

"Holding fast the Faithful Word . . ."



The Word and Work



"Holding forth the Word of Life."

FEBRUARY, 1996

**UNDERSTANDING
MANKIND,
UNDERSTANDING
MYSELF**

"HE WENT"

Go wash in the pool of Siloam . . . he went . . . and washed, and came seeing. -- John 9:7.

"He went" --without waiting to argue,
To question or ponder or doubt,
Though it seemed like a foolish proceeding
To one looking on from without;
Why wash, when the touch of the Savior
Had brought other blind eyes their sight?
When His mere word had power to heal them,
And turn all their darkness to light?

And why in the pool of Siloam?
What good or what virtue was there?
Why not bathe in some brook by the wayside,
Or dip in a well anywhere?
Perhaps the man wondered a little,
But he stayed for no vain argument,
Whatever he thought, he was silent:
Christ had bidden him go, and he went.

What matters the critics' cold carping,
Their views and their vague theories?
One great, vital fact overwhelming
Was answer enough for all these:
"This one thing I know: all-sufficient,
Whereas I was blind, now I see!"
No wonder his heart was o'erflowing
With praise and with ecstasy.

"He went . . . and came seeing"; how certain
Reward of obedience is;
Had he tarried or loitered in going,
The blessing might not have been his.
Oh, haste where the Master has sent you
And go when He bids you to go;
Just there shall His word find fulfillment;
Just then some great gift He'll bestow.

--Annie Johnson Flint

THE WORD AND WORK

"Declare the whole counsel of God"

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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THEME:

UNDERSTANDING MANKIND, UNDERSTANDING MYSELF

Alex V. Wilson

The fog in downtown London was as thick as pea soup. You couldn't see your hand in front of your face, and the streetlights seemed to shine out only a foot or two and then be swallowed up by curtains of cloud. It was during the Second World War, and two U. S. privates groped their way through the dimness, lost. Finally they bumped into someone, literally--not knowing, of course, that it was a two-star general! "Hey, buddy," said one of the privates, "do you know where we are?"

Drawing himself up to his full, enraged height, the general boomed, "DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?" The second private said to his friend, "He's worse off'n we are. We don't know **where we are**, but he don't know **who he is** ! !"

What a parable of modern man who rejects the Word of God. Ignorant of his place and his identity. Baffled about his origin, purpose and destiny. Stumbling around in the dark. And all of this unnecessarily. For Christ is the Light of the world, and the Bible dispels the fog about mankind--and me.

This month we conclude a series of issues dealing with human nature. You may not have noticed the series, for it took different forms. From August on we took the historical approach, examining the lives of Harding, Jorgenson, Murch and others. (Don't miss the great evangelist John Sung in this issue.) Last month we took an analytical approach, studying our sinful nature, differing temperaments, and character formation. Now we conclude with a doctrinal and philosophical approach, investigating some far-out human viewpoints but also the teachings of God's Word. May He help us learn more about ourselves and Himself.

We Have What People Are Yearning For!

Speaking of far-out viewpoints, do you remember that cover article in TIME magazine on the New Age Movement? What a sad, odd mixture it is: An important truth (the spiritual realm exists, beyond the material realm), plus lots of superstitions, and practices based on Eastern religions. The Hindu foundation of the whole thing is seen in quotes

like these: "You are God. You are, each and everyone, part of the Second Coming." "Everybody is God, co-creator of the universe."

But since I was already somewhat familiar with their teachings, what struck me the most was something else. Over and over the article revealed why people are flocking into this movement. What explains this growth? What are people seeking as they turn to a religion like this? Notice the following statements (the emphasis in the quotations is mine).

(1) "Maybe it is time for people to know they have HELP" (from outer space). Feeling their inadequacy and weakness, folks yearn for help. Feeling awfully lonesome in a cosmos which science says is vast and empty, people hope something or someone exists out there who can and will come to our aid.

(2) "Many people see themselves as living in a pretty meaningless world, and there is a profound cry for MEANING." Yes, life's riddles are deeply perplexing. Why is there life? Why death? Why pain and why pleasure? Why love and why hate? Is there any sense to it all? Do I as an individual matter? Does my life have significance?

(3) "People are latching onto a BELIEF SYSTEM to get CERTAINTY where there is no certainty." Yes, various philosophies and religions give differing answers to question #2, the meaning of life. But which answer is right, and how can we know for sure?

(4) Shirley MacLaine, the best known prophetess of the movement, said: "I'm just a human being TRYING TO FIND SOME ANSWERS ABOUT WHAT WE'RE DOING HERE, WHERE WE CAME FROM AND WHERE WE'RE GOING." We are back to the question of meaning, as it relates to our origin and destiny. Does history have any purpose? Is it going somewhere? Or is everything just some kind of sick joke?

We Have The Answers!

Don't those statements make your heart ache? How profoundly sad it is that people remain ignorant about life's most basic questions, when God has revealed the answers.

Help from outer space? Yes--"my help cometh from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." "Come to me, all who are burdened and weighed down, and I will give you rest." "You were sanctified, you were justified in the name of Christ and by the Spirit of our God." On and on we could go.

Meaning in life and in history? Knowing what we're doing here, and where we came from and where we're going? Oh, aren't you hankful for Genesis 1-3, and the first half of Ephesians, and the closing chapters of Revelation (among other passages that could be mentioned)?

Certainty? Having assurance about what we believe in and hope for? Praise God for fulfilled prophecies, the testimonies of transformed lives, and most of all an empty tomb and a living, present Savior.

A belief system to help us find coherence amid the chaos of various beliefs and ideas regarding what is true and what is right? Well, Paul's letter to the Romans would be a good place to start. And getting a bird's-eye survey of God's plan of redemption through the ages is a big help, too.

Friends, we have what the world is looking for. Oh, I don't mean we have all the answers to all the questions that agitate human hearts and minds. We too face many perplexities--that promising young life snuffed out by brutal murder; that Christian worker dying from cancer; that elderly saint lying month after month in a coma; etc. No, we don't have all the answers to life's mysteries and agonies, and we should not cockily pretend that we do. I believe this is one of the basic lessons of Ecclesiastes: don't think you know it all. Yet, despite the mysteries and agonies, on the basis of what we do know, it just makes sense to fear God and keep His commandments and trustingly leave life's heart-breaks and inequities with Him.

And despite our limitations, it's still true; we have what people are yearning for. Let's share it with them freely. Sadly, many of them don't want it enough to receive it, for men love darkness rather than light. But others are true seekers, and when we tell them of the Way they will respond with joy, "Finally I have found Him! At last my heart has found Life and Truth and God!"



The path of duty is the way of happiness, though it may not seem so in the beginning. True, Jesus tells us to take up the cross daily and follow him; but he also says, 'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.' If we follow him lovingly and trustingly, he will delight in us, and it will please him to surprise us with his kindnesses; he will even go beyond our brightest hopes in granting us the desires of our hearts. He loves us and he allows no pain, no sorrow, no disappointment to come to us except it be for our good. He ever watches over us, directs our steps, and causes all things to work together for our good, when we love him as we should." -- James A. Harding

WHAT IS MAN?

John R. W. Stott

Perhaps there is no problem which presses more heavily on thoughtful and sensitive minds today than the question which the Bible asks several times and answers, "What is man?" Before we come to consider the answers the Bible gives to that question, consider the importance of the question itself.

First, it has *political* importance. The nature of man is probably the chief political battleground of the 20th century. One of the main points of conflict between the rival ideologies of Karl Marx and Jesus Christ and, therefore, between the East and West, is whether human beings have any absolute value because of which they must be respected, or whether their value is only relative to the community because of which they may be exploited.

