in his letter in the Jan. '94 W&W.

He & Corinne have 3 children, George, Rachel & Daniel. Correspondence to Corinne or the children may be sent to Daniel at P. O. Box 82, Zebulon, GA 30295. Phone: (706) 567-8920. Robert's father, 92 years old, lives at 935 E. Rialto Ave., San Bernardino, CA 92408. Phone: (909) 888-3007.

-- Alex Wilson

SOMETIMES

*Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword;
... and others ... were slain with the sword*

-- Hebrews 11:34, 35, 37.

Sometimes the lions' mouths are shut;
Sometimes God bids us fight or fly;
Sometimes He feeds us by the brook;
Sometimes the flowing stream runs dry.

Sometimes the burning flames are quenched;
Sometimes with sevenfold heat they glow;
Sometimes His hand divides the waves;
Sometimes His billows overflow.

Sometimes He turns the sword aside;
Sometimes He lets the sharp blade smite;
Sometimes our foes are at our heels,
Sometimes He hides us from their sight.

We may not choose, nor would we dare,
The path in which our feet shall tread;
Enough that He that path hath made,
And He Himself shall walk ahead.

The danger that His love allows
Is safer than our fears may know;
The peril that His care permits
Is our defence where'er we go.

--Annie Johnson Flint