Wherever you look in society today, there is a tendency to dehumanize human beings. War has a fearfully degrading effect upon the humanity of human beings. Racism is another example of the same thing. The great evil of racial discrimination is that it's an affront to the dignity of human beings. So is technology. Arnold Toynbee, one of the perceptive observers of the human scene, wrote, "The triumph of technology is threatening to dehumanize personalities by demoting them into mere things, identified not by a proper name, but by a serial number punched on a card that has been designed to travel through the entrails of a computer." All these are examples in the modern socio-political scene of the importance of getting an answer to our question, "What is man?"

In addition to having political importance, the question has *personal* importance because the question "What is man?" is another way of asking, "Who am I?" To answer the question is to obey the ancient Greek adage, "Know yourself." Large numbers of young people today are involved in the drug epidemic and in the spread of sexual license all of which are symptoms of modern man's search for himself and his own identity. Christians are convinced that men and women will not find themselves in these ways, but we recognize that that is what they are doing, and there is no more important field for search or for research than our own personal identity. Until I have found myself I cannot truly discover anything else, nor can I grow into maturity, nor am I able to give myself in the service of other people. The universal cry today is: "Who am I?" "Where do I come from?" "Have I significance?"

1. Small and Puny

The Bible represents man as a most remarkable paradox. I would like to unfold, as briefly as I can, the biblical estimate of man, what I like to call the beautiful balanced biblical estimate of man. The Bible begins where all of us need to begin and that is, with the littleness of man. If David wrote Psalm 8 then we ought to imagine him as a shepherd boy sleeping out under the vast vaulted canopy of an oriental sky. His eye would rove over the immensity above him, his heart would thrill at its mystery, his spirit would be awed at the silence and the vastness of endless space, and he would cry out, "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast established; What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" You see, he felt the littleness of man, the insignificance of man in comparison with the vastness of the universe.

Now if David could feel like that centuries before Christ, how much more should we, who are familiar with the cosmology of Edington, and Einstein, and Hoyle, and other modern astrophysicists? We know that the earth on which we live is a tiny planet in orbit round a mediocre star, itself on the outskirts of the Milky Way which is one galaxy of millions of galaxies, each about a million light years from the next. As we begin to try to contemplate the enormity of the universe in which we live, we say, indeed, "What is man?" So tiny! I tell you, nothing is more becoming to man than humility, and nothing is more unbecoming than arrogance. As great as the achievements of modern man are in science and technology, there is still an infinite greatness beyond him: and man remains a very frail, a very fragile, a very tiny creature. It's good for us to be humbled before the great God of the universe.

2. Great and Godlike

The Bible speaks of the greatness of man. Let me go on in Psalm 8. "What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him--yet, thou has made him little less than God." When you compare man with creation, he shrinks into nothingness. When you compare man with the Creator you would think that man would be smaller still, but on the contrary he begins to grow into something special and something unique. It's no longer a question of contrast, but rather of likeness. Man is little less than God. Psalm 8 is a meditation on Genesis chapter one, where man's uniqueness is defined in terms of his likeness to God on the one hand, and his dominion over nature and the earth and the animals on the other. And the Godlikeness of man seems to consist of a series of faculties which distinguish him from the animal creation. Let me suggest one or two of them.

To begin with, there are *rational powers*. Man is not like a horse or a mule which have no understanding. They have a rudimentary brain but they don't have what the Bible calls "understanding." They're not capable of reasoning or of the acquisition of wisdom. The human brain is vastly superior even to the electronic brain in essential matters. Oh, we know that the computer has a certain reasoning power. It has memory and can store the information you feed into it. It has a form of speech; it can communicate. But, there is one thing, thank God, it cannot do. It cannot originate new thoughts. It can only think what you feed into it. Man is an original thinker. It is man who is able to ask himself questions about the meaning of the universe. We are able to stand outside ourselves and look at ourselves and evaluate ourselves and ask, "Who am I?" It's an astonishing capacity that we have.

Next, man's *moral sense*, his conscience, can greatly inspire or utterly destroy him, his certain freedom of choice, his urge to do what is right, and his sense of guilt when he does what is wrong. Man has an *artistic gift*. He has a sense of beauty. He draws, he paints, he sculpts, he builds, he has an urge to creativity, he makes music; and all this creative instinct of man is a reflection of the Creator in whose image we have been made. Man has a *capacity to love*, but human love is not explicable only in terms of our hormones. Human love is not just a glandular thing. He or she who thinks that is a very great cynic indeed. Human love is the greatest thing in the world and it's not surprising because God is love, and when He made us in His own image He gave us a capacity to love and to be loved. Man has an *awareness of ultimate reality*. Man is a worshiping creature. He has a strange love/hate relationship with God, rebelling against Him, hating the authority of God, and yet knowing instinctively that he has no other home. All this is part of the greatness of man, made in the image of God--a Godlike being.

Yet, that is not all we know about man, for man is a strange, tragic paradox. He is capable of behaving at one moment like God in whose image he was made, and at the next moment like the animals from whom he was meant to be forever distinct. Man is able to rise to great heights of heroism, and at the next moment he can plunge into the depths of selfishness and cruelty. Man is the inventor of churches and chapels, the inventor of universities and colleges for the acquisition of wisdom. He is the inventor of hospitals for the care of the sick, and on the other hand, he is the inventor of torture chamber and concentration camps. What a strange, bewildering paradox!

3. Sinful and Spoiled

So, the Bible moves from the littleness of man and the greatness of man to the sinfulness of man. Let me read you some words of Jesus. "From inside, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, fornication,

theft, murder, adultery, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, jealousy, slander, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from inside, and they defile a man." What Jesus calls the heart is roughly equivalent to what we now call the unconscious. It's like a deep, deep well. Normally, the thick deposit of mud at the bottom is out of sight and out of reach, but when the water is stirred by the violent winds of emotion the most evil-looking and evil-smelling filth breaks the surface, welling up from the depths of our unconscious, or heart, the things of which we are deeply ashamed. Mark Twain once said that man is the only animal that blushes, or needs to. This is man's sinfulness, this deep, ingrained, self-centeredness of man. Now, Jesus is not describing the criminal segment of society. He is not describing some particularly depraved human beings. He says, "Out of the heart of man" --any man, every man. He is describing refined and educated and cultured people like ourselves. This is His evaluation of us--great, noble, made in the image of God, yet degraded and ignoble, because of our inbuilt fallenness.

This, then is the human phenomenon, and only Jesus Christ can rescue us from this predicament. Jesus died on the cross that we might be made clean from our defilement and that our sin might be forgiven. He rose again. He is our contemporary. He is alive, and by His Spirit He can enter our personality and turn us inside out from self to unself so that we are liberated to give ourselves in the service of God and man.

This is the balanced, biblical estimate of man. Because of man's littleness, all of us need more humility before God. Man is never nobler than when he is on his knees. As one of the great Puritan writers said, "When you go about to unGod God, you unman man." Because of the greatness of man, we've got no right to push him around, to manipulate him. He deserves our respect and not our exploitation. A god-like creature is worthy of Godlike service, and we are called to give our lives, gladly and unreservedly, in the service of men and women made in the image of God. They deserve our service. Because of man's fallenness, we hold our optimism in check. We do not dream of a utopia that will be built by man on earth. Oh, we give ourselves indeed, to the struggle for a better society in which justice and dignity and freedom are guaranteed to all men, but we never lose sight of the ingrown self-centeredness of man, and we know that in the end, man's most urgent need is the good news of Jesus Christ.

"THE GREATEST MIRACLE IN THE WORLD"

Og Mandino

. . . . One chapter in this book is entitled "God Memorandum," wherein you will find a memorandum from God directed to every man. It says,

"Are you blind? Does the sun rise and fall without your witness? No. You can see . . . and the hundred million receptors I have placed in your eyes enable you to enjoy the magic of a leaf, a pony, a child, a cloud, a star, a rose, a rainbow and the look of love. Count one blessing.

"Are you deaf? Can a baby laugh or cry without your attention? No. You can hear . . . and the twenty-four thousand fibers I have built in each of your ears vibrate to the wind in the trees, the tides on the rocks, the majesty of an opera, children at play . . . and the words, 'I love you.' Count another blessing.

"Are you mute? Do your lips move and bring forth only spittle? No. You can speak . . . as can no other of my creatures, and your words can calm the angry, uplift the despondent, cheer the unhappy, warm the lonely, praise the worthy, teach the ignorant . . . and say, 'I love you.' Count another blessing.

"Are you paralyzed? No. You can move. You are not a tree condemned to a small plot while the wind and world abuse you. You can stretch and run and dance and work, for within you I have designed muscles, two hundred bones, and seven miles of nerve fiber all synchronized by me to do your bidding. Count another blessing.

". . . . **Your heart** is strong. Touch your chest and feel its rhythm, pulsating, hour after hour, day and night, thirty-six million beats each year, year after year, asleep or awake, pumping your blood through more than sixty thousand miles of veins, arteries and tubing, pumping more than six hundred thousand gallons each year. Count another blessing.

". . . . *Your brain* is the most complex structure in the universe. Within its three pounds are thirteen billion nerve cells, more than [two] times as many cells as there are people on your earth

"You are the Greatest Miracle in the World."

--Condensed from a book review in a Manila newspaper

We Live in A State of EMERGENCY

A. W. Tozer

The fall of man has created a perpetual crisis. It will last until sin has been put down and Christ reigns over a redeemed and restored world.

Until that time the earth remains a disaster area and its inhabitants live in a state of extraordinary emergency.

Statesmen and economists talk hopefully of "a return to normal conditions," but conditions have not been normal since "the woman saw that the tree was good for food . . . and pleasant" . . . and "to be desired to make one wise" and "took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

It is not enough to say that we live in a state of moral crisis; that is true, but it is not all. To illustrate, we may say that war is a crisis in international relations, a breach of the peace between nations, but that is to leave much unsaid. Along with that breach comes wide-spread ruin, the death of countless thousands of human beings, the uprooting of families, indescribable mental and bodily suffering, the wanton destruction of property, hunger and disease and a hundred forms of misery which grow out of these other horrors and spread like fire over large portions of the earth, affecting millions of persons.

So the fall was a moral crisis but it has affected every part of man's nature, moral, intellectual, psychological, spiritual and physical. His whole being has been deeply injured; the sin in his heart has overflowed into his total life, affecting his relation to God, to his fellow men and to everyone and everything that touches him.

There is also sound Bible reason to believe that nature itself, the brute creation, the earth and even the astronomical universe, have all felt the shock of man's sin and have been adversely affected by it.

When the Lord God drove out the man from the eastward garden and placed there cherubim and a flaming sword to prevent his return, the disaster was beginning to mount, and human history is little more than a record of its development.

It is not quite accurate to say that when our first parents fled from before the face of God they became fugitives and vagabonds in the earth; and it is certainly not true to say that they passed from the love and care of the One who had created them and against whom they had

so deeply revolted. God never abandoned the creatures made in His image. Had they not sinned He would have cared for them by His presence; now He cares for them by His providence till a ransomed and regenerated people can look once more on His face (Rev. 21:3, 22:4).

Men are lost but not abandoned; that is what the Holy Scriptures teach and that is what the Church is commissioned to declare. The traveler lost in a storm knows he is lost; it is the assurance that a rescue party is searching for him that prevents his knowledge from turning to despair. His friends may not reach him in time, but the hope that they will enables him to stay alive when hunger and cold and shock say that he should die.

Let a flood or a fire hit a populous area and no able-bodied citizens feels that he has any right to rest till he has done all he can to save as many as he can. While death stalks farmhouse and village no one dares relax; this is the accepted code by which we live. The critical emergency for some becomes an emergency for all, from the highest government official to the local Boy Scout troop. As long as the flood rages or the fire roars on, no one talks of "normal times." No times are normal while helpless people cower in the path of destruction.

In times of extraordinary crisis ordinary measures will not suffice. The world lives in such a time of crisis. Christians alone are in a position to rescue the perishing. We dare not settle down to try to live as if things were "normal". Nothing is normal while sin and lust and death roam the world, pouncing upon one and another till the whole population has been destroyed.

To me it has always been difficult to understand those evangelical Christians who insist upon living in the crisis as if no crisis existed. They say they serve the Lord, but they divide their days so as to leave plenty of time to play and loaf and enjoy the pleasures of the world as well. They are at ease while the world burns; and they can furnish many convincing reasons for their conduct, even quoting Scripture if you press them a bit.

I wonder whether such Christians actually believe in the fall of man.

Various Views On WHO ARE WE, ANYWAY?

Francis Schaeffer: "Modern man does not see man as fallen, but he can find no significance for man. In the Bible's teaching man is fallen but significant."

* * *

Oliver Wendall Holmes: "I see no reason for attributing to man a significance different in kind from that which belongs to a baboon or a grain of sand."

* * *

My love
she said
that when all's
considered
we're only machines.

I chained
her to my
bedroom wall
for future use
and she cried.

(Author unknown)

* * *

John Stott: "Christians regard man neither with blind optimism (as not needing redemption), nor with black pessimism (as beyond redemption), but with sober realism (redemption both necessary and possible).

"The biblical paradox about man is (a) his dignity as a creature made in the image of God; (b) his degradation as a sinner under the judgment of God. Because of the second fact, he needs to be redeemed, rescued, regenerated. Because of the first fact, he can be. Both the necessity and the possibility of salvation depend on a true, Biblical view of man."

* * *

Reinhold Niebuhr: "Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible; but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

* * *

Blaise Pascal (Christian philosopher in the 1600s): "Man is a feeble reed, trembling in the midst of creation. But then he is endowed with thought. It does not need the universe [to destroy him]. A breath of wind, a drop of water will suffice to kill him. But though the universe were to fall on man and crush him, *he* would be greater in his death than the *universe* in its victory; for he would be conscious of his defeat while it would not be conscious of its triumph!"

* * *

A U.S. Secretary of Education in the 1950s: "The U.S. educational system stands on two basic premises: 1) Man is perfectible. 2) Education is the means of perfecting him."

* * *

Billy Graham: "When I was in Ecuador, I visited the Auca Indians, one of the most primitive peoples in the world. They are living in a stone age culture. I studied their life and culture, filled with hating and cheating and prejudice and wars that have almost exterminated them. I found it easy to say that what these people need is education, together with the social advantages of civilization.

"But I come to Berlin, Moscow, New York, London, and Paris, where we have all the advantages of civilization, and what do I find? Hating, cheating, prejudice, lying, and the two most devastating wars of history. Can I recommend our civilization to the Aucas? Or is something wrong? Is there another answer? There must be something deep down inside that is wrong. The Bible says that we have a disease, a basic human disease. The Bible calls our disease sin."

[Written in the 1960s, when few Aucas had been converted. Since then many have been transformed by Christ.]

* * *

Bumper sticker: "If it feels good, do it."

* * *

John Stott: "To argue for total self-expression of our desires is to forget the doctrine of the fall. To argue for total self-suppression is to forget the doctrine of creation.

"*Because of creation* we must accept what we are. We are not cold fish; we are human beings made in the image of God, endowed by God with unique capacities--for love, moral indignation, sympathy and compassion, joy and sorrow, imagination and artistic creativity. God has made us like that and we are not to deny these capacities. That is the doctrine of creation.

"*But because of the fall*, we cannot accept everything we have become, because our mind, emotions, and will are all corrupted. The good capacities God has given us easily degenerate: Love into lust, joy into frivolity, indignation into malice, sorrow into self-pity.

"See then our paradoxical position. We must not reject or suppress ourselves totally, because we are *creatures of God*. But we must not accept and express ourselves totally either, because we are *fallen creatures of God*."

* * *

James Philip: "The deepest word that can be spoken about sanctification is that it is a *progress toward true humanity*. Salvation is, essentially considered, the restoration of humanity to men. This is why the slightly inhuman, not to say unnatural, streak in some forms and expressions of sanctification is so far removed from the true work of grace in the soul.

The greatest saints of God have been characterized, not by haloes and an atmosphere of distant unapproachability, but by their humanity. They have been intensely human and lovable people with a twinkle in their eyes. One has only to read the biographies of men like Moody, or Spurgeon, or Hudson Taylor, to see how true this is. Some people take themselves so seriously in the Christian life that they become unnatural and stilted, and the natural reaction that comes unbidden to the mind is: 'If only they would unbend a little!'"

DOES GOD WANT HIS PEOPLE TO BE HEALTHY?

RETHINKING SICKNESS AND HEALTH

Dennis L. Allen

First, here are some basic assumptions that underlie my thinking on this subject:

1. Normally, God wants us to be well. "I pray that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." 3rd John 2.

2. We have more control of our health than we have often acknowledged.

3. There are principles of good health which we need to know and observe.

4. God does not suspend the laws He has established in the universe just because we choose to ignore them. We generally recognize this with regard to the law of gravity, but ignore it with regard to laws of health.

5. Drugs have never made anyone healthy. The best they can do is alleviate symptoms and always with side effects.

6. Our bodies can be no healthier than the nutrients that we put into them. The food and drink we put into our bodies determines to a large extent the quality of health that we have.

In America, until recent years, we have largely ignored these principles. Many young people (and older too) are hooked on fast foods which are nutritionally atrocious. In the early years they may seem to get by with that diet without suffering too many dire consequences, but it does not take long for it to begin to catch up with them in obesity and frequent trips to the doctor. In spite of improved labeling, much of the food on supermarket shelves and in our grocery carts are responsible for a lot of our health problems.

Unfortunately doctors are taught very little nutrition and preventive medicine in medical school. Their whole training and emphasis is on diagnosing and treating diseases with drugs developed by the pharmaceutical companies. People in past years were continually being warned of the dangers of overdosing with vitamins. As a result many were afraid to take vitamins unless prescribed by a doctor. At the same time thousands are killed with drugs given by prescription. In the last few years the medical establishment is acknowledging the value and effectiveness of certain vitamin supplements which many by personal experience have known for years. Fortunately the benefits of a healthful diet are now being more widely publicized.

The National Cancer Institute says that, "at a minimum, 30,000 lives could be saved in the year 2000 if Americans would modify their

dietary habits." The true figure may be much higher. The death rate from cancer in America is five to ten times higher than it is in Japan. Westernized nations have a much higher incidence of colorectal cancer than people who live in uncivilized societies. It seems logical that there might be a cause and effect link between fiber intake and the incidence of colorectal cancer. Our average daily intake of fiber is around 4 grams while theirs is around 30 grams. Our diet of highly processed foods makes the difference.

You might say, "Well our diet a generation or two ago before processed foods was not all that nutritious. What about salt pork, bacon, biscuits and gravy?" True. And it isn't easy to get away from the foods we were brought up on. However, long hours of hard work, fewer soft drinks, and more fresh vegetables and fruits probably mitigated some of the bad effects of a high fat diet. Today, Americans eat more processed food with all their additives. Did you know there are 10 teaspoons of white sugar in a can of soft drink? Diet drinks don't really solve the problem. Some artificial sweeteners are even more dangerous in the side effects they can have.

Only in recent years have I noticed that the Israelites were instructed not to eat the fat. Lev. 3:17; 4:8-10. Instead it was to be burned as an offering. "Ye shall eat no fat of ox, or sheep, or goat." Lev. 7:23b. Did the Lord know it was not good for them? It's taken us a long long time to get on to it.

In the beginning God said to man, "Behold, I have given you every herb yielding seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed, to you it shall be for food." Gen. 1:29. Originally this was man's diet--the fresh vegetables, grains and fruits of the earth.

Later Israel was given certain meats which they could eat, and to Peter God declared all meats clean. However, in America we probably eat too much meat. In Chinese cooking, for example, there is much less meat used, yet the food is delicious. We know also that over the earth there is a great variety and difference in the foods various peoples eat. People can be healthy eating many different kinds of food. Only in recent years due to modern transportation facilities are we able to go to our supermarket and buy fresh Alaska salmon, Central American bananas, Turkish dates and Philippine mangoes. So I'm not saying we must eat a very restricted diet, though some with cancer or other diseases have found their health regained by doing so.

A lot has been learned recently about preventive medicine and causes of disease. If we are in Christ our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. I believe the Lord's concern for these bodies goes much further than not smoking and drinking and taking drugs. It is through

our bodies that we are able in this life to serve the Lord and be used by Him to bless others.

David Brainerd (1718-1747) felt a strong call to minister to the American Indians. However, he was not very careful in taking care of his body, exposed himself unnecessarily, and contracted T.B. As he lay dying he said, "God has given me a ministry to fulfill and a horse to ride. I have killed the horse [his body] and now I cannot fulfill my ministry." He was a great servant of God, but his ministry was cut short. He died at the age of 29.

Man is not going to discover secrets that will eliminate death. The Bible says, "It is appointed unto men once to die." Heb. 9:27. "The last enemy that shall be abolished is death." I Cor. 15:26. Unless the Lord comes first (and He well may) we will all depart from this body and be with Him.

Many people feel there is a certain number of days appointed for them and that your lifestyle has nothing to do with it. "You will go when your time comes," they say. They do look both ways when crossing the street, however! The Lord spoke to Israel about "prolonging" their days in the land. He said that children who obeyed their parents would live long on the earth.

The quality and usefulness of our lives is also affected by the level of health we have. Moses apparently was in good health all of his life. "His eye was not dim nor his natural force abated" until the time of his death.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal 6:7. We usually think of this with regard to bad consequences because of wrong choices, but does it not apply equally to good consequences coming from right choices?

Should we not think twice before giving babies and little children Coke and other soft drinks ensuring that they will develop a life long habit with all the attendant consequences. On the other hand children who have developed healthful eating habits from the earliest years are being given a foundation of good nutrition which will stand them in good stead not only for their youth but all through their lives. Our bodies' cells are built of what we have put into our stomach.

Almost every gathering of believer will include prayer for the sick. This is good, but do we ever consider the things we are doing or neglecting to do that may be directly responsible for the sickness? We cannot expect the Lord to do for us what we can do for ourselves by exercising self-discipline. That may be as simple a thing as getting out

of the easy chair and taking a brisk walk every day. It may be saying no to ourselves with respect to second helpings or rich desserts.

The final fruit of the Spirit is self-control. For American Christians our most needed area of self-control is in the matter of eating and drinking. Probably a big percentage of our health problems would go away if we just ate less and brought our weight down to normal. And whatever happened to water as a beverage?

In the wilderness God said to Israel that if they served Him alone, "I will take sickness away from the midst of thee." Ex. 23:25. Normally, God wants us to be in health, but sometimes sickness is within God's will. Lazarus' sickness was "for the glory of God." John 11:4. Epaphroditus through hazarding his life to supply Paul's needs became sick nigh unto death. Phil. 2:27-30. Then there is sickness because of sin. Deut. 28:61. Some people genetically seem to have propensities to certain diseases. Some families seem much more prone to cancer than others. This is no fault of the person so afflicted. However, a person knowing that can take certain precautions rather than be passive or fatalistic.

In the field of Alternative Medicine more and more information is being made available to the general public. There are reports of treatments for cancer, for example, that are widely used in other countries with remarkable success that are not used here. In those areas where the conventional treatments of the medical establishment do not have a very good success rate, I personally believe that alternative medicine deserves consideration. Of course, each person must make his own decision.

Health is a problem that we all have to deal with and I feel that it is not an unspiritual problem. Paul exhorted Timothy with regard to his health. If you would like to correspond with me about any of the issues brought up I will be pleased to interact with you. For those interested in further reading I will be glad to put you in touch with sources of information which might be helpful. (Rt. 4, Box 282B, Salem, IN 47167)

I heard Brother R. H. Boll say once that he believed he would have been long dead if it were not for the indwelling Holy Spirit. He was referring to Rom. 8:11. "He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall give life also to your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you." That is a whole new dimension to this question but should not be ignored.

[Further insights and/or other viewpoints on this important topic are welcome. -Editor]

HEROES OF THE FAITH: JOHN SUNG

Harry M. Savacool

For a moment he held the diploma in his hand, staring at its rich whiteness and its beautiful lettering. With thoughtful eyes he traced the words: Ohio State University; John Sung; Doctor of Science." The slender Chinaman laid it aside to satisfy his father, then began pulling other diplomas from his cabin trunk. Medals, fraternity keys, and awards tumbled out onto the ship's deck. He scooped them into his arms and determinedly flung the trophies out into the sea. In a few moments they sank from sight in the Pacific Ocean--marking the end of a life that almost was. Gazing far out across the restless waters, John Sung looked longingly for the China shore.

It had been a long time since John Sung had been home--since he had gone to America to prepare for the Lord's work and had ended up preparing for his own career. What would his father think; what would his mother say, to what he had to tell them now?

John Sung had felt called to the ministry from childhood. The son of a Chinese Christian pastor, he had been saved at the age of nine during the great 1909 revival in Hinghwa. By the time he was in high school, he was preaching a lot, and even conducted a revival. After graduation he edited his father's magazine, *Revival*, and prayed that God would open the way for him to study in America.

Eventually through the efforts of a missionary, an attractive scholarship came through for John, to attend Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio. Friends contributed enough to cover the cost of travel, and in 1920, young John arrived in America.

When he reached the school, John had only \$6 left. Although faculty members were eager and willing to help him, he was too proud, and preferred to work his own way through.

His English was poor, but within a few weeks he had climbed to the top of his class. And he stayed there. In fact, his amazing ability as a student, especially in science, was made so much of, John just about decided his talents would be wasted in the ministry.

Then on Thanksgiving night in 1922, John dreamed that he was standing on a hill above the river at his home town of Hinghwa. The river was full of people about to drown--many of them his old friends and neighbors. When he plunged in to try to save them, so many clung to him, he himself almost drowned. Then he saw a cross planted in the stream. Holding on to this, he was able to save them. Then he saw

himself in heaven surrounded by those he had saved, all singing praises to God.

Convicted of forgetting the needs of souls around him, John once again organized evangelistic bands and proclaimed the Word of Life. But in his senior year, ambition again got the better of John. He neglected his prayer and Bible study to concentrate on an outstanding scholastic record. By the time he graduated, John Sung--a Phi Beta Kappa honor student who, despite language barriers, had finished four years of study in a little over three--was being proclaimed in papers all over America and Europe as a scientific genius. Deciding to give up the idea of the ministry, he accepted one of the many scholarships offered him, and went on to Ohio State University in Columbus, to specialize in science.

At Ohio State, during which time he gained with great honor both his master's and doctor's degrees, the brilliant Chinese student underwent great spiritual anguish. Most of his professors were either godless or indifferent. He knew himself that he was out of his Father's will, and yet he stubbornly clung to his own ambitions. From the world's point of view, his future couldn't look brighter. He was deluged with offers of positions from the United States, China and Germany, ready as soon as he completed his doctorate.

The new Dr. Sung stayed on at Ohio State on the staff while he tried to decide what to do with his future. Then one night as he sat in the moonlight, he suddenly heard a voice speak distinctly, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Startled, the student jumped to his feet and looked about. There was no one with him. Then he sat down, trembling. "It must have been God," he whispered.

The next day, when a minister stopped in to see him, John told about his experience of the night before, and how he had always felt called into the ministry. Unfortunately the minister suggested that John go to New York City and enroll in a very liberal seminary. There, at the same time, he could take some courses in science at Columbia University and compare the two callings.

It was the worst possible step he could have taken. The seminary mocked unquestioning faith in the Word of God. In such an atmosphere his Bible seemed nothing but words. Even his prayers became a dead formality. "My soul wandered in a wilderness," he himself later declared. Only through the friendship of a missionary on furlough, Dr C. S. Demming, and a few Bible-believing classmates, was he able to keep from being dragged into complete apostasy.

Then one night before Christmas vacation he and four other students went to hear a 15-year-old girl give her testimony for the Lord. The others scoffed, but John realized that her speaking revealed the power of God.

Resolving to know God again as he had once known Him, he tried everything he could think of to achieve his former peace, without success. His mind came near the breaking point as he struggled spiritually. Finally he retired to his room praying day and night.

Then on the night of Feb. 10, 1927, as he prayed, John saw all his sins spread before him. In anguish he searched in his trunk for the New Testament he had not read in months. He read the story of how Christ had died for his sins, and then, ashamed, begged God's forgiveness for them. He continued weeping and praying till midnight. Then he heard a voice say, "Son, thy sins are forgiven," and at once his heart was filled with joy and peace. Joyfully throwing open his door, he ran through the dormitory hallway shouting the praises of God to the horror of the other rudely awakened students.

The next day John Sung went about with shining face telling students and professors of his wonderful experience of coming back to the Lord who had saved him. He walked about quoting Bible verses and prayed far into the night. The seminary authorities, scandalized at his extraordinary behavior, decided he was insane and sent him immediately to a mental hospital.

During his months in this hospital, John made up for the Bible study he had neglected for so long. He read the Bible through carefully 40 times and filled many notebooks with his findings. Finally on August 30, 1927, his friends and the Chinese consul got him discharged. His release, however, depended on one explicit condition: that he leave the United States at once.

Returning home to China, John soon found troubles there, as well. Pastor Sung urged his brilliant son to take a government position offered him so the whole family could benefit from his high salary. When he announced that he was going to preach the Gospel instead, his family, though Christians, wept.

John Sung made that pledge true, going from place to place with other Chinese evangelists proclaiming the Good News. His style of preaching was so unusual, his fervor so sincere, and conversions at his meetings so numerous, his fame spread rapidly. People everywhere began talking about his emphasis on the power of the blood of Christ, the need of the new birth, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

In 1931, while Sung was holding meetings in Nanking, a great revival broke out there with hundreds converted. Invitations poured in from other large cities as well, and everywhere he and his band went revival fires burned. In one year he had 18,000 decisions for Christ.

Even more amazing were the results in the lives of established believers. Whole cities were spiritually re-empowered. Reconciliations and restitutions were the rule. Pastors were rekindled and many missionaries led to deeper spirituality.

These decisions were not the result of polished oratory or showmanship. John's only desire was that people should see not himself but God and His power through him. He spent hours every day in prayer and Bible study, and then threw himself into his preaching. Speaking on the healing of Naaman, he would leap off the platform seven times to illustrate Naaman's seven dips into the Jordan. He spared no energy to get a point across and after each sermon was always utterly exhausted.

Eventually he held meetings not only all over China, but in all of southeast Asia where there were large Chinese colonies. And each place he went he helped organize "witness bands" to carry on the work after his departure. Many of these bands are still active.

In 1938 his health began to weaken, but he was so burdened for souls he wouldn't slow down. Pain in his hip sometimes became so terrible he had to preach in a kneeling position. Finally in 1940 he could no longer keep going. An operation disclosed that he had both cancer and tuberculosis of the hip. He was never able to preach again, but as long as he could, he taught and wrote.

Other operations followed, but he grew steadily worse. Finally at midnight on August 17, 1944, he whispered to his wife, "Don't be afraid! The Lord Jesus is at the door. What is there to fear?"

The next morning John Sung went to be with the Lord.

John Sung was still a young man when he died--a few years past 40. He had been able to give only 15 years to evangelizing China. But what a 15 years they were!

In the eyes of the world, who thought of what John Sung could do as a scientific genius, he had wasted his life. But to this humble evangelist, who proved how much more God could do through him, his life was rich and full.

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"POWER FROM ON HIGH" IN JOHN SUNG'S MINISTRY

(Excerpts from *John Sung*, by Leslie Lyall, veteran missionary to China)

Preach the Book, the Cross and the Holy Spirit: A missionary in China wrote,

"We are having a Bible revival in Nanchang. Dr. Sung can take any Bible passage you suggest and make it live as I have heard almost no other man do. He still spends hours daily with the Book, and that is the secret of his success." John Sung himself was confirmed even more clearly in his own mind that his was to be a message to the churches of China which would expose sin and declare God's remedy for it in the Cross. He felt commissioned to emphasize the uselessness of an empty religious profession without an experience of new life in Christ through the new birth.

Said John after the time in Nanchang: "The experience here has taught me the three secrets of revival: (1) A thorough confession of sin. (2) Prayer for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (3) Public witness for Christ.

Bury The Converts With Christ:

It was in Kirin that Dr. Sung became greatly exercised about the question of baptizing new believers. He and the pastor, against the custom of the missionary society which insisted on a long period of trial before baptism, decided to baptize the 200 converts on the basis of such verses as "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" and "What doth hinder me to be baptized? . . . If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."

Souls Saved And Bodies Healed, Too:

Prayer for the sick has always been a natural part of the faith of Chinese Christians. Many a church has been founded on the basis of prayer heard and answered for the chronically ill, or people raised up from critical illnesses. God has answered prayer in so many thousands of cases that Christians in China expect miracles to happen and they undoubtedly do.

John Sung had vivid memories of occasions during his childhood when God had heard importunate prayer for healing both in the case of his mother and of his father. He had never doubted that prayer did avail for the body as well as the soul.

After 1932 wherever Dr. Sung went, there was pressure on him to pray for the sick. Eventually, without making any claim to a "gift of healing," he made it a practice to include a service of healing at the end of most of his campaigns, when he used the occasion to preach the gospel. Where there was both repentance from sin and a genuine faith in God's power to heal, there were often remarkable cases of healing. But there was also a large percentage of sufferers who derived no benefit at all. Frank Ling well remembers a girl of sixteen who had to be carried on to the platform to be prayed for, but after the prayer she stood up, gave a testimony and walked home. He also remembers a crippled young man of thirty for whom Dr. Sung prayed for a full half-hour, even pulling at his legs with his "believing hand", but without result. He had many such disappointments

Dr. Sung usually had one meeting in every campaign at which he would give an address on healing and the necessity for sincere repentance before inviting the sick to come forward. It was always made plain that it was only as people accepted Christ as Savior from sin that they could expect to be healed. Patients had to hand in a record of their names and addresses and the nature of their disease on cards provided. After united prayer he would speak on Jas. 5:14-16. "Here is the elder of the church," said Sung, pointing to himself. "I come to you in the Name of the Lord, not in any power of my own. I do not possess any magic influence in my hands. So expect nothing of me, but only of Him who stands by me, whose servant I am. I cannot guarantee that you will all be healed, the Lord did not heal all the sick in His day. How much less then His servants!"

The sick then came or were brought to Dr. Sung on the platform. Kneeling, he anointed them each with oil and commanded the disease to leave the sufferer. The same afternoon a praise meeting was held, when those who had been healed gave their testimonies. One woman from Miss Baarbe's own village was clearly healed of a serious disease and became a much-appreciated fellow worker in the gospel.

The following typical incidents [the author describes 7] took place in the village of Golden Well near Amoy in the early months of 1935. They are vouched for by one who personally observed each case. There was an old Buddhist zealot who was deeply superstitious and faithful in her prayers to the spirits. She had been almost blind for three years, and determined to test the reports of healing she had heard. She attended Dr. Sung's meetings and was soundly converted. At the healing meeting, when it came to her turn to be prayed for, Dr. Sung exclaimed, "Hallelujah, praise the Lord!" and immediately Mrs. Chua saw a great light and beginning to see for the first time for three years, gave glory to God. Returning home she was able to read her son's Bible. Soon the idols were destroyed and the home became a Christian one. Later all the family moved to Manila where Mrs. Chua continued

to be a means of great blessing--a truly choice soul, radiant in her faith through many a trial. [The author give 6 more examples].

What happened at Golden Well could be duplicated over and over again. There were many substantiated claims for healing and the benefits were lasting. Others obtained no help at all, and some claims were subsequently shown to be unjustified. But as far as Dr. Sung was concerned the meetings arranged to pray for the sick were valuable evangelistic opportunities and many found Christ who had come only to seek healing.

Churches Revived, Sinners Converted, Workers Raised Up And Supported:

In 1936 Dr. Sung crossed over to Formosa and held campaigns in the north, center and south of that island. Each campaign lasted a week, and the Lord moved powerfully. Well over 5,000 people in Taichung and Tainan made professions of faith and 460 offered themselves as voluntary evangelists. \$4,000 in cash as well as gold rings and jewelry were contributed for the support of the 295 evangelistic bands that were formed.

In every place there were deeply moving scenes as the Holy Spirit convicted men and women of sin. There were many reconciliations between old enemies and apologies were made publicly for wrongs done. A new spirit of love and unity came into being in place of the dissension and hostility which had been paralysing the church life in many a congregation. A dissolute drunkard, opium-addict and gambler was wonderfully saved and set free from his forty years' bondage. Throughout the whole church there was a great revival of Bible-reading and public witness. Results in the shape of increased church attendance were spectacular. Numerous baptisms followed Dr. Sung's departure. In Taichung attendance at the Sunday School doubled its previous weekly attendance of 200. In the same center a hundred preaching bands were formed and continued their witness in the surrounding countryside for at least three years until the Japanese placed a ban on this kind of evangelism. There were four hundred bands formed in Tainan, in the south of the island.



So what shall we say to these things? Oh God, do it again! Revive Your work, O Lord! -- A.V.W.

VOICES from the FIELDS

Mark & Candy Garrett
December 30, 1996

Senegal, W. Africa

The angels in heaven had a party Sept. 10! How do we know this? We baptized three into Christ at our ministry center in Thies. It was a celebration as we witnessed two Sengalese men and one missionary's son come up out of the waters of baptism. After our morning service, the whole assembly enjoyed a Sengalese meal.

The two Sengalese now face ostracism from many family members. The father of Aliou S. is already a believer, but most of the family is Muslim. He told us that one of his aunts has cut him off now and wants nothing more to do with him. He replied that though she rejected him he would not reject her!

Alioune M. is the only believer in his family. The week prior to his baptism his father kicked him out of the house. When his father learned of Alioune's intention to follow Christ, he flew into a rage and quickly brought family pressure to bear. A parade of relatives and important neighbors came to try to persuade Alioune to remain a Muslim. This of course was a good opportunity for him to verbalize his faith to others, even though it wasn't at all pleasant. One of his father's friends left with a new respect for Alioune's faith. Since that time he rented a room in his neighborhood and his father has cooled down. He now is welcome again for meals at home. Will you pray for these two young men in their witness? They can be the key to reaching their families.

Once a person begins to verbalize that they no longer believe in Islam (even in an indirect way), the persecution starts. Our Wolof tutor (J.) said in the presence of family members (all Muslims) that he believes Christianity is the true religion. They all put their hands over their ears. One of them said, "You deserve to be killed!"

Sometimes persecution comes from unexpected sources. He told a Catholic friend that he was no longer a Muslim but Christian and was rebuked. She said she had no respect for a person who abandoned the religion of their parents. J. Says that here, honoring one's parents includes following their religion. It is not so important which religion it is. It just must be their religion.

Tied in with this whole concept is the veneration of ancestors. Many homes have a little altar hidden away in a corner where they honor ancestors, particularly the one who started the family name generations ago. These same people also attend a mosque or the Catholic mass and don't see any conflict of interest.

Keep praying for our tutor. He is like many others here who come to Christ after a long series of small steps. It often takes years of listening to the Gospel before they are ready to face the persecution. We pray that soon he will choose to identify himself with Christ in baptism.

THE PAIN OF PORNOGRAPHY

By "Amy Brown" as told to Ken Walker
Reprinted from *Pentecostal Evangel*

I married with the joyous anticipation of life with a Christian husband. Because of pornography I suffered four years of humiliation before my husband deserted us.

I lived a nightmarish existence that--had God not protected me--would have ended in my death. I sat in church thinking, If only people could see what's going on. But I didn't know who to tell or where to turn.

We entered marriage as Christians. I had been saved at a summer camp at thirteen; my husband, about nine months before we were married.

Growing up in a Midwestern town of some 20,000, I led a sheltered life; my mate was literally the boy next door. I had no idea of what lay ahead after our wedding when we moved to a large metropolitan area.

Our first four years together proved wonderful. We joined a church and got involved in neighborhood groups, times of sharing and spiritual development.

I completed my teaching degree and tutored learning-disabled students. "Robert" attended specialized training after military service and became an engineer at a large plant. He worked hard and earned a handsome salary.

Our problems began after I quit work to give birth to our first child. With only one income we faced budgetary restrictions, and the responsibilities of fatherhood and home started weighing on Robert's mind.

About this time he began stopping at pornography shops and X-rated theaters after work. Since he never brought material home I had no idea. The truth wouldn't surface for years.

Gradually he became cold, distant and verbally abusive. He criticized me endlessly for the 10 extra pounds I carried from the pregnancy: "Your tummy's not as flat as the other women I see . . . you're not so attractive." Two years of such comments damaged my self-esteem.

His behavior escalated to extremes. One moment he would be pleasant, then without warning turn demanding, ruthless and unreachable.

In the third year of his slide he grew sexually abusive. While never physically beating me, he raped me numerous times. No begging or pleading could stop him. He called me other women's names. Worst of all was knowing he didn't care. He no longer looked at me as a person, but as an object for his pleasure.

The abuse finally peaked when he told me, "This is the night I'm going to see if you're woman enough for me." He went into a rage--his eyes turned red and he breathed like a madman. "You don't deserve to live," he fumed. "You're going to see your Maker."

My robe lay next to the bed. He grabbed it and yanked out the belt. Wrapping it around my neck he began choking me.

I prayed and the Holy Spirit gave me peace. I could hear my favorite hymn, "In the Garden." It seemed like I was on the outside of this situation looking in, as the song filled my mind.

Suddenly my husband let go of the belt and fell over, crying like a baby. When he did, I grabbed my robe and ran to our neighbors' house. Seeing the red marks on my neck, they called the police. When they arrived minutes later, my husband sat calm and collected.

After the Lord saved me from this attack, I soon learned I was pregnant with our second child. After hearing of my pregnancy Robert disappeared. Before he left, he mentioned not wanting to stop at X-rated theaters, but his car would "just pull into the parking lot." I was praying he would turn his life back to God.

When our divorce was final, he told me, "I'm doing you a favor by getting out of your life. You deserve better."

Nevertheless, his condition worsened. One night while I was at work, without the court's permission he left with the children in the car. I was notified late that night the children were found in a sleazy part of town locked in the car, while he visited an X-rated shop. I know God protected them. Twice my ex-husband broke into our townhouse.

God has become so real to me over the years. Despite the pain, His guidance, provision, protection and love overcame it. I believe He helped me survive so I can speak out for the other women (and children) who are silently suffering from their husbands' addiction to pornography.

This sin is prevalent within the church. In fact, I left one congregation because the pastor refused to take a stand against it for fear of offending someone. He asked me, "What am I supposed to do, say, 'All you men addicted to porno, meet in room 202 after the service'?"

Over the years I have talked with many Christian women who are victimized, from being ignored to being forced to do things against their will.

One of the saddest commentaries is the church's apathy. One discount store leader brags that as long as he keeps prices low, Christians keep coming, even though he sells pornography.

At one statewide decency rally, two seminary students related being advised to visit porno theaters "to see what's out there." Their professors told them it was an acceptable form of "release" that could help bring marriages back together.

Two pastors told me, "Hard-core pornography is wrong, but don't take away my *Playboy*."

The first step is for Christians to be educated about the seriousness of pornography and admit we have a problem. Because this evil has been in our midst so long, much research has been done on the stages of this addiction. Help is available. And God is able to deliver us from the pain of pornography.

For women who are victims, remember: It's not your fault and you are not alone.

[1-601-844-5036 Help for porn addicts, their families, sexual trauma victims and counselors. Call & ask for Neal Clement of the **American Family Association.**]

NEWS and NOTES

Edited by Jack Blaes

Sudden Homegoing !

Corrine Johnson is now in Heaven with her Lord, & with her husband Robert who died so suddenly about 2 years ago. After 30 years of overseas missionary ministry, first in Brazil & then in Mozambique, Corinne had returned to the U.S. to stay. So she thought. But while visiting her son in Georgia she was in a fatal car accident, dying instantly

Pray for their sons George & Daniel, and especially daughter Rachel, whose own husband was killed in a plane accident in '95. Up there, sometime, we'll understand."

Keep Praying

... for Winston & Irene Allen and also Richard & Virginia Ramsey, as the men wrestle on with cancer. Dennis & Betty Allen are filling in at Eagle River, Alaska through Feb., and Carl Kitzmiller is preparing messages for the Words of Life radio program. Pray for them too.

Area-Wide Youth Rally

Area-wide young people's get-togethers have started again after a lapse of a few years. These quarterly meetings move around from place to place. The Highway Church in Pekin & the Portland Church in Louisville hosted them so far. And on Saturday March 16, from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. EST the meeting will be held at Lilly Dale Church in Gatchel, Ind., near Tell City

The evening's theme will be "Decision," with Sam Marsh, Wally

Bryant & Bill Taylor scheduled to speak. A Bible Bowl on the whole New Testament will be held! And the evening will end with fellowship, food & fun. Y'all come, young people!

2 Important Conferences

Be sure to notice the announcements on our back cover this month, re: the S.B.S. Conference & the K.C.R.C. Lectureship. These are valuable opportunities to be strengthened & encouraged, and we all need that. So take advantage of them if you possibly can.

Don't Miss The Chance

... to have Robert & Joy Garrett visit your church while they're "home" from Zimbabwe. Robert can show slides & preach about missionary work in general & Africa in particular. In addition, he is available to hold 4- or 5-night meetings, teaching about the "mysteries" of Christ & His kingdom (mainly Matt. 13).

At present the Garretts are in La., till the end of March. From then on they'll be in Louisville again, visiting churches in Ky., Ind. & Tenn. Their schedule is unbooked from May 26-July 11, then again from July 21 - Aug. 3. To book them contact Victor Broadus at (606) 253-9834 (evenings). Don't forget that lady missionaries have valuable lessons to share too, so take advantage of Joy's presence. She & Robert are booked to fly to Zimbabwe on Aug. 19 after spending a week with son David in Michigan.

Letters We Like

" . . . I commend you for the helpful piece on 'Ancient Predictions & Current Events' (Nov.-Dec. W&W). Your emphasis upon missions in reference to the soon-coming of Christ is impressive. Your treatment of Israel's return to Palestine makes that position both reasonable and biblical, without being sensational. And what you said about the Apocalypse being an up-to-date book confirms what Ouida & I have concluded from recent readings. We have read through it in 3 different translations.

"This will be a great year for us all. It should be enough for us that if our Lord doesn't come soon we'll be going to Him. The thought of it all, which I often nurture, never ceases to overwhelm me." -- Leroy Garrett.

Just Wishing For Heaven or Sure of It?

People can be divided into 4 kinds: BELIEVERS, UNbelievers, MAKEbelievers, & HALFbelievers. It's sad when a person is only a HALF-believer, not really sure of what he believes, or trying to pick-&-choose which teachings of Scripture he believes and which he doesn't, or just floundering around in uncertainty.

Decades ago in a sermon Brother Boll said that once, to his dismay, he heard a member of the Portland congregation say, "IF I HAVE THE GOOD LUCK TO GET TO HEAVEN. . . !" What a sad, unbiblical statement, for if we belong to Jesus we can KNOW that by God's great grace we are Saved Now and Heaven-bound forever!

Brother Boll's reaction to that man's statement was, "WHEN GOD WASHES YOU, HE DOESN'T LEAVE YOU SPOTTED AND

STREAKED." No, thank the Lord, when a person entrusts himself to Christ as Lord and Savior, he is washed whiter than snow.

Are you saved, and sure?

— Alex Wilson, Portland Bulletin

"Daniel" and "Revelation"

Available Again

Speaking of Brother Boll, 2 of his good books which have been out of print for years are once more available. Robert Garrett printed them in Africa and brought copies with him. We have a few of them, at \$5.00 only.

An International "Restoration Movement" Conference

"Join us at the 14th World Convention of Churches of Christ at Calgary, Alberta, Canada, July 30-Aug 4, 1996. The theme is 'A World of Difference!' It is an umbrella convention that makes room for all streams of the Restoration Movement. We have more people registered from Churches of Christ than ever before. You'll make friends from as far away as New Zealand and Australia. It makes for an ideal family vacation. For information write: 1101 - 19th Ave. S., Nashville, TN 37212."

The above is by Leroy Garrett in his occasional newsletter. The World Convention is held every 4 years, moving around from country to country.

Statistics on Religions and World Populations

Missions researchers project that by the year 2000 there will be about 2 billion people belonging to Christian churches. Muslims with 1.2 billion adherents will constitute the next largest religious group, followed by one billion non-religious people, 860 million Hindus, 360

million Buddhists, about 260 million atheists, and 240 million believing in folk religions.

Among Christians worldwide, there are an estimated 23,500 denominational groups, with Roman Catholics constituting 57 percent of the total. The single fastest-growing group of Christians is Pentecostals, having increased a hundredfold to 372 million in this century. More than half of all Christians live in developing countries, yet the greatest number of Christians in a single nation exists in the United States

Because of political and economic changes in recent years, Christianity has been able to spread to previously closed countries. Robert Karthak, missionary in Nepal, says that prior to the late 1950s there were no Christians in the Hindu kingdom of Nepal. Today there are more than 100,000, but, he says, "we are still treated as second-class citizens."

"We used to say the church is thriving in spite of persecution," says Karthak, a Global Mission interpreter. "But now we say the church is stronger and stronger every day because of persecution"

-- *Christianity Today*

How 2 Congregations Can Work Together

Lilly Dale/ Tell City Spirit of Cooperation

We at the Lilly Dale/ Tell City churches share in many endeavors. The last Sunday of each month, we have our joint missions night. We alternate places each month. At these meetings we give updates on mission works we support (presently eight) and other works we are familiar with. We try to have missionaries come and speak when available. Presently, one of our men is the

treasurer of our joint missions bank account.

Another thing we do is share each other's church van. If either van is out of commission or if more van space is needed we borrow the other's van, if available. At each revival the other church dismisses their scheduled night services in order to support the meeting. Some will attend the other's meeting every night. For the past twenty years we have joined together for a weekend workshop in February. We alternate places each year and jointly decide on the theme and speakers. We share the cost of the meeting. At Thanksgiving time we meet at the Tell City Church for a Thanksgiving celebration. At Easter we meet at Camp Koch along with the Troy Christian Church at 6:00 a.m. We alternate the responsibilities of the service, refreshments and preparation of the building. There are some of the major things that we do together. --Sam Marsh, Lilly Dale

We Should Identify With a Local Church

Many members of the church move into a community and never formally identify themselves with any congregation. Some are drifters, visiting here and there, but never becoming part of any church they attend. They just consider themselves members wherever they go. They do not do this in their work. They do not do this with their children in school. They go immediately and formally enroll them. In fact, we do not treat anything so lightly as we often do the church.

There are a number of good reasons why we should identify ourselves when we move to a new location: 1) Every Christian should be a member of a local church. It is scriptural, and therefore, bears

God's approval. (Rom. 16: 1-2; I Cor. 16: 3; Acts 9: 26-28)

2) It makes it possible to "shepherd the flock," to tend the sheep (1 Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28).

3) It acquaints Christians with one another and is a good environment for Christian living.

4) It opens opportunities for service in His vineyard as members become active in the church. (Matt. 24: 14, 30; Mark 13: 34).

5) It encourages others (Heb. 10: 24). The elders are charged with the spiritual well-being of members and it is important to them to know of your stand. --Cramer bulletin, Lexington

What Do We Do When We Truly Fail the Lord and Others?

The model of 1 John 2:1-2 helps us, "I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have One who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world." We want to urge people to do everything possible to seek faithfulness. But if they do fail, there is a remedy. Failure is not fatal.

The most helpful counsel I've encountered on this subject comes from the writings of Fenelon, a spiritual director in the seventeenth century, in the time of Louis XIV of France. Among his many wise counsels on imperfection, he wrote:

Do not be overly concerned about your defects. Instead concentrate on having an unceasing love for Jesus, and you shall be much forgiven because you have loved much When we look at our defects in peace through the spirit of Jesus, they vanish before the majesty of His love. But when we concentrate on our defects, forgetting that Jesus loves us, we become restless, the presence of God is interrupted, and the flow of God's love is hindered. **The humiliation we feel about our own defects can often be a greater fault than the original defect itself if it keeps you from moving into the realization of God's love.**

When we fall, we fall to our knees. We are not to wallow in pity, seeking to atone for our sin through the misery of our guilt. We have just learned once again the reason for the cross and the empty tomb.

--Douglas Rumford in *Scared to Life*

TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENRICHMENT & ENCOURAGEMENT

Recipe for a More Effective Church

The School of Biblical Studies' Annual Conference

Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville, Ky.

Thurs. & Fri. Nights, March 14-15, 7:00-8:30

Thursday, March 14

The Ingredient of **WORSHIP** -- Alex Wilson, Louisville

The Ingredient of **INSTRUCTION** -- Tom Mobley, President,
Louisville Bible College

Friday, March 15

The Ingredient of **EVANGELISM** -- Sonny Childs, Preacher & Editor,
Olney, Illinois

The Ingredients of **FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE** -- Bud Ridgeway,
Louisville

The Portland Christian High School Chorus will sing on Friday night.

The Kentucky Consortium Of Restoration Colleges

Presents Its 1996 Lectureship

The Holy Spirit

in Conversion, Convictions, and Conversations

3 Messages by Donald Nash of Ky. Christian College

Location: College of the Scriptures

4601 Old Shepherdsville Rd., Louisville

Call C.O.S., (502) 451-4144 for meeting times

Date: Tuesday, April 16, 1996